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CABINET DECISION

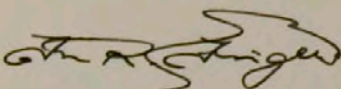
NO. 767

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Submission No.: 667

Title: BALI CATTLE RELOCATION PROJECT.

Cabinet approved the proposed project to capture and relocate up to 1,000 head of Bali cattle from Cobourg Peninsula to the mainland over a maximum 5 year period commencing in 1979.



(M.R. FINGER),  
Secretary to Cabinet.

12 July, 1979.

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THE NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

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Copy No. .... 1 .....

FOR CABINET

SUBMISSION No. .... 667 .....

Title:	BALI CATTLE RELOCATION PROJECT.
Cabinet Member	MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
Purpose:	RELOCATION OVER FIVE YEARS, OF UP TO 1,000 HEAD OF BALI CATTLE FROM COBOURG PENINSULA TO VARIOUS SITES AROUND AUSTRALIA INCLUDING UP TO 300 HEAD IN 1979.
Relation to existing policy:	IN LINE WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD OF INQUIRY INTO FERAL ANIMALS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY.
Timing/ legislative priority:	URGENT
Announcement of decision, tabling, etc.:	PRESS STATEMENT TO BE PREPARED
Action required before announcement:	NIL
Staffing implications, numbers and costs, etc.:	1 X TECHNICAL OFFICER GRADE 1 - \$12,000 SALARY PLUS \$10,000 OVERHEAD ALLOWANCES.
Total cost:	\$40,000 ANNUALLY FOR 5 YEARS, (EXCLUDING SALARY OF TECHNICAL OFFICER), PLUS \$47,000 FIRST YEAR DEVELOPMENT COST.

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Department/Authority ..... Department of Law .....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: RELOCATION OF BALI CATTLE .....

COMMENTS:

There are no legal barriers to the proposal. However, if it is intended to send the cattle interstate it will be necessary to ensure that local requirements regarding their movement are complied with.

There appear to be no constitutional barriers to the proposal.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DESIGNATION: for Solicitor General

DATE: 27 June 1979

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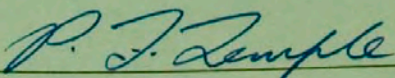
Department/Authority ..... DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY .....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

TITLE: RELOCATION OF BALI CATTLE .....

COMMENTS:

Supported subject to funding priorities in setting the  
1979/80 budget.

  
SIGNED: A B ASHLEY

DESIGNATION: UNDER-TREASURER

DATE: 25/6/79

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Department/Authority ..... PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER .....

COMMENT ON CABINET SUBMISSION No.

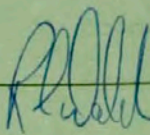
TITLE: ..... RELOCATION OF BALI CATTLE .....

COMMENTS:

No objection to the recommendation.

The need and level for a specialist Technical Officer would be the subject to examination by this office and the costs for salary and associated costs would be approximately \$30,000 per annum. Consideration to undertaking this role by contract should be given.

SIGNED:



R. DONALDSON for Public Service Commissioner

DESIGNATION:

DATE:

25/6/79

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CABINET SUBMISSION

RELOCATION OF BALI CATTLE

THE ISSUE

1. To decide whether a project should be undertaken over the next five years to relocate up to 1,000 head of Bali cattle, including up to 300 head in 1979, from Cobourg Peninsula to several sites around Australia.

BACKGROUND

2. The Board of Inquiry into Feral Animals in the Northern Territory recommended (p 47) removal of feral Bali cattle from Cobourg Peninsula within five years, except perhaps for a small herd of say 100 head retained there in a securely fenced area. It recommended that this should be done " as far as possible by relocation of the animals in other suitable places where the genotype can be preserved and subjected to further investigation".
3. Bali cattle were introduced to Cobourg Peninsula about 130 years ago. A Division of Primary Industry survey estimates the present population to be about 1,100 head. Except for 10 cows and 5 bulls at Coastal Plains Research Station, the Cobourg Peninsula animals represent the only breeding herd in Australia.



4. Local research has indicated that they have some production attributes which could be used to considerable advantage when crossbred with other cattle species.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ISSUES

5. The Cobourg Peninsula Bali cattle, except perhaps for a controlled herd of 100 head, should be relocated from Cobourg Peninsula to other sites because
- (a) Uncontrolled cattle, particularly in an area as exposed as Cobourg Peninsula, pose a risk to the Australian livestock population as possible reservoirs of endemic or exotic disease.
  - (b) A catastrophe, such as an outbreak of an exotic disease, in the present single herd, could eliminate the entire genetic resource from Australia.
  - (c) Additional animals are needed for further evaluation of their potential for use in commercial beef production.
  - (d) The presence of uncontrolled cattle is inconsistent with the status of Cobourg Peninsula as an area of conservation significance, particularly from the environmental protection viewpoint.

- (e) Requests for Bali cattle have been received from zoos in various parts of Australia.
- (f) Possibility of a future export industry of Bali cattle breeding stock to Indonesia and other Asian countries.

OPTIONS

- 6. Removal of up to 1,000 head of Bali cattle, including up to 300 head in 1979, for the reasons referred to above. Retention of 100 head of controlled Bali cattle on the Peninsula is not precluded by this option.
- 7. Retention of the feral Bali cattle at Cobourg Peninsula would eventually result in -
  - (a) Continuing costs of control and elimination by the Government without commercial benefits.
  - (b) Loss of the potential benefits to be gained by the incorporation of Bali cattle into crossbreeding and new breed development programmes for Northern Territory beef production.
  - (c) A cost to Government for their control or elimination in the advent of an outbreak of an endemic or exotic animal disease.
  - (d) A continuing control cost in order to preserve the environment of the Cobourg Peninsula



conservation area.

PUBLIC IMPACT

8. There should be little public opposition to the proposal. It should meet with the approval of those interested in the conservation and possible commercial use of a scarce, valuable and unique animal breed, of those interested in conservation of the natural environment at Cobourg Peninsula and of animal health authorities.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

9. The estimated cost of capture and transport to Darwin of up to 300 head in 1979 is \$40,000. This would be a recurring cost in each of the 5 years of the project. Of this cost \$30,000 in addition to normal Division of Primary Industry operating funds would be required.
10. Clearing, fencing and pasture establishment on a holding area of 300 ha at Coastal Plains Research Station, as recommended in the Feral Animal Report, would cost an estimated \$47,000. Of this cost, \$17,000 would be required in addition to normal Division of Primary Industry operating funds.
11. The salary and overheads of a specialist Technical Officer involved in capture operations and in supervising herd husbandry would be an

estimated \$22,000 annually.

12. The capture and transport costs of Bali cattle supplied to outside institutions will be recovered.
13. A summary of the catching and relocation proposals is at Attachment B.

EMPLOYMENT CONSIDERATIONS

14. The services of a specialist Technical Officer will be required for capture operations and to maintain and handle the additional animals after their transport to the mainland. These services are required because of the very nervous, timid behaviour of the cattle which could result in high mortality, and their need for special and continued husbandry treatment.

COMMONWEALTH AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

15. The Royal Australian Air Force has been approached for the supply of aircraft for the transport of the Bali cattle from Cobourg Peninsula to Darwin.

CO-ORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

16. The Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission supports the proposed project.



The proposals will be discussed with aboriginal groups who have an interest in Cobourg Peninsula.

LEGISLATION

17. Not applicable.

PUBLICITY

18. The project has been discussed with the local ABC Rural Officer and will be given the maximum publicity which is compatible with the nature of the catching operation. A draft press statement is at Attachment A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

19. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the proposed project to capture and relocate up to 1,000 head of Bali cattle from Cobourg Peninsula to the mainland over a 5 year period commencing in 1979.

*Reay Steele*

*25/6/79*

SUMMARY OF BAIT CAPTURE EXPERIMENT AND PROPOSED PROPOSALS

AIM

1. Relocation of up to 1000 sheep from the Northern Territory to Australia, including up to 100 sheep in 1979.

Time Period

2. Five years, commencing 1979.

Distribution

1. Half the sheep to be prepared for export to the United Kingdom. Press statement to be prepared.
1. The remainder of the sheep to be prepared for the Northern Territory Government for research and demonstration purposes.

Organization

1. The project will be organized by a single coordinating Animal Production and Welfare Unit, advised of Division of Poultry Services, Department of Agricultural Services (Department of Primary Industries, Northern Territory) and a representative of the Northern Territory Government, as a representative of the Northern Territory Production and Welfare Unit, and a representative of the organization.

PROPOSALS FOR 1979

6. Proposals for the first 100 of the sheep, 1979 are as follows:

(a) Time and duration of capture

Late July 1979 for 4 weeks.

(b) Location

Danger Creek area of Northern Territory.

(c) Method of capture

Contract baiting, including all the sheep in the area possible and up to 100 sheep in 1979 will be captured individually and weighed, sexed, tranquillized, fitted with ear tags and bled.

(d) Holding and transportation facilities

The cattle will be held in a separate area of the farm.



SUMMARY OF BALI CATTLE CATCHING AND RELOCATION PROPOSALS

AIM

1. Relocation of up to 1,000 head of Bali cattle from Cobourg Peninsula to several sites around Australia, including up to 300 head in 1979.

Time Period

2. Five years, commencing July 1979

Distribution

3. Half the number captured will be made available to outside institutions. Melbourne Zoo is to co-ordinate the supply to zoos in southern States.
4. The remainder of the animals will be retained by the Northern Territory Government for research and demonstration purposes.

Organisation

5. The project will be organised by a group comprising Animal Production and Animal Health Branches of Division of Primary Industry, Division of Management Services (Department of Industrial Development), Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission and Melbourne Zoo, as a representative of Southern Zoos. Animal Production Branch will have prime responsibility for the organisation.

PROPOSALS FOR 1979

6. Proposals for the first year of the project (1979) are as follows :-

(a) Time and duration of catching

Late July 1979 for 4 weeks.

(b) Location

Danger Point area of Cobourg Peninsula.

(c) Method of catching

Contract helicopter mustering will be used to muster into portable trap yards. In addition some animals will be captured individually from horseback or by tranquilisers fired from horseback or helicopter.

(d) Holding and domestication -Cobourg Peninsula

The cattle will be held in portable yards, segregated

into groups of about ten. Tranquillisers will be incorporated into the water supply. The animals will gradually be accustomed to the presence of men, vehicles and horses.

Constant veterinary supervision will be supplied during domestication and transport to the mainland.

(e) Transport from Cobourg Peninsula

The R.A.A.F has been approached to fly out the tranquillised cattle, and this is the preferred method. If the R.A.A.F is unavailable then barge transport to Darwin will be used.

(f) Holding - mainland

Forty animals will be held at Coastal Plains Research Station and the remainder at Berrimah Experiment Farm until the wet season, when all will be transferred to the holding area at Coastal Plains Research Station.

(g) Interstate transport

This will be arranged to ensure arrival in southern States during the warmer months.

(h) Staff

An Animal Production Branch Officer has been nominated to supervise the project. In order to avoid unduly stressing and disturbing the Bali cattle, experienced personnel from Division of Primary Industry will carry out the capture exercise.

Their number will be kept to a minimum, consisting of a team leader, second-in-charge, five others and a veterinary officer.