

LIVE EXPORT — MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

443. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to the facts that live cattle exports are down by 20 000 head in the last three months, letters tabled in the Legislative Council from key trading partners raised concerns about the future of live export from Western Australia, and public statements from both major farming lobby groups expressed their growing alarm at the actions of the Minister for Agriculture and Food. When will the Premier take action to restore confidence in WA's \$8 billion agriculture sector and sack the Minister for Agriculture and Food?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

It really is a pathetic line of questioning by the National Party. Yesterday, we had the tomato-growing member for Warren–Blackwood running the same argument! Today, we have the leader—I put it this way, the current Leader of the National Party—raising the same issue. The thing about Hon Alannah MacTiernan is she is capable and determined and she has the interests of the agricultural sector at heart. Talking to her, all one hears is sense and reason about this issue. The fact of the matter is that the industry is in significant trouble. Everyone knows that. Even the industry knows that.

Mr D.C. Nalder: How are you helping?

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The industry is in significant trouble.

Mr D.C. Nalder: How are you helping?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Seriously, Mr Speaker!

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman, we generally hear the first one you say. When you say it again, it becomes a point of order. I call you to order for the second time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Everyone knows the industry is in significant trouble. What we saw with the *Awassi Express* and other cases of that nature is clearly unacceptable to the vast majority of Australians. That is a fact. Whether they are city or country, it is unacceptable. The only people who do not seem to think it is unacceptable is the Parliamentary National Party of Western Australia. They are the only ones. Everyone else out there knows there is a problem. I have talked to the farming industry at the highest levels. They know that this is a —

Mr D.C. Nalder: The highest levels!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The highest levels. They know that this is a significant problem for them and they know if there are further examples of it, the situation is probably irretrievable. That is a fact.

What is Alannah MacTiernan trying to do? She is trying to get the industry to recognise it has a major problem. What is going on at the moment? There is an investigation into the case of Emanuel Exports. Apparently last year, in August 2017, out of a consignment of live sheep from Fremantle to the Middle East, 2 400 sheep died. There is an inquiry into that, as there should be. The idea the National Party promotes that there can just be lawlessness in that industry, there can be an ignorance of every single standard, is actually putrid that it is prepared to say that.

Alannah MacTiernan is trying to ensure that the industry lifts its game and lifts its standard. That is what should happen. The National Party seems to think lawlessness and breaking the law is acceptable; I do not agree.