

PIG HUNTING

132. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to a media article by *ABC Rural*, dated 13 January 2015, and titled “Volunteer groups forced to compete with illegal pig breeders and hunters in controlling feral numbers in south-west WA”. Despite the alarming number of wild pigs throughout rural and regional Western Australia, a Department of Agriculture and Food feral control officer suggests in the article that individuals go to the trouble of catching, securing, nurturing and then transporting live pigs hundreds of kilometres to release into open bushland for the purpose of providing sport for that specific individual.

- (1) What evidence is there to support claims of “pig seeding”?
- (2) Is the minister aware of any charges against individuals for the dumping of pigs?
- (3) Is the minister aware of any convictions for the dumping of pigs?
- (4) Is the minister aware of studies that show pigs have the capacity to range between 50 kilometres and 100 kilometres?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the member for the question without notice.

- (1)–(4) This has been going on for some time, with people claiming that pigs get released into the wild so people can hunt them. I have to say that I have heard this claim over time and I do not believe there has been any evidence to back it up. I remember when a lot of wild pigs were taken to Northampton and people said they had always been let go by farmers so they can hunt them. While I have been Minister for Agriculture and Food, I have certainly not seen or heard of any evidence, but this myth is bandied around quite regularly. I repeat that I have not seen any evidence whatsoever that that occurs. Interestingly enough, there was also reference to this when I introduced the bounty for wild dogs, and it was said that people let the pups go so they could collect the money next year for the next lot. That adage has also been going around for some time—and I do not believe that it occurs at all.