

Saleyards attract national attention at key conference

■ Kendall O'Connor

Katanning's Regional Sheep Saleyards is gaining a national reputation after the project was presented at the recent Australian Livestock Markets Association annual conference.

Shire chief executive Dean Taylor joined the board of ALMA in October 2013 and invited association members to the official saleyards opening in May.

According to Mr Taylor, the members were so impressed with the facility they requested he speak about the saleyards at the Cairns conference.

ALMA supervises the selling and movement of livestock through the system. More than 100 people from the livestock sector from across the country attend the conference each year.

"I talked about the arrangements for saleyards in WA as it is quite different in WA; we have about four large yards while over east they have literally hundreds of smaller saleyards," he said.

"I also talked about how we built a \$44 million dollar facility for \$25 million, the innovation that we used and how we kept it local and the benefits to the region."

According to Mr Taylor, there is optimism in the sector because of rising demand from Asia and the Middle East.

"Strategic speakers from MLA and the Department of Commerce came in and talked about greater



Shire of Katanning chief executive Dean Taylor. Picture: Bob Garnant

demand for meat and protein from Asia and the Middle East ... quite frankly, the demand is going to outstrip supply.

"The lamb market hasn't been consistent over the years; it is difficult to plan production, the increased demand will give security of supply and demand."

Through his presentation, Mr Taylor gained the attention of several shire representatives attending the conference.

"There were quite a number of shires who operate saleyards ... we had meetings on what we did and how we did it, showed them the model we used and to see whether it could be applied to them," he said.

"Once again, it's keeping up the awareness of Katanning.

"It was a great way to promote Katanning as an opportunity to do business."