

CANE TOADS, ENTERING FREMANTLE PORT IN A CONTAINER FROM QUEENSLAND

412. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry:

I heard on the radio during the weekend that, tragically, cane toads had entered the port of Fremantle in a container. Given the minister's comments the other day when I was speaking during the budget estimates debate, and the commitment the minister gave on cane toads coming out of the Northern Territory, in what way did these cane toads leave Queensland and get into Western Australia?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank Hon Murray Criddle for the question. The answer is in the same way as on the dozens of other occasions that cane toads have arrived in containers from Queensland, and I think on one or two occasions from the Northern Territory, into Western Australia. For example, recently two cane toads - one dead and one alive - arrived in a container of bananas at the Canning Vale Markets. In March two cane toads - although on that occasion both were dead - arrived in a similar way at the Canning Vale Markets. It has been happening, I suspect, in each of the 70 years since cane toads first infested Queensland. The point is that these incursions of cane toads are being discovered at the quarantine hot spots. The member has referred to the port of Fremantle. That is obviously a quarantine hot spot, as are the Canning Vale Markets and a number of other places that receive produce that emanates from Queensland. There is nothing new about it. It has been happening for a long time. The important thing is that when cane toads get into Western Australia, they are found and destroyed.