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MEDIA RELEASE

Welcome to Sheepvention 2007

As Member for Western Victoria, I welcome all visitors and exhibitors to Sheepvention and encourage everyone to make the most of this premier annual event.

Sheepvention provides an exceptional opportunity to attend a remarkable combination of activities developed to display the very best in wool production.

With the sheep show, ram sale, inventions competition, the extensive trade displays and a wide range of other activities, there is sure to be something of interest to everyone.

The well recognised and highly regarded sheep show gives over 200 exhibitors the opportunity to show more than 1,000 sheep that compete for champion and best of breed status. Visitors can see an outstanding selection of wool and meat producing sheep.

Even after a very tough spring and summer that resulted in record breaking low rainfall across eastern Australia, it is a credit to all exhibitors that they can present their sheep in such excellent condition.

The Hamilton ram sale continues to dominate as the major multi-vendor sale. In 2006 the number of sale rams increased with 341 rams selling to a top of \$12,000 for a Wurrock merino ram. The 85% clearance, grossing some \$550,000, proves there is still much demand for high quality blood-stock. The strengthening wool market promises a strong sale again in 2007.

More than 25,000 people passed through the gates in 2006. This year a similar number will enjoy the fashion, entertainment, information, education, food and wine that Sheepvention has to offer.

The Gala Fashion Parade and announcement of the Australasian Young Designers Wool Awards are major features that continue to be overwhelming successful and amongst Sheepvention's most popular attractions.

Along with the Alpaca show, ewe weaner competition and Victorian open farm dog championships, the sheep and wool handling inventions show is a major competition designed to stimulate the invention, manufacture and display of new equipment and ideas that give a glimpse of tomorrow's innovative sheep and wool industry.

I look forward to meeting visitors and exhibitors in person at the various trade stands. I encourage everyone to visit the Liberal Party site to discuss any issues of interest or concern and extend my congratulations to the organising committee, the many volunteers who work so tirelessly behind the scenes and all those participating in this year's Sheepvention.

This very successful, major event for the Hamilton district and injects many millions of dollars into the local community and provides a great opportunity to showcase the city to thousands of visitors.

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