



AUSTRALIAN SENATE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT

REFERENCES COMMITTEE

Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO
Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
GPO Box 858
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Metcalfe,

Inquiries into the importation of Malaysian pineapples, Fijian ginger and New Zealand potatoes

Thank you for your responses dated 30 April, 22 May and 24 May 2013 to the committee's correspondence of 25 March 2013. The committee appreciates the comprehensive information you have provided.

Following the receipt of this information and your appearance at the Budget Estimates hearings on 27 May 2013, the committee resolved to provide Mr Peace with an opportunity to respond.

Mr Peace has suggested a meeting between himself and relevant DAFF officials and their advisers to establish areas of common ground and to identify and potentially resolve any points of difference. The committee supports this proposal.

The committee understands that Mr Peace will be in Sydney on Friday, 5 July 2013 and is available from 1.30–4.30 pm for such a meeting. The secretariat has contacted relevant DAFF officers to provide advanced notice of the proposed meeting.

To take into account the outcomes of this meeting, the committee has decided to seek an extension to its reporting date of these inquiries until Friday, 19 July 2013. The committee requests that all decisions in relation to the importation of pineapples from Malaysia, ginger from Fiji and potatoes from New Zealand be delayed until after the committee has had the opportunity to consider the meeting's outcomes and table its report.

In keeping with past practice, the committee has agreed to publish a copy of this request, and the Department's response, on the committee's website.

In order to facilitate this meeting could you please respond by Friday, 21 June 2013. If you wish to discuss this matter please contact the Committee Secretary, Mr Stephen Palethorpe on 02 6277 3510.

Yours sincerely,

Senator the Hon. Bill Heffernan
Chair

13 June 2013

- cc. Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
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Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

- cc. Dr Vanessa Findlay
Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer
Australian Chief Plant Protection Office
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