

LIVE EXPORT — FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

**414. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Does the Premier have any concept of the lack of confidence and the sheep price reductions that have already occurred due to federal Labor's ill-conceived government ban?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

The reduction in prices has nothing to do with the confidence of the market; it has to do with the fact that there has been a significant reduction in the number of sheep that have been exported to the east coast. In 2019–20 and 2020–21, 1.36 million sheep were exported to the east coast. In 2021–22, that number fell to 68 000. The reason is that the predominant exporting of sheep back in those earlier years was for breeding ewes. Obviously with the progression of time, those on the east coast do not need as many of our sheep because those breeding ewes have done what breeding ewes do. The fact of the matter is that since the 2019 bans came into place, there has been a continuous increase in the number of live sheep that have been exported internationally. In 2020–21, 575 787 sheep were exported and in 2022–23, to date, there have been over 600 000. The member cannot simply say that the measures put in place by the federal government have damaged the industry in terms of the numbers of sheep that have been exported. Obviously, we need to continue to make sure that we articulate to the federal government the role that this industry plays in our community and its importance to many people in terms of their livelihoods. We will do so. We have done that in the past. That has been acknowledged by the industry. I acknowledge that former Premier McGowan and Minister for Agriculture and Food, Hon Jackie Jarvis, have been strong in their advocacy for the industry and we will continue to be.

*Visitors — Leinster Community School*

**The SPEAKER:** Before I give the call to the member for Cockburn, I acknowledge on behalf of the member for Kalgoorlie the Leinster Community School. Welcome to Parliament today.

*Legislative Assembly Chamber — Bells — Statement by Speaker*

**The SPEAKER:** On the issue of the bells that did not ring at two o'clock as they should have, apparently the lights came on but the bells did not ring, which is being investigated, but I imagine it is a bit difficult to test whilst we are all in here. I am hopeful that it is a one-off thing but people will need to be a little more alert this afternoon in terms of any divisions or calls for quorum. Watch out for a text from your Whip, I think would be the advice just in case we have a more significant issue with our antiquated system.