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The Chair

Hon Ian Rickuss MP

Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

Parliament House

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Dear Ian,

Please find attached my submission on the Biosecurity Bill 2013. I am a landholder of two properties, one in the Mary Valley and the other at Kinbombi both of which have occasional visiting of red deer. I have not experienced lost production nor seen damage caused by their occasional visits. I am concerned about the following points in the Biosecurity Bill 2013 and provide recommendations :

**Issue 1: Listing of feral red deer as restricted material category 3 and its disposal.**

Population control of Red Deer on many properties has been managed through harvesting the meat for individual and recreational hunting uses including guided hunts.

Biosecurity Queensland's current estimate of "about 30,000 feral red deer in Queensland in at least 20 populations" shows that there has been a very low breeding rate given that the number given of 21,000 to 22,000 head of wild deer (Max Smith, Dept of Lands 1992) at the end of the major deer trapping times) added to the thousands of deer escaped from deer farms in the last 2 decades. It would suggest a very good harvest rate by hunters and the importance that hunting for quality trophies plays in sustainable control.

Under the proposed Schedule 2, feral red deer are listed as Restricted Material category 3, 4 and 6 and under section **43 Distributing or disposing of category 3 restricted matter**

"(1) A person who has category 3 restricted matter in the person's possession or under the person's control must not distribute or dispose of the restricted matter unless the distribution or disposal is—

- (a) performed in the way prescribed under a regulation; or
- (b) authorised under a restricted matter permit; or
- (c) performed by an authorised officer in the performance of the authorised officer's

functions under this Act.

Maximum penalty—500 penalty units”

**Recommendation:** *that a regulation be written under 43 (1) (a) that recognises the historic cultural and economic values of wild deer be preserved in the historical herds of red, fallow, chital and rusa deer (as described in the Deer Farming Act 1985). This would recognise a sustainable use of the resource for the landholder via property management plans for the management of feral deer in that historical area.*

*A permitting system and the use of Ecological Deer Management/Quality Deer Management principles as recommended by Research into Deer Genetics and Environment Group (RIDGE) be recognised by State Government as a “reasonable step” towards wild deer control in designated historical herd areas for landholders or groups of landholders. The “HuntEasy” style system provides self-regulation of all animal matter being transported from one Property Identification Code (PIC) land- holding to another or to a private residence. This would also reduce the increasing problems of illegal harvest of deer and trespass on landholders properties.*

*Landholders (private and public) could complete an annual returns with details of species controlled, numbers, sex, comments on health of the animals and uses made of the body eg preserved hide, antlers trophy, venison for food consumption (weight) and method used to destroy pest. This will show commitment to controlling numbers, and gather more accurate data on value of the deer from a hunting perspective. These performance indicators are all part of a Ecological Deer Management (EDM) system as per RIDGE Strategic Wild Deer Management Policy 2010.*

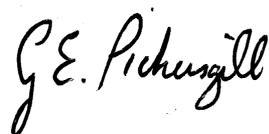
**Issue 2: Requesting input to Regulation or subordinate legislation.**

There were a large number of concerns expressed by stakeholders about the draft Feral Deer Management Strategy and to date there are a number of unanswered questions eg RIDGE, with the final version unavailable to comment on prior to the Biosecurity Bill. There were a number of impractical actions in that strategy eg “ *Action 2.3 Fence areas of high production and conservation value and maintain fencing. All landholders, including government agencies. Ongoing* “. The Feral Deer Management Strategy is proposed to be used to inform the regulations or subordinate legislation such as a Code of Practice to define feral deer management obligations.

**Recommendation:** *that any draft regulation or subordinate legislation relating to feral deer management obligations be open for public comment before finalization.*

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Biosecurity Bill. Please contact me if there are any queries about this submission.

Regards



Glenda Pickersgill