

1 February, 2022

Mr Grant Hehir
Auditor-General for Australia
GPO Box 707
CANBERRA ACT 2600

WOOLPRODUCERS
AUSTRALIA

Via email:

Dear Mr Hehir

RE: Proposed Audit into Australian Wool Innovation (AWI)

I am writing on behalf of WoolProducers Australia (WoolProducers), who are the peak industry body representing Australian woolgrowers across a vast range of issues from animal health and welfare, biosecurity, natural resource management, emergency animal disease outbreak preparedness, and industry development, including research and trade.

WoolProducers welcomes your decision in November 2021 to conduct an audit into AWI following correspondence from the Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislative Committee (RRAT) requesting this audit.

WoolProducers have long held concerns regarding the accountability and transparency of AWI for a number of years and whilst there was a large independent review of AWI conducted in 2018, which made 82 recommendations regarding AWI's governance and general performance, including non-compliance with the Statutory Funding Agreement in place with the Commonwealth, very little has changed with this organisation, despite claims made by AWI that they have addressed these recommendations.

WoolProducers note RRAT's letter, and the two issues identified for examination, being expenditure on WoolQ and AWI seeking an increase in the compulsory levy, however, believe that there are a number of other areas/issues of AWI that should be investigated during this audit.

WoolProducers would like to see a broad scope for the Terms of Reference of this audit to include governance and financial management of AWI.

If you require further information or clarification on this issue, please do not hesitate to contact WoolProducers, CEO Ms Jo Hall at

Yours sincerely,

Edward Storey
President
WoolProducers Australia

Cc: Senator Susan McDonald, Chair, Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislative Committee