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## Classing Tips - for Fire affected Wool

AWEX has been contacted regarding the potential and likely issues that will be faced by growers and classers in the wool shed as a result of the recent fires across most states.

“Wool classers must have a strategy if they are going to be classing fleeces that have been impacted by fire. Understanding the extent of the impact of the fire on a property is paramount to successfully classing fire affected wool in a clip.” said Fiona Raleigh, AWEX Wool Classer Registrar.

Given the extent of the recent fires in NSW, VIC and SA, it is likely that this issue will become more common.

There are a number of potential issues that classers may encounter from sheep that have been affected by the recent fire events, namely:

1. Wool that has been burnt (fibre damaged by fire),
2. Wool that is singed where there is damage to the tip of the wool fibre, and/or
3. Wool affected by charcoal from sheep running on burnt ground. The wool is not burnt but is discoloured with charcoal and ash. There is no physical damage to the fibre.

Classing strategies may include:

- Keeping wool from affected mobs separate and class the affected mob using standard classing methods, or
- Keep affected fleeces/parts of fleece within the mob separate to wool that is unaffected by fire or charcoal.

Example of classed lines:

Line 1- Unaffected wool.

Line 2- Charcoal affected wool, no damage to wool fibre.

Line 3- Burnt/singed wool, may also contain charcoal. There is damage to wool fibres.

NOTE:

- AWEX does not recommend over classing of the clip. The mob concept should be applied, and classers should aim to optimise wool that is unaffected where possible.
- Small portions of fire affected wool should be consigned to Bulk Class as appropriate.

Buyer feedback indicates that charcoal is scourable, however charcoal affected wool should be kept separate from wool that is not affected.

Describe the wool using standard wool descriptions and identify using bins codes, noting the lines made for fire affected wool on the wool classer specification in the classer's comments.

DO NOT use the description or comment of black for burnt or charcoal affected wool. Black is to describe pigmented wool only.

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