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Process to implement statutory Dairy Cattle Export Charge commences

THE Australian Livestock Exporters' Council (ALEC) has commenced a process to implement a statutory Dairy Cattle Export Charge at a rate of \$6 per head.

The consultation period for the proposed statutory charge, which has now commenced, will conclude on 1 September 2017, with ALEC overseeing the process in accordance with the Australian Government's *Levy Principles and Guidelines*.

ALEC CEO Simon Westaway said that following consultation with stakeholders, Australian Government licensed livestock exporters would vote on the establishment of the Dairy Cattle Export Charge.

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

"The revenue will be invested for benefit the industry, with a focus on enhanced accountability, transparency and community engagement, as well as facilitating and maintaining market access and delivering RD&E projects to improve animal health and welfare."

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 voluntary dairy cattle export charge is significantly under-collected and is not sufficient to meet the RD&E and marketing needs of the dairy cattle export sector," Mr Westaway said.

"ALEC members unanimously voted to implement a statutory Dairy Cattle Export Charge because exporters recognise the importance of collective, targeted RD&E investment and acknowledge the restrictions and challenges of the current voluntary arrangement.

"The implementation of a statutory Dairy Cattle Export Charge reflects both a positive and necessary step forward for the dairy cattle export sector as well as Australia's livestock export industry more broadly."