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Dedicated to a better Brisbane

21 February 2017

IGAB Independent Review Panel
Australian Government
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Email: igabreview@agriculture.gov.au

Dear Panel Members

Following the review of the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Review Draft Report - December 2016* (the Draft Report), I am pleased to advise that Brisbane City Council (Council) is supportive of the design of a unified, consistent and strategic national framework for biosecurity. Council also welcomes a partnership approach that recognises the contribution of local government in biosecurity management.

Council is committed to environmental sustainability and is extremely supportive of the stronger environmental biosecurity focus that has been proposed. In particular, the integration of the principle of ecologically sustainable development, acknowledgement of Australia's international responsibilities under the Convention on Biological Diversity and recognition of future risks, particularly surrounding climate change, reflect Council's commitment to our natural environment.

Council supports the recognition that Australia's success in trade and tourism is dependent upon the utilisation of clean, green and distinctly Australian biodiverse environments and that this requires the management of threats posed by pests, weeds and feral animals.

Council also welcomes continued investment and the pursuit of long-term funding assurance for tramp ants and the realisation of assessments that it is technically feasible and cost-effective to eradicate this species from Australia. Support is given to continued innovation, driven by research, to ensure a robust, responsive and affordable national biosecurity system and the availability of default funding arrangements for urgent responses (Option 2).

As detailed above, Council is supportive of this document. However, there are four points that require further consideration.

- Recommendation 30 requiring funding to be redirected to areas that return the highest yields to farmers, industry and the community, appears inconsistent with Recommendation 9, which recommends a greater commitment to considering environmental and native species impacts. In the case where one recommendation is inconsistent with the other, Council seeks clarification on whether there is a process to identify which is of greater significance.

- Recommendation 34 recommends a review of state and territory biosecurity cost recovery arrangements. This recommendation should be complemented with further strategies for the national coordination of this process. Council seeks further information on the responsible agency to implement this review.
- While there is support for increased awareness of biosecurity risk management, Council seeks further engagement prior to the implementation of changes relating to reporting of expenditure, the administration of levies by local governments, or suggested changes to reducing the rateable area to small parcels of land (peri-urban landholders) (Recommendation 29 and Part 8.4.3).
- Local government responsibilities in Table 1 should also be duplicated as state government responsibilities.

Council looks forward to continuing to work with the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Independent Review Panel and the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on the continued improvement of the national biosecurity system.

Should you require further clarification on any of the points raised, please contact Dr Rachel Greenfield, Senior Program Officer, Biosecurity, Natural Environment, Water and Sustainability, City Planning and Sustainability.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Colin Jensen', written in a cursive style.

Colin Jensen
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER