

LIVE EXPORT — NORTH EASTERN WHEATBELT REGION OF COUNCILS REPORT

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

I refer to a report commissioned by the North Eastern Wheatbelt Region of Councils, a voluntary group of seven local governments in my electorate of Central Wheatbelt, revealing that the impact of the Albanese government's ban on live sheep exports for this region will be at least \$128 million in economic loss.

- (1) Does the Premier agree that it is unreasonable for these communities to lose up to nine per cent of their economic base because of a political decision by the federal Labor government?
- (2) Will the Premier meet with representatives from NEWROC to discuss this report and why its analysis is more comprehensive than the work done by his state government on the true impact on this disastrous decision by the federal government?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. It is an important one about how we go about supporting our farmers who continue to do an amazing job on behalf of the economy of Western Australia—and we stand with them. Our own analysis demonstrated that there would be a loss of around about 400 jobs and that it would have an impact on that particular part of the industry of around about \$132 million if we took that completely out of the system—that is, live sheep exports. Obviously, we anticipate that the industry will adapt. We know that one thing our farmers have is an extraordinary strength of character and resilience. From that perspective, we will continue to stand by them in relation to any impacts that might occur to ensure that they know we have their backs. That is what Minister Jarvis, as the Minister for Agriculture and Food, has been taking to the federal government in relation to this issue. That demonstrates our commitment that we believe the welfare arrangements that are in place, the checks and balances that have been put in place as a result of the reforms around that are sufficient. The federal government has a mandate, and we acknowledge and respect that, but we believe this will be an unnecessary burden and one that it should reconsider.