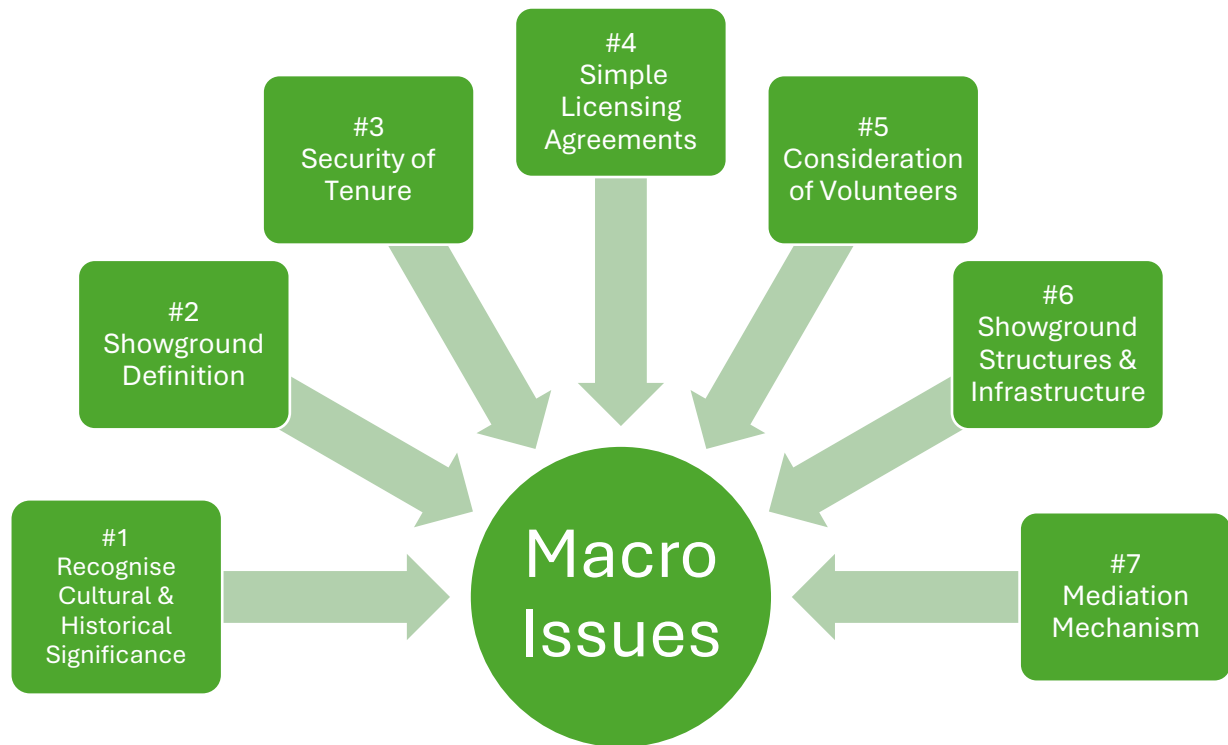


Statutory Review of the Crown Land Act 2016

7 macro issues that Shows operating on Crown Land are facing across NSW
Recommendations from Agricultural Shows in NSW



1 Recognise Cultural and Historical Significance of Shows

- Agricultural shows symbolise Australia's history of growth and prosperity, deeply rooted in rural communities.
- Shows have driven farming excellence and community pride through innovation and information exchange.
- Today, agricultural shows continue to play a vital role in showcasing innovation, driving economic benefits, and fostering community unity, especially during challenging times that regional communities have faced over the last five years (fires, floods & a pandemic) and economic uncertainties.

Recommendation: Educating Crown Land managers about the cultural significance of shows and advocating for consideration of show societies' needs in land management negotiations.

#2 Showground Definition - as a mechanism to address other issues of complexity and lack of clarity in decision-making.

- The CLM Act Review lacks acknowledgment of the vital role show societies play in administering country shows.
- Absence of a defined showground Act hampers clarity and decision-making for land managers & show societies.

Recommendation: To embed a showground definition within the Crown Land Act.

#3 Security of Tenure - provide secure and longer-term tenure to show societies to ensure they are equipped with the confidence to plan and invest as necessary for their ongoing viability

- Planning and scheduling of shows demand substantial time and resources from volunteer-based show societies.
- While shows typically set dates three years in advance, lack of secure tenure arrangements due to the CLM Act hampers long-term planning, impacting show success and discouraging annual commitments.

Recommendation: Enable Crown Land managers to implement a five year lease period for Shows with a five year option to extend. Avoid the necessity for individual Ministerial approval, ensuring smoother administrative processes for showgrounds' tenure management.

4 Simple Licensing Agreements - set clear, simple and easy to use licensing agreements to cut red-tape for show organisers.

- Licensing agreements are excessively burdensome, varying in complexity and length.
- Show societies, predominantly run by volunteers, struggle to navigate these complex processes, leading to inefficiencies and resource wastage.
- The current licensing framework acts as a disincentive for show societies to invest in showground infrastructure, hindering their ability to make long-term improvements.

Recommendation: *Shorter, simplified agreements accessible to volunteers, along with longer-term lease agreements for show societies' confidence in planning and investing in infrastructure.*

5 Consideration of Volunteers - be attuned to, and cater for the volunteers who are largely responsible for navigating the CLM Act and its ensuring processes for shows.

- Volunteers, vital to regional communities, face challenges due to the complexity of the CLM Act, hindering succession planning and attracting new volunteers.
- The extensive documentation required acts as a significant barrier, detracting from volunteers' time for show hosting.

Recommendation: *Simplifying processes and documents, providing templates, and ensuring accessibility would greatly benefit show societies and their volunteers.*

6 Showground Structures and Infrastructure - enable and empower greater investment and accountability for showground infrastructure.

- Showgrounds serve as vital community assets year-round, requiring infrastructure maintenance to support both show events and broader community activities in regional, rural, and remote NSW.
- Under the current CLM Act, Crown Land managers have the authority to allocate buildings to other groups without considering the impact on show societies, leading to neglected infrastructure and tenure ambiguity for show societies.
- Show societies, often the main investors in infrastructure improvements, are hindered by limited access to showgrounds and uncertain tenure, discouraging investments and grant pursuits.

Recommendation: *Improved consultation, solutions for infrastructure challenges, mediation mechanisms, and recognition of their investments in showgrounds' buildings and structures.*

7 Mediation Mechanism - enshrine a mediation and/or issue resolution process.

- Lack of structured resolution pathways for disputes.

Recommendation: *Formal mechanisms to resolve conflicts that may arise among user groups.*

Agricultural Shows remain vital to regional communities in NSW, preserving rural culture and educating the public on agriculture's economic importance. AgShows NSW highlights the need for improvements to the Crown Land Management Act 2016 to ensure the socio-economic sustainability of the 170 annual shows on Crown land. Drawing on insights and collaboration with our members, the submission addresses seven critical issues, advocating for streamlined support for show societies and their 16,000 volunteers.



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Further Information

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