



## DCCC Meeting 90 Communiqué

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment Cargo Consultative Committee (DCCC) met via virtual platform on 25 November 2021.

The DCCC officially welcomed new member, Michael Gallacher, representing Ports Australia.

The Chair opened the meeting by acknowledging the significant disruptions to freight and supply chains due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the challenges this has generated for global container trade and management. Businesses have incurred additional costs and delays and the use of older shipping containers for non-US and European routes has increased pest and disease risk and rates of detection. Like many businesses and industries, COVID has also affected the department's operations with staff identified as contacts being required to get tested and isolate. At one time, this resulted in nearly 100 biosecurity officers being taken temporarily offline, severely impacting assessment and inspection services.

While the international shipping market will take time to balance out due to the reopening of international borders and increase in aviation travel, Australia is still in better shape than other countries. The department is also working on a range of things to reduce the risks associated with contaminated sea containers including:

- implementing urgent actions to address the risks of khapra beetle entering Australia
- exploring molecular technology to detect environmental DNA (eDNA) and RNA (eRNA) and provide faster diagnostics
- trialling the use of cameras to automate external screening of shipping containers as they move from ship to shore
- enhanced data modelling, and analytics, and partnership arrangements.

Members were invited to consider what the industry could do to assist.

Members endorsed the new operating arrangements for the DCCC consisting of the revised Terms of Reference and Administrative Guidelines to provide a more strategic focused committee, and continuation of the development of a forward-looking work plan to advance co-designed initiatives to address real trade related challenges.

A presentation was provided on the development of the first National Biosecurity Strategy. The Strategy is being developed in consultation with the Australian state and territory governments and industry, through the National Biosecurity Committee. Members expressed preliminary views on priorities for such a strategy and were invited to provide further comment to the National Biosecurity Strategy Project Team.

The committee was also advised of work to develop a public facing and aggregated report identifying non-compliant behaviours and the impact this can have on biosecurity assessment and inspection services. Member views were sought on the style and frequency of the report, and how industry could partner with the department to build good intelligence holdings and counter measures to address non-compliance. Instances of non-compliance subject to enforcement action would not be included in the report.

Members were updated on the proof-of-concept trial of new arrangements for imported cargo that seeks to leverage importer systems to manage biosecurity risk across their supply chains. Gaps and areas for improvement had been identified on both sides, as well as opportunities to build resilience. Members noted



the trial would likely result in a number of importers entering into 'green lane' channel arrangements with less departmental intervention generating time/cost savings and speed to market for their goods. The new arrangements would also lessen congestion at the border for other importers while freeing up departmental resources to focus on higher risk activities. Planning for design and implementation of the arrangements is underway.

The Committee noted:

- progress to deliver the Commonwealth Biosecurity 2030 strategy and the development of an annual action plan summarising the key activities/projects that will set the groundwork in achieving the strategy.
- progress of initiatives and activities under the Australian Government's Simplified Trade System (STS) reform agenda, in particular the proposed joint ABF/DAWE Cargo Intervention Model
- ongoing cargo reform work within the department including trials of new and innovative detection and screening technologies
- BMSB 2020-21 season outcomes and requirements for the upcoming season
- actions to address the risk of khapra beetle
- non-compliance statistics; and
- an update on the Biosecurity Cost Recovery Arrangement review, for which members raised the concept of incentivising industry and rewarding compliance through modified service fees and charges.

Members noted a planned system outage between 12pm Friday 3 December until 9am Saturday 6 December 2021 for changes to the department's finance and payment systems. An Import Industry Advice Notice will be issued for DCCC comment to ensure the message to industry clearly articulates the impacts.

A presentation on improving the department's workforce capability was deferred to the next meeting.

The Committee will meet again by March 2022.

#### Industry Attendees

- 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
- Mike Gallacher, Ports Australia
- Zoran Kostadinovski, International Forwarders & Customs Brokers Association of Australia (proxy)