

GOLDFIELDS NULLARBOR RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION — TRAP YARDS

959. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the 3 September 2020 *Countryman* article titled “Yards to trap feral camels” in which it is reported that the Western Australian government awarded \$100 000 to the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association to distribute fencing to pastoralists to install self-mustering trap yards.

- (1) What research exists to prove trapping is a cheaper and more humane alternative to aerial shooting?
- (2) What studies on commercial viability have been conducted to support the establishment of a camel meat industry?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Agriculture and Food, I provide the following answer.

- (1) This initiative has come from suggestions by pastoralists who have used self-trapping yards to protect water infrastructure with good effect. This funding provides an important opportunity to roll these fences out more broadly across the pastoral regions to both protect strategic infrastructure and assess the effectiveness of fencing. Trapping and aerial culling are both useful and humane methods for controlling feral camels and complement each other. Trapping is used to capture small numbers of animals and can help protect water infrastructure. Aerial culling is effective for the removal of large numbers of animals on remote and difficult terrain. However, aerial culling is expensive, costing approximately \$10 000 per day for helicopter usage and an authorised shooter. Unlike aerial shootings, trap yards can provide longer term solutions.
- (2) Quantum Consulting Australia was recently commissioned to complete a Goldfields–Esperance camel industry analysis, which investigated the commercial viability of, and provided recommendations for, the establishment of camel industry components in the Goldfields–Esperance region. The analysis recommended the establishment of a network of self-mustering trap yards as being critical to the establishment of a reliable, regular supply of camels to sustain commercial operations in the Goldfields–Esperance region. The analysis explored the feasibility of camel industry-related components, such as pet meat, camel dairies, meat meal and human consumption, and concluded that a viable industry could be established in the region. There are already a number of established, commercially viable camel-related businesses around Australia, including camel dairies and export-licensed abattoirs. The analysis was commissioned by the Goldfields–Esperance Development Commission and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in partnership with the Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils and the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association. Forty pastoral, government and camel industry stakeholders met in Kalgoorlie last week to workshop the findings of the analysis and advance next steps with the Goldfields–Esperance Development Commission.