

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 6 April 2011, Page 2507

LIVESTOCK ACT

The Hon. A. BRESSINGTON (20:01):

I rise to briefly indicate my support for the honourable member's motion to disallow the livestock regulations concerning Property Identification Code fees. As the honourable member outlined when introducing the motion, hobby farmers, those who simply have a sheep or an alpaca to mow the lawn, or a couple of horses or a single pony for the kids for recreational purposes, will be required to register their property and be liable for the Property Identification Code fee of \$76 every second year.

This is part of PIRSA's march towards total cost recovery, that is, cost neutrality to government, something that has often been spoken against in this place but nevertheless begrudgingly accepted. However, I believe this is different. Whereas previously, cost recovery initiatives were directed at those deriving an income from their property or licence, this expands the requirement to pay to those who own small numbers of livestock for no monetary gain. To quote the current sa.gov.au webpage entitled 'Livestock property registration':

Some fees are paid directly from funds collected on behalf of the respective industry. Others are payable by producers.

Clearly, this page is yet to be updated. However, it does highlight the shift represented as we move from industry and producers being required to register their property, to all owners of livestock, including those for recreational purposes, self-sufficiency, or simply just a pet.

This is not to say that I do not support the Property Identification Code regime, and I can see the benefits of knowing the location of livestock if there is an outbreak of an infectious disease that may threaten industry, but I believe it to be a step too far in PIRSA's cost recovery to be charging recreational and hobby farmers. While I understand that there would necessarily be some cost offset, it would seem to me to be more appropriate to have free mandatory registration for recreational and hobby farmers, with the fee paid by those deriving income from their property.

I am unsure of whether the option of linking the requirement to pay the fee to whether a property owner has an Australian Business Number for the purposes has been explored, but I would have thought this would be possible. Regardless, I do not support the current fee structure and, for this reason, I support this motion.