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ALEC welcomes industry support for Dairy Cattle Export Charge

THE Australian Livestock Exporters' Council (ALEC) has welcomed the positive feedback received during the consultation period for the proposed implementation of a new statutory Dairy Cattle Export Charge.

ALEC CEO Simon Westaway said a wide range of stakeholders had participated in the consultation process, which commenced in May 2017, with key industry groups welcoming the proposed \$6 per head charge.

"We've had encouraging engagement with producer groups and we're grateful for the support of the likes of the Australian Dairy Farmers, the National Farmers' Federation and NSW Farmers," Mr Westaway said.

"Given the importance of what we are considering as an industry, ALEC has decided to provide a short extension to the consultation period through to 13 October for the proposed Dairy Cattle Export Charge.

"We want to maximise the opportunities for further consultation and engagement with livestock exporters and relevant industry bodies, whilst ensuring arrangements for the timing and mechanism of a future industry vote on the new statutory charge can be conducted soon after."

Following the consultation period, Australian Government licensed livestock exporters will vote on the establishment of the statutory charge. ALEC is overseeing this process in accordance with the Australian Government's *Levy Principles and Guidelines*.

When the consultation period commenced in May, Mr Westaway said that ALEC members had unanimously voted to implement a statutory Dairy Cattle Export Charge in recognition of the importance of collective, targeted RD&E investment.

"This statutory charge will ensure our industry's service delivery body, LiveCorp, is adequately resourced to administer programs which enhance the productivity, sustainability and competitiveness of Australia's dairy cattle export industry by undertaking RD&E and providing technical support to exporters," he said.

Australian livestock exporters currently pay statutory export charges on exported beef cattle, sheep and goats. In 2006 livestock exporters chose to initiate a voluntary charge on exported dairy cattle, introduced to enable funding for sector-specific RD&E and marketing at a rate of \$3 per head. ALEC members voted to increase the voluntary charge to \$6 per head in 2014.

"The existing voluntary dairy cattle export charge is significantly under-collected and is not sufficient to meet the RD&E and marketing needs of our dairy cattle export sector which is worth \$127 million FOB (FY 2016/17)," Mr Westaway said.

Mr Westaway said a likely scenario was for an industry vote to be conducted by ALEC's Annual General Meeting in Perth on 14 November, coinciding with the industry's national conference [LIVEXchange 2017](#).