

Comment on: 'Modernising Australia's approach to managing established

Pests and diseases of National significance: Discussion paper'

Following on from a conversation I had last week with BQ, I thought it relative to also submit my thoughts to this submission

Last week regarding the Q Ministers media release in relation to the BQ Capabilities Review,

This review is chaired by Dr Renata Brooks, Dr Ron Glanville and Prof Tom Kompas

I have visited the proposed path lab building site at JCU

I am not aware if Dr Brooks is fully informed of the lost alliance opportunity with JCU's Veterinary and Biomedicine schools

The northern veterinary profession, together with producers and processors of meat, fruit and vegetables, poultry and aquatic products, were bitterly disappointed when funding to complete the government lab complex was axed by the previous government

Dr Brooks may also not be aware of the amount of capital already invested in the site. This involved the acquisition of suitable ground beside the existing purpose built JCU pathology and laboratory complex.

Head works including ground preparation, drainage, power, sewage, road ways including bridges and car parking for biosecurity lab and field staff are evident.

The demand for biosecurity diagnostic, research and field services continues to grow with recent disease incursions. There is to be future expansion of northern aquaculture.

Present JCU lab investment provides on-site expertise including PCR and other molecular technologies. One Health services including : epidemiology, field and lab diagnostic case management, public health, anatomic and clinical pathology, microbiology, parasitology and virology which all assist to diagnose, control and eradicate animal, plant and aquatic diseases.

There is still a DAFF veterinarian in Townsville trained in fish pathology available to take up a position if required

We are not seeing adequate submission of samples to confirm acceptable disease surveillance within Northern Australia and AHA is concerned. But an outpost of a larger biosecurity hub may be worthwhile

One must consider the relevance of the present infrastructure already in place which offers an existing strong and active support base

AVA, University scientists and veterinarians were disappointed at the last minute loss of an opportunity to restore biosecurity capability in FNQ. They believe it is essential to bolster Queensland Biosecurity beyond "the Brisbane line "

A biosecurity diagnostic and research base in Townsville also has the potential to offer collaboration and services to Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Services like these existed before the closure of the Qld government biosecurity laboratories in Townsville in 2012

If the review comes out in favour of a completion strategy for an alliance between BQ and JCU I believe Australia will be the winner

Kind regards

Bruce