



New CSIRO Report highlights costs of livestock transport

AGFORCE has welcomed the launch of a suite of innovative new tools jointly developed by the CSIRO and various state governments to analyse cost savings associated with beef industry transport and logistics in Northern Australia.

Launched this week in Canberra by keynote speaker at the ABARES Outlook Conference, Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss, the 'Livestock Industry Logistics: Optimising Industry Capital Investment and Operations' report outlines the development of the tools as well as case studies used to demonstrate their implementation.

While the work is focused across the northern Australian supply chain, the CSIRO Livestock Logistics project contains information pertinent to the Queensland beef industry. Two of the case studies within the report include analyses of proposals to improve efficiencies at Queensland livestock transport pressure points.

The first shows a proposed upgrade of the 400km Carnarvon Highway between Roma and Emerald and the 110km Gregory Highway between Emerald and Clermont to allow Type 2 road trains as well as the abolishment of tick clearing for cattle transported direct to the abattoir. In this case, modelling shows these measures would have equated to a \$75.6 million saving in transport costs between 2007 and 2011. Other benefits include reduced traffic on the Bruce Highway and a significant increase in public safety.

AgForce Cattle President and Central Queensland beef producer, Howard Smith, said this analysis clearly showed the need for policy change and increased development in the Queensland transport network.

"The land transport of livestock comprises up to 35 per cent of the market price for cattle in Queensland which is grossly out of proportion with other expenses," Mr Smith said.

"For \$75.6 million to be saved by making common sense changes and investment in just one part of the transport network shows that there is huge potential for this cost to be reduced and for the state's livestock industries to drastically improve productivity."

"Tools like these are winners when it comes to providing robust, accurate data to achieve real cost savings for our Queensland beef producers."

The CSIRO report was also particularly timely given the Public Hearing for the Agricultural and Rail Freight Inquiry conducted by the Queensland Parliamentary Committee for Housing, Infrastructure and Local Government conducted in Brisbane earlier this week.

“Another modelling scenario outlined within the report addresses the future potential for livestock rail freight, currently around six per cent of the cattle freight task, and looks at costs and benefits of increasing the proportion of the state’s livestock transported on rail.”

“AgForce sees livestock rail as part of the future of the beef and cattle freight network and the CSIRO work demonstrates the vast potential that this has.

“We now look forward to government and other stakeholders using the case studies for future decision making and further using the tools developed to make well informed decisions pertaining to livestock transport policy and investment into the future.”

- To view Minister Truss speech: <http://www.warrentruss.com/speeches.php?id=142>
- For further information on the Livestock Logistics project: <http://www.warrentruss.com/speeches.php?id=142>

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For media enquiries, contact

**AgForce media and communications: Stacey Milner 0418 733 102 or milners@agforceqld.org.au
Nadine Long 0427 626 853 or longn@agforceqld.org.au**

Who is AgForce? AgForce represents thousands of Queensland broadacre producers who recognise the value in having a strong voice. AgForce leads the way to ensure agriculture’s social, economic and environmental contribution is recognised by all levels of government. AgForce works alongside landholders, encourages and supports the next generation, builds industry partnerships and skills and promotes agriculture - for secure, sustainable, progressive and profitable food and fibre into the future.