Question: 5

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: New Zealand Apples Proof Hansard page:** 13

Senator MACDONALD asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Can't someone tell me if the minister bought a beer in relation to the New Zealand apple industry issue?

Senator Ludwig: Can I be clear: I did not.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: And your parliamentary secretary did not?

Senator Ludwig: You would have to ask him. I do not know whether-

Senator IAN MACDONALD: He is not here, minister.

Senator Ludwig: I could check.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Don't you understand? You are responsible for him. **Senator Ludwig:** Excuse me. You have now gone from the sublime to the ridiculous. You are now asking a new question as to whether I am aware of whether or not the parliamentary secretary may have bought a beer for some person unknown.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Then who do we ask? If we cannot ask you-

CHAIR: Allow the minister to complete the answer.

Senator Ludwig: If you recall, I said earlier that I would take it on notice in relation to myself and I can ask the parliamentary secretary whether he has bought a beer for anyone in the last 12 months.

Senator IAN MACDONALD: In relation to New Zealand apple imports.

Senator Ludwig: So the qualification is for that?

Senator IAN MACDONALD: That is what the question was.

Senator Ludwig: I will check.

Answer:

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has no further information regarding the Minister's and/or Parliamentary Secretary's official hospitality.

Question: 20

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Importation of Oak Proof Hansard page:** 43

Senator EDWARDS asked:

Senator EDWARDS: It is the industry's question. To the best of my knowledge, there has not been much scrutiny on this area. The importation of oak changed dramatically in its form and function and the way in which it is carried out, and the costs involved in the import in importing oak. What consultation occurred with the industry, or has occurred with the industry, on these changes to the import classification in that period of time since February 2011?

Mr Magee: To clarify initially, are you referring to manufactured items made of oak? **Senator EDWARDS:** Cooperage.

Mr Magee: Cooperage, yes. We had quite a bit of consultation, I think, over the last 12 months in relation to newly manufactured oak barrels for the wine industry. You are possibly aware that the object of the original concern here was sudden oak death, which is prevalent in Europe. We then entered into some discussions about whether the manufacturing process for oak barrels substantially addressed those concerns. So firstly, in the manufacture of the staves in new barrels, there is a lot of heat and steam involved in that process. And as I recall it, there was some concerns around the ends of the oak barrels. I am trying to think what they are called—the bits that do not go through the steaming process. We had a discussion with the world expert on sudden oak death and his view at the time was that newly manufactured oak barrels do not constitute a significant pathway risk, which is a reasonable conclusion. Following that process, we then revised the conditions for new oak barrels.

Senator EDWARDS: When did you do that?

Mr Magee: I will have to take on notice the exact date, but this was probably March or April last year.

Answer:

Please refer to QoN 119 Biosecurity – Plant Division from the Additional Estimates hearing in February 2012.

Question: 21

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Importation of Oak Proof Hansard page:** 43

Senator EDWARDS asked:

Senator EDWARDS: So you relaxed the levels of scrutiny or the practices of the manufacturers?

Mr Magee: No, we did not relax anything; we adjusted our levels of intervention in response to the assessed risk.

Senator EDWARDS: Was there any question about the changing the nature of the manufacturer of oak barrels and the impost of carrying out this quarantine procedure offshore prior to the cooperage here changed the nature and put the industry at a competitive disadvantage from a point of view of integrity of barrels and what they are supposed to be used for?

Mr Magee: Not that I recall, but I am happy to take that on notice. There may have been more than one importer involved here. AI wonder whether in that part of your question, you're referring you are referring to the actual timber coming in to manufacture the barrels here as opposed to the finished product?

Senator EDWARDS: I am.

Mr Magee: Yes, okay.

Answer:

Please refer to the answer to QoN 119 Biosecurity – Plant Division from the Additional Estimates hearing in February 2012.

Question: 22

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Importation of Oak Proof Hansard page:** 43

Senator EDWARDS asked:

Senator EDWARDS: There are manufacturers here which are very sensitive—obviously all manufacturers these days—that are importing wood which is being required to be treated outside this country. What puts them at a competitive disadvantage to anybody importing barrels to this country in a whole form.

Mr Magee: Yes.

Senator EDWARDS: Obviously we still want to manufacture as much as we can in this country.

Mr Magee: I will take the second part of that question on notice, if that is all right.

Senator EDWARDS: Yes. Could you provide on notice the time lines and the consultations you have actually had with manufacturers in this country on the issues around the manufacturer of Australian made wine barrels from imported oak? **Mr Magee:** Yes, I am very happy to do that.

Answer:

Please refer to the answer to QoN 119 from Biosecurity – Plant Division from the Additional Estimates hearings in February 2012.

Question: 23

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Branched Broomrape Proof Hansard page:** 43–44

Senator EDWARDS asked:

Senator EDWARDS: Okay. Thank you. I will just move to my second one, which is in regard to branched broomrape in South Australia and the abandonment of the eradication program and the move to a containment of branched broomrape in South Australia, which is obviously somewhat disappointing for those people that are affected. What are the ongoing measures being undertaken to deal with branched broomrape in South Australia?

Dr Cole: As you said, it was deemed not technical feasible for eradication. It has moved now into a transition to a management program. That is being overseen by a national group. We are actually in the final throes of developing the actual program. Key issues to mitigate the spread to the rest of Australia will include interstate regulations high-risk material like machinery, which might be a pathway for branched broomrape. We are also working with industries such as the grains industry, horticulture industry, looking at what regulations we have in place to mitigate the spread through those pathways.

Senator EDWARDS: What Commonwealth funding would be provided to the South Australian department to deal with this?

Dr Cole: That is all subject to the national coordinating group, which is a group overseeing this program. That program is in the throes of being put back up to that national committee to then decide about future funding and the progress of that program.

Senator EDWARDS: You said earlier that it is no longer feasible to try and eradicate it. Is there a report that led you to that decision, and is that able to be provided to us?

Dr Cole: Yes, we can provide that technical report. The main issue about the technical feasibility was, unfortunately, seed longevity. When we first started the program we thought that 12 years would be the maximum that it would be in the seed in the soil. Unfortunately, as part of long term research, the further the program went on, the research continued, and it did not look like that seed bank was going to be decaying, so some of the estimate for eradication were out to 75 years. At that point that was not deemed technically feasible and then it was transitioned into management.

Senator EDWARDS: Will that be in the report?

Dr Cole: Yes, that technical information will be there.

Answer:

Attached is the 2011 Independent Review of the Branched Broomrape Eradication program. The report was used in decision making by the Consultative Committee for Exotic Plant Incursions and the National Management Group.

Review of the Branched Broomrape Eradication Program, South Australia



By John R W Burley¹, F Dane Panetta² and Greg Fraser³

May 2011

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Executive Summary

Term of Reference 1: Progress towards Eradication

The Evaluation Panel was informed of the program's efforts to achieve eradication since the inception of the program. The panel was impressed with the diligence and determination of the program's staff in pursuing this objective. However the Panel also noted that there was no accepted definition of eradication to guide the current program. It adopted the following definition:

Eradication: The permanent elimination of the introduced pest from the ecosystem which, in practice, means that it can no longer be detected by recommended methods of survey and diagnosis.

The incursion has been reasonably well delimited, although there continues to be a low and variable level of new detections, both within and close to the originally defined core area of infestation (quarantine area). Repeated surveys of linked properties in SA and Victoria have failed to detect any spread. Victoria also targets this weed in its Weed Alert Program and has not detected it on other properties.

The Panel believes that the program has been working steadily towards assumed eradication goals, based on moving paddocks to non-detection for a 12 year period. Fifteen paddocks are scheduled for achieving this status at the end of 2011, representing less than 2% of paddocks infested. Over the following three years, a further 207 paddocks (25% of infested paddocks) should achieve this status. Current modelling indicates that eradication could be achieved somewhere between 2040 and 2070. This modelling is based on the assumption that the seed bank for branched broomrape is depleted after the consistent prevention of branched broomrape seed production over a 12 year period and that non-detection indicates that further seed production is prevented. However, on the basis of available data the Panel cannot verify that all seeds are rendered non-viable in this time horizon. As a result, it cannot confirm that eradication will be achieved even within this eradication timeline.

There are a number of issues that lead to eradication no longer being technically feasible. These include the total area infested (7535 ha), the longevity of the seed and the inability to consistently prevent emergence and reproduction in certain land use types, particularly annual pastures.

Moves towards eradication have been complicated by the number and types of beneficiaries of the program and the fact that those needing to implement control measures are not necessarily the main beneficiaries. Clearly, there are numerous risk creators such as those graziers who do not treat branched broomrape and who are not significant beneficiaries of the risk management at the heart of the current program. In addition, beneficiaries of the risk management approach are widely distributed across Australia's temperate zone agricultural industries and yet the costs of the program are being borne by those in quarantine areas (and by the government contributors). Current levels of incentives and compliance mechanisms do not necessarily engage all landholders in the actions needed to move the total infested area towards eradication. At present the program is funded principally from government investment through the national cost sharing mechanism, although the panel could not identify significant public benefits. While there would be significant private and industry benefits across Australia from eliminating this weed, private investment and costs are limited to those imposed on the landholders in the infested area. The Panel recommends that eradication no longer be pursued, since it is not considered to be technically feasible within the constraints of current or potential future investment in the program. This in no way reflects on the quality and conduct of the program by the SA Government and its agencies. The Panel is convinced that the program has been conducted in a most professional and diligent manner given the level of resourcing available.

Term of Reference 2: Future Options

Where eradication is no longer considered feasible, **containment** is often thought to be the next best alternative. The Panel recommends that containment be defined as:

Application of phytosanitary measures (including control of branched broomrape and its hosts) in and around an infested area to prevent spread of branched broomrape.

A containment strategy would include sustained measures to prevent the spread of the weed from current known infested properties. Quarantine measures would need to continue to be applied to prevent the movement of contaminated material outside of the containment zone. Properties within this zone would continue to be considered at risk. Production and market access would be protected outside of the zone while significant imposts would remain for properties within. A containment program should be a long term commitment on behalf of governments and all stakeholders if it is to maximise benefits. However the degree to which governments are required to fund such a program may be subject to transition and adaptation over time.

The Panel recommends that the option to be pursued is based around containment and the ability to declare products and properties to be free of the weed (**Containment plus Product and Property Free status**).

This would enable minimal intervention outside the current infestation, so that a basic level of auditing could assure buyers and sellers of at-risk produce that produce is sourced from branched broomrape free land and thus should not be subject to further restrictions either within or outside Australia. Within the infestation area, a quality assurance program would need to be put in place by industry for those commodities that may be directly impacted by branched broomrape (e.g. vegetables, potatoes, fodder and canola) or for which the presence of branched broomrape poses a significant market access risk (such as cereals). For the livestock industry, restrictions would be limited to phytosanitary measures before movement of high risk materials (e.g. machinery) and to compliance with control measures enforced by the relevant State or local authority. These measures would apply to all properties in the infestation area. All properties would have the ability to achieve branched broomrape free status, independently audited, which would be taken as evidence of compliance with phytosanitary and weed control requirements. Achievement of property free status should be sufficient incentive (through reducing regulatory burden) for landholders to conduct actions on their properties and thus reduce the total infestation.

Other options include **regional management** which would seek to limit the spread of the weed. However this option does not manage the risks to trade both within and beyond Australia. Farmers affected would pay fully for control costs and this option would forfeit the value in the program to date. Without the ability to impose quarantine restrictions, the rate of spread would be enhanced, resulting in earlier realisation of the potential costs of branched broomrape infestation. The risks to primary industries from a '**do nothing**' option were considered to be too great for this option to be considered seriously by the Panel.

Term of Reference 3: **Recommend how progress could be measured and propose 3-5 year targets**

The Panel assumes that eradication will no longer be pursued as the real or nominal objective of any ongoing program. As a result, a shorter term target is required to transition to the new program objective. The Panel recommends that by 1 July 2012 a national management plan for branched broomrape be developed and agreed to by all stakeholders. This should include: development of market access conditions; protocols for determining property- and product-free status; mechanisms for prevention of spread by machinery; implementation of such mechanisms; protocols for determining area free status across uninfested parts of Australia to assure market access, and appropriate funding and resourcing mechanisms for implementation. This may include surveillance mechanisms for branched broomrape in all potentially affected jurisdictions, which could require government funding. However, the Panel recommends that any ongoing program aimed at containment and assuring market access be funded by the industries benefiting from this action. Mechanisms to implement both the containment program and the industry funding required need to be a focus of the current program until June 2012.

Assuming the foregoing occurs, the panel recommends that progress by 1 July 2015 be measured by:

- Evidence of compliance with: a) requirements to clean machinery prior to movement from properties containing branched broomrape and b) orders to control critical infestations, e.g. satellites and those on the periphery of the containment line.
- Evidence of containment plus levels of adoption of property- and product-free status for producers whose marketing is potentially affected by the risk of contamination by branched broomrape.

Term of Reference 4: Stakeholder change, current and future contributions from stakeholders

The status of stakeholders is complex. With the disappearance of single desk marketing, industry representation is fragmented and variable across industry sectors and marketing for horticultural products is conducted by individual properties. Currently, stakeholder contributions consist of costs imposed upon landholders in the infested area, apart from the government contributions that have been driving the eradication program. Any further commitment to management of branched broomrape on a national basis must be contingent upon all or a majority of costs being met by the major beneficiaries of the program. At present the main beneficiaries appear to be the industry sectors that produce grains, pulses, canola and vegetables. The development of a national management plan for branched broomrape needs to include further analyses of beneficiaries and apportion costs accordingly.

The Panel makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: That management of the branched broomrape incursion has a more realistic and achievable objective, based on consideration of technical feasibility, the relative benefits, costs and beneficiaries of further coordinated action and on the willingness of major beneficiaries to contribute to ongoing action.

Recommendation 2: That Containment plus Pursuit of Product and Property Branched Broomrape Free Status be pursued as the new objective for the branched broomrape in the current quarantine area and throughout all susceptible lands in Australia.

Recommendation 3: That by 1 July 2012 a national management plan for branched broomrape be developed and agreed to by all stakeholders. This would enable a smooth transition from the funding currently provided through the national Branched Broomrape Eradication Plan to the new Containment plus Product and Property Free option.

The National Management Plan for Branched Broomrape should include:

- development of market access conditions; protocols for determining propertyand product-free status;
- mechanisms for prevention of spread by machinery;
- a timetable for implementation of such mechanisms;
- protocols for determining area free status across uninfested parts of Australia to assure market access;
- appropriate funding and resourcing mechanisms for implementation.
- surveillance mechanisms for branched broomrape in all potentially affected jurisdictions, which could require government funding.

Recommendation 4: That mechanisms to implement both the containment program and any changed funding arrangements required need to be a focus of the currently available funding until June 2012.

Recommendation 5: Assuming the foregoing occurs, that progress by 1 July 2015 be measured by:

- Evidence of compliance with: a) requirements to clean machinery prior to movement from properties containing BBR and b) orders to control in critical infestations, e.g. satellites and those on the periphery of the containment line;
- Evidence of containment plus levels of adoption of property- and product-free status for producers whose marketing is potentially affected by the risk of contamination by branched broomrape;
- The success of the containment approach in limiting BBR infestations to properties within the currently infested area (i.e., as known in 2011);
- Improvements to the infestation status of land within the currently infested area;
- The level of commitment to funding the program by actual and potentially impacted industry sectors.

Recommendation 6: That any ongoing program aimed at containment and assuring market access be funded principally by the affected parties benefiting from this action.

Recommendation 7: That the South Australian Government ensure that compliance and positive incentives are maintained to minimise the risks posed by non-agricultural stakeholders.

Recommendation 8: That the following steps be followed as part of the transition process:

- Maintain the QA under existing SA legislation
- Transition from an eradication to a containment program, with the aim of moving to a national management approach involving all potentially affected stakeholders
- Conduct a thorough beneficiary analysis
- Consult with specific industry /commodity representative bodies
- Engage Plant Health Committee's sub-committee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access Working Group, to identify what data is needed to facilitate domestic market access for goods produced within the QA
- Develop plan to facilitate domestic market access
- Confirm with AQIS export certification requirements for branched broomrape.

Introduction

The current branched broomrape (*Orobanche ramosa*) incursion was first identified at a single location around 30 km east of Murray Bridge in South Australia and a State funded eradication program undertaken from 1992. In response to increasing numbers of discoveries, national funding was provided for an extensive delimitation survey during 1999. Following two annual delimitation surveys, national funding was provided for the eradication program from 2001 onwards.

Branched broomrape is a parasitic weed of a wide range of plant hosts. The species is a true parasite and has no chlorophyll of its own. Plants can survive only by attaching themselves to the root systems of the host plants. The impact of this attachment varies from virtually nil (a benign association) to significant yield loss or plant death. Even if crop yield is not affected, the quality of the produce can be severely affected, rendering it unsaleable. This is particularly a problem with vegetable crops such as carrots.

Branched broomrape is native to the Eastern Mediterranean, but is now endemic throughout the Mediterranean Basin, Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, South Africa and the Americas. It has the potential to spread to all major horticultural and cropping areas in Australia but is currently restricted to an area of approximately 70 km x 70 km in South Australia.

The major industries threatened by branched broomrape in Australia include oilseeds, faba beans, lupins, vetch, pasture legumes and vegetables (eg brassica crops, carrots). Recent testing of native and ornamental plants has extended the original host list, with implications for the risk to native vegetation.

A further major threat for Australian agriculture is the impact that contamination of products with branched broomrape seed could have on export markets, particularly for grain and hay. Many trading partners are free of branched broomrape and may use its presence in Australia as a trade barrier. A number of countries have imposed a zero tolerance for branched broomrape seed in produce. It is estimated that the value of atrisk crops is approximately \$2.3billion (SCARM 14).

The program had previously been reviewed in 2001, 2002, 2005 and 2008. An independent assessment of the program is critical to its progress beyond June 2012. It will inform the proposal that is presented to the PIMC meeting in October 2011.

Prior to this review, modelling had indicated that eradication could be achieved in 2030, dependent on achieving an annual success rate of 92% in preventing emergence within known infestations.

The Consultative Committee for Exotic Plant Incursions commissioned this review as the body responsible for governance of the Program at the national level.

The Terms of Reference are: -

Using records of the Branched Broomrape Eradication Program, previous reviews and other information, conduct an evaluation of the current Branched broomrape Program that: -

- 1. Evaluates progress towards eradication of branched broomrape from Australia.
- 2. Evaluates **future options** and objectives including eradication or containment scenarios, and recommends the preferred management objective.

- 3. Recommends how **progress** towards the achievement of this future management objective should be **measured** and proposing 3 to 5 year **targets** for the program.
- 4. Evaluates the extent to which stakeholders **have changed and currently contribute** to the program and identify any changes to the stakeholders who should be investing in the future program.

Term of Reference No. 1: Evaluate progress towards eradication of branched broomrape from Australia.

The Panel adopted the following definition of eradication:

Eradication: The permanent elimination of the introduced pest from the ecosystem which, in practice, means that it can no longer be detected by recommended methods of survey and diagnosis.

The evaluation of progress towards weed eradication has been an active area of research in recent years. The criteria for evaluation were outlined in papers by Panetta and Lawes (2005) and Panetta (2007). Subsequently, a simple model that assessed conformity with the delimitation and extirpation (local extinction) criteria was developed and applied specifically to branched broomrape (Panetta and Lawes 2007). The eradograph, which maps temporal changes in performance against both criteria (Figure 1), has been used by the Program to evaluate progress until 2009.



Figure 1. Progress in the branched broomrape eradication program in relation to the delimitation (D) and extirpation (E) criteria.

Conformity with the delimitation criterion (y-axis) occurs when the trace reaches (and remains at) zero. (Note that a log transform of D has been utilised to increase sensitivity as delimitation is approached.) The trace has not reached zero at any point during the program. Conformity with the extirpation criterion (x-axis) occurs when E > 12 (the number of years for which branched broomrape seeds are estimated to persist). Slow progress with regard to the extirpation criterion has remained a concern, indicating a critical need for the development and broad-scale application of cost-effective methods for eliminating branched broomrape soil seed populations.

As the time approaches that release of paddocks from quarantine becomes possible, a more tangible measure of progress becomes available. Release from quarantine is conditional upon non-detection of branched broomrape over a 12 year period; 15 paddocks (<2% of the total number of infested paddocks) are scheduled for release at the end of 2011. Over the following three years, a further 207 paddocks (25% of infested paddocks) may achieve this status, depending upon continuing non-detection of branched broomrape.

Other modelling has been undertaken to determine the time to eradication. Different models have yielded divergent predictions (Figures 2 and 3) in spite of being based upon the same data (obtained from Program records). The reasons for such different outputs are not clear. In any case, both models are based upon the assumption that maximum seed persistence for branched broomrape is 12 years, but there is evidence that seeds may persist for longer, markedly so under some conditions (see point 3 under *Technical feasibility of eradication*).



Figure 2. Modelling decline in the number of infested paddocks over time, suggesting that eradication will occur in approximately 2040 (from Warren and Secomb 2011).



Figure 3. Cumulative distribution function for time to eradication (years from 2008) for the branched broomrape eradication program (from Panetta *et al.* 2011). Model is based upon total infested area, rather than total number of infestations. Mean predicted time to eradication is 62 years, suggesting program completion in 2070.

Regardless of model selection, it is clear that eradication, if in fact feasible, is a very long-term prospect. In addition to the usual problems associated with lengthy eradication programs (e.g. maintenance of institutional commitment and funding, continuity of trained and motivated workers), there are other ways for programs to go off track, such as failure to prevent reproduction, and dispersal leading to the establishment of new foci of infestation. Given the numerous uncertainties associated with pursuing such a long-term objective, the Panel decided to undertake a qualitative assessment of the feasibility of eradication.

Technical feasibility of eradication

The Consultative Committee on Exotic Plant Incursions has established a list of key points to be considered when evaluating whether weed eradication is a feasible objective. In this section the South Australian branched broomrape incursion is examined with regard to these points. It should be noted, however, that a number of points are more relevant to deliberations occurring prior to the commencement, rather than during review, of an eradication program.

- 1. Capability to accurately diagnose or identify the pest or disease Identification of the species has not been problematic.
- 2. Ability of the pest/disease control technique options, including a recommendation as to the control technique that is likely to be the most cost-effective in eradication of the pest or disease

A range of weed control techniques have been utilised against branched broomrape. Broadly, these involve direct targeting of the soil seed bank (fumigation), preventing the growth of plants that are hosts for this weed (host denial) and reduction of seed production of emerged branched broomrape plants. Fumigation, while largely effective (depending upon the product utilised), is too expensive to be employed extensively (see point 3). The efficacy of host denial depends largely upon land use. Cereal crops are not hosts, and the broadleaved weeds that are parasitised are effectively controlled with herbicides within this management context. However, it is difficult to control branched broomrape hosts without also eliminating the legume component in the pasture phase of cropping rotations. Furthermore, broadleaved weeds have significant value as feed in low quality, low input pastures. Where such weeds account for a large proportion of ground cover, their control may exacerbate wind erosion in light Mallee soils. Lastly, application of pine oil at the emergence to flowering stages of branched broomrape can reduce seed production by 50-60%. (A mature plant can produce 20,000 seeds.)

3. Level of confidence that all individual pest/disease organisms (including all life stages present) can be removed/destroyed by the recommended control techniques

The seed phase of this species poses a serious impediment to the achievement of eradication. Since branched broomrape is an obligate parasitic plant, its germination is cued to the close proximity of the root of a host species. The seed bank can be directly targeted by fumigation by methyl bromide, which on average prevents reinfestation of approximately 95% of treated sites. However, the cost is very high (\$20K per ha), so this control technique is restricted to small roadside and satellite infestations. The use of basamid as a fumigant, while less expensive (\$3.5K per ha), is also less effective, allowing the reinfestation of approximately 11% of treated sites. The use of pine oil to target the soil seed bank has been discontinued owing to its highly variable efficacy.

For the most part, however, the strategy to deplete the seed bank has been reliant upon 'attrition', i.e. dependent upon seed losses via natural mortality and germination that does not lead to attachment to a host plant and completion of the life cycle. There is evidence that in the absence of host plants seeds may persist for substantially longer than the assumed period of 12 years under some circumstances (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Persistence of branched broomrape seed in the absence of host plants under field conditions. Note the much higher persistence observed in the non-wettable Dabinett soil (unpublished data).

4. Level of confidence that it is possible to remove the organisms at a faster rate than they can propagate until the population is reduced to a non-viable density

Depending on the land use (see point 2), it is possible to largely prevent emergence and thereby avoid the replenishment of branched broomrape's soil seed bank. In contrast to the situation with many pest animals, where populations may become non-viable at low densities, branched broomrape is capable of selfpollination, whereby a single, isolated plant can produce many thousands of seeds. Seed bank densities will need to be reduced to very low levels, indeed, for infestations to be prone to the vagaries of environmental and demographic processes that put small populations at risk of extinction.

5. Confirmation that the recommended control techniques are publicly acceptable (considering cultural and social values, humanness, public health impacts, non-target impacts and environmental impacts) There has been very little evidence of public resistance to the implementation of recommended control techniques. The rate of herbicide applied to branched broomrape that occurs within native vegetation is sufficiently low that a high degree of selectivity is obtained. No public health impacts exist. The only consideration of note is occasional reluctance to control branched broomrape in annual pastures. This appears to arise for a variety of reasons, including concern about the maintenance of the pasture legume component (annual legumes are susceptible to herbicides used for broadleaved weed control), and the value of broadleaved weeds as feed and/or for prevention of wind erosion on light soils.

- 6. Interim control measures that have been put in place by the Notifying Party Not relevant at this stage of the eradication program
- 7. Endemic pest or disease controls that may limit or prevent establishment None known
- 8. Any legislative impediment to undertaking an emergency response No existing impediment

9. Resources required to undertake an emergency response

Funding for the eradication program to date has exceeded \$A35M, with \$A4.20M and \$A4.48M available in 2009/10 and 2010/11 respectively. This represents a substantial investment over a long period. Whether a higher level investment would have significantly increased the feasibility of eradication is debatable, particularly given the problems posed by the biology of the species, difficulty of achieving a consistent, very high level of control in non-cropping situations, and the very large area affected.

10. The known area of infestation

The extent of the current known area of infestation (7535 ha) is a severe constraint to the feasibility of eradication. Most of the documented completed weed eradication efforts have targeted infested areas of less than 100 ha (Panetta 2009). The eradication of a 2480 ha incursion of kochia in Western Australia was exceptional in that this weed was intentionally introduced, points of introduction were known precisely, spread from sites where introduced was minimal and seeds were relatively short-lived (maximum seed persistence of 3-5 years).

11. The likely distribution of the pest or disease, in accordance with Attachment 5A, 5B and 5C to Schedule, in relation to a terrestrial pest or disease, a inland waters pest or disease or a marine pest respectively

Modelling of the potential distribution of branched broomrape, based solely upon climate suitability, indicates a very wide geographical range in Australia for this weed. More refined modelling (including soil type in addition to climate suitability) for South Australia suggests that 2.2M ha and 4.3M ha are at very high risk and high risk of invasion respectively.

12. Identification of the pest or disease pathways (of entry into, and spread within, Australia)

The pathway of entry into Australia is unknown. The first detection of branched broomrape occurred during 1911 at Glenelg, SA. This infestation appears to have gone extinct within a few years of its detection. The species was not observed again until 1992, in the vicinity of Bowhill, SA. Since detection of this second infestation occurred much later and at a substantial distance from the first, it has been considered to have resulted from a separate introduction.

13. Level of confidence that further introductions are sufficiently low

Because the pathway of entry into Australia is unknown, it is difficult to quantify the likelihood of further introduction. However, the fact that branched broomrape has

not been detected beyond a highly restricted area within South Australia suggests that the frequency of introduction to Australia is very low.

14. The dispersal ability of the organism (that is, whether the organism is capable of rapid spread over large distances)

While there is little knowledge of the relative importance of different dispersal mechanisms and pathways for branched broomrape, the current restricted distribution of this weed suggests that rapid spread over large distances has not occurred. (NB this may be in large part a consequence of actions conducted under the eradication program.) It is suspected that the most likely means of long distance dispersal is the movement of tillage equipment carrying contaminated soil. This means of dispersal can be managed readily through quarantine measures. However, extreme wind events may move the seeds of this species (which are very small and have a large surface area to weight ratio) considerable distances through wind erosion of soil. This may be minimised by maintaining good ground cover (see point 2). Movement of contaminated fodder (hay and/or grain) is another potential pathway for long distance dispersal, but again can be managed through quarantine measures.

15. Level of confidence that the organism is detectable at very low densities (to enable determination of when eradications is achieved) and that all sites affected by the outbreak of the pest or disease have been, or can be, found Considerable research has been undertaken to determine the probability of detection of branched broomrape when it occurs at specified densities within paddocks of different sizes. Surveyor efficiency is generally relatively high (70%). Approximately 2-3% of paddock area is surveyed on an annual basis where infested paddocks are cropped; the proportion is higher in the pasture phase of the cropping rotation since the potential for branched broomrape emergence under this management regime is both higher and more widely distributed through the paddock. The program has been operating under the assumption that branched broomrape seed will persist for a maximum of 12 years, so that if replenishment of the soil seed bank is prevented consistently over this period, the weed should be eradicated. However, experimental data suggest that viable seed may be present even after 12 years of non detection, with a probability of detection in year 13 of approximately 0.1%. The Program has therefore proposed a regime of follow-up monitoring for paddocks that are released from guarantine. It is acknowledged by the Program that branched broomrape may occur at numbers below the threshold for discovery, implying that population increase would have to occur for the weed to be detected again. There is little doubt that the determination of eradication on a local scale would be difficult under these circumstances.

The eradication program has been underway since 1999, and while the incursion has been largely delimited, new infested paddocks have been detected every year. Detectability can vary considerably between years. During the most recent survey (2010), 21 new infested paddocks were detected, six of which fell outside of the quarantine area. Accessibility of potentially infested sites has never been an issue for this program, in contrast to the situation with many other weed eradication efforts.

16. Surveillance activities that are in place or could be put in place to confirm proof of freedom for sites possibly infested by the outbreak of the pest or disease

See point 15.

17. Community consultation activities undertaken

The level of community consultation undertaken has been very high throughout the course of the eradication program. Customer satisfaction surveys conducted between 2008 and 2010 indicate a high degree (scores > 8/10) of satisfaction with virtually all aspects of the program.

Conclusions on technical feasibility of eradication

The effort to achieve weed eradication comprises the detection effort required to delimit an invasion plus the search and control effort required to prevent reproduction until extirpation occurs over the entire infested area (Panetta 2009). In general, the strongest determinant of the total cost of control is the extent of the area that must be searched; while fewer weeds may have to be controlled as a program advances, the entire area must still be searched repeatedly.

The technical feasibility of eradication of branched broomrape would be considered to be very low on the basis of the large amount of infested area (currently 7535 ha) alone. A number of biological factors (e.g. highly persistent seeds, very short interval between emergence and seed production) and operational factors (e.g. difficulty of gaining consistent control in annual pastures) contribute to the difficulty of eradication of branched broomrape. These factors might be manageable in a relatively small incursion (in the order of several hundred hectares or less), but eradication appears to be unachievable over the area presently infested by branched broomrape.

The Panel concludes that progress towards eradication has been consistent with a well-run and highly professional program. However, given the factors outlined above, it does not believe that eradication remains an achievable objective. The Panel therefore recommends that management of the branched broomrape incursion has a more realistic objective, based on consideration of technical feasibility, the relative benefits, costs and beneficiaries of further coordinated action and on the willingness of major beneficiaries to contribute to ongoing action.

Recommendation 1: That management of the branched broomrape incursion has a more realistic and achievable objective, based on consideration of technical feasibility, the relative benefits, costs and beneficiaries of further coordinated action and on the willingness of major beneficiaries to contribute to ongoing action.

Term of Reference No. 2 *Evaluate future options and objectives including eradication or containment scenarios, and recommend the future management objective.*

Warren and Secomb (2011) considered options available should eradication no longer be considered feasible. These included "aspirational eradication" and "regulated containment". The Panel rejected the use of these terms and reverted to use of terms compatible with those used within the Australian Weeds Strategy. Under the strategy, where eradication is no longer considered feasible, **containment** is often thought to be the next best alternative. The Panel recommends that containment be defined as:

Application of phytosanitary measures (including control of branched broomrape and its hosts) in and around an infested area to prevent spread of branched broomrape.

Option 1 Continued Eradication Program

As discussed under Term of Reference 1, the Panel considers that eradication is no longer a likely outcome of the current program, given that technical feasibility of eradication is low under any likely future funding scenario.

As a result, this option is rejected.

Option 2 Containment Program

A containment strategy for branched broomrape would include sustained voluntary and enforced measures to prevent the spread of the weed from current known infested properties. Quarantine or phytosanitary measures would need to continue to be applied to prevent the movement of contaminated material outside of the containment zone. Properties within this zone would continue to be considered at risk. Production and market access would be protected outside of the zone while significant imposts would remain for properties within. A containment program would need to include continued monitoring of linked sites and continued efforts to ensure delimitation of infested land. A containment program should be a long term commitment on behalf of governments and all stakeholders if it is to maximise benefits. However the degree to which governments are required to fund such a program may be subject to transition and adaptation over time.

The objectives for this option would be to:

- prevent the spread of the target outside of the containment zone;
- confirm and maintain Australia's status of being largely free of branched broomrape; and
- ensure that all jurisdictions treat any additional outbreaks of branched broomrape with the aim of eradication and that branched broomrape remains a pest of quarantine concern that is under official control.

However, the definition adopted does not preclude some extension to the weed's existing range within a successful and continuing containment program. In other words, the objective of containment can have considerable benefits even if some minor extensions to known range become obvious.

It would be expected that prevention of spread would include maintenance of the current quarantine measures, along with further identification and addressing of key risk pathways for spread. Maintaining Australia's status of being largely free of branched broomrape would require all jurisdictions to develop and adopt common standards for active and passive surveillance programs, consistent with the degree of

risk of spread. Such processes already exist for properties in SA and Victoria that are linked to the known infestation. Treatment of any additional outbreaks would require all jurisdictions to have the legislative, operational and policy capacity to implement an eradication program at the earliest stage of detection.

Containment alone has disadvantages because there is no prospect for producers and others within the containment zone to be relieved of the burdens of quarantine. This approach has issues of equity, in that innocent parties are penalised and bear unreasonable costs while other producers outside the containment zone potentially bear no costs and yet benefit from imposition of the quarantine zone. Accordingly, there would be considerable incentive for quarantined producers to ignore the restrictions if they had no prospect of ever being freed from these restrictions. Moreover, our discussions with the major bulk handler of grains in the affected area made it clear that their response would be to source their supplies from elsewhere, thus leaving producers in the quarantine zone with unsaleable, or at least severely downgraded, produce for the foreseeable future.

Option 3 Containment plus Pursuit of Product and Property Branched Broomrape Free Status

The Panel recommends that the option to be pursued is based around containment and the ability to declare products and properties to be free of the weed (**Containment plus Product and Property Free status**).

The objectives for this option would be to:

- prevent the spread of the target outside of the containment zone;
- confirm and maintain Australia's status of being largely free of branched broomrape;
- provide sufficient incentive for producers and properties within the containment area to reduce the level of infestation on their lands while maximising the viability of affected producers; and
- ensure that all jurisdictions treat any additional outbreaks of branched broomrape with the aim of eradication and that branched broomrape remains a pest of quarantine concern that is under official control.

The approaches for containment outlined in Option 2 above would also be expected to be followed in relation to this option, while working to overcome the problems presented for landowners within the containment area. Within the containment area, protocols would need to be developed to enable a property to move to branched broomrape property freedom status within a reasonable period. Similarly, product branched broomrape freedom status protocols would need to be developed for host and non-host produce so that growers within the containment zone can maximise returns and receive sufficient incentive to control and hopefully eradicate branched broomrape from their properties.

This approach would enable minimal intervention outside the current infestation, so that a basic level of auditing could assure buyers and sellers of at-risk produce that produce is sourced from branched broomrape free land and thus should not be subject to further restrictions either within or outside Australia. Within the infestation area, a quality assurance program would need to be put in place by industry for those commodities which may be directly impacted by branched broomrape (e.g. vegetables, potatoes, fodder and canola) or for which the presence of branched broomrape poses a significant market access risk (such as cereals). For the livestock industry, restrictions could be limited to phytosanitary measures before movement of high risk materials (e.g. machinery) and to compliance with control measures enforced by the relevant State or local authority. These measures would apply to all properties in the infestation area. All properties would have the ability to achieve branched broomrape free status, independently audited, which would be taken as evidence of compliance with phytosanitary and weed control requirements. Achievement of property free status should be sufficient incentive (through reducing regulatory burden) for landholders to conduct actions on their properties and thus reduce the total infestation.

This containment approach has no clearly defined endpoint, as ongoing containment as an objective has many advantages over allowing the spread of this weed. However, this should not be construed as a commitment from government funders to continue to support branched broomrape control on a cost-shared basis, especially under the current arrangement which does not include industry funding.

Other options considered

Other options include **regional management** which would seek to limit the spread of the weed. However this option does not manage the risks to trade both within and beyond Australia. Farmers affected would pay fully for control costs and this option would forfeit the value in the program to date. Without the ability to impose quarantine restrictions, the rate of spread would be enhanced, resulting in earlier realisation of the potential costs of branched broomrape infestation. The risks to primary industries from a '**do nothing**' option were considered to be too great for this option to be considered seriously by the Panel.

Recommendation 2: That Containment plus Pursuit of Product and Property BBR Free Status be pursued as the new objective for the branched broomrape in the current quarantine area and throughout all susceptible lands in Australia.

Term of Reference Number 3 *Recommend how progress towards the achievement of this future management objective should be measured and propose 3 to 5 year targets for the program.*

The Panel assumes that eradication will no longer be pursued as the real or nominal objective of any ongoing program. As a result, a shorter term target is required to transition to the new program objective.

Recommendation 3: That by 1 July 2012 a national management plan for branched broomrape be developed and agreed to by all stakeholders. This would enable a smooth transition from the funding currently provided through the national Branched Broomrape Eradication Plan to the new Containment plus Product and Property Free option.

The National Management Plan for Branched Broomrape should include:

- development of market access conditions; protocols for determining propertyand product-free status;
- mechanisms for prevention of spread by machinery;
- a timetable for implementation of such mechanisms;
- protocols for determining area free status across uninfested parts of Australia to assure market access;
- appropriate funding and resourcing mechanisms for implementation.
- surveillance mechanisms for branched broomrape in all potentially affected jurisdictions, which could require government funding.

Recommendation 4: That mechanisms to implement both the containment program and any new funding arrangements required need to be a focus of the currently available funding until June 2012.

Recommendation 5: Assuming the foregoing occurs, the panel recommends that progress by 1 July 2015 be measured by:

- Evidence of compliance with: a) requirements to clean machinery prior to movement from properties containing branched broomrape and b) orders to control in critical infestations, e.g. satellites and those on the periphery of the containment line;
- Evidence of containment plus levels of adoption of property- and product-free status for producers whose marketing is potentially affected by the risk of contamination by branched broomrape;
- The success of the containment approach in limiting branched broomrape infestations to properties within the currently infested area (i.e., as known in 2011);
- Improvements to the infestation status of land within the currently infested area;
- The level of commitment to funding the program by actual and potentially impacted industry sectors.

Term of Reference Number 4 *Evaluate the extent to which stakeholders have changed and currently contribute to the program and identify any changes to the stakeholders who should be investing in the future program.*

Data presented by Biosecurity SA identified four key stakeholder groups within the quarantine area, in total over 1400 businesses, residences or properties (Table 1).

Table 1: Stakeholders with the QA (from presentation to Review Team by Biosecurity SA)

Group	Number
Farmers	485
Life-stylers*	271
Shack owners and residential	670
Government bodies and Others	15
Total	1441

* Biosecurity SA term; refers to hobby farmers/peri-urban sites.

Over the period of the current eradication program, over 7,500 ha of land have been infested within a quarantine area of around 210,000 ha. Recent data (Table 2) have identified an increase in the number of infested situations in 2010.

Table 2: Results from 2010 Surveys (from presentation to Review Team by Biosecurity SA)

Year	Area Surveyed (ha)*	Infested Properties	Infested Paddocks	Increase in Infested Paddocks	Area of Infested paddocks (ha)	Area of Infestation (ha)	Infested Road verges	Infested Road Verges (kms)
2010	349,992	294	814	21	58,381	7,535	67	60

* Quarantine Area (QA) 209,685 ha.

The Panel met with members of the Community Focus Group and the Ministerial Advisory Committee, along with other interested stakeholders, as part of the effort to understand changes in stakeholders within the currently affected area. It was obvious that as new detections were found on new properties, the landowners affected became more engaged and concerned about the impacts of branched broomrape. Growers were keen to see paddocks that become eligible being released from quarantine as soon as possible. A number of farmers, including most of the Focus Group, believed that eradication, with time-bound milestones, was the only option to be pursued and that it was essential that incentives and government funding be maintained. However this was not the universal view and at least one Focus Group member expressed the view of many in the community that their faith in the program achieving eradication had been lost, that not enough had been achieved and that the weed was not a problem in cropping situations.

The view was expressed that while older farmers were prepared to commit to the current program, younger farmers were indifferent to the threat and were not

concerned about having the problem in the district in perpetuity. One of the potato growers present raised the problem of dealing with the weed on non-arable lands and that this cost would have to be borne by government in perpetuity as it was not a cost that growers should be expected to meet. Other growers expressed concern with maintaining market access and market share. There was an increasing realisation among some present that eradication may no longer be feasible and that an alternative approach may be needed.

Survey data have clearly identified agricultural production as a beneficiary of the current program that includes certification of freedom of branched broomrape, which facilitates domestic and international trade. The data indicate that primary production within the QA is mainly horticultural, with over \$90 m of potatoes and onions alone being produced. Although branched broomrape does not host on potatoes or onions, its presence in the quarantine area has created market access issues, especially for potato growers. Animal production exceeds \$50m, with broadacre cropping valued at marginally over \$20m.

There was a general view that the costs imposed by maintaining the current controls in the quarantine area should be borne more widely than just by those affected within the quarantine area. Changes in commodity values within the quarantine area do not show clear linkages with the program, with the value of cereal crops, potatoes, onions and livestock increasing markedly from 2007 until 2010. These changes are probably due to improved seasonal conditions and underlying commodity values rather than to changes in industry sectors due to the eradication program. However, these significant increases do show that stakeholders should have greater incentive to contribute to defeating the threat to market access posed by branched broomrape. Clearly the eradication program has not hindered industry expansion.

In summary, there is continuing support for the aim of eradication among stakeholders in the affected area, although there is a growing realisation that this may be unachievable across all land types and uses. The weed can be well controlled in cropping areas but remains an issue in pastures and in other non-arable areas.

International and Domestic Market Access

Commodity	Number	Unit
Cereal grain	80,747	tonnes
Нау	52,953	Bales
Potatoes	31,288	Bins/tonnes
Onions	10,000	tonnes
Lettuce	940,000	items
Cattle	2,068	head
Sheep	57,902	head
Pigs	30,186	head
Horses	29	head
Goats	79	head

Table 3: 2010 Approved movements out of QA following inspection (From presentation to Review Team by Biosecurity SA)

Machinery	7,587	items
Manure	21	loads
Scrap metal	110	loads
Firewood	125	loads

Although product was approved for movement, there were some inconsistencies.

Viterra, a major grain accumulator and marketer, accepted grain from within the QA for the domestic and international trade. The assurance program run by Biosecurity SA provided the confidence that Viterra required to accept goods.

An AQIS protocol has been established to facilitate trade in potatoes to Korea. It is important to note that the same potatoes cannot be traded to Queensland. Apparently the issues in the latter case relate to a lack of data required by the importing jurisdiction.

Under Australia's membership of WTO, we are a contracting party to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Under IPPC Australia has agreed to protect the world's cultivated and natural plant resources from the spread and introduction of plant pests while minimizing interference with the international movement of goods and people.

One issue that complicates the whole trade issue is that it is virtually impossible to identify contaminated produce through the presence of seed of branched broomrape. Given that trade restrictions relate to the contamination of produce by seed it is conceivable that the only way to facilitate trade is through the current process of ensuring produce is not contaminated during production. Host denial has been a very useful tool in efforts to ensure freedom from contamination. However, inspection can ascertain presence of broomrape vegetative material in certain products (e.g. hay).

A wide range of produce may be contaminated with branched broomrape seed. The risk has been assessed by EconSearch and presented in a report to Biosecurity SA. This indicated that from a market access perspective, the risk was highest for produce such as hay and other forage crops and pasture seed. The primary beneficiary of maintaining trade in these commodities is the livestock industry and producers of the commodities.

	Contamination score ^a	Market reaction score ^b
Barley	2	7
Cereal and legume residues	6	7
Cotton (unprocessed)	4	1
Degreased wool	2	1
Grain sorghum	4	5
Greasy wool	6	1
Hay and chaff	3	9
Live exports (sheep, cattle, goats, etc.)	4	5
Live trees, shrubs, bulbs, etc.	5	5
Maize	3	5
Melons and strawberries (fresh)	4	1
Nuts (fresh or dried)	5	1
Oats	4	7
Oilseeds	4	7
Other animal fibre	2	1
Other cereals	4	7
Other forage products	4	9
Other natural fibres	5	1
Other roots, seeds, etc.	5	5
Other vegetables (fresh or chilled)	6	5
Pasture seed	9	9
Peanuts	4	5
Raw hides and skins	6	1
Rice	1	5
Root vegetables (fresh or chilled)	5	5
Root vegetables (partly processed)	1	1
Spices (seeds, roots, etc.)	5	5
Тоbассо	3	1
Tree and flower seeds	3	1
Vegetables seed	5	7
Vegetative material for brooms, plaiting, etc.	4	1
Wheat	2	7

Table 4: Contamination and market reaction scores by commodity

^a On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represents the lowest likelihood of branched broomrape contamination of a commodity. Contamination scores were assessed on a volumetric basis.

^b On a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represents the lowest of likelihood of quarantine authorities in importing countries requiring an assurance from the exporter and/or AQIS that the product has been inspected for branched broomrape contamination.

Source: EconSearch analysis and PIRSA (pers. comm.).

In a presentation to the review committee, "Directions for Managing Branched Broomrape in South Australia Beyond 2011", Biosecurity SA presented detailed information relating to international market access, namely:

- Exporters must meet both the requirements of the *Export Control Act, 1982* and any importing country quarantine requirements for the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) to provide the necessary documentation to enable products to be exported.
- When requested by an importing country authority, phytosanitary certificates are issued by AQIS to certify that the Australian plants or plant products have been *visually* inspected according to appropriate procedures, and they are considered to be free from quarantine pests, practically free from other injurious pests, and conform to the current phytosanitary regulations of the importing country.
- Additional declarations may also be requested by the importing country to supplement the generic statement attested to on the phytosanitary certificate. An additional declaration provides specific information relating to such matters as freedom from certain weed seeds, a specific disease or pest, or endorsement of a phytosanitary treatment.
- In addition to visual inspection of the consignment, AQIS relies on pest status surveillance activities undertaken by the relevant state departments of primary industry (who have the statutory responsibility for such activities) and/or testing by external laboratories where necessary.
- For AQIS to issue phytosanitary certification, Industry needs to be able to present consignments that meet importing country requirements.
- AQIS' ability to endorse additional declarations regarding area freedom, etc depends on the capacity of the appropriate state departments to conduct surveillance to verify pest status (and to provide this information to AQIS), and external laboratories to provide identification services or other requested analyses.

It was also noted that most countries have a general restriction in their import requirements to prevent the importation of pests. A specific example was given of Japan, that is known not to have *Orobanche* spp. present in the country - "All plants and plant products that serve as hosts of injurious insects or pathogens unknown or of restricted occurrence in Japan; living insects and pathogens; soil and plants with soil, unless these are covered by a special Import Permit (only for experiment and research purposes)".

Some countries have specific prohibitions. Countries with zero tolerance that are identified are China, North Korea, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Iran, USA and Japan. AQIS report that "Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Colombia and China" have prohibitions for branched broomrape or broomrapes.

Some countries, such as India, have had closed prohibited weed seed lists. This, however, is subject to change and the current import conditions to India are reported to no longer require certification of freedom from weed seeds (Pers com Grains Ministerial Task Force)

Others are quite different where they only permit specific species - and all nonapproved spp are considered to be prohibited." (D Ryan, AQIS, pers. comm., 2007)

In discussion with senior management of the bulk grain handler,, Viterra, it was obvious that the company has major concerns with the threat posed by branched broomrape. This company handles the majority of the cereal crops sourced from the quarantine area. It was supportive of the continuation of the current program and raised the prospect of reduced market access and therefore lower prices to growers if there was change to the current situation. However the senior managers also raised the

possibility that the company could refuse to accept produce from contaminated areas as an alternative means of addressing the problem.

Maintenance of the current arrangements would continue to place the full burden of financing stakeholder benefits, apart from government contributions, on the stakeholders within the affected areas. All other stakeholders, principally other commodity producers outside of the contaminated areas, would continue to benefit from whatever controls are in place. There is clearly a need to address the discrepancy between those benefiting from mismanagement of branched broomrape and those bearing the costs. The Panel was not convinced that there were significant stakeholder beneficiaries in the wider community apart from the industry sectors affected. For example, the potential impact on the natural environment is unclear and unquantified.

Recommendation 6: That any ongoing program aimed at containment and assuring market access be funded principally by the affected parties benefiting from this action.

The Panel recognises the complexity of the task of achieving industry funding. A significant proportion of the resources and effort of the current Branched Broomrape Eradication Program will need to be redirected towards meeting this objective over the next 12 months.

There are clearly risk creators that are not necessarily beneficiaries of branched broomrape eradication. For example, local government can spread the weed by moving gravel and other materials from infested areas. Shack holders, life-stylers and residential and peri urban dwellers do not have sufficient economic incentive to control the weed and may exacerbate the problem through lack of control. Those authorities responsible for maintenance of crown land along rivers, state and national parks also need to ensure adequate treatment, as do the private owners of non-arable land.

Recommendation 7: That the South Australian Government ensure that compliance and positive incentives are maintained to minimise the risks posed by non-agricultural stakeholders.

Recommendation 8: That the following steps be followed as part of the transition process:

- Maintain the QA under existing SA legislation
- Transition from an eradication to a containment program, with the aim of moving to national management approach involving all potentially affected stakeholders
- Conduct a thorough beneficiary analysis
- Consult with specific industry /commodity representative bodies
- Engage Plant Health Committee's sub-committee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access Working Group, to identify what data is needed to facilitate domestic market access for goods produced within the QA
- Develop plan to facilitate domestic market access
- Confirm with AQIS export certification requirements for branched broomrape.

Consultation.

- Biosecurity SA and others in PIRSA
- Ministerial Advisory Committee on Branched Broomrape
- Community Focus Group on Branched Broomrape
- DAFF BSG
- Grain Producers Australia
- GRDC
- GrowSA
- Local growers
- Onions Australia
- SAFF Grains Committee
- SAGIT
- University of Adelaide
- Viterra

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Question: 32

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Export of Grain Proof Hansard page:** 64

Senator SIEWERT asked:

Senator SIEWERT: I have one final question. You may not be able to answer it, but the department might be able to. Does anyone keep track of the number of shipments that have had their grain rejected on the basis of quality or have had their routes or destinations changed because of concerns over quality when the wheat has been exported?

Mr Grant: Is this for export destinations?

Senator SIEWERT: Yes.

Mr Grant: I think Biosecurity would keep those sorts of records, but I would have to take that on notice and check with them. We would certainly be aware if a country rejected a shipment.

Senator SIEWERT: Do you keep lists of that?

Mr Grant: Yes, we would, but I am not aware that it occurs very often. As I said, I am happy to take that on notice.

Answer:

No. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's export certification program certifies against phytosanitary requirements, which do not include matters of quality. The department does not keep track of rejections of shipments on the basis of qualitative issues but anecdotal evidence does not lead us to consider these instances are regular.

It is not uncommon for export shipments of various commodities to be re-routed. The department understands that the driver behind decisions to re-route shipments is generally commercial.

Question: 60

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Fruit Fly Freedom Proof Hansard page:** 124

Senator COLBECK asked:

Senator COLBECK: I understand that. But, particularly given that Tasmania is fruit fly free, the issues around the protocol were in relation to the treatment or strategies for fruit fly. What efforts were made to actually manage that process? We are talking about changing the protocols around fruit fly. The state is recognised as being fruit fly free. What efforts were made to actually manage that and discuss that with our trading partners, or is it all left in their hands?

Dr O'Connell: No, our biosecurity area was engaged and our agricultural counsellor, I think, as well. We could give you details of the representations we made, but there was extensive representation. Paul, I wonder if you could—

Mr Ross: Yes, certainly. I guess that is the point. Our biosecurity colleagues were involved in the negotiations around the specifics of the protocol, and certainly we have an ag counsellor based in Bangkok who has been heavily involved in liaising with the Thai authorities over this issue. In terms of the negotiations or consultations with our industry, we primarily work through the peak industry bodies and we take their guidance as to the approach we should take in these things.

Senator COLBECK: I am not sure that answers my questions in relation to the discussions with the Thais.

Ms Evans: Senator, we can take on notice whether there was any opportunity to raise—you are asking was there any way of identifying Tasmania as fruit fly free.

Senator COLBECK: It is identified as fruit fly free.

Ms Evans: Sorry, to have Thailand acknowledge that somehow differently to the way they have before.

Senator COLBECK: Yes.

Ms Evans: We can take on notice the status of the way we have exported the fruit there in the past, whether it is on a country basis or whether there is any capacity for regional differentiation. We would have to take that on notice, I am afraid.

Answer:

Historically, most fruit and vegetables exported to the Kingdom of Thailand from Australia were not subject to specific quarantine conditions, with the exception of potatoes from some mainland production areas and citrus. Horticultural products exported from Tasmania were inspected routinely upon arrival at the port of import.

Question: 60 (continued)

As a consequence of its decision to implement a more rigorous quarantine system, specific import protocols have been/are to be implemented to mitigate the risks arising from those pests of quarantine concern to the Thai Government.

To date, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (DAFF's) submissions and other representations have proven successful. To the extent that fruit fly is a pest of quarantine concern to the Thai government for commodities to be exported to Thailand, each new and/or revised protocol specifically acknowledges Tasmania's status as a fruit fly pest free area. DAFF expects the Thai government to continue to acknowledge the fruit fly free status of Tasmania in negotiations to conclude the few remaining protocols.

Question: 61

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Trade with Thailand Proof Hansard page:** 124

Senator COLBECK asked:

Senator COLBECK: The reality is that there are a number of markets where that status is recognised as part of that process. Did we make the representations to see if that could be taken into account?

Ms Evans: We made a number of representations around the issue and tried to resolve it at the time. Again, I would have to take it on notice to find out whether we specifically raised that as an option.

Dr O'Connell: I think what is clear from our perspective is that the Thai authorities made it clear there would be no further consideration of changes to their protocol until they did the audit. It was made very clear to the industry people, as I understand it, that if the audit did not go ahead there would be the suspension. I think we had gone through quite an extensive and rapid process of trying to make this clear. It is very disappointing and now we are going to have to regain it, but I think nobody was under any illusions as to what was going to occur here.

Senator COLBECK: I respect the fact that Thailand is looking to put protocols in place. We have stringent processes in place ourselves and that is part of the deal, but what I am just trying to get to is what efforts were made in respect of the specifics of that particular case? Can I just move quickly on to—

Dr O'Connell: I think we can provide you with a fairly extensive set of exchanges between—

Senator COLBECK: I would appreciate that, if you can. Thank you.

Dr O'Connell: I am sure we can do that.

Answer:

Negotiations between the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) and the Department of Agriculture of the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand commenced shortly after the Thai Government announced its intention to reform its biosecurity system in 2006. Negotiations have progressed on a commodity by commodity basis, commencing with those representing the highest values in trade.

In the six years since the Thai Government signalled its intention to reform its quarantine procedures, the Australian Government, in consultation with Australian horticultural

Question: 61 (continued)

industries, has actively pursued its objectives through representations to:

- confirm the scope of the reforms
- identify those commodities in trade that Australia would/could pursue under the terms of the procedures implemented by the Thai Government
- present technical documentation in support of our preferred objectives
- negotiate the terms of each in-field audit to be undertaken by the Thai Government
- directly articulate Australian interests through meetings between the Counsellor (Agriculture) in Bangkok and the Thai Government and through meetings between officials and the representative of the Thai Government in its embassy in Canberra
- pursue our interests through annual technical bilateral meetings with the officials of the Thai Government
- submit additional correspondence addressing aspects of each draft of each protocol proposed by the Thai Government
- record Australian concerns upon the completion of each protocol (with the agreement of each industry) and request additional changes to the protocols to improve them technically and commercially.

Correspondence and representations between DAFF, Australian industry and Thailand has been extensive, particularly in the last year.

Through these representations, DAFF has consistently maintained that Tasmania (and the Sunraysia, the Riverland and the Riverina fruit fly pest free areas) should be acknowledged by the Thai Government as free of fruit flies of quarantine concern.

Question: 71

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic:** Closer Economic Agreement with New Zealand Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator XENOPHON asked:

- 1. In response to my question on notice from last estimates, the department provided information about the terms of the Closer Economic Agreement with New Zealand. Can the department provide me of any examples where Australia has refused New Zealand products under Article 18 of the CER and New Zealand has accepted this?
 - a. If not, does this show that Article 18 needs to be reviewed?
 - b. If so, how did the fire blight situation differ?
 - c. Essentially, what is the point of Article 18 if New Zealand can simply appeal to the WTO?
- 2. In the same vein, has New Zealand ever refused Australian goods under Article 18?
- 3. How did Australia react?

Answer:

- Three recent examples include the imposition of restrictions on the trade of kiwi-fruit stock; tomatoes; and fresh pork from New Zealand.
 a. NA.
 - b. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) conducted a risk assessment to determine whether quarantine measures were justified and what those measures should be. The risk assessment, which considered the most up to date research available, and which included a 60 day stakeholder comment period, concluded that with the measures applied to New Zealand apples as set out in chapter five of the Final report for the non-regulated analysis of existing policy for apples from New Zealand, apples could enter Australia, and that these measures managed the risk of a fire blight incursion through regulated trade.
 - c. The Closer Economic Relations (CER) acknowledges that the parties have obligations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (which preceded the World Trade Organisation), with the preamble stating: Conscious of their rights and obligations under the GATT other multilateral and bilateral trade agreements and under bilateral arrangements with developing countries of the South Pacific region.
- 2. Similar to Australia, New Zealand does not currently permit the import of various commodities from Australia and imposes quarantine conditions (measures) on other imports.

Question: 71 (continued)

3. DAFF is in frequent dialogue with its trading partners, including New Zealand, to improve the circumstances under which Australian food exporters can export product.

Question: 119

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic:** Changes to Import Conditions for Importing Oak (Quercus), Ash (Fraxinus), Nothofagus and Acacia timber and Timber Mouldings Proof Hansard page: Written

Senator EDWARDS asked:

- 1. Was there any consultation with industry prior to the changes to Import Condition C19146 Timber and Timber Mouldings / Oak (Quercus) effective from 4.4.11?
- 2. When was industry notified of the changes to Import Condition C19146?a. Who did the department specifically notify in relation to Import Condition C19146?
 - b. Did the department meet with any industry stakeholders around Import Condition C19146?
 - c. Were there requests from industry to meet with the department?
- 3. What was the response the department received from industry?
- 4. Was there ever a report provided from industry?
- 5. Did industry provide any alternatives to the changes AQIS made to Import Condition C19146?
- 6. What was the department's response to industry's feedback on these alternatives?
- 7. Was there increased monitoring associated with Import Condition C19146
- 8. Can you provide a timeline of events from the time AQIS decided that changes were required for Import Condition C19146 up to the time the changes were active and implemented?
- 9. Has there been feedback or representations from industry since Import Condition C19146 was changed in 2011?
- 10. What were the representations?
- 11. Who were they from?
- 12. What was the DAFF's response?
- 13. If there were issues raised by industry have they been resolved? If so, how?
- 14. Please explain why Import Condition C19146 requires treatment at 74 degrees Celsius for 60 minutes while Import Condition C5305 allows treatment at 60 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes under an approved import permit.
- 15. Import Conditions C19146 and C5305 are not consistent with each other. Has Biosecurity/AQIS considered amending these import conditions in order to rectify this inconsistency?
- 16. If not, why not? Would Biosecurity be open to consulting industry on this issue?
- 17. Do you intend to revisit or review these changes at any time?
- 18. What is AQIS/Bio-security's policy/procedure for industry consultation/notification when it changes an Import Condition?

Question: 119 (continued)

Answer:

Questions 1-6, 8 and 18

A Notice to Industry was published in January 2011 which allowed importers three months to consider and provide comment on the proposed changes to the import conditions for acacia, ash, beech and oak (C19146). The changes took effect on 4 April 2011.

Industry notices are published on the public website. During 2011 all Industry Notices were also forwarded to the Australian Quarantine Inspection Services Industry Cargo Consultative Committee (AICCC) Secretariat who was contracted by the department to independently co-ordinate consultation with importers.

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) did not receive feedback from industry during the three month consultation period.

Timber with correctly certified documentation has been subject to random surveillance since the implementation of C19146.

- 7. Importers were required to meet increased treatment measures after 4 April 2011. Timber with correctly certified documentation has been subject to random surveillance since the implementation of C19146.
- 9-11. Since the changes were made in April 2011 DAFF has received comments from A. P. Johns cooperage and its broker about implementation issues. A. P Johns has provided a written summary of the heat treatment the oak would be subject to during barrel manufacture in Australia.
- 12-13. DAFF permitted one consignment to be imported under the historic conditions for oak in May 2011. DAFF commenced a review of timber import conditions in September 2011.

DAFF is also reviewing the manufacturing processes of A. P Johns to determine whether the biosecurity risks are addressed by these processes.

14-17. The 74°C for 60 minute heat treatment in C19146 applies to roundwood and rough sawn timber and is a treatment known to address fungal pathogen and insect risks.

The 56°C for 30 minutes referred to in C5305 is for used wine barrels, with a different biosecurity risk to sawn timber.

Question: 119 (continued)

In December 2010, DAFF assessed additional information relating to Oak Wine Barrels. This information was supplied by scientists, experts in new oak barrels in the country of origin, in support of area freedom certification from chestnut blight. Import permit conditions for new oak barrels were revised accordingly.

In September 2011, a review of the import conditions for all sawn timber and timber mouldings commenced. This review will take into account the specific pathway of oak timber from the USA and France and the need for the 74°C for 60 minutes. DAFF is consulting with timber importers, including representatives of the wine industry.

Question: 133

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Dimethoate Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator HEFFERNAN asked:

- 1. Has the banning of certain dimethoate uses had an impact on our exports?
- 2. Will the banning of dimethoate impact on Australia's ability to export to the Heinz factory that has been moved from Girgarre Victoria to New Zealand.

Answer:

- 1. The export of tomatoes and capsicums to New Zealand and some Pacific Island countries relied upon a post harvest dimethoate treatment. Without that treatment option, Australia is unable to meet importing country requirements and exports have therefore ceased pending the negotiation of new treatment options.. Exports of other commodities, including cucumber, zucchini and button squash, have been affected, with the export season now restricted to May–August.
- 2. New Zealand's import conditions do not differentiate between tomatoes for consumption and tomatoes for processing. Until a new quarantine treatment is accepted by the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, no exports of tomatoes from Australia to New Zealand can occur.

Question: 134

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: New Zealand Apples Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator HEFFERNAN asked:

- 1. Provide an update on the number and size of apple consignments that have been approved or imported to Australia?
- 2. Provide an update on the number of apple consignments that have been rejected for importation to Australia, the size of the rejected consignments and the reason for rejection.
- 3. What remedial action has been done since initial rejections?
- 4. A staff member was quoted in New Zealand as saying that consignments are rejected all the time for different import items. Is this the case?
- 5. What are the 10 import permits that have triggered the most rejections in the last 12 months?
- 6. What were the reasons for the rejections and what remedial action was taken after the rejections?

Answer:

- 1-3. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Biosecurity undertook 13 inspections on fresh apples (covering 1401 cartons or 22 668 kg) in New Zealand in August/September 2011.
 - Ten inspection lots (totalling 1121 cartons or 17 638 kg) passed offshore inspection with no quarantine issues detected.
 - Three inspection lots (totalling 280 cartons or 5030 kg) were rejected due to detection of: (1) a single live apple leaf curling midge (ALCM) and leaf trash; (2) a live ALCM; and (3) a small piece of leaf trash.
 - These three lots did not leave New Zealand.

In total, Australia has received 1013 cartons or 15 818 kg of fresh apples from New Zealand.

Since the initial import season in 2011, DAFF has reviewed the season's findings and in preparation for 2012 has audited the processes in New Zealand to ensure the system complies with Australia's import requirements.

Question: 134 (continued)

- 4. The department is not in a position to comment on an alleged quote without a quote and a reference.
- 5. It is not possible to link a specific import permit to data on rejections of fresh produce.
- 6. Imports of plant-based commodities have been rejected for reasons including the presence of pests of quarantine concern for Australia. If possible, DAFF Biosecurity offers a suitable remedial treatment, or requires re-export or destruction of the consignment.

Question: 135

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic:** AAO Certificates **Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator HEFFERNAN asked:

- 1. When were the changes made from the old AA certificate to the new AAO?
- 2. How was this changes publicised?
- 3. Is there an information pack available as to how to conduct the change from the old system to the new?
- 4. What advice does AQIS give to companies to help transition into the new system?
- 5. Is it advisable for companies to wait until the new system is in place rather than doing the full AA in the old system?
- 6. Are companies able to operate under the old AA system ad finitum?
- 7. Can the Process Management System be changed from 01/11/2011? If not, what is the ramifications of this and was this made clear to companies?
- 8. Why can't the PMS be changed under the new system?

Answer:

- 1. The *Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Order 2011* came into effect on 1 October 2011 and removed provisions relating to Approved Arrangements (AA). Existing AAs are able to be maintained through section 50 Transitional Provision.
- 2. The *Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Order 2011* were published on Comlaw. In addition the Grain and Seed Export Program conducted a series of industry workshops where included detail of the transition from AA to AQIS Authorised Officer (AAO). Information regarding the workshops is available at www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/plants-plant-products/ian/11/2011-49.
- 3/4. Information about how to become an AAO, including an information pack, is available from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Plant Exports website at www.daff.gov.au/aqis/export/plants-plant-products/aao.

DAFF has provided detailed information on its website and has been working with individual companies to progress AAO applicants through the stages of application processing, eLearning and on-the-job training to attain the compentency assessments. Once an applicant successfully completes the competency assessment, the individual signs a deed of obligation and following this they are legally appointed as an Authorised Officer.

5. The operating environment, including transitional arrangements, has been in place since 1 January 2012. Individual business decisions are a matter for individual businesses.

Question: 135 (continued)

- 6. Under s50 of *the Export Control (Plants and Plant Products) Order 2011*, if a person was an approved inspector under an approved arrangement under the repealed orders the arrangement continues to operate on its terms and the person is taken to be an authorised officer, with the same powers and in the same circumstances as the approved inspector until the arrangement ceases. Under s50 AAs can continue until the arrangement expires.
- 7. Amendments to Process Management Systems are being assessed on a case-by-case basis and take into consideration if a person was an approved inspector in an approved arrangement, under the repealed orders, and if the arrangement continues to operate on its terms and in the same circumstances.
- 8. Please refer to the answer to Question 6.

Question: 182

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Dimethoate Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

- 1. Has the banning of certain uses of dimethoate had an impact on exports from Australia?
- 2. Will the banning of dimethoate impact on Australia's ability to export processing tomatoes to New Zealand?

Answer:

- 1. This is a duplicate of a question on notice asked by Senator Heffernan. Please refer to the answer to QoN 133 Biosecurity Plant Division from the Additional Estimates hearings in February 2012.
- 2. Please refer to the response to Question 1.

Question: 189

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: New Zealand Apples Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

1. Provide an update on apple trade date from New Zealand from when importation commenced to the current date – including import tonnages and the number of rejections.

Answer:

2. Please refer to the answer to QoN 134 Biosecurity – Plant Division from the Additional Estimates hearing in February 2012.

Question: 190

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Apple Imports from China Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

- 1. APAL were promised information about apple imports from China "when the last consignment comes in". Please provide this information.
- 2. If the "last consignment" has not yet been received, advise when this is expected and when the data will be available.

Answer:

- The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) undertook to provide import statistics to Apple & Pear Australia Limited (APAL) at the end of the season. The 2011–12 apple season has effectively finished and as of 5 March a total of 13 shipments (225 tonnes) of fresh Chinese apples were imported. A DAFF Biosecurity officer inspected all apples lots in China and there were no rejections.
- 2. The above information has been provided to APAL on 5 March 2012.

Question: 192

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Exporter Fund on New Markets Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

- 1. How is the government funding the opening of new markets Minister Ludwig talked about in the Potatoes Australia article December / January 2011?
- 2. Is this through the funds collected from exporters?

Answer:

- 1. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, in close consultation with the Australian horticultural exporter representatives, maintains and builds market access by removing impediments to trade, monitoring developments in trade policy and addressing market access issues with our trading partners.
- 2. These activities are principally funded from appropriation. From time to time staff from cost recovered export programs provide advice into market access negotiations, but this represents only a small proportion of the total costs of opening new markets.

Question: 195

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Horticultural MTF Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

- 1. Given the Horticultural MTF had not met for 6 months, what was the urgency of calling a meeting just before Christmas?
- 2. How many MTF members attended the December 2011 meeting?
- 3. What decisions were reached at that meeting?
- 4. Has a new fee model for horticulture been signed off?

Answer:

1. The industry co-chair on behalf of the Horticulture Ministerial Taskforce members withdrew from the scheduled teleconference on 21 July 2011 and refused to commit to an alternative meeting date to progress new fees and charges.

The Australian Government has been committed to progressing reform to the delivery of horticulture export certification services which require the goodwill of the industry and the government.

- 2. Two, a representative from the citrus industry and the Nursery and Garden Industry Association.
- 3. No decisions were made.
- 4. No.

Question: 196

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Kiwi Canker Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator COLBECK asked:

- 1. QON 179 October 2011 asked how the department could be confident that simply asking people if they had been on farms in the last 30 days was considered sufficient check to protect Australia from Kiwi canker. The answer was insufficient. Explain how the department can be confident that the current quarantine checks taking place on entry to Australia are sufficient, given the often very cursory questioning of incoming passengers who have declared that they have been on a farm or rural area outside Australia in the previous 30 days?
- 2. What is the point of asking this question? What actions flow from it? For example, how should inspectors react if someone has been on a kiwi fruit or even apple orchard in NZ in the last 30 days?
- 3. A staff member was quoted in New Zealand as saying that consignments are rejected all the time for different import items. Is this the case?

Answer:

1. QoN 179 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing in October 2011, from this committee, implies that the incoming passenger card is the only tool at the disposal of the Australian Government to limit the spread of kiwi fruit canker. The response to QoN 179 from the Supplementary Budget Estimates hearing in October 2011 is appropriate.

The question on the Incoming Passenger Card (IPC) is only one tool used by the department to determine the level of screening for incoming passengers.

- 2. The questions on the IPC, including the farm question, are used to identify passengers who may require an increased level of assessment. These passengers are directed to a biosecurity officer, who will question passengers to further assess the level of risk and determine the appropriate risk mitigation action. These include inspection, seizure, release and/or treatment of the quarantine article, depending on the nature of the risks. If a passenger declares to have been on a farm, officers should ensure no products, such as fruit, cuttings or equipment, are being imported in contravention of import requirements. Where equipment, including footwear, is being carried and has not been cleaned by the passenger, the officer will inspect the items and where contamination is detected, will order or perform an appropriate treatment.
- 3. It is difficult to comment on an alleged quote without an exact quote and source.

Question: 231

Division/Agency: Biosecurity – Plant Division **Topic: Imports of Bananas Proof Hansard page:** Written

Senator BOSWELL asked:

Has there been any application for the importation of Bananas?

Answer:

No.