



## Communique

### DCCC Meeting 96 – 15 November 2023

The final DCCC meeting of 2023 was held virtually on Wednesday 15 November. The Chair, Tina Hutchison, First Assistant Secretary, Biosecurity Operations Division welcomed members and confirmed for members that the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (DAFF) new Secretary, Adam Fennessy PSM commenced on 18 September 2023. The new Secretary has a clearly stated commitment to act immediately on DAFF's response to the Australia Public Service Commission's capability review recommendations.

Member discussions then covered DAFF's strategic forward agenda and 2024 biosecurity priorities to grow the capacity and capability for DAFF and industry to deliver effective and efficient biosecurity clearance across the cargo pathway. This included:

- next steps for the Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing System (STEPS) program, which seeks to deliver faster and simpler digital transactions for assessment and sea cargo operations.
- undertaking a structured and collaborative consideration of new and refreshed third-party arrangements and compliance-based intervention schemes.
- resetting how DAFF engages with industry stakeholders on biosecurity matters to provide better two-way information flow, drive meaningful change and triage priority pain points for industry participants.

The strategic and operational agendas will rely on engaging the right mix of cargo and supply chain stakeholders at the right time. DCCC members are keen to provide input on the best fora, platforms, and channels to connect stakeholders including a public facing biosecurity webpage on operational reforms, service performance, risk intelligence and contacts.

Other discussions covered:

- sustainable funding and the new Self Assessed Clearance (SAC) cost recovery arrangements from 1 July 2024, together with an intended review of the operating model current applying to these low value items.
- the cargo pathway, current volumes, assessment delays and DAFF's recruitment and industry education efforts to minimise impacts.
- compliance and the application of strict liability provisions under the Biosecurity Amendment (Advanced Compliance Measures) Bill 2023, including an explanation of DAFF's risk-based triage process that works through the stages of confirming inadvertent non-compliance to deliberate criminal intent to determine the commensurate corrective action/s; and
- the update by the Inspector General of Biosecurity, Dr Lloyd Klumpp, on his plans to review DAFF's regulatory maturity and biosecurity system partnerships (with a commitment to provide members with a further update in 2024).

In closing, the Chair thanked members for their constructive engagement on matters of primary importance to government and industry, and extended DAFF's best wishes for a safe and happy festive season.

In 2024 the DCCC will convene for three meetings. At the first meeting, members will discuss their thoughts on DAFF's proposed approach to engage on strategic and tactical operational priorities.

#### DCCC Industry representative attendees

- Dianne Tipping, Export Council of Australia
- Carolyn Macgill, Food and Beverage Importers Association
- Bradley Leonard, International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia
- Paul Bagnall, Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers
- Greg Carroll, Australia Post
- Sal Milici, Freight and Trade Alliance
- Peter Van Duyn, International Cargo Handling Coordination Association
- Craig Birchall, Qantas Airlines Ltd



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture,  
Fisheries and Forestry**

**Apologies:** Stephen Pearse, Board of Airline Representatives; Michael Gallacher, Ports Australia; Dianne O'Hara, Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries; Scott Carson, International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia