

BROOME STOCKYARDS - CLOSURE

Hon KEN BASTON to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

- (1) Is the minister aware of the closure of the Broome stockyards at the port effective from 12 August 2007; and, if yes, when did the minister become aware of the closure?
- (2) Does the minister consider that this will cause disruption to the export cattle industry in the Kimberley; and, if yes, what steps has the minister taken to ensure that there will be no interruption to the export cattle industry?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank Hon Ken Baston very much for his question.

- (1)-(2) In point of fact, no, I was not aware of the closure of the Broome stockyards. In fact, I travelled past the Broome stockyards just the other day, although obviously before 12 August, and I saw that they were still well and truly in use. I do not understand the reason they might be closed. Perhaps the honourable member might tell me.

Hon Ken Baston: The port authority has put the rent through the roof.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I see. Clearly, the closure of the Broome stockyards is a matter for very serious concern, as they perform a valuable and pivotal function in the export of live cattle from the port of Broome. I will certainly be seeking advice on what alternative or administrative arrangements will be necessary to resolve that problem. I thank the honourable member for bringing it to my attention.