



DCCC Meeting 94, Thursday 6th April 2023

Communique

The first DCCC meeting for 2023 convened in Canberra on 6 April 2023.

The DCCC Chair Tina Hutchison, First Assistant Secretary, Biosecurity Operations Division opened the meeting with introductions; acknowledgement of country; and recognition of the productive partnerships formed during the tenure of the former Chair Colin Hunter.

At the outset, the Chair reiterated her intention to continue the open, respectful relationship with industry and informed members about the department's difficult fiscal environment, the consequences for biosecurity reforms and the two critical areas of work to immediately stabilise biosecurity funding and to support the Commonwealth's biosecurity management remit, the development of the long-term sustainable funding model. DCCC members were unanimous on the need to prioritise investments based on the greatest return on investment for government and tangible benefits for industry.

Against this backdrop discussion largely centred on biosecurity funding and the review of biosecurity fees and charges. Rachel Short, Assistant Secretary, Funding and Revenue thanked members for their contributions to the cost recovery consultation that closed on 24 April and reiterated that since the last review of biosecurity fees and charges in 2015 cost recovery has not kept pace with the real cost of delivering regulatory biosecurity services.

Linked to biosecurity services, Lee Cale Assistant Secretary Cargo Operations (VIC, SA, WA, TAS) and Andrew Patterson, Assistant Secretary Cargo Operations (NSW, QLD, NT, ACT) and Regulatory Assurance presented on the current state of document assessment. Ms Cale reiterated the department's efforts to meet service demand through digitising the end-to-end assessment process including the integrated scheduling system to streamline workflow and build staff capacity and capability. There was consensus that faster border clearance needs compliance with Australia's biosecurity requirements and that key to increasing compliance, is ongoing targeted communications and education for industry.

Discussion progressed to strategic trade related issues. Sal Milici provided a snapshot of the latest in shipping. Members raised the challenges facing Australia's Ports resulting from contaminated imported new motor vehicles; improvements to biofouling management plans and work to progress efficiencies for bulk vessel inspections.

Discussion turned to activities to strengthen compliance prescribed under the late 2022 *Biosecurity Amendment (Strengthening Biosecurity) Act 2022* and consequent *Biosecurity (2023 Infringement Notices) Determination 2022* e.g.:

- multiple infringement notices
- enforceable undertakings for the importation of live plants in international mail
- civil penalties.

A report on the status and findings of compliance audits including key drivers will be provided at the next meeting on 6 July 2023.



Industry Attendees:

Carolyn Macgill, Food and Beverage Importers Association
Sal Milici, Freight and Trade Alliance
Paul Damkjaer, International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia
Melwyn Noronha, Shipping Australia Limited
Greg Carroll, Australia Post
Dianne Tipping, Export Council of Australia
Tony McDonald, Federal Chambers of Automotive Industries
Bradley Leonard, International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia
Paul Bagnall, Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers
Craig Birchall, Qantas Airways Ltd (Observer)