



ALPA

Submission

Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019

To:

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
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31/7/19

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ALPA is a proud member of



Australian Livestock & Property Agents Association (ALPA)

ALPA is the national peak industry body for livestock and property agents.

ALPA represents more than 1,200 agency businesses across Australia. Collectively this group plays an important role in livestock, wool, merchandise and rural property sales and marketing.

ALPA members handle in excess of 97% of rural agency business Australia wide.

ALPA is one of the largest national organisations of small rural business men and women, relied on to protect the interests of agents and producers nationally.

ALPA national membership includes Elders, Landmark, Ruralco and private livestock agencies across Australia.

ALPA appreciates the opportunity to participate in this inquiry.

ALPA GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Australian Livestock & Property Agents Association Ltd (**ALPA**) submission is in response to the Criminal Code Amendment (Agricultural Protection) Bill 2019.

Livestock Agents play a pivotal role in the Australian agricultural sector. Agents are considered trusted advisors to livestock producers. It is disappointing that both agents and their vendor clients have been impacted by recent animal activist activity.

ALPA believes that the amendments put forward are important to ensure the entire agricultural supply chain can go about their business without the fear of being harassed or the threat of trespass.



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ALPA membership is a signature of professionalism in the industry

ALPA COMMENTS

ALPA is supportive of the amendment to the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Criminal Code) to introduce two new offences relating to the incitement of trespass or property offences on agricultural land.

ALPA welcomes the primary production business definition that covers livestock saleyards which have been the source of a number of recent animal activist invasions and demonstrations in Victoria and Western Australia.

While we welcome the new offences being introduced, we are concerned that historically the courts do not enforce the maximum penalties available, or anywhere near it.

There have been many instances where activists have left court with a small fine and often without a conviction being recorded.

This does nothing to deter similar offences happening again and sends a message that activist activities are not considered serious to warrant the maximum penalty being applied.

ALPA acknowledges the Bill has exemptions for journalists and whistle-blowers.

The Bill states that the exemption applies if the material relates to a news report that is in the public interest.

ALPA has real concerns of the term public interest. Animal activists may have a very differing view on what they perceive as public interest against what the agricultural industry perceives as common and accepted practice.

It is important that that this exemption is controlled in a way that does not allow for Australian farms and agricultural businesses be further victimised.

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