



## Communiqué

### Meeting 101 – 31 July 2025

The DAFF Cargo Consultative Committee (DCCC) Meeting 101 convened at Agriculture House, 70 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra, and virtually.

The Chair, Monica Collins, First Assistant Secretary, Biosecurity Operations Division (BOD) opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of country and welcomed in person and virtual attendees.

The minutes from DCCC meeting 100 were accepted, with one action item remaining to be confirmed. All other action items were addressed through inclusion in the DCCC meeting 101 agenda or sharing of papers and presentations as agreed.

The Chair updated DCCC members on the planning for the Agricultural Productivity Roundtable, to be held on 12 August 2025. Improving productivity being the top economic priority for the Australian Government this term, the Treasurer and the Prime Minister will host a high-level Economic Reform Roundtable from 19-21 August 2025, focusing on lifting productivity growth, strengthening economic resilience, and ensuring budget sustainability.

DAFF is supporting Minister Collins's input into the Reform Roundtable by sharing the **Lifting Productivity Issues Paper** with targeted stakeholders, including DCCC members, seeking input on potential productivity issues, including fit for purpose regulation, and digitalisation of regulatory processes.

The department's Agricultural Productivity Roundtable outcomes will contribute to the national reform discussion at the Economic Reform Roundtable.

Members discussed proposed updates to the DCCC's Terms of Reference (ToR), including a refined purpose statement that emphasises the nature of engagement between DAFF and DCCC industry members, a more defined scope to outline the broad topics DCCC will consider and advise on, including how biosecurity also impacts exports. DCCC members agreed that further refinement of the ToR will continue out of session with a view to adopting an updated ToR at DCCC 102 in November 2025.

During the meeting, the department provided updates and discussed the following agenda items:

- The Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing System (STEPS) program, outlining the progress being made to modernise the department's biosecurity IT systems, specifically the Integrated Cargo and Container Platform (ICCP), AI Assisted Document Assessment Proof of Concept, and the Cargo processing predictor.
- The proposed policy for scheduling cargo inspections, including how the changes aim to provide equitable and efficient deployment of cargo inspectors.
- The impending consultation on sunseting biosecurity legislative instruments under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.
- The addition of imported food safety requirements into the Biosecurity Import Conditions System (BICON), allowing access to both biosecurity import conditions and food safety requirements from BICON, providing a single source of information.

- The impending implementation of improved departmental telephony services, providing a more efficient and effective call centre solution to support the department's ability to meet its service standards and overcome existing industry pain points and challenges. The first phase of implementation is anticipated to be completed by the end of September 2025.
- The Self Assessed Clearance (SAC) cost recovery charge indexation and policy, noting the recent increase from 36 cents to 37 cents, and utilisation of the funding for:
  - Enhancing risk assessment, assurance and verification processes
  - Detection capability – exploring the expanded use of detector dogs and X-ray
  - Risk recalibration – reviewing risk profiles to remove low-risk items
  - Industry partnership – collaborating with the air cargo industry to inspect and release low risk goods
  - System enhancements.

The department plans to hold a DCCC out-of-session SAC policy deep dive workshop in September 2025, that will further refine the ongoing SAC risk management policies.

Finally, the concept of Trusted Biosecurity Ambassadors was discussed in a panel forum. The department outlined how its staff, domestically and internationally, work to promote biosecurity compliance and provide capacity building support to help achieve positive biosecurity outcomes. This included how it hosts the Australian Biosecurity Awards, recognising excellence in biosecurity from industry stakeholders. Industry indicated that a program encouraging Australian importers to work with their exporters offshore to better understand Australia's importing country requirements. This could be achieved through the introduction and appointment of biosecurity compliance ambassadors within their businesses, promoting and monitoring biosecurity for increased compliance.

Understanding the different motivators, including recognition and the financial drivers for importers is essential, and was raised as issues that can impact biosecurity compliance. The DCCC committed to exploring how these concepts may be able to be leveraged to improve biosecurity outcomes.

**Reports tabled prior to the meeting:**

- Biosecurity 2024-25 Financial Report
- Cargo Operations Update
- Compliance Activity Snapshot
- Compliance Audit Report
- Approved Arrangements Update
- Summary of operational issues and outcomes raised with DCCC.

In closing, the Chair thanked members for their high level of engagement and noted the next DCCC meeting is DCCC 102, to be held on Thursday, 27 November 2025.

**DCCC Industry representative attendees:**

- Dianne Tipping, Export Council of Australia
- Carolyn Macgill, Food Importers Group
- Bradley Leonard, International Forwarders and Custom Brokers Association of Australia
- Paul Bagnall, Conference of Asia Pacific Express Carriers
- Sal Milici, Freight and Trade Alliance
- Peter Van Duyn, International Cargo Handling Coordination Association
- Melwyn Noronha, Shipping Australia Ltd
- Krithika Arun, Australia Post (proxy for Tanya Thornton)