

SOUTH EASTERN WHEATBELT SHIRES, SURVEY

405. Hon M.J. CRIDDLE to the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:

As the minister knows, the 18 shires in the south eastern wheatbelt, which is affected by drought, have found it necessary to conduct a survey. Why is that duplication necessary given that the Department of Agriculture should, by the minister's insistence, have the information?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

It is an interesting question. I cannot say that I understand exactly what was asked by the 18 shires and whether the information sought by them would normally be available to the Department of Agriculture. To the extent I have any understanding of the data sought by the shires, much of it is related to non-farming businesses. Perhaps that is the reason for the survey.

Hon M.J. Criddle: Local people were asked about their financial situation so that the shires could get a handle on the problems in those areas.

Hon KIM CHANCE: Had the shires approached the department for that data, it would have been made available to them.