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WHO SAID GOVERNMENT WAS OUT!

The latest calls for a Senate inquiry into the wool industry based on the publicised and yet to be substantiated allegations demonstrate the political influence being exerted once again on the wool industry. It is a very poor indictment on our industry and proves that we still haven't come of age as a commercial entity. "It is bitterly disappointing to see the wool industry being used as a political football", AWGA Chair Will Crozier said today.

Claims of breaches of the corporations law act are very serious matters and must be dealt with in the appropriate manner by the proper authorities and not under privilege in parliament.

AWGA's sources have advised that a Senate enquiry will go ahead despite any opposition – so the quicker, the better to clear the air. And if this is the enquiry that 'we had to have', then it must have clear and publicised terms of reference and time frame, include all aspects of management and corporate governance including the activities by the current and former AWI Boards, look at the issue of voting entitlements and also the future of a compulsory levy payable only to an R&D company, in lieu of some much needed industry marketing.

Woolgrowers, reeling from ongoing drought conditions and market fluctuations, are at the crossroads in terms of land use options, sheep options and whether or not to commit long term to the industry. "This is crunch time for a lot of us", Mr. Crozier said, "and the ongoing claims and counter claims by wool industry leaders will hasten the departure of a lot of growers."

AWGA is fed up with the AWI's politicking, which is doing nothing for the commercial future of our industry. Let's hear some NEW R&D and commercialisation of new product.

Woolgrowers are seeking innovation, commercial and cost effective research projects with a long term gain. Woolgrowers do not want a return to the industry leadership and culture pre Goulburn. "What we do care very passionately about is successful commercial outcomes", Mr. Crozier said. AWI has the capacity to influence future trends and market signals with a positive approach. "We'd like to see this happen. If not, it begs the question on how our compulsory wool taxes are being spent and the very future of an industry levy as we approach WoolPoll 2003", he concluded.

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