

**LIVE EXPORT — CONSULTATION PROCESS**

*Statement by Member for Central Wheatbelt*

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt)** [12.21 pm]: I rise to advise the house that in response to the federal Labor government's consultation process as it shuts down the live sheep export industry, on 21 April I wrote to Senator Watt, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and also the chair of his committee on the following matters. One, the process has been poorly communicated and managed. The late notice of dates and times for the first four consultation events created much angst and anger amongst stakeholders who wanted to participate but were unable due to short notice or because many were in the middle of their seeding program. Two, it was a mistake to exclude the eastern wheatbelt, where many sheep producers and other businesses engage in the supply chain. I have called on the minister to return and include further opportunities for these producers and businesses to engage. Three, the minister had shown a complete lack of professional courtesy in that parliamentary representatives for these electorates were not notified of the visits, which only confirms what many suspect: that this is a politically driven decision and Labor has no real interest in knowing how much damage it will cause the Western Australian agricultural sector. Four, I requested the minister deliver additional funding through the budget process to provide counselling and mental health support services immediately, as it is already evident in the communities that I represent that this is taking a serious toll. In all, it has been a disgraceful process following a disgraceful decision. I have not had a reply from the minister. Once again, the Labor Party has demonstrated it is no friend of regional Western Australia or our agricultural sector.