



Business Centre:
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Address all correspondence to:
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Friday, 22 July 2022

The Hon. Gayle Tierney
Minister for Agriculture, Training and Skills and Higher Education
Level 1, 2 Treasury Place
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

E: gayle.tierney@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Tierney,

Foot and Mouth Disease

I forward to you a copy of my recent correspondence sent to the Hon. Minister Murray Watt, Federal Minister for Agriculture, in my capacity as Acting Mayor of Southern Grampians Shire.

This Council represents one of the densest populations of broadacre livestock farming in the world, with in excess of 1 million lambs, 2.3 million sheep and 120,000 head of beef cattle. We proudly stand, regionally, as Australia's number 1 area for agricultural gross value production. Furthermore, the Council owned, and operated, Hamilton Regional Livestock Exchange is one of the largest saleyards in Australia based on annual throughput numbers. The protection of this regional industry is paramount to not only the wellbeing of our community but also the health of our national economy.

The recent reports of FMD in Bali have created considerable anxiety in our community. I understand there is in the vicinity of 260 flights a week between Australia and Bali, which, together with trade and other movements, represent a concerning opportunity for the disease to spread to Australia, the consequences of which, as I am sure you will appreciate, would be catastrophic.

We write to both the Federal and State Government on behalf of our community seeking clarity on several points relating to our border protection and readiness for an outbreak of FMD in Australia.

Specifically, as requested in my letter to Minister Watt, Council would appreciate your response to the following:

- Details of the on the ground response; roles and responsibilities of all levels of government, farmers and industry bodies in the event of FMD entering Australia.
- Are you confident that, in the event of an outbreak, Governments in Australia will be able to work cooperatively and quickly to support farmers?



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- Have any preplanning or preliminary discussions been held with State and Territory Governments, and Industry representatives that would assist a quick financial response in the event of an outbreak?
- Is the bureaucratic resources and processes needed to implement the EADRA in place across state and federal government?

This current situation reinforces the vital need for all levels of government to work together and to have clarity on the plan in place to protect Australia. We look forward to your response and stand ready to support the Federal Government in any way we can on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Robertson', is written over a light blue, wavy background element.

**ACTING MAYOR
COUNCILLOR DAVID ROBERTSON**

Attachment: Hon. Murray Watt Correspondence