



Cabinet Economic Development Committee

Minute of Decision

This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.

Update on Wairarapa Pea Weevil Eradication, and Proposal to Amend Delegations for Approval of Ex Gratia Payments

Portfolio Biosecurity

On 20 November 2019, the Cabinet Economic Development Committee (DEV):

- 1 **noted** that in March 2016, pea weevils were detected in pea seed in the Wairarapa;
- 2 **noted** that, as part of a biosecurity response, the Ministry for Primary Industries imposed a two year growing ban in the Wairarapa for the 2016/2017 and the 2017/2018 growing seasons to eradicate pea weevil, an unwanted organism;
- 3 **noted** that in March 2017, the previous government authorised the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Primary Industries (now Biosecurity) to jointly approve *ex gratia* claims which arise from the Wairarapa pea weevil response that are in excess of \$75,000, up to a total limit for all claims of \$2.6 million [EGI-17-MIN-0043];
- 4 **noted** that, following the detection in the 2017/2018 season of a small number of pea weevils, this ban was extended to cover the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 growing seasons;
- 5 **noted** that total expenditure on all pea weevil *ex gratia* payments now totals \$1.917 million and that MPI is forecasting that the \$2.6 million limit will be soon reached;
- 6 **noted** that the level of individual *ex gratia* payments for growers in 2018/19 is expected to be similar to those in 2017/18 with the smallest being Commercial sensitivity and the largest Commercial sensitivity;
- 7 **agreed** to amend the delegation for approval of all *ex gratia* claims to allow the Minister for Biosecurity to approve *ex gratia* claims arising from the Wairarapa pea weevil response up to a total limit for all claims of \$5.0 million;
- 8 **noted** that no additional funds are being sought for this proposal as sufficient funding for the costs of *ex gratia* payments to pea weevil growers are provided for from within the *Compensation and ex gratia payments following a Biosecurity Event* appropriation;

- 9 **noted** that should further pea weevils be discovered, the Minister of Biosecurity will provide a further briefing to ensure that the financial implications of the discovery will be discussed and considered DEV.

Jack Petterson
Committee Secretary

Present:

Rt Hon Winston Peters
Hon Grant Robertson (Chair)
Hon Phil Twyford
Hon Dr Megan Woods
Hon David Parker
Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Hon Stuart Nash
Hon Iain Lees-Galloway
Hon Jenny Salesa
Hon Damien O'Connor
Hon Kris Faafoi
Hon James Shaw
Hon Eugenie Sage

Hard-copy distribution:

Minister for Biosecurity

Officials present from:

Office of the Prime Minister
Officials Committee for DEV