



AgForce secures Govt promise to consider industry solution to save ag colleges

Friday 14 December 2018

The agriculture industry's campaign to save the Longreach and Emerald ag colleges is gathering momentum, with Agriculture Minister Furner today committing to consider an industry-led solution in the new year.

AgForce has been driving the 'hand them back' campaign on behalf of the agriculture industry and rural communities following a storm of outrage at the Minister's shock closure announcement last week.

At a meeting with AgForce executives today, the Minister agreed to consider a proposal from AgForce to lead wide ranging industry, regional and community engagement over the future of QATC and its assets to ensure there is a strong future for agricultural training in Queensland.

General President Georgie Somerset said AgForce's meeting with the Minister was a "positive first step" in retaining the Colleges for future generations.

"While the future of the colleges is far from certain, we appreciate the Minister hearing our case to keep them open and his commitment to genuinely consider a proposal developed by industry and the community," Mrs Somerset said.

"Although not exactly the outcome we were aiming for — a commitment to handing the colleges back to industry — it is a positive foundation on which we as an industry must build as we work together to secure the future of the colleges.

"We believe the Minister now understands the level of anger in the bush at his decision to close the colleges without any meaningful consultation, as well as our steadfast determination to ensure these vital assets remain within the industry.

"AgForce is proud to be leading the charge on this issue, and will continue to collaborate with stakeholders, communities, the regions, and Minister Furner and his team to develop an effective, enduring solution."

Mrs Somerset said the Minister had also committed to meeting with AgForce early in the new year to keep the lines of communication and collaboration open.

Ends.

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