

Sustainable Biosecurity Funding Advisory Panel (Panel) minutes

Meeting no. 05/2025

Date: 1 May 2025

Time: 9.30am to 5.00pm

Location: Hybrid - Virtual (MS Teams) and Face-to-face (Agriculture House, Canberra)

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

Action item	Action officer	Status
Action items from 9 December 2024 meeting		
1. Department to provide a written biosecurity budget update.	Mr Geysen (Chief Finance Officer)	Completed
2. Secretariat to provide consolidated list of alternative funding approaches raised in BPL submissions.	Secretariat	Completed
3. Secretariat to provide members with further information on opportunities to tour departmental biosecurity operations.	Secretariat	Completed
4. Department to provide members with a plan for the 2024-25 Biosecurity Funding and Expenditure Report.	Ms Saunders (Chair)	Completed
5. Department to provide further information on biosecurity funding and activities to inform understanding of budget allocation and resource prioritisation.	Mr Geysen (Chief Finance Officer) and relevant biosecurity Executives	Completed
6. Secretariat to provide a draft Panel workplan for 2025.	Secretariat	Completed
Action items from 1 May 2025 meeting		
1. Department to explore biosecurity operations tour options, including the possibility of combining a tour with a future Panel meeting.	Secretariat	In progress
2. Department to provide further details on Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing System (STEPS) funding.	Mr Geysen (Chief Finance Officer)	To be actioned prior to or during the August meeting
3. Department to provide further information on corporate overhead allocation methodology.	Mr Geysen (Chief Finance Officer)	To be actioned prior to or during the August meeting

Action item	Action officer	Status
4. Panel to be provided with more information or presentation on the Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Modelling (CEBRA) biosecurity insurance concept.	Secretariat	To be actioned prior to or during the August meeting
5. Department to provide members with a draft 2024-25 Biosecurity Funding and Expenditure Report.	Secretariat	Planned for August Panel meeting

MEETING SUMMARY AND OUTCOMES REACHED

Agenda item	Meeting summary and outcomes reached
Item 1	<p>Welcome and acknowledgement of Country, apologies and housekeeping</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting at 9.30am and welcomed attendees. Quorum was confirmed. See Appendix A for attendees and apologies.</p> <p>Members ENDORSED the previous meeting minutes.</p>
Item 2	<p>Department update</p> <p>The Chair provided a paper to members prior to the meeting with updates on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The management of caretaker period by the department, including engagement with the Panel. 2. 2025-26 Federal Budget outcomes. 3. Ex-tropical cyclone Alfred and recent flooding. 4. Conclusion of the independent review of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity, and key strategic findings under consideration. 5. Status of H5 High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) preparedness activities. 6. Update on current national emergency biosecurity responses. 7. Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Analysis (CEBRA) grant outcomes. <p>Members NOTED the updates.</p>
Item 3	<p>Review of 2024-25 biosecurity funding and expenditure and forward outlook</p> <p>The department delivered a presentation about its funding, year-to-date expenditure and forward outlook in relation to biosecurity.</p> <p>Members NOTED the presentation.</p> <p>Members' comments included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciation of the department's efforts in providing greater transparency and accountability of biosecurity funding and expenditure. 2. Seeking further detail on Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing System (STEPS) funding. 3. Seeking further detail on how the department's corporate overhead costs are allocated, reasons for underspends and information on changes to staffing levels over time. <p>The department addressed queries where information was available and committed to providing responses to members' remaining requests for further detail by the next meeting.</p>
Item 4	<p>Department's sustainable biosecurity funding – update and next steps</p> <p>The department provided updates on potential next steps for Commonwealth sustainable biosecurity funding following the Government's decision in February 2025 not to proceed with the Biosecurity Protection Levy (BPL).</p> <p>Members NOTED the list of alternative funding sources provided during public consultation process for the BPL.</p>

Agenda item	Meeting summary and outcomes reached
	<p>Members suggested the Panel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the future biosecurity funding options in further detail at the next meeting. 2. Be provided with further information or a presentation on CEBRA's biosecurity insurance concept. 3. Be provided with further clarity on the incoming government's views regarding sustainable biosecurity funding, once results of the Federal election have been settled. <p>The department noted that further funding discussions will be held following the Federal election.</p>
Items 5-11	<p>Presentations: Biosecurity, Operations and Compliance Group Divisions</p> <p>The department delivered presentations on current and future priorities of each of the Divisions under the Biosecurity, Operations and Compliance Group, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biosecurity Strategy and Reform Division • Plant Protection and Environmental Biosecurity Division • Biosecurity Plant and Science Services Division • Australian Chief Veterinary Office • Biosecurity Animal Division • Compliance and Enforcement Division • Biosecurity Operations Division. <p>Members NOTED the presentations.</p> <p>Members' comments included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expressing appreciation for the department being open and transparent in their presentations. 2. Seeking further information or updates on specific projects, programs or committees. 3. Seeking further information on how the department will incorporate outcomes of industry-led biosecurity work, such as industry biosecurity import risk assessments, into departmental work. And also, how industry can ensure the work it does aligns with departmental priorities. 4. Suggesting high priority pests and diseases be communicated by geographical location to allow industry to compare pest and disease risks in their location. 5. Seeking advice from the department on how to maintain the momentum of industry-government work that has made great progress recently, such as the H5 HPAI preparedness activities. 6. Seeking further information on expected cargo volumes. 7. Seeking departmental consideration of differential cost recovery arrangements based on level of reporting information provided. <p>The department:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addressed the queries in points 2-6 above. 2. Expressed appreciation for members' feedback on priorities presented.

Agenda item	Meeting summary and outcomes reached
	<p>3. Confirmed its commitment to provide an insight for the Panel on Divisional priorities each year.</p>
<p>Item 12</p>	<p>Priorities for the 2025-26 financial year, and review proposed 2025 workplan</p> <p>The department sought feedback from members on the 2025-26 financial year biosecurity priorities and the 2025 proposed Panel workplan. The Chair noted that the outcome of the Federal election may result in changes to the priorities and workplan.</p> <p>Noting the comment from the Chair, members AGREED to the 2025 workplan with agreement to update as needed.</p> <p>Members' feedback included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expressing the value of the work the Panel does. 2. Suggesting that the biosecurity operational tours be revisited with options for a tour coupled with a meeting. <p>Suggesting that the biosecurity operational tours invitations be expanded further to include non-panel members of their organisations.</p>
<p>Item 13</p>	<p>Proposed framework for the 2024-25 Biosecurity Funding and Expenditure Report (BFER)</p> <p>The department shared its proposed framework for the 2024-25 Biosecurity Funding and Expenditure Report and welcomed feedback from members.</p> <p>Members' feedback included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlighting that the framework is an improvement on the first report, and that the department's plan to include progress against strategic priorities will be helpful. 2. Requesting that the BFER include examples and case studies showing the outcomes of biosecurity activity, expenditure to manage different biosecurity risks, and further information about expenditure allocation along the biosecurity continuum (pre-border, at the border and post-border) and by pathway. <p>The department noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciation for the feedback members provided, noting limitations on data available for inclusion in the BFER. 2. That next steps include a draft of the BFER be provided at the next meeting, which is intended to be published in October 2025. 3. Detail regarding divisional budgets and staffing numbers cannot be included in the BFER, in line with other government reports.
<p>Item 14</p>	<p>Other business and next meeting</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the next meeting held in August 2025.</p>

The meeting closed at 3:23pm.

Sustainable Biosecurity Funding Advisory Panel Secretariat

May 2025

APPENDIX A – Meeting attendees

ATTENDEES	
Dr Mary Wu	Animal Health Australia Industry Forum (ACMF)
Nathan Pope	Australian Dairy Farmers
Paco Tovar	Australian Forest Products Association
Margo Andrae	Australian Pork Limited
Dr Chris Parker	Cattle Australia
Paul Zalai	Freight and Trade Alliance
Colin Bettles	Grain Producers Australia
Jack Gough	Invasive Species Council
Nathan Hancock	Plant Health Australia Industry Forum (Citrus Aus)
Bonnie Skinner	Sheep Producers Australia
Jo Hall	WoolProducers Australia
Justine Saunders APM, Deputy Secretary and Chair	Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)
Christie Sawczuk, First Assistant Secretary	DAFF
Julia Wells, Assistant Secretary	DAFF
PRESENTERS	
Matthew Geysen, Chief Finance Officer	DAFF
Monica Collins, First Assistant Secretary	DAFF
Dr Brant Smith, First Assistant Secretary	DAFF
Dr Beth Cookson, Australian Chief Veterinary Officer	DAFF
Dr Peter Finnin, First Assistant Secretary	DAFF
Dr Susie Collins, a/g Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer	DAFF
Dr Bertie Hennecke, Australian Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer	DAFF
Martin Moseley, a/g First Assistant Secretary	DAFF
PROXIES	
Assoc. Prof. Susan Hester (proxy for Prof. Andrew Robinson)	Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Analysis (CEBRA)
Dean Paini (proxy for Prof. Brett Sutton)	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
Dr Sam Nelson (proxy for Shona Gowel)	GrainGrowers
Scott Carson (proxy for Brad Leonard)	International Forwarders and Customs Brokers Association
APOLOGIES	
Stephen Sheridan	Australian Dairy Farmers
Cameron Brown	Australian Fresh Produce Alliance
Lee McLean	Australian Grape and Wine
Prof. Andrew Robinson	CEBRA
Adam Kay	Cotton Australia
Prof. Brett Sutton	CSIRO
Shona Gowel	GrainGrowers
Brad Leonard	International Forwarders and Customs Brokers Association
Veronica Papacosta	Seafood Industry Australia

SECRETARIAT	
Michelle Brotohusodo, Director	DAFF
Cathy Trinh, Assistant Director	DAFF
Kathryn Pagler, Senior Policy Officer	DAFF
Sachi Ashok, Senior Policy Officer	DAFF