



## Media Release



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### **'Deficient' State Budget misses mark for livestock producers**

Livestock SA president Geoff Power says the State Budget delivered last week has failed to address many urgent and outstanding issues for livestock producers.

In particular, the budget was deficient in its funding for PIRSA, drought and a number of regional issues while imposing higher levies for no benefit to producers.

"There were no announcements or recognition for agriculture as part of the State Budget at all," Mr Power said. "It is as though the government is not interested in agriculture even though it is a powerhouse of the state's economy and a bright light when manufacturing and mining industries are facing a downturn.

"Livestock SA has put much time and effort in assisting with the creation of the new PIRSA program *One Biosecurity*, working with Biosecurity SA and other stakeholders, and it would seem there is nothing in the budget to assist in the program's progression. We feel let down because biosecurity should be a shared responsibility between government, the community and industry."

Mr Power says producers are facing further increases in the Emergency Services Levy in 2016-17, on the back of steep increases in the Natural Resource Management Levy, and are not seeing any benefits for those rises.

"There is also nothing in the budget for drought relief and recovery – there is no strategy, no trigger points for funding support and no money to help," he said.

"Drought funding support needs to be proactive. We need to have a system in place that identifies a trigger point to enact a strategy which acknowledges that rainfall has to be timely and tied to the growing season. Producers can receive large quantities of rainfall at the wrong time of year, which renders them unable to access assistance under the current policy."

Mr Power says in addition, there were a number of topical regional issues which were not addressed in the budget.

"Yorkey's Crossing at Port Augusta needs urgent further funding in addition to the \$350,000 announced some time before the budget. As it stands, if there is an accident or incident on the bridge that provides a route to Western Australia and Northern Territory and it is raining, Yorkey's Crossing becomes impassable, which means an important link between the three states is broken."

**ENDS**

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