



Marion Scrymgour
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

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Territory reptiles seized in largest known attempted shipment

Parks and Wildlife Service officers have seized a consignment of reptiles bound for Sydney, Environment Minister Marion Scrymgour has revealed.

It is the largest known attempted illegal shipment of Territory animals.

Among the consignment of 83 reptiles seized in Darwin on Monday afternoon were snakes, lizards and geckos.

It is probable that charges would be laid against those involved in this suspected illegal activity under the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act for taking, possession and export of protected wildlife.

“Those involved could face a maximum penalty of \$55,000 or five years jail if found guilty of breaching the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act,” Ms Scrymgour said.

She said charges under the Animal Welfare Act might also be laid with a maximum penalty of \$10,000 or 12 months jail.

Ms Scrymgour said the species were identified as possibly being of Central Australian origin with an estimated value in excess of \$10,000 on the black market.

She said a Sydney man believed to be in his late 20s or early 30s is currently helping with inquiries in New South Wales for his alleged involvement in attempting to have these animals reach Sydney.

Ms Scrymgour acknowledged the Territory's Parks and Wildlife Service and the New South Wales Department of Environment and Conservation for their work in the joint operation.

“On Monday afternoon the Parks and Wildlife Service was advised of a shipment of freight at the Australian Air Express Freight Depot in Darwin, containing live animals,” Ms Scrymgour said.

“The parcel was inspected and contained 83 reptiles of various species that were tightly packed in cloth bags within a wooden box.

“Upon inspection, 23 animals were dead with the other 60 currently being held at the Territory Wildlife Park.

“It is alleged the freight had been sent from Alice Springs on Friday, December 2nd, with Sydney its intended destination, via Darwin.

“A Sydney resident has been interviewed about his involvement in the consignment and investigations are continuing that could lead to more people being interviewed.”

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