

LIVE EXPORTS, SHIPPING SUPPORT

427. Hon NIGEL HALLETT to the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry:

Would the minister and the Labor Government be prepared to publicly support the shipping of live exports from Western Australia on a continuous basis that would allow confidence in investment in this industry both here and overseas?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

Yes. As the member would be aware, I have recently answered a question without notice in similar terms. However, I am happy to reiterate the government's position. The government supports the humane trade of animals within, or from, Western Australia and notes that the live export industry provides substantial economic and employment benefits, particularly in rural areas. The government recognises the importance of the live export trade to livestock producers and others involved in the industry and notes the lack of capacity in existing abattoirs to process all the livestock currently exported from Western Australia. In terms of continuity of live exports, the government recognises that the trade is subject to the pressures of worldwide supply and demand, and the decisions of importing countries, which may vary from time to time. The government also recognises that animals are exported from Australia under the provisions and legislation of the Australian government. The Australian government is negotiating with trading partners with regard to security of access of livestock shipments. The Australian government has also recently introduced the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock as a further component in ensuring that livestock exports meet trade and community expectations in relation to animal health and welfare.