



3 September 2020

ACWEP-20-094

Follow-Up to Attendance at Inquiry re
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Restrictions on Stock Animal Procedures) Bill
2019

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

1. If the Bill were to pass in its existing form, mulesing would be banned by 2022. What are the available operations strategies for woolgrowers to achieve the new requirements?

1.1 The operational strategies would need to be aimed at minimising the increased risk of fly-strike in all sheep born from 2022 on.

1.2 This could involve:

- (a) Adjustment of the time of shearing / crutching (if not already done) to avoid the presence of “long wool” on sheep at the time(s) of greatest risk.*
- (b) Strategic (and almost certainly, greater) use of chemicals.*
- (c) Initiation (if not already started) of breeding less susceptible sheep (this takes time). Breeding is the long term minimum cost option.*
- (d) Increased need for surveillance of sheep to check for possible fly-strike.*
- (e) Abandoning wool production if favour of an alternate enterprise. Where possible, some will convert to sheep meat production using their mature ewe flock as a female breeding base.*

Please Note 1: it would be necessary to retain crossbred ewe lambs to supplement the ewe breeding flock;

Please Note 2: some country (e.g. pastoral country) may be less suited, or not suited, to alternate enterprises.

All of the above, with exception of “breeding” invariably lead to increased costs, an increased risk of losses of production and of sheep themselves, despite the efforts of wool growers.

The risk of increased flystrike in hot humid conditions following wet weather is well known.

Increased use of chemicals carries its own risks.

2. Could the outcome of the bill result in large numbers of merino sheep being offloaded to the sale yards? What be the effect of this on sheep and wool markets in NSW? Would a possible outcome be large scale slaughter of wool producing sheep?

2.1 It could have this outcome. It seems certain that some wool growers will quit wool growing. Whether they sell to their neighbours, or to growers in other districts is difficult to assess too far in advance.

2.2 Similarly, some sheep will be slaughtered.

The timing of 2.1 and 2.2 will be influenced by commercial opportunities.

3. If the bill were to pass in its current form would it trigger or require an Industry Adjustment Package from government? What would be the impact on employment in regional NSW.
- 3.1 *I am not well placed to comment on the requirement for an Industry Adjustment Package, without a better knowledge of the basic requirements.*
- 3.2 *One of the consequences of any reduction in sheep numbers is a loss of employment opportunities. Wool sheep are generally regarded as better providers of employment opportunities than other forms of rural enterprise, e.g. the need for shearers. Some of these opportunities are for skilled work, e.g., once again shearing. The consequent loss of employment opportunities will lead to a loss of population in regional areas, that may have knock-on effects, particularly in smaller regional areas. The likely impact can be seen in other areas of Australia where wild dog predation has led to an exodus of wool production. I have lived in one of those areas.*
- 3.3 *One of the other less foreseen risks is an increase in wild dog predation, which can occur if there are less wool growers. Sheep producers invariably have a greater interest in controlling wild dog predation.*

There is little doubt that Australia is well commenced on a path to a Mules-Free environment.

The wool industry itself found in 2010 that prematurely banning mulesing does more harm than good. There is little doubt that banning Mulesing in New south Wales from January 2022 is also premature. If I remember correctly, Mr Pearson referred to the use of alternate longer periods during discussion.

There is no doubt in our Members' view that an exodus of people from wool growing is certain if this Legislation is passed.

With Regards to the Transcript

I have reads the Rules for a change.

Towards the bottom of Page 15, I am reported as saying in response to a question to the Hon Lou Amato:

“Why wouldn't they do anything else?”

I can say with complete confidence that I used the word “would”, rather than “wouldn't”, as “wouldn't” is logically opposite to the arguments that we were presenting.

Confidentiality for the Above

I am not requesting confidentiality.

Kind regards,

Peter Morgan
Executive Director