



5<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Premier

Western Australia will have significant importance in this year's Federal election. The Western Australian Livestock Exporters Association (WALEA) would like to congratulate you on your advocacy to your federal counterparts in opposing the 'Nature Positive' legislation. The fact that legislation has been withdrawn is a clear indication of your influence and willingness to stand up for Western Australia.

From our industry's perspective, we have appreciated your government's opposition to the Live Sheep Ban. This is a policy driven by extreme activists and sadly the Federal Government has become a mouthpiece for them.

Farmers in WA are suffering at the hands of the Federal Government:

- The WA sheep flock declined by 25% in 2024. It is expected to reduce in 2025 to around 6 million – a 50% decrease in 2 years.
- Two major abattoirs have closed in WA since you came to power due to concerns about future viability.
- Wool production in WA is at its lowest since the 1920's due to the flock liquidation.
- Shearers, the catalyst of the Labor movement, are reporting their businesses have dropped by 30% in the last 12 months.

The reason for these outcomes is simple, a viable WA sheep industry needs competition from three markets – meat processing, wool production and live exports.

You take one of these away then the viability of sheep production in WA is damaged and all three of these industries will suffer dire consequences because of the ban. This means less money flowing into local businesses and therefore less people being able to remain in those communities.

For the WA flock to be self-sustaining it requires a minimum of 10 million sheep. As mentioned above, the flock has already dipped well below this. WALEA is greatly concerned that this policy may not only spell the end of the live sheep export industry, but the sheep processing and wool industries as well.

Even if a transition was possible – the Federal Government has given no time and superficial support. Three years does not allow time for businesses to restructure their flocks. \$139 million barely scratches the surface of the economic loss of this ban, particularly when considering that only approximately \$45 million is earmarked for producers and the supply chain.

Your government has said the transition would take at least 10 years with \$1.2 billion assistance. The Western Australian Meat Industry Authority estimated that over \$400 million would be necessary to upscale processing. The Federal Government has not even come close to this figure.

Good governments do not shut down industries that support regional businesses and communities for political purposes.

Premier, we are urging you to stand up once again for WA and demand your federal colleagues to reverse this unjust ban. It is clear it will be an election issue in WA as Western Australians support their farmers and do not like them being mistreated.

Please uphold your proud record of standing up for WA.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Cunnington", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Cunnington  
Chair, West Australian Livestock Exporters Association