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Mr Ian Grant
Warrine Pastoral Company
Via GERALDTON W.A. 6530

February 24th 2003



The Secretariat
Senate Rural & Regional Affairs
And Transport Committee
Room SG.62 Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 3560

Dear Sir

Wheat Marketing Amendment Bill 2002

I am a wheat grower from Geraldton in Western Australia and I am concerned about the lack of transparency and accountability from AWB Ltd. This company is out of control and is not answerable to wheat growers in any meaningful way.

AWB Limited is now a group of companies and AWB International, the pooling arm, is the only area of AWB operations that the Wheat Export Authority appears to look at. The rest of the AWB conglomerate has many business activities that are geared off the single desk for wheat exports. Recent studies conducted by consultants on behalf of the Grain Growers Association in NSW and United Grower Holdings in South Australia have identified many of the areas where AWB Limited is making profits from servicing the wheat pools. The rates charged for the services provided to the pools in this cosy arrangement have been shown to be above market rates and growers clearly are disadvantaged.

The WEA has no mandate to report upon or examine this aspect of AWB Ltd's operations and the Wheat Marketing Act should be amended in some way to force greater accountability and transparency on AWB Limited.

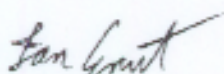
The review of AWB International that is scheduled to be carried out by the WEA in 2004 should be brought forward to this calendar year. It should be carried out by an independent consultant and look at farm gate returns for wheat growers, not just the performance of AWB International and its use of the single desk. AWB Ltd has been operating for over 3 years in its current form and it is time for a searching look at some of its business practices.

It is insulting that wheat growers are being asked to pay a levy to fund the WEA. This government bureaucracy has shown itself to be incompetent and incapable of properly

monitoring the activities of AWB Limited. It is not independent and AWB and the Grains Council of Australia have too much influence over the operations of the WEA.

If government is to retain the WEA, it should fund it from its own resources, not levy wheat exports to pay for it.

Yours sincerely



Ian Grant