



Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
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Re: Inquiry into the provisions of the *Biosecurity Amendment (Traveller Declarations and Other Measures) Bill 2020*

The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (TFGA) is the leading representative body for Tasmanian primary producers. TFGA members are responsible for generating approximately 80% of the value created by the Tasmanian agricultural sector. The TFGA appreciates the opportunity to make comment on the Inquiry into the provisions of the *Biosecurity Amendment (Traveller Declarations and Other Measures) Bill 2020*.

Australia is in an advantageous position of being an island which helps protect us from the introduction of devastating pests and diseases. However, the threat of the introduction of pests and diseases through flights and ship passengers is still present and needs to be accounted for to ensure the protection of our agricultural industries.

The TFGA support the amendments to the *Biosecurity Act 2015* to allow different penalties for specific infringements based on the biosecurity risk. Threats and biosecurity risks can vary, and we believe this is a sensible approach to ensure the protection of industries that are most under threat, based on the risk of an incoming pest or disease.

We believe that the consultation to determine the penalty needs to be extensive and involve stakeholders, including industry representatives, and the determination of the penalty based on science. This consultation and scientific analysis will help ensure that the correct areas are targeted to gain the most effective protection against the most serious pests and disease threats.

The TFGA also believes that any increased revenue from passengers penalised under increased penalties based on these changes needs to be invested directly into biosecurity. We believe it is important that any funds are used to help protect Australia from the introduction of pests and diseases and any revenue generated must be used for this purpose.

We are also supportive of any education on biosecurity and the damage introduced pests and diseases can inflict. We believe with this change in infringements for selected biosecurity risks, it will be vital to ensure passengers are aware of the changes and the risk posed to our agricultural systems. Any education on biosecurity for passengers entering Australia is beneficial and it is also important passengers have a chance to understand the changes and why they are in place. It is also important that they understand the seriousness of the biosecurity risks and why the penalties have increased.

The TFGA continues to value biosecurity highly and believe the protection of our agricultural systems at the Australian border is vital. With increasing instances of passengers entering Australia failing to declare illegal products, this change to the Act is important in helping to address this issue. The TFGA

support the change to the Act if changes are based on scientific opinion and consultation with stakeholders, any increased revenue generated is invested back into biosecurity and extensive education campaigns to inform passengers of the penalty changes are in place.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Skillern
Chief Executive Officer
1st July 2020