

Bruce and Barbara Reid

13 May 2004

The Secretary
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission to The Impact of Pest Animals on Agriculture Inquiry

RE: Federal Funding for assistance with Wild Dog Control in Eastern Victoria

As you are aware, over 1 million hectares of forest in Eastern Victoria burnt in the 2003 fires.

The fire event has caused wild dog numbers to increase to levels never previously experienced.

Lack of food in the burnt forest appears to be forcing these dogs into farm land.

I have never seen wild dog attacks around and in my property, at their current level, in my 30 years on this property, nor in 50 years in the Omeo-Swifts Creek District.

Since the fires, I have lost 230 sheep to wild dog attacks. This compares with less than about 5 sheep attacked per year in most other years.

On top of the trauma and heartache of coping with the 2003 fires and subsequent drought, it is very depressing to drive around my sheep each morning to find the results of the latest wild dog attacks.

There is nothing more depressing for a sheep farmer than to find sheep with their intestines hanging out.

I am forced to deal with these animals straight away, and the only quick and humane thing to do is to cut the suffering animal's throat.

Needless suffering by these poor sheep, and me being forced to slaughter them immediately, have taken their toll on my health. I have often doubted whether I should keep farming or not.

Added to this is the problem of losing good sheep that I have put my heart and soul into breeding and feeding through tough times.

Despite their best efforts, the local dogmen have been unable to cope with the increased dog numbers.

I congratulate the Federal Government on holding an Inquiry into wild dog control.

I urge you to talk to as many farmers as possible who have had wild dog attacks.

I hope that this Inquiry will result in more funds for dogmen, and not more funding for State Government bureaucrats.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Reid