# National Hitchhiker (Contaminating) Plant Pest Action Plan 2022–2032: implementation schedule 2023

The success of the [National Hitchhiker (Contaminating) Plant Pest Action Plan 2022–2032](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/pests-diseases-weeds/plant/national-action-plans) depends on cooperation and collaboration between importers, shipping businesses, agricultural industries, all levels of government, non-government organisations and individuals, experts and research agencies. This implementation schedule will be used to:

* record the progress of actions set out in the plan
* document roles, responsibilities and funding mechanisms
* communicate progress with stakeholders.

Actions in this plan will complement actions in other [national action plans for priority plant pests](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/pests-diseases-weeds/plant/national-action-plans). Plant Health Committee (PHC) is responsible for endorsing plans and overseeing implementation. The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) will host annual forums with key stakeholders to monitor and review implementation schedules. The purpose of these forums is to collect implementation information and discuss potential proposals to support the plan. PHC will be provided with forum findings. PHC will consider how implementation will occur where no lead has been identified for an action.

The overall success of the plan will be assessed against 6 measures:

1. High level of engagement and support from stakeholders (e.g. over 50 stakeholders at annual forums).
2. Improved diagnostic capacity and treatment capability since the development of the plan.
3. Increased awareness among importers, international and domestic shipping providers, Australian industry, governments and the general public, of the potential risks to Australian industry, the environment and social amenity from hitchhiker pests since the development of the plan.
4. Number of projects initiated to provide data to fill knowledge gaps, and number of projects successfully concluded since the development of the plan.
5. High level of confidence in national surveillance and diagnostic capability to provide evidence of Australia’s pest-free status for hitchhiker pests.
6. Higher level of preparation among stakeholders to respond to a border incident or incursion of a hitchhiker pest since the development of the plan.

Implementation of the plan’s actions are shown in Table 1 (prevention), Table 2 (detection), Table 3 (response) and Table 4 (cross-cutting). Indicative timeframes are short term (up to 3 years), medium term (4 to 8 years) and long term (up to 10 years).

**Status key**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Completed – project finished |
|  | On track – project commenced |
|  | Ongoing ­– business as usual activity underway |
|  | Pending – project or activity is yet to commence |

[Table 1 Implementation of activities for Area 1: Prevention](#Table_1_Action_area_1_Prevention)

| Action | Project or business as usual activity | Status | Lead organisation | Contributors (financial and in-kind) | Dependencies |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action 1.1:** Undertake pest risk assessments for hitchhiker pest groupings, taking into account border interception data.  **Expected benefit and outcome: A pest risk assessment will** support emergency responses and lead to more effective measures at the Australian border to minimise the risk of a hitchhiker pest incursion.  **Priority:** high  **Time frame:** medium term | 1.1.1 Develop pest risk assessments, including consideration of biology, interception data modelling, and risk mitigation/management options | Ongoing – business as usual  Pest risk assessments to be completed at species level, with functional groups being informed by this process  External container risk assessment complete | Commonwealth (BPSSD) | Commonwealth (BOD, CED) | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.1 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 1.1 |
| 1.1.2 Review interception data to inform the pest risk assessment and, if possible, provide support to modelling | Ongoing – business as usual  Interception data reviewed as part of external container risk assessment | Commonwealth (HHWG) | Commonwealth (BOD, BPSSD) | Supports many other action areas, including action 1.4 |
| 1.1.3 Undertake a thorough risk assessment of pathways to inform the pest risk assessment | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth (BPSSD, PPEBD) | Commonwealth (BOD) | Supports many other action areas |
| **Action 1.2: Undertake a sea container pathway review to reduce the risk of hitchhiker pests being transported.**  **Expected benefit and outcome: Addressing the risk of contaminated shipping containers will reduce the biosecurity risk of hitchhiking plant pests.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame:** medium term | 1.2.1 Assess results of DAFF initiatives to target high-risk FCL/FCX containers for Khapra beetle for implications for other hitchhiker pests | Pending – project is yet to commence The [Khapra beetle pest risk analysis - DAFF (agriculture.gov.au)](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/policy/risk-analysis/plant/khapra-pest-risk-analysis#:~:text=About%20the%20pest%20risk%20analysis&text=It%27s%20our%20second%20highest%20ranked,for%20human%20or%20animal%20consumption.) is underway. Once finalised this assessment will determine implications for management of other hitchhiker pests. | Commonwealth (BOD) | Commonwealth (BPSSD, HHWG) | Relates to action 1.4  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.4, 1.7 |
| 1.2.2 Assess results of eDNA project for detection of Khapra beetle in sea containers for technology’s potential applicability to other hitchhiker pests | Completed – Project finished (2023)  Developed and validated eDNA tests for BMSB, red imported fire ant, electric ant, spotted lantern fly, spongy moth  Varroa mite eDNA assay developed [Biosecurity molecular screening using eDNA technology: Phase 5 — University of Canberra Research Portal](https://researchprofiles.canberra.edu.au/en/projects/biosecurity-molecular-screening-using-edna-technology-phase-5) (finished Sep 2023) | Commonwealth (BPSSD, HHWG)  University of Canberra | Commonwealth (BSRD, BOD) | Will be informed by Khapra beetle eDNA project and by eDNA investigations conducted by Khapra surveillance team and new eDNA surveillance team |
| 1.2.3 Integrated Risk and Compliance Model: A revised policy approach for managing external risks associated with sea containers | On track – project commenced and will be delivered in tranches  Tranche 1 is the management of external risk of sea containers scheduled for completion by later 2024. | Commonwealth (BPSSD) | Commonwealth (BOD, BSRD, DBD, HHWG) | Not applicable |
| **Action 1.3 Assess whether current random verification requirements for air freight containers will effectively manage the emerging biosecurity risks on the hitchhiker pest pathway.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **Determining the optimal level of random verification protocols for air freight containers will increase the effectiveness of risk mitigation measures for hitchhiker pests. Priority: high**  **Time frame: short term** | 1.3.1 Assess whether random verification requirements for air freight containers is adequate by analysing airside biosecurity risk detections over the previous five years | On track – project commenced  for completion in 2024 | Commonwealth (BOD) | To be determined | Relates to action 1.4, 1.7, 3.2 and 3.3 |
| **Action 1.4 The Cargo Compliance Verification (CCV) program can be used to inform the biosecurity risk profile for hitchhiker pests.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **CCV data is an important tool for testing the validity of a pest risk profile.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: ongoing** | 1.4.1 Analyse CCV program data to improve the validity of hitchhiker pest risk profiles | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth  (HHWG, CED) | Commonwealth (BOD) | Relates to action 1.2  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.2 |
| 1.4.2 Where applicable, leverage the CCV program to inform enhanced data collection to assist risk owners make policy decisions about hitchhiker pests | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth (HHWG, CED) | To be determined | Relates to action 1.2  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.2 |
| 1.4.3 CCV sweepings | Completed – project finished (2023) | Commonwealth (HHWG, CED) | To be determined | Relates to action 1.2  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.2 |
| 1.4.4 To increase the efficiency of biosecurity investment and to identify opportunities for improvement | Completed­ – project finished (2023)  Consider the data from CCV outcomes and how they will be shared with policy areas for review. | Commonwealth (HHWG, CED) | Commonwealth (BOD) | Relates to action 1.2  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.2 |
| **Action 1.5 Analysis of critical control points on the container pathway considering changes in known hitchhiker pest distribution.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **Analysing critical control point data may assist in identifying high-risk container pathways and their change over time, for example, with changes in hitchhiker pest distribution.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: ongoing** | 1.5.1 Regularly analyse critical control points data on the container pathway and make recommendations for reducing risk of hitchhiker pests | Ongoing – business as usual  The International Plant Protection Convention Sea Container Focus Group is developing several global strategies, including a global commercial proposal, where containers are checked and cleaned as required at each point in the supply chain supported by codes and guidelines.  DAFF are actively working to implement new offshore quality systems in high-risk locations including through government-to-government arrangements. | Commonwealth (HHWG) | Commonwealth (BOD, BPSSD) | Relates to action 1 |
| **Action 1.6 Consider stronger measures with Approved Arrangements and First Points of Entry.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **Information on post border movement of containers from likely source ports or containing known host commodities from pack/unpack sites under Approved Arrangements, and volumes and destinations would be valuable to increase the possibility of early detection for post border surveillance and avoid having to undertake a response.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: ongoing** | 1.6.1 Regularly analyse container movement information to strengthen Approved Arrangements and assist with post border surveillance for early detection | Ongoing – business as usual  Hitchhiker surveillance project has identified high-risk non-Biosecurity Entry Points for surveillance and aims to better use data to identify high-risk Biosecurity Entry Points for surveillance | Commonwealth (HHWG) | Commonwealth (PPEBD)  Jurisdictions | Relates to action 1.7  Supports:   * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.5, 2.9 |
| 1.6.2 Consider outcomes of ant baiting at port project for transference to Approved Arrangements | Ongoing – business as usual  The project ‘Pilot prophylactic baiting for exotic invasive ants at high-risk sites’ supports implementation of the National Biosecurity Invasive Ant Plan 2018-2028 – Action 2.9. Project due for completion 30 October 2023.  Similar trials could also be undertaken for other hitchhiker pests if determined suitable to deliver program of work. | Commonwealth (PPEBD, BPSSD, CED)  Jurisdiction | Industry | Supports:   * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.9 |
| **Action 1.7 Support an international shipping container standard and container cleanliness in general.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **Support development of an international phytosanitary standard for shipping containers will reduce hitchhiker risks associated with shipping containers.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: medium term** | 1.7.1 Contribute to the development of an international shipping container standard | Ongoing – business as usual  The Sea Container Focus Group has agreed that an ISPM will be considered as a longer-term option. The group is revising the CPM recommendation on sea containers, to communicate the global risks associated with sea containers, encourage visual examinations and other measures to reduce risks, and is considering a range of regulatory and non-regulatory actions to minimise risks. | Commonwealth (HHWG, PPEBD) | Commonwealth (PPEBD, BOD, TIDI)  Industry | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 1.4 |
| 1.7.2 Investigate provisions to clean containers at container park facilities at the time of servicing and repair, as well as cleaning once sea containers reach the end of their transportation life and are sold as storage containers to the general public | Pending – project to commence when funding available  Looking at ways to better utilise container parks for inspecting and cleaning containers subject to biosecurity control under Approved Arrangements | Commonwealth (BOD, HHWG) | Industry | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 1.4 |
| 1.7.3 Consider reviewing resource material and guidelines that will support container cleanliness | Pending – project to commence when funding available  The Sea Container Focus Group has developed several material and guidelines, including a best practice guide to communicate measures that should be applied at various touchpoints in the supply chain, a pest management poster, and guidelines for NPPOs on how to undertake inspections and record inspection results. | Commonwealth (BOD, HHWG) | Industry | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 1.4 |
| 1.7.4 A project aimed at gaining a better understanding of the extent of the contamination of containers by lifting the floors for inspection and sampling. | On track – project commenced  Two trials have been completed using eDNA and visual inspections. | Commonwealth (HHWG) | Commonwealth (BOD) | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 1.4 |
| 1.7.5 Test use of quantitative mass spectrometers to detect brown marmorated stink bugs in containers and determine whether they are alive or dead. | Pending – project to commence when funding available  The technology was tested during the BMSB season that commenced in September 2020. The project could be expanded to detect other biosecurity threats, including other stink bug species. | Commonwealth (BPSSD) | Commonwealth (CED, BOD) | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 1.4 |

Table 2 Implementation of activities for Area 2: Detection

| Action | Project or business-as-usual activity | Status | Lead organisation | Contributors (financial and in-kind) | Dependencies |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action 2.1:** Support ongoing investment in automatic scanning technology.  **Expected benefit and outcome:** Develop technology to detect hitchhiker pests to full utility and commercialisation.  **Priority:** high  **Time frame:** short term | 2.1.1 Technology to detect biosecurity risks on container surfaces: investigating the use of high-resolution cameras, combined with software algorithms to interpret the images, for automatic detection of biosecurity risks on the external surfaces of containers | Completed – project finished (2023)  Extensive trials conducted from June 2022 to March 2023 showed the camera system could successfully capture images of biosecurity risk material on containers during discharge. However, further work and investment would be required to improve accuracy levels before it could be adopted operationally. | Commonwealth (HHWG, BPSSD, PPEBD)  Trellis | Commonwealth (BOD)  DP World | Relates to action 2.2.  Supports:   * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.4 |
| 2.1.2 Technology to detect pests in difficult to access areas of container and warehouses, and biosecurity sample processing: investigating the use of hyperspectral and visual spectrum camera technology combined with software technology for automatic detection of biosecurity risks on external surfaces of containers | On track – project commenced  Project due to be completed 23–24 financial year. The project is currently focused on verifying the accuracy of the sample processing model. Further work and investment may be required to improve the accuracy of the other models for operational use. | Commonwealth (HHWG, BPSSD, PPEBD), ISD | Commonwealth (BOD) | Relates to action 2.2 |
| 2.1.3 Novel technologies to assist rapid and sensitive detection of brown marmorated stink bug | Completed – project finished (2023)  [Hort Innovation | Novel technologies to assist rapid and sensitive detection of Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (AS19000) (horticulture.com.au)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/as19000/) | Cesar Australia | Hort Innovation | Not applicable |
| 2.1.4 Exploration of advanced control and detection methods for varroa mite. | On track – project commenced  The overall objective of this project is to catalogue and critically review innovations in detection methods and emerging biological and cultural control methods for the Varroa mite (*Varroa destructor*).  [Hort Innovation | Exploration of advanced control and detection methods for varroa mite (PH22002) (horticulture.com.au)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/ph22002/) | Macquarie University | Hort Innovation | Not applicable |
| 2.1.5 Production of a robust classification and identification key of the *Halyomorpha* complex and allied taxa | On track – project commenced  This project will clarify the identity and relationships of the *Halyomorpha* complex of stink bugs (Pentatomidae: *Cappaeini*), inclusive of the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) - *H. halys.*  Duration of project: 2022–2026 | University of New South Wales | Commonwealth | Not applicable |
| 2.1.6 Electrochemical pest detection | On track – project commenced  BMSB is the first target organism.  [Hort Innovation | Electrochemical pest detection (BY22007) (horticulture.com.au)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/by22007/) | Macquarie University | Hort Innovation | Not applicable |
| 2.1.7 Total environmental surveillance (HTS) | On track – project commenced  Project developing quantitative total environmental surveillance post-border  Proof of concept complete | CSIRO | CSIRO | Not applicable |
| 2.1.8 Development of genomic tracking and tracing technology for hitchhikers | Pending – project to commence when funding available.  Pending proof of concept demonstrated in fall armyworm, coconut rhinoceros beetles, and stored grain beetle pest *Cryptolestes* spp.  Hitchhiker-based deployment pending | CSIRO | CSRIO  GRDC  ACIAR | Not applicable |
| **Action 2.2: Review surveillance and diagnostic methodologies and tools.**  **Expected benefit and outcome: Reliable and affordable surveillance and trapping methods and tools, which can be deployed in the field, will assist rapid and accurate identification of hitchhiker pests.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: short term** | 2.2.1 Develop surveillance and trapping methods and tools to assist with the detection of hitchhiker pests | On track – project commenced and due for completion in 2023  Review methods regularly to address risk of emerging hitchhiker pests | Commonwealth (HHWG, PPEBD, BPSSD) | SPHD  SNPHS  Jurisdictions  PHC | Relates to action 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 2.2 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.7, 2.7 and 3.5 |
| 2.2.2 Develop training workshops on identification of hitchhiker pests for selected businesses, with some of these businesses being considered for participation in the development/field-testing of cost-effective hitchhiker trapping/surveillance methods | On track – project commenced  Online training has been developed. [Biosecurity Online Training – Plant Health Australia](https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/resources/training/biosecurity-online-training/)  However, new project requires development/field-testing of cost-effective hitchhiker trapping/surveillance methods and is yet to occur. | Commonwealth (PPEBD, BPSSD, BOD) | Jurisdictions  Industry  PHA | Relates to action 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 2.2 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.7, 2.8 and 3.5 |
| 2.2.3 Deep learning artificial intelligence for BMSB image triage: involves the use of a phone app that uses artificial intelligence for real time identification of brown marmorated stink bug | Completed – project finished (2023)  This will assist with prioritising high-risk inspections on vessels and containers.  [Biosecurity Innovation Program - DAFF (agriculture.gov.au)](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/policy/research-innovation/program#ai-apps-for-the-detection-of-brown-marmorated-stink-bug-and-exotic-bees) | CSIRO | Commonwealth (BOD)  Industry | Relates to action 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 2.2 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.7, 2.8 and 3.5 |
| 2.2.4 Improved molecular diagnostic to detect exotic bee mites | Completed – project finished (2023)  The aim of this project was to develop a single test to detect all five priority honeybee mites.  Assays were developed and validated. Information was shared with key stakeholders including SPHD members from state and territory organisations.  CSIRO have also trialled and optimised sampling and extraction to improve efficacy and efficiency.  Online training will be provided to participants and the protocol shared for proficiency testing. F2F training was proposed in 2024 as part of Annual Diagnostics Workshop.  Rapid molecular test to detect multiple honeybee pests was developed in partnership with CSIRO, which is up to 42% faster than current morphological methods; the test was used in the recent NSW *Varroa destructor* response.  [Plant Innovation Centre - DAFF (agriculture.gov.au](file:///\\Act001cl04fs08\piaphdata$\Plant_Health_Policy\Preparedness_Response\Preparedness\National%20plans\3.%20Hitchhiker%20NAP%202022013827E\9.%20Implementation\2023\Pre%20forum\Plant%20Innovation%20Centre%20-%20DAFF%20(agriculture.gov.au)) | Commonwealth (HHWG, BPSSD, PIC), CSIRO | Commonwealth | Not applicable |
| 2.2.5 The use of artificial intelligence for the identification of brown marmorated stink bug, *Halyomorpha halys* and exotic bees – Phase 3 | On track – project commenced  Duration of project 2022–2023 | CSIRO | Commonwealth | Not applicable |
| 2.2.6 Hazard area analysis for brown marmorated stink bug | Completed – project finished (2023)  Working through data sharing policies  Victoria has incorporated the hazard risk analysis into the NPHSP BMSB network for 2023/24. | Commonwealth (PPEBD) | Commonwealth  NPHSP  Jurisdictions | Not applicable |
| **Action 2.3: Develop and implement national surveillance programs using best practice methodologies and tools.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **Biosecurity at Australia’s borders will be strengthened by national surveillance protocols that reflect the ability of hitchhiker pests to enter through non-commodity pathways, such as shipping containers and personal effects.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: short term** | 2.3.1 Develop and implement national diagnostic protocols for hitchhiker pests, as well as guide the development of surveillance design processes to provide nationally agreed benefits | Pending – Project to commence when funding available  Note: national diagnostic protocols will already exist for some pests | Commonwealth (PPEBD)  Jurisdictions  SNPHS | Industry | Relates to action 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 2.3 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.4 and 2.6 |
| 2.3.2 Identify high-risk non-commodity pathways for surveillance and review methods of reducing the risk including additional intervention | Pending – Project to commence when funding available  For example, the appropriate employment of an approved methodology, combining targeted visual surveillance and trapping methods, etc  Regularly review surveillance methods and address gaps identified | Commonwealth (CED) | SNPHS | Relates to action 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 2.3 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 2.4 and 2.6 |
| 2.3.3 Develop HTS-based, high-throughput screening technology for hitchhiker pests, as a screening and surveillance tool to improve outcomes from national diagnostics efforts | Pending – Project to commence when funding available  Successful proof of concept already completed post-border, and CSIRO also has a growing genomic database of hitchhiker species genomes for deployment | CSIRO | CSIRO | Not applicable |
| 2.3.4 National Bee Pest Surveillance Program: Transition Program | On track – project commenced  [Hort Innovation | National Bee Pest Surveillance Program: Transition program (MT21008) (horticulture.com.au)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/mt21008/)  Related projects:  [National honey bee Pest Surveillance Program (MT12011)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/mt12011/)  [Enhanced National Bee Pest Surveillance Program (MT16005)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/mt16005/) | PHA | Hort Innovation | Not applicable |

Table 3 Implementation of activities for Area 3: Response

| Action | Project or business-as-usual activity | Status | Lead organisation | Contributors (financial and in-kind) | Dependencies |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action 3.1: Continuous**  **improvement of post biosecurity detection responses.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **Post biosecurity detection responses need to adapt to changing pest detection profiles and would benefit from incorporating lessons learnt from previous responses.**  **Priority:** high  **Time frame:** short term | 3.1.1 Continue improvements for co-ordination and optimising responses to post biosecurity pest detections | Ongoing – business as usual  Project being carried out by Victoria – Streamlining Plant Pest Contingency Plans for Integration – completed. This project will develop an IT system to contain modular plans. Adoption of an incident management recording tool (e.g., MAX platform) by all jurisdictions | Commonwealth (PPEBD, BPSSD, BOD) | To be determined | Relates to action 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.1 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 3.1 |
| 3.1.2 Review response guidelines and previous response strategies to improve future response planning, coordination, and communication | Ongoing – business as usual  Project being carried out by Victoria – Streamlining Plant Pest Contingency Plans for Integration- completed. This project will develop an IT system to contain modular plans. Adoption of an incident management recording tool (e.g., MAX platform) by all jurisdictions.  NSW adopted MAX platform. | Commonwealth (PPEBD, BPSSD, BOD) | Jurisdictions. | Relates to action 1.7  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.1 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 3.1 |
| 3.1.3 Protecting pollinators form pesticides: Developing safer, selective pesticides targeting Varroa mite and small hive beetle hormone receptors | On track – project commenced  [Hort Innovation | Protecting pollinators from pesticides: Developing safer, selective pesticides targeting Varroa mite and small hive beetle hormone receptors (PH20003) (horticulture.com.au)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/ph20003/) | The University of Sydney | Hort Innovation | Not applicable |
| 3.1.4 Expansion of flies as berry crop pollinators. | On track – project commenced  [Hort Innovation | Expansion of flies as berry crop pollinators (MT22007) (horticulture.com.au)](https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/mt22007/) | The University of New England | Hort Innovation | Not applicable |
| 3.1.5 Taxonomic study of *Trissolcus mitsukurii* and its efficacy in control of *Halymorpha halys*, the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) | Completed – project finished (2023)  [Searching for the Samurai (wasp) - CSIRO](https://www.csiro.au/en/news/All/Articles/2023/June/Samurai-wasp) | CSRIO | Commonwealth (PPEBD) | Not applicable |
| 3.1.6 Australia Priority Plant & Disease Model (AAPDIS) modelling for management decisions- Khapra beetle and HPPPs  Modelling the incursion and spread of hitchhiker and windborne plant pests in Australia | On track – project commenced  <https://aadis.org/projects/>  [Modelling the incursion and spread of hitchhiker and windborne plant pests in Australia (grdc.com.au)](https://grdc.com.au/grdc-investments/investments/investment?code=UOM2306-003RTX) | CEBRA | GRDC | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.1 |
| **Action 3.2: Improve capability to trace shipping containers and to access their history.**  **Expected benefit and outcome: The ability to effectively track goods following a pest detection will reduce biosecurity risk through permitting a rapid emergency response.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: medium term** | 3.2.1 Investigate methods to improve container and goods tracking to target the movement of hitchhiker pests | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth (CED, BOD) | Commonwealth (BOD) | Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.2 |
| **Action 3.3: Identify and assess effective eradication treatment methods for buildings, goods, and shipping containers.**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  **There is a need for effective treatments for the eradication and control of hitchhikers in buildings, goods, and shipping containers. There is currently no single treatment that fits all goods and situations.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: long term** | 3.3.1 Identify and assess effective treatments for responding to hitchhikers in buildings, goods, and shipping containers to reduce the likelihood of hitchhikers establishing and spreading in Australia. | Ongoing – business as usual  DAFF is currently a member of the methyl bromide alternative working group.  Need to take into account specific industry needs, such as avoiding damage to rubber seals in vehicle imports. | Commonwealth (CED, PSARA, HHWG) | Jurisdictions  Industry  RDCs | Relates to action 1.6 and 1.7.  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 1.6 and 3.3 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 3.2 and 3.3 |
| **Action 3.4: Consider development of standardised response procedures for hitchhiker pests.**  **Expected benefit and outcome: Developing standardised response(s) for hitchhiker pests will strengthen response procedures when a hitchhiker pest is detected.**  **Priority: medium**  **Time frame: medium** term | 3.4.1 Develop a standardised response(s) for hitchhiker pests | Pending – project to commence when funding available  Consider Action 3.1 of the *National Biosecurity Invasive Ant Plan 2018-2028[[1]](#footnote-2)* – Develop standardised response procedures for invasive ants | Commonwealth (BPSSD, PPEBD) | Commonwealth (CED, BOD) | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 3.1 |
| 3.4.2 Develop Commonwealth Places Policy | Pending – project to commence when funding available | Commonwealth (BPSSD, PPEBD) | Commonwealth (CED, BOD) | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 3.1 |
| 3.4.3 Develop Commonwealth Near Border Policy | On track – Project commenced  Draft in development | Commonwealth (BPSSD, PPEBD) | Commonwealth (CED, BOD) | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 3.4 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 3.1 |

Table 4 Implementation of activities for Area 4: Cross–cutting

| Action | Project or business-as-usual activity | Status | Lead organisation | Contributors (financial and in-kind) | Dependencies |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Action 4.1: Develop an overarching communication and engagement strategy and deliver targeted activities relevant to each stakeholder group (industry, traveller, community, government).**  **Expected benefit and outcome:**  There is a need for national awareness of biosecurity and understanding of the risks posed by hitchhiker plant pests, and to encourage reporting.  The communication and engagement strategy will need to emphasise biosecurity is everyone’s responsibility and include activities to target the import supply chain, production industries, the general public and travellers.  **Priority:** high  **Time frame:** short term | 4.1.1 Develop an overarching communication and engagement strategy | Ongoing – business as usual  Activity paused until people capacity is regained.  The strategy:   * will identify ways for business and members of the general public to report suspect pests and receive feedback on their submissions. The significant issue of non-reporting of suspect pests through fear of job loss or a detrimental impact on the business also needs to be addressed in the strategy. The lack of awareness in the general public also needs to be addressed * will consider ways to encourage reporting, interactive training on recognising exotic hitchhiker pests, noting it may also be mandated for importers receiving consignments from high-risk pathways and for Approved Arrangements * will consider businesses in the export supply chain as a key communication target in relation to at-risk commodities * will include activities to target the import supply chain, production industries, the general public and travellers * needs to consider likely reporting volumes and ensure a feedback loop is in place between reporter and assessment. | Commonwealth (HHWG, PPEBD) | Plant Health Australia  Industry | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 4.1 * National Invasive Ant Biosecurity Plan action 6.10 |
| **Action 4.2: Establish governance arrangements to coordinate and monitor national actions.**  **Expected benefit and outcome: Clear governance arrangements to guide implementation of the Plan and coordinate national effort to ensure Australia is as prepared as possible for a post border detection or incursion.**  **Priority: high**  **Time frame: short term** | 4.2.1 Develop/improve governance arrangements to coordinate and monitor national actions and review effectiveness at regular intervals | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth (PPEBD) | Jurisdictions | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 4.2 * National Xylella Action Plan action 4.3 |
| 4.2.2. Collaborate with regional neighbours to align prevention and preparedness activities | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth (PPEBD, TID) | Jurisdictions | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 4.2 * National Xylella Action Plan action 4.3 |
| 4.2.3 Establishment of a regional research alliance Asian Pacific Bioprotection Research Alliance (APBRA) to align research strategies on prevention and preparedness activities | Ongoing – business as usual | CSIRO | Commonwealth | Not applicable |
| **Action 4.3: Identify research and development priorities for investment and to support national and international collaboration.**  **Expected benefit and outcome: Research and development, delivered in collaboration with national and international experts, is an important means to provide information, skills, and tools to prevent entry of hitchhiker pests, or to effectively respond if detected in Australia.**  **Priority:** medium  **Time frame: medium term** | 4.3.1 Identify research and development priorities for investment | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth  Jurisdictions  PBPWG (or similar)  CSIRO (APBRA) | Commonwealth  Plant Health Australia  Jurisdictions  RDCs | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 4.3 * National Xylella Action Plan action 4.5 |
| 4.3.2 Support national and international collaboration | Ongoing – business as usual | Commonwealth (BPSSD, PPEBD)  CSIRO (Fall armyworm, APBRA target lists, Coconut rhinoceros beetles) | Commonwealth (TID) | Supports many other action areas  Supports:   * National Khapra Beetle Action Plan action 4.3 * National Xylella Action Plan action 4.5 |

## Glossary

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| ACIAR | Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research |
| APBRA | Asian Pacific Bioprotection Research Alliance |
| BOD | Biosecurity Operations Division (DAFF) |
| BPSSD | Biosecurity Plant and Science Services Division (DAFF) |
| BSRD | Biosecurity Strategy and Reform Division (DAFF) |
| BMSB | brown marmorated stink bug |
| CEBRA | Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Analysis |
| CCV | Cargo Compliance Verification |
| CED | Compliance and Enforcement Division (DAFF) |
| CSIRO | Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation |
| DAFF | Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry |
| DBD | Digital Business Division (DAFF) |
| HHWG | Hitchhiker Working Group |
| ISD | Intelligent System Design |
| PBPWG | Plant Biosecurity Preparedness Working Group (under PHC) |
| PHA | Plant Health Australia |
| PHC | Plant Health Committee |
| PIC | Plant Innovation Centre (DAFF) |
| PPEBD | Plant Protection and Environmental Biosecurity Division (DAFF) |
| PSARA | Plant Sciences and Risk Assessment (DAFF) |
| RDCs | Rural Research and Development Corporations |
| SNPHS | Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance (under PHC) |
| SPHD | Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics (under PHC) |
| TID | Trade and International Division (DAFF) |

**Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Australia and their continuing connection to land and sea, waters, environment and community. We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on, their culture, and their Elders past and present.

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1. *Exotic invasive ants imported with goods and conveyances: Guidelines for preparing response strategies* (DAFF, as at April 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)