Managing biosecurity risks

- The Department of Agriculture aims to enhance the sustainability, profitability and competitiveness of Australia's agriculture, food, fisheries and forestry industries.

- Australia's biosecurity system protects the unique Australian environment and agricultural sector and supports Australia’s reputation as a safe and reliable trading nation.

- Protecting Australia's biosecurity is a responsibility shared between government, industry and the community.
Drivers for change

The Department of Agriculture is facing:
- significant increases in the amount of international trade and travel
- more complex production supply chains and passenger travel routes
- reduced resources and financial constraints
- a need to invest in smarter regulation.
Industry partnerships

- The Department of Agriculture is developing a differentiated regulatory approach for when we have higher levels of confidence that biosecurity risks are appropriately managed.

- We are in the concept phase of developing a Trusted Arrangements Scheme.

- Industry driven risk management can greatly reduce the time and costs of biosecurity clearance.
Industry partnerships

• This Scheme will be underpinned by sharing responsibility with industry, recognising that:
  – many industry groups/sectors can effectively contribute to the management of biosecurity risk
  – sources of risk across the supply chain can be managed through a combination of controls offshore, at the border and onshore
  – existing industry systems can manage biosecurity risks or can be adapted to do so.
Types of trusted arrangements

An arrangement may be appropriate when a trusted entity:
• is to perform a biosecurity function
• requires approval under legislation to perform a particular activity
• requests permission to divert from standard regulatory requirements
• can demonstrate an ability to build on existing systems to more efficiently or effectively manage risks – offshore, at the border and onshore.
Principles of a trusted arrangement

• The intent of a trusted arrangement is to ensure better, more productive and efficient services for stakeholders; while achieving strong biosecurity outcomes.

• The department will consider an arrangement where:
  – there is legal authority to do so
  – industry can demonstrate a good history of compliance
  – industry processes and policies can meet existing import conditions or provide an acceptable alternative
  – Australia’s biosecurity will not be compromised and
  – the volume or nature of imported goods makes the arrangement a viable option for all parties.
Principles of a trusted arrangement

• The department will approach the submission; evaluation; and approval of trusted arrangements using structured and transparent processes.

• All decisions to approve an arrangement will be supported by evidence that the entity can be trusted.

• The department will monitor the ongoing performance of a trusted arrangement through inspection, audit and surveillance activities.

• Industry will be required to provide ongoing evidence of their compliance with requirements and approved practices.
Benefits

For industry may include:

• reduced logistics and cost pressures
• improved certainty in supply chain timing
• ability to use existing processes and systems within supply chains to meet regulatory requirements.
Benefits

For the department may include:

• ability to capitalise on industry’s knowledge and commitment to collaborative risk management

• improved ability to ensure biosecurity risks are managed in the country of origin, in-transit, or upon arrival in Australia

• reduced inspection effort at the border and increased capacity to invest resources into onshore areas of higher risk.
Next Steps

• Working with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service to align regulatory approaches where possible.

• Engaging with industry to co-design a trusted arrangements framework that:
  – rewards compliance
  – acknowledges the shared responsibility of stakeholders
  – can be applied across the department (import and export pathways).