

BROOME STOCKYARDS - CLOSURE

634. Hon KEN BASTON to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to question without notice 585 regarding the closure of the Broome stockyards. Given the pivotal function they perform in export of live cattle -

- (1) What are the short-term options to ensure that there is no disruption to this valuable trade?
- (1) What additional cost per head to industry will be engendered by these alternative arrangements?
- (3) What long-term plans will be introduced to ensure that the viability of the industry is not damaged?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank Hon Ken Baston for providing some notice of the question.

- (1) Since 1998, the Broome stockyards have operated on land leased from the Broome Port Authority. The operator of the saleyards has made a commercial decision to close the cattle yards and to develop higher value activities. I understand that the port infrastructure that supports live cattle exports - for example, approach areas, marshalling yards and traffic management - is well maintained and can cater for loading from the alternative livestock assembly yards in the Broome area. Other yards are Lawson Kloppers jetty dip yard, Emmanuel's Broome common yard, the soon-to-open Burtons-Kilto yard, which is 50 kilometres from Broome, and Roebuck Stations yard, which is in the planning stage. The commercial operator's decision to close the Broome stockyard will, however, lead to some increase in costs for some live cattle exporters as they will need to negotiate use of the alternative facilities.
- (2) The additional cost per head cannot be quantified at this time.
- (3) Expansion and contraction of yards used for the aggregation of live export animals is driven by commercial pressures. I expect that the industry should be adequately catered for in the future by commercial providers.