

Pastoralists' Association

of West Darling Inc.

Registered under NSW Government Fair Trading

14/10/2013

Review of Funding Framework for Local Land Services NSW.

PO Box Q290,
QVB Post Office,
NSW, 1230.

Dear Sir or Madam,

This is a submission from the Pastoralists' Association of West Darling which represents graziers in the Western Division of New South Wales. Our membership boundaries closely align with the new Western Local Lands Services boundaries.

Comments and suggestions are in relation to that area which will now be the Western LLS. This area is primarily occupied by graziers [with Western Lands Grazing Leases grazing sheep, cattle and goats], National Parks and some cropping and horticulture along the rivers and eastern edge of the area. The productivity of the area varies enormously mainly due to the rainfall and security of rainfall. The profitability is much greater in the east where stocking rates are higher, freight and general services cost much less. The need for services in this area is probably more linked to the higher rainfall area where stocking rates are higher, the properties are smaller, the Bio-security risks are higher and the density of pests are higher. The Graziers of the west are receptive to change and will be prepared to pay for services if they were considered value for money.

The setting of the Dog Board Rate is a good example of paying for service this where landholders adjacent to the greatest risk pay most and those further out payless. The Dog Board rate is set on land area [cents per HA] and most rates are paid promptly.

The Western LLS is a step away from local service delivery and is appearing to be a big expensive monster, but hopefully with careful planning, good delivery of services and fair pricing of those services it will prove to be a step in the right direction.

Services, such as those provided by the DPI, have gradually been eroded away. Leaving just the core LHPA services.

To justify any rates, at least the core services of the LHPA must continue. These include services of livestock identification, pest animal control and animal health. Bio security is of great importance to landholders as well but with recent examples of DPI's lack of interest in OJD and the release of Deer outside of the Deer ACT people are questioning the Government's commitment to Bio-security. Emergency services are another area the Western LLS could perform but a lot of that is not just for landholders. The Pest Insect Levy in the

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Western LLS is basically a cross subsidization from the Western Division to the Central Division where the grasshoppers do the damage so NSW should do the right thing and take the funding from general revenue as do other states, or attach costing to the LLSs in the Central Division. Activities currently performed by the CMA should continue with the current funding arrangements and not in any way subsidised by rates or levies. The grant moneys administered by the CMAs have been a great help to the individuals and the community in general, but the other work including catchment plans etc, are more for the good of the State rather than landholders. The document refers frequently to auditing and governance and the costs of these functions will be large. It was the Government that chose this large centralised model not the landholders, so the Government should pay these costs.

To summarize: the PAWD would support a rate based on Notional Carrying Capacity for the General Rate as well as the Animal Health Rate to be charged to all Landholders in the Western LLS with 2HA or more, with a minimum charge of \$200.

If IPART were to recommend an area based rate system the Western LLS would have to be divided up into areas of similar risk and we believe this would be more contentious than rates based on Notional Carrying Capacity.

We thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this review

Yours Faithfully,

Christopher Wilhelm.
President.