



NEWS

Glencore takeover

# Huge job losses fear at Viterro

RURAL EDITOR

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STAFF fear hundreds of jobs could be lost as multi-national grain giant Glencore International rationalises grain handling and storage business Viterro – and many of the jobs could be in its Adelaide head office.

Since completing the \$6 billion takeover of Viterro on December 18, Glencore has surprised the grain industry at how quickly it has moved to integrate the businesses.

The job cuts, at Grain House on South Tce, have stunned staff amid fears that many jobs will be lost or moved to Melbourne.

One source said it appeared likely that up to half the 400 staff would be made redundant if they were to choose not to relocate to Melbourne.

“While we acknowledge that global and national companies go through restructures, we

despair that another major company has chosen to abandon the state and discard its staff,” he said.

“It just adds credence to South Australia being the retirement state and not the state of choice for major employers and the downward spiral of more job losses continues.”

The State Government, Opposition and the grain industry all said they hadn’t heard from Glencore about its plans since the takeover.

Viterro employs more than 1100 permanent staff in Australia, mostly in SA, and runs 106 grain receiving sites and eight

export grain terminals in SA. It has an estimated market share of about 50 per cent of the state’s grain crop.

Glencore declined to comment about plans yesterday, but it is understood it will retain its Adelaide and Melbourne offices.

Its grain storage, handling, grower services and malt divisions are expected to remain based in Adelaide while Mel-

bourne will remain Glencore’s trading hub and consume its Adelaide trading division.

Opposition agriculture spokesman Adrian Pederick said any jobs losses in SA were disappointing and people should be told what was happening in a more transparent process.

A member of the SA Parliament Select Committee on the Grain Handling Industry, Mr Pederick raised concerns about the future of Viterro’s Adelaide head office and Glencore’s commitment to the state in July when the takeover was underway.

Grain Producers SA chief executive Darren Arney said if farmers still receive a good level of service and the rationalisation reduces overheads, he hoped it would be reflected in higher prices or lower costs.