

Mr B Charles MP
Chairman
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT 2600

REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA'S QUARANTINE FUNCTION

Thank you for your letter dated 15 April 2002 inviting additional information for the inquiry into Australia's quarantine function.

The Tasmanian Government has taken the opportunity to consider the potential implications of the Committee's amended terms of reference with particular regard to the additional phrase, "*the impact of international agreements on quarantine activities, including any proposed free trade negotiations.*"

Having considered the amended terms of reference, the Tasmanian Government wishes to provide the following additional comments to be included with our submission dated 6 November 2001.

Tasmania expects that quarantine activities and issues would remain a separate matter to any free trade or other agreement and that there would be no compromise of Australia's import conditions for risk material in order to facilitate finalisation of trade agreements. Any case for a relaxation of import conditions on any risk item should only be based on recognised scientific principles. The necessity of having defensible quarantine conditions and restrictions based on sound science and transparent processes, including transparent standards of Australia's appropriate level of protection, is highlighted by this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Yours sincerely

Jim Bacon MHA
Premier