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Stakeholder Category: Industry association

Comments: Suitability of the IGAB - the IGAB at a high level is a suitable vehicle to underpin Australia's national biosecurity system. The various sub-levels leading to the IGAB should genuinely seek industry input on the practicality of the plans and their implementation. It should also be recognised that whilst industry input is vital, participation in planning processes imposes a cost on industry that is not recoverable, therefore consultative processes should be well targeted. Industry needs to see evidence that feedback has been carefully considered and that there are good reasons for not adopting its recommendations if in fact this is what occurs. To that extent the engagement with industry should be skewed towards collaboration rather than simply consultation. Such an approach would assist in adopting shared responsibility.

Investment principles - The current investment principles that prioritise resources to the areas of greatest return based on a cost-effective, risk management, science based approach with a proportionate contribution between risk creators, risk beneficiaries and protectors of the common good are acceptable given an appropriate balance between the contributors. WA pork producers are strongly of the view that there is a significant role for government in funding biosecurity controls and responses. Whilst industry clearly has a stake in biosecurity the emphasis has shifted too far towards industry being increasingly responsible for funding it. This risks inadequate funding, duplication of investment and incorrect priorities. From a government perspective expenditure on biosecurity should assume greater priority than it appears to. The 'common good' has a far greater reach in terms of biosecurity than the risk beneficiaries and risk creators and the funding balance should reflect this.

Market access – whilst market access considerations are traditionally directed towards protecting markets as a result of high biosecurity status there is also an argument that Australia's commitment to this status prevents the uptake of innovation from other countries that would increase an industry's competitiveness. For example the inability of the pork industry to import reproductive material from selected countries denies the local industry access to advances that would improve production. This impinges on our capacity to compete with those countries that are not subjected to similar prohibitions. The WA pork industry in no way wishes to see Australia's high biosecurity status compromised but considers the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources should be charged with the task of facilitating a way to enable industries to access this material whilst maintaining biosecurity. We recognise this would be a challenging balance to achieve as it is important that flexibility in one area does not inadvertently lead to pressure for restrictions to be lifted in areas that would have a negative effect on the industry such as the importation of fresh pork meat. This complexity should not however prevent the Department from addressing an industry need.

Measuring performance – the pork industry recognises the importance of performance measurement and considers that progress towards more standardised measures would enhance the efficiency of data collection. A priority in reform of performance measurement should be to ensure there is no additional burden placed on industry and opportunities for reducing the current burden should be sought.

Is this submission confidential? No

Do you agree to be contacted about your submission: Yes