



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MEDIA RELEASE

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Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Impact of Pest Animals on Agriculture Dealing with Wild Dogs Public Hearing in Albury, 18 June 2004

On Friday 18 June 2004, the House of Representatives Agriculture Committee will open hearings on its inquiry into the impact of pest animals on agriculture.

The Committee will travel to Albury to take evidence from landholders and farmers groups from north-east Victoria on the devastating impact of wild dog predation on sheep and cattle in that region. The Committee will hear from nineteen individuals and groups representing a substantial cross section of farmers in the Gippsland, Mansfield and Wodonga areas. Witnesses include:

- The Wodonga District Council of the Victorian Farmers Federation
- The Wangaratta, Barnawartha and Corryong branches of the VFF
- The Ovens Landcare Network
- The Carboor/Bobinawarrah Landcare Group
- Several individual landholders from the north-east
- Six individual landholders from the Omeo area
- Three landholders from Mansfield and Molesworth.

In addition to the submissions received from north-east Victoria, the Committee has received numerous submissions from across Australia highlighting the impact of dogs and foxes. These submissions emphasise the need for better management of the problem, putting greater resources into dog control programs, and a greater commitment on the part of governments to control pest animals, particularly dogs, in national parks and other public lands.

The Committee Chair, Mrs Kay Elson MP, said: "This is a national problem that needs to be urgently addressed. Our rural communities are suffering both from the impact of dogs and the impact of government inaction. We need to do more now to solve the wild dog problem".

Mrs Elson noted that the inquiry had already sparked widespread interest, with over seventy submissions received to date and more expected. She said of the hearings in Albury: "This is just the first step in an inquiry which will take us to other regions of Australia devastated by pest animals. It will highlight the problem and provide us with some of the answers we need."

PUBLIC HEARING—Pest Animal Inquiry—Albury, Friday 18 June 2004

WHO: Landholders and Farmers Groups from north-east Victoria
WHERE: Grand Lakeview Room, Lake Hume Resort, Riverina Highway, Albury.
WHEN: Friday 18 June 2004, 10 am to 4 pm.

Public and media most welcome

For **media comment**, please contact:

Mrs Kay Elson, House Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 4274

For **background information**, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500 or visit the Inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind/index.htm>