



OUT20/11103

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Dear Belinda

**State Significant Infrastructure (SSI-9371) –
North Star to NSW/Queensland Border Inland Rail Project**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed Inland Rail Project North Star to the QLD Boarder (NS2B). The NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) Agriculture provides advice to consent authorities about the protection and growth of agricultural industries and the resources upon which these industries depend.

While many of the issues which NSW DPI (Agriculture) raised during consultation have been adequately addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement, it is recommended that further consideration is given in relation to biosecurity risk management.

NSW DPI (Agriculture) recognise that the proponent (ARTC) will be implementing a biosecurity management plan and that this plan will provide greater detail on mitigation measures the proponent will put in place to manage the biosecurity risks associated with the project. In addition to those strategies and measures identified in the EIS, it is suggested that the biosecurity risk management plan:

- include more comprehensively biosecurity risks from terrestrial invasive vertebrate and invertebrate pest, as well as weeds.

In considering terrestrial invasive species, the Plan should include mitigation measures for the potential introduction of new species to the area, not just species that are currently present. For example, the movement of prohibited matter species Parthenium weed, and red imported fire ants, and other pest species, such as Harissia cactus and Tiger pear.

It is also recommended that the Plan:

- include a comprehensive washdown and decontamination procedure for machinery before they commence works. If machinery is coming from another jurisdiction, this should be done in that jurisdiction.
- include other mitigation measures for the movement of invasive species during the construction and improvement phases as a result of equipment, freight and earthworks. It should also consider the risks of movement of invasive species once the rail is operational.
- account for any legislative requirements under the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)*, such as notification and movement restrictions. For example, notification requirements for prohibited matter or notifiable matter, and movement restrictions for tramp ants as set out in the Biosecurity Order (Permitted Activities) 2019.

- include biosecurity risks from aquatic pests, and mitigation actions in accordance with the NSW DPI [Aquatic Fieldwork procedure](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/722844/Aquatic-fieldwork-hygiene.pdf) (see [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0009/722844/Aquatic-fieldwork-hygiene.pdf](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/722844/Aquatic-fieldwork-hygiene.pdf))
- address the biosecurity risks associated with the movement of plant material and soil between properties during construction. For example, the risks from the movement of major economic pests of cotton, such as fusarium wilt to properties previously free of the disease. All plant material and soil moved in in this project should be kept where possible in the local area, and cleanliness of machinery and equipment moving onto and from individual properties should be considered.
- include mitigation measures relating to the potential for spread of pests, diseases or weeds, to discharge the general biosecurity duty under the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)*. In NSW, the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)* is the primary piece of legislation that provides a framework for the prevention, elimination and minimisation of biosecurity risks and should not be confused with the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (Cwlth)*.

It is recommended that NSW DPI be consulted in the development of the Biosecurity Risk Management Plan, to provide specific technical advice regarding weeds, terrestrial pests and/or aquatic pests (please e-mail as the first point of contact: biosecuritylegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au). It is also suggested that key industry bodies (such as Cotton Research and Development Corporation), other organisations (such as Local Lands Services, Local Government) and key documents (such as the North West Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan) are consulted during the development and implementation of the Plan.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer, Andrew Scott, on 0427 245 313.

Yours sincerely



23/9/20

Tamara Prentice
Manager Agricultural Land Use Planning