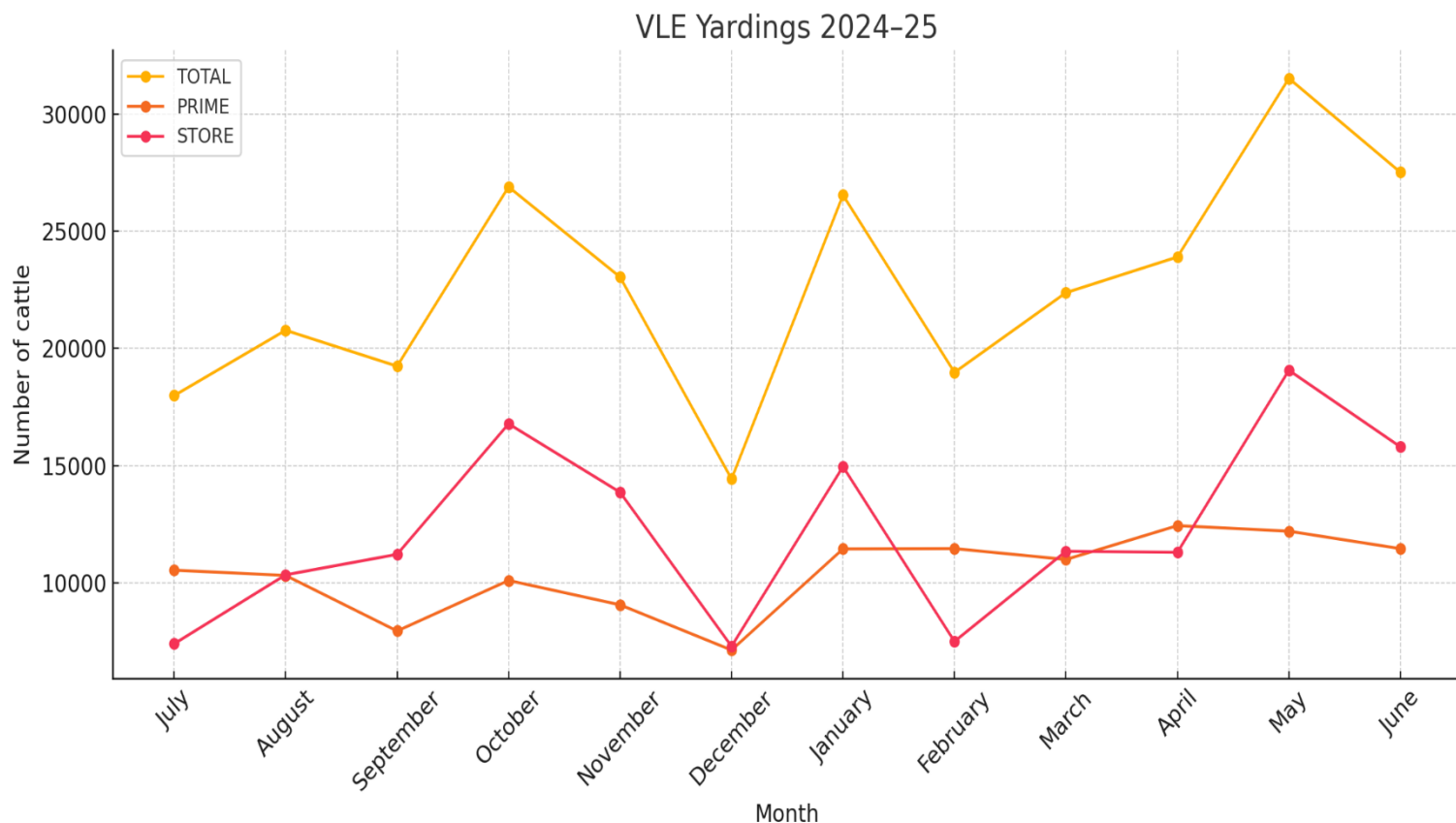




Record breaking June cattle throughput



The biggest June cattle throughput in Victorian Livestock Exchange (VLE) history has capped-off a near record breaking financial year for Gippsland's premier saleyards.

A total of 27,513 cattle were sold through VLE at Leongatha last month with store cattle making up 57 per cent of this total.

Last month eclipsed any other June recorded for VLE - including the combined numbers when VLE was spread across Pakenham, Leongatha and Warragul - while the total financial year throughput was the second largest since Pakenham opened 26-years-ago and the fourth biggest in VLE history.

VLE Managing Director Brian Paynter said the big numbers are a result of a variety of factors. "Obviously, it was a big year because of the conditions – there's no question about that - but the enormous increase in numbers has in part been due to our location, the quality of our saleyards and the competition on the rails. The strong competition has really helped prices considering the massive increase in numbers which we normally associate with a fall in prices. Being the number one selling centre in Victoria and we've had huge support from buyers and sellers."



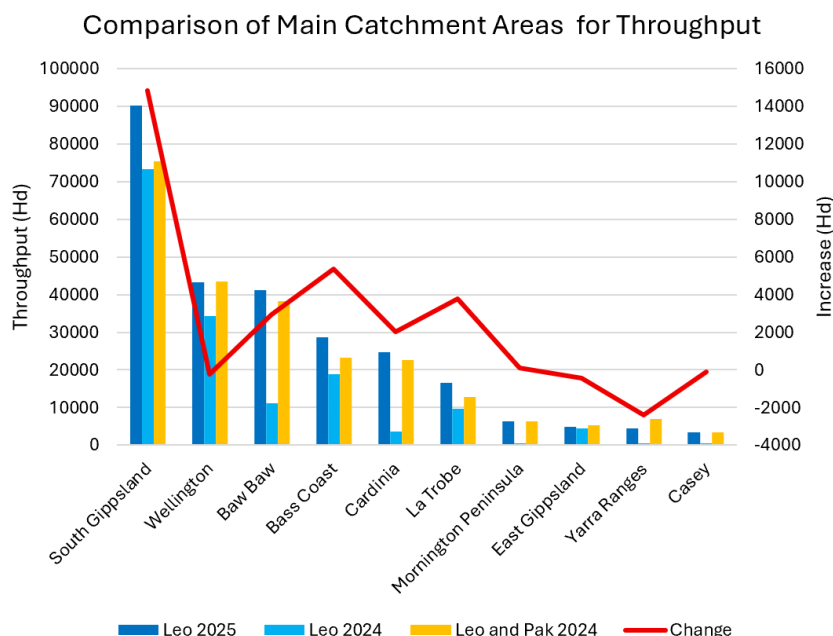
Most Pakenham cattle have transitioned to Leongatha yards

The new single-site VLE at Leongatha has captured most of the cattle that were previously sold at Pakenham, according to recent data.

And extra numbers have also delivered additional buyers to the weekly prime and store sales according to VLE Managing Director Brian Paynter. He explained that initial changes to sale days at Leongatha –

following the closure of Pakenham yards – met some resistance, but over time this changed.

“We have got all the buyers every week supporting the Leongatha market now,” Brian said. Agents have been “really supportive” of the single-site operation with planned future investment in the facility to cater for the bigger cattle numbers welcomed. Nutrien remains VLE’s biggest sale agent, followed closely by Elders – with this business “closing the gap” between first and second during the past 12 months. Alex Scott & Staff sells the third most cattle through VLE.



Future investment awaiting State Government approval

VLE Managing Director Brian Paynter successfully lobbied the State Government to include ‘saleyards’ as eligible to participate in the Development Facilitation Program.

This program, which is managed through Invest Victoria, can fast track planning approvals for significant investment throughout regional Victoria.

With saleyards now included, the VLE is working with Invest Victoria and its consultants KLM Spatial to submit its masterplan and seek approval for key items including covered holding pens and feeding facility, a new four bay truck wash and new agent offices.