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### **Regarding the National Biosecurity Statement**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the new National Biosecurity Statement.

Animal Medicines Australia (AMA) is the peak industry association representing the innovators, manufacturers, formulators and registrants of a broad range of veterinary medicine products that prevent, control and treat disease across the livestock, equine and companion animal sectors.

Australia is in a unique position because many of the world's most devastating and debilitating animal diseases are not present here. Our strict biosecurity measures and systems help maintain this disease-free status, protecting animal health and welfare, public health, environmental health, food quality and safety, and key export markets.

We are pleased to provide the following comments.

### **What does biosecurity mean to you?**

In its broadest sense, biosecurity protects Australia's people, animals and environment – our unique flora, fauna and ecology, our way of life, and our ancestral connections to this land. It operates at all scales – from the national, regional and local scales, to individual properties.

Biosecurity is an essential component of our valuable agricultural and trade industries. Australia has an international reputation as a trusted producer of high quality, and safe, food and fibre, and our reputation provides a strong competitive advantage in global markets.

Biosecurity practices complement good animal husbandry and welfare to protect animal health, supporting a safe and sustainable food supply, and better public health. Healthy animals support a reliable, productive and sustainable agricultural industry, and provide important trade advantages for Australian producers. An outbreak of animal disease could have severe ramifications for the entire agricultural sector, as well as domestic animal health, food safety, public health and our environment.

Biosecurity must include effective surveillance of animal disease within Australian borders. This will enable responsible authorities and affected stakeholders to detect and track endemic, exotic and emerging diseases that threaten animal health. Surveillance is critically important for diseases that can be transmitted to humans (such as antibiotic resistant infections, or brucellosis), and for diseases that can persist in the environment to pose a disease threat in the future (such as anthrax).

### **What is your role within Australia's biosecurity system?**

AMA member companies play a vital role in Australia's biosecurity as the producers of medicines that prevent, control and treat animal diseases, across the livestock, equine and companion animal sectors. AMA members develop, register and supply innovative new medicines, including vaccines and anti-infection medicines to prevent and control outbreaks of animal diseases, as well as medicines and treatments that enable good health and wellbeing. Healthy animals are much less susceptible to disease and infection, and good animal health is essential to good animal welfare.

Healthy animals produce safe, high quality food and fibre products for both domestic and international markets. The use of animal medicines in our livestock industries to improve animal health, welfare and productivity accounts for more than 10% of production in Australia's seven key commodity groups (beef, dairy, sheep meat, wool, pork, poultry meat and eggs), and contributes more than \$2.6 billion to the Australian economy <sup>1</sup>.

AMA members also produce many disinfectants and other anti-infective products used for everyday hygiene and sanitation in animal environments, such as veterinary clinics and hospitals, boarding facilities, racing stables and grooming salons, as well as in the home.

### **What responsibilities do you have in building a stronger and more effective biosecurity system?**

AMA member's key responsibility is to develop, manufacture and register animal medicines that are used to prevent, control and treat animal diseases in livestock, horses and companion animals. AMA members provide medicines to address endemic disease threats (for example, Johnes Disease, Newcastle Disease and Hendra virus), and we lead the response to emerging and exotic disease threats (such as the 2007/8 outbreak of equine influenza).

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<sup>1</sup> Acil Allen Consulting (2018). Economic Contribution of Animal Medicines to Australia's Livestock Industries 2015-16, June 2018.

### **Is there any other information you would like to see in the statement?**

A national statement on biosecurity needs to provide a clear rationale to support and promote Australia's strict biosecurity standards and systems. Importantly, it should identify key stakeholders and their responsibilities to show how biosecurity depends on the integration of activities across national, regional, local and individual scales.

AMA suggests that the National Biosecurity Statement also includes a statement to remind everyone to respect farm signage and follow biosecurity instructions on entering/exiting premises. This is especially important for visitors who may not be familiar with on-farm biosecurity practices.

If you have any questions about this submission, please contact AMA's Science and Technical Manager, Dr Charmian Bennett, at [c.bennett@animalmedicines.org.au](mailto:c.bennett@animalmedicines.org.au) or 02 6257 9022.

Your sincerely,

Ben Stapley

Executive Director