



DCCC Meeting 96
FINAL Minutes
15 November 2023
9:30am – 1:00pm
Virtual

Departmental

Chair, Tina Hutchison, First Assistant Secretary
Bronwen Jagers, A/g First Assistant Secretary
Peter Timson, First Assistant Secretary
Jo Laduzko, Assistant Secretary
Holly Buckle, Assistant Secretary **(Apology)**
Victoria Bowen, A/g Assistant Secretary
Andrew Patterson, Assistant Secretary **(Apology)**
David Burg, Director **(Proxy)**
Brett Liebich, Assistant Secretary **(Apology)**
Mirelle Anthony, A/g Assistant Secretary **(Proxy)**
Matthew Campbell, Assistant Secretary
Anna Brezzo, Assistant Secretary
Bronwyn Dwyer, A/g Assistant Secretary
Kylie Baker, Director

Biosecurity Operations Division (BOD)
Biosecurity Strategy and Reform Division (BSRD)
Compliance and Enforcement Division (CED)
Cargo and Conveyances Policy and Detection Capability/BOD
Cargo Operations (VIC, SA, WA, TAS)/BOD
Cargo Operations (VIC, SA, WA, TAS)/BOD
Cargo Operations (NSW, QLD, NT, ACT) Regulatory Assurance/BOD
Inspections North/BOD
Operational Intelligence and Coordination/CED
Operational Intelligence and Coordination/CED
Audit and Assurance/CED
Investigations/CED
Risk, Intelligence and Strategy/BSRD
Approved Arrangements/CED

Industry

Dianne Tipping
Carolyn Macgill
Bradley Leonard
Michael Gallacher **(Apology)**
Paul Bagnall
Greg Carroll
Dianne O'Hara **(Apology)**
Scott Carson **(Apology)**
Sal Milici
Peter Van Duyn
Melwyn Noronha
Craig Birchall
Stephen Pearse **(Apology)**

Export Council of Australia
Food and Beverage Importers Association
International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia
Ports Australia
Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers
Australia Post
Federal Chambers of Automotive Industries
International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia
Freight and Trade Alliance
International Cargo Handling Coordination Association
Shipping Australia Limited
Qantas Airways Ltd
Board of Airline Representatives

Secretariat

Angela Cressy

Sea Cargo, Industry Partnerships & Strategic Engagement /BOD



Agenda item 1 – Welcome and introductions

Tina Hutchison, First Assistant Secretary, Biosecurity Operations Division opened the meeting by acknowledging country, welcoming members, noting apologies (see Minutes p1), introducing new DCCC industry representatives: Qantas, Craig Birchall and new Department Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) member: Bronwen Jagers, Biosecurity Strategy and Reform Division who has replaced Peta Lane. The Chair confirmed NIL conflict of interest declarations.

The Chair set the context for the meeting:

- DAFF's new Secretary Adam Fennessey PSM commenced in the department on 18 September with a firm commitment to develop DAFF's response to the APS Capability Review.
 - DAFF was one of the first agencies to undergo review. The publicly available findings showed DAFF is a good technical agency in relation to biosecurity; engages well in a range of ways with areas for improvement.
 - A dedicated team will examine how DAFF conducts its business and engages strategically on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and trade matters. Stakeholders can expect to see a shift in DAFF's engagement and positioning.
 - DAFF continues to focus on its response in relation to biosecurity and our relationship with stakeholders.
- For DAFF's Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing Systems (STEPS) program funded over 3 years to reduce cargo congestion, particularly sea cargo and full import declarations (FIDs), the administrative structure is settled; a SES Band 2 implementation board is established; the forward program is shaping up with consultation rolling out.

The Chair concluded by reiterating the DCCC's critical role in engaging with DAFF to make headway on the long-standing biosecurity transaction frustrations.

Agenda Item 2 – Minutes and Actions – DCCC Mtg 95, 6 July 2023

Members accepted the final DCCC Mtg 95 minutes of 6 July as read and agreed to revisit the outstanding action item on the 'key project listing' at the end of the meeting:

- **Mtg 95 2.1:** *Secretariat to liaise with the Chair to address Mtg 94 Action 1: Arrange a key project listing for industry feedback on priorities to the Department either before or at the next meeting in November.*

Agenda item 3 – Items for discussion

3.1 Forward priorities for BOD - resetting strategic industry engagement agenda - Jo Laduzko

The Chair introduced Jo Laduzko to lead discussion on BOD's 2024 priority areas of focus and examination:

Third party arrangements and compliance-based intervention schemes

- DAFF is examining current approved arrangements and compliance-based intervention schemes for maturity, structural efficiency, and expansion opportunities e.g. biosecurity management Approved Arrangements; AEPCOMM and CBIS, 'Green Lane' etc.

Resetting strategic industry engagement

Engagement will underpin the success of all strategic forward agenda and BOD 2024 priorities. In the first instance DCCC views will be sought on three activities:

1. Structured, inclusive industry engagement sessions for views on strategic reforms and/or tactical operational issues.
2. A channel for industry ideas and feedback on the priority areas of reform and tactical recurring tensions.
3. Public facing webpage for information on the current context of biosecurity i.e., what the government is seeing, key work underway and related points of contact.

Members agreed on the need for structured engagement and communications that clearly link the co-dependant strategic operational and tactical priorities. Members supported using fora such as Continued Professional Development (CPD) events, industry forums, webinars, and symposiums for operational reforms potentially similar to those used for joint Australian Border Force (ABF), Simplified Trade System (STS) border initiatives.

Members suggested DAFF could rebuild industry confidence to engage and contribute practical ideas by:

- broadening the engagement platform so that issues are heard, retained, and triaged for action - noting the current bi-lateral consultations are not inclusive.



- loss of confidence e.g.: a historical concept was raised of DAFF recognising, for the purpose of biosecurity, international Civil Aviation flight safety law that specifies imported aviation parts cannot be contaminated.
- Developing a clear framework showing DAFF’s engagement principles, aims and objectives – potentially adopt the Sigma 6 or Kaizen methodologies to facilitate quick wins on tactical issues, or develop engagement plans.
- for tactical issues consider
 - 3 or 4 achievable deliverables.
 - Contacts for specific issues.
 - Central repository of issues for triage, analysis and intelligence to inform operational priorities.

Outcomes:

For collective consideration:

- an annual DCCC program of work to deliver for 3-4 tangible outcomes identified by the DCCC.

For collective visibility:

- a key list of strategic and operational projects underway status including the related engagement.

Jo Laduzko undertook to document DAFF’s thinking on the various approaches and to draft a plan for comment out-of-session and consideration at the next meeting.

Actions

3.1.1: Jo Laduzko to document DAFF’s thinking on approaches to engagement for member’s comment/input.

3.1.2: For DCCC visibility a ‘key project listing’ of priority projects and status.

3.1.3: Secretariat to provide link to BOD web page for member’s suggestions on information and inclusions.

3.1.4: DCCC Mtg 97 to work with the ‘Kaizen’ approach on a single issue to see if there is a practical application for the DCCC.

3.2 Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing System (STEPS) – Nin Hyne, Assistant Secretary, Digital Reform Branch

The Chair introduced Nin Hyne to lead the update on the STEPS sustainable funding Budget measure. DAFF reiterated that STEPS is not a single system, it brings together several digital initiatives for faster and simpler biosecurity cargo transactions to address increasing pressures on the system.

Members noted the Minister expects outcomes in FY 2023/24. In the first 12 months STEPs will focus on sea cargo and FID clearance improvements that will benefit the overall system in the long-term including for workforce management efficiencies, Scheduled Workload Management System (SWMS) and the biosecurity portal. DAFF recapped on issues driving STEPS priorities, please see attached presentation.

Members voiced their appreciation of the STEP’s first-year establishment, discovery activities and roadmap. Members reiterated the need to restore confidence and deliver tangible outcomes or quick wins e.g.:

- COLS: click to send ‘Direction’ to client mailbox
- Longer term delinking biosecurity from FID lodgement through ICS to enable earlier doc submission to DAFF. DAFF reiterated DAFF’s co-dependence with ICS and the importance of understanding the total benefits of a change rather than the optics of a quick change.
- Specific help contacts rather than 1800 number or generic email addresses and a central point for issues to be collated, analysed and prioritised. DAFF to look at this.

All members again reiterated the importance of sensible STEPS engagement with clear linkages to:

- Whole of government regulatory reform
- STS agenda;
- ABF cargo initiatives
- Import and export initiatives e.g. Traceability.

Members suggested taking engagement learnings from the congestion busting program for exports, ‘Taking Farmers to market’.

Actions:

3.2: Nin Hyne to share STEPS roadmap with DCCC members for comment as it nears completion.

3.2.1: Secretariat to circulate Nin Hyne’s STEPS presentation and contact email: STEPS@aff.gov.au.

3.2.2: Secretariat to schedule the next STEPs update at the first meeting in 2024.



3.3 Future efforts across the Self Assessed Clearance (SAC) item pathway

The Chair introduced Jo Laduzko to lead discussion on developments in relation to the SAC pathway, including to introduce a cost recovery arrangement for SACs from 1 July 2024 (Biosecurity Sustainable Funding Budget Measure). Submission to the consultation process on SAC cost recovery design detail and implementation arrangements closes end of November.

Members noted SAC is a large opaque pathway with increasing volumes. DAFF is working to determine levels of confidence in SAC pathway assurance (particularly data) and compliance controls (commodities and entities).

Collection of SAC charge will differ from the duties and GST applied in the FID pathway. The per item SAC charge will be set to recover the appropriate regulatory costs of SAC pathway management based on volume estimates. Discussions cover the proposed set fee for declared items, collected by the cargo reporter and remitted quarterly in arrears to the department. DAFF encouraged members to avail themselves of the consultation opportunities via the submission process, bi-laterals or direct email to Jo Laduzko.

As DAFF's thinking on SACs evolves it will be communicated via the engagement channels DAFF intends to implement. Members will also be kept informed about ABF's pilot - ICS SAC portal (25% of lodgement traffic).

3.4 Cargo update – David Burg, Director, Inspections NSW

The Chair introduced David Burg, Director, Inspections NSW to lead the cargo update noting Andrea Kondos, Andrew Patterson and Holly Buckle were apologies.

Key points covered:

- **Volumes:** FID decreased while SACs increased - including related SAC non-compliance.
- **Interventions:** 163,000 docs inspected; 7,000 consignments assessed with <5,000 interventions.
- **Document non-compliance:** 13% incomplete documentation; 5% incorrect detail.
- **Service delivery:** meeting 77% of inspections nationally.
- **Backlogs in assessments – queuing.**

Challenges for DAFF's resources in the cargo pathways:

- Staff effort
 - Document errors and repeat service calls for status updates on consignments – waste of staff time.
 - Spike in non-compliant supplier importers.
 - Complex higher risk consignments require longer intervention times and staff redeployment to a range of locations nationally.

e.g. Ports and new vehicle imports: last FY detections of biosecurity risk material increased 519% from 14,000 vehicles to over 85,000 with DAFF's effort and backlog easing across ports partly due to industry awareness of overtime and infrastructure changes e.g. treatment bays, storage facilities.
- Military exercises
 - Diverts staff to offshore locations.
- Workforce
 - Tight global and national labour markets.
 - Staff attrition.
 - Loss of corporate, historical knowledge and experience.
 - Onboarding new staff requires existing staff to divert time to practical on the job training which includes providing the context for Australian biosecurity in international trade.

DAFF efforts to bolster cargo pathway service delivery:

- Recruitment
 - Onboarding 40 staff in December further 40 in January with benefits realisation by mid-2024.
 - 90-95 entry level cargo and mail.
 - 100 supervisor managerial roles.
 - 80-100 policy roles.
 - As at 15 Nov. separations keep pace with commencements.
 - Ongoing consideration of options for staff retention and succession planning.
- Partnerships
 - Educating offshore scheme providers to manage Biosecurity Risk Material (BRM).



- Educating Approved Arrangements and Biosecurity Industry Participants (responsible for knowing what an importer is bringing in).
- Opportunities to increase compliance education/awareness
 - Top-down cultural approach e.g. NZ’s Biosecurity Pledge model.
 - Carrots and sticks - reward correct documentation.
 - End user awareness of importer’s biosecurity responsibility.

Issues raised by members:

- Document assessment queuing works differently for sea and air pathways, commodities and urgency.
- WA overtime bookings offered in AEDT time. David Burg to follow up for a direct response to FTA on current approach.
- Cargo Snapshot meeting paper: DAFF to reinvigorate process on a **strictly DCCC in-confidence basis** only.
- DAFF to clarify communications in the recent import industry advice notice 243-2023: Revised Approved Arrangements General Policies (Completed by Matthew Campbell CED/DAFF immediately following the meeting)

Peter Van Duyn ICHKA raised a key initiative in 2024 to prevent BRM reaching Australian shores is the work of the Global Shippers Forum in Brisbane and sea container pathway working group on Hitchhiker Container Cleanliness.

Melwyn Norohna, Shipping Australia Limited (SAL), thanked DAFF for its October update at the SAL Policy Council meeting on the ship biofouling and in-water cleaning guidelines, which are of critical importance to SAL members’ operations. SAL looks forward to ongoing collaboration and engagement on the policy in 2024. Further, SAL agrees with DAFF’s approach to managing vehicle contamination offshore offering to assist DAFF in promulgating the message.

Actions:

3.4: David Burg to identify WA responses to requests for overtime for response to FTA.

3.4.1: Secretariat to reestablish the Cargo Snapshot paper ‘In confidence’ for ongoing DCCC meetings.

Agenda item 4 – Industry information exchange

The Chair noted NIL items were submitted for discussion. The Chair turned discussion to FTA’s questions on strict liability noting an Import Industry Advice Notice on the provisions was published on 14 November 2023. FTA’s questions related to a DAFF guide for industry on the strict liability penalties, how and when the provisions may be applied by the Director of Biosecurity and the avenues for appeal and response should penalties be enforced.

Peter Timson (DAFF) explained DAFF’s approach to assessing and managing non-compliance operates across a compliance continuum as prescribed by its Compliance Policy. DAFF’s first and foremost response is to educate. DAFF’s Operations Coordination Committee considers and triages offences for response before DAFF’s civil section issues any infringement. Civil actions result from deliberate, recidivist non-compliant behaviours. All matters include a natural justice course of appeal.

Agenda item 5 – Inspector General of Biosecurity – review update

The Chair introduced the Inspector General of Biosecurity Dr Lloyd Klumpp who updated the DCCC on the IGB’s review plans for 2024: an assessment of the Biosecurity and Compliance Group’s regulatory maturity; and biosecurity system stakeholder partnerships and relationships.

The IGB aims to develop a repeatable methodology to assess best practice regulatory maturity against attributes of regulatory philosophy, stakeholder education and engagement, problem solving and continuous improvement.

The scope for the review of biosecurity system stakeholder partnerships and relationships is yet to be settled but may cover industry and government biosecurity management arrangements, state and territory and community partnerships.

CAPEC raised the possibility of revisiting past discussions on industry partnerships and shared inspection responsibility. The IGB welcomed discussion, noting the close relationship of partnerships with regulatory maturity and the application of different regulatory frameworks for different partnerships.

The IGB will update the DCCC at its first DCCC meeting in 2024.

Action 5: Secretariat to arrange an IGB update on the review of BCG regulatory maturity at DCCC Mtg 97 in 2024.

Agenda item 6 – Other business

The Chair thanked members for their constructive engagement over the course of the meeting. Members agreed the first meeting in 2024 would be held face-to-face in March in Canberra with Mtgs 98 and 99 to follow in June/Jul and Oct/Nov respectively.

In closing, the Chair recapped on key decisions and the DCCC Mtg 97 Agenda in March:



- DCCC to work with the 'Kaizen' approach to see if there is a practical application for the DCCC.
- IGB to give an update on the review of BCG regulatory maturity.
- STEPS roadmap to be provided.
- A DCCC program of work that fits into STEPS – a realistic set of 3-4 tactical issues underpinned by a record of tactical issues for triage and prioritisation.
- For DCCC visibility outside of STEPS, a 'key project listing' of priority projects and status.

Meeting closed: 13:10pm



Item	Summary of Meeting 96 Actions – 15 Nov	Owner/s
3.1	Jo Laduzko to document DAFF's thinking on approaches to engagement for member's comment/input	Jo Laduzko/DCCC Industry members
3.1.2	For DCCC visibility a 'key project listing' of priority projects and status	Jo Laduzko/Secretariat
3.1.3	Secretariat to provide link to BOD web page for member's suggestions on information and inclusions	Secretariat/DCCC Industry members
3.1.4	DCCC Mtg 97 to work with the 'Kaizen' approach on a single issue to see if there is a practical application for the DCCC	ALL
3.2	Nin Hyne to share STEPS roadmap with DCCC members for comment as it nears completion	Nin Hyne/Secretariat
3.2.1	Secretariat to circulate Nin Hyne's STEPS presentation and contact email: STEPS@aff.gov.au	Secretariat
3.2.2	Secretariat to schedule the next STEPS update at the first meeting in 2024	Secretariat
3.4	Secretariat to reestablish the Cargo Snapshot paper 'In confidence' for ongoing DCCC meetings	Secretariat
3.4.1	David Burg to look into WA responses to requests for overtime for response to FTA	David Burg/Secretariat
5	Secretariat to arrange an IGB update on the review of BCG regulatory maturity at DCCC Mtg 97 in 2024	Secretariat