

Sent: 18 February 2003 11:12 AM

To: tcf@pc.gov.au

Subject: Productivity Commission

To Whom It May Concern

I am a small manufacturer of knitwear situated in the centre of Tasmania and have been asked to give some comments on the impending reduction of tariffs on Textiles, Clothing and Footwear.

My main concern is that the skill base we currently have in the textile industry is shrinking as companies move off shore or go out of business.

It is all very well to consider textiles as a sunset industry but we cannot all be computer programmers and there is a place for product made in this country.

It is impossible to compete with product from countries that have very low wages, environmental policies that either non-existent or not enforced, and employment policies that would not be tolerated in developed countries.

It is even difficult to compete with New Zealand as the wage structure there is lower than our hence they can land product here at a much cheaper rate than we can.

These are my thoughts on the subject of tariff reduction and it affects my pocket.

I would like to remain in business, be competitive and keep my staff employed, particularly as I am in an isolated region where there is not much other employment.

If companies like mine are unable to compete then there will be more people looking for jobs, training and all that encompasses.

If you need to contact me my details are as follows

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Yours sincerely
Clare McShane