



Department of
**Primary Industries and
Regional Development**

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Our reference: MIN8593

Dr Sean Turner
Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement
By email: Le.committee@aph.gov.au

Dear Dr Turner

Thank you for your correspondence dated 7 November 2019 inviting submissions to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement's Inquiry into an Australian Standard for the training and use of privately contracted security and detection dogs. This submission is on behalf of the Western Australian (WA) Government.

After reviewing the Terms of Reference and giving due consideration to the Inquiry, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (the Department) is able to supply the below information. It is acknowledged that some of this information may not be directly linked to the Terms of Reference, however I am pleased to supply it should it assist the Committee.

As you may be aware, the Department administers and enforces the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*. It is through implementation of this legislation and strong quarantine measures that WA has been able to remain free of many destructive pests and diseases which are found in other parts of Australia.

Perth Domestic Airport is a high risk entry point for the introduction of exotic pests, weeds and diseases with increasing numbers of flights and passengers importing potential carriers and risk organisms to WA. Maintaining a high profile and surveillance at this entry point is an essential component of an effective interstate quarantine service.

The Department deploys four detector dogs at the Perth Domestic Airport terminals to detect quarantine risk material. This includes fresh fruit, vegetables, plant material, honey and seed. In 2018-19 1,619 kilograms of quarantine risk material was seized from 3,480 passengers arriving from interstate.

The Department recruits Labradors under 24 months of age, which are generally sourced and trained in the eastern states by an external dog training provider. The initial training undertaken by the external provider is approximately three months, with in-house training continuing to occur in the live environment (airport terminals).

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Ongoing training continues for the life of the detector dog, however it is expected that full proficiency would be reached after approximately 12 months of deployment in the live environment.

The detector dogs are worked on harnesses using positive reinforcement (food reward) and are deployed on a rostered system to the domestic terminals. Generally, detector dogs have one allocated handler however depending on operational requirements re-allocation pairings will occur from time to time. Upon retirement the dog is generally rehomed with the handler.

The Department's detector dogs are housed in purpose built kennel facilities, which are shared with the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and are within the airport precinct. These facilities are overseen by a fulltime Quarantine Inspector charged with ensuring the detector dog's health, welfare and safety.

Should you wish to obtain further information about Quarantine WA please visit <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/biosecurity-quarantine/quarantine>.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission into this Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

HEATHER BRAYFORD
DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL
SUSTAINABILITY AND BIOSECURITY

9 / 1 / 2020