



25 August 2011

Walcha grower bats for AWI board

Author: TERRY SIM

WALCHA woolgrower, Martin Oppenheimer, will stand for election to the Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) board in November, citing a need to give woolgrowers a choice.

Mr Oppenheimer expressed concern that some long-standing AWI board members might be seeking re-election.

"I think we need renewal at AWI," he said.

"Anybody that has been anti-marketing or anti-mulesing, we certainly don't want.

"We worked long and hard to turn the ship around.

"AWI and the industry are not perfect, but they are certainly in a lot better shape, and part of the reason for that is we are starting to rebuild confidence by putting an effort into a balance of research and marketing."

Mr Oppenheimer said there was now a clear distinction about what AWI can and can't do.

"Rebuilding the profile of wool is very important and I want to give woolgrowers the opportunity to keep the good things in the direction we are going at the moment."

Under its constitution, one third of AWI's current six directors must submit for re-election this year, and because the board decided to increase the board to seven after Chick Olsson recently resigned, woolgrowers will now have to appoint three directors at the body's annual general meeting on November 18.

AWI chairman, Wal Merriman, said the two current directors to go up for re-election would be announced within the next two weeks, as well as a candidate assessed by AWI's nomination committee for the third position.

All potential AWI board members must have their skills assessed by a five-member nomination committee made up of Mr Merriman, AWI director, Roger Fletcher, National Farmers Federation president, Jock Laurie, Australian Securities Exchange executive, Will Wilson, and Bell Financial Group chairman, Colin Bell.

"But this doesn't stop anybody from getting 100 nominations (from AWI shareholders) to stand," Mr Merriman said.

The AWI chairman encouraged aspiring directors to stand, but said the board had also tried to find candidates with a certain skill set for assessment by the nomination committee after a consultant recommended skills areas that needed to be addressed.

"Those people have been identified and have been prepared to submit to assessment.

"We will have a nominated candidate (for the third position) with the skill set that the board thinks we need to be recommended to shareholders," he said.



AWGA - News Update

AWI director candidate nominations will be open from September 19 to October 7.

Related Links

<http://australianwoolgrowers.com.au/>

Source: <http://theland.farmonline.com.au/news/nationalrural/livestock/sheep/walcha-grower-bats-for-awi-board/2262013.aspx>