

Please accept the following as a submission/comments from the Public and Aboriginal Health Division of WA Department of Health on the above-mentioned bill.

Most pertinent to Human Biosecurity Officer side of things is the proposed new human biosecurity group directions (HBGD) power, which has been discussed at the Chief Human Biosecurity Officer (CHBO) forum (chaired by the Director of Human Biosecurity (the Chief medical Officer)). This stems from a number of reviews, including the NSW Ruby Princess Inquiry, that recommended the introduction of a new group directions power under Commonwealth legislation. The proposal is to provide a HBO with power that would apply to a group of persons suspected of being exposed to an Listed Human Disease (LHD) for the purposes of reducing the potential transmission of an LHD on-board, in the port environment and to the Australian community. It would apply to both airport and seaport settings. A similar power pertaining to *individuals* are included in the current Act (ie. 'human biosecurity control orders').

An area of ongoing uncertainty is the demarcation of the state-based legislation and roles and responsibilities, and those of the Commonwealth, with respect to various port and maritime boundaries/zones - Coastal Waters (3 nautical mile limit), Territorial Sea (12 nautical mile limit), Contiguous Zone (24 nautical mile limit). The Commonwealth (Health) have stated this proposed HBGD policy would be supported by a policy document and guidance and this is something the states can prosecute through the CHBO forum.

Regards and thanks,

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