

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

BETTER WATER SECURITY AND ACCESS TO PASTURE IN DROUGHT

Since 2015, AgForce has been calling on the Federal Government to recommit to supporting the Queensland government's Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate. In 2018, at the National Drought Summit it was announced that they would reinstate that support. An extra \$14 million over 3 years for Queensland in on-farm emergency water infrastructure was announced, meaning farmers can now claim up to 75% of the cost of new on-farm water infrastructure. AgForce's requests for including desilting of dams on a droughted property have also been delivered, with producers now able to claim from the Federal government up to 25% of costs, up to a value of \$25,000.

MORE ACCURATE LAND VALUATIONS

AgForce has worked tirelessly to assist members with understanding state government unimproved land valuations and strongly support them in objecting to excessive valuations that lead to inflated rates and rents bills. In the Maranoa shire, AgForce valuer John Moore assisted approximately 250 members with objecting to their valuations. We led and represented landholders in a series of 50 mediation test cases, which resulted in an average reduction of 10 to 15 % in valuations for these members. AgForce also assisted members through running workshops in the Murweh, Maranoa

and Boulia Shires and in Preliminary Conferences with the Land Court in the Murweh shire, resulting in reductions on their unimproved values.

MAKING LARGE VEHICLE MOVEMENTS EASIER

Need to move a header or an air seeder on local roads to get to your paddocks? AgForce has successfully advocated to reduce red tape when moving large agricultural vehicles. The new Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Exemption Notice will come into effect in 2019. The Notice increases mass and dimensions limits, meaning most vehicle movements no longer require a permit. It is also easier to cross the border to NSW, Victoria and SA under the new Notice.

Key facts about the Class 1 notice:

- Vehicle width under the Notice in the western zone increased from 6 meters to 6.5 meters
- Simplified: Queensland now only has two not three different dimension zones (coastal and western)
- Easy to understand new online map for identifying which zone applies to your area:

<https://bit.ly/2WLFOYT>

DEFENDING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Following a shock decision by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) to cancel the School Industry Partnership Program (SIPP) after 13 increasingly effective years, AgForce ran a forceful campaign to save SIPP. Large numbers of stakeholders wrote to the Minister urging a rethink, including many industry bodies both state and national, teachers and teacher bodies, parents and students. Face to face meetings with the Minister also occurred and media coverage was extensive and very supportive. Despite this, DAF refused all appeals to keep SIPP. AgForce has since been successful in obtaining limited funding to continue SIPP-type activities with the Gateway Schools to Agribusiness via the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training.

After a somewhat flawed consultation process, the Coaldrake Report recommended the closure of the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges (QATC) and therefore the agricultural colleges. AgForce launched a strong campaign to protest and pushed back on what was a premature announcement. The Department has since implemented a transition process involving a range of stakeholders. AgForce has met with the Minister and the QATC Project Management Office. We have membership on the 2 regional committees and are

continuing to engage with a broader range of interested stakeholders to find a sustainable model and future for the colleges.

REMOVING MOBILE BLACK SPOTS

Access to affordable, reliable phone and internet services is one of the biggest issues for those living and working in the bush. Investing in improved mobile phone coverage is critical to help Queensland farmers adopt new farming technologies. Through persistent advocacy by AgForce and like-minded organisations, the Federal Government announced \$160 million for another round of the Mobile Black Spot Program in 2019 that includes 26 new base stations for regional Queensland. The locations for new 3G/4G macrocell base stations include Dalby, Glenmorgan, Gatton and Bungadoo (Bundaberg). There is also a commitment for another two rounds of Mobile Black Spot base stations.

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BETTER TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Exclusive to AgForce members, AgForce has secured an Escalation Process with Telstra and nbn local. If you experience an issue with your connection/service and your issue remains unresolved after you lodged a complaint with Telstra or the nbn, AgForce can get your issue prioritised for resolution. The escalation process puts AgForce members in touch with regional specialist staff that understand the difficulties of living in remote areas. The three most common issues raised were connection and coverage issues, closely followed by faulty equipment and slow internet speed. After using the AgForce escalation process, all member telecommunications issues were resolved, with more than 70 per cent resolved within two working days.

MORE CONSISTENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

AgForce worked to support the Royal Flying Doctors Service's (RFDS) Drought Wellbeing Project and called for secure funding. As a result, AgForce helped get long-term funding for the RFDS with a four-year contract of \$4 million. This has meant that the Drought Wellbeing Service can ensure they have secure employment for staff and no disruptions of service for rural people; unfortunate realities of the previous year-by-year contract approach.

ADDRESSING INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS NEEDS

AgForce's IR consultant Warren Turner has assisted over 250 AgForce members in managing their employment and workforce issues including determining rates of pay, wage claims, managing terminations, unfair dismissals, workplace agreements and visas. AgForce was also successful in securing exemptions for many broadacre contractors from mandatory state labour hire licensing requirements, the costs of which would be passed directly back to members, and production of a plain English fact sheet to explain the changes.

SUPPORTING NATIVE TITLE RESPONDENTS

With the support of Federal Attorney General funding and in conjunction with expert native title solicitors, AgForce provided over 400 lessees across Queensland free legal representation in native title claims. The service has tailored unique Indigenous Land Use Agreements for Queensland pastoral properties which it negotiates in conjunction with native title representative bodies and the State Government to manage risks and liabilities associated with traditional owners accessing pastoral lands. The program is both time and cost efficient and provides bespoke advice on native title claims for affected lessees across Queensland.

MORE VALUE FROM FARM MANAGEMENT DEPOSITS

After many years of advocacy work, 2018 saw the banks finally commit to offering offset accounts for Farm Management Deposits (FMD). We continue to advocate for FMDs to be extended to trusts and companies to ensure all farm business structures have access to this risk management tool.

SAVING GRAIN GROWERS TIME AND MONEY

The Grain Harvest Management Scheme (GHMS) continues to offer huge benefits to Queensland grain producers by allowing flexibility when carting grain. GHMS helps manage grain loading uncertainties by providing 7.5 per cent 'flexibility' above regulation mass limits. AgForce issues over 1,300 registrations each year, with free participation for AgForce members as the price of the scheme is rebated off membership fees. The Scheme is designed to benefit the grain industry, the community and the road transport industry.

HELPING WITH MEMBERS' TRAVEL PERMITTING ISSUES

Members are frequently meeting problems in their access permitting applications. AgForce has been supporting members to identify barriers and voice their concerns to the necessary government officials in gaining greater visibility on where a permit has progressed to in the chain of approvals,

along with securing of the access.

TAKING STAMP DUTY ON AGRICULTURAL INSURANCE PRODUCTS SERIOUSLY

AgForce together with the Queensland Farmers Federation lobbied the Queensland Government to progress towards removing stamp duty on agricultural insurance products. Consequently, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) has now commissioned a report to investigate the feasibility of this proposal. AgForce is pleased that Government is taking this issue seriously and will make the release and implementation of the report a priority for 2019-20 to ensure that farmers are able to use agricultural risk management products.

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VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

AgForce once again strongly resisted further negative changes to the Vegetation Management Act, bringing together over 500 members at a rally outside Parliament House on 1 May 2018 and guided members in making their voices heard to the Parliament. We also made strong submissions and pushed back against the review of Self Assessable Codes and their conversion into Acceptable Vegetation Development Codes. Importantly, AgForce secured agreement by the state government to include regrowth into their annual report into tree cover so both sides of the vegetation management issue can be considered by policy makers. We also secured funding for a collaborative science summit in 2019 to inform better landscape management policies by government.

AgForce helps decipher complex regulations for members. A wide range of useful fact sheets have been developed for members and are available on the AgForce website. Topics range from regulated vegetation management maps, weed control in remnant and regrowth vegetation, clearing exemptions for fence lines and firebreaks, protected plants and koala essential habitat.

PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

AgForce has worked with members and the compliance sections of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Department of Environment and Science to deal with long standing issues concerning small-holder mining operations on members' land. This has resulted in the Abandoned Mines Unit of DNRME advancing rehabilitation actions and preventing risk to livestock and safety of property owners. To be introduced in 2019, AgForce also called for the inclusion of landholder's agronomy costs in those costs covered by resource companies when negotiating and preparing a conduct and compensation agreement and ensuring eligible costs continued to be covered even when resource companies abandoned negotiations.

PROTECTING ACCESS TO WATER

In coalition with other irrigation groups, AgForce helped secure the legislated 70 GL reduction in the volume of water to be reclaimed for the environment in the Northern Murray Darling Basin (MDB) and supported the voluntary buyback of groundwater entitlements in the Condamine Alluvium. We will continue to defend agricultural interests in MDB Plan implementation.

AgForce continues to advocate to protect stock and domestic water rights in Queensland which has seen no reduction

of these rights in recent state reform and planning processes.

FIGHTING FOR PRACTICAL REEF AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Protecting the Great Barrier Reef is one of the key policies of the Queensland and Australian Governments. AgForce supported landholders achieving innovative water quality outcomes through partnerships in Grains and Grazing BMP. We strongly and publicly opposed the introduction of further blanket Reef regulations in a Bill tabled in 2019, facilitating member submissions and witness hearings and successfully secured Parliamentary Committee hearings in affected regions.

UNDERSTANDING PASTURE DIEBACK

AgForce lobbying and industry representation assisted in securing an additional \$6 million towards researching the cause(s) and management of pasture dieback across eastern Queensland. Members appreciate the efforts of five graziers on the dieback working group who help steer the direction of future research by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA). AgForce welcomes the recent funding commitment by Australian Government and MLA, along with the ongoing field research conducted by the state Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Industry needs a solution for pasture dieback.

FIGHTING FOR STRONG BIOSECURITY PROTECTION

Behind the scenes, AgForce is striving for the best biosecurity outcomes for our producers on national, state and regional fronts. Your membership fees are achieving industry outcomes. We are there at the table with National Farmers Federation and CropLife Australia working on national harmonisation for agvet chemical use, spray drift mitigation and national eradication programs for fire ants and red witchweed.

AgForce has progressed and had input into significant legislative reform such as the review of the Queensland Biosecurity Act 2014, tick lines, the Medicines and Poisons Bill 2019 to replace the Queensland Health Act for use of vertebrate poisons and more. AgForce prepared a chapter in the Queensland Biosecurity Strategy 2018 to 2023, the future framework for biosecurity across the state. Your producer issues are represented at various state forums such as the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animal Committee QIPAC, State Land Pest Management Committee and within Regional Biosecurity Strategies.

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DRIVING THE COLLABORATIVE QUEST TO COMBAT PIMELEA TOXICITY

Pimelea causes seasonal cattle losses across inland Australia. AgForce continues to work with researchers from University of Queensland and DAF in the quest to find a probiotic rumen drench to combat Pimelea plant toxicity in cattle. Originally sought by AgForce and producer pledged funds, this research is now fully funded by MLA with \$1.5 million over the next two years. Other field work is planned to reduce the impact and abundance of Pimelea and collate case studies.

IMPROVING TICK LINE MANAGEMENT

AgForce calls for support for producers on the Tick Line to enable state government amendments to the line. Biosecurity Queensland (BQ) in collaboration with AgForce and industry has delivered a policy to address this demand. AgForce Cattle's Tick Committee continues to encourage BQ to provide more on-ground support for producers and accredited certifiers, undertake surveillance of high-risk areas with open sharing of this information, and monitor tick resistance.

FACILITATED WILD DOG MANAGEMENT

The Queensland Government delivered on a further \$5 million toward predator exclusion fencing over the past 12 months administered by the Queensland Feral Pest

Initiative, with the Federal Government committing \$7 million to drought declared local councils. This fulfils AgForce's lobbying efforts towards \$5million financial support per annum to construct exclusion fencing to protect Queensland's livestock. Members are represented on the State Government's Queensland Dog Offensive Group (QDOG) and on the National Wild Dog Action Plan Committee.

ACCESS TO FIREARMS

After three and a half years of negotiations with Queensland Police Service's Weapons Licensing Branch (WLB), AgForce has seen an increased success rate in primary producers receiving an approved renewal of their Category H (handgun) Licence. AgForce's efforts in providing producers with an application template, detailed information on how to complete an application and one-on-one personal assistance has been rewarded with more licence renewals being approved with minimal questions from WLB.

ENABLING LAY PREGNANCY TESTING OF QUEENSLAND CATTLE

AgForce championed industry calls for pregnancy testing legislation to be changed and government has listened. With over 1,000 submissions to the regulatory impact consultation it is now in government's hands to make the necessary amendments. Minister Furner has given his word he will make this happen, with an announcement on changes to legislation expected in mid-2019.

POLICY PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

In the coming year AgForce will continue to fight for fair laws for farmers and implement our long-term vegetation management (VM) campaign. This includes advocating for a systematic review of the VM Act along with the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and Environmental Protection Act 1994 and pushing the Queensland Government to replace them with sensible legislation. The Landscape Management Committee will also seek funding from the Queensland Land Restoration Fund, hold a science-policy summit and explore legal options for compensation for diminution of property rights and value. Political advocacy will also continue.

TRANSPORT

In 2019, AgForce will continue to advocate for unlocking key strategic trade routes through further infrastructure investment and maintenance that links road, rail and port. This includes:

1. Actively engaging with those living in regional, rural and remote Queensland in establishing a list of assets needing addressing by mid-2019
2. Advocating for funding of a flooding-immune, inland freight route by end of 2020.

3. Advocating for further funding of Queensland's priority bridges.

We will also continue to advocate for the reduction and improvement of regulation associated with the transport industry, including improved access to the network through gazetting routes. This will involve a response to the Heavy Vehicle National Law Review by end of 2020 and advocating for implementation of Oversized Overmass Review recommendations. AgForce will seek to be involved in the freight task discussion and continue to work collaboratively with agencies and other stakeholders to ensure primary producer's needs are met.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

AgForce will keep advocating for better telecommunications services in the bush as a means towards better community outcomes, including supporting social, mental and physical wellbeing and to get younger people moving to regional, rural and remote Queensland. We will look to become closely involved in designing the Digital Tech Hub, including knowledge sharing and seeking funding for at least 4 knowledge broker and 4 technical support positions in regional Queensland. AgForce will also work to see:

- increased investment in infrastructure
- improved consumer protections including no changes to the Universal Service Guarantee until there are fit-for-purpose alternative voice options for those

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on the Sky muster satellite service

- Increased data and more equitable meterage
- Implementation of round 5 and 6 of the Mobile Black Spot Program.

WORKFORCE

A key focus for AgForce in 2019/20 will be on supporting members to manage workforce-related issues including workplace health and safety, industrial relations and skills and training needs. A Workforce Policy Committee has been established to focus on supporting members to establish effective, cost efficient and effective farm safety. This includes engaging a University of Queensland Behavioural Scientist to provide a research project focussing on decision making around safety on farm. The Committee will engage strongly with the Agriculture Unit of WHS Queensland on their compliance monitoring and enforcement policies.

CLIMATE AND AGRIBUSINESS

AgForce will continue to refine and promote our Agricultural Business Cycle, its endorsement by other stakeholders and its adoption by governments as part of their approach to drought policy. We will also promote ag sector access to capital, including maintaining traditional lending channels along with promoting new financing options. Linked to this is securing effective expansion of succession advice

or risk management grants to include associated costs of financial assessment and implementation of new business arrangements. This will include advocating for amendments to the QRIDA and RIC lending guidelines. On climate risk and change we will:

- Continue to advocate for agriculture to be recognised for past efforts to adapt and ongoing support to respond to the risks of climate change such as droughts and natural disasters.
- Ensure the agricultural sector is effectively engaged and contributes to the Queensland Climate Change White Paper by the end of 2019 and early 2020.

Policy positions will be developed on new entrants, energy and electricity.

FACILITATED BIOSECURITY

Biosecurity remains a high priority for all producers and industry. Through policy advocacy, projects, research promotion and member updates, AgForce works hard at keeping new pests out and continuously improving best practice management and containment of existing pests, weeds and diseases. Biosecurity is a shared responsibility and industry needs to be at the forefront. AgForce is a recognised reference point and aims to improve the collaborative biosecurity response to notifiable weeds and diseases, including across co-existing and neighbouring alternative land uses such as gas development. We will seek to have

policy input during the development of biosecurity legislation and regulations and encourage improved linkages between government biosecurity regulations and industry systems such as the national Livestock Production Assurance System.

IMPROVED WATER PLANNING AND REGULATION

AgForce will continue to strengthen access to water in 2019/20 through working with the Commonwealth and Queensland governments to improve GAB sustainability program structuring for bore owners to facilitate their completion of all remaining capping and piping work. Our Water Committee will also seek to guide the development and implementation of the State's water metering and measuring project to ensure water user privacy and practical, science and risk-based settings are used. Water for further sustainable development of northern Queensland is also a focus.

BETTER AGRICULTURAL LAND USE PROTECTION

AgForce will continue to advocate for policies that result in avoidance or minimization of unavoidable impacts on landholders from other land uses, including from mining and gas projects. This includes holding the government accountable for enforcing compliance, effective agricultural land and water resources protections and human wellbeing promotion, empowering producers in negotiations, seeking

positive outcomes and no legacy costs on the community, and helping farmers understand their rights and benefit from other land uses.

FIGHTING FOR PRACTICAL REEF AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Protecting the Great Barrier Reef is one of the key policies of the Queensland and Australian Governments. AgForce seeks to continuously enable innovation across agricultural practices by working together with industry, research and development corporations, commercial agribusinesses, creative producers and governments to ensure our Queensland producers are world-leaders in environmentally-sustainable, agricultural practices. AgForce advocates for voluntary adoption of good land management practices to reduce runoff and improve Reef water quality.

LAY PREGNANCY TESTING OF QUEENSLAND CATTLE

The process of advancing amendments now rests with the state government. AgForce remains committed to working collaboratively with cattle veterinarians to deliver a 'gold standard' training and accreditation scheme to back the amendments and ensure animal welfare outcomes are achieved and service delivery is highly effective and reliable.

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PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING THE SHEEP AND WOOL INDUSTRY

AgForce Sheep and Wool Board is developing a 'Blueprint for Queensland's Sheep and Wool Industry'. The idea is to design a plan that will help promote industry by educating politicians and financiers, thereby creating and building the confidence among the decision-makers to back Queensland's sheep industry. In doing so, the aim is to support existing producers so that they remain within the industry and encourage new entrants to ensure the industry's longevity.

The Blueprint priorities are:

- Continual promotion of government funding toward exclusion fencing to control wild dogs and protect Queensland's sheep and wool industry
- Promote sheep and wool industry RD&E that lifts on-farm productivity growth
- Support financing opportunities and business profitability, including improved access to all sheep and wool market opportunities
- Engage in and support initiatives resulting in more new entrants to the sheep and wool industry.

GRAINS INDUSTRY PROFITABILITY AND GROWTH

AgForce Grains has 5 key priority areas for 2019 including:

1. Insurance Scheme - Stamp duty removal on multi-peril crop insurance in Queensland
2. Supply of reliable and affordable farm inputs
 - Seed availability: Provide early communication to farmers should there be shortages
 - Fuel stocks: Escalate to the NFF and find out more about shipping fuel standard changes
3. Transport and supply chain costs -
 - Queensland Rail: Goals is to keep grain on rail.
 - Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Exemption Notice: Make sure it is implemented to facilitate the movement of large agricultural vehicles such as harvesters on roads
4. High Value Agriculture - Advocate for Northern Development for the grains industry.
5. Water Infrastructure Investment
 - Develop a policy for Northern Development including energy/ environment in agriculture as extra benefit.

WILD DOG CONTROL

Working across the Cattle and Sheep Boards over the next year, AgForce will continue to increase awareness of and reduce the impacts of wild dogs across all industries and promote integrated pest animal management through activities under the Wild Dog Coordinator project.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

We fought for our ag colleges

AgForce continues its strong support for training, skills, education and career promotion for our industry. We contribute actively and effectively to workforce and training bodies and forums for agriculture. This includes the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance, AgForce School Industry Partnership Program with the Gateway Schools to Agribusiness, Skills Impact and the Departments of Agriculture and Fisheries; Employment, Small Business and Training; and Education. AgForce campaigned strongly for a comprehensive consultation process to resolve the fate of the two agricultural colleges and QATC as a whole. AgForce met with the Minister immediately following the announcement and received assurances relating to consultation and to a thorough process for deciding the future of the QATC organisation. AgForce members and staff are working on the college consultative committees for colleges at Emerald and Longreach, pushing for the best outcomes for industry, the community and students.

We supported skills development and career promotion

AgForce contributed to consultative and strategic training bodies, and forums for agriculture.