

12 March 2024

Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Sent via email: rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

Re: Invasive Species Council response to Question on Notice

Dear Senator Canavan,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional information to the committee in response to a question taken on notice in evidence provided to the committee on 7 March 2024 at the Brisbane public hearing.

In the interests of transparency and public information, the following is a list of National Fire Ant Eradication Program documentation we are seeking public release of:

- The minutes of all steering committee meetings since December 2022
- Any documents regarding the fire ant interception in Victoria in February 2023
- The KPMG Review of program operations
- The “Independent assessment on the risk of fire ant movement in the interstate movement of commodities.” – referred to in tabled document 1: Invasive Species Council, Summary of National Fire Ant Eradication Program meetings from March 2023 to November 2023, tabled by Jack Gough, Advocacy Director at the public hearing in Brisbane on 4 March 2024 - 8 March 2023 meeting notes
- The Remote Sensing and Surveillance Review
- The “Independent Review of the Remote Sensing and Surveillance Review” – referred to in tabled document 1: Invasive Species Council, Summary of National Fire Ant Eradication Program meetings from March 2023 to November 2023, tabled by Jack Gough, Advocacy Director at the public hearing in Brisbane on 4 March 2024 - 8 March 2023 meeting notes
- The Governance Arrangements for the National Fire Ant Eradication Program 2023-27
- The National Fire Ant Eradication Program Tactical Operational Response Plan 2023-27
- The Fire Ant Suppression Taskforce Plan 2022-23 to 2025-26
- The August 2023 Scientific Advisory Group Update to the steering committee and any subsequent updates
- The risks and issues register, including a list of all updates/amendments since 2022 and the status of risks
- Any documents outlining risk thresholds for the program, particularly as it relates to trigger thresholds for funding level reviews
- Any Communications and Engagement Updates to the steering committee since 2023
- The Centre for International Economics' independent review of the Proof of Freedom Strategy
- Any ‘bi-annual reviews of CPI figures’ – referred to in tabled document 1: Invasive Species Council, Summary of National Fire Ant Eradication Program meetings from March 2023 to November 2023, tabled by Jack Gough, Advocacy Director at the public hearing in Brisbane on 4 March 2024 - 8 March 2023 meeting notes

- The January 2023 and June 2023 Financial Performance Reports and any subsequent financial performance reports
- Any documents since 2022 outlining funding impacts on procurement, staff retention and recruitment and efficiency and effectiveness of the program
- Any Efficiency and Effectiveness Review conducted since 2021
- The status of the 27 recommendations made in the 2021 strategic review
- All updates on the treatment and surveillance progress against the 2022/23 and 2023/24 work plan
- A list of all 'detections of importance' since January 2022
- A list of amendments/variations to the 2023/24 work plan and the timing and reasons for these
- Any terms of reference and meeting minutes of the New South Wales and Queensland cross-border working group
- The review of the Fire Ant Suppression Taskforce plan 2022-2026 on the effectiveness of suppression and implications for the eradication goal – referred to in tabled document 1: Invasive Species Council, Summary of National Fire Ant Eradication Program meetings from March 2023 to November 2023, tabled by Jack Gough, Advocacy Director at the public hearing in Brisbane on 4 March 2024 - 22 November 2023 meeting notes
- The CSIRO review and recommendations – referred to in tabled document 1: Invasive Species Council, Summary of National Fire Ant Eradication Program meetings from March 2023 to November 2023, tabled by Jack Gough, Advocacy Director at the public hearing in Brisbane on 4 March 2024 - 22 November 2023 meeting notes
- The National Pest Risk Assessment for interstate trade – referred to in tabled document 1: Invasive Species Council, Summary of National Fire Ant Eradication Program meetings from March 2023 to November 2023, tabled by Jack Gough, Advocacy Director at the public hearing in Brisbane on 4 March 2024 - 22 November 2023 meeting notes
- Any documents outlining enforcement priorities or data, including the number of refused entries, biosecurity entry orders, or fire ant related fines and other enforcement actions
- Any briefings to the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service or the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation about how fire ants will be managed in Queensland National Parks
- The annual report and quarterly reports for 2022/23
- The quarterly reports for 2023/24
- The work plans for 2022/23 and 2023/24
- Any assessment of the impact of inflation on the cost of program delivery
- Any assessment of the impact of the recent NSW detections on the program budget
- Any documents, including correspondence, since 2021 regarding the public release of the 2021 strategic review

We appreciate any assistance you can provide with public disclosure of these documents

Yours sincerely

Jack Gough, Advocacy Director
Invasive Species Council