



Speech by

Hon. HENRY PALASZCZUK

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard 29 April 1999

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Newcastle Disease Outbreak

Hon. H. PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries) (10.09 a.m.), by leave: The outbreak of virulent Newcastle disease in New South Wales has been the cause of great concern to egg and poultry producers in Queensland. Earlier this morning, I took part in a telephone hook-up with leaders of the Queensland egg industry to address some of the concerns being expressed by producers in the face of what has become a crisis for the national industry.

It is absolutely critical that the disease be eradicated in New South Wales to avoid any possibility of it spreading to Queensland flocks. So far, more than one million birds have been destroyed. The good news today is that a suspect property close to the infected area in New South Wales has now been cleared by laboratory tests.

The Queensland Department of Primary Industries responded very quickly to the outbreak of Newcastle disease in New South Wales. From day one, the chief veterinary officer from the department has been working closely with his counterparts from the Commonwealth and other States to address this serious situation.

With the escalation of the problem last week, the Queensland Government approved expenditure of around \$800,000 and provided specialist staff, including veterinary officers and stock inspectors. Additional Department of Primary Industries staff, including laboratory personnel, joined the program this week. Queensland will continue to monitor the quarantine measures put in place as part of the measures to control the outbreak of Newcastle disease to ensure that they are effective in preventing any disease movement.

It has been particularly pleasing to receive a letter this week from the Queensland Chicken Growers Association, which said in part—

"We thank you for taking early action and trust that the Queensland Government will continue to provide support to ensure that the disease is eradicated."

As a Government, we remain 100% committed to the proper management of this crisis, as we have done since we were first informed about it.
