



## **Agriculture and trade sector bring a new era of Biosecurity reform**

**The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources' upcoming legislative changes will achieve practical and sustainable benefits to stakeholders across commerce and government.**

The reform brings together years of research, consultation and planning to provide us with a more modern, easy-to-interpret and effective legislation that will help continue to protect Australia's economy, environment and agriculture.

Importantly, the new "approved arrangements" associated with the legislative reform will build on existing co-regulatory schemes. This approach frees up the department's resources away from low risk activities through a range of measures and allows certain biosecurity risks to be assessed by trained, accredited and trusted industry representatives.

This approach is showcased by the Non-commodity for Containerised Cargo Clearance (NCCC) and Automatic Entry Processing for Commodities (AEPCOMM) schemes. The existing schemes enable accredited persons (customs brokers and importers) to direct entries without the need to send documents to the department and have one of its officers process the entry.

Persons who obtained the accreditation prior to July 2014 will be required to successfully complete a Bridging Course by the looming deadline of 31 March 2016. Following an assessment through the Bridging Course, accredited persons must maintain their accreditation through the new Continuing Biosecurity Competency (CBC) program.

CBC training for the scheme will now be conducted every 12 months, similar to the Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) Continued Professional Development (CPD) requirement for individual licensed customs brokers. The CBC will run in parallel to the CPD period from 1 April to 31 March each year.

We are about to launch into an era of significant reform achieved through genuine industry engagement by government. The release of the Biosecurity Act 2015 draft regulations, declaration and determination gives interested stakeholders an opportunity to provide feedback on how they will work in practice when the new Act takes effect on.

Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) is currently delivering a variety of training programmes in this area. Please visit [www.ComplianceNetFTA.com](http://www.ComplianceNetFTA.com) to find out more.

Source: Lloyds List Australia