



Government
of South Australia

Our ref: eA199436
Obj ID: A5899665
Receipt: 17831237

The Hon Clare Scriven MLC

The Hon Nicola Centofanti MLC
Member of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Ms Centofanti

Determination under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*

I refer to your application made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* received by the Office of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development/Minister for Forest Industries on 25 May 2023 requesting access to the following:

“A copy of all correspondence between the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development and the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry between 25/05/2022 and 25/05/2023.”

On 1 June 2023, contact was made with your office seeking to narrow the scope of your application. Accordingly, the timeframe was revised to “25/05/2022 to 25/09/2022.”

The following determination has been finalised.

I have located four documents that are captured within the scope of your request.

Determination 1

I have determined that access to the following documents is **granted in full**:

Doc No.	Description of document	No. of Pages
1a	Attachment A to Document 1 - Lumpy Skin Disease	2
2	Email from Office of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry encl letter dated 04/08/2022 re Lumpy Skin Disease	2

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries

GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone 08 8226 2931 | Email minister.scriven@sa.gov.au



Determination 2

I have determined that access to the following documents is **granted in part**:

Doc No.	Description of document	No. of Pages
1	Email from the Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development encl letter dated 04/07/2022 re Lumpy Skin Disease	3
3	Email from the Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development dated 03/08/2022 re the National Press Club Address	1

The information removed from the above documents is pursuant to Clause 6(1) of Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act which states:

“6 - Documents affecting personal affairs

(1) A document is an exempt document if it contains matter the disclosure of which would involve the unreasonable disclosure of information concerning the personal affairs of any person (living or dead).”

The information removed consists of the names, telephone numbers and an email address of Departmental staff members, and there would be an expectation that their personal information would not be released in this way.

Accordingly, it is considered that disclosure of this information would be an unreasonable intrusion into the privacy rights of the individual concerned.

If you are unhappy with this determination you are entitled to exercise your rights of external review with the Ombudsman SA. Alternatively, you can apply to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT). If you wish to seek a review, you must do so within 30 calendar days of receiving this internal review determination.

For more information about seeking a review or appeal, please contact the Ombudsman SA on telephone (08) 8226 8699 or SACAT on 1800 723 767.

Should you require further information or clarification with respect to this matter, please contact Ms Rachael Colegate on 8226 2931 or email: Minister.Scriven@sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Hon Clare Scriven MLC
MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR FOREST INDUSTRIES

26 / 6 / 2023

Gonos, Anthea (PIRSA)

From: DLO Watt - Agriculture <dlo.watt@awe.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 4 July 2022 2:37 PM
To: PIRSA:Minister Scriven
Cc: DLO Watt - Agriculture
Subject: Letter from Minister Watt [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: MS22-000789 - Minsiter Watt to SA.pdf; Letter ATT A-lumpy skin disease.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear the Hon Clare Scriven MLC,

Please find attached a letter from Minister Watt for your consideration.

No hard copies to follow.

Kind regards,

Clause 6(1)

Departmental Liaison Officer | Office of Senator the Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Clause 6(1) | Clause 6(1)

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

----- IMPORTANT - This email and any attachments have been issued by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The material transmitted is for the use of the intended recipient only and may contain confidential, legally privileged, copyright or personal information. You should not copy, use or disclose it without authorisation from the Department. It is your responsibility to check any attachments for viruses and defects before opening or forwarding them. If you are not an intended recipient, please contact the sender of this email at once by return email and then delete both messages. Unintended recipients must not copy, use, disclose, rely on or publish this email or attachments. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is not liable for any loss or damage resulting from unauthorised use or dissemination of, or any reliance on, this email or attachments. If you have received this e-mail as part of a valid mailing list and no longer want to receive a message such as this one, advise the sender by return e-mail accordingly. This notice should not be deleted or altered -----



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT
MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY
MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

MS22-000789

The Hon Clare Scriven MLC
Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries
Parliament House
North Terrace
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Via email: Minister.Scriven@sa.gov.au

Dear Minister

With the election of the Albanese Government, I am honoured to now serve as the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. I am excited to have started work, including meeting with industry and other stakeholders during recent visits within Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia. I have also received briefings from my department, including on the areas of cooperation and collaboration between the Commonwealth and the States.

I value the contribution the industry makes to Australia, and it is exceptional to see that the value of Australia's agricultural exports is forecast to be the highest on record at \$64.9 billion in 2022–23, while the value of agricultural production is forecast to be \$80.4 billion, the second highest on record. Australian farm businesses have shown their reliability and resilience in the face of the pandemic, and I look forward to helping the industry—and the rural and regional communities that rely on a strong agriculture sector—to continue to grow and prosper.

The former minister for Agriculture, the Hon David Littleproud MP, convened the last Agriculture Ministers' Meeting (AMM) in November 2021. Much has changed since then and I would like to formally invite you to a meeting with our colleagues in the week commencing 18 July 2022. Given the timing is tight to make arrangements for us to meet, I propose a virtual meeting of up to two hours. The purpose is for me to get to know you, and as a group we can discuss our priorities for working together. I intend to follow up with a face-to-face meeting later in the year, though I expect we will be in touch via phone and email between formal meetings as needed.

My department advises me most AMM members wrote to my predecessor earlier this year supporting the AMM and identifying key priorities for the group. Some of these are consistent with what I have already been hearing, for example, biosecurity challenges, agricultural workforce issues and climate change. These issues are important to me and align with some of my priorities for the agriculture industry.

On the issue of biosecurity, one immediate threat to Australia's livestock industries is lumpy skin disease (LSD), a disease of cattle recently detected in Indonesia. A critical gap in our preparedness for LSD is access to the live virus at our high security laboratory facilities at CSIRO's Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (the Centre). The importation of live LSD virus to Australia would allow for testing vaccines, creating newer, safer LSD vaccines and new diagnostic capabilities. This would better prepare our national animal health system against any possible incursion of the disease. It is critical that we take immediate, concerted, and collaborative preparedness actions to protect Australia's livestock.

My department is currently undertaking a risk assessment for the importation of LSD virus to the Centre. The decision on the import of live LSD virus is made by the Director of Biosecurity (or delegate). The importation will not be permitted unless the biosecurity risks can be managed to meet Australia's Appropriate Level of Protection. To provide an additional level of assurance, the Inspector General of Biosecurity will review the proposed import process and compliance controls before any decision is made. Should import be permitted, live LSD virus will never leave the Centre. The Centre has a long history of safely importing and holding very serious exotic and zoonotic disease agents. Import of the virus does not change Australia's disease-free status. Relevant industry groups and state and territory government agriculture departments, including Chief Veterinary Officers were consulted on the potential importation of live LSD virus. In light of the recent incursion of LSD in Indonesia, all groups indicated they support the importation, subject to the risks being managed, and on the grounds, it was necessary to better prepare for a possible disease outbreak in Australia.

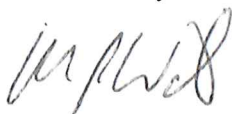
Further information about LSD and importing live virus into Australia is provided at [Attachment A](#).

I see opportunities for us to work collaboratively on not only the immediate biosecurity challenges we face, but also the other issues identified above, and inevitably others as they emerge. By working together, we can make sure the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors seize the opportunities available to it.

Further details and an agenda for the meeting will be provided shortly, however, should you require any further information regarding the meeting, please contact the AMM secretariat at amm-agsoc@agriculture.gov.au.

I look forward to working together through strong collaboration and dialogue to achieve the best possible outcomes for our rural and regional communities, and for the country.

Yours sincerely



MURRAY WATT

04 / 07 / 2022

Enc

Lumpy skin disease

Lumpy skin disease (LSD) is a highly infectious disease of cattle and water buffalo that does not affect other livestock or humans. The disease is caused by a virus like sheep pox and goat pox and is mostly transmitted by biting insects.

The global distribution of LSD is changing. Since 2019 the disease has spread through China and Southeast Asia, and in 2021 the disease was confirmed in Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia. In March 2022 it was officially reported by Indonesia on the island of Sumatra.

If LSD were to occur in Australia, this would cause significant production costs to beef, water buffalo, and dairy cattle industries. In addition, there could be substantial effects on trade if Australia was no longer recognised as being free from LSD. The cost of an LSD incursion would also see severe economic losses to Australia's meat processing sector. Eradication of the disease would also be costly and difficult.

There is currently no LSD vaccine approved for use in Australia. In southern Europe vaccination has been used to effectively control LSD outbreaks. However, in other areas vaccination has not been successful.

Why Australia needs to import live lumpy skin disease virus

Importing LSD virus will facilitate Australia's access to safe and effective vaccines against the disease, if required. Access to the live virus will also enable Australia's top scientists to undertake research on LSD virus, which could lead to better vaccines for Australia and the region. Importing live LSD virus will also help improve Australia's diagnostic capacity.

Vaccines

All currently available commercial vaccines contain modified live LSD virus. Allowing import of the live virus will ensure Australia can test the quality and safety of internationally available LSD vaccines and then use a safe vaccine if there is an outbreak either domestically or in our near neighbours.

Diagnostics

Importing live LSD virus will improve Australia's diagnostic capacity. It will allow CSIRO, Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP) to develop and validate new and improved tests for LSD. ACDP will also establish proficiency testing programs, to ensure state and territory government veterinary laboratories have LSD diagnostic capacity. Any diagnostic material that leaves ACDP will never contain live LSD virus. This means Australia's laboratory testing system will be well prepared if there is an outbreak.

Ability to test samples from our near neighbours

Our near neighbours such as Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea have limited diagnostic capacity and rely on Australia to provide laboratory support in the event of a disease outbreak. This support has previously been provided for African swine fever. In the event of an outbreak of LSD in our near neighbours, it would be vital that Australia could import live virus to provide diagnostic support to assist with the outbreak response and limit the spread of the disease. Helping to control disease in our near neighbours is vital for Australia's efforts to keep LSD virus from Australia.

The process for importing the live virus

- A comprehensive risk assessment of the LSD virus is being undertaken by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The assessment will determine if there are risk management measures available to safely import the virus.
- The department will conduct a specific risk assessment of the facility at ACDP.
- The department will consult with states and territories through the Animal Health Committee (AHC) as well as environmental experts within the department.
- If it is determined that effective biosecurity risk management is possible an import permit application can be assessed.
- An import permit application involves the assessment of a range of factors including the ability and capacity to safely manage the virus. A permit will also set the specific conditions that must be complied with when importing the virus, including safe and secure transportation in accordance with recognised international standards.
- An import permit will only be granted if ACDP is able to satisfy the delegate that they can meet all import requirements and conditions that may be applied.
- The department will conduct ongoing assurance and verification activities with ACDP to ensure that they continue to adhere to all risk management requirements in accordance with and through the use of approved arrangement criteria, other agreements and the import conditions.

How the risks will be managed

The department will work with ACDP to perform a specific risk assessment of the processes and facilities at ACDP to determine if the risk of the importation of live LSD virus can be managed appropriately, and if so, to support the issuance of an import permit under the Biosecurity Act 2015.

An independent assurance review will also be conducted by the Inspector General of Biosecurity before the issuance of an import permit.

Only the secure facilities within ACDP with the absolute highest biosecurity controls will ever be permitted to conduct research on live LSD virus. These facilities feature many layers of containment and strict controls to prevent the release of any pathogens.

In addition to the ongoing risk management required by the department the use of LSD virus at ACDP will be regulated through the following mechanisms.

- The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator independently certifies facilities on appropriate physical containment, procedures, and practices, including within the ACDP secure area, and conducts risk assessments where genetically modified organisms are involved.
- The Department of Health conducts risk assessments on security sensitive biological agents such as LSD virus.
- The National Association of Testing Authorities undertakes regular assurance activities for laboratories.
- There is ongoing oversight of ACDP by the ACDP Security Assessment Group.

Gonos, Anthea (PIRSA)

From: PIRSA:Minister Scriven
Sent: Thursday, 4 August 2022 3:23 PM
To: minister.watt@agriculture.gov.au
Subject: Correspondence from Hon Clare Scriven MLC (South Australia) - Lumpy Skin Disease virus
Attachments: eA197578 - Letter from Minister Scriven 3-8-22.pdf

OFFICIAL

eA197578

Dear Minister

Please find attached correspondence from the Hon Clare Scriven MLC for your consideration.

Kind regards,
Sharon

**Office of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Office of the Minister for Forest Industries**

Level 10, 1 King William Street, Adelaide | GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001
P: +61 8 8226 2931 | E: minister.scriven@sa.gov.au



**Government of
South Australia**

The information contained within this email is confidential and may be the subject of legal privilege. This email is intended solely for the addressee, and if you are not the intended recipient you must not disclose, copy, use or distribute this email or any of its attachments. If you have received this email in error, please advise the sender immediately via reply email, delete the message and any attachments from your system, and destroy any copies made.

eA197578



Government
of South Australia

The Hon Clare Scriven MLC

Senator the Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Minister for Emergency Management
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email: dlo.watt@awe.gov.au

Dear Minister

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Murray'.

Thank you for your letter of 4 July providing information regarding the progress of activities for the importation of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) virus to the high security laboratory facilities at the CSIRO's Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness. It is pleasing to see this is in the final stages and hopefully available to further prepare our response to LSD.

I appreciated the discussion regarding LSD at the recent Agricultural Ministers Meeting held on 20 July. With increasing biosecurity threats in the region, it is vitally important that we work together to ensure adequate resources are directed towards our preparedness activities.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) has been keeping me informed of the progress being made by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Emergency Animal Disease preparedness taskforce and the Lumpy Skin Disease Action plan.

Should DAFF require any further assistance from PIRSA please feel free to contact Mr Nathan Rhodes who is the Executive Director of Biosecurity on email nathan.rhodes@sa.gov.au or phone on 0412 376 450.

Once again, thank you for writing to me on this very important matter and I look forward to working with you to continue supporting South Australian farmers and regional communities.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Clare Scriven'.

Hon Clare Scriven MLC
MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR FOREST INDUSTRIES

3 / 8 / 2022

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries

GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone 08 8226 2931 | Email minister.scriven@sa.gov.au



Gonos, Anthea (PIRSA)

From: Minister Watt <minister.watt@awe.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 3 August 2022 5:49 PM
To: PIRSA:Minister Scriven
Subject: National Press Club Address - Tuesday 9 August [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Minister Scriven

Minister Watt will be making an address at the National Press Club on Tuesday next week.

We have several seats available on stakeholder tables and would value your attendance if you are available.

Could you please advise as soon as possible if you are able to join the Minister. He would love to see you there.

Kind regards



Clause 6(1)
Executive Assistant

Office of Senator The Hon Murray Watt
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Minister for Emergency Management

Clause 6(1)

----- IMPORTANT - This email and any attachments have been issued by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The material transmitted is for the use of the intended recipient only and may contain confidential, legally privileged, copyright or personal information. You should not copy, use or disclose it without authorisation from the Department. It is your responsibility to check any attachments for viruses and defects before opening or forwarding them. If you are not an intended recipient, please contact the sender of this email at once by return email and then delete both messages. Unintended recipients must not copy, use, disclose, rely on or publish this email or attachments. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is not liable for any loss or damage resulting from unauthorised use or dissemination of, or any reliance on, this email or attachments. If you have received this e-mail as part of a valid mailing list and no longer want to receive a message such as this one, advise the sender by return e-mail accordingly. This notice should not be deleted or altered -----