



Dr Lindsay Campbell

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Tuesday, 5 April 2016

Committee Secretary,
Senate Rural Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100,
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

Re: Inquiry into Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection
Amendment Bill 2016

I preface this submission noting that the views expressed are mine, not necessarily those of this Faculty or University. I am quite willing to appear before the committee.

Australia is very fortunate to have an RDC system that is the envy of the world. It is very important for Australia's future to maintain and enhance that system.

With respect to the proposed changes to the legislation, I am in broad agreement. It may be wise to insert clauses into the legislation that allow an RDC to share levy and levy payer information with another RDC. For example, the majority of levy payers to the Cotton RDC are also contributors to the Grains RDC. Similarly, most farms in 'southern' Australia are mixed enterprise farms i.e. they have both crops and livestock. Therefore the sharing of information between the grains and various livestock RDC's may well be beneficial. Furthermore, it would be of great benefit for the Australian Bureau of Statistics to be able to publish data on farms having more than a single enterprise so that policy makers can develop policies that align with multiple enterprises.

This suggestion [for information sharing between RDC's] could be implemented via the database(s) developed by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

Although outside the immediate terms of reference of the committee, I draw attention to the stagnation in Australia's agricultural productivity during this century whereas this has not been the case in North America and Europe. Although many reasons can be advanced as to this stagnation, I believe three major contributors are (i) an over-emphasis on short term research thus providing few advancements for the

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long term (ii) innovation using new technology is frequently lacking due to a culture of fear of failure and (iii) the relatively static funds available through RDC's.

Finally, I draw the committee's attention to the excellent returns from investment from agricultural research noting that the benefits are usually captured over decades.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lindsay C. Campbell.