



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Inquiry into rural skills training and research

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 29 May 2006

Chair: Alby Schultz MP
Deputy Chair: Dick Adams MP

Committee to explore rationalisation of agricultural education

Committee Public Hearing in Parliament House, Canberra – 31 May 2006

The **South Australian Division of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology** will appear before the House of Representatives Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee on Wednesday (31 May) for its inquiry into rural skills training and research.

The teleconference public hearing will take place **from 5.00 pm in Committee Room 1R3, Parliament House, Canberra.**

The SA Division's submission (no. 111 on the committee's website) states that:

“Taxpayers should not be expected to continue to fund the current [agricultural education delivery] structure. Opportunities must exist for rationalization through concentration of resources at fewer centres in order to maintain critical mass... This would probably mean that some universities would get out of ag education altogether”.

The submission also raises a number of issues for consideration, such as the balance between generalist and specialist training, and the impact of research funding on teaching.

The committee chair, Alby Schultz (Member for Hume, NSW), said “there are many challenges facing agricultural education now and in the future. It is important to discuss these and possible courses of action. The committee is interested in hearing more the ways to ensure an ongoing supply of well qualified and skilled graduates enter the industry workforce”.

Further details about the inquiry, including terms of reference and submissions, can be obtained from the committee's website at:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind/ruralskills/> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500 or emailing Aff.reps@aph.gov.au.

For media comment: please contact the committee chair, Alby Schultz MP, on (02) 6277 4386 or email Alby.Schultz.MP@aph.gov.au.

For more information: please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500.