

LIVE EXPORT — MIDDLE EAST TRADE RELATIONS

449. Hon JACQUI BOYDELL to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the Premier's comment in an article on WAtoday on 11 June that "there needs to be more visits by senior Australian political figures to China" in order to improve relationships with our largest trading partner.

- (1) Given that the Premier's government's threat to ban live export has threatened trade relationships with some of our biggest agricultural trading partners in the Middle East, when will a minister from his government visit these nations to improve our state's relationship with them?
- (2) What contingency has the government put in place if his government's threat to ban live export has consequences for other agricultural commodities traded with the Middle East?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) The Premier rejects the premise of the question. At no stage has our government threatened to ban live exports, but we recognise that the appalling regulation of the industry by the federal government has resulted in a massive loss of confidence in the industry. Minister MacTiernan has engaged with trading partners and governments in the Middle East to assure them of our commitment to supporting their food security and to find alternatives in terms of boxed and chilled meat during the contentious, high summer period.