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PGA Welcomes Deputy Prime Minister's Support for Live Export

The President of WA's Pastoralists & Graziers Association Mr Tony Seabrook has welcomed Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack's support for the continuation of the live sheep export industry and dismissal of moves by the Labor Party to introduce legislation to phase out the trade over five years, saying the Federal Government's support is a clear recognition of the live sheep trade's important role in the Western Australian regional economy.

"It is welcomed relief for livestock producers in WA to hear the Deputy Prime Minister reaffirm that contrary to the numerous claims made in the media by animal activists, when it comes to live sheep exports the Federal Government has their back," PGA President Tony Seabrook said.

"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.

"Following the suspension two months ago of WA exporter Emanuel Exports' export licence, many of our established trading partners, including Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait have begun sourcing sheep from other markets, impacting on the livelihoods of thousands of WA livestock producers who rely on this trade.

"In addition, many of the countries filling what is a live trade vacuum created by Australian animal welfare groups, have some of the lowest animal welfare standards in the world. In fact, Australia is the only country that specifically regulates animal welfare outcomes for live exports, and invests in improving animal welfare outcomes both at home and abroad.

"It is clear that the Deputy Prime Minister and the Federal Government understand that any moves to ban or phase out live sheep exports only serves to destroy the viability of our rural industries, damage Australia's international trading relationships, and decrease the high level of animal welfare standards that our live export industry has introduced around the world.

"It is refreshing to finally see certainty and strong leadership from our political leaders and I invite Mr McCormack to visit Western Australia to meet with producers and exporters" Mr Seabrook said.

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