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REEF COMPLIANCE TRUMPS RURAL WELFARE AND MENTAL HEALTH FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Drought has once again taken hold in many parts of regional Queensland and in particular the Burnett region which stretches from the Bunya Mountains in the South to Monto in the North which is in the grip of a severe dry spell. Hay trucks move like camel trains across the crumbling road network whilst farmers work tirelessly to keep their businesses afloat, pumping water, fighting fires, and generally helping each other out. 'This is part of the life in rural Queensland where mateship, volunteerism and selflessness are the norm. When times are tough rural communities pull together and help each other, they unite to form a shield around what we hold dear to protect against fire, flood, and drought' Chairman of Property Rights Australia (PRA) Jim Willmott said.

In recent times, rural people have noticed a new threat emerging. One that attacks our reputation as environmentalists whilst tarnishing our world class reputation as efficient and sustainable producers of food and fibre. This threat is not a new pest species, nor is it a natural disaster, this threat is home grown and wreaking havoc on farming families right here, right now.

This new threat is one borne out of a bloated bureaucracy that uses fake science to substantiate ill-conceived legislation and regulations to take away our ability to farm, erode our private property rights and destroy our livelihoods.

'Government Regulatory Officers aka Reef police are turning up to family farms in the Burnett region and demanding to conduct audits, inspect properties and examining records all while people are battling drought and struggling with the increase cost of living,' said Mr Willmott.

'Landowners say to me it is not fear of being "caught" that worries them it how these Government officers treat people. Farmers are scared, their hands shake and their voices break when they tell me how they have been singled out'.

'These are ordinary people being victimised by an out of control woke State Government bureaucracy. Our farmers cannot comprehend why they continue to be so harshly treated and portrayed as environmental vandals despite all their hard work to the contrary. Feedback from landowners is that these officers are condescending all while making people feel guilty of something before things get even started.'

Who in their right mind would authorise regulatory focussed audits onto any population when they are in a high state of mental stress and anxiety is running high. People are having to shoot staving stock on some properties in the Burnett and now they are dealing with the increase pressure of having Reef Police turn up at their doors demanding access. What is happening here? This Government is ignoring the mental health consequences of their actions and it appears the welfare of our farming communities runs a distant second to satisfying the need for excessive compliance.

Rural people must rally together and support each other from a bureaucracy gone mad. Property Rights Australia has developed a Reef Audit Guide to assist producers and can be downloaded at (<https://propertyrightsaustralia.org.au/reef-regs/>).

‘Farming families must be afforded far greater protection from these power hungry, badge waving officers. Public servants to the people of Queensland? I think not,’ said Mr Willmott.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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PRA has developed some guidance for rural and regional communities:

- Reef Regs Compliance: <https://propertyrightsaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Reef-Regs-Compliance.pdf>
- Reef Regs Audit: <https://propertyrightsaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Reef-Regs-Audit.pdf>