



Newsletter

January/February 2006

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Is Australia's Largest Agricultural Event Under Threat?

As CE of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW (RAS), Roger Perkins heads up a not for profit organisation that has made an enormous contribution to the recognition of agriculture and rural Australia. Join Farm Writers in February when Roger Perkins will talk about the future of the RAS as a Sydney based agricultural organisation.

Since Roger joined the RAS in 1997, he has had key involvement in many successful events that showcase Australia and Australian culture including the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, and consecutive Sydney Royal Easter Shows. Under his leadership, the Sydney Royal Easter Show has gone from strength to strength and is now the largest annual event in the Southern Hemisphere.

Prior to joining the RAS, Mr Perkins was the Chief Executive of ANL Limited where he successfully restructured the company following the Government's decision to privatise it. Prior to this, Mr Perkins was the Managing Director of an Engineering Public Company and before this ran British Paints and Berger Paints in Australia.

The RAS is one of Australia's most successful event management organisations and is responsible for the management of exhibitions and events held at Sydney Olympic Park's Sydney Showground year round. To assist in managing the demand for venues and services, the RAS has developed the Society's Exhibition and Catering business at Sydney

Showground, which Roger is also responsible for.

Once a year, at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, the RAS pulls out all the stops to entertain the city folk, and do the country folk proud. Show themes in the past have showcased

Australian icons

such as the Man from Snowy River and Ned Kelly, however this is all about to change. With major success in running international events under its belt, the RAS is set to push the 2006 Sydney Royal Easter Show onto the international stage by hosting an international rodeo to celebrate the 75th anniversary of rodeo at the Show. Such large scale events will put the Show in a new league, alongside events such as the Calgary Stampede.

Join Farm Writers on 24th February as Roger Perkins reveals the threats and opportunities as the RAS moves into the new era. ☺ Know a speaker you'd like to hear at a Farm Writers' event? Email us at suggestions@nswfarmwriters.org



Roger Perkins, Chief Executive, RAS NSW.

Register on-line for the luncheon on Friday 24th February 2006.

Corporate Members of the Month: Cox Inall Communications and AWEX

Venue: The MENZIES HOTEL, 14 Carrington Street, Sydney.

When: Friday 24th February at 12pm for 12:30pm

Cost: \$55 per head, or voucher, for members. \$65 per head for all non-members.

Register: **BEFORE 5:00pm on Wednesday 22nd February**, on-line at <http://www.nswfarmwriters.org> or by emailing bookings@nswfarmwriters.org or by phone to Sarah Robson, (02) 8204 3730.

Late cancellations: Phone Sarah Robson, (02) 8204 3730

Website sponsored by Telstra Country Wide NSW

Minister Launches New Voice for Ag at Farm Writers Christmas Luncheon

Minister for Primary Industries, Ian Macdonald, recently announced a new advisory council for agriculture to help funnel the views of farmers and industry to the State Government at this year's Farm Writers' Association Christmas luncheon at NSW Parliament.

Mr Macdonald, who is a patron of the Farm Writers Association and hosted the day, took the opportunity to launch the new advisory body in front of the large gathering of agribusiness leaders and communications specialists at the popular lunch.

Comprising 16 people, largely high-flying farmers representing their respective commodity groups from across NSW, Mr Macdonald said he created the NSW Agricultural Ministerial Advisory Council to provide the Government with "a single, consolidated viewpoint on critical issues facing today's and tomorrow's farming community".

The group would be chaired by rural marketing specialist, Mike Cahill. Other members of the new council include Auscott CEO and chair of the Cotton Catchment Communities CRC, Dave Anthony; Sunrice chairman, Gerry Lawson; poultry meat producer, Peter Bartter; Young horticulture producer, Phil Brown; Holbrook sheep meat producer and former Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Richard Bull; Sydney produce marketer, Nick Moraitis; Hawkesbury-based dairy farmer, Janet Moxey, Sydney egg producer, Frank Pace; former president of the NSW farmers association (representing mixed farming), Mal Peters; former Twynam board member, Bill Sweeney (independent council member), Haddon Rig Merino stud principal, George Faulkner, Trangie grain grower, David Kinsey; Australian Pork Limited policy manager, Kathleen Plowman; Nimmitabel beef producer, Howard Charles and Deputy Director General of the NSW Department of Primary Industries, Renata Brooks.

Mr Macdonald has asked the new council to consider "priority issues", including water management, land use conflicts, biosecurity, drought management and the perception of agricultural industries. He said the council would replace the number of smaller industry bodies to create an overall group, and follows the establishment of separate councils for mining,



Farm Writers Chairman Mike Cahill and Minister Macdonald.

natural resources, fisheries and forestry. Mr Macdonald also addressed some of the key challenges and events which faced farmers during 2005 during his presentation to Farm Writers'. He said it had been an active 12 months for the government, with the amalgamation of various departments continuing within the Department of Primary Industries.

Mr Macdonald said agriculture was now given sufficient strength within the new "super" department to help rebuild its influence in parliament. "I don't think the era of maintaining small departments is viable these days," Mr Macdonald said. "Agriculture was losing its influence, but the DPI is of a sufficient strength to be part of major decision making."

He said the year had witnessed a "remarkably successful" rollout of the National Livestock Identification System, despite some early implementation problems with the supply of tags, while the finalisation and release of the contentious native vegetation regulations would enhance local decision making on land management issues.

Rural Writing Competition

Could you be Australia's entrant in an international agricultural writing contest?

We're looking for NSW best rural story for 2005 by a member of Farm Writers. That story becomes the NSW finalist in the national judging to represent Australia at the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) star prize competition.

For further information see www.ifaj.org or email ☺ bevjordan@msn.com.au