



Mr Tom Watling
Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

8 April, 2016

Dear Mr Watling

WoolProducers Australia (WPA) wishes to express its support for the *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016*. While the wool industry may be outside the Terms of Reference of this inquiry in respect to specific legislation, we would like to offer the following in the anticipation that wool growers are afforded equal say into where and how their compulsory levies are spent relevant to other agricultural industries.

WPA understand the amendments to the *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Act 1991* will allow levy-payer information, collected by the Australian Government, to be:

- a) passed on to Research and Development Corporations (RDC); and
- b) in certain circumstances this information to be passed on to industry representative organisations to be used only for specific purposes.

As the wool industry already has the ability for our RDC to access a levy payer database through an intermediary (Link Market Services), WPA is more interested with the second outcome of the amendment and would like to see all grower representative organisations have access to this information to greater enhance consultative/feedback mechanisms and ensuring transparency of compulsory levy expenditure.

Empowering grower representative organisations will lead to greater transparency and consultation between the people who pay compulsory levies and those who spend it on their behalf.

WPA is the peak grower representative body of the Australian wool industry representing the single largest body of growers in Australia through the State Farm Organisation (SFO) network and our Independent Directors, which enables representation of all Australian wool growers.

WPA takes this responsibility very seriously and we have always strived to be the most effective and inclusive body possible, particularly in the area of animal health, welfare and biosecurity where we have oversight of a compulsory levy.

In these areas we have proffered our voting entitlements to other non-member sectors of the wool industry, including the Australian Wool Growers' Association (AWGA), Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders

(AASMB) and the Australian Superfine Wool Growers Association (ASWGA), to ensure that we are truly representative of all Australian wool growers. Enabling grower representative bodies access to the database under prescribed terms would enable an even more effective engagement of the wool growers.

Once passed, these amendments should enable peak bodies to identify the industry issues and priorities of the levy payers we represent through better engagement with them and therefore should achieve more effective and efficient representation of wool growers.

Please do not hesitate to contact our CEO, Ms Jo Hall on jhall@woolproducers.com.au, should members of the committee wish to discuss any of the issues raised in this submission.

Yours sincerely

PRESIDENT
WoolProducers Australia