

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 591**

**Asked on 13 May 2021**

**MR J MADDEN** ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES AND MINISTER FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES (HON M FURNER)—

### **QUESTION:**

With reference to the Longreach Saleyards reopening in March 2021 after a seven-year hiatus— Will the Minister outline the benefit to the Longreach community and the graziers of Western Queensland to have monthly sales at the Longreach Saleyards?

### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for the question.

The re-opening of the Western Queensland Livestock Exchange (WQLX), previously known as the Longreach Saleyards, will create an economic stimulus through creating additional full-time jobs as cattle numbers increase and regular sales are held. The site secured funding through the 'Building Our Regions' program to modernise the complex. In addition, the Queensland Government recently announced a further contribution of \$2.2 million towards the redevelopment which has created part-time jobs during the construction phase and delivered improved infrastructure.

The complex is now under a 30 year long-term lease with AAM Investments, a further positive economic indicator for Western Queensland.

The modernisation of the facility includes a state-of-the-art feed bunker system and improved shade structures to the spelling facility. These upgrades will ensure contemporary compliance when extreme heat conditions are experienced in Longreach.

A unique and innovative improvement as part of the upgrade is the ability to perform online buying and viewing of cattle. This initiative brings the latest technology to a regional selling centre and will enable vendors and sellers to view the live auction, allowing additional market access and buyer opportunity. In early May 2021, I visited the WQLX in Longreach and saw firsthand the improvements that have been completed.

All of the upgrades and construction initiatives to improve stock movement, animal welfare, biosecurity, workplace health and safety and throughput of cattle have created jobs and revenue for the local community.

Currently, WQLX is handling and spelling more than 100,000 cattle per year due to the prime position of the facility for cattle travelling from the Northern Territory. This has created additional income for local businesses in Longreach and surrounding communities.

Although there have been some significant private sales, the re-introduction of monthly sales will be welcomed by industry after enduring prolonged drought. In addition, the reduction in transport costs for local graziers will assist industry to rebuild their core breeding herd and cater to producers taking advantage of short-term feed by trading in cattle through short term turnover of stock.

Isolated relief rain around the district and a decent season in the channel country will also enhance monthly sales at the new facility.