



Deer Industry

Good afternoon,

On behalf of the NSW Deer Industry Branch and in consultation with our National Branch we would like to file our objections to the changing of the way deer are referred to from "Game" to "Pest". The Australian Farmed Deer industry is a small but robust industry and this terminology change as recommended in the draft report would have a significant and negative impact on our members.

Please allow us to make two key points pertaining to this statement and then explain how the re-classification will negatively impact the farmed deer industry;

1. While we the farmed deer industry acknowledge that there are pockets of high feral deer populations within NSW; we are confident that these pockets are not the result of practices employed by contemporary industry participants.
2. We believe that the re-classification of Australian deer from 'game' to 'pest' will encourage a rise in illegal poaching which could lead to injury and loss of life of both deer farmers and their livestock. Poaching is already a significant issue for deer farmers, and while we already employ resources and consistent measures to reduce poaching on our properties, the practice continues. We are very concerned that the increased publicity/awareness of deer as a hunting animal that will certainly result from this re-classification will increase poaching and make it more difficult to try and control.

With the above points in mind; we would ask that the committee consider the following;

Farmed deer, like all farmed animals, do escape from their paddocks occasionally - this can be due to natural events (trees falling over fences because of high winds or bushfires) or malicious practices (fence cutting etc). In these situations, we farmers make (in the majority of cases) successful efforts to re-capture animals after these events, and these successes can be attributed to constantly improving farming practices which create quieter and easier to manage animals. Sometimes, and depending on the farm's location and the circumstances of the events surrounding the animal becoming loose, it can take a week or two for them to be brought back. Our industry is very concerned that if the re-classification goes through, a farmer's stock may be destroyed by poachers before he or she can successfully retrieve them and securely return his or her herd to the farm.

This would of course adversely affect that farmer's financial position but also his or her mental stability. Both are ongoing areas of concern for many rural communities across Australia and one that should hold much weight when considering changes to laws.

The current status in relation to deer hunting was developed in conjunction with Deer Industry and we are content with that, though it does not stop all "poaching" and illegal behaviour it does set the correct standards which people should adhere to.

Yours Sincerely,

Tim Hansen
(On behalf of Deer Industry Association of Australia NSW Branch)