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Adrian Pederick MP

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Shadow Minister for Forests

Police action on stock theft a start says Pederick

The state opposition has welcomed the announcement of police action on stock theft with a note of caution.

Shadow Agriculture Minister Adrian Pederick said Operation Poach, the police proposal to tackle the problem across the state, would offer farmers some support in their efforts to stem the rising incidence of stock theft.

‘While farmers will take heart from this police response, the opposition is concerned that it is a half-way measure by the Labor government, which has consistently insisted the reformation of a stock squad was not necessary,’ he said.

‘With livestock prices as they are, there has certainly been a spike in thefts, but the problem has always existed.

‘Until this latest spate of robberies, reports had died down partly because farmers felt that for reasons of staff availability and lack of specialised expertise the police were not able to respond effectively anyway.

‘Stock theft is not a spur of the moment crime. It requires careful planning, heavy transport vehicles, dogs and a ready market for the stolen stock. It has to be countered with the same level of preparedness.

‘Anything less than a concerted and sustained attack on the problem will only slow the thieves down momentarily. They’ll wait until the heat dies down before cranking their activities up again.

‘Nevertheless, I am pleased to see that something is being done to support our farmers and will be closely monitoring its progress.’