**Agricultural Levies Institute of Australia**

**Minister for Agricultural should go further in seeking to ‘relocate’ Public Servants from Canberra to regional Australia**

The Chief Economist and Chief Executive Officer of the Agricultural Levies Institute of Australia, Mr Spiro Adamopoulos, has today expressed support for calls to relocate public servants to rural and regional centres.

“The Agriculture Minister, the Hon Barnaby Joyce MP, has suggested that decongesting Canberra of public servants would be as beneficial as the Canberra Light Rail”, the CEO of the Levies Institute told a meeting of agriculture industry executives today.

Mr Adamopoulos wants Mr Joyce to go further and pay to relocate levy payer funded industry bodies from high cost city centres to more affordable and relevant regional locations.

The CEO said that “Meat and Livestock Australia, for example, does not need to be located in Sydney”. “Levy payers expect their marketing and research organisations to save money and use levies for the strict purposes for which they are collected”. “Some $20m a year is spent on renting prestige premises in city locations”. “Some of this money can be saved by renting cheaper regional space and better spent on behalf of levy payers”.

“Moving agricultural related departments and organisations to the country is logical”. “This makes them more relevant to the industries and people they serve and who pay for their livelihood”.

‘What we have found is that, many of the officers in say, the Department of Agriculture in Canberra, have no interest in the agricultural community or any association with farmers’ issues”. “The sooner these public servants are placed in farming or related areas, we may see better policy”.

“Further, as the State agricultural departments are already doing much of the work of the federal department, the number of functions in the federal bureaucracy should also be reduced on the way” Mr Adamopoulos explained.

“I hope farmers are aware of the principles behind the levy laws which they have voted for and asked the Minister to implement through the Parliament”, Mr Adamopoulos said.

“I was the architect of many of these laws and I understand how important they are to farmers”, said Mr Adamopoulos.