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The Editor
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In a Mark Beyer opinion piece ("Problems with our Ports ongoing", 22/01/09) it is argued "any adverse consequences would be far outweighed by the environmental benefits" of transferring the live sheep facilities from Fremantle to Kwinana.

Kwinana Industries Council (KIC) would argue there may be environmental benefits for one sector of the community, but simply shifting the issue from one place to another does not provide the greater community of Western Australia with environmental benefits. Indeed we would say this increases the potential for environmental problems.

Kwinana Industry supports the broader concept of an expansion of port facilities in Cockburn Sound, with reservations about the project's overall size, cost, berth length and environmental impacts.

Our concerns over sheep handling facilities to Kwinana are based on three major points:

1. It is expected there may be between one and three livestock ships per week utilising the port if the trade were to be moved from Fremantle. The transport of live sheep from the Port is not supported due to the potential for contamination of Cockburn Sound.
2. The prospect of quarantine lock downs should a livestock ship bring disease into the port is of concern to industry. There are several major production facilities and utilities in close proximity. An agricultural quarantine lock down could be very disruptive to production.
3. Placing livestock handling facilities within the Kwinana Industrial Area (KIA) is not the best use the very finite amount of land designated for heavy industrial use within the KIA's protective buffer.

When a finite amount of is land zoned for heavy industrial use, allowing it to be used for other purposes blocks future heavy industrial projects.

This point was well made by Business News journalist Mark Pownell in April 2008, when he examined the pressure being placed on industrial expansion by land zoning issues.



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