



TASMANIAN FARMERS & GRAZIERS ASSOCIATION

Jeanette Radcliffe
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Radcliff,

RE: Biosecurity and quarantine arrangements inquiry

The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) is the peak lobby group representing Tasmanian farmers. We have made a previous submission to the Inquiry. (See our letter dated 5 August 2010.)

Tasmania is an island state, so biosecurity is of paramount importance - not just to agriculture but also many other parts of our environmental, social and economic fabric. With so much of our state's base being predicated on environmental assets, tourism, and agriculture, we need to be ever vigilant in maintaining our biosecurity and quarantine system. Even the federal Minister for Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, Tony Burke, has recognised the biosecurity status of Tasmania as something that Tasmania has every right to want to be able to protect.

As we have outlined, TFGA seeks a robust, effective, science based biosecurity and quarantine framework. This means a quarantine system that maintains the relatively pest and disease free status Australia – and especially Tasmania – has. We must be vigilant in ensuring that our reputation as a supplier of fresh, high quality, and clean produce and the checks and balances that support this remain second to none in terms of risk management.


TFGA is committed to working with its partners, governments and other stakeholders to ensure that biosecurity standards are maintained at the highest level, and that quarantine risk assessments are based on sound science and transparent decision making processes. Good quarantine policy is a continuum that includes elements of both preparedness for, and prevention of, disease and pest incursions. Governments must actively use their resources to assess import applications, prevent and combat pest and disease incursions as well as fund and coordinate eradication procedures. These activities must leave the international community without doubt that Australia's quarantine and risk assessment regimes are developed and operated independently, and are based solely on sound scientific principles and analyses rather than industry protection.

Since our original letter, we have had the chance to consider the submission made by the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE).

We are fully supportive of the suggestions made therein.

In particular, we concur with their conclusion that increased clarity around Australia's ALOP statement is of vital importance. The methodology around assessment of regional risks is also of significance to Tasmanian farmers, and we support DPIPWE's comments in this area.

We would be happy to discuss this further with the Committee.

 Yours sincerely

 Ian Davis
Chief Executive Officer
16 August 2010

ACN 009 477 810
ABN 51 009 477 810

P: (03) 6332 1800
F: (03) 6331 4344
W: www.tfga.com.au

A: TFGA House, PO Box 193
Cnr Cimitiere & Charles Streets
Launceston TAS 7250