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Biosecurity engagement guidelines: Principles and practical advice for involving communities

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Disclaimer

This document is not intended to be prescriptive or a 'recipe book' for biosecurity engagement, rather it offers principles for consideration to strategically plan and implement biosecurity engagement programs and projects. It could also be used as a diagnostic tool when delivering regional biosecurity plans to identify possible gaps and opportunities for improvement. It acknowledges the wide range of circumstances in which biosecurity engagement operates in terms of local context, available resources and stakeholders. Not all principles discussed will be appropriate in all circumstances.

Contents

Preface	iv
Summary	v
1. Introduction	1
1.1 The Engaging in Biosecurity project	3
2. Biosecurity engagement engine	4
2.1 Considerations and observations	6
3. Engaging effectively	10
3.1 Finding the right people	11
3.2 Getting to know key people and groups	13
3.3 Supporting people's capacity to be engaged	17
3.4 Designing an engagement strategy—some principles	18
4. Continual improvement	20
4.1 Dialogue and reporting	21
4.2 Monitoring and evaluation	22
5. Enablers and barriers to effective engagement	24
5.1 Enablers to effective engagement	25
5.2 Typical barriers to effective biosecurity engagement and possible solutions	29
6. Engagement tools	33
6.1 Choosing engagement tools	34
6.2 Developing engagement tools	34
Appendixes	
A What is community engagement?	37
B Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry	39
C Checklist for investing in biosecurity engagement programs	44
D Checklist for engagement practitioners	47
E Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement	50
Glossary	58
References	59

Preface

The Office of the Chief Plant Protection Officer (OCPPPO) in the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) commissioned this report. It is one of a series the ABARES Social Sciences team developed to support community engagement for biosecurity issues.

It describes principles and tips for effective community engagement in biosecurity and is based on practical experiences within Australia, including profiling six biosecurity engagement programs and conducting four biosecurity engagement trials in horticultural regions. It explains key social enablers and barriers to effective biosecurity engagement, followed by a discussion about principles to help choose and develop engagement tools and an overview of several engagement tools.

The principles in this document acknowledge the wide range of circumstances in which biosecurity engagement operates in terms of local context, available resources and stakeholders. Approaches need to be customised to these circumstances.

This document offers ‘best practice’ principles to plan and implement biosecurity engagement programs and projects, which could help:

- biosecurity engagement practitioners engage more effectively with stakeholders and target groups, address potential pitfalls, diagnose possible gaps and identify opportunities for improvement
- biosecurity policy makers, managers and investors recognise cost effective engagement strategies and support staff involved in biosecurity programs.

This document is companion to *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: how to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component*.

Summary

Substantial investment by government, industry and research bodies has led to significant progress in understanding pest behaviour and control, surveillance, detection and eradication techniques. However, the success of biosecurity operational activities often depends on support from the community. Effective community engagement in biosecurity requires capacity and relationship building, mutual learning and a sense of reciprocity. These elements usually take time to achieve, so engagement is not a 'quick fix' to regional biosecurity issues.

The aim of the Engaging in Biosecurity project was to develop a biosecurity engagement framework that included identifying what enables and hinders effective community engagement about biosecurity issues and to develop the *Biosecurity engagement guidelines*. This was done by profiling six existing biosecurity engagement programs and conducting four biosecurity engagement trials.

Key factors affecting the success of biosecurity engagement programs are represented in the biosecurity engagement 'engine', which provides a conceptual framework for effective biosecurity engagement programs. It illustrates that:

- biosecurity engagement programs involve three stages (formation, design and implementation)
- different stages require distinct decisions, hence the need to engage different people at different stages
- it is important to be responsive to opportunities and issues as they arise in order to maintain engagement; success in adaptive management depends on feedback between the engagement team, stakeholders and target groups
- monitoring and evaluation provides a formal mechanism to establish feedback loops.

Successful engagement depends on key social enablers include trust, networks, responsiveness, accountability and convenience. Barriers this research identified include resourcing, such as high staff turnover and short funding cycles; a top-down approach; over-reliance on print material; divergent views and unmet expectations.

A comprehensive knowledge of potential stakeholders, intermediaries and target groups is necessary to inform appropriate timing and manner of engagement, including framing and designing messages. This includes understanding their level of knowledge and skills ('know how'), motivation ('want to') and resources ('can do').

Biosecurity engagement guidelines:

Principles and practical advice for involving communities

To successfully engage with any stakeholder or target group it is important to consider:

- The message—tailor messages based their needs and desires.
- The messenger—use somebody who has their respect and trust.
- The timing—engage stakeholders early in the engagement program and ensure engagement occurs at a convenient time for stakeholders and target groups.
- The tools—purpose of the engagement, available resources and characteristics of the target group; using a range of engagement tools and activities ensures different learning styles are catered for. Include passive and active engagement methods. Use clear language and where possible test tools before use.

Chapter 01



Introduction

This document provides principles and practical advice for effective biosecurity engagement. It was developed as part of the Engaging in Biosecurity project. The project team identified principles that work and do not work for community engagement in a biosecurity context by profiling six existing biosecurity engagement programs, conducting four biosecurity engagement trials and reviewing recent literature. These 'lessons' are summarised in the biosecurity engagement engine (Figure 1) and provide guidance for developing and implementing biosecurity engagement programs. The document includes quotes from case study informants to bring the principles to life, and a general overview of community engagement is in Appendix A.

The document will:

- help policy makers and managers in agencies responsible for biosecurity better understand how engagement works, recognise potential problems and develop strategies to address them; Appendix B provides a checklist of sound biosecurity engagement principles for senior policy-makers and managers
- support investors in biosecurity engagement programs to obtain value for money from their investments; Appendix C provides a checklist of biosecurity engagement principles for investors
- equip engagement practitioners in the field with ideas on how to engage with stakeholders and target groups, and recognise and address potential pitfalls; Appendix D provides a checklist of sound biosecurity engagement principles for engagement practitioners.

The document is structured to describe the biosecurity engagement engine and its application to address regional biosecurity. This includes:

- consideration for engaging different stakeholders, intermediaries and the wider community for a range of purposes
- enablers of, and barriers to, effective biosecurity engagement
- key principles of continual improvement
- consideration of a number of commonly used engagement tools and choosing the right one.

This is a companion document to *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: How to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component* (Kruger 2012). It includes a case study that brings the principles and steps to life.

1.1 The Engaging in Biosecurity project

The Engaging in Biosecurity project, conducted between May 2008 and September 2011, aimed, in association with landholders, industry and local communities, to develop a biosecurity engagement framework for detection and surveillance of exotic pest and disease incursions to enhance on-farm biosecurity. The resulting framework comprises:

- The basis for a national action plan for biosecurity engagement: considerations for developing an environment conducive to biosecurity engagement at national and state levels. It is contained in *Developing a national action plan for community engagement about plant biosecurity – Consultation Summary Report* (Kruger 2012).
- Best recommended practices: principles and a step-by-step approach for developing and managing biosecurity engagement programs at a regional and local level. It comprises two documents; this and the companion document *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: How to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component*.
- Tools and mechanisms: a number of tip sheets and checklists for biosecurity engagement practitioners, policy makers and investors in biosecurity engagement programs.

The Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) funded the project and the Office of the Chief Plant Protection Officer (OCPPO) managed it. The project contributes toward fulfilling the Australian Government's election commitment to protect Australian horticulture. OCPPO contracted the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) to develop biosecurity engagement guidelines as part of the project.

Chapter 02



Biosecurity engagement engine

The biosecurity engagement engine provides a conceptual framework for an ideal engagement process. It has been constructed based on lessons learned from six case studies and four trials of community engagement for biosecurity purposes, as well as recent engagement literature.

The concept is illustrated as a set of three ‘cog wheels’, each representing the different stages of engagement. The wheels are continually evolving and over time one cog influences and changes as a result of the other cogs. The different stages of the engagement engine are illustrated in Figure 1 and summarised in Box 1.

The biosecurity engagement engine illustrates that engagement programs need ongoing responsiveness to the needs of stakeholders and target groups to realise their full potential.

Each stage in the biosecurity engine has its own purpose and set of decisions to be made. The three stages and their overarching purposes are:

- **Formation**—determining program goals, management and resourcing. This includes examining the problems, such as the main risk pathways and ways to address the risks, in collaboration with stakeholders.
- **Design**—identifying key target groups for addressing biosecurity risks and practical, effective ways to engage them. It often involves gaining insights into target group attitudes, values and motivations through social research and developing an engagement strategy based on the information gathered.
- **Implementation**—interacting with target groups to reduce biosecurity risks, including responding to new challenges and opportunities.

It is easy to think of engagement as the interaction that exists between government agencies and/or industry bodies and community groups once program implementation has started. Engagement with stakeholders and representatives of target groups should start as soon as possible, preferably no later than early in the design stage.

Community engagement needs to be in from the start, in on the policy, in on the planning of operations, in on program design. It needs to be there because it is different from a traditional compliance culture. It is a really different way of looking at the world (Engagement program manager, Vic.)

The formation and design stages influence each other through dialogue and reporting that occurs between the people responsible for program implementation and those responsible for program initiation. This ensures that 'big picture' factors, such as new legislation or changes to market access requirements, influence design of the engagement strategy. It also enables key lessons learned from an engagement program's monitoring and evaluation to be communicated 'up the line' to be considered as part of other biosecurity engagement initiatives (see also section 4.1).

The design and implementation stages influence each other through continual feedback loops, or monitoring and evaluation activities, that provide information about the progress and effect of engagement activities. This information is used to adjust the engagement strategy to ensure continual improvement. Monitoring and evaluation activities are best planned in collaboration with a range of stakeholders during the design phase (see also section 4.2).

2.1 Considerations and observations

The aim of the biosecurity engagement engine is to capture important concepts, principles and considerations in relation to planning and conducting biosecurity engagement, not to provide a rigid process or recipe for biosecurity engagement.

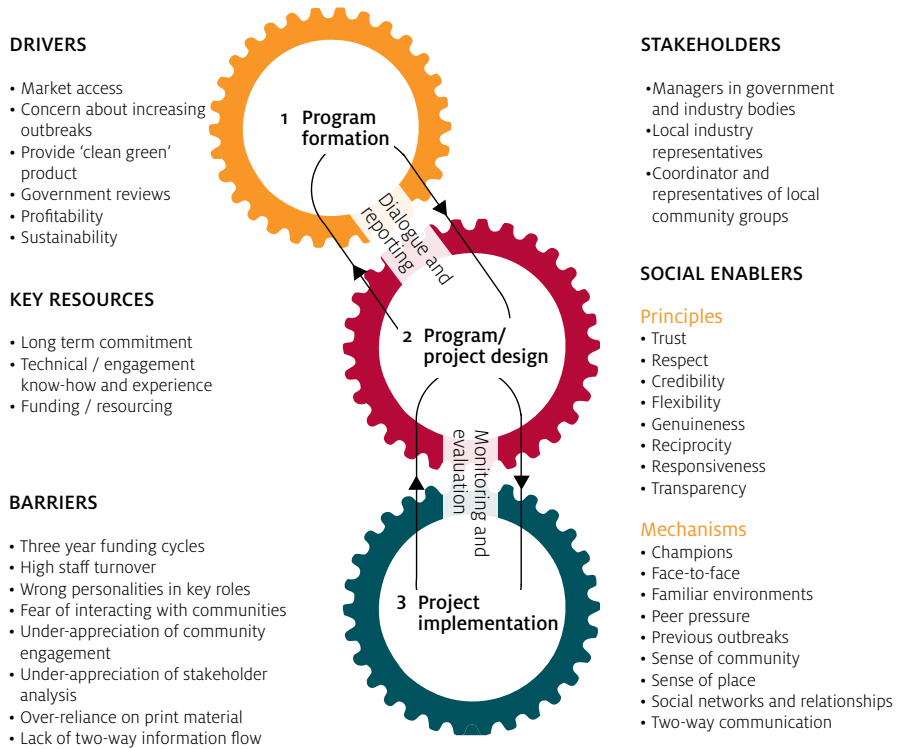
The engagement engine does not imply a top-down approach. Although government agencies and industry bodies commonly initiate and/or oversee the formation and design stages, they could also be initiated and driven by community groups, such as local Lions, Rotary, Landcare or gardening groups. Government and/or industry groups would then become stakeholders to varying degrees.

The stages of the biosecurity engagement engine are not mutually exclusive.

Timeframes for each stage depend on local circumstances. In large engagement programs, formation and design activities may take months or even years if elaborate social research components or funding applications are involved; whereas a program initiated by a local community group may take only a few weeks to form and design. Lag times between stages may also occur. For example, the engagement engine could be incorporated into emergency response plans to outline how community groups would be engaged as part of an incursion response. In this case the formation stage and part of the design stage would occur when the emergency response plans were being developed, but further design and implementation would only occur in the event of an emergency. Feedback from the event or simulated event would then be used to improve the engagement component of the emergency response plan for possible future incursions.

The principles of engagement that relate to establishing partnerships, building relationships and collaborative planning feature strongly in the formation and design stages. Stakeholders decide how biosecurity risks could be addressed in a practical way, who should be engaged and which engagement activities could work best. During the design and implementation stages it is often necessary to gather and provide information at increasingly detailed scales, which become more localised and relevant as the number of people engaged increases.

FIGURE 1 Biosecurity engagement engine



Box 1 Biosecurity engagement engine—summary

Stage 1. Program formation (What?)

Purpose: To determine biosecurity engagement program goals, management and resourcing.

Actions

- Conduct problem scoping, including identifying the main issues and biosecurity risk pathways.
- Identify and engage with relevant stakeholders to define the scope of the program.
- In collaboration with stakeholders, identify the broad program goals, resourcing and governance to deliver the program. Nominate a program coordinator (or similar role).

Stage 2. Program/project design (How?)

Purpose: To identify in which practical ways the community (target groups) could contribute to addressing the biosecurity risk and to develop a community engagement strategy.

Actions

- Identify and engage stakeholders who have knowledge, skills or experience that could help develop a community engagement strategy for Stage 3.
- Develop engagement strategy in collaboration with stakeholders:
 - identify the overall objective of the community engagement strategy
 - identify and prioritise target groups and possible intermediaries, including key messages
 - identify engagement activities to reach potential intermediaries and/or target groups
 - flesh out the engagement activities by:
 - articulating what it will achieve (expected outcomes)
 - identifying the underlying assumptions
 - identifying improvement measures, that is, ways to strengthen engagement activities
 - prioritising engagement activities
 - considering how progress could be monitored.
- Conduct an investigation to establish baseline information.
- Finalise the first version of the engagement strategy and monitoring and evaluation component (it remains a living document).

Stage 3. Project implementation

Purpose: To reduce biosecurity risk by implementing the engagement strategy and monitoring and evaluation component.

Continued

Box 1 Biosecurity engagement engine—summary *continued*

Actions

- Test and refine tools and materials.
- Roll out engagement strategy.
- Maintain relationships with all stakeholders through regular contact and by being responsive.
- Adjust engagement strategy based on monitoring activities and other feedback.

Monitoring and evaluation

Purpose: To be responsive to new opportunities and issues to ensure continual improvement.

Actions

- Identify key monitoring and evaluation question(s), preferably as part of Stage 2 in consultation with stakeholders.
- Establish indicators for monitoring and evaluation.
- Collect and analyse data.
- Report and communicate monitoring and evaluation information.
- Review engagement strategy.

Dialogue and reporting

Purpose: To provide a feedback and action mechanism between the grassroots representation and management in government, industry and community agencies.

Actions

- Program coordinator to ensure management is informed about progress through regular meetings.
- Stakeholders respond to new needs or opportunities as required.
- Program coordinator shares 'lessons learned' with stakeholders and other interested parties to enable shared learning between biosecurity engagement programs.

Note: For more details about the actions listed see *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: How to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component*.

Chapter 03



Engaging effectively

Similar principles relate to all three stages of the biosecurity engagement engine—formation, design and implementation—in order to engage effectively. It is important to know which people to involve in each stage and how to maximise engagement. Social enablers, such as trust, relationships and responsiveness, play a vital role in effective engagement and it is important to apply them throughout an engagement program (see Chapter 5 for an overview of key social enablers in a biosecurity engagement context).

3.1 Finding the right people

Involving the appropriate people is critical in design and delivery of an effective biosecurity engagement program. It means looking beyond organisations and identifying the best individuals to contribute to reaching certain goals. For effective biosecurity engagement, the program team/coordinator needs to engage effectively with three groups of people that each have distinctly different roles in the engagement program. The groups often overlap, but it is useful to distinguish between them. The groups are:

- **Stakeholders**—organisations, groups or individuals with a potential interest in the biosecurity engagement program. It is important to involve appropriate stakeholders in the program formation and design stages.
- **Intermediaries**—organisations, groups or individuals who can help achieve the changes by channelling information toward target groups. Their key role is during the implementation stage. They could also be useful sources of information during the design stage if they have firsthand knowledge of target groups. Factors that contribute to an organisation, business or individual being a suitable intermediary include:
 - being trusted and well respected by target groups and possibly having established relationships with them: for example, growers are more likely to be receptive to messages from people they know well, such as industry development officers, agronomists, key growers or non-government groups, rather than from strangers or organisations with whom they have little contact
 - being in direct contact with target groups: for example, tourist information centres are in regular contact with travellers and could remind them not to bring fresh produce into certain areas; real estate agents communicate with renters and absentee landholders and could remind them of the importance of maintaining backyard fruit trees; and bushwalking, gardening and other clubs could remind their members to watch out for and report suspected pests.

- **Target groups**—organisations, groups or individuals that the engagement strategy intends to influence to lower the biosecurity risk are the focus of the implementation stage.

Program formation

Involvement of key stakeholders is essential to determining appropriate biosecurity goals, management and resourcing. This fosters a sense of ownership of the program among stakeholders and a shared understanding of what the program is designed to achieve. It also allows for program resourcing to be shared among key stakeholders and ensures the program meets stakeholder needs.

Stakeholders are often senior managers in government, industry and/or community groups; they can include potential funders, managers of related programs, people with a policy interest in the proposed engagement program, and communications staff. They could also be community members, such as growers who approach government, industry and/or other groups to join them in developing the broader goals of a program and identifying appropriate resources.

Program design

In order to identify practical ways of addressing biosecurity risk it is important to include people who have a good understanding of the issues and opportunities at a grassroots level. They could be stakeholders, potential intermediaries or representatives of target groups. For example, they are likely to include people such as industry development officers, key growers, local supply chain members, travel information centre staff, representatives from community groups such as Landcare and gardening groups, and other key individuals in the community.

Program implementation

The engagement strategy aims to influence target groups in order to reduce, or contribute to reducing, biosecurity risk by convincing them to do a preferred action. This could be done with or without the help of intermediaries. The most common target groups are:

- 'backyarders' (for example, to become volunteer monitors, pick up fallen fruit or remove host plants from their backyards, and report pests and diseases)
- the community at large (for example, to report pests and diseases)
- certain groups within the community (for example, people who spend significant amounts of time outdoors to watch for and report suspected pests)
- travellers (for example, to dump their fruit and vegetables before entering certain areas)
- growers (for example, to conduct pest monitoring, provide pest data and strengthen on-farm hygiene).

Target groups could also be government or industry officials who are approached by community groups for support such as training in pest identification and control techniques, or other assistance to address biosecurity issues.

3.2 Getting to know key people and groups

A comprehensive knowledge of potential stakeholders, intermediaries and target groups is necessary to inform appropriate timing and manner of engagement, including framing and designing messages. It also provides a basis for relationship building.

Knowing stakeholders, intermediaries and target groups includes gaining insights into what is important to them and what influences their decision-making in relation to the current biosecurity issue. It includes gaining a better understanding of things like:

- their level of interest and influence, and who/what influences their decision making
- their values, priorities, attitudes, aspirations, motivations and expectations
- their knowledge and skills
- their practices, needs and what would be practical for them
- their existing social enablers such as networks, peer pressure, sense of place, sense of community, local champions, and other relevant contextual information
- their capacity to be engaged that is, what barriers need to be addressed before they can be engaged
- which stage(s) of the engagement engine are most relevant to them
- the appropriate level of engagement for them (Figure A1).

In some instances, knowledge of a stakeholder, intermediary or target group based on previous experience or existing networks may be sufficient to identify an appropriate engagement approach for them. However, in many cases further investigation is needed, particularly in the design stage to better understand target groups and potential intermediaries. For more detail on undertaking such an investigation see *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: How to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component*.

When identifying stakeholders, intermediaries and target groups consider:

- Community engagement is an inclusive process. As a general rule, start by including too many stakeholders rather than missing out on crucial ones (Aslin & Brown 2004). However, keep in mind that if engagement requires a considerable amount of time from someone and they struggle to see how they would benefit from their involvement, it could cause aversion to the engagement.
- Large organisations often have several divisions and more than one division is involved in biosecurity activities. Make sure you identify all relevant representatives.
- Selecting certain roles within an organisation may be helpful for finding appropriate stakeholders or intermediaries, but also identify people within these organisations who are passionate about the issue and are well respected by others. These people could become champions for achieving biosecurity outcomes within their organisation.
- Be realistic about the level of engagement (Figure A1) required of people you would like to involve. Be clear on what you expect from them and choose the engagement level accordingly.
- Figure 2 describes potential contributions, limitations and factors that contribute to success for biosecurity engagement with stakeholders, intermediaries and target groups. Note that each category is not mutually exclusive that is, a volunteer may also be an Industry Development Officer (IDO) or a government employee. The success factors have been drawn from eight biosecurity engagement programs. They are not intended to be an exhaustive list of biosecurity engagement success factors.

FIGURE 2 Key stakeholders, intermediaries or target groups in biosecurity

<p>Industry body</p> <p>Organisations funded through industry-based levies. Perform a range of functions, such as providing a voice for the industry and may carry out biosecurity awareness programs or fund industry development officers for biosecurity purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Trusted by growers to give relevant advice ✓ Strong motivation to promote biosecurity given their existence depends on viable horticultural industries ✓ Funding source for biosecurity initiatives ✗ Biosecurity issues may not be a high priority for all industries <p>Effective engagement most likely if industry body is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – committed to biosecurity – dedicated to effective engagement. 	<p>Local growers</p> <p>Growers in a region are seldom a homogenous group. It is important to consider different needs of growers when developing an engagement strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strong motivation to promote good biosecurity practices given strong incentives are in place; for example, market access or reduced on-farm costs ✓ Ability to influence change through peer pressure, leading by example, conveying messages through growers' networks ✗ Don't always see biosecurity as a high priority during 'non-incursion' times or when more pressing issues are present; for example, drought ✗ Awareness of the importance of good biosecurity practices varies <p>Effective engagement most likely if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – communities are closely connected and word of mouth is a key communication medium – growers are up-to-date and aware of biosecurity practices and messages – growers are aware of the effects of incursions.
<p>Industry development officers (IDOs)</p> <p>Officers employed by industry or government to communicate with growers about certain issues. Their involvement with biosecurity depends on the priorities of the industry or government body employing them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tend to be aware of scientific developments ✓ Usually trusted by growers when IDO has a good relationship with them ✗ Biosecurity messages will only be conveyed if they are considered an industry priority <p>Effective engagement is likely if the IDO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – spends time on-farm – is well-networked and has a strong relationship with growers. 	<p>On-farm consultants</p> <p>Private sector technical advisors who work directly with growers. Might be independent or affiliated with a retailer or wholesaler.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Usually aware of scientific developments ✗ May not be as trusted by growers if message is associated with increasing product sales ✗ Biosecurity may not be part of their primary message <p>Effective engagement most likely if consultant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – has ability to provide unbiased advice in best interests of growers and region – has good relationships with growers – is willing to share information and work with other advice givers.
<p>Associated industries—other</p> <p>Support horticulture; for example, contract harvesters and utility providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ May have contact with many growers and other stakeholders in different areas ✗ May inadvertently spread pest and diseases between farms and areas on machinery, footwear and vehicles. 	

Continued

FIGURE 2 Key stakeholders, intermediaries or target groups in biosecurity *continued*

<p>State/territory government (DPIs)</p> <p>Key players in current biosecurity engagement programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Committed to biosecurity ✓ Access to funding for biosecurity activities ✓ Well connected with industry bodies ✓ Technical and operational skills ✗ Competing demands for funding and staff <p>Effective engagement most likely if the DPI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – is committed to effective community engagement. 	<p>Operational staff</p> <p>People such as DPI staff or contractors who conduct operational aspects of an eradication or surveillance program, such as baiting, spraying and monitoring traps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In contact with target groups; for example, growers and backyarders ✓ Have insights in target groups' behaviours and attitudes ✓ Visible to the community through uniforms and equipment ✗ Communication skills vary <p>Effective engagement most likely if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – engagement and technical efforts are integrated – operational tasks are conducted by DPI staff rather than contractors.
<p>Community groups</p> <p>Community groups such as Lions Clubs, Neighbourhood Watch, gardening groups, and bushwalking clubs are often willing to invite guest speakers to meetings and/or include items in newsletters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Helpful for exposing different sections of the community to biosecurity messages ✓ May help develop champions in different areas ✗ Audience may not be interested <p>Effective engagement most likely if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – someone who is respected by the group conveys key messages to group; for example, by giving a presentation. 	<p>Workers and pickers</p> <p>People who work in the farming industry providing short-term labour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Have constant exposure to horticultural crops, potential to perform a monitoring role ✓ Can make a positive contribution to spreading biosecurity messages, given roaming nature of many short-term staff ✗ May pose a biosecurity threat to horticultural enterprises and industries through transfer of soil and plant matter between farms and regions ✗ Not always tied into existing industry networks <p>Effective engagement most likely if workers and pickers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – are made aware of their role in addressing biosecurity issues – have received training to do pest monitoring and/or surveillance.
<p>Local government</p> <p>Can mobilise the wider community and promote a biosecurity engagement program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Well-connected to community, have much local knowledge ✓ Can be effective champions given local knowledge ✗ May have limited motivation to become involved given competing community demands <p>Effective engagement most likely if local government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – has a wide community support base – is well-informed – is committed to local agricultural industries and biosecurity. 	

Continued

FIGURE 2 Key stakeholders, intermediaries or target groups in biosecurity *continued*

<p>Urban residents</p> <p>Critical to addressing pest and disease spread in horticulture in regional communities. May be reached through networks such as local groups and key community figures that have good local knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Can play a valuable role in watching out for biosecurity threats and maintaining backyard plants that could host pests✓ Aware/committed residents may play a role in conveying biosecurity messages to other residents✗ Can pose a significant threat to horticultural operations if they have poorly managed backyard fruit trees✗ May not be aware of or committed to supporting local industries✗ May have insufficient understanding of ramifications of a pest outbreak <p>Effective engagement most likely if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– urban and rural communities understand interdependence– biosecurity messages are clearly communicated using appropriate tools and mechanisms, and messages are based on ‘What’s in it for me?’	<p>Volunteers</p> <p>May support biosecurity programs through a range of approaches, such as doorknocking to increase awareness among backyard fruit growers or undertaking pest monitoring activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Can be an effective way of mobilising the community✗ Limited time/availability✗ May have insufficient understanding of the pest, the biosecurity program or relevant regulations to effectively communicate with others <p>Effective engagement most likely if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– volunteers have a good understanding of the issue/s– volunteer program meet needs of volunteers– support mechanisms are in place, such as training and regular positive feedback.
<p>Community champions</p> <p>Operate as part of a social network to engage a range of stakeholders. They are often well-respected community leaders and enthusiastic vocal supporters of the biosecurity cause.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Effective for ensuring support for a specific program and engendering enthusiasm✗ Champions may suffer burn out✗ May promote reliance on specific individuals <p>Effective engagement most likely if champion is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– committed and persistent– well-networked– credible—has good understanding of biosecurity threat and target group	<p>School children</p> <p>May convey simple biosecurity messages to their parents and communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Great for simple messages such as eating (or otherwise disposing of) fruit before entering fruit fly free zones✗ Limited ability to convey complex issues✗ Audience primarily comprised carers of children depending on age/experience <p>Effective engagement most likely if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– it involves good timing, interactive talks, minimum effort for teachers– biosecurity messages are integrated into related subjects– teachers are enthusiastic about the cause.

3.3 Supporting people's capacity to be engaged

Engagement depends on people having knowledge, skills, motivation and resources to respond to pest-related issues. Engagement is supported through awareness raising, information and knowledge exchange, training, and other forms of facilitation and support (Community Builders 2009).

Helping and supporting stakeholders, intermediaries and target groups overcome one or more of the following factors may be necessary for effective engagement:

- **Knowledge and skills** ('know how')—an appropriate level of awareness and understanding of a pest; its characteristics, potential impact and what is necessary to prevent, eradicate or control it. Groups and individuals also need a good understanding of what is expected from them in order to address the pest issue.
- **Motivation** ('want to')—commitment and aspirations of individuals, communities and agencies to address pest issues. Motivation of any individual or group is strongly related their personal and collective priorities.
- **Resources** ('can do')—capacity of individuals, communities and agencies to participate in the engagement process and do the preferred action in terms of finances, time and staff.

[About on-farm hygiene practices] If we're tight on money, we will compromise; it's the nature of the beast. If you're running a business, you have to compromise to get through ... but this pest is all related to what margin you're making, how thoroughly you can carry out the procedure. Yet, people will say, you realise if you've got it, you'll be out of the industry, you'll be gone. The argument against that I would say, is a lot of people have the attitude; well we're that close to the line anyway. (Grower, Vic.)

Successful community interaction on biosecurity issues requires commitment from organisations to invest in community engagement. Community interaction on biosecurity issues has traditionally been compliance oriented and a change of mindset might be needed from some biosecurity staff in order to engage effectively with community members. Organisational and institutional frameworks can contribute to creating an enabling environment within government, industry and community bodies (The Global Development Research Centre 2009). For example, staff training is important to equip individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information to conduct and support good engagement processes.

... so that was really disappointing. The operational [staff] tended to work completely as [they] wanted to without any interaction with the engagement project ... to put the traps out and that sort of thing; or to inspect trees without actually asking permission to go on sites. So there's a reasonable amount of angst in the community as well about the role the operational staff have ... And that's one of the reasons we actually decided to work less with the residents and more with trying to get through to some of the operational staff and their managers about how you do and don't work with the community. (Program manager, Vic.)

3.4 Designing an engagement strategy—some principles

At all stages of the biosecurity engagement engine, four core communication components need to be considered when engaging people. They are the message (what?), the messenger (who?), the timing (when?) and the tools (how?).

The message (what?)

- Tailor the message for each stakeholder, intermediary or target group based on their needs and desires: the ‘what is in it for me?’ message.
- Ensure key messages are provided in clear, plain language. Avoid jargon, bureaucratic language and cluttering with unnecessary words and less important information.
- Be clear on what engagement outcome is expected—requesting partnership, involvement, feedback; creating awareness; or aiming for behavioural change—and make sure the message reflects that outcome.
- Provide information about how people’s contribution will make a difference.
- Make it easy, practical and inexpensive to participate.

So it was really important that when I was talking with [local government] I was trying to get the message through that I think it’s really important that we work together but that doesn’t necessarily mean you have to be doing stuff that requires increased resources or increased personnel. (Program coordinator, Vic)

The messenger (who?)

- Where possible, use someone who has the respect and trust of the people you are trying to reach, that is, a respected or trusted intermediary. For example, consider using senior staff to make initial contact with another organisation.
- At a community level, use a respected person with whom community members are familiar to facilitate or channel information, such as an ex-mayor or someone who has gained the respect of the community through another cause.
- For growers, messengers could include on-farm consultants, supply chain members or key growers in the region. Variation among growers about who they trust is common, so local knowledge is vital to knowing who the best messenger would be.
- It is best if the messenger can speak in the same way as the target group in order to connect with them and to ensure they understand the message.
- Passion is contagious. If the messenger is enthusiastic about the key messages it is more likely that the target group would also become enthusiastic.

I believe [growers] sift information very brutally, and the credibility of the source of information is one of the key aspects to it. I’ll take note of that because ‘Joe Bloggs’ said it. (Grower, Vic)

You can’t sort of spring out of the car and say I’m here from the government and I’m here to help you, that’s an old cliché, but the point is some people do [that] in ignorance. (On-farm consultant, Qld)

The timing (when?)

- It is important to engage stakeholders and intermediaries as soon as possible. Early engagement fosters a sense of ownership and influence. If they are engaged at a later stage and asked to support what has already been decided, they might have a sense that the program has been imposed upon them, which may adversely affect their engagement.
- Avoid designing communication and engagement strategies in busy periods, such as December and June for government agencies and industry bodies, harvest and planting season for growers, end-of-year for schools or late afternoons for young families.
- Consider tying your engagement activities with events that involve similar people to those you would like to engage; conferences for government agency and industry staff, or field days for growers.

And the other thing about the communication message is that from about November through to June, the growers are very, very busy just in their production window. So you need to work outside that for information and knowledge transfer. Send little triggers and reinforcement points during ... [this period] ..., but then your actual communication window needs to be modelled around production [periods]. And some farms, some regions start earlier, and some start later, so they have different windows. (Industry development officer, Vic.)

The tools (how?)

- Face-to-face communication is most effective, whether it is one-to-one or group meetings.
- Do not rely on print material alone; consider using it only as a mechanism to back up other tools such as summarising a presentation, something to provide after a face-to-face meeting or as a follow-up to a phone call (see also Chapter 6).

Well I believe that face-to-face contact is critical. Like if you post stuff out, you've got no idea of your target, you've got no idea of what acceptance or take up there is of it. If you go face-to-face and somebody goes in behind you, they will say, 'oh yeah, I know about that, yeah so and so was here the other day'. They recognise the person and it just becomes more personal and it seems to be a more permanent message. (Program coordinator, SA)

In addition, the case studies showed that engagement is more effective if the engagement coordinator has the personal characteristics of:

- good interpersonal and communication skills
- good conflict resolution skills
- passion and enthusiasm about the issue.

A step-by-step approach to developing an engagement strategy is contained in *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: How to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component*.

Chapter 04



Continual improvement

Continual improvement is achieved through ongoing information flow between participants in the different stages of the engagement program. In the biosecurity engagement engine this is illustrated as feedback loops between the different cogs—turning one cog also turns the others. This includes:

- dialogue and reporting between the formation and design stages
- monitoring and evaluation between the design and implementation stages.

4.1 Dialogue and reporting

Dialogue and reporting processes ensure all stakeholders involved in different stages of a program are aware of issues and changes as they arise, allowing appropriate responses to ensure continual improvement of the program.

Feedback loops between the formation and design stages enable stakeholders involved in the program formation stage to be responsive to issues and opportunities at the grassroots level or to influence the design stage based on external, often 'big picture' factors, such as new legislation or changes to market access requirements.

It also ensures that key lessons learned in one program are communicated 'up the line' so that they can be considered elsewhere. A gap analysis conducted as part of the project identified a lack of reciprocal learning from the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of biosecurity activities. Solid dialogue and reporting processes is a first step to overcoming this problem.

Romney (2001) describes dialogue as purposeful conversation that aims to increase understanding, address problems, and discuss thoughts or actions. Unlike debate or discussion, in dialogue the relationship between participants is just as important as the themes or issues being explored.

Engagement can be strengthened by constructing situations where meaningful dialogue is created. For example, the management committee of one case study included a representative of a government agency. Various industry members had a number of reservations about this government agency. An open dialogue between these industry members and the government representative created a mutual understanding about the issues and limitations each party faced. The government representative's personality and solid knowledge of relevant issues also contributed to the general perception that he was a valuable committee member.

One of the benefits of having a [government agency X] representative on our committees is that there's a very good exchange, and I know it's not always nice, between industry and him. (Program coordinator, Vic.)

[Government agency X representative]'s been exceptionally good, knowledgeable and a valued member of those committees. (Management committee member, Vic.)

4.2 Monitoring and evaluation

The main purpose of program monitoring and evaluation is to help individuals, groups or organisations think about what is to be achieved, assess how efforts are succeeding, and identify any required changes (Evaluation Trust 2002). Since program evaluation involves systematic collection of information, it bears close resemblance to research and to social research in particular (it uses many of the same qualitative and quantitative methodologies, such as probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling, surveys, interviews, focus groups, document analysis). Further, Patton (1990) defined monitoring and evaluation as:

the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future programming.

Monitoring and evaluation components are generally not strong features of biosecurity communication and engagement programs (Kruger 2009; McGrath 2008), as confirmed through the case studies.

Researchers commonly find that the term monitoring and evaluation elicits a sense of uneasiness in biosecurity engagement program staff. It seems to be viewed as a painful exercise to satisfy program funders, with little value to the program itself.

We'd rather focus on getting the real job done (Program coordinator 1, Qld)

M&E is an onerous thing to keep money coming (Program coordinator 2, Qld)

However, if it is designed based on the engagement team's needs as the departure point—rather than those of external agencies—monitoring and evaluation becomes an invaluable tool to reach best possible outcomes. Requirements from external parties could be incorporated with such an approach.

Monitoring and evaluation is about building in feedback loops during the life of the program in order to continuously maintain and improve engagement by responding to issues and opportunities as they arise. As an analogy, if the objective of a trip is to travel from Adelaide to Darwin, it is important to know as you travel that you are passing through Coober Pedy, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek. It is too late to change course if, at the end of the trip, you discover you are in Perth.

Many factors could undermine the outcome of an engagement strategy, no matter how well planned. Some issues that arose during the case studies and trials were:

- target groups were confused about the practicalities of key messages
- a significant increase in pest numbers since the engagement program was launched—some target group members were unsure about whether the original key messages still applied
- lack of consideration for personality traits, such as the ability to connect with people, when people are appointed in key engagement roles
- information about biosecurity procedures not being timely or accessible to target groups

- build-up of frustration about other aspects of a biosecurity program that affects the engagement program
- some target group members believing that doing the preferred action was either impractical or unsafe.

Such factors need to be addressed promptly otherwise target groups could become disinterested in or frustrated with the cause or the organisation responsible for the program.

Monitoring and evaluation activities could also reveal new engagement opportunities or ways to improve current engagement activities.

In most biosecurity engagement programs informal monitoring is to some extent already happening. Program staff tend to 'keep an ear out' to determine how target groups are receiving engagement activities and whether they are having the intended effect. Monitoring and evaluation is about giving these processes more rigour and making it a formal process.

The difference between monitoring and evaluation

The distinction between monitoring and evaluation is often blurred as they overlap in several ways. For the purpose of this document monitoring and evaluation, as derived from Clear Horizon (2010) and Larson & Williams (2009), mean:

- **Monitoring** is a process that keeps track of the progress of an engagement strategy against what it intends to achieve, including whether the engagement activities are having the intended effect; how they could be improved and whether there are unintended outcomes. The audience for monitoring findings is normally the engagement program team.
- **Evaluation** is a snapshot of the impact of activities to date and it identifies to what extent objectives have been achieved. It involves making judgements about how 'good' an intervention has been in achieving outcomes. It normally involves formal reporting for external stakeholders, such as funders and other interested parties, toward the end of the project.

Planning and implementing a monitoring and evaluation process

All monitoring and evaluation components need to be carefully planned in collaboration with stakeholders. A suggested approach to developing and implementing a monitoring and evaluation process is:

- **Identify primary purpose(s)**—define priorities and intended uses of the monitoring and evaluation component, including identification of the program's rationale (goals, objectives, outputs, outcomes).
- **Focus the process**—formulate, test and refine key questions.
- **Design**—identify indicators that will provide information needed to answer key questions (including the methods needed to collect information/data).
- **Data collection**—who, what, when and where, identify and agree roles, responsibilities and timing of data collection.
- **Data analysis**—ensure information is accessible to stakeholders and facilitate their contributions to data analysis/interpretation.
- **Distribute findings**—determine how/when to distribute findings.
- **Evaluate the process**—assess effectiveness of the process, decide if it should be sustained in its current form or if changes are needed.

See also *Biosecurity engagement guidelines: How to develop an engagement strategy including a monitoring and evaluation component* for a detailed explanation of this approach.

Chapter 05



Enablers and barriers to effective engagement

The way engagement is conducted is important to the success of engagement programs. A number of principles may catalyse engagement, while others hinder the process. The six case studies revealed a number of principles that encourage engagement (also referred to as ‘social enablers’) and barriers to effective engagement.

5.1 Enablers to effective engagement

Principles such as trust, responsiveness, convenience, commitment and accountability are thought to be important to the way growers, urban communities and other stakeholders respond to attempts to engage them in biosecurity activities.

Develop trust

Trust is a complex but important factor in engagement. Developing trust is a gradual and continual process that includes actions that promote sharing, openness, understanding and empathy (Carson & Gelber 2001). It is important that the engagement coordinator/team builds trust with stakeholders, intermediaries and, where possible, target groups, to underpin engagement.

Many actions can contribute to breaking down potential barriers and building trust within a community. One way is to develop social connections with the community outside professional contexts.

I think it takes a while for someone to establish good contacts ... They will wait for a while to see who I am, and what is my role and what sort of a person I am, whether they can trust me ... (Engagement facilitator, Vic.)

... to get that clear message across and have it branded, right, that growers know where it's come from, who's behind it, they trust it, you know, that's valuable. (Supply chain member, Vic.)

Factors that impede development of trust include giving incorrect advice, not readily sharing information, lack of interpersonal skills and frequent staff changes.

I think that motivation and education is a big component of being able to get people to pull together, lack of information or misinterpretation of information is usually at the core of things [that] go wrong between people. (Grower, Qld)

Be responsive

It is essential for the community engagement coordinator/team to be responsive to stakeholders' needs. This shows they are listening to what people are saying and are prepared to respond and work with them. For example, following up information requests or responding to queries in a timely manner can maintain momentum and interest and promote trust. It also requires monitoring how the engagement process is progressing in order to respond to issues and new opportunities. Responsiveness requires flexibility in the engagement strategy. In this document this principle is contained in the suggested monitoring and evaluation process.

[We need] ... someone who is happy to liaise with the community. I mean it's all well and good giving them all this information but if there's no one they can contact and ask questions [of], well it defies the purpose of it a little bit. (School teacher, Vic.)

Build relationships and networks

Personal relationships and informal networks are essential to communication. Engagement is easier if strong local networks are already in place, as these facilitate distribution of information and exchange of practical advice. For example, word-of-mouth is a powerful means of quickly conveying messages in a district.

The strength of relationships varies significantly between grower groups, supply chains and communities. However, if networks need to be developed to facilitate learning and shared vision across industry or local groups, effort may be needed to bring people together. For this to happen, it is essential that the community engagement coordinator be well-connected and have good interpersonal and communication skills.

... they were able to call regular meetings on the spot ... there is a good network around there where you could say okay there is going to be a meeting next Thursday, 7.00 at the pub, they could get the word out pretty quickly and that was good because it's such a concentrated area and everybody knows each other. (Industry representative, Vic.)

I've known them even before the outbreaks occurred, I knew those leading growers down there because I'd go to the meetings. So we were already on first-name terms before they got caught up in the 'web'. (DPI officer, Vic.)

... the important thing is that [the coordinator] gets support for the period of time. Not, probably not be judged on the first couple of years or so, because it takes a lot of building up a rapport with growers getting them online, then around the agribusiness, getting them all understanding what the goal of the project is about, and hopefully then seeing some results. (DPI staff, Qld)

It's important to be able to say 'Let's have a cup of tea' or go and have a beer ... So you have a beer with someone or a couple of people, it's probably a much better way and a more effective way to transfer information and knowledge and maintain relationships than the impersonal way of just dumping a fact sheet. (Engagement coordinator, WA)

Involve community champions

Community champions can play an important role in creating a shared vision that motivates people to cooperate for change and galvanises commitment. Community champions are people who have the ability to encourage and inspire others to make changes. They can be members of the wider community, or growers, or a delivery agency. Often they speak the 'language' of both organisations and communities and can contribute to building trust and credibility between diverse groups.

Look I think it's the same as anything, it's pretty simple, you've got to have someone that's going to champion the cause at the end of the day ... Someone that's going to drive it and someone that's got the energy to drive it, if you haven't got that you've got nothing. (Industry representative, Qld)

... having [him] at the shed meetings was important. We trusted him and that he knew what he was doing even though he copped a lot of flack and people in his own department thought we couldn't eradicate [the pest] ... (Grower, Qld)

Build on a sense of community/place

Building on a sense that people belong to a community and that they matter to one another can be an important way to gain their involvement. For example, if residents view horticultural growers as an important part of the wider regional society and economy, they may be more motivated to become involved in biosecurity activities to protect that industry.

... it was pretty well a whole community based effort. There was involvement from everybody, so that's great. We all have a vested interest in ... as a major horticulture industry. (Grower, Qld)

[It's] a very close knit little community, they only really have... and the majority of people ... know people that are involved in the ... industry, so we had very good cooperation from the locals. (Program coordinator, Qld)

... it's probably a fairly close knit community. I mean they are a really diverse group ... So it's got some really very community minded real business people here as well so it's a very active community ... people see it as a grape-wine community. (Engagement coordinator, Vic.)

Make it convenient

The timing of engagement should be convenient for the intended participants. The venue and format need to be appropriate. Findings from the case studies suggest that growers are more likely to attend meetings if they are held on a grower's property.

Shed meetings are a good example of how this has worked. The success of shed meetings stems from the desire for face-to-face interaction and minimal preparation (that is, no need to go home to wash up first). If the engagement activity is conveniently located, growers will be more likely to attend. Check which time suits different groups; farm managers or consultants may prefer early breakfasts, whereas farm owners may prefer mid-morning or afternoon after finishing on-farm tasks. It is best to avoid critical times of year like harvest season or planting, when people are likely to be busy.

'Piggyback' biosecurity messages

Rural communities and growers have many concerns beyond biosecurity that affect whether they can maintain a viable business or lifestyle. This means it may be difficult to get people to be initially receptive to information about biosecurity or to attend events. If no outbreak or threat is imminent, the issues 'may not be on people's radar'.

An effective way of communicating biosecurity messages is therefore to build in or 'piggyback' biosecurity information onto other activities, such as workshops, meetings or campaigns that are already happening. For example, workshops about farm hygiene practices or productivity could be used to convey pest-specific information to growers. Similarly, a curriculum for school children that focuses on general food production issues, such as 'Where do my vegetables come from?' could be modified to include important pest and disease messages relevant to the local region.

... you've got to get people together and you've got to be able to offer them something that they can see an advantage in for themselves, and going back to the fact that they're all busy quite often is difficult to get people together unless there's something new. (DPI staff, Qld)

Be committed to the process

Long-term government, industry and community group commitment to the process of community engagement is necessary to achieve lasting change. This involves adherence to the program and remaining goal-focused despite set-backs or challenges. Commitment is demonstrated through provision of tangible resources such as funding, staff and other forms of support, but also through intangible assets such as sustained focus and dedication.

... in large part thanks to the Fruit and Veg Association, has been a powerful bonding force for a long period with some excellent people driving that and pulling people and money together. (Grower, Qld)

I think that it helps enormously if you have some political involvement ... You need to make sure that the politician ... [has] the capacity to look at this ... and say 'wait a minute, these people evidence considerable commitment, let's give this a go'. (Industry representative, Qld)

... what you need is to be able to communicate really well with all of the stakeholders and keep them up-to-date and keep their commitment. That commitment can't be ... one way ... (Industry representative, Qld)

Be accountable

Being accountable is an important part of developing trust and confidence among participants in an engagement process. If partners are willing to accept responsibility or account for their actions, even if it means telling people bad news, it is likely to engender more confidence. This needs to be reflected in processes such as inclusive meetings, sharing of information and being honest with people.

Many people emphasised a need for accountability to grassroots growers and residents. This emerged particularly from concerns that interstate differences in pest and disease protocols and regulations need to be resolved to reduce the uncertainty about future investment for growers.

You have to put [both the good and the bad news] out. And if it's a bad news story you've got to [get on the] front foot quickly ... It's not a matter of trying to blame or protect ... There's nothing wrong with saying sorry, someone got it wrong. ... you essentially say look we went through the process, at the end of the day the buck stops with me, I got it wrong. And this is what I'm going to do to try and fix it. (Community representative, Vic.)

Nobody is accountable. How do you make state bodies accountable for time—protocols are dragging on ... We need timelines to give security for people to invest. The way things are currently handled creates uncertainty. We must have a date to say then we will have a protocol—the same everywhere. (Grower, Vic.)

Other engagement enablers

Other qualities of social interaction can help promote more meaningful and effective engagement over the long term. Some of these are:

- **Show respect**—hold other people's contribution and knowledge in high regard.
- **Be credible**—make sure biosecurity messages and messengers are trustworthy and believable.
- **Be genuine**—show that you, and the organisation you represent, have the character or qualities you claim.
- **Reciprocate**—if you behave respectfully, considerately and appropriately others are more likely to respond in a similar way.
- **Be transparent**—be open and communicate biosecurity information to those who need it.

5.2 Typical barriers to effective biosecurity engagement and possible solutions

Research revealed six distinct types of potential barriers to effective engagement: resourcing issues, top-down approach, concerns about interacting with stakeholder groups, divergent views about the role of engagement, lack of two-way information flow, and unmet expectations and other frustrations from the past. These barriers and possible solutions are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1 Typical barriers and possible solutions

Barriers	Possible solutions
Resourcing issues	
A timeframe disjunct—many funding cycles go for three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allow for staged funding. – Funding for the next stage depends on the success and outcomes of previous stages. – Identify alternative sources of resources. – Prioritise engagement activities based on key risk pathways.
High staff turnover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Encourage continuity by retaining key staff for the lifetime of the program.
Inappropriate skill sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure program coordinators or industry development officers are appropriately skilled for the role (for example, effective interpersonal skills, experience working with communities, facilitation skills and effective writing skills).
Top down approach	
Lack of local decision-making capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify local leaders and provide them with authority to make decisions appropriate for the local context. – Support the involvement of relevant local and national industry bodies. – Off-site managers keep in close contact with local representatives and respond quickly to changing needs.
Engagement materials developed with little consideration of local conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Invest in better understanding target groups to identify the most appropriate and cost effective engagement opportunities. – Work with regional partners to develop appropriate materials. – Empower, support and resource local industries and/or communities to develop their own materials.
Concerns about interacting with community groups	
Uncertainty about managing community expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Set clear and realistic goals at the beginning of the process. – Clearly communicate ‘non-negotiable’ policies and legislation.
Divergent views on the nature of the problem that engagement is supposed to address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Help participants find common ground or a shared sense of direction before starting constructive discussions. – Sustain a disciplined process of defining the problem, identifying options and considering the consequences of the different options. – Consider employing specialised facilitators and/or strategies.
Dealing with complex issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allow for an increase in commitment, inclusiveness, time and focus for complex issues. – Invest more in relationship building with and between participants. – Ensure issues are well understood in order to be addressed productively. – Ensure staff are equipped to deal with the issues, both through their technical and engagement skills.

Continued

TABLE 1 Typical barriers and possible solutions *continued*

Barriers	Possible solutions
Fear of failure in engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plan the engagement process. – Build in a monitoring and evaluation component to act as an early warning system and allow for adaptive program management to respond to issues and new opportunities. – Maintain relationships with stakeholders, intermediaries and key representatives of target groups. – Maintain and demonstrate commitment. – Ensure staff are equipped to deal with the issues, both through their technical and engagement skills.
Divergent views about the role of engagement	
Under-appreciation of the potential benefits of community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Government agencies and industry bodies lift the profile of community engagement by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making it a priority for resourcing • showcasing past engagement successes • training staff in community engagement techniques.
Investigation to better understand stakeholders, intermediaries and/or target groups seen as too time-consuming and expensive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Promote understanding of the value of such an investigation for laying the foundation for effective engagement. – Use techniques such as Rapid Rural Appraisals or Participatory Rural Appraisals which can be delivered quickly and relatively cheaply. – Avoid one-size-fits-all communication approaches.
Over-reliance on print material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Explain that distribution of print material alone has minimal affect on behavioural change. – Consider other avenues to convey messages, such as respected intermediaries like on-farm consultants or key community spokespeople.
Lack of two-way information flow	
Lack of feedback loops in the engagement strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Make identifying and responding to feedback loops a priority. – Enhance capacity for staff to respond to feedback from stakeholders. – Consider flexible strategies that can be adapted based on feedback from monitoring and evaluation activities.
Lack of knowledge or understanding of the pest (for example, potential impact of pest, pest spread, habitat or hosts, management methods)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure solid monitoring and evaluation processes and regular contact with representatives of intermediaries and target group are in place. – Ensure engagement strategies are flexible to allow for these issues to be addressed. – Technical experts at grower meetings may help address misconceptions.

Continued

TABLE 1 Typical barriers and possible solutions *continued*

Barriers	Possible solutions
Lack of follow-up with engaged target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure target groups are kept up-to-date about the progress of initiatives/plans, including when things are not progressing as well or as fast as planned. – Instigate a mini-champion network; a network of representatives of various community groups to act as information conduits between the group and the engagement coordinator, including program updates from the coordinator to the group and feedback from the group to the coordinator.
Unmet expectations and other frustrations from the past	
Past unresolved issues or negative outcomes that are still a source of anger among stakeholders or target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do not ignore unresolved issues as they will affect trust and credibility. Consider spending some resources and effort helping people move on. – Use highly skilled facilitators to manage meetings involving disgruntled and angry participants. – Involve staff who have insight into the unresolved/negative issue and decision-making power to address concerns and enable change where necessary by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing opportunities for people to vent anger or discuss the issue in dialogue with the appropriate staff • having an empathetic ear, acknowledging people's frustration • being transparent about what happened, even if mistakes were made, and explaining how similar processes will be improved. – Have a champion for the new process/issue.
Ongoing frustrations and anger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do not promise what cannot be delivered. – Be realistic about what an initiative can achieve. Do not oversell it. – If an expectation has been created that cannot be delivered, provide the affected groups with regular updates. – If disappointing outcomes happen, such as losing market access due to pest concerns, inform affected groups in a personal way through, for example, face-to-face contact, a phone call or through a personalised email. Do not rely on impersonal channels, such as media releases.

Chapter 06



Engagement tools

An extensive range of tools can be used to underpin engagement activities and involve the community in biosecurity issues. Common tools and mechanisms are summarised through an example in Box 2, and a more comprehensive list with other tools and advice on how to apply them is in Appendix E.

Using a range of tools and activities ensures different learning styles are catered for. Both 'passive' and 'active' tools should be used and combined. For 'passive' tools the onus is on target group members to find the information, for example on websites or by requesting copies of documents. 'Active' tools include those where the 'information finds targets groups', for example through doorknocking activities, presentations as part of community events and shed meetings for growers.

6.1 Choosing engagement tools

According to Aslin and Brown (2004) some things to remember when choosing engagement tools include:

- **The purpose**
 - Is it to build capacity or knowledge, resolve a one-off conflict, or develop a continuing relationship? Is it realistic?
 - Will it deliver the intended outcome?
 - Does it match the intended level of engagement (Figure A1)?
- **The resources**
 - Given the resources and constraints available, is it the best method?
- **The characteristics** of the target or intermediary group
 - How many people are there? What are their preferences, needs and issues?

6.2 Developing engagement tools

- Adjust engagement tools to the target group:
 - Use clear language—avoid unnecessary words and less important information. Use plain English and avoid jargon and technical or bureaucratic terminology. Focus on the key messages, including what is expected from the listeners/readers. Use 'What's in it for me' messages. This applies to documents, web pages, road signs, television and radio commercials, and presentations.
 - Test tools—it is crucial that print materials, such as brochures, manuals and road signs are tested with a few representative members of the target group to ensure they are appropriate to their needs and that the message is clear.
 - Work through trusted, credible sources of information.

- Meet in an environment familiar to the target group, such as sheds for growers.
- Create an atmosphere of ‘we are all in this together’ rather than ‘you listen to us, we’ll tell you what to do’.
- Ensure the preferred action is as practical and as easy to do as possible.
- Piggyback biosecurity messages onto more interesting events or topics—especially if the biosecurity issue is of little interest to target groups.
- Ensure tools are practical—rather than ordinary brochures or manuals for growers, consider shed posters or weather-resistant pest identification flipcharts that would fit in a glovebox.
- Create opportunities for personal engagement:
 - Use face-to-face or personal contact.
 - Enable two-way communication, such as the ability to influence the decision-making process or ask questions.
 - Create opportunities to discuss the issue among peers to maximise the chances of internalising the information.
 - Hands-on learning tends to be more effective for growers than a classroom setting.
 - Recognising that ‘seeing is believing’, where growers are able to see an exotic pest through a microscope or in a resin block, it makes a greater impression than just a photo.

Appendix E contains more information about some of the engagement tools, techniques and events that have been used to engage and inform target groups about biosecurity in the case studies. Some activities are active and self-sustaining while others are passive, non-ongoing practices. The relative advantages and disadvantages of using these different activities for different purposes are detailed to aid choosing the right activity.

Box 2 An example of engagement tools in practice

A Toolbox for Tully: The battle against Black Sigatoka was waged in the sheds

Numerous tools and mechanisms were used to effectively engage the community and extend resources during the Black Sigatoka eradication program in Tully, Queensland, which began with the incursion of the leaf disease in 2001. It was a world first for Black Sigatoka to be eradicated from a commercial banana plantation. Effective engagement was a key contributing factor to the success of the eradication program.

Face-to-face contact by eradication program representatives

Program representatives, which included industry and government employees, had regular face-to-face contact with growers and community members throughout the outbreak, but particularly over the first few months.

Shed meetings

Shed meetings were used to regularly meet with growers (every 1–2 weeks) to provide updates on what was happening with the eradication program. Industry staff and DPI staff were available to answer technical questions and the meetings were chaired by ‘shed captains’, young growers selected to lead the groups. Efforts were made to make the sheds as comfortable as possible and catering was provided. Shed captains also met fortnightly to discuss the program in more detail and to plan the next steps for

Continued

Box 2 An example of engagement tools in practice *continued*

eradication in conjunction with DPI and industry staff. As the program progressed the meetings became less frequent and other engagement tools and mechanisms were used to keep the growers up-to-date.

Monitors

Monitors were employed to regularly inspect all farms in the Tully district. Mandatory regular monitoring for detection of Black Sigatoka and leaf spot levels was enforced during the first stages of the eradication program, which provided abundant opportunities for face-to-face interaction. Where monitors encountered difficulties dealing with specific landholders, they were instructed to refer the matter to DPI technical staff who then visited the grower. By all accounts the monitors were very professional and developed good relationships with the growers they visited.

Volunteers

Volunteers were engaged to doorknock backyard banana growers in some areas. Notably, the growers close to Mission Beach played a key role in getting backyard growers on board.

Phone calls

Phone calls were made extensively to engage growers and other community members in the eradication program. The program coordinators and liaison staff usually met key growers face-to-face in the first instance, but used phone calls to follow up. Calls were also made to growers to encourage them to attend shed meetings; this helped bring 90 per cent of growers to shed meetings.

Printed material

Personal contact was the preferred mechanism for the engagement strategy; however, it became impossible for all stakeholders to be engaged this way. Having established good relationships with the growers and other community members, other tools were used to keep the community engaged throughout the eradication program.

Faxes

It was mandatory for growers involved in the eradication program to have fax machines. Faxed updates provided information on program progress and informed them of imminent meetings.

Newspaper and radio

Local media provided updates to growers and the wider community. Industry representatives provided regular updates on ABC radio and local stations. Having the message delivered by industry representatives worked effectively as they were not subject to the strict clearance protocols of government communications. It also meant the message came from people directly affected by the outbreak.

Summary

The success of the Tully Black Sigatoka eradication program relied on high levels of commitment from all growers and community members. The success of the engagement process relied on personal communication that upheld the key engagement principles, including trust, respect, credibility, genuineness, responsiveness and transparency. Much of the success of re-establishing area freedom can be attributed to a number of committed individuals who worked to make sure opportunities were available for personal interaction with all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix A: What is community engagement?

Aslin and Brown (2004:3) define engagement as ‘processes and practices in which a wide range of people work together to achieve a shared goal guided by a commitment to a common set of values, principles and criteria’.

Community engagement is typically defined along a continuum of participation (Figure A1). Engagement can range from passive receipt of individually-targeted information (brochures, pamphlets, manuals)—the shallow end of the engagement continuum—through to partnerships and self-empowered communities that initiate actions independent of external agents—the deep end of the biosecurity engagement continuum.

Community engagement implies ongoing activities over time rather than a single event. Several elements are integral components of community engagement, particularly toward the deep end of the continuum, including:

- ongoing commitment from all stakeholders
- acknowledgement and development of community capacities
- collaborative planning
- decision-making and action
- monitoring–evaluation–feedback–action cycle for stakeholders.


Ultimately, engagement activities should capture community attention, engender ownership of an issue and promote local responsibility for decision-making (Kruger et al. 2009).

A range of well-developed literature on community engagement describes a range of benefits. Most of these benefits materialise if engagement occurs toward the deep end of the continuum. This is summarised in Thompson et al. (2009), and includes:

- increased levels of ownership of and responsibility for problem resolution by community members
- increased empowerment and capacity building for individuals with respect to issues that affect them
- improved effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery
- faster response in times of emergency
- improvements in quality of policy/programs/projects being developed
- early identification of emerging issues and the opportunity to be proactive on issues of concern to the community

- improved reputation of government and other agencies for being open and accountable
- better access to networks, relationships, knowledge of stakeholders and community groups.

FIGURE A1 An engagement continuum

	Type of engagement	Description	Examples of tools	Level and longevity of engagement	
Shallow	Inform One-way communication Message giving	Advertising, education	Newsletters, media, brochures, letters, websites	Passive	Non-ongoing
	Consult One or two-way communication with decision-making not resting with community	Information gathering, reporting	Toll-free numbers, public meetings, surveys, focus groups, panels	Increasing level of engagement	Increasingly self-sustaining nature of engagement
	Involve Creating shared understanding and solutions pursued by one partner only	Community consultation and involvement	Community advisory groups, joint planning groups, forums		
	Partner Developing shared action plans through collaboration	Community participation and negotiation	Community management committees, workshops, negotiation processes		
Deep	Mobilise and empower People take independent initiatives and develop contacts with external institutions for resources and advice	Self-direction planning with limited support through governance arrangements	Action plans developed and implemented by the community with access to experts and resources available through government	Proactive	Ongoing

Sources: CEN 2005; Dare et al. 2008; Hashagen 2002

Effective community engagement is a fluid process. Engagement will be unique in different areas as it is shaped by local conditions, including:

- the decision-making process
- the range of stakeholders involved
- the available resources; financial or in-kind
- other contextual factors.

It is crucial that the entire engagement process be well planned. Poorly planned engagement processes bear greater risks than not engaging at all, and can lead to a loss of credibility and reputation (The Environment Council 2007).

Appendix B: Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry

Assessing the extent to which an existing or proposed biosecurity engagement program is based on sound principles and will realise the greatest return on investment.

TABLE B1 Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry		
Guideline	Remarks	Suggestions
1. Within the organisation		
Promote biosecurity engagement throughout organisation	Biosecurity has traditionally been compliance driven. It might require significant culture change in some branches and sections to embrace community engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continually reinforce the organisation's commitment to biosecurity engagement to all biosecurity staff. – Lift the profile of community engagement by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making it a priority for resourcing • showcasing past engagement successes internally and through the media • educating/training employees in community engagement.
Ensure the biosecurity engagement engine underpins new regional biosecurity strategies	Engagement with representatives from all stakeholder groups from when the program is conceived will ensure better targeted programs and better outcomes than if engagement is commenced after the regional biosecurity program is in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Use the biosecurity engagement engine as a framework for developing regional biosecurity engagement programs. Setting up a biosecurity engagement program involves ongoing decision making. The biosecurity engagement engine engages the right stakeholders for certain decisions at the best time.
Support partnerships, linkages and networks to ensure close, mutually supportive relationships between government, industry and the community	Local people tend to perceive regional biosecurity management in 'us and them' terms. Biosecurity would be better served if a stronger sense of 'us all against the pest(s)' were engendered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide opportunities for staff to build and maintain networks and relationships with community representatives and peers in other government or industry organisations. – Increase the number of opportunities for all potential stakeholder group members to be engaged. Put special effort into engaging with those who have not yet been reached (engage beyond the 'low hanging fruit'). – Apply the engagement principles of trust, transparency, responsiveness and flexibility to building networks, commitment and accountability.

Continued

TABLE B1 Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry *continued*

Guideline	Remarks	Suggestions
Put performance indicators in place to keep track of the organisation's commitment to biosecurity engagement		For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– the number of partnerships that address community and industry biosecurity needs– effectiveness of partnerships; to what extent they – deliver positive outcomes– the number of staff involved in biosecurity engagement.
2. Resourcing biosecurity engagement programs		
2.1 Time		
Allow for realistic timeframes	Effective engagement is difficult to achieve and maintain in short timeframes such as within a 3-year funding cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Allow for staged funding that is made available for each stage and the next stage's funding depends on the success of the previous stage.– Fund engagement programs that appear realistic, not overly ambitious.
Allow for flexible and adjustable program plans	Effective biosecurity engagement means being responsive to new opportunities and issues. The engagement process therefore needs to be allowed to continually evolve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Do not expect detailed project plans and rigid milestones.– Recognise less tangible outcomes, such as building relationships, building trust and two-way communication.
2.2 Funding		
Strengthen investment in biosecurity engagement	Much biosecurity funding is spent on developing and implementing technologies for preventing, diagnosing, surveilling, eradicating, controlling and analysing the risk of pests. The human engagement component is often overlooked, although human behaviour poses one of the most significant biosecurity threats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Make biosecurity engagement a funding priority for research and regional biosecurity programs.

Continued

TABLE B1 Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry *continued*

Guideline	Remarks	Suggestions
2.3 Staff		
Minimise staffing changes	Engagement builds on social capital including relationships and trust, which are normally linked to a particular person. If staff interacting with stakeholder and target groups changes, the capital needs to be re-established, which is time consuming and costly to the engagement program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide incentives for staff in engagement programs to remain involved for the life of the program, especially program coordinators and industry development officers.
Include strong interpersonal skills as a key selection criteria for personnel who will interact with stakeholder groups	Roles such as industry development officers are often filled based on a strong technical background. However, people are more successful in these roles if they are able to build rapport with stakeholder and target groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Give preference to people with good interpersonal skills who have proven ability to develop rapport with stakeholder and target groups in addition to technical skills.
Ensure technical experts are involved in the engagement process to address any technical enquiries or doubts	Most biosecurity engagement programs encounter stakeholders and target groups that doubt or misunderstand technical aspects of the pest involved. As it is important to address misconceptions quickly, the involvement of trusted technical experts is most effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allocate a trusted technical expert to the engagement program (even just on standby).
Facilitate internal community engagement training for staff who interact with the community	Engagement with stakeholder groups is often done by people who have a strong technical background, but with a limited background in engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Include engagement training as a professional development requirement for all technical staff dealing with the public and members of stakeholder groups.

Continued

TABLE B1 Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry *continued*

Guideline	Remarks	Suggestions
Provide support to officers planning and implementing engagement plans	Staff responsible for biosecurity engagement often have strong technical backgrounds and little training in relation to community engagement.	– For example, employ a community engagement expert as part of the organisation’s communications team that could be contacted for advice.
2.4 Be sensitive to new opportunities		
Be responsive to initiatives that originate at community level	Community groups may decide to tackle a certain pest. Support from local industries and/or state and local government bodies could contribute significantly to the success and longevity of these initiatives.	– Allocate staff to deal with such initiatives and/or help communities make contact with the right people within the organisation.
3. Requirements for biosecurity engagement programs		
Enable inclusive stakeholder engagement to underpin regional biosecurity program formation, design and implementation	Most regional biosecurity plans are developed through a top-down approach with limited input from stakeholders at grassroots level. Collaboration and communication with stakeholders, including target group representatives, from the point the program starts is vital to ensure maximum effectiveness.	– Start engagement with representatives from stakeholder groups (including target group representatives or people who are familiar with them) early in development of regional biosecurity plans.
Ensure community engagement is fully integrated into existing regional biosecurity activities	Community engagement is often an add-on to existing regional biosecurity programs, which can undermine its success. In addition, regional biosecurity has traditionally been compliance driven, so a ‘culture change’ might be necessary in some agencies.	– Provide the necessary resources, including training to ensure biosecurity staff understand and support the role of community engagement in addressing regional biosecurity issues.
Insist that biosecurity engagement programs contain robust, but practical monitoring and evaluation components to ensure the intended outcomes are being achieved	Many biosecurity engagement programs tend to prioritise allocation of resources to getting the job done. Without a solid monitoring and evaluation component, serious issues can be overlooked or recognised too late, undermining the program’s effectiveness.	– Include simple, efficient, reliable and cost-effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms into design of all biosecurity engagement programs.

Continued

TABLE B1 Checklist for policy-makers and senior staff in government and industry *continued*

Guideline	Remarks	Suggestions
Test or pilot engagement tools with representatives of the target group before they are fully implemented	Tools, such as signs, brochures and advertisements, can be misunderstood if not refined after testing with target group representatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– For tools that are harder to ‘test’, such as shed meetings, the first meeting could be considered a pilot and feedback sought from participants, to refine subsequent meetings.
Ensure biosecurity messages are designed with certain target groups in mind, taking care to demonstrate relevance to each stakeholder group (‘What’s in it for me?’)	The tendency to communicate biosecurity messages using a one-size-fits-all approach that is not sensitive to the needs and priorities of different groups is common. As these messages do not connect well with target groups, they are less likely to result in the desired change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Promote and support social research components in the biosecurity engagement programs to better understand different stakeholder groups, by gathering baseline information early in the program.
Ensure clear communication with stakeholder and target groups	Information should be accessible by being widely available (online, popular media, presentations, talks) and in the right format that makes the information easy to grasp.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Encourage use of plain English, discourage technical jargon and avoid cluttered language.– Promote use of clear images and pictures of pests and plant symptoms.– Encourage production of practical materials, such as posters, glovebox guides and weatherproof materials.
4. Other important aspects of biosecurity engagement		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Ensure the organisation initiating the engagement uses the engagement principles of strengthening trust, transparency, responsiveness and flexibility to build networks, commitment and accountability. Encourage use of these principles among all stakeholders.– Ensure engagement is genuine; do not let the process be hijacked by powerful or more articulate groups.– Place priority on locally run programs, rather than those from ‘head office’ in capital cities, by people who have established relationships with target groups and a good understanding of local conditions.

Appendix C: Checklist for investing in engagement programs

TABLE C1 Checklist for investing in engagement programs

Guideline	Remarks
1. Program formation	
Key stakeholders are engaged early to influence the boarder goals of the engagement program	If stakeholders are engaged too late, there might be a sense that the program has been imposed on them with not enough opportunity to shape its overall goals.
The broader program goals allow for realistic timeframes	Effective engagement is difficult to achieve and maintain in short timeframes. Fund engagement programs that appear realistic, not those that seem overly ambitious. One option is to allow for staged funding to be made available with funding for the next stage depending on the success and outcomes of the previous stage.
Where applicable, the engagement program is well integrated with the operational side of the larger pest control program	If the engagement and operational staff are not ‘singing from the same hymn sheet’ target groups will receive mixed messages. The two groups need to work together; their activities must complement each other.
A program coordinator (team) is appointed based on both technical and people skills	People skills will help connect with stakeholder and target group representatives; to gain and maintain their support. A good understanding of the pest(s) in question is also important to underpin sound engagement.
2. Program design	
2.1 Formulating an engagement strategy	
The engagement strategy is based on a clearly articulated objective	It is hard to aim for a target if that target is vague. The objective could be stated as an outcome based on what success would look like at the end of the engagement program.
The engagement strategy involves a targeted approach for each target group	This involves biosecurity messages that are based on the ‘What’s in it for me?’ principle and activities that have been designed based on target group preferences. To achieve this, the engagement strategy is best designed around input from target group representatives or people who know target groups well and by a baseline investigation to better understand target groups.
The engagement strategy is based on baseline investigation in order to better understand target groups	A baseline investigation allows the engagement team to gain a good understanding of the local context and help design and finetune engagement activities. If the engagement team is involved in the investigation it is a powerful way to start building relationships with key people.

Continued

TABLE C1 Checklist for investing in engagement programs *continued*

Guideline	Remarks
2.2 Designing engagement tools and activities	
A range of engagement tools and activities are used to reach target groups to cater for different learning styles	This includes tools that are passive (onus is on target group members to find information on websites, request copies of documents) and active ('information finds targets groups', doorknocking, presentations as part of community events, shed meetings for growers).
A significant number of engagement activities are built on social enablers, like trust, relationships, responsiveness and convenience	The research found that engagement is most effective if social enablers are involved. This could be achieved in various ways. The engagement team could focus on building relationships and gaining trust of key people in community groups. Key messages and documentation could be channelled through intermediaries (people or groups who have the trust or are in direct contact with members of the target groups).
Print material is well designed	Print material is written in short succinct plain English, free of clutter and jargon. Material is designed to be practical, such as weatherproofed and designed to be placed where they are most likely to be used, such as gloveboxes and sheds. Photos of pests need to be of high quality with the characteristics of the pests clearly recognisable.
Where suitable, engagement tools and activities are tested	A draft document reviewed by a few target group representatives will help ensure the document is user-friendly. If a series of shed meetings are planned, the first two or three meetings could be used to seek feedback to finetune subsequent meetings.

Continued

TABLE C1 Checklist for investing in engagement programs <i>continued</i>	
Guideline	Remarks
2.3 Continual improvement	
Two-way communication is integrated throughout the engagement program	Two-way information flow is important between the engagement team and senior managers in key stakeholders organisations as well as target group representatives. Two-way information flow ensures that needs, issues and opportunities are communicated, allowing for quick responses. It also contributes to a sense of ‘we’re in this together’ rather than ‘us against them’.
A monitoring component runs parallel with the engagement strategy	Monitoring allows for keeping track of the engagement process. This enhances adaptive management by helping to respond to issues and opportunities as soon as possible. A monitoring component works best if it is based primarily on the engagement team’s information needs rather than solely on external requirements.
A program evaluation is planned	An evaluation assesses the extent to which the engagement strategy has achieved its objectives; whether any unexpected outcomes have occurred; and the lessons learned for subsequent engagement programs.
3. Overall	
The engagement team focuses on engaging the right people for the decisions and tasks at hand	It is not only important to have the right organisations, agencies or groups represented, but also the right individuals for the decisions or tasks at hand. It might be best, for example, to engage directly with senior managers if decisions relate to funding and how the engagement program could be best aligned with other initiatives or organisational goals. For decisions on how to best engage with target groups, extension officers and others who regularly deal directly with target groups might be most suitable.
Target groups are kept up-to-date about the pest or engagement program’s progress	If people’s interest has been gained on an issue, through a presentation for example, and they never hear about the program again, it could lead to frustration and disengagement.

Appendix D: Checklist for engagement practitioners

TABLE D1 Checklist for engagement practitioners	
Step	Remarks and considerations
1. Common principles for engaging stakeholders and target groups	
Whether engaging stakeholders or target groups, identify:	
– the purpose of engagement	Ideally, what would you like them to do?
– the capacity they have, in terms of knowledge and skills, motivation or resources to be engaged	Some stakeholders and target groups might need help to be engaged through, for example, education, training or refunds for travel and other expenses.
– the level of engagement needed	Should they only be made aware of the initiative, are they to be consulted or do they need to form part of the decision making?
Keep stakeholders and target groups informed about the progress	Once people have been successfully engaged in a process or program, it is important to maintain their interest by providing them with updates. If they don't hear about the program again, it might lead to negative outcomes or to a sense of doubt about how valued their involvement really is.
2. Principles for engaging stakeholders	
Engage wide	Include too many stakeholders initially rather than missing out on crucial ones. Ensure all relevant divisions in large organisations are in the loop.
Engage early	Start stakeholder engagement as soon as possible to ensure those who can influence decision making have enough opportunity to do so.
Look for influential people with passion for the issue, not just particular roles	Passionate people often make good champions for a cause.
Continued	

TABLE D1 Checklist for engagement practitioners *continued*

Step	Remarks and considerations
3. Principles for developing an engagement strategy for target groups	
Clearly define the objective of the engagement strategy	Articulate what success of the strategy would look like.
To choose and design engagement activities, consider:	
– The message (what?)	Use ‘What’s in it for me?’ messages.
– The messenger (who?)	Use people who are trusted and respected by the target groups as intermediaries.
– Timing (when?)	Avoid target groups’ busy times.
– Tools (how?)	Use a wide range of tools to cater for different learning styles. This includes tools that are passive (onus is on target group members to find information on websites, request copies of documents) and active (‘information finds targets groups’; doorknocking, presentations as part of community events, shed meetings for growers). Ensure a significant number of engagement activities are built on social enablers. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– <i>Trust</i> – Who do the target groups trust and respect that champion the cause?– <i>Relationships and networks</i> – What existing networks could be tapped into?– <i>Peer pressure</i> – Are bonds between stakeholder group members strong enough to significantly influence each other?– <i>Commitment</i> – How can commitment be demonstrated by the delivery agency? How can commitment and ownership be encouraged within stakeholder groups?– <i>Opportunities to ‘piggyback’</i> messages onto other topics, activities or events. Test and refine tools and materials; for example, run pilots or use a random sample from stakeholder groups to ensure the engagement tool has the intended outcome.
Articulate assumptions	The link between an activity and its expected outcome is normally based on assumptions. Articulating assumptions can be a powerful way to help finetune the engagement strategy and allow for early response if assumptions prove incorrect.
Conduct a baseline investigation to better understand target groups	Could be done before or shortly after development of the first draft of the engagement strategy. Involvement of the engagement team is highly recommended (rather than completely outsourcing it to a consultant).

Continued

TABLE D1 Checklist for engagement practitioners *continued*

Step	Remarks and considerations
4. Continual improvement	
Instigate a regular two-way feedback and action mechanism between engagement team/coordinator and key stakeholders	Work through social enablers such as trust, respect, credibility, genuineness, responsiveness and transparency.
Include a monitoring and evaluation component in the engagement strategy to underpin adaptive program management	To ensure activities are meaningful ensure the monitoring and evaluation component is primarily based on the engagement team's information needs.

Appendix E: Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Engagement method: face-to-face contact						
Individual consultation/ interaction-occurs when engagers meet with individuals; for example, on-farm visits by technical experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – regarded as the best method for conveying a message for all audiences – allows people to feel connected and valued – provides an opportunity for questions and answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – very resource intensive – difficult to engage all relevant stakeholders groups 	<p>Growers</p> <p>General public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the messenger is trusted/credible – used to engage critical, clearly identified stakeholders for a specific purpose 	Any stage	<p>Listen</p> <p>Involve</p> <p>Partner</p> <p>Mobilise and empower</p>
Shed meetings—used to communicate with growers about a specific issue. Sometimes chaired by a ‘shed captain’ usually the shed owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – good for developing initial understanding/ engagement around an issue – facilitates two-way communication between growers, DPI, others – opportunity for growers to lead discussions and ask questions – comfortable, informal environment for growers where they feel supported and able to speak up – allows face-to-face contact with a large group at once – helps develop trust between growers and technical staff or industry – a shed captain may help growers develop leadership skills – opportunity for peer learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – time intensive for time-poor growers – new growers might find intimidating – not everyone will have access – might not be ideal for presenter; there may not be facilities for PowerPoint presentations for example 	Most growers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – meetings are led by growers – meetings are issue specific, e.g. an outbreak – meeting times are decided by growers – not during harvest or planting – shed captains are neutral – catering is provided to add a social element – technical staff are present/ available but not directing the meeting – key points are made available to others after the meeting – remove barriers that could cause uneasiness, i.e. DPI uniforms 	<p>Implementation</p> <p>Design</p>	<p>Listen</p> <p>Involve</p> <p>Partner</p> <p>Mobilise and empower</p>

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement *continued*

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Information stand or van—portable tool used to convey a certain message at an event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can be effectively combined with other engagement tools such as pamphlets, booklets, videos – could become recognisable by the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – puts onus of interest/ involvement on the public – information centre staff may have to deal with frustrated and angry people 	<p>Growers</p> <p>General public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – located at an appropriate audience-specific venue, such as travelling trailer with fruit fly roadblock – staff have support from other agencies to which they can refer difficult cases 	Implementation	Inform
Field days, including on-farm demonstrations, can be held to visually demonstrate a practice or problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – growers are generally comfortable and relaxed on-farm – provides an interactive learning experience, growers usually prefer a hands-on experience – opportunity for growers to learn from each other or develop leadership by volunteering to host a trial – opportunity for general community to learn about food production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – time consuming to organise – sometimes have poor attendance rates 	<p>Growers</p> <p>General public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – are held at times convenient to growers – growers are consulted in organising the field day to ensure it will be relevant/interesting 	Any time	Inform Listen
Industry conferences —most horticulture industries hold annual and biannual conferences or symposiums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – effective for dispersing information to a large number of growers – provides opportunities for two-way communication around issues of interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – growers will pick and choose what interests them—some messages may not be a high priority – smaller growers may not be able to afford to attend 	<p>Growers</p> <p>Industry representatives</p> <p>Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the biosecurity presentations are delivered by champions for the cause 	Any time	Inform

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement *continued*

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Information centres—found in most towns and a valuable conduit for providing information to tourists on biosecurity matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can be effectively combined with other engagement tools, i.e. pamphlets, booklets, videos – generally well used by tourists – tourists appreciate having a fact sheet or brochure explained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – puts the onus of interest/ involvement on the public to enquire – can be time consuming for information centre staff to explain 	Tourists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – there is a pest-specific message, such as fruit fly – staff have received training around the pest – used in conjunction with other tools, such as to explain a poster or pamphlet 	Implementation	Inform
Engagement method: telecommunications and internet						
Personal phone calls—effective where an individual face-to-face meeting is impossible, such as between growers and technical staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – best alternative to face-to-face contact – enables two-way individual interaction and feedback – opportunity for questions and answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – time consuming – may result in lost time depending on availability of receivers 	Growers General community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the caller is known to the audience and credible 	Any time	Listen Involve
Phone text messaging—beginning to be used by engagers for some purposes such as reminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – quick and easy for communicator – likely to be read by recipient – fairly cheap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – limited to how much information a text message can convey – patchy mobile coverage in rural areas and message may be lost 	All with access to a mobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – best for people with established relationships – a reminder about an event or point recipients to another information source 	Any time	Inform

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement *continued*

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
1800 numbers— available for reporting of suspected plant pest and disease incursions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – provides reporter with opportunity to be heard – may enable two-way learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – recipients of message may not provide follow-up leading to disengagement 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – person answering the phone reports back to source – person answering the phone is trained in pest and disease identification 	Implementation Monitoring and evaluation	Listen
Faxes—used more in the past and still preferred by many growers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – relatively quick and easy for communicator – more personal than a pamphlet thus more likely to be read – quicker to access than email – lower incidence of faxes means more likely to be read – cheaper and faster than posting a letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – many people do not have fax machines these days – viewed as cumbersome tool by some messengers 	Growers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – work well with clearly identified target audience – used to provide updates – used as an invitation – no more than two pages – best as follow-up tool, rather than initial contact 	Implementation	Inform
Email—emerging as a tool, but is not yet widely or frequently used in rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – preferred to fax by some large/young growers that may not have fax machine – quick and easy for use by messenger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – easily ignored – many growers do not have or check regularly – considered a poor way of inviting people to events 	Young or technologically literate growers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – individually addressed – accompanied by a text or phone call to alert recipient 	Formation Design	Inform Listen
Internet—a preferred biosecurity tool/ information repository of engagers, such as technical officers and IDOs. Includes YouTube, videos and audios that can be accessed online	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – good resource for engaged parties seeking more information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – information seekers must already be engaged around the topic – access to internet is limited/slow in many rural areas 	Young/ technologically literate growers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – used in conjunction with other tools such as, a newsletter that refers to a website for more information 	Implementation	Inform

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement *continued*

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Engagement method: printed materials						
On-farm manuals— farm glovebox guides, manuals usually provide explanations of pests and visuals for identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can become an invaluable tool for growers – reasonably quick and cheap to produce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – easy to ignore – use determined by quality or relevance to grower – information may date 	Growers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – is small (glovebox size) and weatherproof – should be trialled by growers before printing – contains contact details for follow-up – has good colour photos and diagrams – provides for addition of new information, such as weed decks – is appropriate for target audiences 	Implementation	Inform
Posters—informative posters, such as shed posters, information stand posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – good for growers using itinerant workers – good for farm workers with limited English language skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can be quite expensive to develop and distribute – will need occasional updating – may be ignored by some 	Farm workers General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – has large, clear, colour graphics and diagrams – has minimal text – is placed in a prominent location for easy/frequent viewing such as near a lunch area – is explained initially by the grower or other messenger 	Implementation	Inform
Newsletters/ bulletins—are used by many messengers, such as industry groups, technical officers, consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – some newsletters are widely read by growers, for example, the Macadamia Nut Association Newsletter – growers feel it is valuable if paid for by their levies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – easily ignored – sometimes produced on tight budgets which affects document quality 	Growers Technical officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – paper newsletters more popular – audience specific, industry newsletters are widely read 	Any time	Inform

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement *continued*

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Calenders— informative multi-page posters that can alert growers to different activities in different months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – good reminder for growers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – currently not available widely 	<p>Growers</p> <p>Farm managers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – industry specific 	Implementation	Inform
Factsheets—available in many regions for different pests and disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can be a useful tool for identification of pest or disease – reduce wastage by allowing information seekers to take what they want 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – one-pagers often get lost or damaged over time – often duplicate information available elsewhere for no real gain 	<p>Growers</p> <p>Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can be connected to form a booklet – are used in an outbreak situation – uncluttered and without too much technical information 	Implementation	Inform
Pamphlets— informative pamphlets on pest, disease or practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – can help reinforce messages to pre-sensitised audiences – can promote new understanding of an issue if accompanied by a personal explanation – can be made widely available relatively cheap to produce and distribute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – easily ignored – mailouts considered virtually useless – can waste paper and resources 	<p>Growers</p> <p>General community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – colour photos, clear graphics, maps and minimal text – target audience has been considered – topic is already a priority – linked to an activity, such as fruit fly inspections – linked to a local area – supported by media or other awareness-raising activities – provided with an explanation, such as at information centres, stands – mailouts/letterbox drops are avoided unless linked to an activity – distributed in a small community – uncluttered and without too much technical information 	Implementation	Inform

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement <i>continued</i>						
Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Community newsletters—in addition to agriculture specific newsletters, some community groups, such as Neighbourhood Watch, may include biosecurity information upon request	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– exposure to different audiences– targets segments of the community that are interested in serving the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– audience may not be interested	Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– flag a specific issue likely to be of interest to the broader community– eye-catching heading and includes locally specific examples and photographs– contains contact details for follow-up	<div>Design</div> <div>Implementation</div>	Inform
Engagement approach: media						
Newspapers—local and grower targeted such as <i>The Weekly Times</i> and <i>The Land</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– wide readership of local papers– wide readership of agricultural papers such as <i>The Weekly Times</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– issue must be considered ‘newsworthy’ by paper– media sometimes gets facts wrong	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– issue has pre-existing profile– is linked to an activity	Implementation	Inform
Radio—local radio, ABC for news stories or advertisements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– good way of communicating with busy growers/farm workers– local newspapers generally widely read by community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– issue must be considered newsworthy by journalists– not all people listen to the same station	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– used to provide updates/reminders	Implementation	Inform
<i>Continued</i>						

Continued

TABLE E1 Engagement activities and mechanisms used in biosecurity engagement *continued*

Tools and processes	Advantages	Disadvantages	Most appropriate audience	Factors contributing to success/ appropriate use	Most likely engagement stage	Engagement type
Television — mainly used for advertisements, news will occasionally cover an event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– access to a wide audience– cheap on an access-per-person basis– good for promotion of good news stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– may be of considerable cost for little benefit– hard to make it audience-specific– not all people watch the same channels	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– use in high profile issues, such as Tully Black Sigatoka outbreak profiled Landline	Implementation	Inform

Glossary

Backyarders	Urban and peri-urban residents with backyards where fruit, vegetables or ornamental plants could potentially host pests.
Community	Often thought of as the people living in a local area. However, a community can also mean ‘community of interest’ where a group of people have something in common, such as a personal interest (gardening, sports), group affiliation (Lions Club) or industry membership (melon growers).
Engagement strategy	The strategy developed to interact with target groups. It is developed during the Program design stage and implemented during the Program implementation stage.
Intermediaries	Organisations, groups or individuals who help achieve change by channelling information to target groups.
Pests	In the context of this document, a collective term for pests, weeds and diseases.
Program	Refers to the biosecurity engagement initiative, including the formation, design and implementation stages. As there is considerable variation among biosecurity engagement initiatives (in terms of size, number of stakeholders and target groups involved, and duration), the term program is used inclusively in the context of this document to cover ‘program’ and ‘project’.
Stakeholders	Organisations, groups or individuals who have a potential interest or involvement in the biosecurity engagement program. Stakeholders typically include representatives of industry, government, community groups, local councils, supply chain members, and elected officials, local experts and opinion leaders. Sometimes a stakeholder may not recognise that they have influence over or an interest in a biosecurity issue.
Target groups	The groups the engagement strategy intends to influence. Biosecurity engagement target groups typically include—but are not restricted to—growers, households with backyard fruit trees and vegetables, travellers, culturally and linguistically diverse groups and various community groups. Target groups could also be or become stakeholders if the program objective is of interest to them.

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