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31 March 2026

His Excellency General the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia

All Federal Ministers of the Crown

National Farmers' Federation
Victorian Farmers Federation
NSW Farmers
AgForce Queensland
WAFarmers
South Australian Farmers Federation
GrainGrowers Australia

Open letter also addressed to Australia's canola farmers, grain handlers, grain storage operators, and regional communities across Australia.

SEVENTH NOTICE — THE FUEL IS IN THE AUSTRALIAN SILO's: FAST-TRACK BIODIESEL NOW

Your Excellency. Prime Minister Albanese. Ministers of the Crown. To the National Farmers' Federation, state farming federations, and GrainGrowers. To every canola farmer, grain handler, and regional community across Australia.

No one knows how this unfolds.

The conflict in the Middle East may escalate or resolve. The Strait of Hormuz may reopen in weeks or remain contested for months. Oil prices may stabilise or spike further. Tanker availability may improve or deteriorate. Any potential conflict outside the Gulf puts Australia's shipping lanes at direct risk — and with them, our fuel supply. The instability does not stop there. A world in which multiple simultaneous disruptions are now plausible is the world we are living in.

Nobody — not the government, not the markets, not the intelligence agencies — can tell you with certainty what Australia's fuel supply looks like in 60, 90, or 180 days.

There is one further risk that has not entered the public conversation. Our Pacific Island neighbours — PNG, Fiji, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Samoa, and others — are almost entirely dependent on imported fuel through the same supply chains now under threat. When those chains break, the pressure does not stay offshore. Australia will face direct calls — moral, strategic, and political — to supply fuel to nations within our immediate region. We have defence arrangements, aid obligations, and alliance commitments that make refusal unthinkable. Combined Pacific Island fuel consumption runs at approximately 2–4 million litres per day. **That demand has not been factored into Australia's reserve calculations. It must be.**

Consider what this means in context. Australia is among the **highest per capita consumers of diesel in the world** — our mining, agriculture, freight, and remote power sectors make diesel the backbone of the physical economy. We have **the lowest fuel reserves of any IEA member nation** — holding just 50 to 58 days against an IEA obligation of 90 days and a member average of 140 days, a standard Australia has failed to meet since 2012. We are the nation most dependent

on diesel, with the least buffer, in the most exposed geographic position, at the most dangerous moment in decades.

That uncertainty is not a reason to wait. It is the entire reason to act — with utmost urgency.

I have now written seven formal notices to this Government. My first call to declare a National Liquid Fuel Emergency under the Liquid Fuel Emergency Act 1984 was made **28 days ago, on 3 March 2026.** That call has not been answered. Every day without a declaration is a day without emergency procurement authority, without rationing powers, without reserve release mechanisms, and without the legal framework to direct domestic production. Every day that passes narrows the window.

Responsible government does not plan for the most likely outcome. It plans for the worst — and builds the capacity to manage it. The duty of this Government is unambiguous: **declare the emergency, activate rationing to reduce consumption, release and replenish strategic reserves, and mobilise every domestic fuel source within Australia's borders — beyond the reach of international events — to build the supply buffer this nation urgently needs.**

Australia grows fuel. It sits in silos right now, waiting. The canola crop, the tallow from our livestock industry, the used cooking oil from our cities — these are sovereign fuel sources entirely outside the reach of Middle East conflict, foreign shipping lanes, and international price shocks. They cannot be sanctioned. They cannot be sunk. They cannot be embargoed. They are ours.

It is the duty of this Government to use them.

This is the seventh formal notice in an ongoing series addressing Australia's liquid fuel crisis. This Government has spent months telling Australians there is nothing to see. Meanwhile, Australia has been sitting on an extraordinary national asset: **5.84 million tonnes of canola — the second-largest crop on record — stored in silos across this country right now.** That is the equivalent of approximately 2.2 billion litres of biodiesel. Not a proposal. Not a future resource. Feedstock that exists today, in Australian hands, on Australian soil, requiring no tankers, no Persian Gulf, and no foreign government's permission.

This letter is a call to act on it — immediately, at scale, with a program of fast-tracked micro-biodiesel plants that puts regional communities, farmers, and local industry at the centre of Australia's fuel response.

1. THE NUMBERS: WHAT AUSTRALIA HAS RIGHT NOW

The 2025–26 canola harvest: **7.7 million tonnes** — the second-largest on record.

Of that:

- 1.86 million tonnes exported October–January, with shipments continuing at a measured pace
- **5.84 million tonnes (76%) remain in Australian storage as of late March 2026**
- Estimated biodiesel yield: approximately **14 million barrels — 2.226 billion litres**

At Australia's net diesel consumption of approximately **55–60 million litres per day**, this stockpile represents around **34 to 37 days of energy-equivalent diesel supply** — enough to materially close the gap in Australia's IEA reserve deficit, while tanker routes remain disrupted and voyage times run to 32 days from the US Gulf Coast. Note: biodiesel carries approximately 9% lower energy density than mineral diesel; these figures reflect that adjustment. At B20 blend ratios the difference is negligible.

The canola is here. The crisis is here. The question is whether government will Act.

2. THE SOVEREIGN CANOLA RESERVE — HOLD 50%, PROCESS BEFORE THE NEXT CROP

Australia must immediately implement a min **50% export hold** on remaining canola stocks and designate that volume as a **Sovereign Biodiesel Reserve.** This is not a permanent export ban — it is a crisis measure tied to domestic production capacity and the timeline to the next harvest.

The numbers:

- Current stock in storage: 5.84 million tonnes
- **50% export hold: 2.92 million tonnes reserved for domestic biodiesel production**
- Crush yield at 40% oil by weight: approximately 1.168 million tonnes of canola oil
- **Biodiesel yield: approximately 1.27 billion litres of finished biodiesel**
- Time to next harvest (2026–27 crop, sown May–June, harvested November–December): approximately 8 months
- Required processing rate to consume reserved stock before next harvest: approximately 5.3 million litres per day
- **Plant capacity required: approximately 90–100 plants at 2ML/year running continuously**

This is achievable. It is the target the 90-day build program is designed to hit.

The rolling annual cycle — a permanent sovereign fuel reserve

Once the micro-plant network is in place, the cycle self-sustains permanently:

- Each year's canola harvest arrives November–December
- 50% is reserved by law for domestic biodiesel processing
- The network processes continuously through the following 8 months
- The next harvest replenishes the reserve before stocks are exhausted
- **Australia never again faces a diesel crisis without a domestic production buffer**

A 50% annual reserve across a 7–8 million tonne harvest yields approximately **1.1–1.3 billion litres of biodiesel per year — permanently.** At 55–60 million litres of diesel consumption per day, that covers approximately **18–22 days of national consumption from domestic production alone**, every single year, without a single foreign tanker.

That is not a subsidy. That is sovereignty.

The export hold must be declared today. Every tonne that leaves Australia in the next 30 days is a tonne that cannot fuel this country through the crisis that is already here.

3. BIODIESEL IS NOT COMPLICATED — AND NEITHER IS THE EQUIPMENT

This is the part the bureaucracy will not tell you. Biodiesel production at micro or community scale is **not a complex industrial process.** It is a well-documented, proven, commercially available technology operating at farm and community scale around the world for decades.

A complete micro-biodiesel production setup has two stages:

Stage 1 — Crushing (seed to oil)

- A seed crusher / expeller press extracts crude canola oil from the seed. Screw-press expellers are mechanically simple: a rotating auger inside a barrel cage, driven by an electric motor through a gearbox. Robust, low-maintenance, and widely used in regional Australia for oilseed processing.
- A 1-tonne/hour expeller produces approximately 400 litres of crude canola oil per hour — enough to supply a 2ML/year biodiesel plant running a single shift.
- The pressed meal remaining after crushing is high-protein stock feed — canola meal is a premium livestock feed ingredient. Every crusher produces two saleable outputs: oil for fuel and meal for farms. **The economics work from day one.**

Stage 2 — Biodiesel production (oil to fuel)

- A reaction vessel (stainless steel tank, 1,000–100,000 litre capacity) where extracted oil undergoes transesterification

- Methanol and a catalyst (sodium or potassium hydroxide — available from agricultural suppliers)
- A separator and wash system — separates finished biodiesel from glycerol byproduct
- Basic instrumentation and pumping

Both stages can be built in Australia, by Australians, right now.

The crusher is a screw, a barrel, a motor, and a gearbox. Australian regional workshops build far more complex equipment every day — headers, augers, irrigation infrastructure, mining conveyors. A screw-press expeller is well within the fabrication capability of any competent regional engineering shop. The main wear parts — auger, cage, and bearings — can be manufactured domestically. No import dependency at any point.

Standardise the design. Publish it open-source. Any fabricator builds to spec. Regional engineering shops become not just operators of this network but **manufacturers and maintainers** of it — a second industry created alongside the first.

The full production chain: locally grown canola — locally built crusher — locally built biodiesel plant — fuel for local farms and regional distribution. Zero foreign dependency at any point. That is a genuinely sovereign supply chain, built from the ground up with existing Australian skills and existing Australian steel.

A micro-plant producing 1–2 million litres per year can be built and commissioned in 8 to 12 weeks under normal conditions. Fast-tracked, with pre-approved designs, government procurement authority, and streamlined approvals — **under 3 months from green light to first litre.**

There is no exotic chemistry. No rare materials. No technology transfer required. Australia can build this with what it already has.

4. THE INFRASTRUCTURE ALREADY EXISTS — IT IS JUST NOT RUNNING

Before a single new plant is built, this Government should ask one question: why are Australia's existing biodiesel facilities sitting idle?

Australia currently has installed biodiesel production capacity of approximately **110 million litres per year.** In 2023, actual production was **1.5 million litres** — a utilisation rate of **1.4%.** The plants are built. The knowledge exists. The regulatory approvals are in place. The equipment is not running because there is no federal mandate, no procurement contract, no subsidy, and no emergency directive telling them to produce.

Known facilities include:

- **Ecotech Biodiesel** — 35km north of Brisbane, QLD. Operating since 2006. Capacity 30ML/year, expandable to 75ML. Canola, tallow, and used cooking oil feedstock.
- **Riverina Oils & Bio Energy (ROBE)** — Wagga Wagga, NSW. Canola crushing and oil extraction with biodiesel processing capability. Heart of Australia's canola belt.
- **Northern Oil Advanced Biofuels Pilot Plant** — Gladstone, QLD. Operational. Producing biodiesel from sugarcane bagasse. Backed by Queensland State and federal government grants. Expansion to 200ML commercial refinery planned.
- **Barnawartha** — Victoria. Mothballed. Its closure alone was sufficient to disrupt national biodiesel supply and push up prices across the country — a lesson in what happens when government treats fuel production as a commercial afterthought.

In parallel with building new plants we must turn the existing ones back on — this week, under emergency procurement authority, at full capacity.

Under a declared emergency, government can direct these facilities to produce, purchase their output at a guaranteed price, and have product entering the distribution network within 30 days. That window is open right now.

Immediate recommissioning grant — existing facilities

Government releases emergency recommissioning grants to all mothballed and underutilised biodiesel facilities to return to full production capacity. Funding covers equipment servicing, feedstock procurement, and working capital for the first 90-day production run. Tied to a guaranteed government purchase contract for output. No competitive tender — eligible facilities apply, certify readiness, and receive funding within 14 days. **Target: all known idle capacity producing within 30 days of declaration.**

5. THE MICRO-PLANT MODEL — HUNDREDS OF PLANTS, NOT ONE FACTORY

The standard government instinct will be to identify a single large processing facility and route all feedstock through it. That is the wrong model for this crisis. It is slow, centralised, and creates a single point of failure — as Barnawartha proved.

The right model is distributed micro-scale production:

- **Target: 200–500 micro-biodiesel plants** across canola-growing regions — Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, NSW, and Queensland
- **Each plant:** 500,000 to 5 million litres per year capacity, co-located with existing grain storage, farm cooperatives, or regional depots
- **Feedstock:** Direct farm-gate or silo-sourced canola oil, avoiding long transport chains
- **Output:** B20 blend (20% biodiesel, 80% mineral diesel) to extend diesel stocks immediately; B100 for dedicated machinery and generators
- **Operators:** Local engineering businesses, farmers' cooperatives, regional manufacturers — not multinational contractors

Distributed production means:

- Faster build and commissioning (no single bottleneck)
- Resilient supply (no single point of disruption)
- Local fuel security — regional communities and farms fuel themselves first
- Jobs and new permanent industry in the towns that grow the feedstock

A network of 300 plants averaging 2 million litres per year produces 600 million litres annually — over a quarter of the stockpile's potential yield converted to ongoing domestic fuel production, permanently reducing import dependence.

Glycerol byproduct: Every litre of biodiesel produces approximately 100ml of glycerol — a valuable industrial chemical used in pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and animal feed. Micro-plants can sell byproduct locally or to existing glycerol processors, improving the economics of every plant from day one.

6. WHAT FAST-TRACKING LOOKS LIKE — A 90-DAY PROGRAM

This does not require new legislation. It requires government will and emergency procurement authority — both of which flow directly from a declaration under the **Liquid Fuel Emergency Act 1984.**

Week 1–2: Activate existing plants

Issue emergency production directives to all idle biodiesel facilities. Government announces a guaranteed purchase price for output. Release recommissioning grants immediately. First additional litres enter the network within 30 days.

Week 1–2: Emergency grants — micro-plant design and build

Grants of $50,000 to $500,000 per applicant open to regional engineering businesses, farm cooperatives, and grain storage operators to design and construct micro-biodiesel plants and crushers to the published standard design. No competitive tender delay — eligible applicants self-certify against the spec and receive funding within 14 days. First grants approved within 30 days of emergency declaration.

Week 1–2: Import bridge — Chinese and Indian turnkey plants

Chinese and Indian manufacturers currently supply complete turnkey micro-biodiesel plants — including crusher/expeller and transesterification units — to specification, with global delivery and

commissioning support. Lead times of 8–12 weeks at significantly lower capital cost than bespoke fabrication. In a declared emergency, government should immediately procure **50–100 imported units as a bridge measure** — getting product into the network within the same 90-day window while Australian fabricators are building their first units. Every imported plant that enters service becomes a working reference model for Australian fabricators to inspect and build upon. The import bridge closes as local industry scales.

The objective is clear: Australian feedstock, Australian fuel, Australian plants — built by Australians, owned by Australians, for Australians. The imported units get us to first production. Australian industry takes it from there permanently.

Week 1–2: Pre-approved standard plant design

Commission a single reference design for three plant sizes (500kL, 2ML, 5ML per year) — including crusher/expeller specifications — from existing Australian biodiesel engineering firms. Publish as open-source for any builder. Approve it once — every plant built to spec receives automatic development and environmental approval.

Week 1–4: Canola purchase commitment and export hold

Declare the 50% export hold on remaining canola stocks. Government announces a floor price for domestic biodiesel-grade canola — not charity, a procurement contract. Farmers commit stock. Existing crushing and oil extraction facilities redirect a portion of throughput to biodiesel grade.

Week 2–6: Regional plant procurement

Open tender to regional fabricators, engineering workshops, and farm cooperatives. Priority to existing grain storage sites. Simple contract: build to spec, first litre within 90 days, government buys output at guaranteed price for 24 months.

Week 4–12: Build, commission, produce

Parallel construction across 50–100 initial sites. CSIRO and state agriculture departments provide technical support. Local tradespeople do the work. First new plants online within 10–12 weeks.

7. THE ECONOMICS — THIS PAYS FOR ITSELF

At current diesel import prices of $1.80–2.20/litre (and rising), domestically produced biodiesel at $1.40–1.70/litre production cost is already competitive without subsidy — and the feedstock is sitting in Australian silos at risk of export before it can be used.

Government investment required:

- Recommissioning grants for existing plants: ~$50–80 million (immediate)
- Emergency micro-plant build grants (first 500 applicants at average $200K): ~$100 million
- Import bridge — 100 turnkey units at average $300K landed: ~$30 million
- Pre-approved design development: ~$2–5 million (one-time)
- 90-day micro-plant procurement contracts (100 initial sites at average $800K each): ~$80 million
- Canola floor price procurement over 12 months: ~$400–600 million
- **Total first-year commitment: under $900 million**

Against this: 2.2 billion litres of domestic biodiesel capacity, 300+ new regional businesses, a permanent reduction in import dependence, and fuel security through the current crisis and every one that follows.

8. TO AUSTRALIA'S FARMERS — YOU ARE THE SOLUTION

Your silos say what this Government will not: you are the answer.

The canola in storage right now is not just a commodity waiting for an export price. It is emergency fuel. It is energy sovereignty. Every tonne diverted to domestic biodiesel production is a tonne that

does not require a tanker, a Persian Gulf route, or a US Gulf Coast loading berth. It is fuel that stays in Australia, refined in Australia, by Australians, for Australians.

And critically: **a portion of every tonne you process stays on your farm as fuel.** The micro-plant model is not just about national supply — it is about farm-gate energy independence. A cooperative of five grain farms processing their own canola oil can fuel their own tractors, headers, chaser bins, and freight trucks through harvest, seeding, and every season that follows. The diesel that powers your operation does not have to arrive on a foreign-flagged tanker from the Persian Gulf. It can come from the crop you just harvested, processed fifty kilometres down the road, by a business your community owns.

The fuel crisis that is strangling supply chains right now does not reach a farm that fuels itself. That is what this program builds — not just for this crisis, but permanently.

The micro-plant model means farmers and cooperatives can own the processing infrastructure, not just supply the feedstock. That is a permanent structural change to rural Australia's economic position — new industry, new income streams, and genuine energy independence for regional communities that have always been the most exposed when supply chains break.

9. THE LONG GAME — LARGE-SCALE PLANTS: BEGIN PLANNING NOW

The micro-plant network solves the immediate crisis. But Australia's long-term fuel sovereignty requires scale. Micro-plants are fast and distributed — they cannot alone replace the volumes currently imported. The next layer of this program is a network of **large-scale dedicated biodiesel refineries** — facilities in the 50ML to 200ML per year range — that process feedstock at regional hub scale and feed directly into the national fuel distribution network.

These plants take longer to build — 18 to 36 months from site selection to full production. That is not a reason to wait. **It is a reason to start today.** Planning approvals, site acquisition, environmental assessment, feedstock supply agreements, and financing structures must all begin now if Australia wants large-scale domestic biodiesel capacity online by 2027–28.

Proposed large-plant target network

- **2–3 plants in Western Australia** — co-located with existing grain handling infrastructure at Kwinana, Geraldton, or Albany. WA produces the majority of Australia's canola export crop. Processing it domestically before export is redirected is the logical first step.
- **1–2 plants in South Australia / Victoria** — serving the southern cropping belt and connecting to the east coast fuel distribution network. Barnawartha in Victoria is an existing, permitted site that could be recommissioned and expanded to large-plant scale.
- **1–2 plants in Queensland / NSW** — building on the existing Ecotech Biodiesel and ROBE infrastructure. The Northern Oil facility at Gladstone already has expansion plans to 200ML. Government offtake commitment accelerates that timeline immediately.

What government must do now to enable large plants

- **Declare a Sovereign Biodiesel Industry policy** — long-term government purchase agreements (10 years minimum) giving investors and lenders the certainty needed to finance large plant construction.
- **Fast-track planning and environmental approvals** — a dedicated EPBC pathway for sovereign fuel infrastructure, with 90-day assessment timelines for pre-approved site categories.
- **Establish a Sovereign Fuel Infrastructure Fund** — co-investment vehicle for large plant construction, drawing on the same financing mechanisms used for critical minerals and clean energy projects.
- **Lock in the 50% canola reserve by legislation** — not emergency regulation, but permanent statute. Large plant investors need feedstock certainty across a decade, not a crisis measure that expires when the tankers return.

A fully built large-plant network of 5–7 facilities, combined with the micro-plant distributed network, would give Australia the capacity to produce **2–3 billion litres of biodiesel per year domestically** — covering 35 to 50 days of national diesel consumption from Australian-grown, Australian-

processed fuel, every year, permanently. That is genuine fuel sovereignty. Not a crisis response. A structural solution.

The micro-plants address the crisis. The large plants address the future. Both must begin today.

9. YOUR EXCELLENCY — THE QUESTION THAT MUST BE ASKED

This Government has not declared the emergency. It has not activated the NLFERP. It has released only 20% of strategic reserves while declining to explain what triggers the remainder. It has allowed canola exports to continue while domestic biodiesel plants sit at 1.4% utilisation. It has not moved to secure domestic fuel production from the largest canola stockpile in Australian history.

I ask you to put one question to your ministers today: **why is 5.84 million tonnes of Australian canola not currently being fast-tracked into domestic biodiesel production — and why are existing plants with 110 million litres of installed capacity operating at only 1.4% utilisation during a national fuel crisis?**

If the answer is “we are working on it” — ask for the timeline. If the answer is “it’s not that simple” — ask which part of plumbing, welding, and canola oil they cannot organise in 90 days. If there is no answer — that is your answer.

Declare the emergency. Implement the 50% export hold. Release the grants. Activate the existing plants. Fast-track the builds. Buy the canola. Fuel Australia with what Australia grows.

History will record not just what was done — but what was known, when it was known, and what was said in response.

Yours sincerely,

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