



REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA'S QUARANTINE AND BIOSECURITY ARRANGEMENTS - REPORT AND AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

On 19 February 2008, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Tony Burke MP announced a comprehensive, independent review of Australia's quarantine and biosecurity arrangements.

This review included, but was not limited to, a wide-ranging assessment of the functions of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service and Biosecurity Australia. The review was undertaken by an independent panel of experts chaired by Mr. Roger Beale AO, a Senior Associate with the Allen Consulting Group. Mr. Beale was joined on the panel by Dr Jeff Fairbrother AM, Mr. Andrew Inglis AM and Mr. David Trebeck.

On 30 September 2008, Mr. Beale provided the panel's report - **One Biosecurity: a working partnership**, to the Minister.

On 18 December 2008, the Federal Government's Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Tony Burke released the detailed report by an expert panel chaired by Roger Beale AO, **One Biosecurity: A Working Partnership**.

The report makes 84 recommendations which represent the biggest reforms to our biosecurity system in more than a century.

Key recommendations include:

- Establish a new national authority which brings together the major functions of Biosecurity Australia; the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service and parts of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Establish a new biosecurity standards commission to assess the biosecurity risk of imports, with greater emphasis on risks to human health and the environment
- Develop new biosecurity legislation to replace the Quarantine Act which is a century old
- Appoint an Inspector-General of Biosecurity with broad powers to audit and investigate the Authority's work
- Establish a new council of experts to advise government
- States, territories, industry and the Commonwealth must coordinate better to monitor biosecurity after goods and people enter the country, not just at the border

The panel also recommends an increase in funding and substantial information technology upgrades.

It held 170 meetings with domestic and international stakeholders and received more than 200 submissions.

Mr. Burke said the Federal Government had accepted all 84 recommendations in-principle, but more consultation was needed on how to implement the findings and fund the reforms.

Interim administrative arrangements will take effect from 1 July 2009.

The panel's report and the Federal Government's preliminary response can be accessed from <http://www.daff.gov.au/about/publications/quarantine-biosecurity-report-and-preliminary-response>. Alternatively, if you would like a hard copy of the report, please contact the Quarantine and Biosecurity Policy Unit on free call 1800 196 192 or email biosecurityreform@daff.gov.au.