

DRAFT RELEASE 30/08/22

PAUL WRIGHT SLAMS LATEST CCA REFORM TAKEOVER BID

Chair of Cattle Producers Australia (CPA) Paul Wright today denounced the latest Cattle Council of Australia (CCA) attempt to seize the reform process for grassfed cattle levy-payers' representation and said that the latest CCA circulation of a draft Constitution for the yet-to-be-formed Cattle Australia had no grass-fed cattle producer support because it had not been approved by the RSC.

Mr Wright went onto say that the reform process was resumed in late 2020 by then Minister David Littleproud through successful Federal Government facilitated and funded roundtable conferences between CPA and CCA which reached in principle agreement on the structure and funding of a new body to replace CCA as the grass-fed cattle producer Peak Industry Council.

An Industry Leaders Forum (ILF) comprising 30 grass-fed cattle producers nominated by CCA was then convened to discuss the CPA/CCA agreed restructure proposal and the ILF then formed a Restructure Steering Committee (RSC) to implement the transition from CCA to a new grass-fed cattle producer Peak Industry Council to be called Cattle Australia.

The RSC was provided with a detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) to draft the constitution and establish a funding stream for Cattle Australia and the RSC reached fundamental agreement on most aspects of the proposed Cattle Australia Governance structure, Board and Policy Council model at a face-to-face RSC meeting in Brisbane on 13 February 2022.

The legal firm King and Wood Mallesons (KWM) was contracted by the RSC to draft the CA constitution. In a breach of clear RSC directives, the RSC Chair failed to forward the agreed RSC briefing notes to KWM which led to the production of a flawed draft Cattle Australia Constitution that has not been accepted by the RSC or the broader industry.

Over the following months CCA and SFO members of the RSC sought to make a number of significant changes to the proposed Cattle Australia structure agreed on 13 February 2022. These efforts culminated in a proposal being put by CCA and the SFO representatives at a face-to-face RSC meeting held in Brisbane on 10 June 2022 for:

- the RSC to be wound up on 30 June 2022 rather than once the Board is installed in accord with the ToR, and
- Cattle Australia to be formed by amending the CCA constitution rather than incorporating a new Cattle Australia entity. This was based on advice from DAWE which would allow for a quicker transition.

The RSC did not agree to be wound up on 30 June 2022 and insisted that would remain in its role until the new Cattle Australia board was in place as required in the ToR.

In principle agreement was reached at that 10 June 2022 RSC meeting for Cattle Australia to be formed by amending the CCA constitution which was based on the understanding that:

- the DAWE advice provided for a quicker and easier transition, and that
- this process would be subject to a detailed Memorandum of Understanding and process agreement between the RSC representative entities.

Subsequent advice obtained by CPA from DAWE on 20 June 2022 and passed onto the RSC, revealed that the same legislative process would need to be followed to replace Cattle Council of Australia with Cattle Australia, regardless of whether that involved the formation of a new entity or reconstituting an existing entity.

CPA then advised the RSC that given this written advice received from DAWE, the RSC would need to make a measured determination as to whether it was in Australia's grass-fed cattle producers best interests for:

- CCA to amend its constitution to a form agreed to by the RSC, or
- whether Cattle Australia should be incorporated as a new entity pursuant to the terms of that RSC agreed constitution

The terms of the draft Constitution forwarded by the Secretariat to the RSC on 29 June 2022 were not agreed to by the RSC and CPA forwarded a detailed list of material issues that it had with that draft. A copy of that advice can be located on the CPA website on the following Link:

<https://cattleproducers.com.au/cattle-australia-restructure-process/>

On 30 June 2022 the RSC independent Chair Andrew Macaulay incorrectly advised the ILF that the RSC had:

- *settled on a transition as the safest and swiftest pathway to deliver reform and democratisation, and*
- that the RSC had agreed to the CCA/SFO voting structure on Monday 27 June 2022, and
- the RSC was to be wound up on 30 June 2022.

On 8 July 2022 Andrew Macaulay again incorrectly advised the RSC and the wider public that - the RSC had been wound up at 3pm on 30 June, and that there had been a subsequent RSC handover of the draft constitution, committee material, IP, and records to CCA on 1 July.

Dr Wright denies the assertion in CCA's 29 July 2022 Beef Central statement that all members of the RSC have been given statements that adequately detailed how the RSC funds were spent and also advised that he was aware that at least one donor to the RSC cause has made a formal written request for its donated money to be refunded and another former RSC member donor who resigned in July 2022 as a consequence of concerns that the provisions of the ToR were not being complied with, suggested that the donation moneys should be paid back to the donors.

Dr Wright concluded by saying that '(t)he history of the grass-fed cattle producer organisational restructure process outlined above demonstrates that CCA whose directors are appointed and sacked

by SFO's is simply attempting to take control of Cattle Australia and if allowed to do so Cattle Australia will never achieve the democratic representation needed for all Australian cattle producers. If CCA were to succeed in taking over the reform process then the opportunity to have the most influential organisation in Australian agriculture will be lost.

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