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Call to end AWI legal case

By MARIUS CUMING
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The wool industry is facing pressure from within to cease its legal action against animal rights activists.

One of Australia's largest woolgrowers has begun a national campaign to end the legal action.

High profile Western Australian woolgrower and former chairman of the Australian Wool Innovation Wool Advisory Group, David Webster, is formally proposing to join the legal case, but as a third party opposing the action.

Mr Webster has received legal advice from a Queen's Counsel suggesting there are a number of precedents where a third party more adversely affected than the two contesting parties has stopped a legal case.

Another option being explored is to partition the court to also end the action. Mr Webster denies the development will only give strength to animal activists and is now encouraging other woolgrowers to either formally join him as a third party or register their disapproval of AWI's case in a fax.

"If we can get this issue out of court we can negotiate an end to it and get on with injecting some confidence in the industry and to start marketing our wonderful product," he said. AWI had no official comment in reaction to the development except to say the next directions hearing for the case took place the Federal Court this week.

The sheep and wool industry taskforce is working at securing important retail support for wool, with the court case just one part of the campaign against activist groups.

SOURCE: Stock & Land, Victoria, June 23 issue.

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