



LIVESTOCK SA INC

Unit 5
780 South Road
GLANDORE SA 5037
08 8297 2299 (P)
08 8293 886 (F)
admin@livestocksa.org.au (E)
www.livestocksa.org.au (W)

29 September 2014

Hon Jay Weatherill
Premier
GPO Box 2343
ADELAIDE SA 5001

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Received: | 30, 9, 14 |
| Physical ID: | PRM1405209 |
| File No: | PRM141 |
| Action Officer: | MAFF-Direct |
| Draft Due: | |
| Previous Carcas: | |

Dear Mr Weatherill

Livestock SA were very concerned at the decision to abolish the Pastoral Board.

While there have been issues with some of the activities of the Pastoral Board, over its long history it has served the State well. It is essential that whatever replaces the Pastoral Board also works for the current interests and the future of the pastoral industry.

Livestock SA requests that it be involved with the development of the reform that will be required when the Pastoral Board is abolished.

Livestock SA was formed last year to represent South Australian sheep, beef cattle and goat producers. It has taken over the role previously provided by the South Australian Farmers Federation. As such it now represents South Australian pastoralists.

We were very pleased to be invited recently by the State Government to take a key role in delivering its package of assistance measures for drought affected pastoral businesses. The first grants have now been approved.

As part of the process in becoming established, following a series of regional meetings (including at Port Augusta) and consultation with livestock producers across the State, Livestock SA identified ten priority issues (see attached). Three of these priorities are specific to the pastoral region – besides the drought, the other two dealt with the Pastoral Board and the Dog Fence.

There is a need to review the Pastoral Board and its activities, and the Government's decision to abolish the Board makes it even more important that pastoralists are now consulted.

Yours sincerely

Richard Halliday
PRESIDENT



LIVESTOCK SA INC

Unit 5
780 South Road
GLANDORE SA 5037
08 8297 2299 (P)
08 8293 886 (F)
admin@livestocksa.org.au (E)
www.livestocksa.org.au (W)

26 February 2014

LIVESTOCK SA ELECTION PRIORITIES

Livestock SA has identified ten priority issues that will need to be addressed by the incoming State Government following the election on 15 March, 2014.

These issues are:

- 1 Drought support for South Australian pastoralists
- 2 Reduction in the cost of water for livestock
- 3 Development of South Australia's live export trade
- 4 More support for PIRSA, SARDI and Biosecurity SA
- 5 Review of the Pastoral Board and its activities
- 6 A more efficient transport system to allow for efficient volume movement of livestock
- 7 Need to balance agriculture with the environment and community
- 8 Maintaining and recognising the value of the Dog Fence
- 9 Encouragement for the next generation of primary producers
- 10 Funding for Livestock SA

1 Drought support for South Australian pastoralists

Livestock SA wants the following short-term measures put in place to assist those South Australian pastoralists currently in drought:

- *Pastoral rent relief*
- *Allowing the use of B Triples to assist with de-stocking and to reduce transport costs*
- *Support for bore well maintenance and cleaning*
- *Freight assistance for agistment of breeding stock.*

It is proposed that there be a refund on freight once the drought has broken and the breeding stock return from agistment.

More important than the above measures, are the Farm Finance Concessional Loans from the Australian Government. It is necessary to ensure that there is sufficient funding provided to South Australia for these to be widely available so that pastoralists can apply as well as other producers. Consideration also needs to be given to an extension of the loan period specifically for those in drought to allow for drought recovery (currently five years).

In the longer term a South Australian proactive drought package must be permanently put in place, rather than the current ad hoc development of any State package as a drought develops. This needs to complement both the national drought policy and the support provided in other States.

The need for debt mediation legislation also needs to be considered as part of any drought package.

2 Reduction in the cost of water for livestock

There needs to be a differentiation in water prices for water used from SA Water for livestock consumption. The current excessive price of water is beginning to lead to a reduction in livestock numbers in those areas reliant on SA Water.

3 Development of South Australia's live export trade

In 2012, 375,000 sheep were exported live from SA, worth \$44 million. This was only 16% of the total from Australia and this has declined since then with strong competition from WA.

4 More support for PIRSA, SARDI and Biosecurity SA

There must not be any further cuts to PIRSA, SARDI and Biosecurity SA. It is time for the State Government to invest in agriculture and this needs to start with a vibrant Government Department that can assist the further development of primary production in South Australia.

As part of this, there needs to be funding made available for investment proposals for agriculture to be considered and supported, and an expansion of livestock research.

Adequate resources must be in place to ensure South Australia can cope with any livestock disease outbreaks if the State is going to be able to maintain its clean and green image for premium food and fibre production. Responsibility for animal welfare also needs to be given to PIRSA.

5 Review of the Pastoral Board and its activities

There are a range of restrictions in place that appear to be limiting efficient livestock production in pastoral areas such as restrictions on watering points leading to land degradation, water not being allowed for irrigation which may be able to assist towards drought-proofing a property, and the need to change the management of goats so that there can be a development of meat production from rangeland goats. In addition the assessment processes used to determine stocking rates and the setting of rents also need to be reviewed.

6 More efficient transport system to allow for efficient volume movement of livestock

This needs to include more access for larger heavy vehicles across South Australia, road infrastructure upgrades to allow for efficient and safe transport of livestock (including more overtaking lanes), and increased funding for maintenance.

With more sealing and better maintenance, there will be more opportunity to expand those roads that A-triples can use, including the Birdsville Track. In addition to sealing Yorkey's Crossing, consideration should be given to realigning this road. Ultimately there must be more access allowed for larger heavy vehicles to be able to deliver to all saleyards and meat processors in this State.

7 Balance agriculture with the environment and community

There needs to be a balanced and consistent approach to natural resource management, land access and infrastructure use, ensuring primary production has priority and can profitably increase production. Far too often there are examples of agriculture and livestock production being restricted.

8 Maintaining and recognising the value of the Dog Fence

This valuable resource needs to be an integral part of the National Wild Dog Plan, and as such supplemented with effective control measures either side of the fence.

The State Government needs to openly recognise that:

- a dingo based wild dog population is now established and breeding inside the SA Dog Fence

- the established and expanding wild dog population is currently creating a serious economic and social burden for sheep producers inside the Dog Fence in pastoral and nearby zones
- mandatory wild dog control responsibilities are not being applied uniformly across the landscape, at least partly due to the now diversified pattern of pastoral land uses
- the control responsibility is falling in a disproportionate way on the shoulders of pastoral sheep producers, in many cases with great detriment to their businesses and daily lives
- the currently northern centred wild dog problem, if not seriously addressed by the State, will advance southwards, to have a critical impact on the livestock future of all of the developed areas of South Australia
- there is ample evidence in other States to demonstrate how advancing dog problems can be implicated in a collapse of the sheep industry, with adverse outcomes for the economy
- wild dog prevalence is not just a sheep/livestock problem, but has serious peri-urban and social implications, well demonstrated by interstate experience
- every litter of wild dog pups born inside the Dog Fence further diminishes the value of that long standing barrier and if dogs inside are not eliminated, the entire value of the Dog Fence and the State's investment in it could be lost
- many pastoral people believe the current situation represents a critical turning point, as the cost of control continues to escalate with every expansion of the dog population inside the Fence.

A comprehensive Wild Dog Control Program needs to be implemented in South Australia which:

- is long term and has a broad, stable funding base supported by government in partnership with industry and landholders
- is applied equally across the landscape, inside the Dog Fence, irrespective of land use or class of ownership
- uses all available control measures including shooting, incentives, trapping and both ground and aerial baiting, in combination so as to maximise effect
- seriously considers the need for strip or buffer baiting, including outside the Dog Fence
- employs at least three professional doggers to work with and mentor landholders in their individual control programs and to deal with hot spots.

9 Encouragement for the next generation of primary producers

A South Australian government must look to encourage the next generation of farmers. Competing with overseas money has made it very difficult for younger people to invest in primary production. Reductions in stamp duty and long term finance options should be investigated. Changes to payroll tax also need to be considered to encourage employment, particularly for younger people in rural areas who may then develop careers in agriculture.

10 Funding for Livestock SA

Currently under South Australia's *Primary Industries Funding Scheme Act 1998* there is a Sheep Industry Fund and a Cattle Industry Fund. All sheep owners in South Australia are required to pay 35 cents a head to the Sheep Industry Fund when five or more sheep are sold for \$5.00 or more per head. Cattle owners who purchase transaction tags or permanent identification devices required under the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) must pay \$1.10 per NLIS identification device to go into the Cattle Industry Fund. Although contributions to these funds are compulsory, under the legislation, a refund of contributions is permitted.

Livestock SA is currently receiving financial support from the Sheep and Cattle Funds to start the organisation. The ultimate aim is for a part of the levy on all sheep, beef cattle and goat so that all livestock producers are financing Livestock SA as their representative body.

Secure funding for Livestock SA is required by a proportion of the current Sheep and Cattle Industry Funds being allocated to Livestock SA, and the establishment of a Goat Industry Fund.