

COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELLING REQUIREMENTS

**709. Hon LOUISE PRATT to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to recommendation 6 of the Legislative Assembly's Economics and Industry Standing Committee "Report on the Inquiry into the Production and Marketing of Foodstuffs".

- (1) What progress has been made on the recommended survey of local government authorities to determine the impact of the country-of-origin labelling requirements on local authorities?
- (2) Will the minister advise whether the survey results to date have indicated that the labelling requirements have caused local authorities any difficulties?

**Hon Ljiljana Ravlich:** Good question!

**Hon KIM CHANCE replied:**

That is a very good question.

Several members interjected.

**Hon KIM CHANCE:** I think it is an excellent question and I am glad that the house welcomes the opportunity to hear some follow-up on what has been a very important issue in the community.

- (1)-(2) The survey is in fact in two tranches. On the advice of local authorities, the second tranche of the survey will now be undertaken in November this year, rather than in September as was first planned. This is to allow authorities to have a little more experience with the new requirements prior to providing their considered response. The first tranche has now been completed and the results at least partly analysed. The first tranche has indicated that local government authorities are carrying out their inspection role under the country-of-origin labelling specifications very capably and with minimal additional effort. Specifically, 96 per cent of the respondents to the survey among local government authorities have received fewer than five complaints, and 91 per cent have indicated that the enforcement of country-of-origin labelling has had no impact on their current resources. Although there have been a few isolated instances of noncompliance with the new standards, they have been principally among smaller traders. The major stores have been very good at applying the new standards. The COOL standards have generally been enthusiastically adopted by retailers and very strongly supported by consumers. I certainly look forward to the second tranche of the survey some time around December.