

**Speech by Mrs Gina Rinehart  
Executive Chairman of the Hancock Prospecting  
Group and S. Kidman & Co  
Patron of National Agriculture and Related Industries  
Day  
Pastoralists and Graziers Association of West  
Australia (PGA) 2017 Convention  
Wednesday 27 September 2017, Perth, WA**

**WATCH: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADZuM9yYPDQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADZuM9yYPDQ)**

Good morning pastoralists and graziers, friends.

Thank you very much for inviting me to speak at your convention, “pathways to prosperity.”

My family has had a very long association with the Pastoralist and Graziers Association, and a long history in the pastoral industry, dating back to the northwest when our family on my father’s side was amongst the first settlers in the second half of the 1800s and its first pastoralists. And on my mother’s side, her father James Nicholas, both separately and including in association with his long term friend and another remarkable Australian, Sir Sydney Kidman, also had a long tradition of pastoral interests.

It is a very special honour for me to now address pastoralists and graziers and the PGA at your convention. Thank you.

We are an industry I believe we can all be proud of, an industry of great importance to Australia for centuries, an industry built with many remarkable Australians in rugged and remote and often difficult outback conditions. An industry which many others from truckies to accountants and agents rely upon, please join me in very well deserved applause.

May I add my warmest congratulations in advance to tonight’s award winners.

Now I would like to speak briefly to you about our industry, and, two pathways to prosperity – the reduction of red tape, and, investment in agritech.

Australia’s cattle industry has great room to grow, and is right on the doorstep of the growing demand from Asia, take for example the size of our cattle industry compared to Brazil.

**Screen:**

Both Brazil and Australia are the largest two countries in the Southern Hemisphere with similar landmasses and some areas not suitable for agriculture, and both are leading economies in their regions.

How many head of beef cattle does Brazil have?

And, how many head of cattle do you think Australia has? The answer is astonishing.

Approximately, Brazil currently has more than 210 million head of beef cattle, compared to Australia's approximately 25 million.

**Screen:**

That's right – Brazil, a country with a similar land mass has a cattle industry nearly 10 times bigger than Australia's!

Let's look at a further comparison, that between West Australia and Queensland.

**Screen:**

Queensland, in long-serving former Premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen's time, welcomed investment and business and a thriving cattle industry was built up.

Today, according to Meat and Livestock Australia's 2016-17 figures, Queensland has a herd size of approximately 10.6 million.

And what about West Australia, with its much larger land area, would you think we'd have more cattle than Queensland?

Well regrettably, we don't, indeed we have far less, despite our much larger land area, a tiny approximately 2 million cattle.

**Screen:**

Unfortunately, for us in WA, we have lots of government tape that seriously hampers our cattle industry.

Just one example of government regulation that you would be familiar with that acts to prevent our industry from developing, the restrictions on the usage of the Fitzroy River.

Across the average wet season, approximately 7,000 gigalitres of water is wasted as it uselessly flows into the ocean.

**Screen:**

Now, 7,000 gigalitres of water can be hard to put into perspective but think of it this way, every year 14 times the amount of water in the huge Sydney Harbour flows through the Fitzroy, past many stations, out unused into the ocean.

As it stands in 2017, the government only allows one water licence to access water from the Fitzroy River.

**Screen:**

And, guess how much water the government permits to be taken? 6 gegalitres.

This leaves approximately 99.9991% of the water to run out uselessly into the Indian Ocean.

We can't raise cattle without good water supplies, and we sure can't match Brazil without increasing water supplies!

Stagnant unfenced dam water, which cattle often drink, can be dirty and contaminated containing diseases such as E. coli and giardia, causing illness and deaths.

**Screen:**

According to American and Canadian research, cattle could also put on between 15 and 28 per cent more weight over a year just by drinking clean water.

Allowing access to water from the Fitzroy would not only be a win for pastoralists, but also a win for the animals as they would be drinking cleaner, healthier water.

**Screen:**

If the government allowed us to tap into this and other huge wasted good water sources we would be able to increase our cattle numbers and just imagine the benefit to all the related industries that depend upon agriculture.

Finally, across all of our Kidman stations, we are undergoing a technology transformation, rolling out technology we have already tried on our Hancock stations, reinvesting profits to enable the digitalised UHF system, walk-over weighing systems, drones, as well as solar pumps, hydraulic lifts, improved hydraulic weaner cradles with head supports, plus additional water facilities and more to improve the productivity and safety of our properties, and make it better for station managers to manage.

The digitalised UHF system enables clear and quick and widespread communication from anywhere on the property to anywhere in Australia or overseas, through the use of a handheld device.

**Screen:**

The digitalised UHF devices enable private and group phone calls, text messages, brief emails and can transmit emergency notices so they can be responded to quickly throughout the station, improving staff safety, and enabling greater efficiency for managers.

Another major technology we are rolling out is walk-over weighing where walk-over scales are fitted near a water point and record the weight of the cattle that walk over it, and enable cattle ready to be marketed to be automatically yarded, and those underweight to return to pasture.

**Screen:**

Walk-over weighing is an innovative self-mustering technology which improves knowledge of cattle and planning, lessens mustering expense where able to be used, and is better for animal welfare, reducing the need for mustering or re-mustering cattle, leaving the cattle more relaxed and able to eat and drink when they need.

Representing one of the largest commercial trials for drones in agriculture, we recently completed testing of drones on our Kimberley stations and after licences obtained, we will roll this technology out across all of our stations, commencing this year.

**Screen:**

A technology we plan to adapt from our usage in the mining sector is the use of drones.

I hope that those of you and your families here will join us to celebrate Australia's inaugural National Agriculture and Related Industries Day in Canberra on November 21.

**Screen:**

National Agriculture and Related Industries Day is being conducted with assistance from you, the Pastoral and Graziers Association of West Australia, the Northern Territory Cattleman's Association and other rural organisations.

This inaugural annual day is an initiative I founded which aims to recognise the importance of one of Australia's most important industries, and enable other Australians to better understand it, and its needs to be internationally cost competitive, should we wish to retain our export markets and grow these opportunities.

I hope you have an enjoyable and beneficial convention. Best wishes to you all.

Thank you.

**ENDS**