

finalreport

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Supply Chain Management Lamb and Sheepmeat “Support Coordinator”

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Abstract

The Lamb and Sheepmeat Support Coordinator assists members of the MLA sheepmeat supply chain management program to focus on the development and the delivery of customised information and services to supply chains and their participants . This improves compliance with customer specifications and increases industry efficiency.

A productive 12 months for the “Support Coordinator of the MLA sheepmeat supply chain program” built on the strong foundation developed in 2003 and 2004.

2005/06 has seen more planning and development work as part of “a team” on more integrated, diverse and complex projects throughout MLA – Livestock Production & Innovation.

The role of “support coordinator” continues to provide the MLA, Sheepmeat Supply Chain management team with:

- forum, seminar and workshop planning, development and evaluation skills
- quality control & development of 30+ consultants engaged to deliver on-behalf of MLA
- time to develop relationships with the numerous networks important for this program (ie state and local livestock agents, industry consultants, state DPI's).
- ability to consolidate and combine industry information and R&D into useful resources
- a sounding board for industry development and issues.
- A team based approach
- An interest in fostering linkages with beef and sheep industry development
- Assistance in planning, development, delivery and evaluation on “practice change” programs

MLA Prime Time

Working as part of the team of MLA LPI, IAC & Marketing and Currie Communications, the previous 3 years of the MLA Prime Time program was reviewed both externally (workshopped) and internally. The evaluation acknowledged the program as a resounding success in commencing “practice change”.

4 MLA Pastoral Prime Time Forums were developed and delivered across Australia

Planning and early delivery of 20 MLA Prime Time Workshops has commenced.

Of the 14 MLA Prime Time Wean More Lambs demonstration sites established in 2004/05, 6 have finalised their results, 6 continue and 2 have ceased operation.

Cost of Production

A Cost of Production (CoP) workshop and web based tool covering both beef and lamb has been developed, piloted, resourced and is in early stages of delivering 20 workshops across Australia.

Industry Planning Forums

A number of industry planning forums and workshops and field days were attended on behalf of MLA and included The Hamilton Sheep Vention, WA Sheep Updates Review workshop, Sheep CRC II – C&A planning, SA Lamb Development Team (SALDT) meetings and \$uperBorder\$ Conference.

Confinement Feeding

Support was provided to the Confinement feeding – lamb finishing project with assistance with the terms of reference and overview of the “Stocktake Survey”, “Literature review” and “analysis of economic tools” for this sector. At the request of both industry and MLA, in January 2006, an industry workshop was facilitated and a group of “Australian Lamb Finishers” have aligned themselves with Sheepmeat Council of Australia to progress the development in this sector in conjunction with MLA.

Sheep Genetics Australia

In conjunction with the Sheep Genetics Australia team, assistance was provided in the planning, evaluation and actual facilitation of 9 Sheep Genetics Australia Information Forums across Australia to inform producers (mostly current users) of the new system and the opportunities it affords.

EDGENetwork

EDGENetwork workshops reviewed were Effective Breeding (lambs), Money Making Mums, and Money Making Merinos. As part of with MLA EDGE and SGA, terms of reference were developed, reviewers engaged, their drafts peer reviewed and pilots are planned for late June and early July.

Wean More Lambs EDGENetwork workshop review has also commenced, with contribution from Holmes Sackett & Associates. This strengthens the “economic aspect” in addition to bringing in their experience from the MLA Wean More Lamb Demonstration Sites Project.

The pastoral sector has expressed an interest in WML and their needs will be explored including possible delivery format and associated resources.

National Lamb Industry Convention

Coordination of the committee of the National Lamb Industry Convention was attempted, but in part did not meet planned expectations.

Success was achieved in meeting process and actions, empowerment to develop a quality program and engagement of potential International and “fresh” speakers. Late development of the “Communications Plan” and being unable to engage the committee in ownership of the “hard task – sponsorship”, meant the budget fell well short of requirements by \$150K and the Convention was postponed.

It is quite possible that industry will not provide adequate funding for such an event even though they believe it is an important mechanism to gather and focus the industry. Industry will attend, but appear reluctant to sponsor to the magnitude that is required of the event to be “self-funding”.

Curfews

Curfews has been raised from a number of sectors of the supply chain (eg producers, transporters, saleyards & processors & scientists (SMEQ)) and within various units of MLA. An earlier paper was expanded to a sectorial literature review and gap analysis to meet the needs of all parties and now places MLA in a sound position to make decisions on appropriate R&D investment in this sector.

MLA R&D Insights Forum

A “pilot” MLA R&D Insights Forum for 20 private consultants was planned, facilitated and evaluated in conjunction with the MLA LPI team.. This provided MLA with valuable learning on how and what to engage this sector with in the future.

Executive Summary

The consultant co-managed:

1. The implementation and management for MLA Pastoral Prime Time which included event location organisation, program design, presenter briefs, presenter scheduling, and finalising presentation content and agreements/contracts where required of over 20 consultants.
2. The coordination, development and planned delivery of Prime Time workshops including; communicating program to stakeholders, finalising workshop locations, program content and contracting of 10+ deliverers.
3. Assisted in the development and delivery of the 2006 National Lamb Industry Convention.
4. Provided support to the supply chain program coordinator and program manager, as directed by MLA.
5. Assisted in the development of projects and in the delivery of appropriate information at key industry forums as directed by MLA.
6. Identified and communicated problems and issues as they arose and, with MLA's consent, carried out prompt remedial action and undertook other actions and activities, as directed by MLA from time to time.

The consultant was unable to

7. Bring the 2006 National Lamb Industry Convention to fruition. It was postponed.
8. Coordinate input and development of the 4th Australian Prime Lamb Group Compendium to publication standard, (was to be a new resource for the NLIC, but the timeline can now be reviewed.)
9. Develop the following on-farm resources as the development of the AWI/MLA Sheep & Wool best Practice Manual has required highest priority and this put on-hold any further development of specific resources, as they will need to compliment and dovetail into this flagship manual. Hence the following were not developed;:
 - Pregnant scanning ewes project – awaiting major “reproduction” review
 - Weaner trading description – handled & implemented by NLRS
 - Maternal state workshops (MCPT) – awaiting redevelopment of EDGE workshop and development SGA Ram Breeder workshops.
 - Maternal Tips and Tools – as above.
10. Management Solutions Tip and Tools – both projects were extended for seasonal reasons and to allow detailed financial analysis to occur.

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1 Background

1.1 Background

The MLA supply chain management program focuses on the development and delivery to supply chains and its participants, customised information and services to improve compliance with customer specifications and increase industry efficiency.

This agreement makes provision for the Services of a lamb and sheepmeat support coordinator.

The Services support the supply chain program coordinator and project manager to achieve the program objectives.

2 Project Objectives

2.1 Project Objectives

The Consultant will achieve the following objective(s) to MLA's reasonable satisfaction:

By 30 June 2006, the Consultant will:

1. **Implement and manage the following aspects of the Prime Time project plan including;**
Manage the process of finalising event locations, forum programs and presenters for MLA Pastoral Prime Time, including developing presenter brief, presenter scheduling, finalising presentation content and agreements where required.

Coordinate the development and delivery of workshops including communicating program to stakeholders, finalising workshop locations, program, content and delivers.
2. **Coordinate the development and implementation of on-farm resources:**
 - Pregnant scanning ewes project
 - Weaner trading description
 - Maternal state workshops (MCPT)
 - Maternal Tips and Tools
 - Management Solutions Tip and Tools
3. **Coordinate the development and implementation of the 2006 National Lamb Industry Convention,**
4. **Coordinate input and development of the 4th Australian Prime Lamb Group Compendium to publication standard,**
5. **Provide support to the supply chain program coordinator and program manager, as directed by MLA,**
6. **Assist in the development of projects and in the delivery of information at key industry forums as directed by MLA,**
7. **Identify problems and issues as they arise and with MLA's consent carry out prompt remedial action and undertake other actions and activities, as directed by MLA.**

3 Methodology

3.1 Methodology

Communications

Subject to the confidentiality obligations, the Services will be communicated by the Consultant:

Item	Details	Person responsible
Quarterly reports	Detailed quarterly report of the sub-program activities, in relation to the strategic and operational plans.	Bruce Hancock
Final report	The final report will include a section detailing the implications of the research findings to industry. The final report will be supplied in both electronic and hard copy format and may be reproduced and published in the standard MLA style, with due acknowledgment to the Research Organisation/Consultant. Only final reports submitted in accordance with MLA's style guide will be accepted by MLA. Report guidelines will be provided by MLA on request.	Bruce Hancock 30/06/06

Agents or subcontractors

Subject to the obligations relating to agents and subcontractors, MLA consents to the engagement of the following agents or subcontractors:

Milestones

Number	Milestone and achievement criteria	Due date
1	On signing of agreement	01/07/2005
2	Achievement and acceptance of milestones by MLA	30/09/2005
3	Achievement and acceptance of milestones by MLA.	31/12/2005
4	Achievement and acceptance of milestones by MLA	31/03/2006
5	Achievement and acceptance of milestones by MLA	30/06/2006

Fees and Payment

Total Funds =	\$128,690	(GST exclusive)	
Daily rate =	\$757	Number of Days	170

Cash flow

Nominated Person	Daily Rate	Max days	Max fees	Max expenses	TOTAL
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, a body corporate pursuant to the Administrative Arrangements Act, 1994 (SA) trading as Rural Solutions SA	\$757	170	\$128,690	\$20,000	\$148,690

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Results and Discussion

MLA Prime Time workshops

Another 20 MLA Prime Time workshops are in the early stages of implementation in association with the Events Partners – Elders and Landmark during Winter '06. Leading *EDGEnetwork* deliverers and 4-5 private consultants will deliver these short, focused, hands-on workshops to value-add the learning in the forums and assist producers to move to a new level of operation.

Over 412 producers attended these workshops in the past and rated the overall workshops very highly at 9 out of 10, in line with their assessment of the forums.

Participants valued the independent and quality deliverers, the quality resources, hands-on and practical activities within small groups. The workshops were short, sharp & focused, yet adequate time for deep discussions on issues important to participants.

The workshops increased confidence to use new skills and knowledge and 33% of the tools will definitely be used in the future. MLA *EDGEnetwork* workshops were also flagged.

In 2006 workshop topics will include Ewe and weaner management, Feed budgeting & assessment, Grain finishing lambs and Feeding ewes in tough times (WA).

MLA Prime Time Forums

4 MLA Pastoral Prime Time Forums were delivered during June in conjunction with the MLA PT Team and Currie Communications. 198 pastoralists, 16 L/Agents, 35 service providers and 7 media attended and rated the forums very highly at 8.5/10.

Collaboration continues with Event partners - Elders & Landmark and event supporters in State DPI's and AWI. Given the remoteness of these regions, it was identified that functional "local networks" would be important and were consequently engaged.

These forums were focused in the pastoral regions of Australia (Cunnamulla, QLD, Pt Augusta, SA, and Cue & Carnarvon, WA) at the request of Event partners.

The program was developed, key messages agreed upon, examples of practice change identified and high quality speakers engaged / developed to deliver a quality program across Australia. Once again, deliverers of the same topic have worked in teams to bring together the collective knowledge across Australia. This was well received by participants.

EDGEnetwork was again profiled, with many direct and enthusiastic leads made for future training.

Currie Communications developed the marketing & communication plans and were of extremely high quality and effectiveness, this time putting greater emphasis on local networks.

Resource & Support material

There were no new materials during 2005/06 The development of the AWI/MLA Sheep & Wool best Practice Manual has required highest priority and this put on-hold any further development of specific resources, as they will need to compliment and dovetail into this flagship manual. With that in-mind, re-editing "The Lamb Guide" and "Wean More Lambs" has started. A MLA retail publication, "WellRed" was also reviewed for technical correctness of the on-farm components and was found to lacking, misleading and incorrect in some areas.

MLA Prime Time Wean More Lambs Demonstration Sites

14 WML demo sites were established across Australia and their on-going activities and outputs supervised by the Project Coordinator – Sandy McEachern, Holmes Sackett & Associates. A mid-term review meeting was held on 13 March where preliminary results were discussed and 3 “key messages” developed. Some shaping of the final data output was considered, in particular, how Cost of Production was going to be used in analysis.

6 groups have completed their final analysis of data, 2 have ceased operation and won't complete the activity and 6 remain in progress. (see reports on SCSB.063)

Confinement feeding – lamb finishing

Support was provided to the Confinement feeding – lamb finishing project with

- assistance with the terms of reference and overview of the “Stocktake Survey”,
- “Literature review” and
- “analysis of economic tools” for this sector.

At the request of both industry and MLA a industry workshop was facilitated in Adelaide. A group of “Australian Lamb Finishers” have now aligned themselves with Sheepmeat Council of Australia to progress the development in this sector in conjunction with MLA.

MLA Sustainable & Productive Grazing Grants

3 MLA Sustainable & Productive Grazing Grants were approved in SA and a watching eye has been kept on them. One was cancelled due to under-estimation of work commitment by the producer and the bad season, another was successfully completed in year one and the final one continues with enthusiastic activities occurring over 2 seasons.

Developing a common understanding of fat and condition scoring

A review meeting was attended to discuss the findings of research commissioned by MLA on the comparison of predictive methods of fatness and condition in merino sheep.

EDGENetwork

EDGENetwork workshops up for review were Effective Breeding (lambs), Money Making Mums, and Money Making Merinos. As part of a team, terms of reference were developed, reviewers were engaged and their drafts have been peer reviewed. Pilots are planned for late June.

Wean More Lambs EDGENetwork workshop review has commenced, with contribution from Holmes Sackett & Associates to strengthen the “economic aspect” and in addition bring in their valuable experience from the Wean More Lamb Demos. The pastoral sector has also expressed an interest in WML and will be engaged to explore their needs and possible delivery format and resources.

Sheep Genetics Australia

Assistance in planning, evaluation and the facilitation of “9 Information sessions” for seedstock and leading commercial producers and service providers. These occurred from November '05 through to May '06, across Australia.

MLA R&D Insights Forum – Private Consultants

A “pilot workshop” highlighting MLA's latest on-farm sheep & beef research and development for 20 private consultants was developed and facilitated, and a final report consolidated from their feedback. Although not perfect, there was a keen desire from all parties to change the format and content and have another go with greater segmentation of the attendees.

5 Success in Achieving Objectives

5.1 Success in Achieving Objectives

20 MLA Prime Time Workshops in early implementation.

4 MLA Pastoral Prime Time Forums completed and evaluated.

12 MLA Prime Time Wean More Lambs demonstrations nearing completion.

1 “Scoping workshop” for Australian Lamb Finishers facilitated and reported

1 “pilot” MLA R&D Insights Forum facilitated for 20 private consultants.

4 EDGENetwork workshops under re-development (continuous improvement)

5.2 Un-Successful completion of Objectives

Coordination of the committee of the National Lamb Industry Convention was attempted, but in part failed. Success was achieved in meeting process and actions, empowerment to task of the development of a quality program and engagement of International and “fresh” speakers. Failure occurred from late development of the “Communications Plan” and being unable to engage the committee in ownership of the “hard task – sponsorship” and as such the budget fell well short of requirements by \$150K and was postponed. In all reality, it is quite possible that industry will not provide adequate funding for such an event, even though they believe it is important to gather and focus the industry. Industry will attend, but appear reluctant to sponsor to the magnitude that is required of the event to be “self-funding”.

The coordination and input into the development of the 4th Australian Prime Lamb Group Compendium to publication standard was not achieved as commencement on this project was just to be started when it was decided to postpone the NLIC, of which this publication was targeted for release.

6 Impact on Meat and Livestock Industry

6.1 Impact on Meat and Livestock Industry – now & in five years time

The role of “support coordinator” continues to provide the MLA, Sheepmeat Supply Chain management team with:

- forum, seminar and workshop planning and development skills
- quality control & development of 30+ consultants engaged to deliver on-behalf of MLA
- an avenue to develop relationships with the numerous networks important for this program (ie state and local livestock agents, industry consultants, state DPI’s).
- ability to consolidate and combine industry information and R&D into useful resources
- a sounding board for industry development and issues.
- A team based approach
- An interest in fostering linkages with beef and sheep industry development
- Assistance in planning, development, delivery and evaluation on “practice change” programs

7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions and Recommendations – what did we learn?

There would appear to be more than adequate outcomes in 2005/06 to continue this service in 2006/07 to continue

- Ongoing MLA PT Initiatives – WML Demos, Sustainable & productive Grazing Grants
- Continuation of MLA Prime Time
- Development of maternal sector resources
- The Australian Lamb Industry Convention
- Sheep Genetics Australia
- Curfews
- EDGEnetwork

8 Bibliography

Not applicable

9 Appendices