

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Industry Trade Advisory Panel

#### **1 Introduction**

The industry Trade Advisory Panel (iTAP) is an advisory panel to assist Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited (Hort Innovation) fulfil its obligations under its constitution to provide advice to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DoAWR, the Department) about the prioritisation of new and improved technical market access for the Australian horticulture industry.

#### **2 Function of the Panel**

The function of the panel is to provide industry perspective and input into the consideration of trade issues by Hort Innovation and the Department, with a focus on identifying issues relating to research and development that affect market access of Australian horticultural produce. The panel will provide recommendations to Hort Innovation of suitable methods to address gaps or deficiencies in existing body of research.

The panel will provide commercially relevant advice, ensuring industry's central role in providing input to inform Hort Innovation's advice to the Department on a range of industry issues as they arise.

#### **3 Scope**

The scope of the panel's interests includes research and development issues as these affect market access whether in new or existing markets.

The panel will provide recommendations to Hort Innovation of suitable methods to address gaps or deficiencies in existing body of research.

The panel will also provide relevant advice on a range of industry issues as they arise, including responding to requests for industry advice from Hort Innovation and the Department on market closures and trade impediments relating to issues around research and development.

Consideration of market access or improvement requests to government for prioritisation will not be covered.

#### **4 Management of the Panel**

The panel will be an advisory mechanism of Hort Innovation, with individual members appointed by Hort Innovation. The panel will be facilitated by Hort Innovation's Trade Manager or Trade Unit delegate.

The panel will meet via teleconference at least thrice annually and additionally as required by Hort Innovation, and in person as deemed necessary by Hort Innovation.

#### **5 Role of the Facilitator**

- Facilitate all panel meetings.
- Regular communication with panel members.
- The Facilitator may also act as a spokesperson on trade issues of importance, as approved by Hort Innovation.

## **6 Panel Membership**

The panel is comprised of skills-based representatives appointed by Hort Innovation based upon their relevant expertise in the horticultural export sector (Appointees). Consideration will also be given to an appropriate skills mix.

The panel may be augmented by individual experts including from government, industry and academia, from time to time, and at Hort Innovation's discretion.

Proxies or alternates at panel meetings will not be accepted.

Appointees will need to demonstrate a capacity to work in a collegiate manner for the wider horticultural good.

The skills set sought for the panel includes expertise in research and development and expertise and commercial trade-related activities. Specifically, the skills set will include:

Sectoral experience:

1. Relevant qualifications and experience in the agricultural export sector;
2. An understanding of market access, improvement and development; and
3. Commercial experience in the export of horticultural products.

Technical skills:

4. An understanding of technical barriers to trade in export markets;
5. Familiarity with sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) issues and plant quarantine;
6. Growing, packing and exporting agricultural produce; and
7. International trade policy formulation, including tariffs, quotas and trade analysis

Appointees will be expected to attend all scheduled meetings, and review pre-meeting reading materials.

## **7 Confidentiality, Declaration of Interests and Agri-Political Refrain**

Panel members will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement given the nature of material likely to be presented to them as part of a market access application or discussions with Hort Innovation and the Department. All commercial and trade-in-confidence material contained in market access applications is to be considered as sensitive and must not be distributed or discussed outside of the panel's deliberations or other formal requirements of the Panel. Panel members must maintain confidentiality around material provided and discussion held in the course of the panel's activities, at the discretion of Hort Innovation.

Information presented to the panel may be commercial-in-confidence, government-in-confidence, or otherwise open. The nature of the information presented will be clearly advised by the Facilitator. Any breach of this confidentiality will fall under unacceptable norms of business behaviour and may result in removal from panel membership.

A Hort Innovation Undertaking to Refrain from Agri-Political Activity is required to be signed and returned to Hort Innovation before nominees can join the panel. This refrain acknowledges the member's consent to abstain from commenting on trade matters from a panel-member perspective for the duration of their tenure as a panel member. Comment on trade matters from a non-panel member perspective is not restricted.

Additionally, panel members must complete and sign a Declaration of Interests Form and immediately advise the Facilitator should they have a commercial or other conflict of interest in any topic under consideration by the panel.

## **8 Term of the Panel's Membership**

Appointments to the panel will be for a period of one year (1), with no maximum number of terms.

Membership on the panel will be reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary by the Facilitator.

## **9 Panel Funding**

The activities of the panel are funded by industry through Hort Innovation's Trade Unit.

For face-to-face meetings, funding will include travel, accommodation, meal costs and Hort Innovation's standard daily allowance rate.

All funding and allowances will be awarded in accordance with Hort Innovation policies and procedures.

Panel members will not receive remuneration for participating in teleconferences.

## **10 Communication of Outcomes**

Upon approval by the Trade Manager, minutes and relevant attachments (where necessary) will be distributed to all panel members. This function will be the responsibility of Hort Innovation.

The Trade Manager or Trade Unit delegate, as Facilitator of the panel is responsible for communicating the panel's advice to Hort Innovation, industry or the Department, as appropriate.

## **11 Dispute Resolution**

The General Manager of Research, Marketing and Investment of Hort Innovation will adjudicate on any matter(s) requiring resolution, which cannot be resolved within the panel by the Facilitator.