

Submission on the effectiveness of legislation and other measures to prevent and deter activities by unauthorised persons on agricultural and associated industries.

Farming livestock is a large and important part of the Australian and Victorian economy. This has been recognised by the Commonwealth and State Governments. That is one reason why we have such an emphasis on farm biosecurity. We do not want an outbreak of any disease, such as foot and mouth, which will cause massive economic loss and hardship to many people and damage Australia's reputation as a country that has disease free farm animals. Any unauthorised entry of a farm is a threat to that farm's biosecurity and the health of the animals being cared for there. Unauthorised entry for any reason, including such as that which occurred at the Gippy Goat farm should be clearly covered by legislation as a prosecutable action under biosecurity legislation with jail sentences and significant financial penalties.

Farmers as much as anyone else have a right to a safe workplace. Unauthorised entry of a farm is an extremely threatening and highly stressful action to the farmer and their family. This is an act that immediately causes a highly stressed workplace and therefore a very unsafe workplace. Workplace safety legislation should be amended too include such acts as causing and being intended to create an unsafe workplace. I think workplace safety legislation has significant penalties and those applicable here should be at the higher end.

Most farms are family businesses and family homes. Every farmer and their family have a right to be safe from and to feel safe from the threat of anyone; especially a group, forcing access or what would be seen as invading over fences or through shut gates. The emotional impact of going through such a traumatic experience must be huge, especially for children.

The unauthorised and unwanted trespass on to any farm by climbing over a fence or gate is a criminal act akin to breaking into any persons home or any business. Such acts should be dealt with as criminal under the criminal law. They are serious crimes.

The theft of a goat or any other livestock for any reason is still theft, and it is theft of valuable property. In instances such as the Gippy Goat the theft was carried out openly and brazenly with complete disregard for the law. My understanding is that the perpetrators even refused to return the animal. Yet they were fined a mere \$1.00. Why?

The other why I have is -Why is the Victorian Government so slow to act when New South Wales and Queensland have quickly taken steps to deter unauthorised access to farms?

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