

National Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Expert Group Meeting 7 Communiqué

The National Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Expert Group (expert group) was established by the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) in March 2015 as a recommendation from the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB) Implementation Taskforce. The role of the expert group is to develop, harmonise and maintain the national capability and capacity to prepare for the response to biosecurity emergencies. Three specialist task groups were established under the expert group to focus on different elements of preparedness (i.e. resourcing, training and evaluation/lessons management).

The expert group reports to the NBC and is currently chaired by Dr Lloyd Klumpp, Tasmanian NBC representative.

To provide for common understanding of preparedness targets, the expert group developed a document outlining the *Strategic Position for Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness*. This document was endorsed by NBC in November 2015 and provides direction for the work of the expert group.

Meeting Update

Meeting seven of the expert group was held in Perth, Western Australia on 20-21 June 2017. The meeting included presentations by the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources and the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia.

Key matters considered during the meeting were:

- Progress developing the Biosecurity Emergency Management Knowledge Base, including implementation and communication strategies. The knowledge base will provide one single point of access to contemporary and validated biosecurity emergency management information and documentation relevant to biosecurity emergency preparedness, response and recovery.
- Progress from the expert group's review of environmental biosecurity preparedness and response arrangements, and how this relates to the NBC's environmental biosecurity activities stocktake. Members discussed the importance of environmental biosecurity and future national work in this space.
- The NBC endorsement of the [Interstate Deployment Arrangements for Biosecurity Responses](#) which describes the arrangements for coordinating the deployment of personnel to assist affected jurisdictions to resolve biosecurity incidents. And the [Evaluation and Lesson Management Guide](#) which provides a nationally consistent approach to evaluate responses to biosecurity incidents. Both documents are published on the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources website.
- Progress developing two new national resource management stocktakes (financial and physical arrangements) to determine jurisdictional resources available to respond to biosecurity incidents.
- Progress implementing the National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT), including the implementation plan endorsement by NBC, the nationwide recruitment of new members and establishment of the NBRT Advisory Group. The NBRT is scheduled to be in place from 1 July 2017, and will create a cross-sectoral rapid response capability. The Biosecurity Emergency Response Training Australia (BERTA) Strategic Plan 2017-22 and Strategic Action Plan 2017-22 were endorsed. The objective of these plans is to ensure the national capability to develop and maintain trained personnel to manage biosecurity responses.
- Progress developing the national suite of training and assessment materials for biosecurity emergency response, including timeframes for completion.
- Progress developing options for a real-time national evaluation capability that would provide immediate evaluation support to combat jurisdictions.

Outcomes

The expert group endorsed:

- its revised terms of reference to be provided to NBC at their next meeting
- all Specialist Task Group work plans for 2017-18 and the Biosecurity Emergency Management Knowledge Base work plan for 2017-18

The next expert group meeting will be held in Sydney on 28-29 November 2017.



Expert group members being briefed on the outcomes of the Western Australian Tomato-Potato Psyllid biosecurity response in early 2017.