



Government
of South Australia

The Hon Clare Scriven MLC

Our ref: eA203551
Obj ID: A7097597
Receipt: 21864221

The Hon Dr Nicola Centofanti MLC
Member of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Dr Centofanti

Determination under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*

I refer to your application made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* received by the Office of the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, Minister for Forest Industries on 29 July 2025 requesting access to the following:

“All correspondence, briefings, meeting notes, emails, and related documents exchanged between Minister Clare Scriven and PIRSA (Primary Industries and Regions SA) relating to the following topics:

- *Pigs*
- *NLIS (National Livestock Identification System)*
- *Australian Pork Limited*
- *Pig Pass program”*

Timeframe: 1/07/2024 to 29/07/2025

Accordingly, the following determination has been finalised.

I have located two documents that are captured within the scope of your request.

Determination 1

I have determined that access to the following document is **granted in part**:

Doc No.	Description of document	No. of Pages
1	Email from Chief Executive, PIRSA to Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development dated 18/7/2025 re Pig Welfare Investigation	5

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries

GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone 08 8226 2931 | Email minister.scriven@sa.gov.au



The information removed is pursuant to Clause 6(1) of Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act which states:

“6 - Documents affecting personal affairs

(1) A document is an exempt document if it contains matter the disclosure of which would involve the unreasonable disclosure of information concerning the personal affairs of any person (living or dead).”

The personal information removed consists of the following:

- Name and email address of the author of correspondence to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Mobile telephone number of a Departmental officer

It is considered that members of the public can correspond with a Minister without fear that their identities are released.

As a mobile telephone number allows a person, including an officer of an agency, to be contacted outside of business hours and is information that is not ordinarily available to the public, the information is taken to concern the personal affairs of an individual.

Accordingly, it is considered that disclosure of this information would be an unreasonable intrusion into the privacy rights of the individuals concerned.

Determination 2

I have determined that access to the following document is **granted in part**:

Doc No.	Description of document	No. of Pages
2	Email from Chief Executive, PIRSA to Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development dated 4/7/2025 re Pig Welfare Investigation	3

The information removed is pursuant to Clause 4(2)(a)(i), Clause 6(1), Clause 6(2), Clause 7(1)(c) and Clause 9(1) of Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act.

The document consists of a briefing to a Minister from a public sector agency to ensure the Minister is kept informed on matters relating to her portfolio responsibilities. The matter relates to alleged animal abuse at a piggery in South Australia. The document also forms part of the decision-making process of Government.

Clause 4(2)(a)(i) states:

“4—Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety

(2) A document is an exempt document if it contains matter the disclosure of which -

(a) could reasonably be expected -

(i) to prejudice the investigation of any contravention or possible contravention of the law (including any revenue law) whether generally or in a particular case; and

(b) would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.”

Pursuant to Clause 4(2)(a)(i), in a media release issued by the RSPCA, it advises that it is progressing an investigation into alleged animal welfare breaches at the piggery concerned. It also indicates that the RSPCA is preparing a brief of evidence with a view to instigate court proceedings.

In addressing the public interest test for the Clause 4(2)(a)(i) exemption, I have balanced the following factors:

In favour of the public interest:

- Meeting the objects of the Act favouring access to documents.
- Ensuring optimal use of public resources.
- High level of interest in the accountability of public office holders.
- The importance of transparency and openness and the interest that the public has in the decision-making processes of Government.
- High level of media and community interest in this animal welfare matter.
- Promoting the health and well-being of animals.

Contrary to the public interest:

- The recent age of the information was considered and the continuing relevance of matters leading to potential legal proceedings.
- The knowledge that investigations are currently ongoing.
- Release of this information is likely to prejudice the enforcement of relevant legislation while investigations and enquiries are underway into alleged animal welfare breaches.
- To release such details would provide the public with its own view of the circumstances prior to any investigative outcomes being known.
- It would be inappropriate to disclose information relating to processes leading to any possible wrong-doing, prior to the knowledge of any outcomes.
- A regulator should be able to carry out its legislative functions and investigate matters without fear of the information being prematurely released.
- Should any findings reveal any allegations of wrong-doing, disclosure of this information could reasonably be expected to prejudice the possible contravention of the law.

Having considered the various factors weighing for and against disclosure, I have determined that disclosure of this information would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Clause 6(1) states:

“6 - Documents affecting personal affairs

(1) A document is an exempt document if it contains matter the disclosure of which would involve the unreasonable disclosure of information concerning the personal affairs of any person (living or dead).”

The information removed pursuant to Clause 6(1) consists of the following:

- Information which would identify the individual who reported the matter of alleged animal abuse.
- Mobile telephone number of a Departmental officer.

The RSPCA relies on information provided by members of the community to report suspicion of animal abuse. Disclosure of the identification of complainants could reasonably be expected to deter people from raising concerns in the future. This would be to the detriment of the welfare of animals in South Australia and would undermine the organisation’s efforts in enforcing the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*.

Accordingly, it is considered that disclosure of this information would be an unreasonable intrusion into the privacy rights of the individuals concerned.

Clause 6(2) states:

“6 - Documents affecting personal affairs

(2) A document is an exempt document if it contains allegations or suggestions of criminal or other improper conduct on the part of a person (living or dead) the truth of which has not been established by judicial process and the disclosure of which would be unreasonable.”

Pursuant to Clause 6(2), the information refers to allegations of criminal and improper conduct relating to alleged animal abuse at a piggery farm in South Australia. In a media release issued by the RSPCA, it advises that it is progressing an investigation into alleged animal welfare breaches at the piggery concerned. The RSPCA is preparing a brief of evidence with a view to instigate court proceedings.

Accordingly, to release this information would be unreasonable as the truth of the allegations has not been established by judicial process.

Clause 7(1)(c) states:

"7 – Documents affecting business affairs

(1) A document is an exempt document –

(c) if it contains matter –

- (i) consisting of information (other than trade secrets or information referred to in paragraph (b)) concerning the business, professional, commercial or financial affairs of any agency or any other person; and
- (ii) the disclosure of which –
 - (A) could reasonably be expected to have an adverse effect on those affairs or to prejudice the future supply of such information to the Government or to an agency; and
 - (B) would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest"

Pursuant to Clause 7(1)(c), the documents contain information relating to the business affairs of a piggery farm where animal welfare allegations have been made.

In addressing the public interest test requirement for the Clause 7(1)(c) exemption, I have balanced the following factors:

In favour of the public interest:

- Meeting the objects of the Act favouring access to documents.
- Ensuring optimal use of public resources.
- High level of interest in the accountability of public office holders.
- The importance of transparency and openness and the interest that the public has in the decision-making processes of Government.
- High level of media and community interest in this animal welfare matter.
- Promoting the health and well-being of animals.

Contrary to the public interest:

- Protecting the commercial and business interests of third parties.
- Disclosure of this information would reveal business details where investigative processes are currently underway.
- It would be inappropriate to disclose details which might implicate the possible wrong-doing of a company resulting in reputational damage to that business.
- It would be improper to air the details into the public domain relating to the business affairs of a third party without its consent.
- If third parties cannot be assured of confidentiality by Government with respect to documents relating to their business affairs, this would have the potential to harm business relationships with Government and hamper future dealings with public sector agencies.

Having considered the various factors weighing for and against disclosure, I have determined that disclosure of this information would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Clause 9(1) states:

“9—Internal working documents

(1) A document is an exempt document if it contains matter—

(a) that relates to -

(i) any opinion, advice or recommendation that has been obtained, prepared or recorded; or

(ii) any consultation or deliberation that has taken place, in the course of, or for the purpose of, the decision-making functions of the Government, a Minister or an agency; and

(b) the disclosure of which would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.”

In addressing the public interest test for the Clause 9(1) exemption, I have balanced the following factors:

In favour of the public interest:

- Meeting the objects of the Freedom of Information Act favouring access to documents.
- Ensuring optimal use of public resources.
- High level of interest in the accountability of public office holders.
- The importance of transparency and openness and the interest that the public has in the decision-making processes of Government.
- High level of media and community interest in this animal welfare matter.
- Promoting the health and well-being of animals.

Contrary to the public interest:

- The recent age of the information was considered and the continuing relevance of matters leading to proposed legal proceedings.
- Providing an agency with the ability to undertake internal consultation without unnecessary interference.
- Allowing a Minister to be fully briefed on matters without Departmental officers needing to moderate the information in fear of public release.
- Protection of the deliberative processes of Government.
- Preserving the integrity of information-gathering processes, including matters of a sensitive nature.
- The information is not widely published or disseminated.
- Disclosing this detail may compromise the manner in which information is gathered in the future for the decision-making processes of Government to the detriment of the betterment for South Australia.

Having considered the various factors weighing for and against disclosure, I have determined that disclosure of this information would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

If you are unhappy with this determination you are entitled to exercise your rights of external review with the Ombudsman SA. Alternatively, you can apply to the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT). If you wish to seek a review, you must do so within 30 calendar days of receiving this determination.

For more information about seeking a review or appeal, please contact the Ombudsman SA on telephone (08) 8226 8699 or SACAT on 1800 723 767.

In accordance with the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular PC045, details of your application, and the documents to which you are given access, will be published in PIRSA's disclosure log. A copy of PC045 can be found at https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/20818/PC045-Disclosure-Logs.pdf

If you disagree with publication, please advise the undersigned in writing within fourteen calendar days from the date of this determination.

Should you require further information or clarification with respect to this matter, please contact Francesca Blefari on 8226 2931 or email: Minister.Scriven@sa.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Hon Clare Scriven MLC
MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR FOREST INDUSTRIES

3 / 9 / 2025



**Minute to
Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries**

Ref: eA203299

For	Approval and Signature
Critical Date	21 July 2025 (to meet standard timeframes for Ministerial correspondence responses)
Subject	Pig welfare investigation

Synopsis

Both RSPCA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) have received reports regarding concerns for the welfare of animals at a piggery north of Adelaide. PIRSA is assisting the RSPCA in its investigations into this incident. The case has received media interest, resulting in a number of calls and written correspondence to yourself and the department (PIRSA).

Recommendations

That you:

1. Sign the attached letter of response to [redacted], following emails received from [redacted] regarding this case (Attachment A).

SIGNED / NOT SIGNED

2. Approve the attached letter template, to be used, where appropriate, as a standard response to any other correspondence received regarding this case (Attachment B).

APPROVED / NOT APPROVED

.....
 Hon Clare Scriven MLC
**Minister for Primary Industries
 and Regional Development**
Minister for Forest Industries
 / / 2025

Ministerial Comments -

Background

- Both RSPCA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) have received reports of extremely poor animal husbandry and housing of pigs on a piggery at Dublin, north of Adelaide.
- The previous brief on this case, which you NOTED on 4 July 2025, provides more detailed background (ref A7010966).

Discussion

- PIRSA is continuing to assist the RSPCA in its investigations into this incident, including participating in a second property visit on 9 July 2025.
- An updated briefing will be provided at the conclusion of the investigation, or sooner if required.
- The case has generated media interest, resulting in a large volume of calls and written correspondence to yourself and the department (PIRSA).
- Correspondence has been received from [REDACTED], who has previously written to you and the department with other concerns relating to the pork industry. A letter of response to [REDACTED] has been drafted for your approval and signature (Attachment A).
- A letter template for a standard response to any other correspondence received regarding this case has also been drafted and is attached for your approval (Attachment B).
- While it is anticipated the standard response could be used in most cases, the department will continue to provide bespoke responses regarding this issue as deemed necessary.

Stakeholder / regional impacts, consultation and engagement

- Both Australian Pork Limited and Pork SA have contacted PIRSA Executives to express their shared concerns for animal welfare and support for an independent investigation into this case. Pork SA and a private veterinarian are supporting the property owner in rectifying on-farm issues as the RSPCA-led investigation continues.

Management of key risks

- Perception of South Australian pig industry practices could be compromised, exacerbated by the media attention this case is receiving.
- Industry assurance programs, for example APIQ®, could be viewed as ineffective by consumers, if conditions on industry accredited piggeries are able to deteriorate to the level that they have on this piggery. This concern has been raised by [REDACTED] in his correspondence.

Legislative and/or financial implications

- The investigation to date has uncovered potential non-compliance with the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*, administered by the Department of Environment and enforced by the RSPCA; and the *Livestock Act 1997*, administered and enforced by PIRSA.
- PIRSA will continue to cooperate with the investigation being led by RSPCA and will consider any compliance actions under the *Livestock Act 1997* in due course.

Attachments

- A. Draft Letter - eA203299 - Request to Department - [REDACTED] - Pig Industry
- B. Draft Letter - eA203299 - Standard Response - Pig Industry



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Department of Primary Industries and Regions

18 / 7 / 2025

CONTACT	Con Poulos
POSITION	Acting Executive Director
DIVISION	Biosecurity
MOBILE and LANDLINE	[REDACTED]
Cleared by	Skye Fruean

eA203299
eA203357



Government
of South Australia

The Hon Clare Scriven MLC

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email regarding animal welfare concerns at a property north of Adelaide. The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) is aware of these concerns and is assisting the RSPCA in its investigations into this incident.

The investigation is being conducted independently from industry, in-line with state animal welfare legislation, which is administered in South Australia by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and enforced by the RSPCA.

The pork industry, through both Pork SA and Australian Pork Limited, have demonstrated their support for this independent investigation, and I am informed have commenced their own separate investigation. I remain confident in the pork industry's commitment to striving for improvement and quality assurance, including with respect to animal welfare and social licence.

The South Australian Government remains committed to animal welfare, reflected in our legislative framework that is at least consistent with other states and territories, and in some respects, more stringent. This legislative framework is currently under review, with the Animal Welfare Act recently updated, and work currently being undertaken to update the Animal Welfare regulations. The [DEW website](#) has further information on this review, including opportunities to participate in community consultation.

Once again, thank you for writing to me regarding your concerns on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Clare Scriven'.

Hon Clare Scriven MLC
MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR FOREST INDUSTRIES

25 / 7 / 2025

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries

GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone 08 8226 2931 | Email minister.scriven@sa.gov.au



Document ID:



Government
of South Australia

The Hon Clare Scriven MLC

Mr/ Mrs First name Surname
Position Title
Company
Address
SUBURB STATE POSTCODE

xxxxxxxxx@xx.xxx.xx

Dear Mr/ Mrs Surname

Thank you for your email regarding animal welfare concerns at a property north of Adelaide. The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) is aware of these concerns and is assisting the RSPCA in its investigations into this incident. Any reports of alleged breaches of animal welfare standards are very concerning.

The investigation is being conducted independently of industry, in line with state animal welfare legislation, which is administered in South Australia by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and enforced by the RSPCA.

The pork industry, through both Pork SA and Australian Pork Limited, have demonstrated their support for this independent investigation, and have also commenced their own investigation. I remain confident in the pork industry's commitment to striving for improvement and quality assurance, including with respect to animal welfare and social licence.

The South Australian Government remains committed to animal welfare, reflected in our legislative framework that is at least consistent with other states and territories, and in some respects, more stringent. This legislative framework is currently under review, with the Animal Welfare Act recently updated, and work currently being undertaken to update the Animal Welfare regulations. The [DEW website](#) has further information on this review, including opportunities to participate in community consultation.

Once again, thank you for writing to me regarding your concerns on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Hon Clare Scriven MLC
MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MINISTER FOR FOREST INDUSTRIES

/ / 2025

Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries

GPO Box 1671 Adelaide SA 5001
Telephone 08 8226 2931 | Email minister.scriven@sa.gov.au





Minute to
Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
Minister for Forest Industries

Ref: A7004919

For	Noting
Critical Date	4/07/2025 (the issue may be in the media on or around this date)
Subject	Pig Welfare Investigation

Synopsis

Both RSPCA and PIRSA have received reports of extremely poor animal husbandry and housing of pigs on a piggery at Dublin. The main issues were those of pigs being housed in overcrowded internal pens and outside "eco shelters" that were similarly overcrowded and not being adequately cleaned out.

PIRSA offered to assist RSPCA with their investigations, a PIRSA veterinary officer attended the property on Friday 27 June with RSPCA Inspectors. Observations of RSPCA Inspectors and the PIRSA vet summarised the conditions the pigs were living in as atrocious. Multiple pigs were observed dead or had to be euthanised. RSPCA have initiated compliance action to ensure immediately action is taken by the piggery owners to remedy the housing conditions.

Recommendations

That you:

- Note the brief

NOTED

Hon Clare Scriven MLC

**Minister for Primary Industries
and Regional Development**

Minister for Forest Industries

4 / 07 / 2025

Ministerial Comments -

Background

- On Thursday 29 May 2025, a member of the public reported observations of atrocious living conditions and pigs suffering and dying on a piggery at Dublin South Australia. The reporter claimed her CLAUSE 5(1) and had taken some footage of the pigs which the reporter provided to the PIRSA Nuriootpa Customer Services Officer.
- The email and footage were forwarded to the Manager of Field Operations for Animal Biosecurity – PIRSA, who immediately notified the Chief Inspector of the RSPCA, who indicated that the same footage had already been sent to him.
- PIRSA confirmed address details for the piggery with RSPCA and offered the assistance of an Animal Health Officer or Veterinary Officer to attend with RSPCA when they arranged a date to investigate.
- On 30 May RSPCA replied to PIRSA stating that they would be applying for a warrant to attend the piggery the following week.
- PIRSA did not hear from RSPCA again regarding the issue until 11 June, when RSPCA indicated they would be visiting the piggery at Dublin the following week.
- Unfortunately, all PIRSA veterinary officers were at a training session on the day that RSPCA wanted to inspect the site; therefore, PIRSA offered services of a private Veterinarian but RSPCA decided to postpone their visit until the week beginning 23 June. Arrangements were made for RSPCA Inspectors and a PIRSA veterinary officer to inspect the piggery on 28 June.
- Upon visiting the piggery, the atrocious conditions observed in the footage provided by the reporter were confirmed. Observations of severe overcrowding of internal shelters and outdoor shelters being full of mud, water and excrement to depths over 40cm.
- Multiple dead and sick pigs were removed from the mud in these shelters and 15 pigs were euthanised.
- PIRSA conducted post mortems on 2 recently dead pigs to assist RSPCA in determining the cause of death, a further 2 carcasses were submitted to the laboratory for post mortem. A report of observations of conditions and the pigs was compiled by the PIRSA vet and provided to RSPCA.

Discussion

- Clauses 4(2)(a)(i), 6(2), 7(1)(c), 9(1)

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Stakeholder / regional impacts, consultation and engagement

- It is PIRSA's understanding that the specialist pig veterinarian who previously provided consultation services to this piggery has now declined his services to the owners. That veterinarian was present during the inspection and was significantly upset by what he observed.
- On 3 July, PIRSA's Chief Veterinary Officer discussed the case in-confidence with Australian Pork Limited and Pork SA. Clauses 4(2)(a)(i), 6(2), 7(1)(c), 9(1)

Clauses 4(2)(a)(i), 6(2), 7(1)(c), 9(1)

Management of key risks

- Perception of South Australian pig industry practices could be compromised if the general public become aware of the conditions on this piggery. As at 3 July, PIRSA is aware that at least one media outlet (ABC) has footage allegedly from this piggery.

- Clause 9(1)

Legislative and/or financial implications

- Clauses 4(2)(a)(i), 6(2), 7(1)(c), 9(1)
- PIRSA have also been advised by RSPCA that pigs were observed to be cannibalising the dead pigs in pens they were housed with, allowing this to occur constitutes an offence under the *Livestock Act 1997*, which PIRSA administers. PIRSA will continue to cooperate with the investigation being led by RSPCA and will consider any compliance actions under the *Livestock Act 1997* in due course.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

4/7/2025

CONTACT	Georgie Cornish
POSITION	Executive Director
DIVISION	Biosecurity
MOBILE and LANDLINE	<small>Clause 9(1)</small> / 8429 2743
Cleared by	Con Poulos