

Minister for Primary Industries and Water

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Jim Lyall
Brocburn Dorper & White Dorper Stud
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11 MAR 2008

Dear Jim

Thank you for attending the meeting on Tuesday 24 February and allowing me the opportunity to explain my intent to discontinue prescription of the Dorper, Damara, Awassi and Karakul sheep breeds under the *Animal Farming (Registration) Act 1994*. In coming to this decision representatives from DPIW and I have consulted widely with diverse sheep and wool industry stakeholders. As a consequence, two reports have been produced that are now publicly available on the DPIW web site (www.dpiw.tas.gov.au) together with stakeholder submissions.

I have not taken this decision lightly but have done so considering the evidence and arguments presented together with the Government's obligation to uphold competition principles and implement National Competition Policy.

I understand that wool growers see these sheep breeds as a potential contamination threat but keepers of these breeds see them for their commercial value and potential. On a number of occasions I have asked TFGA to provide me with alternative solutions to legislation but this has not been forthcoming. As we discussed at the meeting, legislation alone cannot remove this threat and certainly cannot guarantee purchasers of Tasmanian wool that it is free from such contamination.

In my view, the most reasonable way forward is for the two groups of sheep producers to work cooperatively to develop an understanding and perhaps a system whereby the two industries can coexist without legislation. In an effort to achieve this outcome I invite breeders of these prescribed sheep breeds to participate in a formal dialogue process with representatives of the TFGA and DPIW. I propose this meeting be attended by three representatives each from TFGA, exotic sheep breeders and DPIW with the chair being Mr Wes Ford (General Manager, Primary Industries, DPIW). The meeting has been arranged for Friday 20 March so as the process can be finalised by 30 April 2009. Please provide Robin Thompson at DPIW with the names and contact details of your representatives so as the meeting details can be forwarded to them.

I look forward to this process bringing this issue to finality as it has been almost eighteen months since it commenced which is unacceptable to all stakeholders.

Yours sincerely


David Llewellyn MP
MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND WATER