

Complete Agricultural Consulting Services

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23rd April, 2008

The Chairperson
Quarantine and Biosecurity Review
GPO Box 858
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

Dear Chairperson

Re: Ethnic Extension and Publicity Program Targeting a Reduction in Prohibited Items Arriving Via Parcel Post

In 1990 Tasmanian AQIS management noted an increasing number of parcels were being quarantined by staff at the Australia Post Hobart mail centre.

Many of the items quarantined were potential "time bombs"; most had the potential to create havoc in the Australian primary industry sector.

AQIS Canberra provided seed funding to review the extent of the parcel post threat/problem with the aim of developing an extension-awareness program targeting the main ethnic sectors to which most of the problem parcels were addressed. A comprehensive review of the problem led to the formation of an Ethnic Advisory Group working with a project team to develop what proved to be a very successful extension-awareness program.

The project clearly demonstrated that relatively simple procedures could be implemented at the State level to significantly reduce the number of prohibited items, arriving via the postal system, addressed to sections of the ethnic community. Tertiary students were identified as a particular problem group with some 35% of parcels quarantined addressed to them.

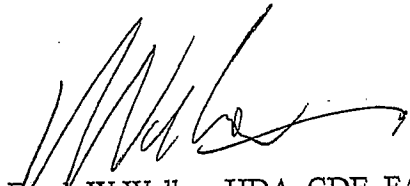
In late 1994 the final project report (copy attached) was forwarded to AQIS, Canberra. When no response was received, AQIS Tasmania contacted the Canberra office to be advised the report had been lost! Whilst another was sent, no action resulted nationally in implementing any of the recommendations.

AQIS Tasmania did take action and with co-operation from tertiary institutions with significant ethnic enrolments, has minimized the extent of the problem.

As there is still a significant threat to plant and animal based production industries from inappropriate plant and animal material arriving in Australia via the postal system, why can't the recommendations made in 1994 be implemented nationally?

I would appreciate following these matters further in person when the Review Panel visits Tasmania. However, as I expect to be overseas from 12th July to 1st September inclusive I would appreciate the matter being followed up with Mr. Danny Reardon, Manager, AQIS Tasmania, should the panel be visiting during this time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank W Walker', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Frank W Walker, HDA, GDE, FAIAST, CPAg. JP
Manager