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AWI Chief fails wool growers and alienates consumers ...says AWGA

The revelation on the ABC Radio National Background Briefing aired yesterday by the Chief of Australian Wool Innovation that the National Training and Accreditation Program for Mulesing, introduced at a cost of \$360,000 will only “help make some people feel more comfortable” brings into serious question the course of action taken by AWI against the boycott on Australian Wool.

The Australian Wool Growers Association believes that the ABC program has highlighted the concerns of many woolgrowers with the hard lined, 19th century approach taken by AWI.

”In particular the suggestion of a significant investment in a National Training and Accreditation program has been undertaken to “help some people feel more comfortable” without any regulation or code of adoption is an incredible admission of a half hearted approach” says the AWGA Chairman, Mr Chick Olsson.

“This is a head in the sand approach to a major crossroads for the future of the industry. Like it or not we have to acknowledge that animal activists are here to stay, and we must find some common ground to the benefit of all” says Chick Olsson.

”To hear the frank admission by the Chairperson of PETA, Ms Ingrid Newkirk, that the legal action is in fact assisting her organisation in keeping the story alive and generating publicity is further evidence that AWI and the Chairman in particular are not serving the interests of woolgrowers well” states Mr Olsson.

The suggestion that this legal action is probably going to cost more than the total amount of woolgrowers funds invested on alternatives to mulesing will do nothing to address consumer perceptions. Nor will it provide a long term solution to this issue.

To be told on the program that AWI footage of outdated radical mulesing at AWI field stations is being used by PETA in their advertising campaign is simply beyond belief.

”To hear that woolgrowers are going to foot the financial bill for all livestock industries is further grounds for concern and suggests that sections of the management of AWI is out of touch with both woolgrowers and consumers” concludes a concerned Mr Olsson.

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