

LIVE EXPORT TRADE

**83. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry:**

The minister will know that it was reported in today's Press that the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has claimed that farmers need to accept the inevitable end to the live export trade.

- (1) Does the minister understand that the trade underpins the livestock price in Australia?
- (2) Will the government actively support the continuation of the trade?

**Hon KIM CHANCE replied:**

I thank Hon Murray Criddle for raising this matter.

- (1)-(2) The answer to both questions is unequivocally yes. It provides me with the opportunity to address one particular issue, which was raised as a result of the public attention given to the RSPCA representative's statement at the Western Australian Farmers Federation conference last week, which was to the effect that the RSPCA opposes the live sheep trade and will work towards ending the live animal trade. The RSPCA is an organisation that I believe enjoys the support of all members. It unstintingly provides a very broad service, and over the years has done so very well. The government's relationship with the RSPCA at all levels is good. Our continuing support for the RSPCA has been underlined on successive occasions by the responsible minister, the Minister for Local Government and Regional Development, but we disagree on this point. I think it is reasonable we have a disagreement on one issue among the dozens of issues that are dealt with by the RSPCA. With due respect to those people who hold other views, the live export industry is a relatively small part of the whole of the RSPCA's role. The fact that we hold different views on this particular matter does not impinge in any way on the very good relationship that exists between the government and the RSPCA and our continued support.