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30th January 2019

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Senate Environment and Communications Reference Committee regarding the current *Inquiry into controlling the spread of cane toads*.

About Animal Control Technologies (Australia)

Animal Control Technologies Australia (ACTA) is Australia's leading research and manufacturing company specialising in control of vertebrate pest animals including foxes, wild dogs, feral pigs, rabbits, plague mice, plague rats, invasive ant species and cane toads.

For nearly 20 years ACTA has developed, registered and manufactured a range of world class products. ACTA researches and manufactures products used to control vertebrate pest animals to help protect farmer livelihoods and the environment from pest animal damage. ACTA bases all of its investment on strong facts, extensive research, testing and results and has formed enduring partnerships with leading industry, research and government agencies across all states and territories.

Especially relevant to this submission, ACTA has a long history working with lead researchers at James Cook University (JCU) to develop management tools that will control cane toad populations in all environments.

Direct responses to the nominated terms of reference

The effectiveness of control measures to limit the spread of cane toads in Australia

It is widely understood that the distribution of cane toads within Australia is still expanding (Cane Toads are expanding at approximately 50km per year) and given the extreme invasiveness of the cane toad, it is unclear what biophysical conditions may, in fact, limit their spread. The effectiveness of control measures has yet to be critically analysed due to their relatively short period of existence and lack of a nationally coordinated program however limiting the spread of

cane toads in Australia will only be achieved by targeting all stages of the cane toad life cycle and continuing to be innovative in approaches to reduce their damage. For example, there are control measures available that target the cane toad tadpole and adult stages plus there is significant investment going towards 'training' our native species to avoid the cane toads. Approaches such as releasing juvenile toads ahead of the invasion front to expose native species to a reduced level of toxicity (compared to adult toads) are innovative and could prove to be an invaluable part of any management program. There are also programs that feed native species 'cane toad sausages' to make them recognise the taste and smell of toads and to also make them sick so they learn to avoid cane toads are focussed on helping the native species, not controlling the pest.

As with other established pest animals, total eradication should not be the goal but thoughtful and strategic management to acceptable levels of damage or localised eradication would be realistic targets.

With respect to new product development, ACTA have developed in conjunction with JCU, the TOADINATOR® Cane Toad Trap, which is highly effective in trapping cane toads within a localised area. Consistent and broadscale use will lead to cane toad population management.

The TOADINATOR® has consistently demonstrated the ability to trap more than ten (10) times the number of toads when using it in conjunction with an internal light and the ACTA-ATTRACTA®, a cane toad specific sound lure. The trap uses a solar powered sound lure that delivers a modified cane toad call into the surrounding area and instead of the intensive hand-picking method, the traps can be left out overnight, emptied and reset straight away. The traps are energy efficient, can be used in any environment and importantly, could be used ahead of the invasion front as a sentinel device to detect any presence of toads in new areas. The TOADINATOR® is easy to use and could be operated by any volunteer group, government agency or individual. More information is available on request or at www.animalcontrol.com.au.

Exhaustive field trials confirm the TOADINATOR® can be deployed to ensure a successful toad reduction program, however, as always with any pest animal control technique, it is the lack of large scale, coordinated adoption of available practices that limits their success and the potential reduction of the invasive species.

Additional support for cane toad population control measures

As a leading Australian company specialising in pest animal control, we fully support any current and future developments that would lead to cane toad population control.

Our core business is to develop tools that minimise the impacts pest animals have on our native species, landscapes and livestock so having strategic and operational support from all levels of government would go hand in hand with our operations.

Our mission statement highlights the need to continually innovate:

"We pioneer ways to redress the environmental and agricultural imbalances created by invasive pests"

Recommendations

ACTA make the following recommendations to the Senate Inquiry:

1. Promote community-led initiatives through awareness and community participation in nationally coordinated and recognised programs
2. Strengthen evidence supporting pest management to counteract the misinformation that leads to proven control measures being put at risk
3. Research into developing more control measures for cane toads and also improving the current options where possible
4. Implement nationally coordinated initiatives to monitor cane toad population growth and migration and provide support for on-ground management programs

Thank you for the opportunity to provide highly relevant information as part of your inquiry, we are prepared to give more information if required and are interested in hearing the outcomes of the inquiry.

Kindest Regards,



Jessica Marsh
Extension and Communications Manager
Animal Control Technologies Australia