



**Coimisean | Forestry
na Coilltearachd | Commission**
Alba | Scotland

Mr D Russell

21 January 2009

Our ref: SEC/08/104

**Forest Enterprise
Head Office Scotland**
1 Highlander Way
Inverness Business Park
Inverness IV2 7GB

Fòn/Tel: 01463 232811
Facs/Fax: 01463 243846
hugh.insley@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Dr Hugh Insley
Àrd-Oifigear / Chief Executive

Dear Mr Russell

Your letter of 28 November to Michael Russell, Minister for the Environment, has been passed to me. I apologise for the delay in this reply however the Minister has been unavailable to comment until this week.

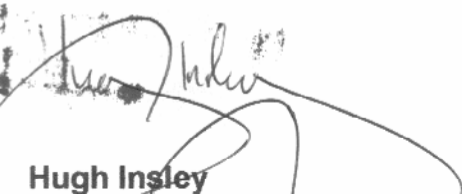
Your letter raises a number of issues which Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) has fully addressed in the past. I do, however, wish to make some final comments.

- A summary of the responses to the mountain biking strategy consultation has now been published at: <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey-intro.zgi?p=U2B76H655CE4>. You should note that the Steering Group is led by Scottish Cycling not FCS.
- You accuse FCS staff of dishonesty, malpractice and deception. FCS absolutely rejects these claims, particularly your assertion that we lied to a Government Minister.
- In keeping with Government guidelines, business opportunities on the National Forest Estate are offered through a tendering process. Whilst FCS is happy to discuss opportunities with potential businesses, prior to tender, it does not operate on a 'preferred bidder' process.
- Having now identified a suitable crossing for the burn on the Lochside trail, and having carried out an appropriate tender, this work is progressing.
- The Minister has already stated that he is content for the Information Commissioner's investigation into your Freedom of Information requests to run its course. I understand that the Commissioner has not yet issued a decision notice.



This reply has been discussed with the Minister's office, and he is content that FCS has responded appropriately.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hugh Insley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping loop at the end. It is positioned above the printed name "Hugh Insley".

Hugh Insley