



8 April 2016

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Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural
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via email: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016

Australian Pork Limited (APL) is the national representative body for Australian pork producers. APL is a producer-owned not-for-profit company combining marketing, export development, research and innovation and policy development to assist in securing a profitable and sustainable future for the Australian pork industry.

As part of the rural Research and Development Corporations (RDC) community, APL provides in principle support for the Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016 (the Bill) and the proposed legislative changes the Bill will make to the *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Act 1991*.

APL has a significant existing connection with levy payers through systems such as the pork industry's traceability program PigPass, and various consultation mechanisms for both small and commercial producers. Should it be passed, the Bill will make it possible for APL to ensure wider coverage of pork producers who may not be accessing or be covered by existing pork industry initiatives and therefore, not currently within APL's database system.

In addition, the Bill will facilitate a streamlined Membership renewal process every three years. The current system of renewal is one which is suboptimal for pork producers. Levy payer registers will provide improved governance around constitutional processes, enable allocation of voting rights for industry polls more efficiently and accurately, and make obsolete, the need for cumbersome paper-based statutory declarations.

APL understands that the Bill allows for information and industry specific data to be distributed to the relevant RDC and therefore suggests that, for the benefits of the Bill to be fully realised, data collection enable identification down to an individual property level (Property Identification Code) with an ability to separate this data to allow cross checking of pig movement reporting and levies paid by individual producers. The provision of levy payer data at export abattoir level only will be meaningless to improving the pork industry's systems and connection with the pork producers who ultimately are the levy payers.

Biosecurity and food traceability is of significant importance to the Australian pork industry underpinned by its national traceability system (PigPass) which provides real time information on the movements of pigs in Australia. Current legislative impediments prevent identification of generally small but unregistered pig producers. This is a substantial barrier to identifying the cause of disease outbreaks or food safety issues should they occur and potentially undermines the significant traceability and biosecurity protocols both the pork industry and Australian governments have in place. This Bill, and state government mandatory reporting of

pig movements to the PigPass database, will enable identification of all pork producers, improving these already robust systems.

APL is cognisant of the responsibility access to this sensitive information requires and fully supports the rigorous safeguards proposed in the Bill.

Should you have any questions about this submission, please do not hesitate to contact John McGoverne on 02 6270 8846 or via email John.McGoverne@australianpork.com.au.

Yours sincerely

Deb Kerr
General Manager Policy