

PRESS RELEASE 27 August 2018

Response to Farm Online Article – Push to merge red meat councils gains strength

Dr. Paul Wright, Chair of Cattle Producers Australia fiercely opposes a merger of the red meat peak councils that RMAC's Chair, Mr Don MacKay is fervently pushing, according to two recent Farm Online articles.

Dr Wright said, "an obvious example of competing interests is the live export, where grass-fed cattle producers strongly support live export and processors do not."

Dr Wright was disappointed with Mr MacKay's claims in the [Farmonline article 25 August 2018](#) that "the Senate inquiry into grass-fed levies involved a "lot of work, yet came up with nothing" and that there was a need to prevent this in the future."

"Contrary to his comments, these recommendations have not been taken up on account of the unshakable industry attitudes and RMAC's failure to act and lead reform, he said.

The 2014 [Inquiry into grass fed cattle levy funded structures and systems](#) (5.26) found that the existing RMAC structure inhibited its capacity to effectively represent the whole of industry and that it was the events surrounding the 2011 suspension of the live cattle export trade to Indonesia, which demonstrated the extent to which the current bodies and structures do not work.

Furthermore the [CCA submission](#) to that Senate Inquiry attached an Innovact report that CCA commissioned, claiming as a consequence of falling SFO membership and the convoluted SFO structure, CCA no longer truly or appropriately represented Australia's grass-fed cattle producers.

Dr Wright said, "clearly by its own admission the CCA's structure precludes it from appropriately representing grass-fed Levy payers in the 21st century and this inherent issue can be observed in the Farm Online article where Mr Howard Smith, President of CCA shows support for RMACs push to amalgamate the industry representative sectors. Maybe Mr Smith could explain to cattle producers how a single multi sector body could possibly work on live export issues or with respect to price transparency."

It is evident from the numerous inquiries and the ACCC Cattle and Beef Market study that major reform is needed and Mr MacKay's push to merge all 6 red meat councils will further entrench an already failed system.

"Intuitively, RMAC's push to merge all red meat industry organisations, who hold their own structures and constitutions, would not be progressive in achieving the recommended reforms and we have a fundamental duty to ensure cattle producers are operating in a truly competitive market and are able to have their voice heard," Dr Wright said.

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About Cattle Producers Australia

Cattle Producers Australia Ltd (CPA) is the new voice on issues that affect grass-fed cattle production businesses. We offer a new era of leadership in advocacy and governance for the grass-fed cattle industry. As a democratically elected organisation, all grass-fed cattle producer members have voting rights and equal opportunity to stand for election. Policy Advisory Councilors will be elected from 15 regions across Australia. Control of CPA will be directly in the hands of grass-fed levy paying cattle producers.

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