

# **Biosecurity Imports Levy Industry Steering Group**

## **Terms of reference**

Biosecurity risks are changing as import volumes increase and new pathways emerge or become more complex. In the 2018-19 Budget, the Australian Government announced imposing a levy on imports arriving by sea to invest in a stronger, fit-for-purpose biosecurity system.

In the course of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources engaging with industry about implementation, industry stakeholders raised a number of concerns about the levy, in particular the design and scope of the levy and the limited consultation.

The Australian Government is committed to the Biosecurity Imports Levy. However, in light of continuing industry stakeholder feedback, the Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources is establishing an industry steering committee so industry stakeholders will be better able to support and contribute to the design of the levy.

The steering committee's considerations and recommendations will assist the government in further considering design and scope elements of a levy.

### **Scope**

The steering committee will make recommendations to the minister on a possible scope and design for an ongoing biosecurity import levy, with specific reference to:

- base
- rate(s)
- imposition point(s) of financial liability – including but not necessarily limited to ports, importers, shipping lines, customs brokers and stevedores, and
- collection mechanism(s),

and having regard to:

- processes of importing that might raise biosecurity risks
- the outcomes of consultation on the proposed levy to date
- the inclusion of all containerised and non-containerised cargo transported to Australia by sea, with the exception of military equipment
- simplicity and predictability for levy payers
- administrative efficiency and practicality for affected industry and government, and
- the aim of raising an estimated \$325 million (net) over the first three years.

The steering committee's recommendations will be informed by consensus committee views. Dissenting views will be clearly set out and attributed. Information and data supporting conclusions will be provided to support government consideration, including potential costing of proposals by the Department of the Treasury.

### **Consultation**

The steering committee will consult widely, including through the invitation of submissions, within scope, from any interested parties.

All submissions received, and meetings held, by the steering committee will be recorded and appended in full to the committee's recommendations to the minister. All submissions will be placed on the department's website.

If, in the course of the steering committee's considerations, it becomes clear that an industry or sector not already represented within the committee membership or engaged in consultation, may potentially be captured within the committee's recommendations, the committee will invite input from the relevant peak representative body or association.

**Membership**

The minister will appoint up to 9 individuals to the steering committee. These individuals represent expertise in potentially impacted industry sectors and the supporting industries.

The committee will be led by a respected and independent chair appointed by the minister.

The committee will be supported by a secretariat independent of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and of industry.

**Timing**

The steering group will start immediately and will make recommendations to the minister no later than 1 June 2019.

**Resourcing**

The Chair will determine administrative arrangements with reasonable costs negotiated with and met by the department.

With the exception of the independent chair, steering committee members will not be remunerated. Committee members will be responsible for the costs of attending any committee meetings.