

Media Release



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Closure of wild dog committee must not come at Victorian farmers' expense

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is concerned the decision by the Victorian Government to dissolve the Wild Dog Ministerial Advisory Committee and says its absence must not expose Victorian farmers to the threats posed by wild dogs.

VFF Livestock Councillor Peter Star said the decision to discontinue the committee could undo years of progress towards controlling the menace of wild dogs and could expose Victoria's livestock industries to costly damages.

"The Wild Dog Committee demonstrated the Government was serious about controlling the threat of wild dogs and allowed farmers to have a voice in the matter. The decision to scrap the committee makes no sense and has the potential to undo years of progress".

"Wild dogs pose a significant threat to the Victorian livestock industry and cost an estimated \$18 million dollars each year".

"They murder and maim native and endangered species, damage the environment, hunt livestock and pose a serious animal welfare threat to the animals they attack which is an enormous headache for farmers, particularly in the high country," Mr Star said.

Mr Star said the VFF was committed to ensuring the practise of aerial baiting continues, despite the closure of the committee and will be lobbying the Victorian Government on this issue and the void left by the departure of the committee.

"Aerial baiting is a vital wild dog control measure and research shows that it is also extremely effective for controlling foxes, which not only attack lambs but also kill native wildlife. The VFF will be lobbying the Government to ensure aerial baiting continues as part of an integrated wild dog management program to protect Victorian sheep producers and native fauna."

"The VFF stands ready to help fill the gap in landholder and industry input created by the loss of the committee," Mr Star said.

The VFF is prepared to provide the opportunity for landholder and industry input on wild dog management created by the loss of this committee and will continue to work with relevant departments to achieve effective wild dog management outcomes.

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