

## Submission to the IGAB Review

This submission is a follow-up to the Discussion Group attended on 5 May 2016. At that meeting the following issues were discussed;

1. **RD&E** – The scope of the review is silent on the whole question of RD&E. This is an emerging issue. In times past, state agencies and CSIRO had been highly active in issues of agricultural biosecurity research. However, in recent times, the research activities of several state agencies have contracted significantly or been transferred to universities. Further, the recent publicity surrounding CSIRO suggest it is winding back on public good research as well, all of which puts the sector at risk of little R&D support in the future except for the university sector. This is further exacerbated by the CRC for Plant Biosecurity completing its term in 2018 and an equivalent is not likely to be funded.

The IGAB Review Panel is therefore encouraged to give strong consideration as to how RD&E is to be supported in future. The need is clear and so some new arrangements need to be put in place. It is recommended that a network of universities and other research providers be established such that there is good geographical coverage, sustainable career paths established and suitable training provided. To some extent a network already exists in the plant area through the current CRC for Plant Biosecurity but ongoing funding beyond the CRC term needs to be put in place, presumably through government and RDC funding. Similar considerations need to be given to animal biosecurity issues.

Attention needs to be given to a governance model that does not have the bureaucratic setup of the CRC and preferably does not require the establishment of a new entity to run it. It needs to be cross sectoral and probably RIRDC seems to be an appropriate place to consider for a home. In any case there needs to be legislative protection and a budget process that provides some reasonable certainty such as a rolling 5-year agreement.

2. **The “System”** - The Discussion Paper (p15) provides a diagram of the components of the IGAB. It is unclear how the components relate and there appear to be two independent silos that have tenuous connections. The arrows seem to be going in the wrong direction and the meaning of the dotted lines is anyone’s guess.

There is a need for such a diagram as the current relationships are confusing. For a start there needs to be a lead body where the ultimate responsibilities lie. That would seem to be the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC). The membership of the NBC needs to be reconsidered as it is an opportunity for other potential players to be involved and have ownership (eg other Departments, industry players, experts from universities and CSIRO). It would seem appropriate for AHA and PHA to report to the NBC and for IGAB to be absorbed into NBC. The relationships with the other committees in Figure 2 (p15) need to be reconsidered and revamped accordingly.

3. **One Australia** – much discussion in the meeting related to the bureaucratic processes and the different requirements for different jurisdictions. This makes no sense and it is expensive without any clear benefit for the duplication. Consistency of legislation for Australia should be the clear aim with agreement with the states that they work in the one system. It is important that Tasmania be part of IGAB or else be treated as a foreign country with respect

to biosecurity. Differences between states need to be sorted out **within** the one Australia approach.

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