



3 May 2019

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

## **A fond farewell for a frontline detector dog**

Today we celebrate the long and distinguished career of one of Tasmania's most valuable Biosecurity assets, Hunta the Detector dog.

In 7 years, Hunta has cleared tens-of-thousands of passengers coming off hundreds of cruise vessels, and been up in the luggage compartment of buses, in port terminals and gangways to process passengers arriving at Tasmanian ports.

Early in 2018, during the peak of the successful Tasmanian fruit fly eradication response, Hunta intercepted a fruit basket that had arrived direct from Queensland. This was just one of 100s of boxes in the freight shed that day. His keen nose was drawn straight to the package and the uncertified goods were appropriately dealt with.

The Hodgman Liberal Government takes biosecurity very seriously, and we are backing up our words with real action to protect Tasmanian primary industries and our environment.

We doubled the biosecurity detector dog teams from six to 12, and they are a critical part of our biosecurity frontline from the Launceston and Hobart airports to our regional airports, ports, and mail centres.

Biosecurity underpins our \$2.4 billion in agri-food production per annum, over \$3 billion in exports and our \$2.8 billion inbound tourism industry.

We have delivered vital biosecurity infrastructure including state of the art diagnostic laboratories, border signage, and the Powranna truck wash and we are investing more to tackle pests and weeds.

The recently tabled Biosecurity Bill 2019 is the next step in modernising our biosecurity systems so they can continue protecting us for the next thirty years.

I wish Hunta all the best for his retirement with his handler and best friend Nat, and welcome his successor Sash, who will continue the good work protecting our borders.