



Committee Secretary  
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee  
Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

## **Agricultural Shows Australia**

### **Submission to the Inquiry**

#### **Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019**

Agricultural Shows of Australia (ASA) has been established to promote the role and significance of Australian Agricultural Shows to the wider community. The ASA's vision is a strong and vibrant network of Agricultural Shows working together to engage, influence and promote the essential value of Australian agriculture. The membership of the ASA is made up of capital city Royal Agricultural Societies and state-based Agricultural Show bodies, together representing over 580 agricultural shows, with a combined economic value of \$965 million annually.

The purpose of ASA is to;

- Present a unified and greater voice for agricultural shows in Australian society.
- Advocate for the Agricultural Show movement to government and industry.
- Provide tools to minimise the risks associated with running agricultural shows.
- Engage young people in agriculture through education and employment opportunities.
- Educate the public and other stakeholders regarding the importance of Agricultural Shows, and agriculture in general.

The establishment of the ASA as a single, unified body will ensure agricultural shows enjoy a strong and sustainable future through shared knowledge, experience, opportunities and innovations.

#### ***The Intent of ASA Submission***

#### **The Bill does not appear to protect Showgrounds**

The Bill defines "agricultural land" as agricultural land means land in Australia that is used for a primary production business.

The Bill also lists businesses that are primary production business.

That list does not include Agricultural Showgrounds.

Accordingly, while there may be scope to argue for a broad interpretation of the definition, the Bill does not clearly prohibit a person from using the internet to incite a person to trespass, damage or steal at an Agricultural Show.

Agricultural Societies may be concerned that the Bill does not protect Showgrounds from protests from animal rights activists. There is a case to be made that it should, because:

- agricultural shows are an important part of primary production, providing a showcase for agriculture in regional and urban centres;
- farmers exhibiting their livestock at Showgrounds are vulnerable to protests that may harm the farmer, animals and the general public (an activist could incite a protester to open cattle stalls during a show, creating a risk to public safety); and
- the Bill should not be confined to the particular concern that led to its drafting (publication of private addresses). If a person published information about after-hours security at a show, for the purpose of inciting a break-in, that would be just as harmful as the same conduct as publishing a farm address.

ASA understands that including Showgrounds in the definition of agricultural land, via the list of primary production businesses, would significantly expand the scope of the Bill.

Notwithstanding our submission, ASA fully supports the amendments to the Bill regardless, as supporters and participants of Australian agriculture.

I would be pleased to discuss this submission with the Committee as appropriate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R H Wilson', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr Robert H Wilson AM

Chair

Agricultural Shows Australia

[chair@agshowsaustralia.org.au](mailto:chair@agshowsaustralia.org.au)

+61 418 486 141