

Knowing and owning our roles and responsibilities

[Feedback request 1](#) **The Review Panel seeks feedback on the draft roles and responsibilities of national biosecurity system participants.**

Essential characteristics of involvement of participants:

- Involve community groups.
- Use expertise of external specialist groups eg. ABSANZ
- Use existing strategies to identify key stakeholders
- Use other exemplars such as prawn white spot disease and equine flu to identify planning and preparedness for pandemics or other outbreaks
- Absence of reference to training in preparedness.

[Feedback request 2](#) *The Review Panel seeks feedback on the total effort and costs associated with demonstrating area freedom by jurisdictions, and the value of that trade.*

- **Recommendations seem reasonable.**

Stronger environmental biosecurity

[Recommendation 4](#) *Jurisdictions' biosecurity surveillance activities should include pests and diseases that pose the greatest threat to our export markets*

Surveillance should include pests and diseases that may affect exports as well as tourism and Australian flora and fauna even if not of industry concern.

[Recommendation 6](#) *IGAB2 should clarify the roles and responsibilities of the parties with regard to international and domestic market access, including proof of area freedom.*

Without clearly defined roles and responsibilities dispute resolution will be difficult.

[Recommendation 7](#) **IGAB2 should include an explicit commitment by jurisdictions to support financially, decisions agreed to under NEBRA, but look to put in place systems that ensure decisions are evidence-based and transparent, in keeping with best risk management principles, and that give confidence to governments and the**

community that funds are being committed wisely and appropriately.

This will only work if the level of funding is adequate. Resourcing of this area will be costly. How will it be managed if the Govt does not fund it adequately? There needs to be a risk based approach that is evidence driven and transparent to all stakeholders.

Recommendation 8 Jurisdictions should institute formal arrangements between agriculture and environment agencies to define the objectives of cooperation, leading and support roles, information flows, resources and deliverables. The Australian Government agriculture and environment departments should enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, modelled on those with health and immigration agencies.

This is a suitable approach as it limits duplication of resources and provides a cooperative framework when multiple agencies need to combat an emergency situation. However, how and will these MOUs work in practice?

Recommendation 9 The IGAB should make clearer commitments to environmental biosecurity and include:

- the principle of ecologically sustainable development
- acknowledgement of Australia's international responsibilities under the Convention on Biological Diversity
- a program of work to determine, plan and prepare for national priority pests and diseases impacting the environment and native species
- a focus on environment and community as well as industry partnerships
- invertebrate transmitted diseases as well as animal diseases.

What means will be put in place to COMMUNICATE new pests to industry? They will need to develop excellent structures for communication. This also applies to Recommendation 21.

Recommendation 10 The Australian Government should establish the senior, expert position of Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer within the environment department. A less preferred option is to house the position in the agriculture department. The position should

report on the effectiveness of Australia's environmental biosecurity arrangements and achievements. Reports should be made publicly available.

The expert position should be within Environment, though separate from DAWR as currently DAWR place funding emphasis on Biosecurity controls. All reports should be publically available and a mechanism should be available for public comment on findings and recommendations. **It is essential that this position is independent.**

Recommendation 11 The NBC should establish and resource a new Environmental Biosecurity Committee (EBC), comprising government and external environment biosecurity experts and representatives from both the animal and plant sectoral committees of the NBC, to support the role of the Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer. The role of the EBC should be reviewed following its work to prioritise national biosecurity risks impacting the environment.

The new EBC should include stake holders and researchers either through representative organisations or by enrolling distinguished individuals (or both). Having a committee would ensure a consensus approach is in place for the prioritisation of risks.

Recommendation 12 Greater and explicit roles should be developed for AHA and PHA in environmental biosecurity, instituted through amended constitutions and expanded board expertise.

As long as the appropriate members are recruited so that it does not become conflicted.

Building the national system

Recommendation 13 Jurisdictions should adopt a systematic approach to determine and plan for national priority animal, plant and environmental pests and diseases.

Disagree, a framework has to be developed nationally

Recommendation 14 The NBC should lead five-yearly national-level risk prioritisation for emerging animal, plant and environmental risks and pathways, in partnership with system participants, reporting to AGSOC and AGMIN.

Is 5 yearly considered sufficient? There is an opportunity to incorporate a mechanism written into priority review framework for a more regular review if required.

Research and innovation

Recommendation 15 The sectoral committees of the NBC, with the endorsement of the NBC, should develop an agreed set of National Biosecurity R&I Priorities, in consultation with system participants and in line with the agreed national priority pests and diseases. Priorities at a sectoral and cross-sectoral level need to be considered. The priorities should be developed within two years of the final IGAB review report, and should be reviewed every five years.

More frequent review may need to be considered in order to keep abreast of emerging pests. Is 5 yearly considered sufficient? There is an opportunity to incorporate a mechanism written into priority review framework for a more regular review if required.

Feedback request 3 **The Review Panel seeks feedback on the following options for a new entity for cross-sectoral biosecurity R&I:**

Option 1: Establishing a new stand-alone entity for cross-sectoral biosecurity R&I.

Option 2: Addressing cross-sectoral biosecurity R&I within an existing RDC (for example, the Rural Industries RDC).

The Panel also seeks feedback on the funding options and would welcome alternative suggestions.

A separate and independent entity is preferable to modifying a role within an existing RDC is better as then there is no competing commitments and KPIs can be clearly set out and measured.

Strengthening governance

Recommendation 16 A future IGAB should remain an agreement between the First Ministers of the Australian, state and territory governments.

AGREE

Recommendation 17 First Ministers should, within IGAB2, identify lead ministers and agencies for biosecurity (assumed to be agriculture or primary industries) and require supporting whole-of-government

arrangements to be in place, including through memoranda of understanding.

AGREE

Recommendation 18 First Ministers should formally establish the NBC and articulate its Terms of Reference in the IGAB.

AGREE

Recommendation 19 The NBC should include the CEO of the Australian Local Government Association, and the New Zealand Government be invited to include a representative.

It might be appropriate to have more local representation if their cooperation is needed for eradication implementation. Maybe a representative from each State and Territory not just the CEO of ALGA?

Feedback request 4 The Review Panel seeks feedback on the proposed Terms of Reference for the NBC.

Where ministerial review of annual and evaluation reports is required before the report is made publically available there should be time limits written into the agreements to ensure timely release of information. There should also be a mechanism for public comment on any recommendations. An annual meeting of stakeholders to provide input to NBC is a good idea but should it canvas input from a wider group of stakeholders than just AHA and PHA members to include environmental groups.

Recommendation 20 The NBC should adopt a sub-committee structure that aligns with the revised national biosecurity system objectives and national reform priorities in the IGAB. All NBC working groups and expert groups should be task-specific and, wherever possible, time-limited.

AGREE

Recommendation 21 The NBC should take steps to increase its public profile and openness, including establishing a stand-alone website.

AGREE

The website could be maintained by, but be separate from, the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources,

AGREE

and could accommodate and centralise all information on the NBC, its committees, and their activities. Key policy frameworks, agreements and reports of the NBC should be made publicly available on the site.

AGREE

[Recommendation 22](#) AGSOC should establish and provide oversight to an independent IGAB Evaluation Program **AGREE** to assess and report on implementation of each jurisdictions' commitments under the IGAB. The evaluations, or a summary of them, should be made publicly available following ministerial consideration. **AGREE**

[Recommendation 23](#) The NBC should clarify core commitments of jurisdictions for use in the independent IGAB Evaluation Program to be documented in a future IGAB.

[Recommendation 24](#) The NBC should report annually to AGMIN on its progress of priority reform areas. **AGREE**

The NBC's work program and annual report should be made publicly available upon ministerial consideration.

AGREE

[Recommendation 25](#) AGSOC should establish, as a priority, an Industry and Community Advisory Committee to provide advice to the NBC on key policies and reforms.

[Recommendation 26](#) The NBC should convene a dedicated annual national Biosecurity Roundtable for AHA and PHA members to provide direct input to the NBC. **AGREE**

Funding our national system

[Recommendation 27](#) The NBC and the Industry and Community Advisory Committee, in consultation with other key stakeholders, should revise the National Framework for Cost Sharing Biosecurity Activities to enable its practical application.

[Recommendation 28](#) The NBC, with key industry and non-government partners, should agree uniform and fully inclusive categories of funding activity for the national biosecurity system.

[Recommendation 29](#) The IGAB should include an ongoing commitment to the funding stocktake, with governments publicly reporting their expenditure and the high-level stocktake results under uniform and fully inclusive categories.

[Recommendation 30](#) All governments should review their current biosecurity expenditure, with a view to redirecting funding into areas that return the highest yields to farmers, industry and the community. This approach will require a planned and coordinated strategy of engagement and communication.

[Recommendation 31](#) The Risk Return Resource Allocation model should be extended to include all jurisdictions and their investments, with the Australian Government providing assistance to jurisdictions to build national capacity.

Recommendation 32 AHA and PHA should coordinate an industry stocktake of national biosecurity system investments, making the results publicly available.

Feedback request 5 The Review Panel seeks feedback on the following options to ensure a more rapid-response to an exotic pest or disease incursion:

Option 1: Cost-sharing arrangements should provide for four weeks of monitoring, assessment and preliminary control strategies, while an overall assessment is conducted on the possibility of successful eradication.

Option 2: Cost-sharing arrangements should include a default funding arrangement for when decisions cannot be quickly reached about the success or otherwise of an eradication program.

Option 2 preferred.

Recommendation 33 The emergency response deeds for aquatic animals and exotic production weeds should be finalised within 12 months.

Recommendation 34 State and territory governments should review their biosecurity cost-recovery arrangements to ensure they are consistent, appropriate and transparent.

Agree. However, this only works where systems are efficient. Cost recovery is currently inefficient as the roles of individuals that administer the system are not clear

Recommendation 35 All levels of government could help meet their budgetary challenges by reviewing biosecurity levies and rates/charges currently or potentially applying to system participants. These should be commensurate with agreed national cost sharing principles, which the Review Panel considers should be reviewed.

Measuring system performance

Recommendation 36 The NBC should establish a time-limited task group to progress development of a performance framework and performance measures for the national biosecurity system.

AGREE

Recommendation 37 The Australian Government should facilitate development of an integrated, national biosecurity information system to provide a common platform for all jurisdictions to share and access biosecurity data and information in the national interest.

AGREE

Recommendation 38 Data and knowledge sharing should be a core commitment of jurisdictions under the IGAB. Minimum standards and specifications should be agreed for data sets.

AGREE

Recommendation 39 The Australian Government should establish, within the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, a dedicated National Biosecurity Intelligence Unit, to coordinate and provide advice to the NBC, AGSOC and AGMIN on biosecurity intelligence covering emerging risks and pathways, and international and domestic pest and disease detection.

Any established function should include requirements for containment of pests once detected, not just environmentally but during any transport for disposal, storage or research on the individual pests.

A future system, a future IGAB

Recommendation 40 Jurisdictions should adopt the proposed new priority reform areas and associated work program for IGAB2, and amend the IGAB in line with proposed revisions.

Agree subject to inclusion of timelines to ensure this occurs within a reasonable limit for all jurisdictions.