

Mr TOLLNER: I am asking a question of the Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Is this a point of order?

Mr TOLLNER: No, Madam Speaker, it is not. I am asking you a question.

Ms LAWRIE: Then there is no point of order, Madam Speaker. He is not asking a point of order. He cannot just stand up in the Assembly and randomly ask you a question. We follow the rules of the Chamber.

Mr Tollner: You are opposed to me asking a question of the Speaker – is that what you are saying?

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Tollner: Madam Speaker, I have asked you ...

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Member for Fong Lim, if you wish to speak, you need to seek leave of the House. That is the rules.

Mr TOLLNER: Madam Speaker, I seek leave of the House to ask you a question.

Leave denied.

Mr Tollner: To ask a question?

Madam SPEAKER: The House has decided ...

Mr Tollner: You people are really pathetic.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Resume your seat.

LIVESTOCK BILL (Serial 13)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Mr VATSKALIS (Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to consolidate the livestock legislation into a single bill enabling the reduction from five acts to one. There will be a consequential reduction from six regulations to one. The legislation will be halved. There will be improved consistency and simplicity for the public, livestock industries and regulatory staff.

The legislation is in place to support product integrity in the livestock industries for the benefit

of consumers, and to facilitate disease surveillance and disease control. There are minimal restrictions related to endemic diseases, with any restrictions being nationally consistent.

There are extensive powers to respond to an emergency animal disease such as foot and mouth disease or avian influenza. A rapid effective response will minimise the cost of a response and the consequence of the disease outbreak on the livestock industry and the economy. Actions can be undertaken to control the disease and to prevent the spread of the disease.

The traditional methods of determining the ownership of cattle, buffalo and horses by brands and ear marks will be maintained. Property Identifier Codes, PICs, which have been in operation for cattle since the 1970s, will be extended for all livestock to provide a unique identifier for properties with livestock. The National Livestock Identification System for cattle and buffalo will be maintained.

Australia is a world leader in the traceability of livestock to enable a rapid tracing mechanism in the event of a disease or a chemical residue event. Consumer and market confidence is thus ensured. In order to protect the high health status of the Northern Territory livestock, health certificates for the importation of livestock will be maintained. An acceptable level of protection is provided while not impeding trade in livestock. Any restrictions are nationally consistent.

Powers are in place for the investigation and control of disease in livestock. The historical eradication of bovine pleuropneumonia by 1973, bovine brucellosis by 1989, and bovine tuberculosis by 1997 are examples of successful disease control programs within the Northern Territory, with major market access and production benefits. There is mandatory reporting of specified animal diseases based on the national notifiable diseases of terrestrial animals by veterinarians and owners. Laboratories are approved consistent with national standards to ensure quality testing results.

Compensation is provided for livestock and things that are destroyed for disease control purposes. Compensation is generally determined by a panel of three experienced valuers. There is an appeal process for the owner or the Chief Executive in the event of a disagreement.

Authorised officers under the legislation are the minister, Chief Executive, Chief Inspector, and Inspector. Each have distinct roles under the legislation. The Chief Inspector is appointed by the Chief Executive. Inspectors are appointed by