Queensland Government

Department of
Primary Industries

Our ref: CTS 02157/25
CTS 02155/25

Mr Trevor Hold
Trevor.hold79@gmail.com

25 February 2025

Dear Mr Hold

I refer to your email of 28 January 2025, requesting an internal review of the decision dated 24 January 2025 to modify how the department will communicate with you regarding the National Fire Ant Eradication Program (NFAEP).

I can confirm that I have had no prior involvement with the department's decision prior to conducting this review.

I am appropriately authorised to conduct the internal review and have considered the complaints process undertaken and outcome reached.

I have carefully reviewed the information available, including:

1. the letters dated 24 January 2025 addressed to Dr Rachel Chay, Deputy Director-General and Chief Biosecurity Officer and Mr Graeme Bolton, Director-General, Department of Primary Industries
2. the decision dated 24 January 2025 and associated supporting material
3. an extract of your Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube activity
4. information you have published on the website NFAEP Advocacy Journey – Australian Advocacy Group
5. an assessment of the volume, frequency, effort and impact on resourcing.

The department's Customer Complaint Procedure, Stakeholder Engagement Charter and Preventing and Responding to Work-Related Violence Policy and Procedure apply to the management of customer interactions.

Having regard to all of the above, I am satisfied that your behaviour has been unreasonable and the decision to modify your communication with the department was appropriate.

Whilst you disagree with the decision, you were provided with sufficient information to understand why your behaviour was considered unreasonable. The action taken to respond to your unreasonable conduct also followed the steps in the department's procedure at the time. Nevertheless, the internal review has identified opportunities for improvements when dealing with unreasonable complainant behaviour.

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The department is committed to engaging with industry and community; however, your behaviour does not align with the department's Stakeholder Engagement Charter which outlines the department's expectations and when customer disengagement is appropriate.

I therefore find that the original decision to cease all future communications with you in relation to the NFAEP, except for treatment of your property, to be reasonable and appropriate. For clarity, all future communication:

- with the NFAEP regarding treatment on your property will be through a single point of contact - nfaep.corro@daf.qld.gov.au
- if you think you have found fire ants at your home, workplace, public land or another property, you may report them online here at Report fire ants. While the department will acknowledge and act upon legally required reports, this does not extend to ongoing direct engagement beyond what is necessary for biosecurity management.

I do not consider any further action is warranted and I consider this matter closed. Any correspondence that you have sent to departmental officers since 24 January 2025 relating to NFAEP will be filed without further action.

If you are dissatisfied with this internal review administrative decision, you may contact the Queensland Ombudsman (the Ombudsman), which has the power to investigate decisions and actions of Queensland State Government departments. The Ombudsman can be reached at **ombudsman@ombudsman.qld.gov.au** or by phone at (07) 3005 7000.

Yours sincerely

Justine Clark
Deputy Director-General, Corporate
Department of Primary Industries