



## “From the General Manager’s Desk” 18 Movember 2021”

### **Bourke Small Stock Abattoir**

Mayor Barry and I met on site at the new abattoir last week with the owners of Thomas Foods International (TFI), the purchasers of the Enngonia Road facility. In attendance was the Executive Chairman of TFI, Mr Chris Thomas and Group Managing Director, Mr Darren Thomas, along with various other members of the TFI Leadership Team. It was good to hear of the company’s enthusiastic vision for the Bourke abattoir, which includes further investment and jobs for the community. Having now met with these Gents and their team, the potential opportunities for Bourke are most exciting. With the situation in respect of COVID improving, generally off the back of improved vaccination rates, and when coupled with the prospect of increased tourism, the economic activity that will result in the community when the abattoir starts up, which is expected mid 2022, and the current positive state of the agricultural sector, it is considered that all augers well for Bourke for the future. These are exciting times.

### **Council Meetings**

One of the stable requirements of Council meetings in NSW since, I would imagine, when Councils commenced, is that Councillors have had to attend Council meetings in person. If as a Councillor you didn’t attend, you couldn’t contribute to the meeting and you didn’t get a vote. Interim changes were made to this requirement during COVID which permitted Councillors to attend meetings via an audio-visual or online link. The changes were introduced to ensure that the decision-making processes of councils continued to operate during the period of the COVID lockdowns.

The Office of Local Government has now updated the Code of Meeting Practice such that where Councils so adopt, councillors will be able to attend meetings virtually. This is an important step forward. The updated Code provides that Councils will have the option to allow councillors to be present for official meetings by audio-visual link if they can’t attend in person because of illness, disability, caring and work responsibilities or other reasons agreed to by council. In addition, the changes introduced will allow councils to meet entirely remotely during natural disasters and public health emergencies.

I will be reporting on this issue at the Council meeting to be held on 22 November 2021.

### **Movember**

Don’t forget that Movember is the annual, month-long celebration of the moustache, to highlight men's health issues, specifically prostate cancer and depression in men. Mo Bros, supported by their Mo Sista’s, started Movember (November 1st) clean shaven and then have the remainder of the month to grow and groom their moustache. During Movember, each Mo Bro effectively becomes a walking

billboard for men's health and, via their Mo, raises essential funds and awareness for Movember's men's health partners.

I take the opportunity to highlight some interesting statistics regarding men's health:

- Men's health is in crisis. Men are dying on average 5 years earlier than women, and for largely preventable reasons.
- A growing number of men – around 10.8M globally – are facing life with a prostate cancer diagnosis. Globally, testicular cancer is the most common cancer among young men.
- Across the world, one man dies by suicide every minute of every day, with males accounting for 75% of all suicides.

Gents take control of your health and make regular appointments with your Doctor for a regular check-up and then take their advice. If you're interested to find out more about Movember, go to

<https://au.movember.com>

### **Burrendong Dam**

Burrendong Dam near Wellington supplies environmental water to the extensive floodplains of the Macquarie Marshes out past Warren. When the marshes flood, water ultimately flows into the Barwon and Darling River systems above Bourke. Whilst it has taken time to fill up, I noticed that as of last Sunday, Burrendong Dam was at 124% capacity with good flows still occurring along the Macquarie River, both upstream and downstream of the dam, as a result of rain activity in the Bathurst catchment and the Bell River catchment near Wellington, respectively.

Burrendong Dam is a large inland dam that is three times the size of Sydney Harbour. It has a surface area equal to nearly 10,000 football fields and its wall is taller than a 25-storey building. Its capacity includes 1,188,000 ML of water storage and a potential 489,000 ML of additional air space for flood mitigation. This is an interesting point and relates to my earlier comment that the dam is at 124% capacity. As readers know, if you have a bathtub, you can only get the bath to 100% capacity before the water spills. It is full. The additional 24% at Burrendong relates to this additional air space for flood mitigation. In addition to heavy rainfall over much of the Northern Tablelands in the northern catchment of the state, there is plenty of talk around in respect of the potential for further flows in the Darling River come late December. In addition to all this, La Nina has yet to be confirmed.

### **Last Meeting of this Council**

Next Monday will be the last meeting of the Bourke Council as elected in September 2016. The term of this Council was to be for a period of four (4) years ending in September 2020. COVID put paid to those arrangements when the NSW Minister for Local Government, quite rightly, postponed the elections until 4 September 2021, and then with the COVID outbreak this year, the elections were again postponed till 4 December 2021. In total what started as a 48-month term for the current Council, their term was ultimately extended to a 63-month period. To their credit, all Bourke Councillors stayed the course and saw their term out. This wasn't necessarily the case for quite a few other Councillors throughout the state. As I said in last week's column, there were 10 persons who nominated for the 10 Councillor positions, thus Bourke has an uncontested election, which means voters won't need to vote. Some residents may say that's good. Others may have liked to have had their say!

### **Cricket World Cup**

Good to see that Australia won the 2021 ICC Mens T20 World Cup final against New Zealand with Mitch Marsh and David Warner the big hitters in the run chase. On the matter of cricket, a couple of Sundays

ago, the Father of a close friend of our family, Greg, had a major heart attack. Unfortunately, he never regained consciousness before passing away two (2) weeks ago today. In his younger days, Greg was quite a cricketer and in 1981 he was picked to play for a Western NSW Country side to play against the West Indies, which at the time included players the likes of Clive Lloyd, Viv Richards, Joel Garner and Michael Holding. Unfortunately for Greg he never played in the game because the week before the game he was playing for Southern NSW and he went to hook a rising ball and misjudged it before losing his two (2) front teeth. My last conversation with Greg was at the Macquarie Club in Dubbo on the Friday evening before the Sunday. I knew that Greg wasn't a great fan of Australian Opener David Warner from past comments. At the time Warner had just got some runs the night before after a couple of ordinary digs in the World Cup. I cheekily said to Greg, "Good to see Warners back in form!" Greg was straight back at me telling me his view of Warner from his very clear perspective. I did have a chuckle to myself at the time. I think however that Greg has had the last laugh. Every time Warner is mentioned, all I can hear is Greg's view on the player!

**Quote: "Two doses (of either COVID vaccines) offers greater protection than just one dose, so please arrange to get your second dose".** NSW Deputy Chief Health Officer Marianne Gale asking people who had not had their second dose to "please not delay" after it was revealed that some 57,000 people in NSW had not come back for a second COVID-19 vaccine.