

MIDLAND SALEYARDS, RELOCATION

975. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:

My question is about the relocation of the Midland saleyards. Is the minister any closer to finalising a decision on the construction of saleyards at Muchea; and is there a date for the removal of saleyard activity from Midland?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

As the honourable member will be aware, a decision has been made by the Government to locate a new livestock facility in the Muchea area and to sell down the Midland asset. I do not have a precise date for the sale of the Midland facility or the way in which it will be sold, because it is held in a number of different titles. Some of those titles can be sold while the saleyard is still in operation. Indeed, negotiations are being undertaken at this stage about one such block, and I believe there may be others. Some of the land cannot be sold until such time as the saleyard is closed, and this includes land that is outside the saleyard precinct. The reason it cannot be sold is that it forms land that is within the buffer zone of the effluent treatment plant for the saleyard. Therefore, regrettably, that land cannot be sold.

I will deal with the purchase of the Midland land. The Government is considering whether an option should be taken on a certain piece of land. However, because of the sensitive nature of an arrangement of that kind, I am not keen to go any further with that. The saleyards steering committee has met to discuss issues relating to the expression-of-interest process and other points that go close to the centre of the member's question. I understand that the committee will meet or has already met with the saleyards liaison committee, which is the industry's voice in that matter. If that meeting has taken place, I have not been briefed on the outcome of it. The decision-making process is at a critical stage. I hope that I will be able to announce to the Parliament before too long that options have been taken on specific areas of land.