



**Adrian Pederick MP**  
Member for Hammond

**House of Assembly**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> July 2014**

**Economic and Finance Committee:**  
**Emergency services levy 2014-15**

**Mr PEDERICK ( Hammond ) ( 11:22 :43 ):** I rise also to talk about the tabling of the emergency services levy report 2014-15. It is an absolute disgrace what is happening here. This is a land tax, an absolute land tax, on our primary producers and I am standing here as a proud primary producer, but having had my land leased out for about 10 years now for the interests of the parliament. This is just a backdoor tax on our primary producers who are already struggling. I asked in the house yesterday what a \$1.5 million property near Murray Bridge would pay in land tax, the emergency services levy. It would be \$420. That would be a farm that would be barely viable.

We just had the leader, the member for Dunstan, talking about a property worth about \$4 million, and their tax has increased to over \$800. It is just crazy stuff. As with farming, the saying is that people have to get big or get out. This is because of cost pressures on the industry and the efficiencies of having larger properties, so that means there will be many family operations (and some of these family operations have become family semi-corporate farming operations) will be paying thousands extra for this emergency services levy.

What will they get back for it? Next to nothing. Yes, some of this funding goes into paying for emergency services vehicles, but many of our farming friends are those same volunteers who man those vehicles and valiantly give their time to fight fires and pick up and look after the road accidents that happen on our highways and lesser known roads. There are some horror stories. One particular friend of mine has been with the Coonalpyn CFS for many years but is having a year off because he is sick of seeing the trauma and death resulting from high-speed accidents that happen on the Dukes Highway. He is just having a bit of time out for 12 months to get his head together—that is how this affects people.

The issue here is this is a backdoor tax. It will make farmers that little bit more unviable. We have a budget that has been stripped down to \$59.8 million for PIRSA. We have a government that supposedly wants to ride on agriculture's back, yet every year they take more and more money out of the Primary Industries' budget, and now we see another tax on our great primary producers.

Especially in regard to where the emergency services levy goes, I have been quite disheartened over recent years to learn that a lot of our fire trucks are not even

manufactured locally. They have been manufactured in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and the latest lot were made in New Zealand by Fraser's. They bring the Isuzu trucks out from Japan. They do some import/export arrangement where I think they even unload the trucks here in Australia then put them straight back on and take them to New Zealand to put the fire truck bodies on—in New Zealand.

This is a government that does not even support our local industries with this emergency services levy, and it is shameful—it is absolutely shameful. I have a great manufacturing company, Moore Engineering, in my electorate in Murray Bridge, who manufacture fire trucks. They work for All Fire Services. They have some contracts with the CFS, but they pale into insignificance compared to what Fraser Engineering are building in New Zealand.

There are many, many hundreds of thousands of dollars—in fact, it would run into millions of dollars over time—that are not being spent in this state and that could be spent in my electorate on building quality fire trucks. What I have seen happen over time with some of these trucks that have come in from interstate and overseas is that, as soon as there is a problem, the trucks shake apart, they need—

**Dr McFetridge:** Plastic fantastics.

**Mr PEDERICK:** Yes, that's it. They need some maintenance. Well, hello? Where is the maintenance done? Moore Engineering. They come in to fix some of the problems that have occurred with these trucks. I have seen two brand-new trucks—one from Ceduna, that was detailed to Ceduna, and one that went to Meningie—that were basically falling apart on their first runs and had to come to Murray Bridge for a refit.

We are stabbing our primary producers, many of whom are our CFS volunteers out there in the field, with a huge impost with the massive rise in the emergency services levy, which will just be another thorn in the farmers' sides, making them wonder why they are doing it, especially when they look at the lower amount that PIRSA gets in the budget lines. We see budget cuts to research and development and budget cuts to biosecurity. It just goes on and on, and it smacks our primary producers in the face.

I find it so unacceptable that not only are they paying this backdoor tax—this land tax—but then this emergency services levy is being used to fund vehicles and trucks that are put together in New Zealand. This is a government that supposedly supports this state. I cannot see how that is supporting our state. All members on the government side should be ashamed of that, and the Minister for Regional Development, the Minister for Trade, and others, need to have a good, hard look at what is going on when ordering vehicles and equipment for this state's use. Why are we not supporting our local industries?

We hear all the carry-on and outrage about the support or non-support for Holden, depending on who you talk to in this place, but Holden's always were going to go. They made that decision in Detroit. They said, 'You could have thrown as much money as you like but we are out the door. We are going.' We have people who could be building equipment in this state yet they are overlooked by this government, who only look at what I believe is

the bottom line but then they get an inferior product and it costs a lot more in the end to maintain.

Not only are we getting vehicles that I do not believe are up to scratch but also people are paying a lot more in the emergency services levy, which just makes it harder for their way of life in the bush. When people finally realise, when the accounts arrive in the mail, I can just imagine the amount of anger coming from throughout our rural electorates to us in this place when they voice their concerns. I think it is an absolute disgrace. It is a backdoor tax and a real impost on our great farmers and primary producers.