



Julie Collins MP

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Minister for Small Business

Mr Adam Fennessy PSM
Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
70 Northbourne Avenue
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Secretary

I am writing to you to set out my expectations for the delivery of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (the Department) regulatory functions.

This Statement of Expectations reflects the Government's commitment to good corporate governance and our regulatory reform agenda. It is guided by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and complements the Australian Public Service (APS) Reform Agenda's four priority areas for an APS that embodies integrity, puts people and business at the centre, is a model employer and has the capability to do its job well.

The work of the Department in its regulatory functions supports the significant contribution of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors to Australia's economy.

I expect the Department to undertake the following regulatory functions in the public interest while continuing to safeguard and grow sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry for all Australians:

- Assessing and managing biosecurity risks and risks relating to ballast water as the Director of Biosecurity pursuant to the *Biosecurity Act 2015* and associated charging legislation
- Regulating goods for export pursuant to the *Export Control Act 2020* and associated charging legislation
- Prohibiting the importation of illegally logged timber and the processing of illegally logged domestic raw logs as regulator pursuant to the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012*

- Ensuring food imported into Australia complies with Australian food standards and public health and safety requirements pursuant to the *Imported Food Control Act 1992* and associated charging legislation
- Administering primary industry levy and charge collection to improve efficiency and effectiveness pursuant to the *Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Act 2024* and associated legislation.

I acknowledge the work of the Department to date through its Integrated Transformation Program to strengthen and develop the efficiency and effectiveness of the Department's regulatory functions, including through the creation of a new Chief Regulatory Officer.

This letter sets out my expectations, as the Responsible Minister, for the Department moving forward across three main areas of regulatory reform, regulator best practice, and collaboration and innovation.

Regulatory reform agenda

The regulatory reform agenda is a key component of the Government's plan to boost Australia's productivity and lower the cost of living by ensuring a fit for purpose regulatory environment.

The Government is looking at ways to boost productivity through reducing unnecessary or duplicative regulatory costs. Cooperating with the states and territories and working with international partners identifies opportunities to improve the quality of regulation and lower the cost of living for Australians.

The Government is also improving regulator performance, capability and culture through regulatory stewardship. This supports the Government's commitment to Australian Public Service reform by building trust in government and its institutions and by putting business and community at the centre of policy and services.

I understand the Department of Finance is progressing work across the Commonwealth to help agencies measure their regulatory maturity. I expect the department will be engaged in this important work to inform its own capability with respect to evaluation and continuous improvement.

I expect the department to contribute to the regulatory reform process by seeking opportunities to remove duplication and streamline processes to improve efficiency, lift productivity and continue to uplift regulatory maturity.

Principles of regulator best practice

In exercising its functions and powers in accordance with these principles, I expect the department to display the following principles of regulator best practice:

1. Continuous improvement and building trust:

- Use qualitative and quantitative analysis as important tools for assessing and reporting on performance, and to support continuous improvement. This includes:
 - o applying the Regulator Performance Resource Management Guide 128 to its regulatory functions to assess its performance and engagement with stakeholders, and
 - o incorporating regulator performance reporting into the department's reporting processes, as required by the Regulator Performance Resource Management Guide 128 under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, to support greater transparency and accountability of regulator performance.
- Promote a work culture that builds public confidence in the department's work and promotes trust in Government decision-making.

2. Risk-based and data-driven:

- Actively understand, engage with and effectively mitigate strategic risks to successfully manage its regulatory functions without unnecessarily impeding the operations of regulated entities.
- Use data sources that meet relevant data assurance standards for assessing and reporting on the quality of statistical information.

3. Collaboration and engagement:

- Undertake regular, open, transparent and consistent engagement with stakeholders including industry, government and the broader community to maintain competent and innovative regulatory practices. Consequently, I expect the department to:
 - o Seek opportunities to engage and consult genuinely with stakeholders
 - o Be receptive to feedback and diverse stakeholder views
 - o Seek to increase transparency in decision-making processes
 - o Provide up-to-date, clear and accessible guidance and information to assist regulated entities with compliance.

Innovation and regulatory change

I expect the department to continually monitor the environment it operates in, and engage with other regulators, to ensure that regulatory approaches keep pace with best practice, changes in technology, industry practices and community expectations.

I also expect the department to regularly review and, where necessary, adjust policies, protocols and operating procedures, to ensure it can respond to the changing social, technological and commercial context in which it operates.

Relationship with Minister and Portfolio

The department plays an essential role in ensuring that the Government and I are well placed to respond promptly to any policy challenges and opportunities arising from these regulatory frameworks. Accordingly, I expect the department to provide accurate, considered and timely policy advice on significant issues relating to these regulatory frameworks, in accordance with the Government's policy priorities and objectives.

As the responsible Minister, I will provide an enabling environment for the department to consistently implement best practice by ensuring the department is well informed of the Government's policy direction as specific initiatives and strategies are being considered.

While respecting the independence of portfolio regulators, I expect the department will work closely with portfolio agencies in advancing and sharing best practice regulation.

I ask that this Ministerial Statement of Expectations and your Statement of Intent be available on agriculture.gov.au and transparency.gov.au in the Corporate Plan and/or Annual Report.

I look forward to working cooperatively on these important priorities.

Yours sincerely



Julie Collins MP

30 / 1 / 2025