



Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

**PRIMARY**

**INDUSTRIES**

**MINISTERIAL**

**COUNCIL**

**Record and Resolutions**

**Second Meeting  
Sydney  
10 October 2002**

**RECORD AND RESOLUTIONS**

**OF THE**

**PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL  
COUNCIL**

**SECOND MEETING**

**SYDNEY, 10 OCTOBER 2002**

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ISSN 1446-6031

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**PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**SECOND MEETING**

**SYDNEY, 10 OCTOBER 2002**

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**PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**SECOND MEETING**

**SYDNEY, 10 OCTOBER 2002**

**COUNCIL PARTICIPANTS**

The Hon Warren Truss MP (Chairman)	Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Senator The Hon Ian Macdonald	Minister for Forestry and Conservation
The Hon Richard Amery MP	Minister for Agriculture New South Wales
The Hon Henry Palaszczuk MP	Minister for Primary Industries & Rural Communities Queensland
The Hon Kim Chance MLC	Minister for Agriculture Western Australia
The Hon Paul Holloway MP	Minister for Agriculture, Food & Fisheries South Australia
The Hon John Hill MP	Minister for Environment & Conservation South Australia
The Hon Bryan Green MHA	Minister for Primary Industries, Water & Environment Tasmania
The Hon Paul Lennon MHA	Deputy Premier, Minister for Economic Development, Energy & Resources Tasmania
Mr Bill Wood MLA	Minister for Urban Services Australian Capital Territory
The Hon Damien O'Connor MP (representing The Hon Jim Sutton MP)	Associate Minister of Agriculture New Zealand

**OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE**

[\*Denotes member of the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC)]

**Commonwealth**

Mr Michael Taylor\* Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - Australia

Mr Geoff Gorrie

Mr Mike Macnamara

Dr Gardner Murray

Mr Tim Roseby

Mr Bernard Wonder

**Secretariat**

Mr Phil Lansdown

Ms Judi Lilley

Ms Debra Robertson

Dr John Zillman AO\*

Bureau of Meteorology

Mr Neil Plummer

Mr Bruce Stewart

**New South Wales**

Dr Richard Sheldrake\*

NSW Agriculture

Dr Mike Curll

Mr Don Hayman

Mr Steve Dunn\*

NSW Fisheries

**Victoria**

Ms Chloe Munro\*

Department of Natural Resources &amp;

Dr John Galvin

Environment

Dr Bruce Kefford

**Queensland**

Dr Warren Hoey\*

Department of Primary Industries

Mr John Pollock

**Western Australia**

Dr Graeme Robertson\*

Department of Agriculture

Dr Paul Biggs\*

Forest Products Commission

**South Australia**

Mr Jim Hallion\*

Primary Industries and Resources SA

Mr Barry Windle

Mr Robert Freeman

Department of Water, Land &amp; Biodiversity

Mr Peter O'Neill

Conservation

Mr Roger Wickes

**Tasmania**

Mr Kim Evans\*

Department of Primary Industries, Water and

Mr John Pauley

Environment

Mr Mark Addis\*

Department of Infrastructure, Energy and

Mr Andrew Blakesley

Resources

**Northern Territory**

Mr Roger Smith\*

Department of Business, Industry & Resource  
Development

**Australian Capital Territory**

Dr Maxine Cooper

Environment ACT

**New Zealand**

Mr David Allen

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

**PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**SECOND MEETING**

**SYDNEY, 10 OCTOBER 2002**

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**PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

**SECOND MEETING**

**SYDNEY, 10 OCTOBER 2002**

**CHAIRMAN'S OPENING COMMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Ministers to the second meeting of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council.

Apologies were noted from:

- . The Hon Kim Yeadon, MP for New South Wales;
- . The Hon Keith Hamilton, MP for Victoria;
- . The Hon Paul Henderson, MLA for the Northern Territory; and
- . The Hon Jim Sutton, MP Minister for Agriculture, New Zealand

The Chair welcomed the new member from Tasmania – The Hon Bryan Green MHA and the Hon Damien O'Connor, New Zealand Associate Minister of Agriculture.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.1</b>

## INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL TRADE – RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

1. Council was informed of significant developments which have taken place since the last update to Council in May 2002 on international agricultural trade matters.

### BACKGROUND

2. A number of recent international agricultural trade policy developments are important for world agriculture and Australian export interests. These include a recent and ambitious negotiating proposal put forward by the US in the WTO agriculture negotiations, the passage of US Trade Promotion Authority and the European Commission's proposals for the mid term review of aspects of EU farm policy. The outcome of current WTO dispute settlement actions against Canadian dairy export subsidies and Japan's phytosanitary measures on apples could also prove to be important.

### DISCUSSION

3. From an Australian and Cairns Group perspective, the WTO agriculture negotiations have received a fillip with the recent passage of US Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) and the tabling of an ambitious US negotiating proposal for global agricultural trade reform. Both developments should help to restore US credibility in the agriculture negotiations that had been seriously undermined by the new US Farm Bill. The success of the agriculture negotiations will be dependant on strong US leadership and close coordination with the Cairns Group — as was the case with the Uruguay Round and the launch of the Doha round.
4. The passage of TPA is important because it provides a stronger mandate for the Bush Administration to negotiate on bilateral and multilateral trade issues relatively unhindered by Congress. The US WTO negotiating proposal has called for all agricultural tariffs to be reduced to 25% or less over five years starting from 2006 and for the elimination of export subsidies over the same period. The US also proposed placing a ceiling on WTO member's trade and production-distorting domestic support equivalent to 5% of the value of their agricultural production. These WTO proposals, if adopted, would go a long way to removing some of the major distortions in world trade and place strong pressure in particular on the agricultural policies of the EU and Japan.
5. However, wide differences in positions between the major players continue to be a feature of the recent agriculture negotiating sessions in Geneva. Japan for example, has

even been trying to roll back market access gains from the Uruguay Round while the EU is adopting a minimalist approach and trying to link any concessions it needs to make to non-trade concerns. The EU for example, is offering to increase market access on the condition that third country imports meet EU animal welfare standards (probably through compulsory labelling).

6. Based on the agreed work program, trade negotiators have only six to seven months left to meet the tight deadlines set at Doha. When negotiations re-commence in September, after the northern summer break, Australia is looking for strong evidence that the new developments in international trade will translate into meaningful progress in the negotiations.
7. The CAP Agenda 2000 mid term review (MTR) proposals put forward by the European Commission on 10 July are light at the end of the tunnel. For the first time the Commission appears to have seriously acknowledged that EU agricultural policies have detrimental effects on domestic and international markets as well as the environment.
8. Australia welcomes any move to decouple support from production and is pleased with the proposed shift of funding from direct payments towards more targeted and efficient rural development programs. If adopted, this move could have significant implications for the EU's ability to negotiate domestic support disciplines in the WTO.
9. Nevertheless, support provided to farmers in the EU would remain high whilst the MTR makes no mention of market access. The linkages being made in the proposal between subsidies and animal welfare, food safety and quality standards also sound alarm bells. The EU is already seeking to use such non-trade concerns to justify continued high levels of support to agriculture in the WTO negotiations.
10. WTO dispute settlement actions remain an important part of Australia's agricultural trade agenda as dispute outcomes will generally have an influence on how specific WTO rules and obligations in the Agriculture and SPS Agreements are interpreted. Australia is a third party in both the current dispute actions being taken against Canadian dairy export subsidies and Japan's quarantine measures to protect apples from fire blight.
11. Agriculture Ministers from Quint countries (Australia, US, Canada, EU and Japan) met in Nara, Japan 25-27 July. The importance of progressing the Doha negotiations and meeting the tight deadlines was a key focus of the meeting. Australia's Minister Truss led a discussion on non-trade concerns, stressing the need to address these using 'green box' policies. The US introduced its new WTO negotiating proposals. Quint was useful in establishing good working relationships between key Ministers. Australia will host the next Quint in 2003.
12. Complimenting WTO processes, the Government is continuing to pursue a number of bilateral free trade-related initiatives with a range of trading partners. Negotiations on a comprehensive FTA with Singapore are at an advanced stage and agreement has recently been reached with Thailand to commence negotiations for a Closer Economic Relations Agreement and with Japan to explore all options for deepening economic linkages. The passage of US Trade Promotion Authority also means that the way should now be open for Australia and the US to agree to commence negotiations on a FTA in the near future.

13. Minister Truss also informed Ministers of the World Food Summit held in Rome in June 2002 which brought together one of the largest group of delegations to look at progress. Many delegates raised their concerns about protectionism in agriculture and the way in which it was inhibiting the development of their economies.

## **RESOLUTION**

14. Council **NOTED** recent international agricultural trade developments and that the combination of the passage of US Trade Promotion Authority, the European Commission's mid term review proposal and an ambitious new US negotiating proposal put forward in the WTO agriculture negotiations have added a new dynamic to the environment for these negotiations.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.2</b>

### CLIMATIC CONDITIONS AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. Council was advised of new measures for Exceptional Circumstances and current climatic conditions, El Niño and drought outlook.

#### BACKGROUND

##### EC Reform Progress

2. A SCARM working group of State and Commonwealth officials, and a member with expertise in the banking sector, prepared an Interim Report for ARMCANZ 21 (August 2001) outlining a framework for a new EC policy consistent with the principles agreed at ARMCANZ 19 (March 2001).
3. At ARMCANZ 21, Council agreed in principle to implementation of EC buffer zones and the use of predictive data in the EC assessment process (ARMCANZ 21 Resolution 1J), noting that agreement on a new EC policy framework is linked to the resolution of policy and funding issues, particularly for EC farm business support. The Working Group re-convened in September 2001 and February 2002 to progress development of the proposed EC framework.
4. At the PIMC meeting on 2 May 2002, Council:
  - (a) agreed-in-principle to selected elements of the EC framework developed by Commonwealth and State officials but recognised that further negotiation was needed to finalise the detail of the elements;
  - (b) did not agree to 50:50 Commonwealth-State funding of EC business support;
  - (c) agreed that the Commonwealth be fully responsible for the provision of EC welfare support;
  - (d) noted the Commonwealth's position that the elements of the EC framework agreed in-principle at (a) were conditional on agreement to 50:50 Commonwealth-State funding of EC business support;
  - (e) agreed that the Chairman and individual Ministers write to State/Territory Treasurers to seek an agreed package; and
  - (f) noted the Commonwealth will review Interest Rate Subsidies (IRS) as a form of farm business support.
5. The Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry wrote to the Treasurers of all States and the Northern Territory on 29 May 2002 concerning EC Reform, and wrote in similar

terms to all State Ministers for agriculture on 6 June 2002 and again on 29 August 2002 seeking agreement to the EC reform framework.

6. On 30 August 2002, Agriculture Ministers in all States and Territories wrote to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry supporting the implementation of the EC reform package but rejecting joint funding of business support. The States do, however, support the proposed changes to farm business support provision.

#### **New Commonwealth support measures**

7. On 19 September 2002, the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry announced significant new measures for EC. The measures include six months of welfare support being available to farmers as soon as it is accepted that a *prima facie* case has been made for EC declaration and the use of predictive modelling, where appropriate, enabling applications to be considered sooner.
8. These new measures will be subject to the relevant State having declared drought and provided substantial State support to affected farmers.
9. The Commonwealth has sought 50/50 funding of business support measures, but this has been rejected by the States. The Commonwealth is now proposing that business support be provided once EC has been declared and that the funding for this measure would remain at 90 percent Commonwealth and 10 percent States/Territories in the first year, with the Commonwealth and States/Territories matching funding for the second, and any subsequent year of EC in that area within the next five years.

#### **DISCUSSION**

10. In the light of the worsening climatic conditions, the Commonwealth has endeavoured to make the current system more accessible to farmers.
11. The Commonwealth also remains committed to reform of EC policy and believes that, without joint funding of business support measures, implementing reform is unworkable. It has taken steps to reduce the impost on the States and as an incentive to States and Northern Territory to meet the requirements of reform.
12. The position of the Commonwealth is that, until agreement on the proposed funding contribution can be reached, it is not prepared to fully implement the planned reforms, as it believes this would undermine the policy's intention for States to assume significant responsibility, consistent with the level of participation in the application and assessment processes.
13. It was proposed the Interest Rate Subsidy Review be deferred until EC policy is resolved.

#### **Current climatic conditions and El Niño and drought outlook**

19. Dr John Zillman, Director of Meteorology, gave a presentation to Ministers on the current climatic conditions and outlook together with diagrammatic charts.

20. Dr Zillman advised Ministers that experience from past El Niño events and the output from international computer models suggest that the present El Niño event is likely to continue into early next year. The Bureau's statistically computed *probability* of below median (normal) rainfall for the November-January period, based on recent and current global sea surface temperature pattern, suggests that the odds favour drier than average conditions in Victoria, southeastern South Australia, and most of NSW and southeast Queensland, and wetter than average conditions over much of the north and west. For the same period, the odds also favour warmer than average conditions across most of the north and east of the country, especially in the northeast. Dr Zillman stressed the broadscale and probabilistic nature of these outlooks and reminded Ministers that individual rain producing systems can be expected to alleviate the rainfall deficiencies in some areas.

### **Further discussion on Exceptional Circumstances**

21. With regard to EC applications from the States and Territories, the Chair emphasised that it was important that when presented, the application should contain the necessary information and demonstrates a prima facie case. It is necessary for all applications that the State first declare drought and provide new assistance that is not normally available.
22. For those States that do not declare drought, the Chair advised that he would be prepared to seek approval from the Federal Cabinet to waive this requirement. The relevant State would need to demonstrate that it is providing benefits for a prescribed period of time on the basis that the specified area is in drought.
23. New South Wales sought a definition of substantial assistance but felt that this could be dealt with at officials level.
24. Ministers indicated their support for the EC measures announced in September which includes fast-tracking of applications through the use of predictive modelling and the availability of interim income assistance for areas that have demonstrated a prima facie case for EC.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

25. Council:
- (a) **AGREED-IN-PRINCIPLE** with elements of the new reform package;
  - (b) **AGREED** that the Chair would write to all State and Territory Ministers outlining the new EC reform package for their consideration; and
  - (c) **NOTED** the report on the current climatic conditions and outlook.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.3</b>

### FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

1. Following the completion of a full-scale simulation (Exercise Minotaur) to test Australia's national arrangements for managing post-border aspects (preparedness, response and recovery) of a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak, a number of preliminary key findings have emerged. Council agreement was sought to progress various issues critical to improved prevention, preparedness and response to major animal diseases such as FMD.

#### BACKGROUND

2. In mid 2001, COAG requested that a full-scale simulation under third party oversight be held to test Australia's national arrangements for managing post-border aspects (preparedness, response and recovery) of an FMD outbreak. The simulation (Exercise Minotaur) was held in the week of 9 September 2002 and had seven key objectives:
  - the integration of national arrangements (both intra- and inter-jurisdictional);
  - administrative arrangements in support of operations;
  - the capacity and capability of resources for managing an FMD outbreak and its consequences;
  - the logistics arrangements;
  - communication;
  - disease control policies and strategies as described in AUSVETPLAN;
  - trade management arrangements; and
  - socioeconomic relief and recovery strategies and processes.
3. A draft application for FMD freedom for certain zones in Australia was also prepared in conjunction with Minotaur. The objectives were to test Australia's ability to prepare a nationally coordinated zoning application and respond to trading partner examination and resultant querying of our application.
4. Over 1000 people in Commonwealth, State, Territory and local governments and industry participated in Minotaur. Overseas observers attended from Canada, USA, UK, New Zealand and Malaysia (representing the OIE).

## **DISCUSSION**

5. Exercise Minotaur was successfully completed and met the objectives set. There was serious engagement from participants in all levels of government and in industry and all participants gained from the exercise. The international observers provided a valuable perspective and were very supportive of the exercise which they consider has set a new international benchmark for such events. Overseas countries are interested in the outcomes and this will principally be covered through reports to OIE.
6. Many lessons will be learned from Minotaur and these are being documented in the various reports that are being prepared. This is a critical phase of the Exercise and it is important that this be as comprehensive as possible to enable considered decisions to be made. While a number of key issues are already apparent (see below), it is essential that the outcomes are acted upon as soon as possible by all jurisdictions so that Australia's preparedness for major animal diseases, such as FMD, is at the highest possible level.

### **Communications and information management**

7. The exercise demonstrated scope for improving the existing, publicly available communications systems, particularly the capability to rapidly transfer information for decision-making (timing of transmission and capability to download). Other important weaknesses revealed were capability to rapidly transmit a significant volume of information to all parties involved so that people were well informed about the facts (and to assist with media management) and the sheer volume of use of the telecommunications systems.
8. This clearly highlights the importance of and need for a national information management system that can operate on real time, rapidly and accurately convey the various elements of information required by each jurisdiction and be able to handle a significant volume of information. This is the most important critical success factor. PISC has agreed that work should commence immediately through a working group chaired by Peter Bailey (Victoria) to identify information requirements, establish performance standards and develop a business plan for implementation. A paper will be prepared for Council's next meeting.
9. A review of relations with the media would be beneficial. In a real event, it needs to be clear who would take the lead role, who would need to be involved and that they are suitably trained. Jurisdictions are likely to be judged by their communications capability rather than by what they do; rapid engagement with the media with credibility, provision of accurate information, with consideration being given to the worst case scenario; and nomination of an authoritative, knowledgeable figure who engages the media within set limits. A report on these matters should be prepared for the next Council meeting.

### **National Coordination Framework and Memorandum of Understanding**

10. During the exercise it was recognised that the committee structure in the national Commonwealth/State coordination framework could be complex. However, the structure reflects the Federation. Clearly, careful attention is need to the timing of meetings and the committee roles need to be clearly understood by all.

11. The national coordination framework and the associated MOU appear to be robust. It is intended that the MOU be considered by COAG Senior Officials in early November 2002 for signing. Guidelines for relief and recovery are to be developed for inclusion in the MOU at a later date.

### **Cross-border issues**

12. Procedures exist across some State/Territory borders to handle disease control matters. The exercise showed some differences between State/Territory legislative powers and operating procedures. This compatibility issue needs to be addressed to ensure there are no impediments to rapid disease control activities. Appropriate protocols should be developed between all adjoining States/Territories.

### **Vaccination and zoning policy**

13. The Exercise advanced understanding of a number of key policy issues, particularly vaccination and zoning. There appears to be a need to promote increased awareness of the complexity of any decision to use vaccination. Science/technology will advance and thus the vaccination option needs to be under continual review. Clear criteria for the use of vaccination under Australian conditions need to be established and adhered to with a national perspective. More work is required on modelling, both epidemiological and economic, which would aid decision-making.
14. AHA needs to now rapidly develop a contract and secure supplies of priority use vaccination.
15. The draft zoning application has been lodged with the USA and NZ. Within Minotaur the debate concentrated on a cost-benefit assessment and highlighted the tension between establishing zones for early trade recommencement purposes and the use of scarce resources on establishing and maintaining zones rather than eradicating the disease in other areas. The zoning policy needs further debate and a higher level of understanding and definition.

### **Livestock Tracing**

16. This was not tested directly under Minotaur. Nevertheless, the ability to quickly and accurately trace livestock through mandatory schemes emerged as a key issue throughout the simulation, and remains fundamental to effective and efficient disease control and eradication. It is encouraging to see momentum gathering with commitment and potential roll-out of Livestock Identification Schemes in both Victoria and NSW.

### **Cost Sharing Agreement (CSA)**

17. During Minotaur the funding arrangements under the CSA became a diversion from taking decisions to combat the disease. The 1% GVP limit would quickly be reached in an FMD outbreak – for other diseases the limit is more realistic. A new arrangement, specifically dealing with a major national emergency such as FMD, needs to be carefully developed so as to reflect the reality of an FMD outbreak, and not unravel the existing agreement for other CSA identified diseases. A way forward could be to create a new

(fifth) category “major national emergency”. AHA needs to consider this matter and propose a resolution for the next Council meeting.

### **Stock standstill**

18. The Exercise highlighted the need for further debate and agreement on stock standstill arrangements. This, combined with the decision to rapidly put infected or suspect infected animals down, are equally important and decisions need to be taken up-front and simultaneously during any incident. Ideally, to minimise the chances of spread of FMD it would be preferable to implement a national standstill immediately on suspicion of FMD, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that particular areas have not had contact with any potentially infected material. This issue needs further debate with industry.

### **Standard operating procedures**

19. There is a need to further develop and roll-out nationally consistent operating procedures. Some significant work has been done by NSW, and further work will be undertaken in the context of AUSVETPLAN and other plans.

### **Other issues**

20. Council has previously endorsed action on a range of other prevention, preparedness and response matters which were essential to Minotaur (and to any real event). These are listed in Annex A. Work on many of these issues, such as diagnostic capacity, is still progressing and should be completed as soon as possible.

### **The future**

21. As people occupying key positions and technologies change, it is essential that a high degree of awareness is maintained and that response systems are continually improved. In this regard there should be rolling 5-year plan with a large-scale exercise every 3-4 years and smaller exercises testing individual parts of the overall system each year. It has been suggested that future large-scale exercises have more modest objectives but be more detailed in their focus.
22. The Commonwealth Chief Veterinary Officer presented Ministers with a summary of the evaluation from Exercise Minotaur. Ministers were also provided with a summary report of the findings from the National Management Group. The evaluations from the Exercise will be compiled to show the way forward and will be included in a major report for COAG.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

23. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** that Exercise Minotaur achieved the objectives set for it; that international observers considered Minotaur set a new international benchmark; that there was serious engagement during the Exercise by all levels of government and industry; and that there were a number of important lessons learned (some of which are

addressed below) and **AGREED** that these be actioned expeditiously by jurisdictions after the reports on Minotaur are completed;

- (b) **NOTED** that a detailed report will be brought forward for the next Council meeting following final debriefing of all parties;
- (c) **NOTED** that the most important lesson learned from Minotaur was the need to significantly review communication systems (see also recommendation (j)) and linkages with the media, and that a separate paper will be prepared for the next Council meeting;
- (d) **NOTED** that the decision making process within the national coordination framework will also be reviewed and a report presented to the next Council meeting.
- (e) **AGREED** that management of cross-border issues be reviewed and appropriate protocols developed between the adjoining States/Territories;
- (f) **AGREED** that vaccination and zoning policy be progressed and proposals presented to the next Council meeting;
- (g) **NOTED** that the ability to rapidly identify and trace animals remains as the highest level critical success factor (see Resolution 2.5);
- (h) **AGREED** that arrangements for FMD under the Emergency Animal Disease Cost Sharing Agreement (particularly the 1% GVP criteria on cost sharing) be reviewed and revised as control and eradication of FMD would be on a different scale to other listed diseases; and that Animal Health Australia be requested to propose a resolution of the issue to the next Council meeting;
- (i) **AGREED** that to minimise the potential spread of FMD, powers be established to implement a livestock standstill which could be invoked immediately in all jurisdictions on the basis of reasonable suspicion;
- (j) **AGREED** that there is an urgent need to establish and implement a national information management system which meets the information requirement of all jurisdictions; and that work commence immediately to identify information requirements, establish performance standards and develop a business plan for implementation, for consideration by Council at its next meeting;
- (k) **AGREED** that there is a need to further develop standard operating procedures and to roll these out nationally, where practical;
- (l) **AGREED** that other prevention, preparedness and response issues in Annex A continue to be progressed as a high priority;
- (m) **AGREED** that in the light of lessons learned from Minotaur and the importance of maintaining emergency animal disease response capabilities, a 5 year rolling plan be prepared, which would include a future major national exercise in 3-4 years time

with mini exercises to be held each year to test individual parts of the system, and that the plan be presented to Council at its next meeting; and

- (n) **AGREED** that all jurisdictions continue to support the work of the Control Group to enable full assessment of the results of Minotaur.

**ANNEX A:** Current status of FMD policy actions

## **CURRENT STATUS OF FMD POLICY ACTIONS**

### **FMD vaccination policy**

Slaughter out of FMD without the use of vaccination remains the method of choice for eradication. However public opposition to destruction of large numbers of farm animals, technical advances in vaccination and serological diagnosis, and changes to international standards mean that the strategic use of vaccination in future large-scale outbreaks of FMD is now receiving increased attention. The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) has amended the *International Animal Health Code* Chapter on FMD to allow for the use of analytical tests to differentiate between FMD-vaccinated and FMD-infected animals. However, this option will not be available until further field validation of these tests is completed, and this will most likely extend beyond 2003. The practical effect will be that countries that experience FMD outbreaks and use strategic vaccination will be able to regain FMD-free status in a shorter time. This is consistent with a push in Europe to 'vaccinate to live' in future FMD outbreaks.

Veterinary Committee (VetCom) has submitted an out of session paper to Standing Committee on decision criteria for use of FMD vaccine. Some preliminary work has been done on cost-benefit studies to evaluate conditions under which vaccination becomes a preferred option. However, work remains to be undertaken on sensitivity analysis and costing framework and the related zoning exercise.

### **FMD vaccine supply**

Animal Health Australia continues to progress the business case for commercial supply of FMD vaccine, with International Vaccine Bank (IVB) FMD antigens to be used in the interim, if and when required. The future of the IVB was discussed at the IVB Commissioners' meeting in May 2002 which agreed: (1) to retain the current FMD antigens for emergency use in the short term; (2) to prepare a report for consideration by members that will examine upgrading the IVB; (3) to waive Australia's contributions if, as a result of the report findings, Australia elects to revoke membership of the bank. The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) has recently issued import permits for IVB vaccines, should they be required, with the National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (NRA) nearing finalisation of its assessment process. Funding, guaranteed supply, appropriate FMD strain coverage, safety in terms of the BSE agent and AQIS/NRA approval remain important issues for alternative vaccine sources.

### **Feral animal risk**

The feral animal risk in FMD spread and maintenance varies with a number of factors, including the location of an outbreak. Therefore the focus remains on a practical risk assessment approach to controlling feral animal populations in the event of an outbreak of FMD, with each State and Territory needing to assess their individual risks. States are cooperating on a feral animal mapping project to aid the risk assessment process and the AUSVETPLAN manual for feral animals has been adopted.

An overemphasis on the importance of feral animals in an FMD outbreak is not supported by current scientific evidence and would be detrimental to convincing trading partners of freedom

following an outbreak. VetCom and Vertebrate Pest Committee are cooperating on implementation of the VetCom report on this matter. Work still needs to be progressed, including a review of the literature and models of FMD spread and development of models of the possible spread of FMD to, within and out of feral animals in Australian situations.

### **Zoning policy for FMD**

Principles were developed for a national zoning policy for export trade purposes in 2001. Australia has prepared a full zoning submission based on a simulated outbreak scenario for assessment by the United States and New Zealand. Assessment of the submission should allow refinement and finalisation of Australia's national zoning policy.

### **Laboratory capacity**

Although progressive implementation of sample automation at AAHL is proceeding, success depends on adoption of compatible sample tracking testing and reporting systems in all jurisdictions, particularly in regard to the need for a national emergency disease information management capability. Australian laboratories will also need to develop capacity for new serological tests as they approach international validation/adoption. The Sub-Committee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards is to report shortly to VetCom on resource issues and implications for laboratory capacity of a large-scale FMD outbreak.

### **Epidemiology and economic modelling**

Work remains to develop and refine the Australian epidemiological model to handle larger numbers of farms and to incorporate a greater spatial component. Quadrilateral countries have accepted and in some cases adopted the Australian model. This will underpin Australian approaches to zoning and outbreak response options. More precise economic work is required to provide cost-benefit analyses of response options, including conditions under which vaccination might be a preferred option.

### **FMD monitoring and surveillance**

Existing initiatives such as the Protect Australian Livestock Campaign and the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy, that promote emergency animal disease awareness for veterinarians, farmers, stock handlers and others, have been reinforced by the Commonwealth, States, Territories and industry taking available opportunities to promote awareness. VetCom is continuing to develop framework performance standards for the investigation of suspect disease reports for all livestock industries.

### **National information needs in emergencies**

The development of an integrated national emergency disease information management capability is a critical success factor in emergency disease preparedness. Problems with progressing such a capability have been highlighted. A small and well-established component of such a system, ANEMIS, has recently been transferred to a Windows-base. The system is designed to assist data gathering, processing and analysis, particularly at Local Disease Control Centre level.

**Key performance measures (swill feeding, livestock tracing, AUSVETPLAN)**

VetCom has analysed the prohibition approaches in each State and Territory to the high-risk practice of swill-feeding pigs, including illicit activities, and has reported to PISC. Livestock tracing, is in a separate agenda item. The AUSVETPLAN manual for FMD has been progressively updated. Details of vaccination decision criteria and zoning for trade purposes will need to be incorporated once these matters have been finalised. A number of critical standard operating procedures also need to be finalised to support AUSVETPLAN. These include movement of potentially affected commodities across internal borders and stock standstill arrangements.

**Stock standstill**

The ability of States and Territories to implement a national standstill has been analysed and individual jurisdictions have assessed legislative changes that may be required. A draft protocol has been prepared and should be finalised in the near future.

**Other issues (carcase disposal, legislation, trade strategies)**

Australia has collaborated with Quadrilateral countries on the latest technical and policy developments on carcase disposal. A draft of the AUSVETPLAN carcase disposal manual has been produced and will be progressed through VetCom. The *Quarantine Act 1908* has been amended, and State and Territory legislation assessed, to provide the necessary powers to meet critical success factors. Industry is developing sectoral trade plans.

**Criteria for assessment of preparedness**

Criteria have been developed (based on the Victorian risk assessment approach) so that each jurisdiction can assess its level of preparedness and report to COAG.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.4</b>

### **BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY**

1. Council was informed of developments in Australia and overseas in relation to Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. At PISC 2 (March 2002) Standing Committee considered several developments relating to BSE preparedness and referred specific recommendations to Ministerial Council. Matters of an on going nature relating to that reference, together with certain recent developments, are discussed in this agenda paper.
3. BSE and other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) continue to attract a high level of scientific, regulatory and public interest. The possibility that BSE has infected sheep and goats and is being maintained as a naturally transmitted disease in these species remains an issue of intense scientific speculation, with the attendant risks of loss of consumer confidence in the safety of sheepmeat and increased regulatory activity affecting trade in sheep, goats and their products. New scientific knowledge about the transmission of BSE and scrapie by blood transfusions is giving rise to additional concerns about CJD and v.CJD transmission risks attached to human organ transplants and the medical use of blood and blood products.
4. In the face of continuing scientific uncertainty about key aspects of TSEs it is not unsurprising that importing country regulatory and other policy settings are increasingly cautionary in nature, with significant costs faced by exporting countries in justifying claims of absence of disease in their animal populations. These pressures are likely to result in further changes to international standards, and individual importing country requirements, for TSE surveillance and/or other risk management measures.
5. Domestic factors are also drivers for change to Australia's current TSE approaches. The adequacy of Australia's annual quarantine and other policy settings to manage the risk of TSE's in animal populations continue to be subject to independent scientific review on the part of the National Health and Medical Research Council's Special Expert Committee on TSE (SECTSE). This Committee is currently considering risks attached to certain farmed animal feeding practices, which may hold the potential for recycling TSE infectivity within or between species. SECTSE may recommend additional risk management measures in this area, resulting in the possible future need for specific Standing Committee consideration of this issue.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **International developments**

6. The situation in Europe relating to BSE deteriorated significantly during 2001 and early 2002 as the number of countries reporting their first or subsequent cases of BSE increased. This increasing rate of detection relates, in part, to the use of a greater number of rapid tests for BSE in countries with risks of exposure to BSE infectivity due to past import practices. Over the past 12 months there have been reports of BSE cases for the first time in native born animals in Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Slovakia and recently, beyond Europe, to Israel. Japan has reported BSE in 4 native born cattle since September 2001.
7. In the recent past Australia has provided detailed submissions, requested by a number of its trading partners, in relation to its current BSE and scrapie status. Submissions have been provided to the European Commission (latest in December 2001 with supplementary information sent in March 2002 and June 2002), New Zealand (December 2001), Japan (4 submissions from June 2001 to March 2002), and Indonesia (April 2002). To date there has been no outcome to the BSE country assessment processes being conducted by these importing countries of Australia.
8. As part of its recent legislative initiatives relating to BSE, the EC is to apply a new five level BSE risk classification system to Member States and third countries. This will replace the older four level GBR system under which Australia currently enjoys the most favourable GBR Level 1 rating. The EC reassessment of Australia could be completed by late December 2002, although slippage may occur. Should Australia not be assigned a favourable BSE risk country rating, additional measures will need to be taken to allow continued trade in meat and animal products with EU countries. Under this circumstance, other trading parties could also impose more demanding conditions on imports of red meat from Australia.
9. The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) has amended a number of BSE-related provisions and recently finalised its Animal Health Code Chapter for scrapie. It is now possible for countries to apply to OIE to have an assessment made of their BSE status. Australia lodged a detailed submission in July 2002 for this purpose and expects to receive the OIE assessment in about six months. An Australian scientist (Dr Mike Nunn of AFFA) has been appointed by the OIE to its assessment panel determining the BSE status of applicant countries.

### **BSE in Japan**

10. Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) reports indicate that Japanese consumer reaction to the announcements of BSE in Japan, saw retail sales of beef in Japan recover from a 48% fall in October 2001 shortly after the first case of BSE was announced to a level in March 2002 of 20% below this reference point. It is difficult to predict the medium term impact of this reaction on demand for Australian chilled and frozen beef in the Japanese market (worth \$A1.7 billion in 2000-01).

11. Australian beef exports to Japan have not recovered at the same rate as all beef sales. June 2002 figures indicate that Australian beef exports to Japan remain down 40% on last year, and calendar year to date shipments are also down 40%. In the short term, exports of Australian beef to Japan are expected to remain well down on last year. In addition, following its success in 2001 as the leading beef importer into Japan, Australia's share of the import market, which initially declined from 48% to 43%, is now at 46.5%. Survey information indicates Australian product is still highly regarded on safety grounds, but that importer demand is for specific beef cuts and not "full sets" as traditionally offered by Australian exporters. Consequently, only selected areas of the market are recovering.
12. The Commonwealth Government is working with MLA and the beef industry, including through the SAFEMEAT partnership, with the aim of restoring consumer confidence and demand for Australian beef and beef products in this market. A \$5 million government funding package was announced in July 2002. Together with an additional \$2.5 million from industry, the package is expected to assist the Australian beef industry to regain its market share through a promotional campaign in Japan and at the same time build resources for a sustained longer term strategy.
13. Japan continues to have in place temporary, BSE-related measures, which restrict certain classes of imports, notably meat and bone meal for animal feeding purposes. The timing of the announcement by Japan of permanent measures, their precise nature and their likely impact on Australian exports remains a matter of conjecture. It is clear, however, that Japan's assessment of Australia's TSE risk (when completed) will have a bearing on the level of restrictions likely to be applied. At this stage it is possible that exporting countries will need to enhance TSE surveillance measures and improve systems for traceability of meat cuts as a condition of access to the Japanese market.

#### Industry/SAFEMEAT

14. Industry/SAFEMEAT are concerned the approximately 17,000 live cattle that are exported annually from Australia to Japan and subsequently become subject to BSE testing at slaughter, hold the possibility of generating false positive test results. AFFA has sought and obtained assurances from Japanese authorities that they will advise Australian authorities if a presumptive positive rapid test result is obtained on an animal of Australian origin in order that the finding may be resolved by further testing in each country before an announcement is made public. A process to introduce two additional types of rapid tests to the Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) to assist resolution of test findings made overseas on Australian livestock exports is underway.
15. A SAFEMEAT/Veterinary Committee working group on DNA identification systems, which provide a means of verifying the Australian origin (or otherwise) of cattle, which might be the subject of disputed BSE test results in Japan, is close to finalising its report. A decision on funding and related issues for introducing this capability will then need to be made.

#### **Surveillance issues**

16. SAFEMEAT has considered overseas and domestic (including funding) developments impacting on the design and execution of current livestock surveillance programs for BSE and scrapie in Australia. Consideration was given to international changes and expectations regarding BSE and scrapie monitoring and surveillance, with specific

reference to current approaches in the European Union, United States, Canada and New Zealand. The United States is to further increase the number of immunohistochemistry tests it conducts for BSE surveillance from 12,500 to 20,000; Canada is considering increasing the number of immunohistochemistry tests from 2,000 to about 10,000 and may utilise rapid tests for a proportion of this surveillance; and New Zealand is to conduct 1,500 to 2,000 cattle and 3,000 sheep tests using the 'Prionics Check' rapid test. The increased testing in all Quads members was aimed at targeting sub-populations such as "fallen" or "on-farm dead or suspect slaughter" animals.

17. The SAFEMEAT working group recommended that consideration be given to initiate research and development work on the use of rapid tests for BSE and scrapie surveillance of the national herd and flock for a period of 2 to 3 years, based on approximately 2500 to 5000 tests per year. The work was seen as necessary to help prepare Australian systems for likely changes to OIE standards for surveillance. It will also have the benefit of providing additional supporting data for market access related purposes. This proposal remains under consideration by SAFEMEAT with indications it may not enjoy support from some livestock industry segments. At PISC 3 (September 2002), Standing Committee strongly supported the proposal to progress R&D work on the use of rapid TSE tests for surveillance on sub-populations of the national herd and flock.
18. Passive surveillance is an important tool for detecting occurrences of new or unusual animal diseases. Recently, examination of tissues collected at the post-mortem of an imported, male Asiatic golden cat that had died at the Melbourne Zoo in March 2002, led to the referral of frozen and fixed tissue samples to AAHL for exclusion of TSE. AAHL subsequently made a presumptive diagnosis of TSE, based on positive results to a range of tests. CCEAD considered the finding and endorsed a number of actions, including: advice to OIE; referral of specimens to the World Reference Laboratory for confirmation; and a referral to Veterinary Committee to examine the adequacy of current preventative measures at zoos.
19. SECTSE subsequently considered this presumptive diagnosis of TSE in a zoo felid, and has requested information concerning TSE risk factors relating to Australian zoo and circus animals and approaches taken to manage these risks. It is proposed to establish a Veterinary Committee Working Group to address issues raised by both CCEAD and SECTSE, with membership to include zoo experts.
20. The notification of this presumptive TSE finding has not resulted in adverse reactions from trading partners or the Australian public. The finding received only limited coverage in the Australian media.

### **Ruminant feed ban issues**

21. ARMCANZ (now PIMC) resolutions in March 2001 *inter alia* recommended that the ruminant feed ban legislation be amended to further simplify compliance with requirements by excluding the feeding of all forms of MBM (including blood/poultry/feather and fish meals) to ruminants. Legislative changes have now been enacted in all jurisdictions.

22. PIMC 1 (May 2002) was advised that, as part of an overall strategy to confirm that rendered animal remains are not being incorporated into cattle and sheep feeds, a method which detects specific and very low levels of ruminant DNA was newly available to monitor feeds intended for ruminants. The test had been developed at the Australian Government Analytical Laboratories (AGAL) utilising industry research and development funds. At this stage the test is not validated to National Association of Testing Authority (NATA) standards and, accordingly, many not be used for evidentiary purposes in legal proceedings. Protocols for utilisation of this test are being progressed through SAFEMEAT and Veterinary Committee to support State and Territory audit procedures. The test is seen as a means of augmenting the existing audit processes conducted by the States and Territories.
23. A Veterinary Committee working group is considering audit guidelines for the ruminant feed ban in Australia to achieve national consistency. Utilisation of the AGAL test as an audit tool is included in this process. Veterinary Committee has also established a group to consider the advantages or otherwise of the possible establishment of a national TSE “freedom assurance program” that incorporates NTSESP and ruminant feed ban components.
24. Biosecurity Australia has conducted an import risk analysis (IRA) on processed stockfeed of plant origin, including in respect of possible BSE risks. Consideration is being given to verifying the purity of any imported stockfeeds (in terms of both deliberate and adventitious meat and bone meal content) through utilisation of the AGAL test. Requests to AFFA to import plant-based stockfeeds from Indonesia and Malaysia are being progressed as part of this IRA and will be subject to checking at port-of-entry.
25. SAFEMEAT has requested AUS-MEAT to develop, in consultation with Veterinary Committee, industry and AFFA, a simple Quality Assurance (QA) module for feedstuffs to assist industry to comply with the ruminant feed ban.
26. SECTSE has commented on the AGAL test noting its high unit cost (\$200-300) and ability to detect only ruminant material (i.e. not all classes of prohibited materials) and recommended that consideration be given to further developing the test. Some State/Territory jurisdictions have also expressed concerns with the cost of this test and have sought the application of industry levies to fund its use for audit purposes.

#### **Special Expert Committee on TSE (SECTSE)**

27. Commonwealth agricultural and health officials are working closely to manage issues that affect both animal and human health. SECTSE is reviewing preventive measures for TSEs and providing independent scientific advice to government to assist in refinement of policies. The 2001 annual report for SECTSE provides an indication of the array of TSE risks in human medicine, therapeutic goods, food, agriculture and the environment, which are considered by this Committee.
28. Key areas of ongoing SECTSE consideration related to the agricultural sector, that are receiving further consideration include:
  3. . the BSE and scrapie components of AUSVETPLAN;
  4. . TSE risks of inter-and intra-species recycling through animal feeds;
  5. . developments relating to the possibility of BSE in sheep; and

6. . surveillance for TSEs in animals and audit of the ruminant feed ban.
29. In particular, the issues regarding inter-and intra-species recycling have the potential to have a significant impact on, and associated cost implications for, Australian pig and poultry industries and related industries, such as stockfeed manufacturing and rendering.

### **Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)**

30. FSANZ is assessing submissions on BSE status from 33 countries, which seek to export beef/beef products for human consumption to Australia. Interim country assessments have now been released by FSANZ to applicant organisations in Australia and five other countries. Announcement of the final assessments of these countries will occur within a few months. Australia received an interim country rating of “A”, the most favourable category.
31. The FSANZ BSE risk country categorisation process has the potential to create discomfort in some key trading partner countries particularly if FSANZ’s assessment proves less favourable than other ratings (eg EC’s GBR rating system) currently held by applicant countries.

### **Exercise Minotaur**

32. ARMCANZ (now PISC) agreed at its August 2001 and March 2002 meetings to adopt a range of measures to further enhance protection against BSE and other TSEs. Substantial progress has been made in giving effect to these resolutions. Additionally, a process involving COAG is being progressed to ensure an effective, whole of government response capability for emergency animal diseases including FMD and BSE. These arrangements were tested by a large scale FMD simulation, “Exercise Minotaur” (Sept. 9-13). The simulation identified a number of areas requiring improvements.
33. The Commonwealth Chief Veterinary Officer advised Ministers that BSE was seen as a sleeper and key points were to make sure that Council decisions on feed bans are implemented by States and Territories.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

34. Council:
- (a) **NOTED** the continuing significant implications for Australian interests that attach to BSE-related developments, including the assessments of Australia’s BSE status being conducted by a number of parties, including the Office International des Epizooties (OIE), European Commission (EC), Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), New Zealand, Japan and Indonesia;
  - (b) **NOTED** that Australia’s preparedness will be strengthened by progression of:
    - (i) improvements based on conclusions drawn from the simulation “Exercise Minotaur”;
    - (ii) completion of current Veterinary Committee and SAFEMEAT tasks relating to feed tests and audit of feed bans; and

- (iii) introduction of DNA testing system for live cattle exports to Japan; and
  - (iv) on enhancements to the recently developed DNA test for animal feeds;
- (c) **NOTED** that on-going evaluations of the National Health and Medical Research Council's Special Expert Committee on TSE, hold particular significance for agricultural industries, especially in relation to feeding practices; and
- (d) **ENDORSED** the progression of R&D work on the use of rapid tests for surveillance in sub-populations of the national herd and flock to ensure Australia's favourable BSE status is maintained, and as a contingency in the likely case that changes are made to the international requirements for monitoring and surveillance of animal TSEs.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.5</b>

## **LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION AND TRACING AND RELATED ISSUES**

1. A critical element in managing the response to major disease outbreaks and food safety scares is a national system for livestock identification and tracing. Council agreement was sought to a proposed national approach for livestock identification.

### **BACKGROUND**

2. Australia is falling behind Europe, Canada and New Zealand in terms of its capacity to effectively track animals, on a national basis, from property of birth through to slaughter. This exposes Australia to the risk of not being able to respond quickly and effectively to major exotic disease outbreaks, such as Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD). Australia also risks losing the confidence of consumers and overseas markets in our ability to underpin assurances about product safety and integrity. The European Union (EU) already requires a comprehensive identification and tracing system while Japan may well introduce similar demands on its suppliers of livestock and livestock products.
3. In the context of its re-affirmation of the need for enhanced trace-back and trace-forward systems for cattle, sheep, pigs and other FMD susceptible species, Council (PIMC 1, May 2002) agreed to the formation of a high level working group of Standing Committee Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) to develop an agreed set of criteria for an effective national approach for livestock identification and tracing and to outline the extent to which governments, as a whole, should support the introduction of such arrangements. Council also agreed that industry should be consulted on short term and long term strategies to strengthen Australia's livestock tracing arrangements, including giving consideration to the introduction of legislation making the use of National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) compulsory.

### **DISCUSSION**

4. At previous Council meetings, there has been general agreement that national livestock identification and tracing systems are required. However, there has been no commitment to the adoption of a particular system for each species.

#### **Cattle**

5. There is wide acceptance within the cattle industry that maximum protection from future food safety and disease incidents, such as FMD, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

(BSE) or chemical residues, will not be achieved until cattle can be traced quickly and accurately for longer periods than is possible using tail tags.

6. The cattle industry has developed the NLIS. The NLIS operates at a fraction of the cost of equivalent cattle identification and tracking schemes based on visually readable tags and passports operating in the EU, and established more recently in Japan. The NLIS is the cornerstone of the arrangements introduced in late 1999 for the supply of Australian beef to the EU markets and in its two years of operation, has worked reliably and withstood an intensive review by European Commission auditors in November 2000. Approximately 15% of Australia's cattle herd is already NLIS-identified.
7. Standing Committee believes that there are no major technical impediments to the wider implementation of an NLIS-based system for cattle in Australia. Furthermore, Standing Committee is not aware of any emerging technologies that are likely to be superior to that used within the NLIS. Accordingly, Standing Committee is of the view that the NLIS for cattle should be accepted as the basis of Australia's system for cattle identification and tracing, with sufficient flexibility built in to reflect different production systems within Australia while at the same time ensuring coherence on a national scale.
8. To give effect to the rapid implementation of an NLIS-based system across Australia, Standing Committee has developed an implementation strategy. The implementation strategy includes:
  - (a) performance standards for a national system of identification and tracing of cattle in Australia;
  - (b) key features of the system, including mandatory NLIS and mandatory vendor declarations linked to State/Territory administered Property Identification Code (PIC) registers;
  - (c) an implementation timetable, with a start date of 1 January 2004 and full implementation from 1 July 2005;
  - (d) proposed criteria for exemptions, including a risk-based approach to general exemptions from the NLIS itself;
  - (e) mandatory transaction recording from 1 January 2004; and
  - (f) roles and responsibilities for the Commonwealth Government, State/Territory Governments and industry, with an estimate of implementation costs for industry.

## **Sheep**

9. The sheep industry has also recognised the importance of the need for effective tracing systems and has recently launched the National Flock Identification Scheme (NFIS). The NFIS is supported by Standing Committee as the national system for the identification and tracing of sheep in response to food safety, disease and market access issues (PISC out-of-session resolution July 2002). Standing Committee has also agreed that all States/Territory Governments should consult with sheep industry stakeholder groups in relation to developing a timetable for the implementation of the NFIS and communicate agreed outcomes to industry by 1 December 2002.

## Other species

10. Standing Committee is of the view that the goat industry should adopt the same system as the sheep industry with a similar timeframe for implementation. However, movement of trapped or farmed feral goats direct to abattoir may require a more flexible system similar to low risk cattle.
11. In respect of the pig industry, Standing Committee believes that it should examine the current slap branding system, which operates nationally, to determine whether this system is still appropriate. There is also a need for an ear tag system for pigs less than 20 kg, an agreed national PIC system and an agreed documentation system.
12. Mr Keith Adams presented to Ministers, the Cattle Council of Australia's formal policy position in relation to the National Livestock Identification Scheme i.e.
  - . that it supports the maintenance and further development of NLIS;
  - . the adoption of NLIS should be driven by commercial forces and designed to meet the requirements of each State/Territory under the national industry scheme;
  - . NLIS should build on and enhance the current mechanisms in place in each State/Territory with regard to property identification movement controls, quarantine, tail tagging etc.
13. Mr Bill Whitehead, Sheepmeat Council of Australia, outlined to Ministers the Flock Identification Scheme (NFIS), designed to provide a national standard framework for the identification of sheep. The key driver of the NFIS into the future is the development a Business Plan for the full implementation of the Scheme. Key to the Business Plan is the PISC agreement that all government consult with the sheep industry in their State to determine the timetable and drivers for the full implementation of the NFIS in their State.
14. Ministers were also informed of Victoria's successful experience with the NLIS. Industry has adopted this technology, particularly cattle, however once the benefits and efficiency gains on farms had been realized, the uptake has been dramatic. Victoria's confidence in managing a disease outbreak is enhanced because of this system and there have been a number of very complimentary reviews from overseas.
15. Ministers agreed to the suggestion that an Advisory Group be established to identify the issues that need to be resolved in advancing the NLIS and NFIS issues and report back to Council at its next meeting.

## RESOLUTIONS

16. Council:
  - (a) **AGREED** to the establishment of a High Level Industry/Government Advisory Group with membership from: the Cattle Council of Australia; the Sheepmeat Council of Australia; Meat & Livestock Australia Ltd; Animal Health Australia; SAFEMEAT; NSW Agriculture, Queensland, the Northern Territory; and the Commonwealth Chief Veterinary officer; and
  - (b) **AGREED** that the Advisory Group would:

- (i) review international developments regarding the development and implementation of livestock identification and tracing systems and their implications for access of Australian livestock products to export markets;
- (ii) examine the proposed approach for a national system for livestock identification and tracing in Australia (NLIS-based for cattle, NFIS-based for sheep) in terms of its congruence, or otherwise, with international systems, and the benefits it would bring to Australia for managing major animal disease outbreaks, consumer confidence in the safety and integrity of livestock products, and on-farm decision making by livestock producers;
- (iii) investigate the options for customizing the NLIS-based system for cattle and NFIS-based system for sheep to take into account the different production systems for cattle and sheep in northern and southern Australia, and any other relevant considerations that would have an impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of a national system; and
- (iv) report back to Council (via Standing Committee) at its next meeting on the timing, nature of, and implementation of, a rapid and accurate national livestock identification and tracing system across Australia, with supporting legislation.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.6</b>

### **BIOSECURITY: IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS STATUS REPORT**

1. Council was informed of progress on the review of the Import Risk Analysis Framework.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. At PIMC 1 (May 2002) Ministers confirmed their commitment to work cooperatively to develop nationally cohesive biosecurity policy. They agreed to confirm their partnership arrangement in an exchange of letters to supplement their continuing commitment to implementing the SPS Agreement as articulated in the 1995 Memorandum of Understanding on Animal and Plant Quarantine Measures. Council also agreed that the current definition of Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP) meets Australia's current needs. Council members from all Australian jurisdictions also committed to addressing different regional pest and disease status and risks through early and comprehensive cooperation as part of the risk analysis process.

#### **DISCUSSION**

3. The import risk analysis (IRA) process followed by Biosecurity Australia in developing and reviewing quarantine policies is set out in the IRA Process Handbook produced by AQIS in 1998. As envisaged when the IRA Handbook was released, Biosecurity Australia has undertaken a review of Australia's IRA process, consulting extensively with stakeholders during 2001 on the basis of a proposed revision endorsed by the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) in March 2001.
4. The proposed revisions to the Handbook are based on experience to date and aim to improve consultation and further promote scientific rigour, while making the process as streamlined and efficient as possible. The proposed revisions provide for enhanced involvement of States and Territories early in the process. Some elements of the proposed revisions have already been incorporated into the performance of import risk analyses where these are non-contentious and result in an improved outcome. The revised Framework is expected to be released in late 2002, following a further round of consultation with stakeholders.
5. Publication of the revised Handbook will help Australia to refute negative comments, such as those made recently by various trading partners and other parties, about the

scientific basis, timeliness and transparency of its IRA process.

6. Biosecurity Australia is currently undertaking 48 import risk analyses (IRAs), 27 on animals or animal products and 21 on plants or plant products. All are following the structured and consultative process currently in place and are progressing well.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

7. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** progress that has been made on the review of the Import Risk Analysis Framework; and
  - (b) **NOTED** the report on the status of current major import risk analyses.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.7</b>

### QUEENSLAND'S BIOSECURITY STRATEGY

1. The Queensland Minister for Primary Industries & Rural Communities informed Council of the structure and nature of new arrangements in Queensland with the establishment of the Queensland Biosecurity Advisory Council.

#### BACKGROUND

2. Biosecurity is the management of risks by exclusion, eradication and control of biological agents, pests and diseases, which may cause social, economic or environmental damage to food and fibre systems.
3. Responsibility for biosecurity is shared between the Commonwealth and State governments and the community generally. National issues such as border quarantine are a Commonwealth responsibility, while States are involved in post-border issues such as surveillance for early detection and incursion management.
4. The establishment of organisations, such as Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia, has enhanced the coordination of national biosecurity activities. Each organisation has a comprehensive membership of the jurisdictions delivering biosecurity for the animal and plant industries, respectively.

#### DISCUSSION

5. The Queensland Biosecurity Advisory Council (QBAC) is being established to guide the development and maintain standards of animal and plant biosecurity in Queensland. Its objective is to provide strategic advice and make recommendations to the Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities on a comprehensive biosecurity framework for Queensland, including risk-based analysis and policy development.
6. The Council will be concerned with strategic policy considerations involving animal and plant biosecurity including the following:
  - (a) the development of strategic priorities for animal and plant biosecurity services;
  - (b) infrastructure issues including funding of animal and plant biosecurity services;
  - (c) exotic and emergency disease preparedness and management;
  - (d) animal and plant biosecurity issues as they effect the market access, food safety and human health;

- (e) animal and plant biosecurity issues affecting more than one industry or those requiring a regulatory response from government;
  - (f) communication of animal and plant biosecurity related information to stakeholders; and
  - (g) Queensland input to national import policy relating to biosecurity, particularly the processes involving Biosecurity Australia.
7. Queensland will be initiating discussions to increase the effectiveness of collaboration with interstate and federal agencies, with the intention of establishing memoranda of understanding on process delivery as the need arises. Of particular concern initially is the interaction between the Commonwealth and Queensland in the delivery of biosecurity functions.
8. In order to enhance the biosecurity framework in Queensland, a budget initiative has been to reduce government funding for inspection and certification services so that departmental resources can be applied to surveillance and preparedness for high-risk agents such as foot and mouth disease (FMD) and exotic fruit flies. The transition to this new initiative will involve a staged increase in fees for cattle tick and plant health inspection services over the next three years.

## RESOLUTIONS

9. Council:
- (a) **NOTED** the structure and nature of new arrangements in Queensland with the establishment of the Queensland Biosecurity Advisory Council and the proposed linkages with Biosecurity Australia; and
  - (b) **NOTED** issues for government and industry in transitioning to a new biosecurity strategy, including reduction of subsidies for inspection and certification services.

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	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.8</b>

### FORESTRY AND FOREST PRODUCT ISSUES

1. Council considered regional forest industry development as an important means of developing regional economies. Within this context, Council endorsement was sought for the revised *Plantation of Australia: the 2020 Vision*.

#### BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

##### Forest Industry and Infrastructure Development

2. Regional Forest Agreements (RFAs) have been progressed in all States with commercial native forests, and a high level of forest conservation reserves achieved in all cases. Limited gains, however, have been made with respect to the processing and manufacturing industry, including infrastructure needs, and Australia still has a significant trade deficit in forest products.
3. Regional forest industry development, as part of an integrated approach across a number of industries, is an important means of developing regional economies. Areas for future consideration include:
  - (a) processing lower grades of wood from native forests and future large volumes of plantation wood into value added products;
  - (b) strategies for development of an on-shore timber processing and manufacturing industry;
  - (c) use of residues for biomass energy to assist Australia's adoption of renewable energy sources under its climate change response; and
  - (d) the significant infrastructure issues (including cost-sharing, transport solutions) for State/Territory and local governments arising from changes in wood supply patterns arising as a result of the large areas of new plantations.
4. A national Forest Industry Regional Development Conference will be convened during 2003 to discuss the role of forestry in regional development and will involve a wide range of interest groups from the forest and non-forest sectors.

##### Plantations 2020 Vision

5. In 1996 the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, and the plantation-based industries endorsed *Plantations for Australia: the 2020 Vision* as a national strategy to

treble Australia's plantation area to three million hectares by 2020. The Vision has now been revised.

6. Over half a million hectares of new plantations have been established since 1996, over 70% with private capital. This increase in private ownership has significantly increased investment opportunities and developed a more competitive industry. Of the total plantation resource, 5% is now contributed directly by farm foresters, and around 20% by farm foresters participating with industrial growers through leasehold and joint venture arrangements.
7. The vast expansion of plantations has brought a number of matters to the forefront which the Vision partners will be required to address including social and environmental changes, market development, the transition from public to private ownership, and the contribution by farm foresters. One role of governments has been to remove impediments that discriminate against forestry development when compared with other agricultural land uses.

### **Regional Plantation Committees**

8. RPCs were established in 1996 by AFFA through its Farm Forestry Program. They were developed in the main plantation regions to promote wood production on cleared agricultural land and to integrate commercial tree growing with other agricultural land uses, promote tree planting for production of wood and non-wood products. A recent review of RPCs found that they enhance regional economic development potential by increasing the commercial plantation estate to allow industry to continue to expand and remain world competitive.
9. The Commonwealth recognises the value of the RPCs and the importance of maintaining their capacity and the momentum they have built, and is currently sourcing funding to take all RPCs through to the end of the 2002-03 financial year. State Governments have indicated support for providing matching funding in 2002-03, but this is still to be confirmed.
10. The RPC review highlights the uncertainty confronting the national RPC network regarding long-term funding support, and suggests continuing the current funding model until June 2005. The Commonwealth commitment is in most cases \$75,000 pa for two years for each of the 18 RPCs, bringing its total contribution to approximately \$2.5 million (\$1.25 million pa).

### **Forest Environmental Services**

11. At PIMC 1 (May 2002) Council noted opportunities for forestry and agriculture to work together and with the NRMMC, to develop proposals and solutions to benefit both sectors, particularly through forest environmental services such as salinity mitigation, water quality, surface and ground water flows, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration.
12. Salinity is one of the major environmental issues facing Australia. Forests and woody perennials provide one of the few options for land use change in the lower rainfall areas

of Australia that, used appropriately, will deliver long term environmental benefits, economic benefits and social benefits, particularly for regional communities.

13. Despite the recognised benefits of forestry for farm incomes and sustainability, there has been a very low take up of farm forestry in the lower rainfall zones. Farm forestry also appears not to be seen as an important option in the development of natural resource management plans by community NRM groups under the National Action Plan.

## RESOLUTIONS

### 14. Council:

- (a) **RECOGNISED** the importance of forestry to many regional economies and that regional forest industry development can contribute to the development of regional economies;
- (b) **NOTED** that areas for future consideration include processing lower grades of wood from native forests and large volumes of plantation wood into value added products, development of an on-shore timber processing and manufacturing industry, and the use of residues for biomass energy;
- (c) **NOTED** that the significant changes in wood supply patterns arising as a result of the large areas of new plantations will result in infrastructure issues becoming an important issue for State/Territory and local governments, but will also present the opportunity for a national approach to issues such as cost sharing, transport solutions, etc;
- (d) **NOTED** that a Forest Industry Regional Development Conference will be convened during 2003 to discuss the role of forestry in regional development;
- (e) **ENDORSED** the revised *Plantations for Australia: The 2020 Vision*;
- (f) **NOTED** the role of Regional Plantation Committees (RPCs) in implementing the 2020 Vision and promoting commercial forestry development, and **ENDORSED** a strong message of support for RPCs;
- (g) **RECOGNISED** the role of commercial plantation and tree farming in delivering environmental services, and supports the use of environmental funding programs to create leverage through commercial investment;
- (h) **ACKNOWLEDGED** the sub-economic nature of plantation development based on timber alone in the low and intermediate rainfall zones, but recognises the scope for integration of timber, water, carbon and biodiversity values to create economically viable conditions for development; and
- (i) **NOTED** that the PISC's Forestry and Forest Products Committee and the NRMSC's Land, Water and Biodiversity Committee are jointly preparing advice for consideration by PIMC and NRMCM on forests and environmental services.

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	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.9</b>

**CERTIFICATION AND LABELLING -  
AUSTRALIAN FORESTRY STANDARD**

1. Council endorsement was sought for the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS).

**BACKGROUND**

2. The AFS provides a basis for certifying sustainable forest management and labelling of forest products, and will be an important means for Australian producers to maintain and expand market share. Many customers, particularly in Europe and North America, are requesting guarantees that timber is sourced from sustainably managed sources, and the AFS seeks to provide such assurance.
3. Development of the AFS commenced in late 1998 with the establishment of a working group by the Standing Committee on Forestry (SCF). In July 1999, SCF presented a report to the sixth meeting of the Ministerial Council on Forestry, Fisheries and Aquaculture (MCFFA) where Ministers endorsed the further development of the AFS. After a comprehensive process of consultation and development, the draft Standard was circulated to members of the Technical Reference Committee (TRC) for balloting in early July for a four week period. The results of the ballot were resoundingly positive and the AFS forwarded to Standards Australia for approval as an Australian Standard.

**DISCUSSION**

4. Endorsement by Ministers is an important step in finalising the Standard. It should be noted that endorsement will not bind member States into exclusive alignment with the AFS, but rather provide recognition that the AFS is one of a number of management tools available to Australian forest owners and managers. Support from the NRMMC is also important as this will broaden support for the Standard.
5. The AFS is one of a number of certification standards being developed internationally and has been designed in such a way as to be able to meet differing requirements. These include the PEFC Scheme (encompassing 16 European countries as well as the USA and Canada, and with Chile recently expressing interest in membership) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) promoted by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and other environment groups.

6. Mutual recognition of the AFS with other certification standards is currently being explored, in particular with the PEFC which will be meeting in Luxembourg in November and which will consider an application for Australian membership. NAFI and AFG have been actively exploring PEFC membership to date. At its recent meeting, PISC's Forestry and Forest Products Committee agreed that the AFS Steering Committee should be empowered to manage the mutual recognition process.
7. The AFS Steering Committee was established to manage the development of the AFS. When started, the task appeared to be to develop the Standard and ensure independent certification bodies were available. On-going management will also require that arrangements be put in place for interpretation, amendment and review of the Standard.
8. Ministers expressed strong support for the Standard as recognition of the sustainability of Australian forest practices.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

9. Council:
  - (a) **ENDORSED** the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) as a credible certification Standard which will enable Australia's forest managers to confidently respond to market demands for assurance that Australia's unique forest environment is well managed, noting that the AFS is one of a number of tools available to promote sustainable forest management;
  - (b) **AGREED** to seek support from the NRMCM to reflect the support for the Standard from environment as well as production portfolios;
  - (c) **NOTED** the approach proposed in this paper for the on-going management of the AFS and the process for seeking mutual recognition with the Pan-European Forest Certification (PEFC) Scheme; and
  - (d) **NOTED** that support for the AFS is not inconsistent with support for other schemes.

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	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.10</b>

### CARBON ACCOUNTING – IMPLEMENTATION OF AN AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

1. Council support was sought for consistent implementation of a nationally consistent carbon accounting standard across Australia which will provide a broad framework to identify the issues that need to be addressed in measuring carbon in forests.

#### BACKGROUND

2. Standards Australia has developed a carbon accounting standard through consultation with interested parties and stakeholders. It was released in July 2002 as an interim standard with validity to 17th June 2004. Part 2 of the standard is planned to deal with carbon sequestered through the improved management of land, rather than through forestry.

#### DISCUSSION

3. The Standards Australia carbon accounting standard provides a basis for ensuring that the major premises underlying marketable carbon rights are satisfied; it does not provide a means for determining the quantum of carbon that has been or is likely to be sequestered in any particular location over a specified period of time. The standard identifies issues to be addressed - not the "tools". The quantum of carbon sequestration would be determined by a separate mechanism, such as the "Carbon Accounting Toolbox" or detailed inventory by the manager of relevant carbon pools.
4. Australia is seen as a single source or market by overseas investors. Inconsistent standards complicate the consideration of investors and pool managers, generate uncertainty and reduce the potential value of a product such as rights arising from carbon sequestration.
5. Consistency is being sought for appropriate elements of Australia's carbon sequestration market. For instance, a national working group is currently seeking to promote nationally consistent carbon rights legislation under the aegis of the COAG High Level Group on Greenhouse.
6. The International Standards Organization is currently developing a carbon accounting standard for international use, for which the Australian standard is the base document.

Once the international standard has been finalised, it would be useful to reconsider the Australian standard and alter it as appropriate.

7. The National Carbon Accounting System (NCAS) has been developed through the Australian Greenhouse Office to provide the national methods and tools for estimating emissions and sinks associated with land use, land use change and forestry activities, in particular for afforestation and reforestation. These methods and tools will provide the basis for national accounts for determination of credits from afforestation and reforestation against Australia's 108 per cent Kyoto target. The interim Australian standard provides a broad framework in which to facilitate bilateral trade in carbon credits. The NCAS, CSIRO and the Australian National University are developing an operational toolbox for afforestation and reforestation projects consistent with the NCAS methods, with the aim of providing a well-informed and standardised method suite. The toolbox will consist of a number of tools, some of which are already developed and some of which are still underway. It has already shown benefits in terms of increased market confidence.
8. Most activity with respect to trading of sequestered carbon is likely to be of a voluntary nature during the period of the interim standard (to 17th June 2004). During this period there will not be a strong statutory framework to enforce adoption of the standard, although there may be voluntary or "unofficial" frameworks established.

## RESOLUTIONS

9. Council:
  - (a) **ADOPTED** the Standards Australia carbon accounting standard on an interim basis until June 2004;
  - (b) **AGREED** that jurisdictions adopt the standard on a trial basis;
  - (c) **AGREED** that jurisdictions work to encourage adoption of the standard by relevant private sector parties;
  - (d) **SUPPORTED** the COAG High Level Group on Greenhouse to continue to consider the statutory basis for future carbon accounting or carbon sequestration certificates under any formal trading scheme developed within Australia;
  - (e) **AGREED** that PISC's Forestry and Forest Products Committee (FFPC) undertake a review of implementation in January 2004 and advise PISC, NRMSC and Standards Australia of any amendments required to the interim standard; and
  - (f) **AGREED** that this advice be conveyed to NRMSC and NRMCC.

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<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.11</b>

### AQUACULTURE INDUSTRY ACTION AGENDA

1. The Commonwealth Government announced an Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda initiative in March 2000. The Action Agenda aims to identify impediments to industry growth and to develop strategies to remove them. The National Aquaculture Development Committee (NADC) was established for the Action Agenda to assist the aquaculture industry and government to identify impediments to industry growth and to develop strategies to remove them.
2. A Marine and Coastal Committee (MCC)/NADC working group considered those aquaculture issues that could be usefully progressed by the Ministerial Council process. The working group reviewed and discussed the recommendations proposed by the NADC for the Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda.
3. The NADC's recommendations were finalised in August 2002 and are grouped under eight initiatives:
  - (a) a National Aquaculture Policy Statement;
  - (b) implementing an industry driven action agenda;
  - (c) growing the industry within an ecologically sustainable framework;
  - (d) investing for growth;
  - (e) promoting aquaculture products in Australia and globally;
  - (f) meeting the research and innovation challenges;
  - (g) making the most of education, training and workplace opportunities; and
  - (h) an industry for all Australians.
4. MCC considered six key opportunities where the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments collectively could provide the greatest assistance to aquaculture development in Australia in the immediate term. The six key opportunities are:
  - (a) making a National Aquaculture Policy Statement to send a clear message to international and domestic investors, public and policy makers that Australian Governments are united in their commitment to encouraging its sustainable growth;
  - (b) developing and implementing nationally agreed better practice principles for development and management of aquaculture;
  - (c) facilitating industry capacity building in respect of research and development;
  - (d) facilitating industry capacity building in respect of establishing a national peak industry body;
  - (e) streamlining the regulatory environment for ESD; and

- (f) encouraging a greater focus, wider collaboration and synergy amongst Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in the areas of research, education and training.
5. In addition to the above key activities identified by MCC, Western Australia suggested that approaches to increase productive and responsible investment in aquaculture be developed.
  6. Actions in these areas will support the recommendations recently made by the NADC for the Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda and by an aquaculture working group to the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

7. Council:
  - (a) **SUPPORTED** the activities identified by the Marine and Coastal Committee as forming the basis of an aquaculture work program for the Primary Industries Ministerial Council; and
  - (b) **AGREED** to the following additional key activity where the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments collectively could provide the greatest assistance to aquaculture development in Australia in the immediate term:  
“to develop approaches to increase productive and responsible investment in Australian aquaculture”.

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<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.12</b>

## REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL RED IMPORTED FIRE ANT ERADICATION PROGRAM

1. Council was informed of the satisfactory progress of the red imported fire ant eradication program.

### BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

2. The Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA) is a highly pervasive and destructive pest and has the real potential of being Australia's greatest environmental disaster with major long-term economic and social consequences.
3. The National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Plan includes:
  - (a) four treatments of the known infested area per year for three years;
  - (b) surveillance of the 5km buffer zone around the infested area once each year; and
  - (c) surveillance of the treatment area each year for two years after treatment.
4. An outlier protocol, approved by the Scientific Advisory Panel, was adopted to treat and inspect the area around nests found close to, but outside the originally defined infested area, rather than extend the boundaries of the treatment area, to contain the expense of the program
5. The National Plant Health Monitoring Group has found satisfactory progress for the first year of the program.

### Program results

#### Treatment

6. The Treatment Program was limited by the expansion of the known infested area to include outlier sites close to but outside the original boundary. The Treatment time frame, dependent on climatic conditions warm enough to support active foraging by ants, was seven months rather than the expected eight. The first round of treatment was slow as systems were tested in the field.
7. 82%, 93% and 96% of all known infested area were treated in Rounds 1, 2 and 3 respectively. Given the limitation to the treatment program, the eastern zone, the heavily infested areas in the west and all areas suitable for aerial application received a fourth application; ie 61%.

8. All known infested properties and those which did not receive all the required treatments, are being inspected over winter and, as necessary, individual nests are being treated.
9. Monitoring sites show a 90% overall reduction in nest density; 98% reduction of super-colonies and 70% reduction in lightly infested areas. Surveys of 30% of known infested properties show that 75-80% are free of fire ants. Monitoring sites also show a rapid return of native ants, *Iridomyrmex*.

#### Surveillance

10. 96% of properties in the 5km surveillance zone have been inspected to date, and 66% of properties in the enhanced surveillance zones around outlier sites have received the first of two inspections.

#### Containment

11. New legislation to allow entry to treat properties and to place restrictions on the movement of high-risk material came into place in March 2002. 70,000 residents have provided consent to treat and 1672 high risk businesses have signed off on Approved Risk Management Plans.
12. NRMCC gave in-principle approval in May 2002 to expand the current program and increase the budget of the Program to \$144.9m to cater for the increased Treatment Area and reduced treatment time frame.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

13. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** that the National Plant Health Monitoring Group has found that the program has made satisfactory progress against the first two Milestones set by the then SCARM/ARMCANZ for June 2002:
    - (i) treatment is providing acceptable levels of control of red imported fire ants (RIFA); and
    - (ii) no significant infestations found in surveys outside the known infested areas in Queensland or elsewhere in Australia; and
  - (b) **NOTED** Milestones 3 and 4:
    - (i) favourable report from an independent scientific review by suitably qualified scientists; and
    - (ii) favourable report from independent operational and financial audits of all RIFA program elements, including interstate, will be reported against in September 2002 when climatic conditions will be more conducive to assessing the impact of the program.

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<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.13</b>

### **NATIONAL COORDINATION OF A BAN ON THE ROUTINE TAIL DOCKING OF DOGS FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES**

1. Council considered the issue of developing a nationally consistent approach to routine tail docking of dogs for cosmetic purposes.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. The recently agreed role for PIMC included dealing with a number of priority areas, which included 'ensure animal welfare practices are amongst the best in the world'.

#### **DISCUSSION**

3. Animal welfare issues relating to domestic animals have the capacity to result in significant political, media and legislative activity. As with livestock, there would be benefits from a coordinated approach to animal welfare issues relating to domestic animals e.g. controls over dangerous dogs, coordination of electronic ID schemes, national accreditation of animal trainers, legislation controlling welfare in pounds, shelters, pet shops, boarding establishments and breeding/rearing establishments.
4. PIMC and its predecessors have had an established role in dealing with animal welfare issues relating to livestock. PIMC receives technical advice on livestock welfare issues from PISC's Animal Welfare Committee (AWC). Each State and Territory has a representative on the AWC which has traditionally drawn representation from all State and Territory departments responsible for primary industries.
5. The recent recommendations of the *OIE Ad Hoc Group on Animal Welfare* are for the scope of OIE animal welfare activities to cover:
  - (a) animals used in agriculture and aquaculture for production, breeding and working purposes;
  - (b) companion animals including 'exotic' (wild-caught and 'non-traditional') species; animals used for research, testing and teaching purposes;
  - (c) free living wildlife, including the issues of hunting, trapping and vertebrate pest control; and
  - (d) animals used for sport, recreation and entertainment, including in circuses and zoos.
6. Routine tail docking of dogs raises two concerns – the ethical acceptability of cosmetic surgery on dogs, and the suffering caused by the surgical pain of the intervention in a

normal dog. Pain issues might be addressed by conducting the intervention under appropriate analgesia by a veterinary surgeon. On an ethical basis, the community is generally against the procedure if it is for cosmetic purposes only.

7. The National Consultative Committee for Animal Welfare (NCCAW) is appointed and funded by the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to provide advice to him on animal welfare issues. A position paper on the tail docking of dogs, adopted by NCCAW, recommends to the Minister the banning of the procedure with a phase in period during which the procedure should be conducted by a veterinary surgeon.
8. The ACT has introduced a ban on routine tail docking of dogs.
9. Tail docking is not a mandatory requirement of any breed standard recognised by the Australian National Kennel Council. The Council has resolved to amend all breed standards for breeds with docked tail to have the words ‘preferably docked’ removed. The breed standard will now allow tails to be left in a natural state for judging purposes. The organization would prefer that tail docking was not banned, leaving it to an individual breeder’s ethical decision.
10. The Australian Veterinary Association policy is that tail docking of dogs is unnecessary and unjustifiable and supports introduction of legislation to ban the procedure nationally.
11. The RSPCA opposes the procedure on any species unless on the grounds of an individual animal’s health, as assessed by a veterinarian.
12. Ministers considered that the issue of the appropriate Ministerial Council and the role of PIMC to deal with domestic animal welfare issues needed to be clarified.
13. Although agreeing in-principle, Ministers felt that the issue of a nationally coordinated State and Territory ban on the routine tail docking of dogs for cosmetic purposes required further consultation. Ministers requested that following consultations in each jurisdiction, a report be presented to its next meeting.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

14. Council:
  - (a) **AGREED** that Standing Committee report to Council at its next meeting with recommendations on PIMC’s role (as compared to other Ministerial Council’s role) in animal welfare; and
  - (b) **AGREED IN-PRINCIPLE** to a nationally coordinated State and Territory ban on the routine tail docking of dogs for cosmetic purposes and **REQUESTED** Standing Committee facilitate consultation, under Victoria’s Chair, in each jurisdiction and report on outcomes to the next Ministerial Council meeting.

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<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.14</b>

### LIVE EXPORT TRADE TO THE MIDDLE EAST

1. Council was informed of action to address the issue of mortalities of cattle and sheep on live sheep voyages out of eastern Australia.

#### BACKGROUND

2. The current live cattle export Order under the Australian Meat and Livestock Industry (AMLI) Act was promulgated as a result of the investigation into the *MV Charolais Express* incident in 1998 and applies to long haul voyages of cattle generally. Separate action was also taken against the exporter at that time.
3. The Order specifically addressed conditions for exporting southern hemisphere cattle into the northern hemisphere summer, with weight limitations and additional space to be provided for them. The majority of cattle exported to the Middle East during the northern summer go to Red Sea ports (Egypt and Jordan) and traditionally a significant number of the cattle are sourced from northern Australia. However, there has been a regular small trade in cattle (usually around 250-500 head per shipment) destined for Arabian Gulf ports.
4. The *MV Becrux* departed Portland on 14 June 2002 and Fremantle on 18 June 2002 with 1995 head of cattle and 63,434 head of sheep destined for Middle East markets of Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar. This was its maiden voyage.
5. The exporter informed AQIS around 1 July 2002 that significant cattle mortalities had occurred as the vessel entered the Arabian Gulf on 29 June 2002, when very hot, still, humid conditions were experienced. The extreme weather conditions and high mortalities continued. When the vessel docked in Damman, Saudi Arabia, on 1 July 2002, mortalities had reached approximately 280 head with 100 carcasses still on board.
6. The decision to dock on 1 July 2002 was taken in the hope that the cattle could be quickly unloaded into the importer's feedlot and further losses minimised. The cattle were subsequently rejected by the Saudi Arabian veterinary authorities, although the sheep destined for Saudi Arabia were allowed to be unloaded. The vessel departed Saudi Arabia and, whilst alternative markets were found for the cattle in the United Arab Emirates of Fujairah and Muscat, further mortalities occurred both up until the time of discharge and in the feedlots after discharge. Based on the Master's report, there were 614 shipboard mortalities. The final number of mortalities in the feedlots is unknown. Some estimates have suggested total mortalities of between 800 and 900.

7. The remainder of the sheep were subsequently discharged in Muscat and Doha and total sheep mortalities were around 2.2 % (1418 deaths out of a shipment of 63,434).
8. The Marine Orders 43 state that the acceptable cattle mortality level is 1% or less on a voyage of 10 days or greater and that the acceptable sheep mortality level is 2% or less. Mortalities above these levels automatically trigger an investigation by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). As both cattle and sheep mortalities on the maiden voyage of the *Becrux* exceeded the limits, AMSA has commenced an investigation, in consultation with AQIS and Livecorp.
9. The outcome of the investigation will be used to determine any action that should be taken against the exporter or the vessel, and any long term changes that may be needed for livestock exports to the Middle East, in general.
10. The Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry announced on 16 July 2002 that the current Order in relation to southern cattle exported to the Middle East in the northern hemisphere would be amended to limit the total number on any vessel and to allow only cattle sourced from above the 26<sup>th</sup> parallel to be exported to the Arabian Gulf ports during the northern hemisphere summer period from May to October inclusively. This amendment is an interim measure and the Order will be reviewed, pending the outcome of the investigation.
11. Any changes that may be needed to the export requirements for sheep into the northern hemisphere summer will also be reviewed, pending the outcome of the investigation.
12. The *MV Becrux* returned to Australia on 25 July and sought approval to load a second consignment of sheep at Portland and Fremantle for the same Middle East ports as those of its maiden voyage.
13. AMSA inspected the vessel in Portland and cleared it as being equipped and maintained to standards specified by Marine Orders 43. AQIS considered all of the relevant information and decided to permit sheep to be loaded for a second voyage subject to a number of conditions including a requirement for an AQIS veterinarian to accompany the voyage and additional space for the sheep. The role of the AQIS veterinarian is to monitor the health and welfare of the sheep on board and measure environmental conditions, looking for any 'hot spots'. Information gained will be of assistance in the investigation into the outcome of the maiden voyage.

## **DISCUSSION**

14. This tragedy is clearly unacceptable to government and industry. Without prejudging the investigation, which will take several months to complete, there will need to be careful consideration of the future export of southern cattle to the Middle East during the northern hemisphere summer. Close consultation with all stakeholders will be essential.
15. The industry has changed in recent times with much larger vessels being used with the capacity to carry greater numbers of sheep and cattle. Sourcing sufficient numbers of cattle and sheep has seen the traditional trading patterns change, ie the emergence of the Saudi Arabian live sheep and cattle market has provided the opportunity for vessels to

reconfigure their cargo mix of sheep and significantly more cattle to service their Persian Gulf markets. The cargo of the *MV Becrux* was the first of such consignments. It is suspected that the larger configuration of these newer and larger vessels has minimised the commercial pressure applied by the Order for exporters to source cattle from above the 26<sup>th</sup> parallel. This impact needs to be closely examined.

16. The industry has attempted to address changes in the trade and welfare concerns through the introduction of a quality assurance scheme, the Livestock Export Accreditation Program (LEAP), for the preparation and transport of exported livestock.
17. The cattle and sheep mortalities on the *Becrux* now require the Government and industry to determine the adequacy of Government Orders and industry programs and to identify whether any additional measures or amendments might be needed to protect the welfare of the animals. Welfare groups have criticised the performance of the live cattle trade. The RSPCA has proposed that the ban on the export of southern cattle during the northern hemisphere summer be extended to all Middle East destinations.
18. The Australian Meat Workers Union has also taken the opportunity afforded by this incident to call for a ban on the live animal export trade in favour of domestic processing of all livestock.
19. The Chair advised Ministers of a report from the Independent Reference Group, consisting of government, industry and welfare groups, commissioned to look at the management practices in relation to the recent livestock export incidents, has identified a range of issues, which if addressed, should be able to resolve the problems at Portland.

## RESOLUTIONS

20. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** that an investigation led by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), and including AQIS and the industry body, Livecorp, is currently underway into the unacceptable cattle and sheep mortalities on the maiden voyage of the *Becrux* to the Middle East in June 2002;
  - (b) **NOTED** that, in relation to cattle, the live animal export industry suggested interim measures for shipping southern cattle to the Arabian Gulf during the northern summer and that this ultimately led to the recent amendments to the Order setting out conditions for cattle exports to the Middle East;
  - (c) **NOTED** that the interim arrangements and the current Order will be reviewed pending the outcome of the AMSA led investigation;
  - (d) **NOTED** that the current export requirements for sheep into the northern hemisphere summer and winter will also be reviewed pending the outcome of the AQIS component of the AMSA led investigation; and
  - (e) **NOTED** that Standing Committee agreed that regular updates will be provided to Council on this issue.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.15</b>

### FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT

1. Council was informed of preparedness to address bushfire emergencies in the coming fire season and the proposed Cooperative Research Centre for Bushfire.

#### BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

2. Forest fires are predicted to be a major problem in the coming months and the Commonwealth is concerned to ensure that a national response mechanism is in place, and that necessary preventive measures are taken beforehand.
3. The Commonwealth has recently announced that it will provide up to \$5 million to pay for up to half of the direct costs of leasing and locating three Erickson Airplane heli-tankers for the peak fire season. The States and Territories will be asked to pay the other half of the direct costs, as well as all the operating costs. The Commonwealth has taken this action because of the effectiveness of the heli-tankers in assisting with the NSW bushfires last summer.

#### Cooperative Research Centre for Bushfire

4. There is currently a proposal to establish a CRC for Bushfire with core and supporting participants drawn from land management, fire management and emergency services agencies, as well as universities and other research centres.
5. The proposal received overwhelming support at a workshop hosted in March by the Commonwealth Minister for Science who advised that a "Bushfire CRC, involving private and public sector funding would attract \$15 million of Commonwealth funding, as well as raise the profile of research into bushfires. It could also lead to the development of new technology and programs for dealing with this constant threat to Australian lives and property". The application is being co-ordinated by the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC).
6. The Aim and Principal Objectives of the proposed CRC are:
  - (a) to manage the bushfire risk to the community in an economically and ecologically sustainable manner;
  - (b) to develop an internationally renowned centre of excellence to lead and co-ordinate bushfire research in Australia;
  - (c) to provide a research framework that will improve the effectiveness of bushfire management agencies; and

- (d) to increase the self-sufficiency of communities in managing the risks from bushfires.
7. The 2002 Selection Round for CRCs attracted almost 60 applications for funding. An announcement on the successful applications will be made in December by the Commonwealth Minister for Science. Despite recent activities such as Project Vesta which sought to predict wildfire behaviour, we do not know as much about bushfires as we should, given its significance to Australia. If the proposed CRC on Bushfire is established, it will make an important contribution to filling this gap, as well as on other fire research areas such as preparation, suppression and education.

#### **Australian and New Zealand Fire Control Officers to the USA**

8. In early August, following several weeks of wildfires in both the USA and Canada, the USA sought assistance from Australia and New Zealand to help with wildfire suppression activities. In response, a contingent of about 50 firefighters left for the USA in mid-August, and assisted primarily with the "Biscuit" Fire in south-west Oregon which, at over 200,000 hectares, was the largest fire in Oregon's history. The firefighters returned home in mid-September. This contingent followed the assistance provided by Australia and New Zealand in August/September 2000.
9. The contingent was organised through the Forest Fire Management Group, a sub-committee of the PIMC's Forestry and Forest Products Committee. The expertise of Australian and New Zealand firefighters is recognised internationally, and it is appropriate for this Council to formally recognise their contribution, as well as the contribution of the firefighters (including volunteers) during the Australian and New Zealand fire seasons.

#### **RESOLUTIONS**

10. Council:
- (a) **RECOGNISED** that Australia may be facing another severe bushfire season and the importance for arrangements to be in place to ensure an effective response;
  - (b) **NOTED** the Commonwealth's offer to provide up to \$5 million to pay for up to half of the direct costs of leasing and locating three Erickson Aircrane heli-tankers for the peak fire season;
  - (c) **NOTED** that a decision on the establishment of a CRC for Bushfire will be made in December;
  - (d) **CONGRATULATED** the contingent of Australian and New Zealand firefighters who travelled to the USA in August/September to assist with the wildfire emergency; and
  - (e) **ACKNOWLEDGED** the contribution of Australian and New Zealand firefighters (including volunteers) and emergency services personnel during domestic fire seasons.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.16</b>

**AUSTRALIAN MODEL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE  
WELFARE OF ANIMALS – THE FARMING OF OSTRICHES**

1. Council was asked to endorse the *Australian Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – The Farming of Ostriches*.

**BACKGROUND**

2. The Model Code of Practice was drafted to fulfil a need identified by Animal Welfare Committee for a Model Code to provide guidance to those responsible for the care and welfare of ostriches about agreed best practice animal welfare standards.

**DISCUSSION**

3. *The Australian Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – The Farming of Ostriches* is intended as a standard to all people responsible for the welfare and husbandry of ostriches and aims to encourage the efficient, considerate treatment of animals so that stress is minimised.
4. The Office of Regulation Review was consulted in the preparation of the Regulation Impact Statement and has approved the Regulation Impact Statement as suitable for presentation to Ministerial Council.

**RESOLUTIONS**

5. Council:
  - (a) **ENDORSED** the *Australian Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – The Farming of Ostriches*; and
  - (b) **NOTED** that Standing Committee has requested the Primary Industries Health Committee to consider how to ensure the code is adopted and ensure communication to industry.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.17</b>

### UPDATE ON BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS IN AUSTRALIA

1. Agreement was sought from Council on continuation of Council's commitment to bovine tuberculosis (TB) eradication in Australia. Council was also advised of the development of arrangements for the management of TB post 2002 by Animal Health Australia on behalf of the parties of the current national program.

#### BACKGROUND

2. Since the inception of the national program in 1970, industry and governments have spent in excess of \$1 billion on the eradication of brucellosis and TB. Australia was declared free from brucellosis in August 1989 and from TB in December 1997.
3. The Tuberculosis Freedom Assurance Program (TFAP) was established in January 1998 to monitor and respond to the expected occasional incidents of TB, following the 27 year eradication program.

#### DISCUSSION

4. In order to meet the international obligations for TB free countries, Australia must demonstrate on-going surveillance and eradication activities. The national program, TFAP, (1998-2002) was developed to meet Australia's international obligations and eradicate any cases of TB detected.
5. TB currently persists in Australia at very low levels, which, combined with the epidemiology of bovine TB, is such that sporadic new cases are likely to be detected for the foreseeable future.
6. The proposed TFAP2 (2003 – 2006) is essentially a continuation of the existing national program, containing a strategy to move to a risk based surveillance system within the states/territories jurisdiction. Surveillance for TB will continue after the conclusion of the NGSP through meat inspection procedures as outlined by the Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production and Transportation of Meat and Meat Products for Human Consumption (the Australian Standard). The Commonwealth will continue, with industry, to fund meat inspection at AQIS abattoirs, thus remaining committed to continuing TB surveillance. States and Territories will continue to be responsible for eradicating disease detected and the Cattle Council of Australia will continue to provide assistance measures to effected producers.

7. An independent review of the risk posed by TB and the surveillance arrangements that are proposed for TFAP2 has been completed to assist in resolving some stakeholders' concerns. Dr Gardner Murray, Australian Chief Veterinary Officer, chaired the Steering Committee for the Review, the outcome of which supported the surveillance approach proposed under TFAP2.
8. The TFAP2 has been developed by all stakeholders and reflects the need to manage the transition process to a risk-based surveillance system, whilst continuing to meet Australia's international obligations. Animal Health Australia advise that the draft TFAP2 Deed of Agreement will be available for consideration by stakeholders in the week commencing 7 October 2002.
9. One of the objectives of the proposed TFAP2 is to identify appropriate post-2006 arrangements for the management of TB to continue to meet Australia's international obligations and manage the progressive implementation of these arrangements. Thus, it is anticipated that Animal Health Australia, on behalf of stakeholders, will be seeking Council endorsement of recommendations regarding TB surveillance and eradication needs beyond 2006, during TFAP2.

### **Recent detections**

10. During the first four and a half years of TFAP (January 1998 – June 2002) more than 38 million cattle were monitored at abattoirs with approximately 18,000 granulomas examined by laboratories to exclude TB. During the same period, a total of 8 properties have been detected with TB (4 in 1998; 0 in 1999; 1 in 2000; 0 in 2001 and 3 in 2002).
11. In recent years, on the properties where TB has been detected, the number of individual animals with TB in infected herds has been at an extremely low level. During 2000 and 2001, 16.8 million cattle were processed by abattoirs with only 16 animals detected with TB. This equates to a prevalence of approximately 1 in 525,000 (assuming the accepted sensitivity of 50% for abattoir inspection).
12. Two aged cows, detected with TB in August 2000, originated from a Queensland property with a long history of the disease. The Queensland Department of Primary Industries (QDPI) advised that during 2002 the owner has delivered nearly 5,000 cattle for destocking and has cooperated with the testing of about 19,000 cattle remaining on the property. TB has not been detected in any of these animals. The QDPI further advised that the owner is contesting the valuation of the cattle as determined by the QDPI in the local magistrate's court.
13. In January 2002, TB was detected in an aged buffalo cow in the Northern Territory on routine meat inspection. The NT Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development (BIRD) advised that the 30 head of buffalo and 15 cattle remaining on the property were sent to slaughter or destroyed. No further TB was found in these animals. In July 2002, TB was confirmed in a further 7 buffalo on an adjacent property as a result of a surveillance testing program of neighbouring feral herds. Plans to eradicate the disease on this property and the adjacent area are continuing.
14. TB was also confirmed in a mature steer slaughtered in Queensland in March 2002. The QDPI advised that the property of immediate origin in Queensland is well developed and

currently runs about 4,300 cattle. No further TB was detected during a slaughter and testing program on the property.

15. These cases do not affect Australia's internationally recognised TB free status in terms of OIE requirements.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

16. Council:

- (a) **AGREED** that each jurisdiction must continue to remain vigilant and discharge its responsibilities regarding bovine tuberculosis (TB) to ensure Australia's internationally recognised TB free status is not jeopardised;
- (b) **NOTED** that Animal Health Australia is finalising a proposal for the extension of TFAP for a further four years;
- (c) **NOTED** progress in currently active, individual property TB eradication programs within Tuberculosis Freedom Assurance Program (TFAP); and
- (d) **REQUESTED** that Animal Health Australia further examine future TB management needs beyond 2006, given the low prevalence of the disease.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	MEETING NUMBER: 2
	LOCATION: SYDNEY
	DATE: 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.18</b>

### INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

1. As part of the COAG framework to advance reconciliation, the implementation phase of the closely aligned Natural Resource Management (NRM) and Primary Industries (PI) Action Plans will cover a range of activities that contribute to addressing the needs of Indigenous people.

#### BACKGROUND

2. PIMC 1 (May 2002) endorsed the Primary Industries Action Plan for Reconciliation as a framework document for preparing detailed Implementation Plans. The Joint Taskforce for Advancing Indigenous Reconciliation was asked to build on the NRM and PI Action Plans and develop detailed Implementation Plans for Standing Committee and Ministerial Council endorsement.

#### DISCUSSION

3. The NRM, PI and Environment Protection and Heritage (EPH) Action Plans are based on the same template and the development of the Implementation stage of the Plans was also to be developed cooperatively. The NRM and PI Implementation Plans are being developed by the Joint Taskforce for Advancing Indigenous Reconciliation. The EPHC Indigenous Taskforce has recently been established and will be developing their Implementation Plan in coordination with the Joint Taskforce for Advancing Indigenous Reconciliation.

#### RESOLUTION

4. Council **AGREED** to the Primary Industries Implementation Plan for Advancing Reconciliation at Annex A; and

**ANNEX A:** Implementation Plan for the Primary Industries Ministerial Council Action Plan



<p><b>1C.</b> Steer the development of a national framework for the re-engineering of appropriate programs to meet the needs of Indigenous people</p>	<p>Development and communication of a national framework</p> <p>Consistency of performance measures across jurisdictions.</p> <p>All PIMC agencies will review and re-engineer their policies, products and services according to CoAG's requirements for Aboriginal Reconciliation by Dec 02.</p>	<p>Where applicable, primary industries policies, products and services will have a flexible approach to design and delivery that encourages maximum participation by Indigenous people. Increased equity of outcomes that relate to the social and economic well being of Indigenous people.</p>	<p>Develop a framework for co-ordination and collaborative development of programs and delivery to have regard for, the needs of Indigenous people/communities for PISC consideration</p>	<p>Agencies</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>1D.</b> Build capacity, by showcasing examples of best practice in member agencies, MCATSIA and ATSIC work in implementing CoAG's aboriginal reconciliation framework to encourage agencies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify opportunities to enable increased Indigenous involvement;</li> <li>• identify opportunities for cooperation and streamlining of program development and delivery across agencies</li> <li>• forging links between member agencies and the private sector to identify and develop economic opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Case studies documented and disseminated to member agencies.</p>	<p>Improved social and economic well-being of Indigenous people and communities.</p> <p>A shared understanding of successful models</p> <p>Increased sharing of models of best practice between jurisdictions and other agencies.</p> <p>Increased communication on Indigenous issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies in developing their work programs to include case studies which enhance opportunities in increased Indigenous involvement and management in primary industries.</li> </ul> <p>Agencies in developing their work plans, seek and create links with the private sector to deliver economic opportunities.</p>	<p>Agencies</p> <p>Agencies</p>	<p>December 03</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<p><b>1E.</b> Ongoing review of the PIMC implementation plan to ensure that actions targeting Indigenous disadvantage are progressed.</p>	<p>The implementation plan reviewed and amended as required.</p>	<p>Council's work plan supports the COAG reconciliation framework.</p>	<p>Agencies to provide Programs Committee with an annual report of agencies progress against work plans.</p> <p>Co-ordinate plans and provide a report on all agencies plans to PIMC</p>	<p>Agencies</p> <p>Programs Committee</p>	<p>December 2004</p> <p>March 2005</p>
<p>2. Promote inter-governmental and inter-sectoral links and coordination</p>					
<p><b>2A.</b> Encourage representatives of Indigenous organisations on relevant Council working groups</p>	<p>Working group membership details reported by PIMC annually.</p>	<p>PIMC enhances Indigenous representation and can encourage change as appropriate.</p>	<p>PIMC groups will ensure the engagement participation by, relevant Indigenous groups all policy processes through their working groups.</p> <p>Working groups will report to Programs Committee annually on their Indigenous representation</p>	<p>PIMC</p> <p>PIMC working groups</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2003</p>
<p><b>2B.</b> Oversee the development of processes and procedures that will result in intergovernmental links and partnerships being established with Ministerial Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (MCATSIA) and other relevant ministerial councils on cross-jurisdictional Indigenous issues.</p>	<p>Links established with other Ministerial Councils.</p> <p>A level of consistency in advancing reconciliation across Ministerial Councils.</p>	<p>Joint decisions made in partnership with other Ministerial Councils.</p>	<p>Invite ATSIC, ILC and/or other relevant representative to join) PISC working groups</p> <p>The PIMC report provided by the Programs Committee be forwarded to MCATSIA and all other Ministerial Councils.</p>	<p>PISC</p> <p>PIMC</p>	<p>March 2003</p> <p>Annual from April 2005</p>
<p><b>2C.</b> Oversee the development of processes and procedures that will foster partnerships with key Indigenous bodies.</p>	<p>Identification of and development of links with Indigenous organisations by December, 2002.</p>	<p>Improved communication with representatives of Indigenous agencies, groups.</p>	<p>Agency work plans to identify the linkages with Indigenous agencies.</p>	<p>Agencies</p>	<p>Ongoing from December 2003</p>

<b>2D.</b> Review and closer align /combine the PI, NRM and EPHC Action Plans on Advancing Aboriginal Reconciliation.	Consistency of Action Plans on Advancing Aboriginal Reconciliation	Improved service and consistent delivery of services to Indigenous agencies, groups and communities.	Approach NRMMC and EPHMC to develop a combined action plan for 2003-4.	PIMC	October 2002
<b>2E.</b> PIMC Member agencies ensure websites links provide information on Advancing Aboriginal Reconciliation, relevant activities and where possible relevant case studies.	Links put in place and case studies developed	Broader access to and understanding of programs	Agencies to maintain Indigenous information on appropriate web based technology.	PIMC	Ongoing
3 Identify and address gaps barriers and opportunities					
3A. Monitor the development and implementation of best practice guidelines which incorporate above principles and the COAG priority areas	Best practice guidelines developed and adopted by agencies by June, 2002  Develop a process of continuous improvement to review best practice guidelines	Better program flexibility and coordination between government agencies  Better access to information on the advancement of reconciliation	Develop Best Practice Framework and Guidelines for recommendation PIMC approval  Agencies to apply the Best Practice Framework and Guidelines in the development and implementation of PI Strategies and delivery mechanisms.  Best Practice Framework and Guidelines published on agencies' websites	Joint Taskforce  Agencies	October 2002  October 2003  October 2003

<p>3B. Monitor progress of member agencies to review and reengineer policies, programs and services for Indigenous people/communities</p>	<p>Policies, programs and services are revised using the best practice guidelines to take into account cultural differences.</p> <p>New policies, programs and services are developed and targeted at Indigenous people.</p>	<p>Removal of current barriers that exist and prevent Indigenous people taking-up existing programs and/or services and achieving equity in outcomes.</p> <p>Relevant consistency of policies, programs and services across agencies.</p>	<p>Agencies monitor the progress of their work plans to improve policy, programs and service delivery to Indigenous people/communities.</p> <p><i>Agencies ensure that all new policies, programs and services are developed and targeted at Indigenous people/communities and: that these policies, programs and services are reviewed on a regular basis as part of the agencies' monitoring processes</i></p>	<p>Agencies</p> <p>Agencies</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>3C. Foster the sharing of information on examples of Indigenous action in primary industries and sustainable resource management.</p>	<p>Shared information to develop best models for delivering benefits to Indigenous people. Case studies documented and disseminated to member agencies</p> <p>Updating the best practice guidelines annually</p>	<p>Improved models of programs and service for Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>Increased capacity of agencies to design and deliver improved models of programs and services with Indigenous communities /agencies.</p>	<p>Agencies publish on appropriate web site news stories, case studies, successful models and other relevant agency experiences on PIM agency websites</p>	<p>Agencies</p>	<p>Ongoing from December 2003</p>
<p>3D. Promote the development of decision making processes and tools which integrate Indigenous issues into regional land management and planning processes.</p>			<p>Develop Best Practice Framework and Guidelines for NRM approval</p> <p>Agencies to use the Best Practice Framework and Guidelines in the development and implementation of primary industries strategies and</p>	<p>Agencies</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

			delivery mechanisms  Best Practice Framework and Guidelines published on agencies' websites.		
<b>3E.</b> Support the development of a national approach to best practice to property management planning on Indigenous lands in partnership with ILC and ATSIC.	Build a partnership with ATSIC and ILC by July 2002.	Consistency of best practice in property management planning on Indigenous lands.	Agencies in partnership with ATSIC, ILC and other relevant Indigenous representative bodies and Land Councils incorporate the Best Practice Framework and Guidelines into property management planning	Agencies	Ongoing
3F. Ensure programs designed and delivered by member agencies promote Indigenous employment and management opportunities.		Increased employment and management opportunities for Indigenous people.	Agencies establish a baseline and provide reports on program outcomes in terms of Indigenous employment and management opportunities.	Agencies	Annually
4. Measure, review, evaluate and respond					
4A. Report as required to COAG and MCATSIA on the outcomes achieved under this Action Plan	Ensure the establishment of a mechanism for the measurement, evaluation and reporting on agency responses to the action plan  Reporting to COAG completed as required	Partnerships, shared responsibilities with Indigenous communities, program flexibility and coordination between government agencies  All reports are in line with MCATSIA requirements and the Review of Government Service Provision on Indigenous reporting.	Agencies supply reports as required to CoAG and MCATSIA on outcomes achieved	Agencies	As required

<p>4B. Partner with MCATSIA, NRMMC and EPHC to develop a set of key indicators of Indigenous involvement and participation in management of sustainable primary industries activities.</p>	<p>Key indicators developed and adopted by primary industries agencies by the end of 2002.</p>	<p>Greater understanding and better measurement of involvement in management of sustainable primary industries policies and programs. Consistent benchmarking and reporting across PIMC agencies and/or Ministerial Councils.</p>	<p>Key indicators in Primary Industries developed for Primary Industries work plan.</p>	<p>Agencies</p>	<p>By December 2002</p>
<p>4C. Monitor and progress of the review and re-engineering of member agencies policies, programs and services.</p>	<p>Policies, programs and services are revised using the national framework to take into account cultural differences; New policies, programs and services are developed and targeted at Indigenous people.</p>	<p>Improved services and programs for Indigenous people. Improvement in the social and economic well being for Indigenous people and communities.</p>	<p>Agencies ensure work plans incorporate review and re-engineering of policies, programs and services.</p>	<p>Agencies</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>4D. Ensure the establishment of a mechanism for the ongoing review of the PIMC action plan.</p>	<p>Establish a process in partnership with MCATSIA for review</p>	<p>Enhanced capacity for PIMC to advance reconciliation</p>	<p>Review current action plan and make recommendations in partnership with ATSIC and ILC for improvements for 2003-04 plans</p>	<p>Programs Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.19</b>

**FOOD - DOMESTIC REGULATION OF ORGANIC PRODUCTION, IMPORT,  
DISTRIBUTION AND LABELLING**

1. Council endorsement was sought for an industry self regulatory approach to the regulation of organic and biodynamic products.

**BACKGROUND**

2. SCARM 17 (March 2000) requested its Industries Competitiveness Committee (ICC) to investigate and progress options for the recognition of a national standard for the domestic production, import, distribution, and labelling of organic products.
3. The establishment of a national domestic control framework for organic products should ensure that:
  - (a) Australian consumers would be able to make informed choices about the products they purchase by being able to differentiate between certified products and products produced by other means (increased buyer confidence);
  - (b) domestic consumers would have recourse against imported food with fraudulent or misleading labelling;
  - (c) the means to challenge the authenticity of labelling claims of imported products is strengthened; and
  - (d) the nation-wide consistency in the management of organic production issues is maintained.
4. PISC 2 (March 2002) requested the International Competitiveness Committee (ICC) consult with industry, retail and consumer groups regarding options described in the Options Paper on domestic control of organic and biodynamic products. Based on this request, ICC collaborated with AFFA and arranged an Organic Industry Consultation Workshop in Canberra May 2002.
5. Australian grown organic foods destined for export are required to comply with Version 2 of the National Standard for the Export of Organic and Biodynamic Produce (hereafter referred to as the National Standard) under the Export Control (Organic Certification) Orders 1997.

## DISCUSSION

6. The Organic Federation of Australia (OFA) has sought regulation under the Food Standards Code (FSC) administered by the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) now known as Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). However, this avenue is not considered appropriate given the agreed focus of the FSC on matters affecting human health and safety.
7. To gain certification under the National Standard Australian producers, processors, packers and transport providers are required to undergo a certification process and a regular auditing regime. However, while it is illegal to export uncertified organically labelled products, food that is labelled as organic but is not “certified” can be sold on the domestic market at the retail and wholesale levels.
8. The organic industry, primarily through the OFA, was actively sought government regulation. In particular they have voiced a preference for underpinning legislation to the National Standard to enable them to effectively prosecute those making misleading claims regarding the authenticity of products - that is, labelling a product “organic” when it is not certified, or not what consumers would assume “organic” to be.
9. Industry consultation revealed that some members are not wholly supportive of “regulation” if it means additional costs for industry members.
10. Industry believes it already has a Code Of Practice in the National Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Produce. However, there is currently no clear dispute resolution mechanism in place.
11. An ACCC Complaints Report has revealed that consumers are not making a significant number of complaints about organic labelling to warrant further investigations. While the OFA believes there are up to 2000 - 3000 cases of product substitution on the domestic market, there is little evidence to support this claim.

## RESOLUTIONS

12. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** that Standing Committee reaffirmed its support for industry self-regulation for organic production; and
  - (b) **ENDORSED** an industry self regulatory approach to the regulation of organic and biodynamic products through the adoption of a voluntary Australian Code of Practice and protection through the Trade Practices Act and Fair Trading legislation.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.20</b>

### GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS

1. Council sought support to ensure effective industry self-regulation in the management of GM risks to agricultural production and trade.

#### BACKGROUND

##### **National policy principle on GM-free zones**

2. PIMC 1 (May 2002) agreed that the Gene Technology Ministerial Council (GTMC) should be advised of studies by the Commonwealth and States on practical aspects of the establishment of GM-free zones and asked to consult with PIMC members prior to its taking decisions in relation to policy principles on such zones. This request was conveyed in correspondence from the Chair of PIMC to the Chair of GTMC.
3. At its meeting on 24 May 2002, the GTMC agreed to establish a Working Group to develop a draft policy principle to recognise GM-free zones established under State or Territory legislation for identity preservation or marketing purposes. The draft policy principle is being finalised and will be made available during consultation with the public, PIMC, the Office of Gene Technology Regulator and others, in accordance with the *Gene Technology Act 2000*. Following the consultation process, the policy principle will be reconsidered by the Gene Technology Standing Committee (GTSC) and forwarded to GTMC for consideration and decision early in 2003.

##### **Management of genetically modified crops**

4. Industry has, through an industry committee, Gene Technology Grains Committee (GTGC), been examining the numerous, through-chain issues involved with the coexistence of GM and non-GM crops in the field. The Committee met with PISC's Plant Industries Committee (PIC) and discussed the process for delivering coexistence, including the definition of coexistence objectives, understanding of and ability to define standards (ie. through regulations or through a code of practice), the management practices needed to put coexistence into place, and the responsibility to identify and establish the standards. The GTGC has since developed and publicly released a draft "Strategic Framework for Maintaining Coexistence of Supply Chains" for wide discussion.

## DISCUSSION

5. If GTMC is able to issue the national policy principle on GM-free zones in advance of possible commercial releases of GM canola crops, this would facilitate actions by jurisdictions considering the implementation of GM-free zones for marketing purposes.
6. The impending commercial release of GM canola highlights the importance of making sound progress in managing and monitoring GM risks to agricultural production and trade.
7. PIC has been preparing Guidelines for Industry Stewardship Programs and Crop Management Plans to provide a sound technical basis for the development of industry self-regulation.
8. The GTGC is also developing a table of responsibilities for “On Farm” Co-existence, which indicates, from their perspective, the delivery mechanism for achieving Guidelines for Industry Stewardship and Crop Management Plans outcomes.
9. Ministers were reminded that at PIMC 1 (May 2002), Council requested Standing Committee to monitor and report on the “industry self-regulation and government monitoring” approach in two years time, or earlier should changes in policy or market conditions warrant. In light of this, it was agreed that Standing Committee be asked to report to Council in early 2003 on industry preparedness for the commercial release of canola and on options and recommendations for ongoing government monitoring of industry self-regulation.
10. Some Ministers expressed concerns that the OGTR might approve commercial release of GM canola prior to finalisation of the policy principle on GM free zones by the Gene Technology Ministerial Council and the industry self-regulation arrangements.

## RESOLUTIONS

11. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** progress on the development of a national policy principle on GM-free zones;
  - (b) **REQUESTED** Standing Committee to complete its consultations and finalise the “Guidelines for Industry Stewardship and Crop Management Plans” by the end of 2002; and
  - (c) **REQUESTED** Standing Committee to provide a report to Council out-of-session in early 2003 that:
    - (i) advises on industry preparedness for the commercialisation of GM canola; and
    - (ii) provides options and recommendations for ongoing government “monitoring” of industry arrangements.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.21</b>

### GRAPEVINE LEAF RUST IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

1. Council approval was sought for the eradication of grapevine leaf rust in the Northern Territory.

#### BACKGROUND

2. The exotic disease grapevine leaf rust (GLR), caused by the fungus *Phakopsora euvitis*, was first detected in Australia in a Darwin suburb during July 2001. GLR is widespread in the tropical and sub-tropical areas of southeast Asia. The closest known potential sources of infection for Darwin are East Timor, West Timor and Irian Jaya but the disease is likely to occur in other areas of Indonesia, including Bali.
3. Although the NT and Queensland believe that eradication is probably unattainable, other members of the Consultative Committee on Exotic Pests and Diseases (CCEPPD), considered GLR to be eradicable on technical grounds and agreed that in consideration of NT's legislative restrictions the best option would be to conduct intensive surveys to detect all grapevines in Darwin and surrounding areas followed by the destruction of all diseased vines with follow-up monitoring for three to five years of the remaining healthy vines for appearance of rust.

#### DISCUSSION

4. The cost of the proposed eradication was estimated to be \$1 million. The need for ongoing surveillance to assess uninfected vines for infection may add to the cost of the program, however this can only be assessed after the initial survey is complete.
5. Through direct discussion, the wine and grape industry, in particular the Winemakers Federation of Australia, has indicated their willingness to assist government agencies with required research to determine resistant varieties, the efficacy of an incentive package and the development of a communication strategy, and an education and awareness strategy to facilitate the success of a program to eradicate GLR.
6. Council was informed that the costs of eradication would be for 12 months with ongoing costs over a three to five year period possibly in the order of \$500,000 for monitoring with another \$200,000 for a public awareness and incentive program with agreed industry assistance.

**RESOLUTIONS**

## 7. Council:

- (a) **NOTED** the recent detection of grapevine leaf rust in the Northern Territory and that survey results indicate that GLR is currently restricted to the Darwin area;
- (a) **APPROVED** the eradication of all diseased grapevine with initial costs of \$1 million from governments
- (c) **NOTED** that the *full* cost of response options cannot be accurately estimated until after the initial survey has been conducted;
- (d) **NOTED** that industry has indicated their willingness to assist the research on resistance, communication, education and potential inducement strategies to aid in successful eradication; and
- (e) **APPROVED** an initial budget and cost sharing arrangement in 2002-03, based on production tonnage, between the Commonwealth and State/Territory governments with the following contributions:

	%	\$
Commonwealth (AFFA)	50.00	500,000
New South Wales	11.3	113,000
Victoria	14.24	142,400
Queensland	0.25	2,500
Western Australia	2.17	21,700
South Australia	21.87	218,700
Tasmania	0.17	1,700
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.22</b>

**NATIONAL OVINE JOHNE'S DISEASE CONTROL AND EVALUATION  
PROGRAM (NOJDP) PLAN 2001-02 - 2003-04**

1. Council was informed of modifications to the NOJDP for the remaining two years of the program.

**BACKGROUND**

2. In late August 2002, the NOJDP Program Advisory Committee (PAC) met and developed an agreed set of principles specifically relating to the two-year transition period for the national program. The 'Agreed PAC Positions' are detailed below:
  - A two-year continuation of a NOJDP to July 2004 is appropriate to enable a planned transition from the NOJDP to future arrangements.
  - The revised Plan must include provision for the immediate commencement of a planned process for the development of transition arrangements, including detailed consultations with all stakeholders. The transition consultations must include the finalisation of future arrangements for the management and control of OJD in Australia.
  - There is recognition by most stakeholders that a national financial assistance package will not be part of the two-year plan.
  - The provision of State based assistance measures in NSW and SA, and the planned assistance arrangements in Victoria, are providing some assistance for OJD affected producers.
  - Significant progress has been made in defining the distribution of the disease and a range of R&D projects have already enabled significant on-farm management and other procedures to be put in place that will continue to control the spread of the disease. It is anticipated that R&D outcomes over the next two years will provide additional information that will further enhance disease control practices.
  - Savings identified in the Surveillance and Control Sub Programs currently funded by the Commonwealth and the NSI for the last two years of the planned program – estimated to be approximately \$1.7 million – should be 'redirected' and provide an enhanced risk-based control program that will allow affected producers to establish property status and maintain trading options. This 'saving of \$1.7 million' is the net figure after 'leaving' up to \$100,000 of the previously identified savings in each State's surveillance budget.
  - Detailed consultations on the components of the new Control/Transition Sub Program will be undertaken as soon as possible to ensure all jurisdictions/Parties have an opportunity to outline the type of testing procedures and transition

arrangements they believe will deliver the most effective outcomes for the program.

3. Animal Health Australia is now preparing the detailed budgets for the revised Surveillance, Control and Transition Sub Programs and finalising the scope and content of the assistance measures and testing arrangements in the Control and Transition Sub Programs. The PAC members reviewed the revised Sub Program details in early September and the draft Two Year Transition Program Plan 2002-04 is now being finalised.
4. The final Draft Two Year Transition Program Plan 2002-2004 will be considered by the Parties to the Deed in September 2002. The financial implications for all Parties will be detailed so State governments, the National Sheep Industry and State sheep industries can determine the impact on their funding commitments when compared to the original Program funding arrangements. Animal Health Australia, subject to the reaction of Parties to the Deed, will consider the Two Year Transition Program Plan 2002-04 in October 2002.

## **DISCUSSION**

5. Discussions in the PAC reflect the views of the Members and since the committee, although representational of all Parties does not have representatives of all States, their reaction to the revised funding arrangements will be critical for the eventual endorsement of the Transitional Program Plan.
6. Animal Health Australia previously sought the views of all Parties to a revised program funding proposal in late May 2002. The proposal at that time included the redirection of Commonwealth and National Sheep Industry (NSI) surveillance funds for the last two years of the program to financial assistance to OJD affected producers. The reaction of Parties to the notion of 'transferring the surveillance funding responsibility' to States was generally favourable, although one State was not able to support the initial proposal.
7. The PAC considered the views of all Parties with respect to surveillance funding and the new Program Plan provides up to \$100,000 of on-going Commonwealth and NSI funding to each of the State surveillance programs for the period July 2002 to July 2004. However, the estimated surveillance 'savings' from the Commonwealth and the NSI of almost \$1.7 million will be 'reallocated' to the new Transition Sub Program. This program will provide assistance for on-farm testing strategies that will enable producers to maintain or recover their normal trading patterns and allow subsidies up to \$1,000 for the development of Property Disease Management Plans (PDMPs). Additional savings in the funding contributions by the Commonwealth and the NSI to the current Control Sub Program of \$340,000 will also be transferred to the new Transition Sub Program.
8. The PAC is also proposing that the Control Sub Program be funded by the State sheep industries in New South Wales and Victoria to a level commensurate with the original funding commitments of those State industries. These funds will provide State-based assistance measures to producers and assist with the effective delivery of the NOJDP. It is also recognised that other States are funding producer assistance measures, for example South Australia, and that contributions in NSW and Victoria may exceed those indicated in the proposed budget.

9. The PAC is recommending that the R&D and Communications Sub Programs be funded in accord with the agreed three year budgets and has noted that the Management Sub Program will require an additional \$50,000 if the next two years expenditure is maintained at the budgeted level.
10. The difficulty in finalising the Program Plan for the last two years of the current NOJDP reflects the continuing debate - and to some extent the uncertainty - with respect to the longer-term management of OJD in Australia. The proposed Transition Program Plan specifically addresses the issues surrounding the development of the long-term strategies for the management of OJD and the interim arrangements for on-going surveillance and control programs.
11. The revised funding proposals for the surveillance, control and transition programs attempt to introduce the longer term funding arrangements that will likely be in place post the NOJDP. However, extensive consultation with all stakeholders will take place over the next several months as the longer-term arrangements are debated widely throughout industry and government before any final decisions are taken.
12. Recent consultations between government and industry in Victoria on the future of the control program in that State will require further consideration and an analysis of its impact on the national program. It appears that the previously agreed policy to have significant areas of western NSW and most of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania move to Protected zone status 1<sup>st</sup> October 2002 – the Eastern Australian Protected Zone (EAPZ) - is being reconsidered by Veterinary Committee following developments in Victoria and some continuing disquiet among some industry groups. The progression to an EAPZ, particularly in Victoria, may be subject to some delay depending on the deliberations of Veterinary Committee.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

13. Council:
  - (a) **NOTED** that the NOJDP Program Advisory Committee (PAC) has recommended that Commonwealth and National Sheep Industry (NSI) underspent surveillance and control funds be redirected to a Transition program to provide a financial subsidy to affected producers for testing to maintain trading and develop on-farm disease management programs;
  - (b) **NOTED** that other components of the NOJDP, including the R&D, Communications and Management Sub Programs will continue in accordance with the Program Plan presented to Parties early this year; and
  - (c) **NOTED** that Animal Health Australia and the PAC are preparing a draft Two Year Transitional Program Plan 2002-04 for consideration by the Parties to the Deed in late September 2002.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.23</b>

### PLANT HEALTH AUSTRALIA REPORT

- Council was presented with a report of the activities of Plant Health Australia (PHA).

#### **BACKGROUND**

- PHA was incorporated on 27 April 2000 as a Public Company, limited by guarantee, to represent plant industry and government, identify and coordinate priority plant health issues in Australia and to promote international and domestic confidence in Australia's plant industries.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### **PHA/PISC engagement**

##### Cost sharing in the plant sector

- A member workshop held in October 2001 to discuss cost sharing principles and models resulted in two models being considered:
  - a plant cost sharing model (similar to that adopted by members of Animal Health Australia); and
  - a functional split model – based upon industry managing compensation (through a compulsory levy mechanism) and governments continuing to manage and fund eradication efforts.
- Sixteen cost sharing case studies based on hypothetical and actual incursions were distributed to members in April 2002. Government members and some industry members indicated support for the plant cost-sharing model, but there was also strong support for the functional split model from some horticultural industries.
- PHA conducted a series of workshops with members in early May to discuss the cost sharing case studies. These workshops provided clarification on unresolved issues, and identified agreement on a number of key aspects of a cost sharing agreement.
- At the 30 May 2002 General Meeting, PHA members endorsed a PHA Board proposal to prepare an initial cost sharing agreement based on agreed principles, while resolving outstanding issues through the formation of the four small Expert Reference Groups (ERGs), made up of PHA members and stakeholders. Each ERG will produce an issues paper and key recommendations. Following a review by PHA Board, these will be

provided to PHA members for further consideration and comment before agreed recommendations are incorporated into the draft cost sharing agreement.

7. PHA intends that a substantive draft agreement will be available for consideration by members at the PHA Annual General Meeting on 31 October 2002, and that a final agreement will be prepared for signing before the end of 2002.
8. A key issue for plant industry members is affordability, and the means to reliably establish a compulsory grower levy through which the industry could contribute to cost sharing. A number of plant industries have indicated that they cannot participate in cost sharing without a suitable levy, and are concerned about meeting all 12 principles for establishment of a compulsory levy.
9. Disease classification also has the potential to hamper the development of an effective cost sharing agreement. Most government members have expressed a strong preference for limiting the number of serious pests/diseases included in a cost sharing agreement.
10. PHA is seeking support for an initial agreed list of pest/diseases of concern, with any additional pests/diseases to be identified, and potentially classified through PHA's industry biosecurity process. As in the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement, pests or diseases not originally included in the agreement could still be handled through the cost-sharing framework with the agreement of affected parties.
11. There is limited plant industry support for biosecurity provisions, in a cost sharing deed of agreement. A pragmatic approach to the issue may be to include generic requirements, with the flexibility to negotiate more comprehensive biosecurity obligations over time.
12. The CEO and Chairman of PHA participated in a meeting with the PISC plant cost sharing working group in Canberra during late May 2002. PHA appreciates the opportunity to participate in these meetings, and welcomes development of a common PISC position on cost sharing issues.

#### National Weeds Workshop

13. PHA and the Australian Weeds Committee (AWC) held a workshop on 19-20 February 2002, with the aim of examining gaps and duplication in roles and responsibilities across weed management. The workshop received strong support from the CRC for Australian Weed Management, Biosecurity Australia, AQIS, AFFA, Environment Australia, World Wide Fund for Nature – Australia and the CSIRO.
14. The workshop proceedings are to be distributed in July, and the PHA Chairman has written to the Secretary of AFFA regarding the potential for PHA to contribute to the coordination of national weed management issues.

Tri-State fruit fly

15. The PHA Board continues to observe the Tri-State Fruit Fly steering committee deliberations. Given progress being made on cost sharing for exotic plant pests, PHA believes that an agreed cost sharing model and principles developed through this process could also be broadly applicable to Tri-State Fruit Fly.

Branched broomrape

16. PHA believes that a further contribution to this program from the grains or horticulture industries for retrospective expenditure is unlikely to be achievable. The cost sharing agreement is only expected to cover future incursions of exotic plant pests and diseases, and weeds will not included in the first instance.

Optimising the decision making process

17. PHA aims to review and enhance the decision making process for responses to exotic plant pests and diseases, a crucial component of the Australian plant health system. PHA has consulted with AFFA and other PHA members, and OCPPO will shortly commence a desktop review to document and assess the current decision making process. This will allow PHA to work with all members to develop possible approaches to enhance existing decision making processes.

**PHA industry biosecurity initiative**

18. PHA recently released industry biosecurity planning guidelines to its members. The nationally consistent guidelines will be used to develop industry specific biosecurity plans. The grains, sugar, banana, fresh stonefruit, citrus, and apple/pear industries have indicated that they wish to begin industry biosecurity plans.
19. A Program Manager has been recruited to develop a grains farm biosecurity and incursion management plan over the next three years. Commonwealth Budget Initiative resources, and funding negotiated with the Grains Council of Australia and the Grains Research and Development Corporation is being used to fund this position.
20. PHA intends that its guidelines will be consistent with, and complement existing State based approaches, such as the 'Guard' programs successfully adopted in Western Australia.
21. The Industry Biosecurity Planning Guidelines recommend the formation of individual Industry Biosecurity Groups (IBGs). IBGs will have technical, government, and industry representation and will assess risks and develop appropriate industry specific biosecurity plans and measures.

**Diagnostic capacity**

22. PHA recently released a report on the status of plant diagnostics in Australia. Although the report provides a snapshot of mainly government diagnostic facilities and structures, PHA believes that the overall findings are a useful indicator of national diagnostic capacity. The PHA Board will review the recommendations of the report; and examine the potential for PHA to invest in future projects that will cost-effectively assist in enhancing the national diagnostic capability.

### **National awareness/1800 number project**

23. PHA has undertaken negotiations with the IPHRWG regarding establishment of a national 1800 number for reporting exotic pests and diseases. Standard Operating Procedures for handling and responding to calls have been circulated and agreed by state organisations. PHA is working with all its members to develop an appropriate and cost effective communication strategy for promoting the number to relevant primary producers.

### **Plant health information systems**

24. The Australian Plant Pest Database was launched in late April 2002, and has been well received by plant health specialists. PHA continues to liaise with government bodies regarding inclusion of further collections and ongoing data capture.

### **Other projects**

25. PHA has recently finalised and distributed the Annual Operational Plan 2002-2003, and review of the Annual Operational Plan 2001-2002 to members. The Annual Operational Plan provides details of other projects planned for the current financial year.

### **Sustainable funding mechanisms**

26. AFFA has undertaken consultation with PHA members regarding a specific end use levy for membership subscriptions. A number of members indicated support for a specific end use levy, and the *Plant Health Australia (Plant Industries) Funding Bill 2002* was introduced into the House of Representatives in June 2002. The Bill is expected to be considered by Parliament during the Autumn 2002 sitting. The Bill provides PHA members with the option to use a grower levy to cover their yearly membership obligations. Any excess funds collected are to be diverted to relevant industry research and development corporations.

### **Membership**

27. The Winemakers' Federation of Australia (WFA) and the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (formerly an associate member) became full members of PHA at the first General Meeting in May 2002.
28. PHA has received a full membership application from the Winegrape Growers' Council of Australia (WGCA). This application will be considered at the Annual General Meeting in October 2002. An application for associate membership has also been received from the Australasian Plant Pathology Society.
29. With recent membership additions, PHA now represents all major sectors of plant industry in Australia. The forestry sector remains an associate member of PHA through the Forestry and Forest Products Committee, but PHA is discussing full membership with appropriate bodies from the forestry sector. .

### **Commonwealth Budget Initiative**

30. PHA continues to work with AFFA on developing and implementing projects developed through the Commonwealth Budget Initiative – *Building a National Approach to Animal and Plant Health*.

### **RESOLUTION**

31. Council **NOTED** the report.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.24</b>

### **REPORT BY PISC CHAIR**

1. The Chair of the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) informed Council of several significant issues considered by PISC 3 (September 2002) which are important to the longer-term work program of the Committee and Council. These are summarized below.

#### **Defining the Future Role of Government in Primary Industries**

2. Standing Committee considered a paper brought forward by its Industry Competitiveness Committee and Rural Affairs Committee arising from a number of studies undertaken of key issues and trends impacting on Australian agriculture and in particular the implications for government arising from them.
3. Given the large number of drivers that will impact on the future of agriculture, there is a need to prioritise which issues need to be addressed, recognizing that not all drivers of change will equally influence the future role of government.
4. Standing Committee had a wide-ranging discussion concerning a partnership approach between Federal and State governments. This is essential to achieving a consistent direction in policy and application with respect to the future role of government in agriculture and in providing further guidance to Standing Committee.
5. The Committee agreed to a proposed workshop to be convened by Tasmania in October to discuss State and Territory perspectives on the changing role of government and to develop objectives, approach and timelines to complete the necessary work. A report is to be provided to Standing Committee in November 2002.

#### **Agricultural And Veterinary Chemicals – NRA Strategic Project And Report On Pesticide Use In Australia**

6. Standing Committee considered a number of issues likely to arise in the near future in relation to agricultural and veterinary chemicals and their implications for the work of the Council. These issues arise from:
  - (a) a risk analysis of Australia's agvet chemical management system by the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Policy Committee (AVCPC) to develop a risk management framework for identifying priority areas for AVCPC attention;

- (b) a project in 200 by the Board of the National Registration Authority for Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (NRA) to identify possible directions for the NRA over the next ten to fifteen years.
  - (c) the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering's (AATSE) Report on Pesticide Use in Australia which made a number of recommendations relating mainly to the need to monitor impacts of chemical use and control of use issues. Dr John Radcliffe who prepared the Report gave a presentation to Standing Committee members.
7. AVCPC is focusing initially on four high priority areas: Appropriate Chemical Access; Agvet Chemical System Performance; Domestic and International Market Access; and Agvet Chemical User Awareness and Training. AVCPC expects to finalise implementation plans for projects within these areas later this year. In doing so, it is essential that AVCPC take into account recommendations and issues identified in the Radcliffe Report and the NRA Strategic Project Review.
  8. Standing Committee agreed that AVCPC should bring forward its completed work plan, together with responses to the report on the NRA Strategic Project and the Report on Pesticide Use in Australia, to the next Standing Committee meeting.

#### **Research Priorities – National and R&D Corporations**

9. Standing Committee also considered its input to the Commonwealth Government's review of National Research Priorities which was initiated by the Federal Minister for Science in May this year. It reviewed and agreed to a joint submission on primary industries R&D priorities to be made to the review. In doing so, it was noted that the Minister for Science's preference was for a small number of national priority areas to be identified – for this reason it was agreed the submission focus on two main themes namely:
  - (a) improved primary production through sustainable resource use; and
  - (b) healthy, safe, affordable, humane foods.
10. These priorities fitted well with the two themes of sustainability and a "healthy, wealthy and wise" Australia which had emerged from the review consultation phase as likely National Research Priorities.
11. It is expected that the Commonwealth Government will announce the National Research Priorities this month (October 2002). Standing Committee agreed that it would then prepare a position paper for input to the Commonwealth's review process of priorities for Rural Research and Development Corporations.

#### **RESOLUTION**

12. Council **NOTED** the report.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.25</b>

## COUNCIL WORK PROGRAM AND PRIORITIES

### BACKGROUND

1. PIMC 1 (May 2002) agreed to terms of reference and priority areas it wished to address. Council also requested Standing Committee to report to each Council meeting on progress against priority areas.

### DISCUSSION

2. Standing Committee has considered and agreed proposed terms of reference and broad work plans for its four Advisory Committees:
  - . Industries Competitiveness Committee;
  - . Primary Industries Health Committee;
  - . Forestry and Forest Products Committee; and
  - . Rural Affairs Committee.
3. The work plans of these Committees reflect and encompass the priorities identified by Council. Given the large number of policy issues to be addressed by the individual Committees, several are undertaking significant reviews to establish comprehensive strategic frameworks for more detailed work programs and identification of emerging issues.
4. Annex A provides a summary of key areas being addressed by the Primary Industries Standing Committee against priorities identified by Council.

### RESOLUTION

5. Council **NOTED** the broad areas being addressed by Standing Committee and progress against the agreed priority areas.

**ANNEX A:** Primary Industries Ministerial Council – Progress Report For Priority Areas

## **PRIMARY INDUSTRIES MINISTERIAL COUNCIL – PROGRESS REPORT FOR PRIORITY AREAS**

### **1. Ensure the Implementation of Disease Preparedness Systems, In Particular For FMD.**

- Significant focus on implementation of emergency response systems for Foot and Mouth Disease, in particular through a range of simulations, in particular Exercise Minotaur (9-13 September). Standing Committee members were directly involved through their membership of the National Management Group and through the opportunity to review and comment on the efficacy of emergency responses.
- Other significant issues currently being considered by Standing Committee include the level of preparedness for other diseases such as BSE and National Ovine Johne's Disease and the implementation of forward control and evaluation programs.
- Progress on these issues is the subject of several PIMC2 papers, as well as papers considering appropriate information systems such as livestock identification and tracing.

### **2. Finalise Arrangements With Industry For The Management, Including Funding, Of Animal And Plant Disease Outbreaks Across All Industry Sectors.**

- Cost sharing arrangements for emergency animal diseases were agreed with Animal Health Australia in March 2002 and were the basis of the response to the control of Newcastle Disease in May 2002 and of the response of government and industry as part of Exercise Minotaur – further meetings of the NMG are proposed to address a number of issues identified through the Exercise for FMD.
- Cost sharing arrangements in relation to plant disease outbreaks are currently the subject of discussion between AFFA, other jurisdictions and Plant Health Australia and its members.

### **3. Enable Indigenous Communities To Better Participate In, Benefit From And Contribute To Primary Industries.**

- In response to COAG, earlier meetings of both the Primary Industries and Natural Resource Management Ministerial Councils endorsed Action Plans for Indigenous Engagement. Standing Committee's were requested to prepare detailed implementation plans, in consultation with the Environment Protection and Heritage Standing Committee.
- The current agendas for both Primary Industries and NRM Ministerial Councils include papers on implementation of Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plans.

### **4. Maximise The Opportunities For Rural Women And Youth To Participate In The Management Of Their Industries.**

- Rural Womens' Working Group (RWWG) is to prepare a program evaluation process and budget for the National Action Plan for Women for submission to the next Standing Committee meeting.
- Under the Rural Affairs Committee (RAC), the Young People in Rural Industries Working Group is to address measures and priorities to facilitate increased participation of young people in rural industries. The Group has recently reported to RAC on priority areas for 2002-03 and will report annually to the RAC. The work plan and budget for the Group will be presented to PISC in March 2003.

**5. Ensure Animal Welfare Practices Are Amongst The Best In The World.**

- PIHC has maintained a continuing role in animal welfare issues both at a level of model codes of practice and at the broader policy level in areas such as the management of live animal exports. Experience to date indicates there is certainly an important monitoring role for Standing Committee in relation to animal welfare performance. Several papers on these matters have been listed for consideration at PIMC2.

**6. Ensure the Protection of Australia's primary industries resources, plant and animal biodiversity through scientifically-based biosecurity policy.**

- These priorities represent a significant component of the terms of reference for the Primary Industries Health Committee under Standing Committee. Given the range of policy issues that fall within these areas, PIHC is developing a more strategic framework upon which to base its work program and those of its supporting committees.
- Initially, the Plant Health Committee and Veterinary Committee will commence individual risk analyses to identify and prioritise issues, including emerging issues that may need to be brought before Standing Committee and Council.
- Issues related to genetically modified crops is also an important focus within this priority area. At PIMC 1 (May 2002), Council agreed that the Gene Technology Ministerial Council (GTMC) should be advised of studies by the Commonwealth and States on practical aspects of the establishment of GM-free zones and asked to consult with PIMC members prior to its taking decisions in relation to policy principles on such zones. A paper has been brought to PIMC2 outlining the outcome of this process which should see the draft policy principles ready for consultation in September 2002.

**7. Adopt Standards And Guidelines Directed At Sustainable Primary Industry Practices And The Maintenance Of Australia's "Clean Green" Reputation.**

- In pursuing this priority, it is clear that a number of activities overlap with or are complementary to areas under consideration by the NRM Standing Committee and Council.
- For example, Standing Committee is bringing to Council a draft Australian Forestry Standard for Certification and Labelling which is intended to provide a basis for certifying sustainable forest management and associated labelling of forest products.

- The Standing Committee is also seeking Council agreement to an Australian Standard for Carbon Accounting.
- At a broader level, Standing Committee has also commenced work, in close collaboration with the NRM Standing Committee, to examine issues such as environmental management systems in agriculture and greenhouse issues and agriculture.
- Environmental sustainability is also an important element and goal of the National Food Industry Strategy which is relevant to the activities of the Industries Competitiveness Committee.

## **8. The Role of Forests in Sustainable Landscapes**

- Standing Committee recently considered a paper on *Forest Environmental Services* that examined the use of commercial plantations and farm forestry for delivering environmental services, such as salinity mitigation. It was recognised that a high level of co-operation is required with the NRM Standing Committee and Council in pursuing this agenda.
- Consequently, PISC recently agreed that its Forestry and Forest Products Committee and the NRMSC's Land, Water and Biodiversity Committee would jointly prepare advice for consideration by PIMC and NRMMC on forests and environmental services.

## **9. Influence the business environment in the development and adoption of innovation along the value chain in agriculture, fisheries, food, forestry and all associated industries in order to promote globally competitive industries.**

- This area is addressed through several of PISC's Advisory Committees. The Industry Competitiveness Committee, for example, has an ongoing role in considering the impact of broad policy areas such as developments in international agricultural trade. Through this and other Committees, PISC is considering key issues in relation to the food sector (particularly against the background of the National Food Industry Strategy), and the forestry sector.
- PISC through the Industries Competitiveness Committee and the Rural Affairs Committee has recently initiated a joint study on the future role of government in agriculture. This will be a significant element of the future work program of both Committees and will be undertaken in conjunction with the FFPC and the NRMSC Marine and Coastal Committee. Initially a workshop is to be held to discuss jurisdictions' perspectives with an initial report back to PISC in November 2002.
- The Rural Affairs Committee under PISC has also reported on its evaluation of the FarmBis Program. The RAC Working Group drew on recent evaluations completed under the FarmBis monitoring and evaluation framework, and undertook a SWOT analysis of the program's performance to date. While the Program was seen as working well, the RAC evaluation identified several areas to improve performance: encouraging participation by new target groups, improved communication strategies, and the potential to include supply-chain logistics and management within FarmBis priorities.

- PISC has also considered a number of issues concerning forest industry development, such as the *Plantation Vision 2020*. The Forestry and Forest Products Committee has also agreed to support a National Forest Industry Regional Development Conference in mid-2003. These issues are the subject of several papers to both PIMC and NRM Ministerial Council.
- A significant element of PISC's program has been Exceptional Circumstances Reform following on from consideration of this issue by Council in May 2002. A paper has been brought forward for Council's consideration at PIMC 2 based on the outcome of consultation to date between the Commonwealth and State/Territory jurisdictions in relation to funding structures.
- The Natural resource Management Marine and Coastal Committee (MCC) has been working with the aquaculture industry as part of the Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda process to identify an aquaculture work program for PIMC. MCC has identified a number of possible actions including a National Aquaculture Policy Statement, improving R&D and innovation capacity, development of best practice principles and streamlining the regulatory environment for ESD. A paper responding to these proposals has been brought to PIMC 2 for consideration.

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	MEETING NUMBER: 2
	LOCATION: SYDNEY
	DATE: 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.26</b>

### FINANCIAL REPORT

1. Council was informed of expenditures agreed by PISC 3 and PIMC 2.

#### BACKGROUND

2. Standing Committee is required to report to Council on all expenditures agreed within its limit of \$1m in any one instance
  - decisions on expenditure above \$1m are taken by Council.
3. A summary of the financial items agreed by PISC 3 and PIMC 2 is at Annex A.

#### RESOLUTION

4. Council **NOTED** the summary of expenditure items.

**ANNEX A:** Summary of expenditure items

**SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE ITEMS****Agreed by PISC out-of-session:**

<b>PISC Item OOS 2</b>	<b>Potato spindle tuber viroid in Western Australia and New South Wales</b>	
	Funding in 2001-02 of survey, eradication and decontamination action with member contributions as follows:	
	%	\$
	Commonwealth (AFFA)	50.0 96,565.50
	New South Wales	5.5 10,622.20
	Victoria	13.0 25,107.03
	Queensland	12.0 23,175.72
	Western Australia	4.0 7,725.24
	South Australia	9.5 18,347.45
	Tasmania	6.0 11,587.86
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0 193,131.00</b>

<b>PISC Item OOS 5</b>	<b>Final cost-sharing reimbursements for Newcastle disease outbreaks in NSW, 1999</b>	
	Final costs for 2002-03 for the Mangrove Mountain and Schofields outbreaks of Newcastle disease (ND) in 1999 and for the ND Virus Survey in 2000 with member contributions as follows:	
		\$
	Commonwealth (AFFA)	1,494,573.42
	NSW	-2,030,220.1
	Victoria	357,986.48
	Queensland	269,162.76
	Western Australia	146,365.54
	South Australia	108,263.25
	Tasmania	7,949.36
	Northern Territory	7,476.75
	Australian Capital Territory	13,159.08

**Agreed by PIMC:**

<b>PIMC Item 4G</b>	<b>Grapevine leaf rust in Northern Territory</b>	
	Cost of treatment and eradication of vines in Darwin in 2002-03 with member contributions as follows:	
	%	\$
	Commonwealth (AFFA)	50.00 500,000
	New South Wales	11.03 113,000
	Victoria	14.24 142,400
	Queensland	0.25 2,500
	Western Australia	2.17 21,700
	South Australia	21.87 218,700
	Tasmania	0.17 1,700
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00 1,000,000</b>

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	<b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> 2
	<b>LOCATION:</b> SYDNEY
	<b>DATE:</b> 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.27</b>

### NEXT MEETINGS

#### BACKGROUND

1. At the NRM Ministerial Council meeting on 31 August 2001 it was agreed that the meetings of the Primary Industries, Environment Protection and Heritage and Natural Resource Management Ministerial Councils be held back to back.
2. It was also agreed that the associated meetings of the Standing Committee be held four to five weeks prior to the Council meetings and be hosted as for the Council meetings.
3. PIMC 1 (May 2002) noted that future meetings of the Standing Committees will be limited to Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide with the costs of hosting these meetings shared equally amongst all jurisdictions. Council also agreed to hosting arrangements through to 2004 for the Standing Committees and Councils.

#### DISCUSSION

4. Queensland and Western Australia have subsequently agreed to a change in the venues for the April and October 2003 Council meetings, i.e. for the April meeting to be held in Queensland and the October meeting to be held in Western Australia.
5. The Chair advised Council that there would be further discussion on dates for the three Ministerial Council meetings at the NRMMC and EPHMC meetings on 11 October. He also advised Ministers that it was becoming increasingly difficult to arrange a Thursday where there were no parliaments sitting and asked for early indications if agreed dates caused a problem.

#### RESOLUTIONS

6. Council **AGREED** to the changed venue for the April and October 2003 Council meetings as follows:

	<b>Thursday and Friday</b>	<b>Meeting host</b>
<b>2003</b>		
Standing Committees	13/14 March 2003	Victoria
Min Councils	10/11 April 2003	Queensland
Standing Committees	4/5 September 2003	South Australia
Min Councils	2/3 October 2003	Western Australia
<b>2004</b>		
Standing Committees	11/12 March 2004	South Australia
Min Councils	15/16 April 2004	South Australia
Standing Committees	9/10 September 2004	Victoria
Min Councils	7/8 October 2004	Victoria

<b>Primary Industries Ministerial Council</b>	MEETING NUMBER: 2
	LOCATION: SYDNEY
	DATE: 10 OCTOBER 2002
<b>RESOLUTION</b>	<b>No: 2.28</b>

**NATIONAL COMPETITION REVIEW OF  
DRUGS, POISONS AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES LEGISLATION**

1. Council considered, out-of-session, a paper seeking endorsement of a response to the National Competition Review of Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Legislation.

**BACKGROUND**

2. In July 1999, the Council of Australian Governments announced the review of the scheduling of drugs, poisons and controlled substances as one of the national reviews under the National Competition Agreement. The review was required to examine drugs, poisons and controlled substances legislation against the *Principles of National Competition Policy* and to determine if the benefits outweighed the costs.
3. The Final Report on the *National Competition Review of Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Legislation* (The Galbally Report) has been presented to the Australian Health Ministers Conference (AHMC), as required by its terms of reference.
4. In preparing its response, AHMC is required to consult with the Agricultural and Resources Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ, now Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC)).
5. The Galbally Report makes 27 recommendations, including separate scheduling committees for human medicines and poisons (all other chemicals, including agricultural and veterinary chemicals).
6. Other recommendations include changes to advertising controls, transaction recording requirements and other implementation aspects of the trading of scheduled products. Lastly, reflecting the separation of the two scheduling committees, the Galbally Report recommends separate compliance arrangements for each class of products. Implementation will require changes to both Commonwealth, state health and, in some cases, changes to state/territory agricultural and veterinary chemicals legislation.
7. Adjustments to the existing scheme are also required to facilitate the implementation of anticipated joint health arrangements under the Trans Tasman Mutual Recognition Agreement.

8. In preparing a response to the Galbally review, the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council (AHMAC) established a Department of Health and Aged Care working party to consider its recommendations and prepared the *Report of the AHMAC Working Party on the Review of Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Legislation for Consideration by COAG*. This report recommends adoption of all the Galbally Report recommendations with some minor amendments or exclusions.
9. Unfortunately, the Galbally Report is ambiguous and confusing in some significant aspects. In particular, it fails to adequately define the scope of its recommendations in a number of cases, particularly as they relate to the agricultural and veterinary chemicals scheme – the apparent inconsistency in the use of the term 'medicines' is an important case in point.
10. A joint PISC/AHMAC response on the Galbally Report has been superseded by the Working Party Report, despite discussions between AFFA and the Department of Health and Ageing and input to a proposed draft report. The Working Party Report does not include any of the analysis undertaken and progress achieved in these discussions that indicated an interpretation that tightly focussed on human medicines.

## RESOLUTIONS

11. Council:
  - (a) **ENDORSED** the Response Paper as providing the appropriate response to the National Competition Review of Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Legislation; and
  - (b) **AGREED** that the Response Paper be forwarded to the Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council as the PIMC response to the National Competition Review of Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Legislation.

**PIMC 2/02 Communiqué**  
**10 October 2002**

### **Primary Industries Ministerial Council Meeting**

#### **Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Capability**

Ministers agreed that Exercise *Minotaur* had been successful and very worthwhile. The Exercise had involved people at the highest level of both government and industry and had significantly increased awareness of the many complex and serious issues that would arise if there was a real major national animal disease emergency in Australia. Importantly, the Exercise had highlighted a number of areas where improvements could be made to improve Australia's capability to deal with an outbreak should one occur. Ministers agreed that these matters, which include development of a far more effective national information management system and rapid and accurate tracing of animals, should be dealt with as a matter of high priority.

Ministers also discussed BSE and re-affirmed the importance of maintaining surveillance at a level which satisfies the demand of international markets as well as the importance of implementing bans on suspect material which could enter animal feed.

Ministers reinforced their commitment to maintaining Australia's status for being free of bovine tuberculosis. In particular, they stressed that each jurisdiction must remain vigilant and fully discharge their responsibilities regarding bovine tuberculosis in Australia. They supported the extension of the tuberculosis freedom assurance program for another four years.

As an adjunct to these decisions, Ministers also considered options for development of an effective system for identification and tracing of national livestock. Council agreed that a high-level working group, including representatives of peak industry bodies, be asked to review the national livestock identification system and existing State livestock identification systems and report back to Council on options for a nationally-based system.

#### **Exceptional Circumstances**

Minister Truss offered further Commonwealth initiatives as part of the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) Reform package, focussing on funding of business support, and reaffirmed the Commonwealth's commitment to EC reform. Council reconfirmed its support for a new framework for EC and highlighted the other contributions that State and Federal Governments make to assist farmers and rural communities outside EC funding. In this context, heads of agricultural agencies recently agreed to provide information on state drought programs so that the Commonwealth could develop a dossier of support measures.

Minister Truss proposed that the Commonwealth continue to contribute 90 per cent of the cost of business support in the first year, with the States contributing the balance, and proposed that the States/Territories and the Commonwealth provide matching funding for the second and any subsequent year within a five year period.

The Commonwealth's offer to the States is a further attempt to improve the EC process. It would build on the improved accessibility already achieved through the use of predictive modelling and the availability of interim income assistance, announced by Minister Truss in September, for areas that have a demonstrated *prima facie* case for exceptional circumstances

### **International Agricultural Trade**

Council also reviewed recent developments in the area of international agricultural trade. A number of significant recent trade policy developments were noted by Council including the position put forward by the United States and the Cairns Group to the WTO agricultural negotiations and the European Commission's proposals for mid-term review of aspects of EU farm policy.

### **Live export trade**

Ministers discussed a number of recent incidents in the livestock export trade involving unacceptably high mortality of sheep and cattle. All Ministers supported the initiatives being taken by government and industry to meet community expectations in regard to the welfare of animals involved in the trade.

Ministers were also briefed on the review of the live trade undertaken by the Independent Reference Group which was initiated by the Federal Minister, the Hon Warren Truss. The IRG has been requested to advise both government and industry on future initiatives to improve animal welfare outcomes in the livestock export trade.

### **Australian Forestry Standard**

Ministers endorsed the Australian Forestry Standard, which will provide a basis for voluntary and independent third-party certification that supports a continual improvement towards sustainable forest management practices in Australia.

The Standard seeks to provide an assurance to purchasers of Australian timber that it has been sourced from sustainably managed forests. The Standard was developed by forest owners and managers, indigenous, scientific and community representatives and contains environmental, social, economic and cultural forest management performance criteria and requirements.

The New Zealand Minister provided a strong statement of support and endorsement for the Australian Forestry Standard as recognition of the sustainability of Australian and New Zealand forest practices.

### **Forestry and Forest Products Issues**

#### Regional Forest Industry Development

Council recognised the importance of forestry and regional forest industry development to many regional economies and noted that a Forest Industry Regional Development Conference would be convened during 2003.

#### Forest Plantations

Ministers endorsed the revised Plantations for Australia: the 2020 Vision as the national plantations strategy, with the goal of increasing Australia's plantation base to 3 million hectares by 2020. The Vision has been implemented since 1996 as a partnership between governments and industry, and the increase in private ownership has significantly increased investment opportunities and developed a more competitive industry. Council also noted that Regional Plantation Committees had an important role in implementing the Vision and endorsed a strong message of support for RPC's.

### Forest Environmental Services

Council also noted opportunities to better integrate forestry and agriculture and the need to work together and with the NRM Ministerial Council, to develop proposals and solutions to benefit both sectors, particularly through forest environmental services such as salinity mitigation, water quality, surface and ground water flows, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration.

### **Carbon Accounting**

Council noted that Standards Australia had developed a nationally consistent carbon accounting standard to provide a basis for ensuring that the major premises underlying marketable carbon rights are satisfied. Council agreed to adopt the standard on an interim basis until June 2004. Council requested that Standing Committee undertake through its Forestry and Forest Products Committee a review of implementation in January 2004 and report back on any possible amendments to the interim standard.

### **Forest Fire Management**

Recognising the severe bushfire season Australia may be facing, Council noted the Commonwealth's offer to provide up to \$5 million for up to half of the direct costs of leasing and locating three Erickson Airplane heli-tankers for the 2002-03 fire season. Council also noted the Commonwealth's offer to pay half of the \$800,000 cost with New South Wales of air transportation of two of the heli-tankers urgently to Australia to meet current emergencies.

Council noted that a decision on the establishment of a Cooperative Research Centre for Bushfire will be made in 2002.

Council also congratulated the Australian fire control officers who travelled to the USA in August/September to assist US authorities combat the severe outbreaks that marked its 2002 fire season. Council also took the opportunity to express appreciation and acknowledge the efforts of the forest services, rural fire authorities and emergency services personnel and thousands of volunteers, in battling fires in Australia and New Zealand each summer.

### **Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda**

Council noted the importance of the aquaculture industry and its potential to become a major contributor to the Australian economy. It noted work that had been undertaken with the aquaculture industry as part of the Commonwealth Government's Aquaculture Industry Action Agenda to identify a work program for the Council responding to impediments in resource planning and management. Council agreed to a number of key areas to be addressed, in particular the development of a National Aquaculture Policy Statement.

### **Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan**

Council at its last meeting in May 2002 endorsed the Primary Industries Action Plan for Reconciliation as a framework document for preparing detailed Implementation Plans for Council's consideration. This work was undertaken in conjunction with the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council. Council agreed to the Primary Industries Implementation Plan for Advancing Reconciliation.

### **Genetically Modified Crops**

At its previous meeting in May 2002, Council agreed to ask that its members be consulted by the Gene Technology Ministerial Council prior to any decisions in relation to policy principles on the establishment of GM-free zones. This process had been put in place. Council noted that

it would have an opportunity to comment on the draft policy prior to its consideration by the GTMC.

Council also agreed that work should be undertaken to advise on industry's preparedness for self-regulation of the introduction of GM crops and guidelines that might underpin government monitoring of industry performance.

### **Grapevine Leaf Rust**

Council considered the occurrence of grapevine leaf rust in Darwin and funding for an eradication program. Council acknowledged the significance of the disease in terms of potential impact on the Australian wine and grape industry overall. Council agreed to funding of \$1 million in 2002-03 to support an eradication program in Darwin. The issue of industry support and funding will be taken up with respect to funding pests and disease eradication in future years.

### **Routine Tail Docking of Dogs - National Co-ordination**

Council considered the issue of developing a nationally consistent approach to routine tail docking of dogs for cosmetic purposes. Council recognised that a wide range of views existed within the community that needed to be recognised in considering this matter.

Council agreed in principle to a nationally co-ordinated State and Territory ban on the routine tail docking of dogs for cosmetic purposes. Recognising the diversity of views on this matter, however, Standing Committee was requested to facilitate further consultation in each jurisdiction on this issue and report back to Council's next meeting.

Council also agreed that its Standing Committee should report at the next meeting on what role the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (as compared to other Ministerial Councils) should have in the broad area of animal welfare beyond that relating to production animal industries.