



## *Change of name and structure for the Sheep Industry Leadership Council in Western Australia.*

**By Kim Haywood, WAFarmers**

### **Issue:**

Forecast on-going decline in the WA sheep population has driven a review of the need and level of influence of a whole-of-supply-chain sheep industry body. The Sheep Industry Leadership Council (SILC) was formed by the WA state government in 2011 with a charter of providing strategy and leadership on matters of industry currency, however a review has highlighted the efficacy of this body has been flawed due to a lack of ownership and accountability to meat processors, wool and livestock exporters and lobby and grower groups. This has occurred at a time of significant restructure of DAFWA R&D services, although currently DAFWA is part-way through the delivery of the \$10m Royalties for Regions Sheep Industry Business Innovation Project, which involves a substantial contribution to WA sheep industry R&D, albeit capped by the conclusion of that project at June 18.

### **Industry Responses:**

# 1. On November 30, 2015, SILC convened a meeting of Research and Tertiary institutions together with WA's chief scientist Professor Peter Klinken and representatives from AWI and MLA. At that meeting the Universities agreed in-principle to collaborate and respond to the opportunity created by the change in R&D landscape. However under professor Klinken's advice, there was little point in progressing this initiative without the full support of the WA sheep supply chain. AWI and MLA were interested observers in the process.

# 2. On March 30, 2016, SILC brought together all relevant chairs and CEOs of WA sheep industry entities and projects and commenced a process of re-vamping SILC so that it might become more representative of the entire WA sheep supply chain. Members at that meeting agreed to reconvene and consider a set of motions for change.

# 3. On May 3, a number of key proposals to deliver the changes were put forward. Attendees at this meeting who supported the process included:

- Chairs and Executive Officers from WAFarmers, PGA, Grower Group Alliance and WALRC;
- All WA Universities with a sheep interest plus CSIRO and Muresk;
- DAFWA; AAAC(WA); Sheep's Back Project;
- CEOs/Chairs of WA leading sheep meat processors, wool exporters and live exporters.

### **Key Changes**

The resulting changes that will be formally mandated at the upcoming SILC AGM are:

1. SILC to undergo a name change to become The Sheep Alliance of WA (Inc);
2. Membership is open to entities that are key contributors to the WA sheep supply chain and/or actively working towards improving the WA sheep industry profitability and where membership is the entity, not the individual. Indications are that membership will at least involve the participating entities from the March 30 and May 3 meetings;

3. All current director positions to be spilled and Alliance members to be responsible for nominating candidates for the board; an independent selection panel that includes WAF and PGA representation will be responsible for appointing the directors and where the directors appoint their chair;
4. The Sheep Alliance to develop an MOU with WALRC, where WALRC's key function is to provide the alliance with its six monthly reports on RD&E priorities. There is the additional potential for WALRC to provide an M&E role on RD&E activities endorsed by The Alliance;

### **Roles/Responsibility/Governance**

The Alliance will charge the directors with 3 key responsibilities:

1. Reviews and proposes governance over the current sheep industry plan and vision in a manner that commits to alignment with national sheep meat and wool industry strategic plans;
2. Take on the responsibility of providing a business case for the development of a central sheep industry entity, similar to that proposed by the WA grains industry but with the charter of (yet not limited to) aligning sheep RD&E activities. We will propose that a dedicated sub-committee is developed to progress this matter; and
3. Becomes closely involved with the monitoring, evaluation and delivery of activities funded by the \$10m Royalties for Regions Sheep Industry Business Innovation Project.

### **Fundamentals**

- Funding for the Alliance's core governance operations (including that of the contract for the delivery of the Executive officer function) is provided by DAFWA through its SIBI Royalties for Regions project, to June 30, 2018;
- The effectiveness of the Alliance will be determined by the calibre and regularity of communications both within the membership (and proposed associated membership); and externally to the sheep industry stakeholder group, including AWI and MLA. To that end, the Alliance will seek a key person contact from each MLA and AWI to ensure that our two-way communication is optimised.