

Media Release



Victorian
Farmers
Federation

Monday 23 September 2019

VFF calls for tougher trespass penalties at Parliamentary hearing

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) President David Jochinke presented today at the Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism to ask for farm trespass penalties to be strengthened to \$220,000 for individuals and \$400,000 for organisations, and \$1,000 on-the-spot fines.

“Earlier this year, more than 70 activists stormed the Gippy Goat Café, intimidated staff, entered stock yards, and repeatedly stole livestock. The ringleader of this group received a grand total of two \$1 fines. Another activist was found guilty of theft but received zero penalties from the court,” said Mr Jochinke.

“The purpose of the Inquiry is to determine if current laws are effective in preventing and deterring activists from trespassing on farms. How could they be effective when the courts are handing out such pitiful penalties?”

“By their own admission, activists willfully defy the law without fear of consequences. They continue to invade family farms and even repeatedly attack the same farm over a series of weeks.

“Tougher laws are required because trespass on farm properties presents particular risks that do not exist in other workplaces such as risks to personal safety, animal welfare, biosecurity and public health.

“Most importantly, farm trespass is akin to home invasion. Farms are not only a place of work, but are the homes of our farming families.

“After hearing the shocking stories of farming families harassed by activists, I hope Parliament will have no doubt in their minds - we need tougher laws to protect our farming families and deter invaders,” said Mr Jochinke.

ENDS

Media Contacts:

David Jochinke, VFF President, 0427 834 524

Heather Smillie, VFF Stakeholder, Media & Communications Officer, 0400 874 589

About the VFF

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is dedicated to representing the interests of farmers and making a positive difference to their businesses and communities. We strive to create an environment for our members, our farmers, that enables profitable, safe, sustainable production to ensure an enduring social licence in a community that respects and values the sector.

Farrer House 24-28 Collins Street Melbourne 3000

Ph. 1300 882 833 | Fax. 03 9207 5500 | E-mail. vff@vff.org.au | www.vff.org.au