

ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Second Reading

Resumed from 8 November.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [5.53 pm]: I am the lead speaker for the opposition on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. This bill, which has come down from the other place, is obviously supported by the opposition. I would like to commend the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Legislation, which worked on this bill to bring it to this point: the Chair, Hon Dr Sally Talbot, and Hon Jim Chown, Hon Dr Steve Thomas, Hon Colin de Grussa and Hon Diane Evers. I would also like to acknowledge the involvement in the process of bringing this bill to this point of WAFarmers, the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of WA and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

The current act deals primarily with the prohibition of cruelty to animals. However, it is unable to give effect to the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines. The national guidelines for animal transport were ready to go in 2013 but could not be brought in in Western Australia because our Animal Welfare Act did not allow it. National standards and guidelines have been prepared for the land transport of livestock, the farming of sheep and cattle, and livestock saleyards and depots. Additional national standards are currently being developed for the pig and poultry sectors.

The majority of the Legislative Council committee supported clauses 1 to 8 of the bill, or essentially what is required in order to bring in the national standards. This was the original intention of the bill. However, the majority of the Legislative Council committee did not support clauses 9 to 19 of the bill, for a number of reasons. The first was the existence of a Henry VIII clause in clause 9. The second was that industry was concerned about the proposal to create a position of “designated general inspector”. Those concerns included the ability to enter a vehicle or premises without the owner’s consent. Currently, inspectors can apply for a warrant to enter premises, or they can enter premises if they have a reasonable suspicion that an event is going to happen or has happened. It was considered that it is relatively easy these days for people to get a warrant; for example, police officers. Another concern was that a lot of intensive animal production systems rely on exclusion to maintain their biosecurity levels, and if notice was not given about entering premises, it could affect their biosecurity status. Another concern was that the intended act would enable designated general inspectors to be appointed by the minister rather than the chief executive officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Another concern was that no clear reason has been given for the need to create this position, nor has there been any indication of the qualifications and powers of the people who will be appointed to this position.

The Easton animal welfare review recommended a review of the Animal Welfare Act. This was, and still is, supported by the industry, and this was also the intention of the previous government. Thankfully, everyone seems to be in agreement on this issue. The people from DPIRD who appeared before the Legislative Council committee said that the process has not yet begun; and, when it does, it will take about 18 months. As someone who has worked in the industry all my life as a grower, as a member of a research organisation, and in agri-politics, I think I understand how most people in this industry think. They tend not to like surprises or to have things lobbed on them at the last minute. If legislation was introduced to put in place agreed national standards, that is what should be done. That is what everyone has agreed on. However, clearly not everyone has agreed on the position of designated general inspectors, and concern and alarm has been expressed in some quarters about this proposal. No-one understands better than farmers the importance of animal welfare. Generally, and almost certainly, it makes good business practice. In the last few months, the worst example we have seen of animal abuse was committed by some young men in Wanneroo. That was a horrendous example. It was not farmers who did that, but people who live in the suburbs.

In a similar vein, the existing powers covering live animal export are federal. Those powers should be respected and that area of federal responsibility be left as such. I am confident that the measures that were brought in following the review after those terrible losses earlier this year on the live sheep carrier will be effective.

It is worth mentioning the situation being faced by egg farmers. The cages that egg farmers are currently using were agreed to some years ago and are about halfway through their commercial life. The industry is currently not very profitable, if profitable at all. That is mostly due to the price of feed. When we consider that the industry made that investment based on the existing guidelines, at considerable cost, the industry’s clear view is that if the government wants to impose new standards, it should help pay for those changes. If the government is not willing to do that, the industry will probably close up and eggs will need to be imported from interstate, because production will follow the lowest standards. The pork industry in Western Australia is in a similar dire situation.

Therefore, for the opposition, this bill makes a lot of sense. In my opinion, it would make further sense if the standards that were agreed to nationally also became the standards in this state. In New South Wales, for example,

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the national standards have been modified and brought in. However, Victoria and the Northern Territory have just accepted the national standards, and I understand that changes to the national standards automatically flow through to their legislation. In many ways, that is a better way to do it, rather than going to the trouble of making amendments to the national legislation that are appropriate to Western Australia, and also having to change the standards whenever the national standards are changed. I would like to think that our Western Australian standards could automatically follow the national standards, and that is a question that I will be asking during consideration in detail.

I have never come across a grower who likes to see any animal suffer.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands — Deputy Speaker) [7.00 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the second reading debate on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. I want to cover a few points relevant to the groups I work with. In some respects my comments will reflect the same issues that the member for Geraldton raised, often with the same concerns attached to try to make an industry sustainable, relevant and able to compete in a different cultural and social ethic. There will obviously be points on which I diverge from agreement with the other member. I remind members that no action of any merit was taken to improve or change the Animal Welfare Act under the previous government. A couple of reviews were done, but at the end of the day nothing really productive emerged. In fact, it is safe to say, given that some of us were around during those years, all that really happened was a great deal of concern being raised by the organisations and agribusiness with very little resolution or solutions for the way forward. I am particularly pleased that the Minister for Agriculture and Food has had the forethought to bring this bill in. When she was first put in the role, she expressed to me her deep concern over what she had been told was a lack of capacity to enforce compliance with national standards. She has echoed that concern over the last 12 months and has fought really hard to get the bill through intact. Sadly, it is not intact. Some key components that went to the heart of enforcing the national standards and guidelines have been removed by the majority report of the Standing Committee on Legislation. I must say that the minority report was more to my liking, but we get that! I will talk in more detail about that later. In Western Australia we had what the minister described as an unacceptable situation in which we had signed off on standards and guidelines and said that the state would be governed by them, but we had no way of incorporating them into any kind of regulatory regime.

The current standards we are looking at, which will immediately be able to be progressed when this bill goes through, relate to the welfare of animals—sheep and cattle in particular—during land transport and at saleyards and depots. We know those areas are extremely vulnerable to problems. We have monitored animal welfare issues in those settings for a number of years. Indeed, I remember some years ago when there was a drought in Western Australia and we ended up transporting animals—I am shuffling around looking at some of the details of this—to the eastern states because we did not have feed here to care for them. We sent them to the eastern states for slaughter. The standards and guidelines for cattle and sheep allow for them to be deprived of water for 48 hours during transportation, after which they have to be spelled for 36 hours. In 2010, a reported 732 070 sheep and 78 511 cattle were transported from drought-affected Western Australia to abattoirs on the eastern seaboard. Those journeys are very long. There was not just water deprivation, but also the risk of heat stress, because clearly it was in summer. I know someone who followed one of the sheep carting trucks that went from the north west across to Queensland, monitoring the situation and the plight of those animals, and it was not pretty. The process of transport includes loading and unloading, and that is inherently stressful for animals, for livestock, and there are various physiological measures that assess some of those stressors.

These are standards that we urgently need. We urgently needed them back in 2012 and we urgently needed them as recently as a year ago when this was first debated in the upper house. A year later, members are still listening to me put my half hour's worth on why this bill should have gone through a lot more quickly. I suppose there is argument for me to sit down, shut up and just let it go through in a hurry, but I do not intend to do that, because there are several other points I want to make.

I understand other states already have the capacity under their own welfare legislation to incorporate standards and guidelines—instead of saying “standards and guidelines”, I will just say “S and Gs”—and to enforce them and make sure that compliance is effective. Why are we not doing that? Indeed, why have we not been doing it for some time? It would have protected this industry. As it is, it has been left vulnerable. We really do not have to go much further back than about a month and what came out in the Moss review to understand its comprehensive demolishing of the performance of the federal government in regulation. It would be an understatement to say that the Moss report was scathing about other sorts of regulation that have failed dismally without compliance measures in place. Some of the language used about the department's performance and the live export trade includes “a brutal trade”, “a weak regulator”, “a culture of fear”, “cover-ups” and “conflicts of interest”. The report does not say anything we have not been saying consistently and repeatedly for a number of years. The only thing that is different is that the federal government has been forced to listen to some of the truths and that the Australian Labor

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Party has now made a commitment to take action to stop this in the future. The live export industry has its own incredible problems to deal with, and this is not the time for me to say what I think about that industry or the Moss report, but it is pretty clear from the contents of the report that the failures in the regulation of animal welfare are vast and unresolvable.

Page 27 of the Moss report states —

163. **Conclusion:** The department's process for determining the regulatory conditions that should apply to live animal export consignments does not appear to be supported by sufficient scientific evidence. Past mortality rates on similar voyages are not an adequate means to conclude that transportation arrangements are sufficient to ensure animal health and welfare. As such, more sophisticated scientifically valid measures of welfare must be adopted by the department and the industry.

I think the Minister for Agriculture and Food said exactly those words, or very similar to them, way before the Moss review.

An in-depth analysis of some of the information in that report makes for interesting reading. I do not think that the federal government got it right in any way, shape or form. I do not think that its response has satisfied the public or the industry. It is fair to say that there are still some real gaps and that that will continue to be the case under a regime of poor enforcement. There is some independence and some light on the horizon given what is happening in Canberra around boats carrying livestock and the changing position of some members of Parliament there and with new members being elected. I am also very aware that some members of the federal Liberal Party do not support this industry, and I suspect, but I do not know, that members on the other side of this house have similar views.

This amendment bill, according to Minister MacTiernan's speech in the upper house on 1 November —

... is about moving away from a model based on responding to reports on active cruelty, and towards establishing a set of standards, in conjunction with the industry, that sets out acceptable practice, and then ensuring people comply with it; not a system of waiting for someone to do in someone who might have been cruel. It is really putting this on a more modern basis of compliance.

That is absolutely what is at the heart of this bill. Why is there no urgency around doing this? Every day that we fail to act, more vulnerable animals are being subjected to unregulated and unmonitored practices. In some cases people have been convicted and there have been instances of horrific cruelty to animals. I am thinking about the de-horning of a scrub bull on a station in the north west. Anyone who is interested can certainly look at the decisions in that case. It is a very good example for why we need to enforce compliance with the national standards and guidelines. This bill is very urgent because every day we delay, more animals go unprotected and are vulnerable to abuse.

Compliance monitoring, if brought in as part of the review of the act, means that animal welfare organisations and the industry will benefit greatly from the monitoring that will take place. It is not rocket science. It is nothing new. There is compliance monitoring in many industries. Why are people ignoring animals, which are sentient beings? They deserve a good and strong compliance regime. There is compliance monitoring, for instance, in the food industry and huge compliance monitoring in the health industry. There is compliance monitoring in education, child care and the liquor industry. Again, I look to my colleagues in the upper house. Hon Diane Evers referred to a series of compliance monitoring provisions for a range of industries—not just the four or five I mentioned. I will read out the full list she quoted —

... auction sales, architecture, betting and gaming, building, film and game classification, gene technology, health, human reproductive technology, surveying, mining, pawnbroking, second-hand dealing, ports, rail safety, tobacco and taxis ...

Vets have some compliance monitoring as well. It is nothing unusual or strange. The Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act provides powers of entry for compliance monitoring. The Fair Trading Act, the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act and the Fish Resources Management Act all have these provisions. But what happened when this amendment bill was put to the upper house? The Standing Committee on Legislation majority report—the minority disputed it—recommended no capacity for the enforcement of national standards. What bloody use is it then? Seriously! Why have standards if people cannot go in and check whether they are being complied with? We do not expect a local restaurant to be given a one-day or two-day warning that someone will inspect it for cockroaches. We do not expect childcare centres to be given 24 hours' notice before we check that our children are safe. We should not, and indeed the community does not expect, that an industry that is already at risk, already vulnerable, would reject this sensible notion. It is not hard to enact, but the committee, clearly dominated by —

Mr D.R. Michael: Potatoes.

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Ms L.L. BAKER: Potatoes! Clearly, it was not dominated by Labor. The Labor minority report recommended that the compliance provisions as drafted in this bill should be enforced. I feel very sorry for the Minister for Agriculture and Food. She fought very long and hard on that front. We have had to step back and regroup. When the review of the act commences, we need to make sure that we look at compliance. Members can bet their bottom dollar that I will be pursuing that.

The 2016 Productivity Commission inquiry report, titled “Regulation of Australian Agriculture”, made a number of recommendations. At paragraph 5.2 it states —

State and territory governments should review, by the end of 2017, the way in which their farm animal welfare regulations are monitored and enforced, and make necessary changes so that:

- there is separation between agriculture policy matters and farm animal welfare monitoring and enforcement functions
- a transparent process is in place for publicly reporting on monitoring and enforcement activities adequate resourcing is available to support an effective discharge of monitoring and enforcement activities.

State and territory governments should also consider recognising industry quality assurance schemes as a means of demonstrating compliance with farm animal welfare standards, provided that the scheme complies (at a minimum) with standards in law, and involves independent and transparent auditing arrangements.

The key points from that report include —

- Animals (sheep, cattle, pigs and poultry) are an essential part of the agriculture sector. Their outputs, such as milk, wool, meat and eggs, are basic elements of the food and fibre chain. While most Australians accept the rearing of animals for commercial purposes, many also place a value on their health and wellbeing (welfare).
- Good animal management practices are an essential part of livestock operations.

Members know that as well as I do. In the past health has been the prevailing concern. Health is clearly important. The physiological health of animals is clearly important because it integrates with their psychological standing, but wellbeing is far greater than that. Welfare is far greater than just “Are they healthy?”

The report continues —

Producers have an incentive to improve animal welfare where it increases the productivity and profitability of their business, including when consumers demand higher welfare products.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: Apart from the compliance aspects, which are lacking in this bill, the power of entry to enforce compliance has also been lost. The committee’s report meant that the minister has had to take out the designation of general inspectors, who would have had the power to enter non-residential premises and vehicles to monitor compliance with part 3 of the act and with court orders and directions given for animal welfare. That is not a big stretch. I have already spoken about the industries that have compliance monitoring. There is no way that we should have let this bill go through without adequate provisions to monitor what is happening. We expect from people who have care of animals that we should not have to worry about powers of entry. We expect that people who are directly charged with caring for animals for their breeding, growth and eventual destination—whether, like me, it is for performance reasons for sport with horses, or whether it is a meat, a food or a fibre product—are doing the right thing. We should not have to worry that people are doing the right thing with these animals. Compliance is part of being in a modern society. To deny that is simply stupid and will not get us anywhere. The public must have confidence that we have animal welfare standards that can be achieved. Without these designated inspectors, I am not clear on how we can ensure that all the national standards that now need to be complied with are being enforced.

It does not make sense to say that we want national standards and guidelines that are a fundamentally different model of regulating the industry, but we want only the same sorts of powers that have to be based on there being a suspicion if we think a company, farm or livestock business may be in breach. Members need to think about the fact that for this industry to continue with a social licence and not sustain further damage, they should have supported the role of the inspectors in making sure that compliance was being adequately monitored. I think the minister has admitted that the inspectors would have been trained by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. That would perhaps have given the industry some sense of, “Oh well, that’s okay maybe, as long as they are not inspectors from other places who don’t know us and our business.” There was not really the chance for that to happen. We will make sure that that is well researched and documented with the industry when it is again put forward as, I hope, part of the animal welfare review.

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I will mention a couple of things from the few reports on this area; I left half in my office because I could not carry them all! I will talk about the issue of livestock transport and standards, and intensive and commercial farming of animals. I am drawing from a September 2015 document entitled “Animal Welfare Regulation in the Australian Agricultural Sector: A Legitimacy Maximising Analysis”, by Jed Goodfellow of Macquarie Law School. I will make a few comments about some of the animals, starting with pigs —

Farrowing crates are even smaller in dimension than stalls, typically measuring 50 centimetres in width by 2 metres in length. Sows are kept in farrowing crates for approximately four weeks until weaning, at which point they are then moved to a ‘mating stall’ to be artificially inseminated before the process starts again.

The Tasmania Government’s Regulatory Impact Statement on restricting the use of stalls listed the following welfare impacts associated with their use:

It is a very long list, so I will not read them all out. I urge members who are at all interested in the area of farrowing crates and sow stalls to read it. The welfare impacts include —

- Prevention of foraging, locomotion and exploratory behaviours which normally constitute over 70% of activity during daylight hours;
- Prevention of normal behaviour of dunging in a location separate to the resting location;

Most animals are very clean and ensure there are not dung piles where their food is or where they sleep. They cannot do that in a crate. Further welfare impacts include —

- Prevention of normal social behaviour of females to live in social groups;
- The provision of less space ... than is required to meet the dynamic space requirements of an average sow ... and thereby meet the Model Code requirement that “sows accommodated individually in stalls must be able to stand, get up and lie down without being obstructed by the bars and fittings of the stall, to lie with limbs extended, to stretch and to be able to freely undertake such movements”

Can members imagine what it must be like for a living, breathing creature to have skin abrasions, ulcerations, severe lameness and urinary tract infections? The list goes on. Those are the impacts of farrowing crates.

A topic that will soon come under national standards and guidelines is that of meat poultry. I put on the record the welfare impacts associated with broiler chickens stocking densities, including a general decrease in physical activity; irritated mucous membranes; respiratory and eye disease; reduced ability to carry out foraging, preening and resting behaviour due to exposure to high ammonia gases generated by faecal matter; increased physiological and oxidated stress levels; increased hot burns; increased skin diseases; heat stress leading to hyperventilation and panting; and increased levels of anxiety and fear.

This debate actually started around dehorning. I have mentioned the station in the north west where this hideous situation resulted in a court case. I will not go into it; it is probably the worst thing I think I have ever seen. The thesis states —

Cattle are commonly dehorned to reduce risks of injury to handlers and other cattle in yards and during transport. Dehorning is most commonly carried out using a curved dehorning knife, hot iron, or other mechanical apparatus known as cup and scoop dehorning. The procedure is painful as the calf’s horn consists of soft tissue and attaches to the skull at approximately six months of age. Pain relief is not required under the *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals: Cattle*.

Go figure.

I could go on. The thesis contains an extensive breakdown. I covered long distance transportation when I talked about the drought and moving animals 48 hours without water. The thesis continues —

... the vulnerable position of animals within the industrial farming model and provides the necessary context for the assessment of the regulatory framework, and critically, the role of Departments of Agriculture in administering animal welfare legislation. But before this can take place, the social and political characteristics of the regulatory problem must be considered. It is safe to say that the changes in farming practices considered in this Chapter, and their impact on animal welfare, have not gone unnoticed by the broader Australian community. Indeed, they have occupied much of the focus of a growing social movement that is dedicated to representing the interests of animals against such forms of ... exploitation.

The thesis continues —

With the public’s growing recognition and respect for the sentience of animals and their intrinsic value, it is likely to become increasingly difficult to rely on the purpose for which an animal is used as a means

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to justify causing that animal harm beyond that which is tolerated in other contexts of animal use and interaction. There is likely to be increased demands for animals to be treated with greater consistency in recognition of the fact that sentience is sentience regardless of the context of animal use. In other words, the public is likely to increasingly question the disparity in protections afforded to different species of animals under animal welfare legislation, ...

I think that goes without saying.

Quoting from the thesis, in 2012, the then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture made this statement —

[The Agriculture Minister] receives thousands of letters a year from the public calling for government action on welfare, for the Australian Government to step in where it is perceived that state or local levels have failed. I know this because we answer all those letters. I also expect that state and territory ministers receive similar correspondence. It's really very clear in this issue—this is not just an animal welfare lobby issue. It's not just a bunch of passionate people exciting the social media. It's clear that the community cares.

We are all here to see the dual outcomes of better animal welfare standards and maintaining an industry that this country has called its own for many, many years. It is possible to do both, but we have to acknowledge that the farmers are vulnerable and the animals are vulnerable, and somewhere in that mix we have to find a compromise position from which we can ensure good compliance with standards, not just enforcing or accepting standards. We need to allow people to look at animal welfare practices and we need to allow for transparency so that the community can again become confident that this is a great nation, and that we care for animals and look after not just their health, but also their welfare and wellbeing. Until that time comes, we will be constantly coming back to this house to debate these kinds of issues. I long for the day when this will be a thing of the past and we all understand that sentience is not a human domain but is part of every living creature, and that every living creature, even those that we farm to eat, to wear or whatever, deserves both our respect and its dignity, because it is a living creature that feels pain and emotions, and does not deserve to be abused or treated cruelly.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [7.30 pm]: I would like to speak for a short time on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. It is a very important bill. Agricultural animal husbandry is one of our most vital industries and it has been since the creation of our nation. I suspect it will become increasingly important into the future as the world, particularly Asia, needs protein. Therefore, it is important that we periodically look at the regulations that govern animal husbandry and animal welfare to make sure that they are up to date, if you wish. Animal husbandry is also a national industry. The industry is fully integrated across the nation and we are increasingly exporting our animal produce, whether as chilled and boned meat or live animals. The world desires, indeed demands, that Australia, and all nations, has the highest standards for care, shipping and transportation of animals, and that is why there has been significant movement across the nation on these issues. Particularly as we grow into new markets in Asia, indeed in China, getting the system right will be extremely important. That is what this bill does.

Over the years the various state agricultural ministers have agreed to national animal welfare standards and guidelines. The national standards are not only applied in most other states, but also used in our trade negotiations with other nations, particularly China, as the basis on which we treat animals and the various standards that are accepted. This is an important issue. Of course, large segments of the community have grave concerns about standards of animal husbandry, perhaps not so much on farms—what comes to mind is the live export industry. The video of what happened on those ships a few months ago—actually more than a few months ago—was provocative. For anybody who has spent a great deal of their life, if not most of it, on a farm living with—and off, if you wish—animals, that video would have been a more shocking spectacle than for those who are probably new to farming. To say the least, it not only shocked me, but also depressed me to my bones. That simply cannot be allowed to happen again. I admit that that is a commonwealth issue. This bill does not deal with the live export issue, but I nonetheless mentioned it.

I would particularly like to thank and congratulate my colleagues in the upper house who made this bill better. The passage of this bill has shown the true function of the other house—it is a house of review. The initial stages of the bill originated in the upper house, because the minister responsible for the bill is there. It was sent off to a committee by the minister and the majority of that committee made substantial changes to it, and, I might add, significant improvements. I would particularly like to thank Hon Jim Chown; Hon Dr Steve Thomas, who is a vet—he is sitting behind the Chair—and Hon Colin de Grussa who were the majority members in the committee and who made some substantial changes. They basically said that we should focus on implementing the national standards in Western Australia. The minister has a longstanding passion for animal protection. I think the first time I met her was on a protest against live exports in Fremantle. I am sure that she has not changed her views, although

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she is now a minister and has to take a wider perspective. I am not denigrating her stand on that at all. It is her personal stand and I am sure that she is passionate about it. But as a minister she has stepped back and is governing, hopefully, for the whole community. I believe we have the task in front of us—again, this bill does not deal with the live exports as such—and it is imperative that we make this bill work for our agricultural sector and, I might add, for the livestock. That is my view.

The previous speaker, the member for Maylands, also shares those passionate views, and I respect that. My view is that the majority members of the committee have truncated the bill quite substantially but focused it on the appropriate issues—that is, implementing the national standards. Some aspects have been taken out of the initial bill that went to the committee, particularly the issue of inspections. The member for Maylands talked about that. The proposal was that we set up a new parallel set of designated inspectors who would have a right of entry to farms even if they did not have evidence to indicate cruelty or violation of the standards. I think that we should set up standards and have farmers implement them on their farms. The best stewards of animals are farmers themselves. In most areas in which we have standards we have a code of conduct and we allow the industries and the firms in those industries to put the code in place and to ensure that it is sustained.

Mr D.R. Michael: Do you think that should be the system in restaurants for public health?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: To a large extent it is.

We should set up the national standards rather than have random inspectors go out and inspect farms without any indication of inappropriate behaviour. That is excessive, particularly if we were to have new designated inspectors. I think the initial bill went too far. It would have significantly inhibited the adoption by farmers of the appropriate national standards, and put in place a them-and-us situation between farmers and the Department of Agriculture and Food inspectors and created a policing mentality. Anyone who has ever worked on a farm knows that if they do not treat their livestock properly, their livelihood will deteriorate. A farmer's livelihood is dependent upon the health and the condition of the animals that they raise. Any half-decent farmer—the vast majority of ours are more than half decent—will realise that. We need a system that incorporates the farmers' ownership and maintenance of this issue. We do not want to have a policing exercise. If we have this type of culture on farms, we are less likely to see situations such as those on live export vessels. Those events were not the fault of the farmers. They brought the sheep, healthy, onto the ships, and then the shipper took over. There were some complications, but the standards were simply not high enough. Hopefully, the commonwealth will impose higher standards.

The bill is properly focused on implementing national standards and a system that works with the farmers on that, using the existing inspection processes, and focuses on trying to ensure that all the systems, from raising cattle and sheep to transport to markets, are appropriate on and off the farm. This is the correct way to do it. This industry has huge potential for growth and expansion of economic activity. If we look at estimates of the increasing demand for animal protein in China, even decreasing it by 50 per cent, the potential demand from Australia is still phenomenal. As China grows and urbanises, its availability of agricultural land shrinks, and as its people become wealthier, the demand for protein grows. More importantly, Australia has a clean and green reputation in China, and also the appropriate management of animals. The same factors increasingly apply to Japan. As the new free-trade arrangement we have with Japan grows over time, we will have increasing access to its cattle and livestock markets. Japanese farmers treat their cattle almost as well as they treat each other, with massages and the like. It is very intensive, I might add—much more so than in Australia.

With respect, I disagree with the member for Maylands. I have a lot of respect for her because her intentions are personal and well thought out, but we differ. I think this bill is spot-on, and I want to thank my colleagues in the upper house for it. It is a very important bill. Of course, the work will not finish with this. There will be a lot of work to do to make sure that we increase the standards and—here I think the member for Maylands was right—meet the increasing expectations of the general public of Australia and Western Australia for treating animals with more care and respect. I readily accept that that is a growing trend, and that is why the national standards were set up. We also have to do something that is very important, and that is to make sure that more urbanised people, who are the dominant group in Western Australia, understand their food sources more thoroughly, because there is a profound and growing disconnect between the population and the food sources. However, that is a task for another day and another bill.

I would like to commend this bill. It is an excellent improvement on what was initially drafted. I thank the Legislative Council and the committee, and the Liberal Party, of course, will support the bill.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore) [7.44 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. We heard speakers earlier today and this evening talking about this matter, one of whom was the member for Maylands. I will refer to a couple of things that the member said in her contribution, which was passionate, as always, on the issue of animal welfare. She is well acknowledged for the commitment she has to those matters, and for the passion with which she holds those matters in her heart.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 20 November 2018]

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Mr Ian Blayney; Ms Lisa Baker; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Shane Love; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Cassandra Rowe; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr David Michael; Mr David Templeman

As we know, this was part of a much larger bill that was introduced into the Legislative Council. I understand that the minister herself referred it to the Standing Committee on Legislation for review. I pay tribute to the members of that committee for their work, including Hon Colin de Grussa, who is the Nationals' agricultural spokesperson. He did quite a bit, both in that committee and in the wider debate, to raise this issue as a matter of concern and to draw attention to the concerning provisions in the bill that the committee ultimately recommended be set aside. I congratulate him and the rest of the committee for that work. As we know, the bill as it stands now helps bring Western Australia into line with the rest of Australia in being able to implement clear and well understood standards for the treatment of animals, and for animal welfare. The member for Maylands, as I said, made a few comments earlier about that process. I do not necessarily think it was forced upon the minister; I think the minister saw that the bill needed to be sent to the committee because there was a lot of work still to be done to ensure that the community and the industries supported changes to the legislation. It was a sensible move in the end to refer the bill to that committee, to have that work done and to produce some sensible outcomes.

The Nationals fully support the bill now before the house. We look forward to ensuring that, through the provision of these standards, there will be confidence in the community and in the industries involved in handling animals of all sorts. It is acknowledged that social licence is not a term that many farmers like. I do not think farming communities really like the idea that they have to justify their existence to others, but we have seen with recent developments, in the live sheep export industry especially, that the industry exists in a wider paradigm of a political background and the need to have the support of the community, otherwise these sorts of industries cannot continue.

I was not going to bring up the matter of live exports; I am completely off the sheet here. With regard to what the member for Maylands initiated into the discussion by speaking about that matter, I would like to pay some measure of tribute to the current federal minister, David Littleproud, a National, for his very determined activities to try to ensure that industry understands that animal welfare is a very serious matter, and it needs to be taken to the very heart of that trade if it is to continue into the future. I think many participants already knew that, but it needs to be understood by all participants to avoid slip-ups. We have seen some tragic circumstances in the past. Some of the actions that the federal minister has taken in immediately calling for reviews not only of what happened, but also into the culture of the department that led to that situation, have been very important and insightful. They have shown that he clearly wants to get to the very bottom of not only the incident, but also the culture that caused the incident. He has taken some measures that will address those issues.

It is disappointing that the Australian Labor Party has taken the view federally that it wants to see this industry wound down, giving a time line of five years. Once an uncertainty like that has been introduced into the industry, I do not think it will take five years to wind down. The customers will move off quicker than that because they want some certainty in their market and they need to find food for the future. They will move as quickly as they can to find other suppliers. I know that some members of this house detest the live sheep trade and probably the live cattle trade as well but the unfortunate fact is that animals will be transported to those countries regardless of whether Australia is a participant in the trade. Do members really think that the animal welfare standards will be higher coming from some countries in South America or maybe Africa than those that our federal government and our community would expect? I think the answer is clearly no. The same number of animals will be shipped to those countries that want live sheep and cattle. The market exists, so animals will be sourced to fill that market. If those animals do not come from a country like Australia, they will not come from a place where animal welfare is something that is even seen as important, perhaps. Some of the work that has been done over the years in developing the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System program has helped lift animal welfare standards for not only the animals that we export, but also all animals in that trade. It would be great pity if Australia were to withdraw from that trade because I think it would lead to lesser animal welfare outcomes. It might make people in Australia feel good because our animals are not being shipped, but it certainly will not make for better animal welfare outcomes overall. Sometimes, perhaps, it is more important to have your foot in the camp and be able to influence a program and that type of industry as a participant rather than as an outside observer.

We have heard of some of the serious doubts that existed about the original bill that went to the Legislative Council. There already has been talk about designated general inspectors and whether it was appropriate for them to be introduced in the Animal Welfare Act, which the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017 seeks to amend. I think many people in the farming industry were concerned about the qualifications and perhaps even the motivations of the inspectors who would be acting in that role. I have heard from members that other industries are subjected to random inspections and random spot checks of their procedures. Today, I was reading about some restaurants in Perth that have been pinged because they have not been keeping up the standard of food safety that they should. I do not think any industry can expect to be exempt from random inspections. At some point when it comes—it may well come—there needs to be some very clear understanding about the qualifications and motivations of the inspectors and about who will pay, direct and moderate their behaviour. Very clear guidelines are also needed on the expectations of welfare for the place being inspected. At the moment, we are trying to bed down the national standards and get some sort of a system in which people can have clear guidelines on what is an acceptable practice

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and what is not. Surely, it is better to have that become part of the culture of the industry and then introduce a greater level of inspection into the regime at some point, than to randomly move ahead and have inspectors trying to enforce standards that may not be very well known in the general community. Perhaps an inspector will be looking more at getting a prosecution rather than looking to educate, and education is always a better way to make sure that people in the long run do the right thing in their industries.

As members would know, it is a different matter when somebody is involved with animals as their livelihood than for perhaps many people here who have pets or may keep a few sheep on a hobby farm. When someone deals with hundreds or thousands, or even hundreds of thousands, of animals in their care, it is a different matter. Depending on the species that they may be involved with, some people in the community may not agree with some of the activities that are carried out. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, for instance, regularly puts out things attacking the shearing industry and its practice. I even saw one Facebook post the other day from a group like that complaining about the behaviour of a group of Scottish shearers who were swearing at the sheep. I do not think that swearing at the sheep would necessarily cause the sheep injury. I know that some people here believe that sheep are intelligent, but I do not think that they have a full grasp of the English language.

Mr C.J. Tallentire interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I do not think they quite grasp the sort of language that the member for Thornlie might hear around his electorate. They probably do not react badly to a couple of swearwords. I think we have to be realistic about these industries and know that sometimes the work is hard and repetitive, and occasionally slip-ups happen, but they are not necessarily caused by bad people or bad processes. Apart from shearing, people might be milking animals or dehorning animals because dehorning is done in some circumstances for the welfare of animals as much as their handlers. I take the point that some instances of that may appear to be less well managed than others, but nonetheless they are facts of life and they happen. Every sheep and cow, for instance, is required to be identified. That involves the removal of an area of their ear. I do not think anyone in here would like to have part of their ear cut out, but farmers are required to do this. It is not necessarily even something that they want to do. It is just part of the practice of running animals.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Can I ask, because I don't know, how widespread mulesing still is?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Mulesing is pretty widespread for Merino sheep. People who keep wethers, for instance, and might be moving them on might not necessarily mules them, but certainly if they are breeding ewes and animals that they are going to keep for a length of time it is seen to be good practice because it helps to prevent some of the shocking effects of flystrike. It is a good management tool for that. I believe there is a good adoption of the painkilling sprays in the industry to help with the animal's welfare. In fact, some people have found it improves the animals and they are very happy to do it. It is a good outcome all round with the introduction of some of the painkilling measures for mulesing. But again, some members would probably find that very distasteful. Quite a few people, if they went to see a mulesing operation, would find it very distasteful, but it is also distasteful and distressing to see the result of flystrike.

These things have to be taken on balance. Even things like drenching and handling animals to remove their parasites can sometimes cause some level of stress to the animal. However, from a stockperson's point of view, the idea is not to cause stress to the animal. They want to handle the animal as quickly and efficiently and with as little stress upon them as they can because the animals do not grow if they are stressed and therefore they will not make the farmer money. At the end of the day, farmers want the animals to thrive. They do not want to cause them pain or unnecessary cruelty. Things are done to them so their health and production will increase.

I know it is difficult sometimes from the outside to look at the reality of some of the work that people, including me, have undertaken with stock over many years. The member for Geraldton and others in the chamber would know exactly what I am talking about. We need to remember that almost universally farmers have a great sense of pride in the animals they produce. They want to produce good animals. They want to produce animals that are healthy because they want people to want to purchase either the animals or the output of the animals, whether it be milk, eggs or whatever. They are keen to ensure that their animals are well treated. The Leader of the Opposition made a good point about the marketing of the products. Increasingly, we are marketing some of our meats and other goods in areas where people are looking for quality produce. They are looking for high standards of animal welfare and good animal health especially, because they want to eat a healthy product that has not been raised with too much interference, if you like. These are important measures that everybody in the community can work towards, but we have to be sensible about them.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr R.S. LOVE: When animals are handled in such numbers and with such frequency, it is extremely important that the standards are well known and clearly understood so that people can meet those standards. We do not want

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people to feel that the practice that they have been doing forever on the farm is the only way to do things. If matters can be improved, that is good to see.

Part of the other problem with the original legislation was the clarity of the regulations. I believe the original bill had what is known as a Henry VIII clause, whereby the department could have changed the standards without recourse to Parliament. That could have led to a situation of uncertainty in the community. As I said, it is very important that the community, industries and regulators are aware of the accepted standard. That needs to be well understood. We are not going to achieve that if the standard can be changed willy-nilly by the department perhaps after a change of minister or office holder in the department.

Turning to the codes of practice, clauses 1 to 8 of the bill are the original clauses. Clauses 9 and 10 have been introduced to bring the standards into the legislative and regulatory regime. I am a bit interested in clause 10, which has the description of the code that we might be asked to accept as the regulated standards. I think it refers to the interpretation of the term “code of practice”. There is a fairly broad definition of that in clause 10. I am a little interested to hear a bit of discussion from the minister representing the Minister for Agriculture and Food, who I am sure is well abreast of these issues and will be able to provide concise answers about the meaning of those standards that I and the member for Geraldton have expressed some interest in. We will certainly look to see what comes out of that.

Overall, the Nationals WA support the bill. I think the member for Maylands and others referred to the measure that has been introduced, but a wider review of the animal welfare legislation has been mooted. I understand from reading *Hansard* that it might be about 18 months or thereabouts before we see some result of that. That is what the minister has indicated, but I may be wrong. That appears to be what was said. We will be very keen to see that process and to see that, when that legislation is developed, the concerns of not only the wider community, but also individual industries are well understood. We need a review going forward into the future that helps to ensure that better welfare standards are maintained. We also understand that all parties need to have greater ownership of those standards so that the people in the industries, those involved in the regulation, those involved in marketing or consumption and the general community understand exactly what Western Australia’s animal welfare standards are. If there is a transgression, I am quite happy to see that transgression dealt with as necessary, but only if everybody understands the rules and those rules are sensible, have been agreed with industry and the wider community, and are supported and reviewed by Parliament. I look forward to the consideration in detail stage.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie — Parliamentary Secretary) [8.06 pm]: As a significant part of my education, I was told to view livestock as units of production. Of course, that is a way of disconnecting people from the wellbeing of an animal—to view it as a unit of production. For a long time, humanity has viewed animals as being very different from ourselves and therefore not worthy of the same welfare considerations. We have slowly seen progress. Indeed, here we are debating the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017, which seeks to bring in certain standards. Perhaps the bill does not go quite far enough on enforcement matters, but it will move us on from the old concept of the legislation simply protecting against cruelty. In this case, we are looking at standards around health and welfare. That is a sign of progress.

I think it is fair to say that many people still view their livestock as units of production. I think of cattle producers. I have certainly helped on beef cattle production farms. I can think of situations in which the cattle were yarded and then the big trucks came in and took the cattle away and there was that silence. Some people might view it as a silence that means that the animals are off to the saleyards, and they are hoping for the big cheque to come in, but it is also a deathly silence. They know that they have lost all the animals that they have worked so hard with for years and that they raised from calves. Perhaps they had planned the mating–breeding cycle and went to the bull sale to choose the bull to sire the offspring. They may have been involved in pasture management and ensuring that the watering had been done. They may have been involved in the whole life cycle. It is never an easy moment for even the hardest livestock producer to see their produce go to market. There is always that thought that we are saying goodbye to a generation. I do not think these standards are going to apply to that overall view of things, but they can apply in the production standards around very basic things such as when a calf is born. It may be a non-polled breed. I was involved in breeding Limousin cattle. We went, strangely, from Murray Greys, a naturally polled breed, to Limousin cattle. We had to deal with their horns, and the family came up with a fairly elaborate way of dehorning cattle. I was able to check this out with one of our colleagues from the other place, a very well qualified person who is a vet. We used an analgesic sedative called Rompun, which is based on the xylazine sedative. Once the calf is given a dose of Rompun, it is pretty groggy. We would then get in with a dehorning device that was effectively a soldering-iron. Once that was heated, the horn bud of the animal was scooped out. The ones that got that treatment were pretty lucky because I have seen dehorning on other places—on stations and what have you—where it is a matter of getting the animals down a race. They are often a lot older as well, so the horn is fairly established. They are rammed into the head bail. The member for Moore was questioning the way we speak to animals. To my mind, the best-run sheep yards and cattle yards are those where

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things are as calm as possible and things are done efficiently. These animals, which are not used to being in yards, have to be moved down the race quickly. Once the head is in the bail, the farmer gets some giant boltcutter-type device to take out the horns. It is a pretty gruesome affair.

There is also castration. The member for Moore mentioned the use of ear pliers delivered to us by the Department of Agriculture and Food. They are often nasty things, especially if one has been unlucky enough to have an ear plier mark that requires a particularly big chunk of the ear to be taken out. These things never worked very smoothly. They were always a bit inefficient. I could feel them pinching the ear as I crunched down on it. It is a nasty business. It is probably better than the alternative, which was branding and is used in the station country. The heat of that brand would go on, and there are all the other treatments that have to go on with livestock as well. It is not always the quiet, bucolic life that grazing animals might conjure for us. Even when they are receiving pour-on drenches, I am never sure how much of a burning sensation that might cause an animal, whether they feel they are a bit chemically intoxicated because of the pour-on drench that has been given to the animal to get rid of various worms or parasites of some sort. Then, of course, there are the oral drenches. That is an alternative but is somewhat more labour intensive. I doubt that tastes particularly good, but I am sure they can get over that. There are injections through tough skin and all that sort of thing. There is no doubt that livestock go through it. It is very important to ensure we have standards that people should adhere to when they are doing these very routine, simple tasks, and doing them as quickly as possible.

It is similar with sheep. We have touched on mulesing. I agree that fly-blown sheep is something that no-one wants to see. That is a horrible thing. I think we do have to make further progress in finding alternatives to mulesing for Merino sheep so they do not have that build-up of manure that can lead to the fly-blown condition and make sure that they are okay and that they are regularly shorn. So many other unfortunate things can happen to livestock. We have to have good standards in place. Sometimes animals do not get shorn. Sometimes, when they are on bigger properties, they are left in a back paddock or forgotten about and suffer from malnutrition. I have even seen that in areas not far from Perth. Poor property ownership and inexperienced livestock management has meant that animals have suffered serious malnutrition and are in shocking condition and clearly suffering. There are drought conditions as well that we hear all too much about, which is currently occurring on the east coast. We have certainly had our fair share of them in this state as well. Even when the rains come, animals get stuck in mud and drown. Lots of things happen to livestock. It is a very sad thing that it can mean a lot of suffering. That is what we need to eradicate. We should have standards that make sure that animals do not suffer so that we can meet the highest production standards.

I mentioned that I went to—I do not think I named it—Muresk Institute of agriculture. The member for Geraldton also went there, as did Hon Colin de Grussa. Three of us in this Parliament went through the same agricultural training. That is an education that makes one see the importance of looking after livestock so that they grow well and eventually provide a good return. There is always that trade-off. There is a risk of a trade-off where people will look to produce animals in a way that is as free of labour effort as possible, requiring less time and effort on the part of the livestock owner. That means that sometimes animals are neglected. That is certainly something we need to guard against.

I now refer to the need for inspections to take place. The idea exists that that could be something people might fear. We have to really work towards ensuring inspections are actually seen as an opportunity for a livestock owner to have their production system validated. They can then proudly say that they are meeting standards and eventually look towards getting premium prices. We know this is the way to go. For so long, Western Australian agriculture has accepted that it is about commodity production; we will be price-takers. We have to move out of that and move into being price-setters. The only way to do that is by being able to clearly say why or how our product is different from someone else's. One of the ways we can do that is by saying, "I am a producer of Black Angus cattle that have been grazed in the best pastures possible and have been well looked after. I have had independent certification of my production standards. My calves are well treated when they come through. We use the most humane methods possible that are exactly what consumers would like to see." That is the way we have to go. If we just continually accept that we are producers of a commodity, that we are going to take whatever the price is—the lowest price on the global market—we are not going to be able to get ourselves out of that situation of being price-takers.

The idea of consumers wanting to know more about where their food comes from ties in very well with the movement towards how people relate to animals in general. As consumers become more interested in their food, they are also becoming more concerned about the production standards. People are continually asking those questions about where their food has come from. It is really important that we get this right. We have about 500 pastoral leases in Western Australia. I am not sure how many of those are cattle stations as opposed to sheep stations these days. I have spoken at length in this place about the financial viability of some of those pastoral leases. I think some of the most profitable stations are the ones running cattle in the north of the state in the Kimberley. Of course, much of their produce probably ends up in the live cattle export trade. I will touch on that issue

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in a moment. The idea of running cattle on big stations makes a lot of sense, but I recall visiting some stations in the Pilbara and seeing some very expensive Brahman bulls that had been purchased from the Canterbury Brahman Stud in New Norcia. They were lovely and really good animals, but they were not very happy in spinifex country. The Brahman is a magnificent animal but, of course, it has pendulous skin and a pizzle that sits low to the ground, which is not very sensible in spinifex country because they are uncomfortable and inhibited from moving around. It was a poor choice on the part of that particular property owner to go for those animals, as magnificent as they are. I am sure their breeding rate was not particularly good. An Aboriginal stockman pointed out to me that the bulls were forming gentlemen's clubs because they did not really want to go out and find females in the herd. They were quite happy where they were and avoided damage to their wellbeing. The care of livestock is something that the broader Western Australian community and, indeed, consumers right around the world are becoming more interested in so we have to get it right.

I want to touch on the live sheep trade and note that the best figure I have is that the live sheep trade to the Middle East is worth about \$250 million a year whereas live cattle exports, principally to Asia, are worth about \$2 billion. In the words of a live cattle exporter, reliable live cattle exporters are copping so much damage in the political crossfire because of a cottage industry, the live sheep export industry. I thought that was an interesting perspective. I am not entirely convinced that the way in which cattle are exported is superior to the way in which sheep are exported, but there is recent and well-documented evidence of the conditions in which sheep are exported. I happened to be at Fremantle Harbour when the *Maysora* set sail on 22 September. I think that was the first major shipment of sheep since the ban came into place. It was a pretty appalling sight. Fremantle Harbour was very quiet. I just happened to be there by chance visiting the Arctic exhibition at the WA Maritime Museum. I saw that ship set sail and one thing that struck me was the appalling pollution that came from the ship that went all over Fremantle Harbour and North Fremantle. It was dreadful. Of course, because the fuel used by the ships, especially the *Maysora*, is the cheapest bunker fuel they can get, it produces a thick sooty smoke. It comes out and goes straight into the ship's vents, adding to the trauma for those animals. Perhaps a gassing of sheep takes place on poorly ventilated ships. It was pretty appalling to see.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The cruelty of animals in the live animal export trade, especially sheep, is something we have to address.

I will quickly touch on issues relating to penned and caged animals and the community's desire that pigs and poultry live in decent conditions. People are appalled when they see battery hens or sows in sow stalls and realise that they have almost no freedom of movement. If the industry does not watch out and does not make the transition to free-range piggeries and free-range chickens, it will pay a price—there is no question about it.

Another area that is dealt with by the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017 is the control of animals, including pest animals. I know that many people will be as professional and cautious as possible about, for example, the control of foxes on properties, but I think there is a real problem particularly with the control of so-called feral pigs in the south west. I know of many stories of piglets being released into areas of the state forest with cruel acts done to them before they are released, such as cutting off their ears and horrible things like that, so that dogs cannot catch them, and of growers shooting them when they become wild boars. They are a source of entertainment for some sick minds who want to hunt them. Really, we can avoid the problem in the first place by not allowing their release. Genetic studies that have been done show that some of these pigs in south west forests are directly descended from piggeries in the north, such as Gingin. We know where they have come from and we know that they have not somehow escaped or been bred in the wild. They have in fact been translocated and released for the purpose of shooting them in state forests. Although it is an illegal activity, it seems to be a popular one in some parts. That sort of thing has to be controlled. It is a very big part of what the community expects when it comes to animal welfare.

Dr D.J. Honey: It's already illegal.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It is already illegal, but it is happening. Some people in country towns will proudly show off their ute that is set up for pig shooting and proudly show off their pig dog. There is almost a blind eye turned to this. Perhaps in some cases people believe that they are providing a community service by eliminating pigs that are causing damage and being a nuisance, but the evidence shows that a lot of what they are shooting are animals that have been translocated to satisfy somebody's idea of blood sport. That is simply not acceptable. Of course, we hear about other acts of animal cruelty. We have to elevate the standard of the treatment of animals in general in the community. It is useful when the community sees and hears about some of the horrible and cruel things that happen to native and other animals because it is appalled. Perhaps that is a way of making the community more sensitive to acts of animal cruelty. We have to look at the causes of that sort of behaviour and in that way perhaps we can avoid these horrible events, such as people using crossbows to shoot kangaroos and other

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animals. It would be a major step forward if we can work out what it is that triggers this cruel behaviour in some people. There are probably a whole host of reasons why people act cruelly towards animals. We have to ensure that we have legislation that deals with those people and hands out the toughest penalties to provide at least that dissuasion. Treating the cause is absolutely key to hopefully getting rid of cruel behaviour towards wild animals and any animal out there, even if it is a feral pig. Feral pigs are a major problem and there are many other problem species and pest animals, but it is not their fault they are there. They deserve to be dispatched humanely and we have to ensure that that is governed by the standards I imagine we will see through this legislation. These standards have to be backed up by enforcement. We have to have enforcement procedures in place to make sure that happens. I know there is a hesitancy to have people come on to properties, but I will conclude with the comment that it is in everyone's interest for Western Australia to have a reputation as a state where animal welfare is determined by standards that are enforced. That is in our interests, because it will add to the marketability of our produce and to our reputation as a state that appreciates the importance of animals enjoying lives that are not in any way subject to cruelty or unfortunate circumstances. We have to work harder to convince people of the need for good enforcement regimes so we can have the best standards.

I am sure there will be further legislation in this place that looks to improve the standards. The community expects it of us. I know that in my electorate of Thornlie we have a very strong view when it comes to treating animals well. People are always keen to know that animals are respected. They love their pets, they care deeply about how they are treated and they see that production animals—livestock and farm animals—should be treated well too. That is what is expected by the people in my electorate and I think it is expected right across the state. If we can deliver on meeting that expectation, we can improve the marketability of a lot of our livestock produced for food. I conclude my remarks.

MR K.M. O'DONNELL (Kalgoorlie) [8.31 pm]: I have some things written down and I wish to go through them before I then talk about changing my mind. We are debating the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. An important area of the bill is the adoption of national animal welfare standards and guidelines to bring WA into line with the rest of Australia. There have been some concerns raised in WA about the adoption of national standards and the potential impact on the operations of our local producers. The rest of Australia has been under these national standards. It is suggested that this has not created any significant issues and therefore should not present any issues for WA; however, in many industries and sectors, WA tends to be different from the rest of Australia and we need to recognise this and ensure that our farmers and producers are not negatively impacted. The current arrangements require animal inspectors to seek a warrant or owner consent to monitor compliance unless the inspector reasonably suspects an offence has or is likely to be committed. This bill is going to give inspectors greater power to undertake random compliance checks on non-residential properties and vehicles, with no prior notice required. As a police officer—I am sorry that I keep referring to that; there are just a lot of examples that come out of that —

Dr D.J. Honey: You should be proud of it.

Mr K.M. O'DONNELL: I am!

As a former police officer, I saw the existing powers of animal inspectors in effect on both residential and non-residential properties. In my experience, the avenues available to inspectors to enable monitoring of compliance by seeking a warrant, owner consent or acting on information provided on a suspected offence are sufficient and have resulted in many successful prosecutions over the years against those who harm animals. I questioned the need for the increase in powers, as the current act has the provision for access when an offence is reasonably suspected, allowing inspectors to act on information and other indications that suggest checks are required. There is always a concern and risk of abuse of power when there is greater freedom provided to monitor compliance without the need for justification. We need to be cautious when considering an increase in powers in any industry.

I listened to the speech by the member for Maylands. I have always believed that there are two sides to a story. When I was on the local council in Kalgoorlie, I moved a motion one night. I spoke to three or four councillors and they agreed with me, so I thought I did not need to speak to any more councillors because the first three or four I spoke to all agreed with me. I put the motion forward and it went 50–50, with some people saying no and others saying yes. As members would be aware, the mayor gets a chance to speak before any motion is voted on. Our mayor, Ron Yuryevich, was a very wise man. He got up and spoke. Once he had finished speaking, although I had put the motion up, I wanted to vote with him against it. That was because of the way he said what he said. I was thinking of that when the member for Maylands was talking. I was not aware that in some of these industries people can just walk here, there and everywhere. As a police officer, if I wanted to inspect somebody's gun cabinet, I had to give them written confirmation that I was coming back to inspect it. When I first saw this legislation, I thought that there was no way in the whole wide world that an animal ranger was going to be able to go wherever he wants. That was my thinking. That was what I thought. When I hear what others do to monitor compliance,

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I can understand that. The most important issue here is the welfare of animals, and if the existing powers are not deemed adequate to ensure animal wellbeing and safety, we need to look at changes. I put the reaction to amendments to the Animal Welfare Act and similar reactions to the way the Liberal Party sold the sale of Western Power down to one word: “marketing”. I think that was not done well. I am expressing my personal opinion here, but this issue of compliance has not come over well. I am sorry; I keep looking at the member for Maylands. She should have spoken on this bill earlier. When she spoke, I could see where she was coming from and others may possibly have seen where she was coming from. I envisage this issue possibly coming back at another time and I look forward to listening again to the member for Maylands. Perhaps she could be used as the front person—not the frontman—to talk to us on this side.

I turn to animal welfare. In Kalgoorlie–Boulder there are station owners. I will name one station, Woolibar station. It used to allow people with firearms on the property to cull vermin. It also used to allow people to go on to the farms for yabbing and picnics—just walking through the bush. All that stopped a few years ago when livestock carcasses started to be found with arrows through their heads. We are talking sheep, cattle and kangaroos. It was just wanton destruction, which I do not think any of us agree with and which only a very small percentage of people undertake. Everybody else suffered by this access being stopped. The member for Maylands talked about live exports. I know this is not part of it, but I do not think any of us agree with any of the inhumane things that go on. However, I would only support changes if we could get the farmers alternative markets. I would be very much against just stopping and saying to them, “Bad luck, you have not got a job.” I think this is a step in the right direction. I am not going to go on, but I just look back to marketing. This legislation may not have been gutted the way it had been if it had been presented differently. Even I did not like it when I first saw it. I said, “No way in the whole wide world.” That is all I need to say.

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [8.38 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. Given the shortcomings of the Animal Welfare Act 2002, the purpose of the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill we are discussing tonight is to provide the regulatory basis required for the application of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines set by Animal Health Australia and, as already mentioned by some of the previous speakers, agreed to by all the Australian states and territories, including WA. Although the bill provides the means for the regulated application of standards and guidelines, it will not extend the power of inspectors to apply a proactive approach to compliance with those standards and guidelines, which is extremely disappointing from my perspective, to say the very least. The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines were established in full consultation with industry stakeholders and apply to all parties involved in the care and management of animals, particularly livestock, including cattle, sheep, horses and goats. The standards will also shortly include agreed guidelines for poultry and pigs, which is welcome. Western Australia is the only Australian state jurisdiction yet to legislate the Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines, and this bill, as others have mentioned, seeks to address that anomaly. This bill, however, also highlights the need for vigilance on the issue of animal welfare and protection, and the outdated intensive farming practices that still exist in WA and the persistent gap between community expectations of farming and production practices and standards and what is actually happening on the ground, in many cases on many farms—not all but on many. Australia’s live sheep export industry, battery hen farming and intensive pig farming are three examples in which the community’s expectation of the humane treatment of animals and livestock is simply not being met by current industry practices and government regulation. I think that largely in Western Australia the state government is really leading the nation where it can, particularly in its determination to phase-out battery hen farming, which is absolutely remarkable and something that I welcome.

The RSPCA reported that more than 11 million layer hens, or around two-thirds of all laying hens in Australia, are still confined to battery cages. In WA approximately half of the 1.9 million eggs produced every day still come from battery hens. That is from an article in WAtoday of 31 January this year titled “Caged eggs could be banned”. In its submission to the national review of poultry standards, the WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development cited the serious animal welfare risk of battery hen cages, which if we use the current 2003 guidelines, now over 15 years old and voluntary, can be as small as 30 centimetres by 30 centimetres—about the size of an A4 piece of paper—and 40 centimetres high for a single hen. Cages containing three hens provide even less space per bird. These small spaces do not allow hens to engage in any of their natural nesting, perching or scratching behaviours. To confine hens to such a small space, in my view, is inherently cruel. The community expects vastly better from egg producers and they are voting with their feet. A 2017 RSPCA survey found that almost all Australians believe battery hen farming is cruel, and the science around it overwhelmingly supports the community.

I saw this firsthand in my electorate and I was a little surprised. This issue has been very dear to my heart since childhood and I very much look forward to battery hen farming being phased out and eventually banned. When the code was up for review, I was inundated by people in my electorate who contacted my office expressing their disgust at the battery hen farming industry and who wanted to put their voice in opposition to the poultry code

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review. Although the government has not been able to place a ban on the sale of eggs from caged hens, it is serious in its intent to have this practice phased out, and the community expects that of us. They want us to act on that intent. We will continue to push for this standard to apply at a national level.

The draft standards and guidelines released last year have not recommended moving away from battery hen cages, nor have they improved on the current cage sizes, which, in my view, is disgraceful, frankly. The industry must understand the community no longer accepts this is a modern farming practice and they continue to move away from caged poultry products. Although industry representatives maintain that the cost of improving conditions are an unsustainable burden, the consumer continues to move towards eggs and poultry produced in a minimum or a barn system, and more so, increasingly, to a free-range system. With an annual growth rate of 4.2 per cent over the past five years, the egg industry is growing. Within that, though, the free-range sector has experienced the greatest growth, and the Australian consumer continues to move towards these products, as I have said. That was stated in an IBISWorld egg farming market report of May 2018. Other countries and other regions around the world, including the European Union, New Zealand and Canada, committed years ago to phasing out this intensive, archaic and cruel farming practice. In my view it is well and truly overdue that Australia does the same.

Australia's live export industry is another example of how Australian governments have fallen behind in reflecting the community's expectations of the humane treatment of animals. As evidenced in recent reports, systemic animal suffering and abhorrent cruelty is par for the course; in fact, it is the norm on shipments of live sheep from Australia to the Middle East. According to the Animals Australia website, on shipments between May and October 2017, thousands of sheep died during a single shipment, including 2 500 from heat stress alone. This is clearly totally unacceptable. Most of us, myself included, can barely bring ourselves to view the disgusting footage of those poor sheep on those monstrous vessels and their voyages of hell. Evidence from multiple investigations into the live exporting industry and the animal slaughter practices of many of those countries importing our livestock show extreme cruelty and routine breaches of international, national and Western Australian animal health and welfare standards. Based on the evidence collected in many investigations in recent years, the Australian federal government needs to ban live exporting.

In my letter earlier this year to the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, Hon David Littleproud, MP, I expressed my deep concern on behalf of my electorate about the live export trade and the inherent cruelty of the practice. I think that the issue of live exporting goes across party lines. People come up to me and say, "I have voted Liberal all my life, but on this issue I felt very strongly. I want to see an end to this cruelty, Cassie." I have had voters who vote Greens, Labor, One Nation and Liberal all say the same to me when I have met them in my office, at the local shops or out doorknocking. The overwhelming concerns of my constituents and I is that the welfare of the animals involved in the industry will continue to suffer despite increased regulation and associated harsher penalties for noncompliance. Of particular concern are stocking densities and temperature control during high heat and humidity of summer on Middle Eastern voyages, which I believe remain too high to provide relief for the animals on those awful voyages. In short, this industry does not have a social licence to operate. With that in mind, it was very distressing to read in *The West Australian* of 14 October this year that the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources had issued an export advisory notice requiring 17.5 per cent less stocking densities than those prescribed by the Australian standards for the export of livestock. These stocking densities took effect on the first of this month; the official end of the northern hemisphere summer. The RSPCA reported this density standard allows exporters to put a 15 kilogram sheep into a space—I quote from its website—"barely larger than a square metre". So the sheep are not able to lie down at the same time or, and I quote again, "easily access feed and water". Keep in mind that their voyage at sea is up to four weeks. What an absolute disgrace!

The federal department has deliberately ignored the signs of allometric tested density minimums and the advice of the Australian Veterinary Association, which advocated for higher minimums of stocking densities throughout the year to protect the welfare of sheep on board. This came on top of hearing that a new licence had been issued to a Kuwaiti company after it had been banned. The company has close links to Emanuel Exports, which also lost its licence after the recent revelations of extreme cruelty during voyages. In addition to the McCarthy review, the recent Philip Moss review of the federal minister's department found multiple failures since 2013 that have rendered the department completely ineffective on this issue. Although the minister has said that he will adopt all 31 of Moss's recommendations, I and the Australian public no longer have faith that this will assist in guaranteeing the protection of sheep on these voyages or at their destinations.

Until live exports are banned, I support the establishment of an independent regulator to which the industry will report. I also support the instalment of an independent observer on all voyages, who will give daily feedback of vision and reports to the independent regulator. In view of this initiative, together with the dedicated and compassionate WA Minister for Agriculture and Food, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, I also support the establishment of an inspector general and an independent office of animal welfare at a federal level. Although the increased regulations will provide some assurance, it is both my firm belief and that of my constituents that live exporting

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must end and that increased onshore meat processing would be encouraged by this, which will in turn create more jobs for Western Australians.

A third example of intensive farming practices in Australia that I would like to refer to is pig farming. I note that the pig farming industry has made progress in reducing intensive farming practices, particularly with the significantly reduced use of sow stalls. There is still substantial work to do; however, pig industry bodies have come together to voluntarily phase out sow stalls, with a view to making sow stall redundancy mandatory. I commend them on that. As at 2017, 80 per cent of sows were no longer in stalls, and the industry continues to work on improvements, including removing sows from farrowing crates, where they are kept from just before their litter is born until the litter is up to six weeks of age. Farrowing crates are, however, still widely used, with the justification that they save the piglets from being crushed. But, again, this does not allow the sow to engage in its natural behaviours of nesting during this period, or rooting and foraging. Free-range pig farm operators have found solutions to manage this issue, and although it is not perfect—it can mean the loss of piglets—it does mean that the sow and the litter lead a much happier life, free to roam in the outdoors and engage in their natural behaviours, which is imperative.

I would like to share with the chamber some really great examples of successful corporate-model farms in the great southern district of WA that are leading the way in free-range pig farming on an industrial scale. There are smaller mixed farms, such as Ben Oldfield's family farm, which was noted on ABC rural news in October 2015; Colin Ford's family farm in Cranbrook; and the Australian Pork Industry Quality Assurance Program-accredited Linley Valley Pork free-range farms. Of course there are other examples as well.

Although there are model codes of practice for the welfare of pigs and a code of practice for the transport of pigs, these codes are up to 15 years old. The industry will be working with Animal Health Australia to include pigs in the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines to further improve the practices that remain in the industry. However, I am encouraged by the industry's willingness to invest in improved practices and research, and the willingness of large producers to abide by, and in turn invest in, the recommended practices. That is really heartening. Despite this, there is still a long way to go before the common practices of large-scale pig farming satisfy the expectations of the Australian community and consumers. At least this industry recognises that its farming practices must reflect our expectations about animal welfare in order for the industry to grow, and that it needs to have a social licence in order to operate effectively in this country.

Although this bill will not extend the powers of inspectors, it will for now address the minimum standards of animal welfare in Western Australia, particularly for livestock currently included in the national animal welfare standards and guidelines. While we await a further review of the Animal Welfare Act 2002, it is up to us as representatives of our local communities to maintain the pressure on industry bodies, producers and all those associated with the care and management of animals until they and both state and federal governments meet our expectation of mandatory standards for the health and welfare of the truly voiceless—the animals that rely on us for their humane care and protection. I really want to see all industries step up, change these cruel practices and ensure that we treat all animals in a humane and ethical fashion. This is well and truly long overdue.

In closing, I am disappointed that this bill does not do more for the protection of animals. We have really missed the opportunity to show compassion and make wholesale changes, but I hope that it is a step in the right direction and that future federal governments will lead the way to end cruel and archaic farming practices. I look forward to seeing an end to some of these practices for good. I will conclude my contribution there. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [8.55 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution tonight to the debate on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. I am a little bit concerned about some of the rhetoric going around the chamber. Certainly, some good points are being made some of the speakers, but, as I am a sheep producer, I want to cover off on a few facts and some of the hysteria that is going around.

Firstly, I want to briefly talk about the bill. I think it was important that the bill was referred to the upper house committee of which our National Party member Hon Colin de Grussa, MLC, is a member. I agree that it is important that Western Australia brings its animal welfare scenario into line with the national standards. I am disappointed, though, that this legislation, to me, is actually stopgap legislation. It is really only half of the original bill. A lot of the original bill was cut out by the committee, and the minister agreed to that along the lines that the legislation would need a full review next year. To me, we have ended up with stopgap legislation. It is okay that we are going to bring WA into line with the national guidelines, but a lot more needs to be done, including consultation with industry, farmers, transport and the RSPCA. I think that is a little bit disappointing.

One part of the bill taken out by the committee that I think is important is the Henry VIII clause that would have allowed a minister to change the bill without going back to Parliament. I am certainly glad that the committee took that clause out of the legislation. It was curious to note that the RSPCA said in its submission that it did not see

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the need to depart from the national approach and recommended that the bill should effectively stop after it implements the national standards and guidelines. That is quite an interesting comment and I will be interested to see what the RSPCA's next submission will be when the full review happens, starting perhaps late this year and going through next year. I am sure that many people in the farming sector will have a lot of interest in that review.

As a sheep grower, I have noted many of the comments made tonight. The member for Thornlie gave us a good review of not only sheep, but also cattle, goats and pigs, and earmarking, mulesing and many other things. I was quite impressed with the member for Thornlie's knowledge of many of those aspects of farming.

Around 5 000 sheep growers are left in this state, and I would say that probably 98 or 99 per cent of them are very good operators. The things that have transpired recently in the live export industry have disappointed a lot of growers. They take pride in producing a good quality animal. They raise the sheep from small lambs to one or two years old, and deliver them to the live export company, expecting a good quality operation from there onwards. Growers take their animal welfare very seriously. I reject some of the comments made by the member for Belmont about the live export trade. Hon Colin de Grussa and I travelled to Canberra three or four weeks ago and met with the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, David Littleproud. We asked him to come to Western Australia and talk to growers and others involved in the industry. As the member for Moore did, I congratulate him for the serious line he has taken on this industry. The Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock and the Moss review demonstrate that he is taking it seriously. He is looking at his own department, as the member for Belmont pointed out. He understands that we need to get the industry in line. There are some very good operators in the live export industry, but the industry has been tainted by one or two operators.

I believe our federal minister is taking it seriously. He spent three days in Western Australia, travelling through Beverley, Brookton and parts of the wheatbelt, and the next morning held consultations in the Centenary Room here in Parliament House. We held a forum with industry players from transport, farmers, and pellet plant operators and growers who are making investments in the millions of dollars. This industry is really important to them. He took on board all of their comments, and I congratulate him for the way he did that. The next day we went to the Katanning saleyards, in my home town. I was pleased to have him there, and once again he spent a lot of his time talking to growers and the likes of Elders, Landmark and other agents. His consultation has been good. He has taken those reviews very seriously. Minister Littleproud is determined to clean up the trade. The livestock densities and the independent observers are all good steps in the right direction. I would like members to note that the last four live export journeys have averaged 99.3 per cent survival rate. Those numbers are very good.

It is very simplistic to talk about processing everything locally. It sounds good in theory, and I am sure many people agree with it. We have a large abattoir in Katanning, the Western Australian Meat Marketing Cooperative Limited, which is a very efficient operation, but it is not that simple. Certain animals are not suitable to go through the abattoir process, but they are very suitable for the live trade, and there are also the problems of labour. That is a real issue; we just cannot turn the tap on and off. The live export industry, at its height, exported about 1.6 million sheep per year. We just cannot turn the tap on and say that we could handle all of those domestically.

An important point that I think the member for Moore made earlier on, and the real concern for me, is that if we stop the live trade, those countries will source their livestock from other countries such as Sudan and Somalia, which have much lower animal welfare standards. That is the most important point. It makes everyone feel good to say that we should just ban the trade and pack it in, but I can assure members that animal welfare outcomes from those countries will be far lower than those in Australia. People who are serious about animal welfare should have a good think about that. They should think about what flows on when Australia is banned from this trade.

I agree that we need to control and improve animal welfare standards, but I can say that the one thing that was controlled, which I think is a disgrace, was the way in which the footage of the export vessels was distributed. We have all seen the footage, but it was held back for something like eight months and, funnily enough, the very morning after the *60 Minutes* program, every member of Parliament in Australia received that booklet on their desks, as I am sure every member here did. It was an orchestrated campaign. They withheld the footage for eight months. If they were really concerned about animal welfare, they would have been on the job the next week, not eight months down the track.

Ms L.L. Baker: Why do you think they withheld it?

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Because they wanted to launch a controlled and organised campaign. I can understand that that is what they wanted to do, but I want to point out that, in doing that, they have exposed the whole situation. They are not actually that worried. They are happy for many shipments to take place afterwards before it is dealt with, eight months down the track. That is what I am trying to point out. To me, that is one item, and the other one is the animal welfare outcomes when the countries that take our sheep now source their animals from the likes of Sudan and Somalia. I just wanted to make that point. To me, it was really disappointing that that was an orchestrated

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campaign. No doubt it has had a big effect on the Australian public and, as I said, the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources has taken it seriously. I think we have all seen him on *60 Minutes*, and we have seen him take it seriously. He has these reports, and he is going to act. We need to give him that opportunity. We need to give our sheep growers, whom I believe have excellent animal welfare on their individual farms, the opportunity.

In closing, one thing I am particularly concerned with, not so much in this legislation but after the reviews, is how the inspectors' access to farms will work out. I guess there will be consultation, but we need to be very careful about just releasing inspectors with no controls over where they go, what time and what notice they give—those types of things. It is really important for me to stand up on behalf of our farmers in Western Australia, because I know that, as I said, 98 to 99 per cent of them have very good animal welfare standards on their own farms, and they should not be penalised for things that happened out of their control. I am very happy with the way our federal minister will hopefully bring them under control.

MR D.R. MICHAEL (Balcatta) [9.09 pm]: I rise tonight to support a bill that I consider to have been watered down. I would be much happier to support the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017 in its original form. Like the member for Belmont, I grew up in a house full of animals. I am an animal lover. Pepper and Priscilla are waiting for me at home. Over the last 20 years, my house has been the source of much sterilisation of cats in Tuart Hill as they have come through, including Pepper and Priscilla who decided to stay. It was the animal welfare-conscious upbringing I had from my mum and dad and my grandparents that led me to make a personal decision about four years ago to become a vegetarian. The reason I did it, as well as for animal welfare, was for health. From research I have done since then, I am reasonably convinced that the consumption of animal products—meat or dairy—has a detrimental impact on public health. That is why I stopped. The impact on the environment is another reason—stopping the clearing of land all over the world for feed and pasturing is, for me, a very easy solution to world hunger and a very easy solution to climate change. As someone who believes in climate change, it was not something that sat well with me. Also animal welfare was a factor. Unfortunately, once I delved into looking at the way that animal products are produced—things I had been blissfully unaware of as I chewed into kilo steaks, seafood, chicken, pork and everything else I used to eat and love—I could not go back to eating them after seeing how that food is produced. The research I did was Australian-based. This is not something that is happening elsewhere; it is happening in Australia. That is my personal view and what I am going to say tonight is my personal view. I am not going to try to convince members to become vegan, because I know that is what everyone hates. I already cop enough hilarity in the dining room and with my friends about my lack of eating meat, so I will not go there any further.

Mr A. Krsticevic: You have my full support.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: Thank you, member. Veganuary starts on 1 January, so I am happy for the member for Carine to join me.

I want to talk about the future. In our inaugural speeches, a lot of members spoke about the pace of change in the world at the moment. The world is changing very quickly, whether it is in technology, science or space, and very much in terms of our social conscience and social views. More people are becoming woke to social issues. That could be the first time it has been said in *Hansard*.

I think that there are big changes afoot for animal welfare. I think all of us receive the emails from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Animals Australia. We are not talking about one or two, or 30 or 40; we are talking about hundreds and, for federal members, thousands. I spoke to the officer of a federal Liberal member of Parliament on the weekend at the Osborne Park Show, who said there are staff in their office whose full-time job is to deal with emails about live export. The emails were all from local people, not from people in other parts of the state or country. The world is changing fast and I think people's views on animal welfare are changing fast. The more that people learn about some of the current procedures that have been given a social licence, both currently and for a very long time in the past, the more some of the current procedures might have to change. That is where I think the original Animal Welfare Amendment Bill would have been so helpful to the industry and to hardworking farmers. Although I do not eat their products anymore, I know that being a dairy farmer or any kind of farmer is incredibly hard work. I understand there is incredible uncertainty in seasons and prices. I would agree with the member for Roe that 99 per cent of farmers adhere to the accepted current practices and they practice what some would consider to be good animal welfare outcomes. I would probably feel a little bit different now, but I get that under the current social licence most farmers will do their best for those outcomes because it affects their product, which has been said, and they need their product to be the best for sale.

I was lobbied by egg producers about a year ago when we were talking about the national poultry standards, which has not been decided upon at the federal level. I have seen some of the lobbying by the live export industry—mostly the live export companies. Again, probably one or two are not as bad as the others. To be honest with members, some companies are bad. I am not going to name them but I have seen some of their directors in

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interviews on TV and, quite frankly, given what they have been doing and the way they run their business, I view them as monsters. Some of those bad companies have dragged this industry down into the trouble it is in. We heard that the stigma around live sheep export is also affecting the live cattle export industry.

I think that unless there are inspections and unless people can go onto a farm without notice to find that two per cent who are doing the wrong thing, the future will hold more and more whistleblowers. If there are inspectors, people will be fined and told to stop, and their business could be stopped. That can all be done under regulation and within a framework. If there are whistleblowers, they will appear on *60 Minutes* and on the front page of the paper. That is where the industry and those farmers who work so hard will come undone—even the good ones—if there is no inspection regime to allow for those people doing the wrong things, whether it be a farmer, transporter or live exporter, to get caught. Whistleblowers are the only way they can be caught, which will affect everyone. Those industries are at risk of being caught overnight. Like the member for Belmont, I support federal Labor's position, which is a five-year transition. I have heard the Premier's answers to some of the member for Roe's questions in question time. He said that if this happens again, the live sheep export industry is at risk of being gone overnight—if there is more footage like that we have seen. That is why I think the original bill would have been so good for the industry as well. Good compliance and good inspectors should not affect good agriculturalists and people doing the right thing; it will catch the people doing the wrong thing, but they will not appear on the front page of the paper, at least not straightaway. There will be no sensational footage on *60 Minutes*. That is where the original bill would have been great and where the weakening of this bill is a problem. Unfortunately, at least federally, some former Western Australian senators were keen on having federal "ag-gag" bills to stop the whistleblowers, but it will happen. Technology is such with drones and cameras these days that it will happen. In the future, in all industries that involve animals, I think whistleblowing will continue to happen unless we have a good investigative inspection regime.

I covered the live export industry, which is covered in the Moss report. It outlines where some of the inspection regime was taken away by our national embarrassment, Barnaby Joyce. That has caused this problem. This bill tonight is a stopgap, and I am looking forward to hopefully having a proper review of the Animal Welfare Act. There is a need for compliance and there is a need for inspection. If it were not for one brave whistleblower, we would not have even known that these issues occurred on live export ships. I shudder to think, especially about that company, how many other instances there were that we do not know about. How many other instances might have been worse? We need an inspection regime for stages of our food and clothing production. Every other stage has some kind of regime. The end product for most would be within a restaurant where public health inspectors can come to check for things, as the member for Maylands said. I do not see why it should be any different at the front end.

In terms of the pig industry, I think the social licence for sow stalls, farrowing crates and that type of animal husbandry and the way that those pigs are produced probably has a life to it. To my mind, chickens are probably the most abused animals on this planet. Caged hens are used for meat or eggs. The stocking densities are disgraceful; an area the size of an A4 piece of paper is just not good enough. Chickens deserve better, and these are just the hens. The way male chicks are dealt with, which is normally being gassed or ground alive on the first day of their life, is abhorrent. A lot of people do not know that is the practice. It happens all over the world. As more and more people have access to the internet and as people become more inquisitive, these things will change. Standards may have to change. I liked milk and a good YoGo, but then I learnt about bobby calves and the plight of the mothers whose bobby calves are ripped away from them. I could not continue to enjoy milk or dairy products or cheese. I love cheese, but it is not something I can continue to eat with that knowledge. Society's attitudes are changing, and the industries will have to deal with that.

I am saddened that this bill is not what it should have been. Lisa Baker, the member for Maylands, has been the champion within the Labor caucus since she was elected. I know there are some animal lovers on the opposition benches, especially within the Liberal Party, who did not look that comfortable when we talked about live export earlier this year; I will not name them. I hope we can move to a more bipartisan way of dealing with animal welfare, as has always been the case and always should be. Now that I am a member of Parliament, I am not privileged to polling, but I know from my former life as a campaigner and staff member that support for animal welfare runs at 80 or 90 per cent in most seats. The two major parties would normally be in agreement on these big animal welfare issues. I was a bit disappointed in the Leader of the Opposition's comments tonight and his lack of support for an inspection regime. Obviously, I am disappointed in what the upper house and its committee did to this bill. The original bill was a stopgap, but it was a good stopgap that would have allowed a better regime while we looked at amending the Animal Welfare Act. I do not think the inspection regime should be controlled by the Department of Agriculture and Food. It has the best intentions in the world, and I cast absolutely no aspersions on its staff, but it has a conflict and it is not the place to deal with animal welfare issues. All animal welfare issues should sit somewhere different. The bill has now been weakened. We cannot rely on a warrant with a day's notice, because

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someone could clean up their animal welfare practices as that would allow them enough time to stop. We will never find a solution that will allow the whistleblowers to come in. We need proper inspections, not just national standards and guidelines. It is a good start but we need more than that, because sometimes they are not the best either.

For those members who know me, I had to make a decision a year and a bit out from the election about whether I wanted to be the next Mayor of the City of Stirling or whether I should try to sit in this place. One of the reasons I ran for election was, quite frankly, the disgraceful attack that was levied upon the RSPCA by the other place. I followed that closely. How the Liberal Party could support that beggars belief. From what we have seen from that upper house committee and from what I have heard tonight, I am concerned that the Liberal Party has moved well away from its normal position of being centralist and in step with the community on these issues. I hope that we can fix this in the future, and I will talk to some of the people in this chamber about that. For those members who feel uncomfortable about some of the things that have been said tonight, or about this bill or live export—I know some of them—now is the time for them to stand up to their own party, and especially to some members in the upper house. I think we can do better together. I would like to invite the Liberal Party back to the fold with the Labor Party and the community on animal welfare issues.

What we say in this place can come back to haunt us, and it can be laughed at by future generations. With all due respect, I will quote some comments from 1979 by Mr Stephens, the then member for Stirling, who said —

Albany, of course, received a severe economic jolt when the Federal Liberal Government decided to go ahead with an inquiry into the whaling industry. That inquiry resulted in the cessation of whaling activities in Albany ... To me it is quite apparent it was thought to be more important to placate a few conservationists in Melbourne and Sydney than it was to consider the economic interests of the town of Albany, which is a couple of thousand miles removed from Canberra and, no doubt, forgotten by the Federal Parliament.

He goes on —

... our unilateral withdrawal from whaling, in my opinion, will not help the whales very much, and it will not make very much difference to the whales whether they are killed by one country or another.

The positions we in this Parliament take can be looked at and ridiculed, laughed at or thought of as dreadful by future generations. Some of the things said in this place on this bill by those opposite will probably be in that category in a few years' time.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [9.25 pm] — in reply: On behalf of the Minister for Agriculture and Food in the other place, whom I represent in this portfolio area, I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. I thank the members who have made a contribution to this important debate. I thank them for their frankness, their honesty and, indeed, their passion. We heard from the Leader of the Opposition and the members for Geraldton, Maylands, Moore, Thornlie, Kalgoorlie, Belmont, Roe and, of course, Balcatta. Obviously, in those contributions we heard a variety of opinions and views, and some extensions of views that have been put, and I appreciate that.

I always think about some of the significant efforts over history on the wellbeing of animals, including animals that are raised for food and produce. It is always interesting to acknowledge that the animal welfare issue attracts huge public sentiment. Indeed, that has been borne out in this Parliament. I remember the now Premier introducing to this place early in the 2000s during the period of the Gallop government one of the biggest petitions calling for the ongoing reform of animal welfare. I think there were thousands of signatures on that petition. I remember he appeared on the front steps of Parliament and there were reams of signed petitions. That attracted attention and support.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Were some dog-eared, minister?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: They may have been! That was one example of community concern and, indeed, community compassion for animals. From memory, I think that petition was particularly focused on pets, but I am not sure. The member for Maylands may be able to support me while she reads tomorrow's news today. It was a significant petition.

Some of the people in this place will be surprised to hear that I have agrarian roots in my family. My very much loved grandparents, Win and Jack Bates, were farmers in the Narrogin valley in Boundain and Yilliminning. They were very successful farmers. I was very proud of them. In fact, I spent much of my early years, particularly school holidays of course, on their farm in Boundain. I fondly remember sitting on the open tractor, as it was then, as my grandfather, pop Bates, cropped the land during the May school holidays. I learnt a lot of things from him, as one does from their grandparents. I learnt a lot of valuable lessons, including of course the value of life and witnessed firsthand the humane way that he and my grandmother, and later my uncles who worked the farm following them, treated and respected animals. I do have some empathy for the comments made by the member for Roe and the member for Geraldton regarding farmers. All of us in this place, or most members during their speeches,

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highlighted that overwhelmingly farmers continue to respect the life of their animals and the importance of appropriate husbandry. As other members have highlighted, we know the abhorrent exposés of those animals aboard those ships that were so graphically highlighted to a very large audience. It not only attracted a lot of attention, but also it stirred the passion of many people in communities throughout the nation.

The member for Belmont and the member for Balcatta highlighted issues around other animals and their treatment now and over time. Although there was some disappointment from some members about this bill being watered down, I think was the term used, we must keep forging ahead with progress to ensure that ultimately the welfare of animals is everyone's business, and indeed for the sector, as was highlighted in the second reading speech. It is important to approach this knowing that effective and credible animal welfare is not a threat to agriculture, but indeed if we can install community confidence in animal husbandry practices, it can only benefit the sector. That is an important point that was made in the second reading speech.

It is very important that we have opportunities in this chamber to debate issues that are so important. This is an important issue. The welfare of animals is really, really important. Whether a person is a vegan, a vegetarian or a carnivore like I am, or an omnivore as many here are, the fact is that we should all be concerned about the welfare of animals and product from those animals and be confident that those animals are treated humanely and with appropriate practices that ensure cruelty does not prevail.

It is quite remarkable that in this chamber, on both sides of Parliament, we have three members who attended a wonderful college, the Muresk Institute. The member for Geraldton was a Mureskian and the member for Thornlie was a Mureskian. Who was the other one?

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Hon Colin de Grussa.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The other one was Hon Colin de Grussa from the other place. This fortieth Parliament has three graduates from the Muresk Institute. Even though I was born in Northam and grew up in Northam, I cannot claim any graduation from Muresk. The closest I got to Muresk was the Spencers Brook Tavern, which is a couple of kilometres from Muresk. A Sunday session at the Spencers Brook Tavern was an experience.

Mr C.J. Tallentire: Did you get to a B&S?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Oh yes, but I could not go into those tales! We could be here all night. I do not have lead speaking time like they do in the other place. I could keep members here until midnight but I will not do that.

I think that is wonderful. It is important that this Parliament has representatives who are farmers who work the land, and people who have studied. We also have people who continue to have a deep passion, like the members for Maylands, Balcatta and Belmont and others who deeply and passionately care about the welfare of animals and the respect of that. It is also important to have this debate. I want to highlight and make it very clear what this bill effectively does because it is important to put in context what it does. Essentially, the bill does one thing only: it broadens the objects of the Animal Welfare Act to permit regulation-making powers for the proper treatment and management of animals. That will be used to implement the national standards, which many members have spoken about in their contributions. Essentially, nothing else about the act will change as a result of the bill because there was a process that, as we know, was undertaken in the other place with the committee system. A previously proposed compliance regime will not proceed under this amendment bill. However, a review of the Animal Welfare Act is an important next step, and a next step that I hope the community will be engaged in. The stakeholder engagement has been very thorough and the buy-in by various stakeholders is of course very high and very much valued by them. The review of the act, which of course will be a key step next year, is going to be a very important element of this progression of animal welfare in this state and across our nation. Each national standard has been the subject of broad national consultation. In November 2017, there was key stakeholder engagement. I have seen the list of those who engaged. It is a very broad list. A very large cross-section of interest groups and stakeholders were canvassed. A number of key events, which were hosted by various stakeholders, fed into the overall consultation process. I can understand some members' disappointment about the bill having been watered down. Perhaps we could say it has turned a sow's ear into a silk purse. I do not know, but that might be the case. At the end of the day, it is important that we progress.

A couple of comments were made during second reading contributions about some clarification, which I might raise now. I am not sure whether there is an intention to go into consideration in detail. I am happy for that to happen because I would like this bill to pass tonight.

Mr I.C. Blayney: It will be very brief.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is fine.

The member for Moore raised the issue of clause 10. I think he was seeking some further clarification, and I am happy to flesh this out more in consideration in detail if he wishes to raise this further. I have been advised that it is important to remember that the codes of practice he raised apply across the legislation, including as a defence

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to cruelty offences. Therefore, it would be a mistake for the definition to be too limiting. That is some advice I have had in response to some of the member's queries about the issue of the code of practice in clause 10. The explanatory memorandum highlights that clause 10 inserts a new subsection containing an interpretation of the term "code of practice" as used in section 94 of the act. That provision will provide for the adoption of codes of practice relating to use, care, safety or health of animals. The new provision will make it clear the document can have a title other than "code of practice" in order to be capable of adoption by the regulations. The definition specifically includes a standard, rule, specification or other similar document.

I thank the member for Geraldton for his contribution. In it he made some comments about the adoption of standards. I am advised that there is now to be consideration of the adoption of the standards by reference, among other options, with a view to having as efficient and effective a process as possible. It is worth noting that in discussion with industry, especially that of the north, the feedback strongly indicated that it may want the regulations to recognise regional variation in production systems that impact on animal welfare implementation, which is an interesting concept and feedback. That is obviously consideration that has come out of the cattle industry in the northern part of the state.

As I have highlighted, the next phase is the review process that the minister is keen to have underway next year. I am sure that this issue, irrespective of what happens nationally, will see many, many members of our community, a cross-section of our community, deeply interested in this issue. I suppose that at the end of the day, all of us, no matter what position we may come from, want to see a transparent and clear framework in which good practices are implemented and sustained. Indeed, having a robust and sustained framework allows for good animal husbandry practices. As stated in the second reading speech, there are benefits for all if it is a clear and well-desired process. I thank all members who have made a contribution to this debate tonight. We are obviously very keen for the bill to pass this place tonight, as it has been through the other place. The next steps become very, very important in the ongoing progress of high-quality animal welfare in Western Australia.

I commend the bill to the house.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave denied to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement —

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I thank the advisers for being here. Unfortunately, they had to sit in the gallery for a while. The opposition was taken to task by a member of the government last week for not spending enough time on bills; otherwise, I think it probably would not have been necessary to go in to consideration in detail, but I felt it was the appropriate thing to ask questions. I refer to the commencement of the legislation. Following on from that, will this legislation be reviewed; and, if so, after how many years?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am advised that the review of the Animal Welfare Act will include this particular amendment.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 3 amended —

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Has there been a failure to prosecute for an offence in the past under the existing legislation?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am advised that under the existing processes—not this one—prosecutions will occur only for allegations of cruelty. Of course, the amendment allows for animal welfare to be considered in the context of any potential litigation or regulatory offence.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Can the minister explain exactly what this provision—the insertion of these words—adds? As I read it, the Animal Welfare Act already prohibits cruelty to and other inhumane or improper treatment of animals. Why is it necessary to insert this additional paragraph when the act as it stands already prohibits the mistreatment of animals?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am advised that the constraints of the existing act has meant that only animal cruelty could be regulated. In fact, issues associated with the welfare of animals are, of course, not covered. To ensure that that could be covered, this clause, and this expansion if you like, has been included in this amendment bill. That was based upon legal advice on the constraints of the existing act around cruelty only. I have a further point. Without this change we would not be able to implement the standards. It is quite a crucial clause that will enable the standards to be applied.

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Mr R.S. LOVE: Section 3(1)(b) of the act already provides for the protection of animals from improper treatment. Would not the contravention of a standard already constitute improper treatment of an animal?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am again able to advise that the addition—the expansion of this element of the legislation—was on the advice of parliamentary counsel, which, of course, was part of the drafting process, and is an important component to ensure that the capacity of the standards are applied, and can in fact be applied.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Part 3 Division 3 heading inserted —

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: The minister referred to this in his second reading speech, but I would like it clarified. It appears that there are three ways the national standards can be implemented in a state. As I said, in Victoria and in the Northern Territory any changes to the national standards will apparently flow into their standards. The standards can be adopted by reference or with minor modifications, or the standards can be set out in full in delegated legislation with modifications. I am curious to know which path it is intended Western Australia will go down.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am advised that we will be moving towards the adoption of the standards as the method, of course with the expectation that parliamentary counsel will continue to provide further advice on the implementation of those standards. That advice—not parliamentary counsel's advice, but the ongoing consultation—may be also influenced by viewpoints put by stakeholder groups. But, essentially, to answer the member's question, of the options, the adoption of the standards is how we will progress this amendment.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Can the minister give any indication of the process by which the standards will be updated nationally?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The member will be aware that there is a five-year review process with regard to the standards. In the bill, the expectation is that as they are amended or modified, we will move with that, in that same vein. But be aware that we are talking about a five-year process, so we would not expect that to be a regular occurrence because of that five-year review process. However, we would look at reflecting any changes to those national standards through our own state legislation.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: When this bill is passed, what education or information processes are intended to be undertaken to inform the industry of the change to the laws?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Throughout this process, of course, farmers have become very familiar with the standards, so I understand that there is already a broad awareness of the standards, and they have been delivered through key stakeholder mechanisms. But, of course, the department will be responsible for an education and awareness program as we progress to the review next year, and we will of course make sure that there is a good education program attached to this amendment once it is passed. I am advised very strongly that there is very good awareness throughout the sector of the standards themselves already, but I understand that will be complemented by an ongoing education program delivered via the department.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9 put and passed.

Clause 10: Section 94 amended —

Mr R.S. LOVE: This clause relates to the interpretation of the code of practice into the regulations. Was there no interpretation of the code of practice before this?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I think the understanding is that it was quite an ambiguous definition. In the prior legislation, there was some sense of ambiguity to the code of practice due to the addition of words however described. Essentially, this makes the definition more narrow to refer specifically to standards, rules and specification or similar document. In fact, this is, I think, considered to be a much stronger improvement and clarification of that definition relating to the code of practice.

Mr R.S. LOVE: We have heard discussion on clause 8. I think the member for Geraldton was talking about national standards, but they are relatively few in number. This code of practice seems to me to indicate a whole variety of things that may exist at the moment but which may not be national standards as outlined by the member for Geraldton and that could be taken by the department to be used as a guide for the production of regulations. If we go back to clause 7, which we skipped over, it shows a very wide range of things that these regulations may cover. It lists everything from the qualifications of persons through to the management of zoos and medical treatment. There is a range of areas that will not be covered by the three or four standards that are already in place or probably any that are being developed in the future. One would expect that the regulations will have to borrow

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from a wide range of rules, specifications or other similar documents. Will they be standards, rules, specifications or other similar documents that exist at the moment? If so, are they all documents that are somehow a creature of government or will they include standards, rules, specifications or other similar documents that might be developed by other bodies such as industry groups or groups like the RSPCA?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I understand where the member is coming from and I understand what he is highlighting. It is not the intention at this point to be over-specific. The work of drafting the regulations will take some time. For example, regulations could be introduced to enshrine a Western Australian code of practice or industry standard that could, technically, be done. However, the regulations to provide for the adoption of any standards ultimately will be disallowable instruments. This Parliament will, of course, have key oversight and the member for Moore, as a member, and others will have an opportunity to move to disallow those for whatever reason they may come to or on advice they may have. I think a good check is in place, but it is acknowledged that drafting the regulations will take some time. Ultimately, this Parliament is accountable to those regulations and a disallowable mechanism can be triggered by any member of this place when they are tabled.

Mr R.S. LOVE: We have not ruled out standards, rules and specifications that are not the creature of government but could be presided over by an outside group or some other accepted standard or specification. Clause 10 amends section 94 and refers to subsection (2)(d), which reads —

adopt codes of practice relating to the use, care, welfare, safety or health of animals either —

- (i) as modified by the regulations;
- (ii) as they exist at a particular date; or
- (iii) as they are amended from time to time;

My concern is that a rule or specification from an outside body could be amended from time to time by that body, which would then have a regulatory effect on industry and would perhaps be unknown by even the regulator until discovered.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The intention was in fact to provide some flexibility to allow input into the potential regulations. This clause effectively highlights some options for how those codes of practice will be ultimately adopted. It does not prescribe that they all have to be followed to deliver the adoption of a code of practice, but it allows for input—it may be input from industry—about a particular code of practice that is universally accepted as appropriate. This clause ultimately allows flexibility in dealing with options to deliver to the intent of a code of practice, and that may include industry itself having input.

Mr R.S. LOVE: That does not really answer the question of what will happen if a rule, specification, standard or other similar document is changed by an outside body. If the regulation simply refers to the standard, rule or document and it is changed, that will have an effect on the regulation itself without that change being explicit or perhaps even known. I am asking the minister whether he can rule out categorically that a rule, standard or specification change by the body that controls that particular rule, specification or similar document does not necessarily change the liability or the regulation of welfare of that section of the industry without that being well known.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I will attempt to answer the member's question, which is a very good question. The minister's intent—she has been very clear on this—is of course the focus on the national standards. The intention is to not introduce anything that is going to be counter to the emphasis on the national standards. I refer to proposed section 94(3), as the member highlighted. I think the member may perhaps be overly concerned about the “from time to time” component of that clause. Perhaps I can assure him that that is not necessarily going to happen each time, because it may be influenced by the focus on the national standards. I just want to reassure the member. I cannot give him a yes or no answer, but I can reassure him that it is not the intent of the minister to deviate from the focus on the national standards—that is very much what she is focused upon. But, again, the legal advice that has been given in the drafting of this bill from parliamentary counsel is that, within the context of this clause, there is the need for some flexibility, and that is why proposed subsection (3) is included.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I understand why it is there. I agree with it being there if it is a national standard agreed by the Council of Australian Governments or whoever is in charge of agreeing to the national standards, but the way this is written it would apply to a whole range of standards, rules and specifications and not just that narrow group that we are all aiming to see developed. As this is written now, it constitutes a risk of actually undoing what the government is trying to do, which is to provide certainty and a framework in which everyone is agreed on the rules around the treatment of animals. It could potentially have negative consequences for both the industry and the degree of certainty in terms of creating an air of confidence so that everybody knows exactly what is expected of each other. I ask that the government provide some extra level of comfort to the chamber that that will not happen,

Extract from Hansard

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or that if it does happen, such a change would be communicated or monitored. I want to ensure that if an outside agency's rule or specification is adopted, the department or the minister will take it upon themselves to make sure that those rules are monitored so that nothing untoward happens to affect industry.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I understand; I appreciate the member's line of concern, and I can assure him that we will undertake to give that assurance.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [10.15 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [10.15 pm]: I will speak briefly on the third reading of the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017. I thank members for their contributions. I am glad that quite a few members contributed and it was not a simple matter of stamping it and pushing it through. The agricultural industry, particularly livestock farming, has changed enormously over the past 50 or so years. From the time white people first came to Australia, it has been one of the constants in our lives, and it will continue to change.

The issue of mulesing came up. As a grower who paid research levies for years, one of the great disappointments of my life is that, although I am a believer that science can solve almost any problem, that is one problem we have not been able to find a solution for, and that really irritates me. Last weekend I was in the UK, and I drove past one of these open piggeries. The temperature was probably 10 degrees outside, and the pigs were in mud up to their stomachs. I will call it mud, but it was probably mostly faeces. The UK is heading into the winter, and most of the feed being put down the mouths of those pigs would have been going to keep their bodies warm. We would not allow that for sheep, cattle or horses, but that is quite acceptable for pigs, because we think that is what pigs are happy in. I was listening to what people were saying about intensive piggeries just now, and I was thinking of those pigs in their politically correct open paddock in the UK, and I started to wonder whether they would actually be happier in a nice warm intensive shed. An interesting point that I would like to make is that plenty of people had something to say about eating meat, but no-one mentioned the production of artificial meat, which I understand is very close. The member for Balcatta might be able to eat a piece of steak that started off as a genetically modified soybean.

Ms L.L. Baker: I gave a whole speech about that—clean meat.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Clean meat is the name, is it? Okay.

Mr D.R. Michael: My fridge is full of tofu.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: You enjoy your tofu!

It is interesting that the technology for that is advancing rapidly, and artificial meats, I am told, are not that far away. On that happy note, for some, I will finish my remarks.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [10.17 pm] — in reply: I thank the member for Geraldton, and I again thank all members for their contributions tonight. I will also personally thank the advisers who assisted me in answering those curly questions from the member for Geraldton and the member for Moore: Ms Katherine Clift, Ms Sarah Kahn, and Ms Miriam Sauley, as well as I-Lyn Loo, who was in the Speaker's gallery, and Sarah Bailey. I thank them for their support and guidance on this bill, and I thank all members again for ensuring the passage of this bill this evening.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

House adjourned at 10.17 pm
