

# Heatley pays parting tribute

MLA

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RETIRING Meat and Livestock Australia chairman Don Heatley (pictured) has paid tribute to the resilience of the livestock industry in his final chairman's address to the Meat & Livestock Australia annual general meeting in Longreach today.

"Looking back over the 13 years of my time on the MLA Board, I've seen the resilience of Australian livestock producers displayed time and time again," Mr Heatley said.

"We've seen drought, floods, the Aussie dollar swing from 49c to US110USc, demand in global markets run hot and cold. But no matter what's been thrown at us, we've knuckled down and got on with the job of producing safe, quality beef, sheep and goatmeat for the world's consumers," he said.

Mr Heatley is returning to full time operation on his family cattle business based at Home Hill in North Queensland after retiring from the board.

"I intend to make sure my business prospers for generations to come, I'll be looking out for the next R&D outcome, using every tool MLA can offer to help me manage my margins and making absolutely sure I maximise the return on my levies," Mr Heatley said.

In his first AGM address as MLA managing director Scott Hansen outlined MLA's renewed focus and direction for supporting producers into the future. He also reiterated MLA's within the industry.

"MLA is not the industry representative body, it is not a policy or a regulatory body, we are a marketing and R&D services company," Mr Hansen said.

"MLA's role is to create opportunities across the cattle, sheep and goat supply chains by optimising the return on collective investment in marketing and R&D."

This includes investing in R&D to create opportunities to reduce the cost of production, improve the feedbase and animal welfare for livestock. It also includes investing in marketing to create opportunities for increased demand for your products, he said.

Mr Hansen said he welcomed continued industry engagement and constructive advice and direction.

Voting from the floor of the AGM is expected to conclude at about 5pm. Final results will be calculated and released shortly afterwards.

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