



## Department of Primary Industries

Our Ref: SI003621

Ms Jeanette Radcliffe  
Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
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Dear Ms Radcliffe

**05 MAY 2008**

### INQUIRY INTO MEAT MARKETING

Thank you for your letter of 4 April 2008 about the Senate inquiry into meat marketing and inviting the Victorian Department of Primary Industries to provide a submission.

I understand that this inquiry is founded on reports of substitution of hogget for lamb by some Australian meat processors and that it will consider concerns relating to inappropriate application of the lamb brand and the management or marketing of lamb.

PrimeSafe is the Victorian Statutory Authority that continues to actively implement agreed national standards for meat processing and meat branding. I am advised that PrimeSafe is not aware of any evidence of a breach to labelling conditions. As rivalry between sheep processors in the market can lead to spurious claims of substitution, I strongly urge this inquiry to make every possible effort to identify any evidence of the substitution of hogget for lamb. Upon receipt of any evidence of this occurring in Victoria, PrimeSafe will initiate an immediate investigation. PrimeSafe has a proven record in ensuring government's objectives are achieved and I am confident that it has appropriate powers to deal with the matter.

The issue of labelling is important in ensuring consumer and industry confidence, and I look forward to receiving recommendations following this inquiry. I am especially interested to consider recommendations that will ensure food safety objectives are achieved and those that provide industry with a consistent approach to the management of product quality.

Yours sincerely,

**BRUCE KEFFORD**  
Deputy Secretary

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