



Nursery & Garden Industry  
Queensland

Media Release

24 February 2016

## **NGIQ discuss Biosecurity Regulations with Minister for Agriculture**

NGIQ President, Paul Lancaster and Executive Officer, Kerry Battersby, met with Minister for Agriculture, Hon. Leanne Donaldson and separately with Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Mrs Deb Frecklington to discuss issues relating to the industry.

Top of the agenda was the proposed increase in plant health inspection fees to take effect from 1 July 2016 as part of the new Biosecurity Regulations.

Kerry Battersby pointed out the increased fee of \$180.20 per hour for a Plant Health Inspector was an increase of \$64.28 per hour and significantly higher than the hourly fee for an Animal Health Inspector, which will actually decrease from 1 July 2016. Biosecurity Queensland have previously said the difference between the two fees was an extra administrative fee involved with plant health inspections. The Minister's departmental adviser assured NIGQ that the fee would be reviewed in 2017 as part of a larger review of inspection fees, but the fee would not necessarily be reduced during the review process.

Paul Lancaster spoke to both the Minister and Shadow Minister on the need for a Greenlife Nursery Register. NIGQ believes a Nursery Register would assist communication and provide access to businesses caught up in any biosecurity incursions, emergencies or natural disasters. The Minister's departmental adviser will seek more information from NIGQ.

The Minister said she will inform NIGQ of the release date of the Biosecurity Capability Review Report, which should be released very soon, but has been delayed since November 2015. NIGQ made a written submission to the Review and presentation to the Review Panel in early August 2015.

The Minister accepted NIGQ's invitation to visit a production nursery to gain an insight into operations of the industry and both the Minister and Shadow Minister look forward to visiting the new Horticulture Pavilion at this year's EKKA Show. Mrs Frecklington also expressed interest in meeting with Senator Anne Ruston, following the Senator's presentation at the NGIA National Conference.

NIGQ thanks Mr Ian Rickuss, Member for Lockyer, for arranging these meetings.

### **About NIGQ**

Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NIGQ) is the industry association representing production nurseries, garden centre retailers, allied trades and associated professional and educational services to the industry. There are more than 2,000 businesses operating in the sector, employing an estimated 6,000 staff. Nursery production is expected to contribute more than \$898 million to the state economy in 2015/16.

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