



Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment Cargo Consultative Committee

Meeting 89 Communiqué

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment Cargo Consultative Committee (the Committee) met via virtual platform on 9 August 2021.

The Committee acknowledged the national biosecurity system was facing multiple issues on multiple fronts, including increasing supply chain complexity, changing consumer behaviour and trade patterns, and a greater array of pest and disease threats.

The Committee noted that the Australian Government had invested an additional \$400 million in biosecurity funding over the next four years, as it recognised the current approach to biosecurity management would not sustain efforts to meet these challenges. The recently issued [Commonwealth Biosecurity 2030](#) strategy is the department's roadmap for change, with a focus on governance, technology, people, regulation and sustainable funding, and nine strategic areas of action. The Committee will consider progress against these nine strategic actions at its next meeting.

Members noted that strong partnerships with industry and other stakeholders, and effective avenues for discussion and collaboration, will be critical to achieving success. The Committee agreed on a refresh of the Committee operating arrangements to consider what improvements could be made to the forum to achieve the best outcomes for the department and industry, including the introduction of a forward-looking workplan for the committee.

Ms Christine Sawczuk, Deputy Head of the Australian Government's Simplified Trade System (STS) Implementation Taskforce presented on the aims of the Taskforce, its whole of government approach, and on work to date to build a platform for improved government trade service delivery.

Ms Lisa Milin of the Australia Border Force (ABF) presented on incremental STS initiatives being led by the ABF, some of which are in collaboration with the department. This included a digital platform for paperless trading and regulatory reforms to modernise practices at the border. The Committee noted that the ABF and the department would be commencing industry consultation in coming weeks on one initiative, a proposed new sea and air cargo intervention model.

Members discussed progress of the Biosecurity Portal which will provide the ability to self-manage inspection bookings, allowing users to see all their requests in the one place. A small number of industry participants will trial the portal from September 2021, with end-to-end testing to be completed before the portal is made available for broader release.

The Committee noted ongoing reform work across the cargo pathway to deregulate activity and simplify industry interactions with the department. This includes progressive implementation of virtual inspections; proof-of-concept trial of new third party arrangements for imported cargo; and trials of new technologies to improve pest detection rates on or in shipping containers and to automate the assessment of import documentation.

Members noted work underway to better align industry engagement activity across the department and with the Department of Home Affairs, ABF and the STS Implementation Taskforce.



Members were also provided with updates on the review of imported food legislation; BMSB 2020-21 season outcomes and requirements for the upcoming season; actions to address the risk of khapra beetle; accreditation of facilities for offshore management of use vehicles from Japan; a proposal to allow goods to be inspected for biosecurity purposes at the discharge port rather than the destination port; non-compliance statistics; and biosecurity financial performance including an update on the Biosecurity Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) review. The department also tabled an update on service standards and performance measures 2020-21 for members to note.

The Committee will meet again in November 2021.

Industry Attendees

- Craig Birchall, Board of Airline Representatives
- Carolyn Macgill, Food and Beverage Importers Association
- Sal Milici, Freight and Trade Alliance
- Melwyn Noronha, Shipping Australia Limited
- Greg Carroll, Australia Post
- Dianne Tipping, Export Council of Australia
- Paul Bagnall, Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers
- Peter Van Duyn, International Cargo Handling Coordination Association
- Tony McDonald, Federal Chambers of Automotive Industries
- Zoran Kostadinovski, International Forwarders & Customs Brokers Association of Australia (proxy)

Guests

- Christie Sawczuk, Deputy Head of the Simplified Trade System Implementation Taskforce

Observers

- Lisa Milin, Simplified Trade System Strategic Alignment, Australia Border Force
- Mike Gallacher, Ports Australia