

## MEDIA STATEMENT

17 May, 2016

### **WoolProducers Australia calls for more certainty around the Backpacker Tax**

WoolProducers Australia has today welcomed the announcement by Assistant Treasurer Kelly O'Dwyer on delaying the backpacker tax for six months, but is seeking a greater commitment to lessen the tax hike or dump the proposal permanently.

WPA President Richard Halliday said 'the delay in implementing the severe flat rate of 32.5% was a step in the right direction, but there needs to be more long term certainty for Australian farmers who utilise this sector, not to mention more certainty for overseas working holiday makers who are considering working in the Australian agricultural industries.'

Like many agricultural industries, backpacker labour is playing an increasingly important role in Australia's wool industry, in both on-farm and wool harvesting sectors, with many wool growers and shearing contractors relying on backpackers to fill the employment shortfall in this area.

'The reality is that the wool industry, particularly in pastoral areas need access to backpacker labour and the proposed changes to this tax regime will have a detrimental impact on sourcing these people'. Mr Halliday said.

'While the whole-of-government review of the agricultural sectors workforce requirements' is also welcomed we would like immediate reassurances that backpackers will remain a viable and accessible workforce resource'. Mr Halliday continued.

WoolProducers Australia commends the National Farmers' Federation in leading the public campaign against this tax hike.

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