Virginia Hawker

Other, please specify: nee Collins - my family owned Collinsville. In the mid 1980s Collinsville genetics influenced 30% of Australia's wool clip when there were 100 million Merino sheep in Australia earning #\$5 billion in export income.

- Q 1. I do not have any concerns AWI is not meeting its statutory funding obligations.
- Q 2. The current governance arrangements are very effective. AWI, under its current leadership performing is superbly and delivering outstanding results to its shareholders. The board election process of AWI is totally democratic especially when compared with MLA, CCA and SCA. Every woolgrower has the opportunity to elect the board, and anyone can stand for the board if they obtain sufficient woolgrower votes. Their detractors, some sections of the media and several senators have agendas to destabilize the company for their own purposes. They are held in contempt by the vast majority of woolgrowers who are grateful to have people of such high calibre on the board, and in senior executive positions of AWI. Instead of 'persecuting' AWI, an enquiry should be held into AHA and their appalling mismanagement of the Johne's Disease debacle, as well as into MLA, CCA & SCA who have incestuous cross-funding arrangements, which are utterly opaque. They are totally different in their financial accountability to AWI whose corporate governance and annual reports are completely transparent.
- Q 3. By any measure, AWI is exceeding market expectations with wool at the highest prices for decades across most microns. Demand for any product does not just happen. The reason worldwide demand for wool is so buoyant is because of a wide array of excellent marketing initiatives, innovative product development and regular contact between Mr Merriman, other board members, senior executives with processors, designers and countless others in the world of wool. AWI has huge goodwill and overwhelming support from its stakeholders. I will be very surprised if AWI does not exceed its planned outcomes and targets in 2019.
- Q 4. It is extremely easy to follow AWI's activities. AWI's stance on mulesing is absolutely correct it is up to individual woolgrowers to decide whether to or not. Millions of sheep would die from flystrike/blood poisoning if they were not mulesed. AWI has been pivotal in enabling the sheep industry to have a sensible approach to Johne's Disease unlike the cattle industry's traumas as a result of the devastating policies of MLA, CCA and AHA. Even a cursory glance at the 2016/17 AWI annual report online shows the enormous breadth of marketing, research and extension activities undertaken by AWI. They are carefully targeted, well conducted and pivotal to the future of the wool industry worldwide.
- Q 5. AWI engages, consults and communicates brilliantly with its stakeholders. The chair, board members and senior executives attend a vast array of industry events where anyone can have their opinion heard and discussed. Their consultative approach to stakeholders is totally different from MLA, CCA, SCA and AHA who are very difficult to communicate with.
- Q 6. I am not qualified to answer this question other than to say that AWI's handling of proxies is in line with most other Australian companies where shareholders can (and do) direct their proxies to the chairman or a board member.
- Q 7. AWI collaborates closely with all relevant R&D organisations to achieve positive outcomes for its shareholders, and the wider wool community. Its contributions and returns are clearly quantified in the annual reports unlike MLA etc.
- Q 8. No, and I think any change would require changes to the AWI constitution which would be difficult and disruptive to achieve.
- Q 9. I am not qualified to answer this question but if employee longevity is of value, AWI is performing very well.