



PGA pushes support for live exports in Canberra

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The President of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association (PGA) Tony Seabrook, has met this week with Federal MPs and Senators in Canberra, including Agriculture Minister David Littleproud, to discuss the economic and social importance of the live sheep and cattle trade on Western Australian producers and regional and remote communities.

“This was a tremendous opportunity for many MPs and Senators to hear directly from the coal face on how recent decisions by the live exports regulator are affecting the livelihoods of thousands of producers, and the viability of regional industries and communities in Western Australia,” PGA President Tony Seabrook said.

"It was refreshing to see the support from the Government and from backbenchers from across the country for the continuation of the live export industry.

“Western Australia is the largest exporter of sheep in Australia with over one third of sheep sent to markets in the Middle East - making the trade a vital and important part of the WA regional economy.

“It has been close to 5 months since the last shipment of sheep to the Gulf, and so far approximately 19,000 sheep have been exported from Western Australia to other markets, costing WA sheep producers almost \$60 million in farm gate revenue. During the same period last year, over 532,000 sheep had been exported from Western Australia, with the estimated farm gate return worth more than \$62 million.

"This figure doesn't include the flow on to other regional industries who are reliant on the live export trade, including transporters, stock agents, and feed suppliers, nor does it include many small businesses in regional communities dependant on a vibrant live export trade to sustain their livelihoods.

“In Western Australia, the live export industry is the largest buyer of our livestock, supports regional businesses, and provides much needed regional jobs, which in turn strengthens our regional communities.

“Any move to phase out, or ban the trade will only serve to destroy regional jobs, regional communities, regional businesses, and hard working Western Australian regional families.” Mr Seabrook said.

“This is why it is so disappointing to listen to shadow Agriculture Minister Joel Fitzgibbon’s comments at today’s National Farmers Federation Conference that the Labor Party believes the live sheep export industry has no future, and should just ‘move on’.

“While Labor is happy to throw WA sheep producers “under the bus” in order to appease a small but vocal number of animal activists who want to see an end to the trade, the reality is, once they ban live sheep exports, cattle will be next.”

(ends) Issued by PGAWA. For further comment please contact: PGA Office Ph 08 9212 6900