

Given that there are no finches currently ensconced within Class 1 it hardly seems fitting to pontificate about the trial of the EBRKS too much from a finch keeper's perspective!

However, we wish to give as much insight to the Department as possible.

From interviews with and emails & phone calls from members of the **Finch Society of Australia** it appears that a few members availed themselves of the use of MTR's for several of the valuable exotic species.

They felt that this gave them partial "peace of mind" as to the question of establishing ownership of these finches should the need ever arise.

For all but the most highly priced of the exotic finches there appeared to be little use of MTR's by the representative group of finch breeders contacted.

However, most agreed that the use of MTR's could be a useful tool in proof of ownership cases but many felt that for the majority of lower value exotic finch species held in our aviaries they were superfluous.

Some were also reticent to use/issue them but there appeared to be few problems in obtaining them - with those that opted for them experiencing few difficulties.

From this we concurred that the information distribution was effective and readily accessible to those wishing to avail themselves of this service.

Members also saw no reason for the status quo to change re finches being upgraded to Class 1 in light of the fact that, apart from one Asian gentleman who tried to smuggle his 2 pet finches into Australia, there has been a complete lack of smuggling activity associated with finch species.

We would also like to point out that one of our members, Doug Hill, was involved with assisting the customs and quarantine services in investigating this breach of Quarantine protocol.

The majority of finch keepers appeared content with the present system as long as finches remained exempt from mandatory paperwork – based on the multitude of reasons outlined in several of the FSA's previous EBRKS submissions – but also suggested that there should be further consultation before any finch species were upgraded to Class1 pending any possible legal importation – and the FSA felt that they should be included into any such discussions.

Although favouring legal finch importation they felt that this should not be at the expense of those finch keepers presently holding such species or those financially unable to avail themselves of this service.

Summary:

- FSA members were content with the EBRKS so long as finches remained off Class 1 and saw no reason for this to change and should any such changes be suggested they trusted that there will be a full consultation process with those qualified to debate the ethology of these species and that more than a simple climatic-based model will be considered – again as outlined in the FSA's EBAG submissions, with full consideration of the diverse nature of the Australian environment and the perils facing any such "potential escapees".

- Use of MTR's favoured by some when purchasing the rarer, high-priced exotic finches.
- Few experienced any difficulties obtaining MTR paperwork.