

Frequently Asked Questions

The livestock transaction levies you pay are the basis for calculating your voting rights for MLA ballots, in particular the annual general meeting (AGM). Listed below is information about the AGM, the Levies Notice, the Proxy form and other frequently asked questions.

1. When and where is the MLA AGM?

The 2011 MLA AGM will be held on 17 November in Longreach, QLD.

2. Who can vote at the MLA AGM?

Only MLA members can vote at the MLA AGM. If you are not sure whether you are a member, contact MLA membership services on 1800 675 717 or email membership@mla.com.au

If you are a producer of cattle, sheep or goats and pay the livestock transaction levy, you are eligible to apply for membership of MLA. Membership is free. For an application form please see www.mla.com.au/join or email membership@mla.com.au

3. What are livestock transaction levies?

Livestock transaction levies are levies charged on the sale and transfer of livestock (cattle, sheep and goats). The money raised is invested in the red meat industry to assist in research and development, marketing and market access activities.

Levies are collected by the Australian Government's Levies Revenue Service (LRS), not MLA. LRS then distributes the income from the levies amongst Animal Health Australia, Australian National Residue Survey and Meat & Livestock Australia Limited (MLA).

4. How much is the livestock transaction levy?

The levy amount is different depending on the type of animal sold, i.e. cattle, bobby calves, sheep, lambs or goats.

5. How do I obtain my full voting entitlement for the AGM?

'Full' voting entitlement means the maximum number of votes members can obtain based on the amount of livestock transaction levies that were paid to MLA (in each class) during the previous financial year.

To obtain your full voting entitlement, you need to complete and return the Levies Notice by the deadline shown on the form. If you don't return the Levies Notice to MLA by the deadline you will be allocated a single vote.

6. If I am not already a MLA member, how do I become a member to enable me to participate in the 2011 AGM?

To get full voting entitlements new members must apply for membership by 16 September. Following ratification of their membership they will then be sent a Levies Notice to complete by COB 5 October.

If they apply after 16 September and before COB 5 October they will be able to participate in the AGM but will only be entitled to one vote. Those who apply after 5 October will not be able to participate in this year's AGM.

Membership applications are available on the MLA website at www.mla.com.au/membership

7. What is the Levies Notice?

The Levies Notice is the way members inform MLA about the amount of livestock transaction levies they paid in the previous financial year. This information is used as the basis for determining your full voting entitlements. The Levies Notice form is sent to all MLA members in July each year.

8. Doesn't MLA already get my levy information automatically?

MLA does not receive information on the levies paid by each individual levy payer. Levies are paid directly to the Australian Government's Levies Revenue Service and only bulk amounts are forwarded to MLA for the purposes of either marketing or R&D. With the exception of the dairy and wool industries, at present privacy restrictions prevent a broker/agent/processor or feedlotter from forwarding on a levy payer's individual information through to the government body (Levies Revenue Service) and/or the industry body eg MLA.

MLA commissioned a review of the process to seek a better system however the industry has determined that the benefits of a more automatic system were far outweighed by the substantial cost involved. The important difference between industries such as dairy and wool, compared to the livestock industry, is that while wool has approximately 260 brokers or collection points for levies and dairy less than 100, the livestock industry has over 2600 collection points (agents, abattoirs, feedlots, and other producers). We also have multiple species which further complicates the system.

The additional levy collection costs for the industry to implement the system would also have to come from existing MLA marketing or R&D programs. The current voluntary levies notice system is also relatively simple to complete and many producers now record this information electronically.

9. Can't MLA use the transaction levy information I supplied last year?

No, the process of securing your voting rights is an annual process. Your current year's votes are dependent on how much you paid in levies during the previous financial year.

10. How do I know what levies I have been charged?

The levies charged on livestock sales should be shown on the sales receipts received from your agent or processor.

11. What about private sales?

Levies should also be paid on private sales. To find out how, producers need to contact the Levies Revenue Service directly. Central Office (Canberra) – 1800 020 619

PLEASE NOTE: the Levies Revenue Service DOES NOT hold information on how many levies an individual producer has paid. They can only explain how it should be paid.

12. Can I still vote at the AGM if I don't complete and return the levies notice before the deadline?

Yes you can still vote. However you will be allocated a single vote, not your full voting entitlement.

13. How do I know how many votes I have?

Each year in October the formal AGM pack is posted to all MLA members. The pack includes the formal AGM papers including the Voting entitlement and Proxy form. The number of votes you have will be shown on the top of the Voting entitlement and Proxy form.

14. What is the difference between the Class voting entitlements and the Aggregate voting entitlement as shown on the Voting entitlement and Proxy form?

Class voting entitlements are the number of votes you have in each class of livestock – ie cattle, grainfed cattle, sheep and prime lambs, or goats – and are dependant on the amount of livestock levies you have paid for each species as you indicated on your Levies Notice. These entitlements are used for class specific resolutions.

15. I believe the amount of votes I have been allocated is incorrect?

All votes are calculated using the details the producer provides on the Levies Notice and the levies scale. Bear in mind not all of the transaction levy is paid to MLA. For example – only \$4.58 of the \$5.00 cattle levy is currently paid to MLA, therefore voting entitlements will not be one vote per \$.

16. What fax number or address should I return the Levies Notice/Proxy form to?

The free call fax number is 1800 022 040. A reply paid envelope is provided with the Levies Notice and Proxy form.

Alternatively address an envelope to:
Meat & Livestock Australia Limited
Reply Paid 3561
Melbourne VIC 8060

17. How can I return my levies notice online?

Visit www.mla.com.au/voting and follow the directions. Your MLA member number can be found on the Levies Notice or on your MLA membership card.

18. I have lost/didn't receive my Levies Notice/Voting entitlements and Proxy form. How do I obtain another one?

You will need to ring the MLA Membership Services Line on 1800 675 717 and select option 1. Please have your MLA membership number ready.

19. My old address details have been used for the Levies Notice/AGM pack?

The address data is compiled a couple of weeks before any large mailing as it takes a considerable length of time to print all of the forms, then pack and post the packages. If you inform MLA of a change of address during this time, your new details will not be used.

To ensure your address details have been updated either ring the MLA membership services line on 1800 675 717 or email membership@mla.com.au

20. Do I need to register beforehand to attend the MLA AGM?



No you do not need to register beforehand. However, you should have either your MLA membership card or your Voting entitlement and Proxy form with you when you register on the day.

21. Who can attend the MLA AGM?

MLA's AGM can be attended by:

- MLA members
- Any proxy, attorney or representative appointed by a member
- Other persons permitted by MLA

22. I'm a small producer, only selling 100 head of cattle each year. How can I compete with the large pastoral companies who sell thousands of head of cattle?

The method for calculating voting entitlements contains a mechanism that reduces the voting strength of the large producers. A sliding scale is incorporated in the calculation. The current scale is shown on the yellow and green card which accompanied the Levies Notice.