

**Australian Sheep and Wool Industry Taskforce
Stakeholder Forum
Monday, 8 November 2004, Menzies Hotel, Sydney
14 Carrington Street, Sydney**

Program

- 11.00am Welcome – Chairperson Lucy Broad, Director, Cox Inall Communications
- 11.10am **Research and development (R&D) briefings**
- Update on AWI R&D mulesing and blowfly control projects
Dr Scott Williams, Animal Health Project Manager, AWI
 - Update on live export industry management program.
Mike Hayward, General Manager MLA
- 11.40am **Modus operandi of animal rights organisations**
Sharon Turner, Executive Director, WoolProducers
- Internationally - PETA
 - Domestic – Animals Australia
- 11.55am **Australian Sheep and Wool Industry Taskforce Strategy**
Robert Pietsch, President, WoolProducers
- Industry coordinated approach
 - Initial contact by animal rights group (PETA)
 - Joint Australian Government and industry support
- 12.15pm **Industry initiatives to date**
- Support provided to international retailers
Peter Wilkinson, Managing Director, The Woolmark Company
 - Global wool trade sector
Dr Peter Morgan, Executive Director, Australian Wool Industries Secretariat
 - Media and Communications
Peter Wilkinson, Director, Wilkinson Media
- 12.45pm Lunch
- 1.15pm **Australian Wool and Sheep Taskforce – next steps in the strategy.**
Robert Pietsch, President, WoolProducers
- 1.45pm **Discussion on future directions on surgical mulesing.**
Chairperson Lucy Broad, Director, Cox Inall Communications
- 2.30pm **Discussion to add value to the current directions on live exports.**
Chairperson Lucy Broad, Director, Cox Inall Communications
- 3.00pm Afternoon tea
- 3.20pm **Wool and Sheep stakeholders – strategy support**
Chairperson Lucy Broad, Director, Cox Inall Communications
- Role of SFOs and industry associations
 - Communication requirements during the PETA campaign.
- 3.40pm **Meeting Summary**
Dr Len Stephens
- 4.00pm Close



WoolProducers

SHEEPMEAT
COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA



australian wool
innovation
+livestock



**Australian Sheep and Wool Industry Taskforce
Stakeholder Forum
Monday, 8 November 2004, Menzies Hotel, Sydney
14 Carrington Street, Sydney**

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting opened by Chairperson, Lucy Broad.

Research and development (R&D) briefings:

Dr Scott Williams, Animal Health Project Manager, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) presented an update on AWI's R&D mulesing and blowfly control projects. Key points noted:

- **Current mulesing initiatives:**
 - **Non-surgical mulesing:** involves injection of a natural protein into the skin. The procedure is painless and permanent. Extensive research and trialling is still required.
 - **National mulesing program:** aim to develop best practice guidelines for mulesing, marking etc. Accrediting contactors to ensure the procedure is performed correctly and under appropriate conditions and timing. Program has commenced in Western Australia and will be available to all states.
 - **Pain relief for mulesing:** aims to provide preliminary evaluation of two painkillers for mulesing;
 - **Mulesing Technical Forum:** forum aimed at woolgrowers, scientists and consultants who will be informed on developing new products and practices such as mulesing alternative and genetics. Dates: 7-8 December 2004.

- **Current blow fly projects:**
 - Integrated parasite management
 - Predictive modelling of flystrike
 - New fly-specific insecticides
 - Biological control using fungi
 - Biological control using worms
 - Fly genomics
 - Managing IGR resistance

Live trade

Mike Hayward, General Manager Live Exports, Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) presented an update on the live exports management program. Key points noted:

- Brief on Keniry Report
- Establishment of a national initiative to include from whole-of-chain animal health and welfare standards for live trade – with reference to legislation.
- Tightening of licensing and regulation of the trade.
- Outlined restrictions on type, age and origin of livestock exported during winter months.
- Tighter regulations and agreements with recipient countries in place in Middle East to prevent a recurrence of the Corno incident.
- Introduction of compulsory levy on live exports to fund R&D by LiveCorp.
- Placement of an Australian Government Veterinary Counsellor in the Middle East.

© 2004 Australian Wool Innovation Ltd



WoolProducers

SHEEPMEAT
EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN



australian wool
innovation
a tradition

mla
MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA



Modus operandi of animal rights organisations

Sharon Turner, Executive Director, WoolProducers profiled the animal extremists groups, such as PETA and Animals Australia and their activities overseas and domestically. Key points noted:

- **PETA:**
 - Mission statement: Animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on or use for entertainment.
 - Membership: 800,000 with six offices worldwide.
 - President: Ingrid Newkirk
 - Tactics: look for panic and lack of unity in the targeted industry; use of media celebrities and shock value campaigns.
 - Communication mediums: mainstream media and web.
 - PETA threatens retailers if they do not join the boycott of Australian wool.
- **Animals Australia:**
 - Aim: to expose suffering; claim to research alternatives and lobby governments to effect changes in laws to protect animals.
 - Membership: represents 40 member groups
 - Headed by Glenys Oogjes
 - Tactics: similar to PETA on a smaller scale.

Australian sheep and wool industry taskforce

Robert Pietsch, President, WoolProducers spoke on the initial contact made by animal rights group (PETA), industry's approach on the issue and the joint initiatives with the Australian Government and industry. Key points noted:

- Membership of the sheep and wool industry taskforce includes representation from:
 - National Farmers Federation (NFF)
 - WoolProducers
 - Australian Wool Innovation (AWI)
 - The Woolmark Company
 - Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA),
 - Sheepmeat Council of Australia (SCA)
 - LiveCorp
 - Australian Wool Industries Secretariat (AWIS)
 - International World Trade Organisation (IWTO)
 - Australian Government
- Outline of sheep and wool industry strategy includes:
 - The Operations Group are working with Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) who are representing their members. There have been several discussions between the Australian industry and the US retailers who have been threatened by PETA to boycott Australian wool.
 - Through WoolProducers, a letter of offer was sent to PETA, to enter into a dialogue on the topic of mulesing.
 - Distribution of communication kits to retailers in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia. As well as a retailers program to allow retailers to communicate directly with senior people in Australia to address the issue(s).
 - Distribution of media kits to all major media outlets in Australia, United States and United Kingdom.
 - On going dialogue and contact with Australian Embassy in United States in Washington and American organisations such as the American Sheep Industry Association and Animal Agriculture Alliance.
 - RSPCA NSW and Australia Veterinary Association (AVA) have accepted as necessary the practice of mulesing...
 - Establishment of an industry website – woolisbest.com. The site offers information on current R&D activities on mulesing; answers frequently asked questions for both mulesing and live trade and other vital information that would assist woolgrowers, member organisations and the general public on the hot topics circulating in the sheep and wool industries.
 - Development of a targeted US and UK marketing campaign: key messages - the benefits of wool, it is a clean and green fibre and Australian producers care about animal welfare.



WoolProducers



- o AWI are investigating legal options to reduce the impact of PETA's campaign on retailers and the Australian wool industry.
- o Government briefing program – The Operations Group have briefed Ministers and opposition spokespersons on industry's efforts with respect to the husbandry practice of mulesing, live trade and animal extremist's threats.

Industry initiatives to date:

Peter Wilkinson, General Manager, The Woolmark Company provided a brief on the ongoing support provided to international retailers.

Key points:

- International retailers will want to keep this issue out of the spotlight.
- Protecting their brand will be an important consideration in dealing with this issue.

Dr Peter Morgan, Executive Director, Australian Wool Industries Secretariat, provided synopses on the effects of the issues at hand are having on the global wool trade sector.

Key points:

- There are many people who have significant investments in the wool pipeline. They have as much at stake as the wool growing industry.
- There are several parts of the wool pipeline that are solely wool reliant eg scourers, carbonisers and topmakers can only process wool
- AWI and IWTO are keeping their Australian and international memberships informed of the issues as they develop.

Peter Wilkinson, Director, Wilkinson Media outlined the media and communication efforts to date. This included:

- Educating mainstream media on mulesing and live trade. Ensuring any coverage on either issue that industry is the media's first port of call for information.
- Coordination of media and retailer kits worldwide.
- Crisis management program.
- Future steps in the media and communication strategy – to educate media heads and executives on the topics of mulesing and live trade – that industry is on the front foot and not at the mercy of the media.

Australian wool and sheep taskforce – next steps in the strategy.

Robert Pietsch, President, WoolProducers provided an insight of the strategy – going forward. Outlining the following:

- A whole-of-industry approach: all organisations and affiliated groups to join as one. To be unified in supporting the wool and sheep industry in fighting against those who threaten the industry and the livelihoods of the Australian producers.
- The offer to meet with PETA whilst Ingrid Newkirk is in Australia is being pursued. This is a recommencement of the dialogue that occurred earlier in the year.
- Develop a marketing campaign that supports retailers and consumers in understanding the value of the Australian merino fibre.
- The legal options were under evaluation and considered as part of the strategy The example outlined was Huntington life sciences - this case had a successful outcome against PETA.
- Continue to review opportunities to pursue legal actions against PETA.
- To continue to promote the initiatives and efforts of industry. Ensuring consistent messages are delivered to the members and the woolgrowers of Australia.

Discussion points

Len Stephens raised the matter that AWI was investigating legal options as to how to best manage the PETA threat.

Discussion on future directions on surgical mulesing



WoolProducers



australian wool innovation



Lucy Broad, Meeting Chairperson invited participants to an open discussion on surgical mulesing. The meeting considered the following:

- Phasing out of the practice.
- Fast tracking current R&D activities on mulesing
- Pain relief

The meeting agreed in principle:

- That the Australian sheep and wool industry is committed to ending the current practice of mulesing by 2010.
- The industry expands the current mulesing operator accreditation program Australia wide.
- That the industry continues to investigate a broad range of pain relief options targeted at mulesing.

Wool and sheep stakeholders – strategy support

- Role of SFO and industry associations:
 - The role of these groups is vital.
 - That the key messages delivered by the state farm organisations and associations are consistent with those prepared by industry.
 - Remain unified and on the front foot.
- Communication requirements during the PETA campaign.
 - Communication material will be provided by the wool and sheep industry taskforce (Matthew Flugge, Manager, Industry and Government Relations, AWI on 0407 845 785 or Peter Wilkinson, Wilkinson Media, on 02 8969 6322.)
 - All media enquiries regarding mulesing, live trade or animal extremist groups are to be filtered through to Peter Wilkinson at Wilkinson Media.
 - Encourage all organisations to promote the industry website woolisbest.com on their respective home websites.

It was agreed that a press release was issued that summarised the decisions of the day.

Meeting closed at 5.15pm

Representative organisations attending the meeting released the following joint press statement:

Industry agreement on mulesing

8 November 2004

Australian sheep and wool industry leaders, at a meeting in Sydney today, expressed their commitment to the phasing out of the current practice of mulesing by 2010.

The Australian wool industry and major international clothing retailers, have been threatened by an international boycott by the animal rights group PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) because of mulesing and live sheep exports.

Robert Pietsch, President of WoolProducers and member of the Australian Sheep and Wool Industry Taskforce, said the industry was fast-tracking a number of research and development programs that would enable, firstly, an end to mulesing and secondly, interim measures to ensure animal welfare continues to be an absolute priority.

"Industry research programs, undertaken by Australian Wool Innovation Limited, are currently investigating alternatives to mulesing including the use of a protein which removes wool and tightens skin around the breech," Mr Pietsch said.

"A current accreditation scheme for mulesing contractors is being expanded nationally."

Mr Pietsch called for a united industry approach to meet the PETA threat.

"We need to remember that retailers in Australia and the northern hemisphere want to know that the Australian industry is producing the best wool in the world in a sustainable and socially responsible manner."

Media contact:

Peter Wilkinson
Wilkinson Media
Phone 02 8969 6255 / 0414 383 433



WoolProducers



australian wool
innovation
limited

