

Donald B. Lawson OAM
M.Ag.Sc, CPAG

4/7/19
With Compliments

TO MENTAL HEALTH Royal Commission

AS RURAL POLICY IS A FACTOR IN MENTAL
HEALTH IT GETS BACK TO THE STATE OF
RURAL EDUCATION WE HAVE ABOUT 7% WITH
TERTIARY EDUCATION IN RURAL VIC. NEW ZEALAND
IS ABOUT 24%. USA NEARLY 40% THIS RURAL
YEA POLICY IN MY VIEW IS
3717 POORLY THOUGHT OUT

Australia

Email: [REDACTED]

Your information	
Title	OAM. M. AG. SC
First name	DONALD.
Surname	LAWSON
Email Address	
Preferred Contact Number	
Postcode	
Preferred method of contact	
Gender	
Age	
Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? Please select all that apply	
Type of submission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organisation AUSTRALIAN JOHNS ALLIANCE CO. Please state which organisation: FORMER Please state your position at the organisation: DIRECTOR Please state whether you have authority from that organisation to make this submission on its behalf: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Group AUS JOHNS ALLIANCE How many people does your submission represent? ABOUT 4000 AT THE PEAK.

For individuals only

Please identify whether this submission is to be treated as public, anonymous or restricted

While you can request anonymity or confidentiality below, we strongly encourage your formal submission to be public - this will help to ensure the Commission's work is transparent and the community is fully informed

Please tick one box

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public	My submission may be published or referred to in any public document prepared by the Royal Commission. There is no need to anonymise this submission.
<input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous	My submission may only be published or referred to in any public document prepared by the Royal Commission if it is anonymised (i.e. all information identifying or which could reasonably be expected to identify the author is redacted). If you do not specify the information which you would like to be removed, reasonable efforts will be made to remove all personal information (such as your name, address and other contact details) and other information which could reasonably be expected to identify you.
<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted	My submission is confidential. My submission and its contents must not be published or referred to in any public document prepared by the Royal Commission. Please include a short explanation as to why you would like your submission restricted.

Please note:

- This cover sheet is required for all formal submissions, whether in writing or by audio or video file. Written submissions made online or by post, may be published on the Commission's website (at the discretion of the Commission) subject to your nominated preferences.
- Audio and video submissions will not be published on the Commission's website. However, they may be referred to in the Commission's reports subject to any preferences nominated.
- While the Commission will take into account your preference, the Commission may redact any part of any submission for privacy, legal or other reasons.

ONE OF THE KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN IS

① THE FARM BUSINESS AND THE HOME ARE ONE AND SO WHEN THERE IS STREETS THERE IS NO BREAK.

FOR CITY ^{WORK} BUSINESSES AND HOME ARE LARGELY SEPARATE. SO THAT THERE IS USUALLY A BREAK FROM STREETS

Your contribution

Should you wish to make a formal submission, please consider the questions below, noting that you do not have to respond to all of the questions, instead you may choose to respond to only some of them.

1. What are your suggestions to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness and reduce stigma and discrimination?

MORE SUPPORT FOR BOUND BLUE AND OTHER ORGANISATION

MORE TRAINING FOR VICTORIA POLICE MEMBERS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH ILL CITIZENS

2. What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent mental illness and to support people to get early treatment and support?

X WE ARE CHRONICALLY SHORT OF
RURAL PSYCHOLOGISTS AND ALL
PSYCHOLOGISTS SHOULD BE ON THE
SAME MEDICARE REBATE. WHICH IS
NOT THE CASE AT PRESENT

3. What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent suicide?

A LOT OF RURAL SUICIDES IS
DUE TO POOR GOVERNMENT POLICY
JOHN POLICY ESTIMATED 30 TO 60
SUICIDES

WATER POLICY - 3 PEOPLE A WEEK
SUICIDAL IN SHARMAN STOKES SHEPPARTON
OFFICE

POLICY COST BENEFIT STUDIES NEED TO
LOOK AT SOCIAL IMPACT AS WELL AS
ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

4. What makes it hard for people to experience good mental health and what can be done to improve this? This may include how people find, access and experience mental health treatment and support and how services link with each other.

① THE BEHAVIOR OF A FEMALE POLICE OFFICER IN THE MANSFIELD POLICE STATION MADE THE MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES OF MY DAUGHTER DETERIORATE.

② THERE NEEDS TO BE RURAL FACILITIES TO TREAT ALL PEOPLE WHO NEED CARE

5. What are the drivers behind some communities in Victoria experiencing poorer mental health outcomes and what needs to be done to address this?

LACK OF FACILITIES IN ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER WAS ASSESSED THE QUESTION ASKED IS ARE YOU SUICIDAL THEY ANSWER NO AND ARE THEN TURNED OUT INTO THE STREET WHEN IN MY OPINION THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN HOSPITALISED AND TREATED

6. What are the needs of family members and carers and what can be done better to support them?

MORE CARING POLICE. THE BEHAVIOUR OF A FEMALE MEMBER OF THE MANSFIELD POLICE FORCE WAS A DISGRACE AND SHE BASICALLY ASSAULTED MY DAUGHTER WHO HAD PTSD, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND PANIC ATTACKS.

7. What can be done to attract, retain and better support the mental health workforce, including peer support workers?

NOT SURE BUT A FACILITY LIKE
THE UNSW GLENORMISTON
AGRIWILTERN COLLEGE IN THE WEST OF
VICTORIA I SUGGEST WOULD MAKE
AN EXCELLENT DRUG & ALCOHOL REHAB SITE

8. What are the opportunities in the Victorian community for people living with mental illness to improve their social and economic participation, and what needs to be done to realise these opportunities?

VERY HARD AS THEY OFTEN LACK THE
SUPPORT OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY
1 PERSON WITH MENTAL HEALTH
IMPACTS ON ABOUT 15 FAMILY MEMBERS
25 FRIENDS 5 POLICE AMBULANCE PLUS
ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY WORKER MULTIPLE
IMPACT ABOUT 50 TO 1.

9. Thinking about what Victoria's mental health system should ideally look like, tell us what areas and reform ideas you would like the Royal Commission to prioritise for change?

MORE RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION
IN RURAL AREAS. AS AGRIWILTERN
RESEARCH FACILITIES NOW CLOSED
THEY COULD BE TURNED INTO
MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES

10. What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victoria's mental health system and support improvements to last?

DISMISS POLICE OFFICERS WHO
ABUSE MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE AND
HAVE PSYCHOLOGISTS, AVAILABLE
TO ASSIST POLICE FOR THEIR OWN
MENTAL HEALTH AS WELL AS ALL PEOPLE

11. Is there anything else you would like to share with the Royal Commission?

YES. I WAS HEAVILY INVOLVED WITH
THE DISASTROUS. TOWARDS POLICY THAT
PUBLIC SERVANTS. ADVISED POLITICIANS
ON.

THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF THIS
POLICY CAUSED A GREAT DEAL
OF STRESS TO LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS
THE PUBLIC SERVICE HAD UNDER THE PRIVACY
ACT BUT OUR ESTIMATE WAS THAT 'WELL
OVER 30 FARMERS SUICIDE'

Privacy
acknowledgement

I understand that the Royal Commission works with the assistance of its
advisers and service providers. I agree that personal information about me
and provided by me will be handled as described on the Privacy Page.

☒ Yes ☐ No

[Signature] O'Brien, M. G. Se

THE PRIVACY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS ONE
REASON HOWEVE PEOPLE CAN'T FIND OUT
THE TRUTH.



4th July 2019

OPEN LETTER TO BEEF INDUSTRY LEVY PAYERS

RMAC WHITE PAPER THROWS LEVY PAYERS UNDER THE BUS

At 3pm this afternoon Don Mackay as Chair of RMAC will release a White Paper - *A better red meat future: A white paper for the Red Meat Advisory Council* recommending a restructure of our industry to elevate their control over industry issues and levies but ignoring the democratic rights of levy payers to own the body advocating for our businesses and to elect those representing the interests of levy payers.

RMAC will be replaced by Red Meat Australia to advocate for all businesses in the beef supply chain by perpetuating the Peak Industry Councils (PICs) and offering PICs the opportunity to appoint a director on the new organisation.

Levy payers whether grass-fed cattle producers, processors, lot feeders or live exporters are forgotten in this model and are expected to sit back and watch the machinations of the appointed representatives as they deal with the issues that they consider important for our industries.

Red Meat Australia must be owned by the levy payers and its directors elected by the levy payers. For too long our rural businesses have suffered from the inept and at times catastrophic decision making by those nominated to PICs and RMAC.

As an example, when the current CEO of RMAC was Policy Director of AgForce, she was involved in developing the policy recommending to the Queensland Government the eradication of Johne's disease from the Queensland beef herd. The pain and suffering in the bush by those quarantined by this policy, now proved to be totally fallacious, and their significant financial loss, rests at the feet of all who prosecuted it including Cattle Council of Australia and AgForce.

Past Senate enquiries established the need for democratic representation and ownership of the bodies established to advocate for our industry. We call on the Federal Minister for Agriculture to ensure cattle producers, processors, lot feeders and live exporters are treated fairly in this restructure and are the members of Red Meat Australia and elect its directors by open ballot.

We ask all levy payers in our industry to contact the Minister for Agriculture at [redacted] to change the proposed model to enact a fair and just structure where those who pay have a right to say. We must not allow the damage caused in the past to be perpetuated by apathy.

John Gunthorpe

Australian Cattle Industry Council.

WITH RURAL SUICIDE VIA JOHNE'S AND
WATER POLICY. WE WOULD WELCOME THE
OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER INPUT DE

Johne's Policy
1st Part

13 February 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

As a service to the sheep/dairy producers suffering from the injustices of the Johne's Program, it was suggested by Don Lawson and [REDACTED] (Directors of the Johne's Alliance) that I ran a telephone hotline service for affected producers to ring me to discuss their concerns.

Don and [REDACTED] knew that there were serious concerns amongst sheep and cattle producers from SA, Victoria and NSW, suffering from the devastating effects that was happening to them, as a result of draconian policies over the issue of Johne's disease ovine or bovine and the lack of empathy for their position from government or neighbour's casting them like lepers from society, through no fault of their own. They had received many phone calls from affected farmers, so felt that a hotline available for more hours than they were able to provide (because of their own business work commitments) that they suggested I ran the service. I did this for two periods of time in 2001 and 2003, for approximately four weeks each session.

During those two periods, I received between 200 and 300 phone calls. Some of them were repeat calls and some lasted only a couple of minutes, the longest being about an hour and half.

Because I had been involved in managing two properties, (one in Victoria, a cow/calf, steer fattening and fat lamb operation and a cow calf property in Queensland) gave me the confidence and credibility that I could relate to the farmers that rang in. Almost all were so relieved to be able to speak to somebody that was sympathetic to their cause and had some understanding of the problems they were going through.

They were some of the most stressed people I have ever come across and their sheer helplessness they found themselves in was enough to make anyone with any heart-weep.

Several things that come to mind in writing this note are the age of most people that had rung in. Many would have loved to have retired but their circumstances had prevented them from doing so, some were in their late sixties to early seventies.

One of the more stressful calls was from a central NSW sheep farmer, as a responsible farmer; felt it was his moral duty to tell his neighbour his sheep had Johne's. A couple of days later he was bashed by his neighbour. The irony being that he was sure that his sheep had contracted Johne's from that neighbour's sheep.

I had a younger fellow from Kangaroo Island that had put his life long savings into his sheep. When his sheep were diagnosed with Johne's, he sold the lot but then went into them again two years after having being instructed that two years was sufficient quarantine period only to lose the flock again. He was in the throes of getting out and going back to Adelaide to get a 9 to 5 job; - a broken young man.

I received several phone calls from farmers so stressed that I knew I did not have the answers for them and they so near to the end of their tether that I referred them to ring, either [REDACTED] or Don Lawson, which many did. I know of one stressed producer, despite their best efforts, did take his own life.

In the end I asked the two Directors if I could be relieved of my position as a help line operator, as I found the process too upsetting and left with a feeling of inadequacy, as this

draconian ill conceived, non-scientific program, was causing so much stress to far too many innocent people

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Former Office Manager Australian Beef Association

Don Lawson

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 27 March 2015 10:59 AM
To: Don Lawson
Subject: Re: MEDIA RELEASE

I love your spelling mistakes I know you put in on purpose.
 Best of luck with this
 Love,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

On 26 Mar 2015, at 6:38 pm, Don Lawson [REDACTED] wrote:

PLEASE DISTRIBUTE THIS PRESS RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE AUSTRALIAN JOHNES ALLIANCE

THE AUSTRALIAN JOHNES ALLIANCE (AJA) SPOKESPERSON DON LAWSON TODAY WELCOMED THE VICTORIAN FARMERS FEDERATIONS (VFF) COMPREHENSIVE PAPER ON THE NEED FOR AN INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF BOVINE JOHNES DISEASE

"THE AJA STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE NEED FOR AN INDEPENDENT COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS THAT LOOKS AT THE REAL COST OF THE CURRENT JOHNES DISEASE POLICIES. THAT ANALYSIS SHOULD INCLUDE THE SUBSTANTIAL LOSS TO PRODUCERS AS WELL AS THE COST TO THE INDUSTRY INCURRED BY ANIMAL HEALTH AUSTRALIA AND THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT BODIES WHO ARE CHARGED WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE JOHNES POLICIES" MR LAWSON SAID "WE KNOW FOR INSTANCE THAT MEAT AND LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA HAS ALLOCATED \$9.8 MILLION TO THIS DISEASE. PRODUCERS NEED TO BE INFORMED ABOUT THE REAL COSTS TO THEIR LEVIES AND TAXPAYERS FUNDS"

JOHNES IS A RELATIVELY MINOR DISEASE BUT HAS HAD TEN TIMES THE AMOUNT SPENT ON IT THAN ANY OTHER DISEASE. THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THIS MUST BE EXAMINED WHILE THIS BJD REVIEW IS BEING UNDERTAKEN

THE AJA HAS REQUESTED A MORATORIUM BE PUT IN PLACE FOR THE LAST 450 HERDS IN THE FAILED MARKET ASSURANCE PROGRAM

THE FACT IS THIS SMALL NUMBER OF PRODUCERS ARE FORCED INTO THE PROGRAM TO TRADE WITHIN AUSTRALIA BUT IF THEY TESTED WITH A FALSE POSITIVE OR THE SHEEP STRAIN THEIR ENTIRE BUSINESS IS AT RISK WITHOUT ANY PROPER COMPENSATION

THE AJA WELCOMES THE POSITIVE MOVE FROM THE VFF AND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THEM TO BRING SANITY AND COMMONSENSE TO THE MANAGEMENT OF JOHNES BY INDIVIDUAL PRODUCERS AND THEIR PRIVATE VETS AS IS THE CASE WITH ALL OTHER ON FARM DISEASE MANAGEMENT

"JOHNES IS A MANAGEMENT DISEASE FOR FARMERS IN HIGH RAINFALL OR IRRIGATION AREAS WHERE INTENSIVE GRAZING TAKES PLACE" MR LAWSON SAID

Don Lawson OAM
 [REDACTED]

4/07/2019

TO THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO MENTAL HEALTH

a supplementary submission

5/7/2019

one of the limiting factors in the rural areas is a limited access to RURAL legal aid and RURAL psychologists

my observations at the [REDACTED] court house is that a large number of cases are really mental health issues that the court and police have to deal with

the limiting factors are that the duty solicitors or legal AID are under resourced and generally not trained to deal with mental health issues and or drug and alcohol addiction cases

most of those involved in these cases don't have the resources to engage a private legal representative

I have enclosed a current fee structure to demonstrate the level of fees as a guide these can range from \$600 to \$320 PER HOUR a barristers fees may be even higher

there needs to be assistance from the court as to how these ill people can represent themselves at no cost

IN MY VIEW THE LEGAL COURT SYSTEM NEEDS A MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE TO HELP ASSESS THE REAL NEEDS OF THOSE WHO ARE ILL

the police are under resourced and need psychologists to assist as a percentage of police only make mental health issue worse as they lack training in this area

yours sincerely

Don Lawson OAM M.AG.SC

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Don Lawson

O. A. M

ATTACHED LEGAL FEES LETTER