



# Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment

To: COMU via 9(2)(a)  
From: 9(2)(a), Institutional Performance, Science, Skills and Innovation  
Topic: Future Footprint – Provisional Analysis  
Action required: For your input  
Security: Commercial in confidence

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Please find attached a copy of our analysis on the Future Footprint business plan submitted on 31 October.

The business case has been partially superseded by a proposed joint education-research-industry hub at Lincoln. A detailed plan is due to be presented by the Chairs of AgResearch, Plant and Food Research, Landcare Research, Lincoln University and DairyNZ by March 2013. Minister Joyce has shown substantial interest in the concept.

The Lincoln Hub plan will be built upon the Future Footprint strategy of moving staff from Ruakura (Hamilton) and Invermay (Dunedin) to Massey and Lincoln. Given this reliance, AgResearch request approval in principle before starting detailed planning.

MBIE has 2 significant concerns that will need to be addressed:

The first is that the benefit of the business case is mostly economic rather than on AgResearch's balance sheet. The benefits (especially given the Lincoln Hub proposal) could be substantial. This is in line with AgResearch's Core Purpose. We will recommend that shareholding Ministers seek assurances that those economic benefits are realised (i.e. that the hub functions are aligned and a culture of partnership is incentivised).

The second is a question of if the business case presented is gold-plated. We will only be able to assess, alongside the Lincoln Hub, once the next stage of planning concludes.

9(2)(a) was involved in the initial review of the business case and I appreciate that COMU have therefore lost significant institutional knowledge. Please pass on my contact details – I am more than happy to talk through the business case in detail.

A briefing based on this analysis will be sent to Minister Joyce and Minister Coleman. We would appreciate input so that the briefing can be sent on December 21.

Regards

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