

27/01/2014

Re: Senate Inquiry Into the Collection and Expenditure of MLA Levies

Dear Sir/Madam

We refer to the forthcoming Senate Inquiry mentioned above and would like to present the following submission for your consideration.

As cattle producers we appreciate that the government has recognised the need for an Inquiry as a result of the ongoing diminishing returns in real terms over the past number of years. It appears there is enough data available to confirm that the cattle producer has never been worse off since the beef slump of 1974 to 1978.

In relation to the present structure of the MLA we have reached the stage that whilst it was set up with the best of intentions to represent the red meat industry, it is both inefficient and unworkable in its present form. I am sure the MLA would acknowledge that it is not sensible nor professional for one organisation to act for three competing interests in our industry.

Our suggestion would be that independent organisations be established for Producers, Processors and Retailers responsible for the collection of their own levies and managing their own members interests. The format, constitutions and goal setting for each organisation would be attended to by their members.

We recognise that each body does share some common interests namely research and the promotion of red meat globally. As such each of the three independent groups above would have a commitment to contribute to the financing of work undertaken by the organisation whose task it is to meet these goals.

We congratulate the Federal Minister for Agriculture on acknowledging the serious issues confronting our industry and trust that the Inquiry will address these problems and take whatever steps required to allow the members of each of the groups involved to take control of their own interests.

Thanking you
Yours faithfully

Don, Cathy and Scott Bates
(Winnathoola Pastoral Co)