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Wool Industry relief as AWI legal case finishes. New direction policy needed.

With news that a settlement has been reached between AWI and extremist animal rights group PETA, AWGA has extended congratulations to those parts of the AWI board that finally agreed to end this protracted and expensive legal farce.

“ It was with relief that I heard that this unnecessary court case has finally ended” states AWGA Chairman, Martin Oppenheimer. “ For the last 3 years, the AWI leadership has been clearly distracted by this fight with animal rights groups , at a cost of declining wool demand and an industry that has been struggling for survival,” Oppenheimer states.

“ We must remember that when this current AWI board took control in 2002, we were selling over \$3.6 billion dollars worth of wool annually . In 2005/2006, our industry sold less than \$2.6 billion in wool export sales annually, a reduction of over a billion dollars of export wool sales annually. A devastating record to say the least” he states.

“Now is the time to re group and realise that mistakes have been made. Our industry has to be positive and learn to deal with these issues in a more comprehensive and sensible manner. The legalistic manner that the AWI leadership seems to favour as a “shoot first, ask questions later” approach will not work, and has not worked. We must embrace intelligent, energetic and modern thought processes on real reform ” says Oppenheimer.

AWGA would welcome an urgent industry forum on new direction policy, to assure the wool industry that these costly and distracting legal exercises will not be repeated again.

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