

# Media Release



Victorian  
Farmers  
Federation

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## FARMERS TO BEAR THE COSTS OF CAMPING DECISION

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has said today that the disrespect continues as farmers are shut out of the camping site assessment process and will ultimately pay the price as a result.

VFF President Emma Germano said that while farmers with licences impacted by the 27 pilot sites had been notified an assessment was taking place, they were not being consulted in the assessment.

“Currently licence holders are only being notified that an assessment is taking place on their licensed frontage. This needs to change. How can the impacts be assessed without speaking to the impacted farmer?”

“No one knows the land better than farmers who have live and work on it every day. It’s a no-brainer to involve farmers in this process,” Ms Germano said.

Ms Germano said that with the rules coming into force today she is concerned it is just an accident waiting to happen.

“Campers interacting with farm businesses is just an accident waiting to happen. As much as it burdens farmers, there is also a genuine concern for those camping in areas where it’s just not appropriate and dangerous to pitch a tent.”

“Farmers who will have to deal with the campfire that gets away, the spooked stock, gates left open and god forbid a serious injury or death. These are not cases of if, but when.”

“Unfortunately the notion of free camping doesn’t exist and farmers will be the ones left out of pocket dealing with issues such as broken gates and wrecked fences.”

“Our job now is supporting our members so they understand their rights and can manage these risks and impacts on their farm business.”

“We encourage farmers subject to one of these pilot sites to get in touch with the VFF, to talk with your insurance broker and begin to plan how you will deal with campers interacting with your farm business,” Ms Germano said.

Ms Germano said some risks could be managed if a registration system is implemented.

“We are still asking the Government to implement a system of registration so that the Government and farmers know who is camping where and when.

“Minister D’Ambrosio has conceded a registration system will be implemented, so why does her own department continue to create confusion by contradicting this? Should this be the case, it would be a welcome development, however until it is confirmed there will continue to be confusion.”

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“This would allow farmers to manage risks associated with their business, included access of stock to river frontages, and for emergency services to manage fire and flood risk,” Ms Germano said.

The VFF will be holding a briefing for its members and producing information to help its members understand their rights and obligations.

**ENDS**

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