



Australian Government



Cotton Research and
Development Corporation

Fisheries Research and
Development Corporation

Grains Research and
Development Corporation

Rural Industries Research and
Development Corporation



Wine
Australia

Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations

Response to Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Review Draft Report

March 2017

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council of Rural RDCs welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to review of the Intergovernment Agreement on Biosecurity in response to the *Draft Report* released in December 2016.

The Council of Rural RDCs represents all 15 of the Rural RDCs as a collective. This submission provides a general high level response to R&D related aspects of the report. A number of the Rural RDCs will also make more detailed submissions which provide additional analysis and reflect the circumstances facing different industries within the rural sector across agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Our aim is to provide the Committee with background information about the role of the Rural Research and Development Corporations within Australia's rural innovation system, examine how the innovation system and the biosecurity system intersect and how that may be improved, and outline work we are doing to improve coordination and collaboration for cross-sectoral research.

The Rural RDCs play a key role in the rural innovation system to prioritise, fund, execute and evaluate research, development, technology transfer and adoption that improves the economic, environmental and social performance of Australia's rural industries. In some cases the RDCs are also funded by their industries to undertake specific market-related activities such as market development, market access and promotion. All RDCs have an eye to market conditions, expectations, challenges and opportunities as part of ongoing strategic analysis and review. The RDCs operate and are funded as a co-investment partnership between industry and government, with a mandate and remit to focus on issues that are facing industry. The benefits of our work flow broadly to producers and along supply chains, as well as to the community and the environment.

As noted in the draft report, the Rural RDCs are making substantial contribution to the national biosecurity system through approximately \$50 million of research, development and extension (RD&E) investments annually. The report does not include much detail as to the level or trend of investment by other participants in the national biosecurity system, and the implication is that the investment from the RDCs provides a foundation for national biosecurity research and innovation.

The RDCs ensure research investment is well targeted, designed and executed within a clear and defined strategy that has a view to both past investments and learnings, and the future needs of producers, supply chain participants and other stakeholders. Under the funding agreements with the Commonwealth, the RDCs are obliged to maintain a balanced portfolio with research investments that have short, medium and long periods to impact.

It is the view of the Council that the system does not lack research management capacity, however we do acknowledge the need and imperative for greater coordination of cross-sectoral biosecurity RD&E for better outcomes at industry and government levels. The RDCs do not support the establishment of a new entity dedicated to investing in and managing biosecurity research to address the coordination challenge. We suggest such an organisation would likely increase duplication and fragmentation, would lack the awareness across other areas of related and complementary research investment required for management and incorporation of biosecurity within an overall research portfolio, and may lead to the perverse outcome of decreasing the overall level of investment in biosecurity RD&E. Instead the Council recommends the focus should be on enhancing existing arrangements to create better connections between the national biosecurity system and the research effort as a more efficient and cost effective response. The Council notes the initiative recently announced by the seven plant industry RDCs as a positive step in this direction.

There are major challenges in terms of how different layers within the national system connect, overlap and interact with the others, noting that there are different drivers and influences at work. The interests, priorities, requirements and expectations of industry and government can be quite different, let alone those of the broader community or the environment. Looking at the system through the lens of activities across preparedness, surveillance and detection, response in the event of an incursion, and recovery following an outbreak, alongside the organisational layering, would allow an exploration and discussion of how the responsibilities, interests and expectations of participants change at different points depending on circumstances.

Structures have already been established that could facilitate cross-sectoral coordination of research and innovation, most notably through the Plant and Animal Biosecurity RD&E Strategies, and through Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia. Like others parts of the biosecurity system, the coordination and delivery of biosecurity research is hampered by a lack of connection between the biosecurity functions and the research and innovation services. While multiple connections are implied, in practice there is little engagement. We contend that a greater focus on the relationship between biosecurity service and delivery, and the research that informs and enhances these functions, would be a significant improvement for the overall system.

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations (the Council) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft Report of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Review. This response is provided on behalf of Australia's 15 Rural Research and Development Corporations, and, as such, focuses on high level issues and policy settings.

The Council notes that individual RDCs have also made submissions to the inquiry to reflect the particular circumstances of those organisations and the industries they serve. In particular the Council would like to acknowledge and support the submission from the Rural Industries RDC in relation to the panel's request for feedback regarding future options for the coordination of biosecurity research and innovation. It is the Council's view that as much as possible existing structures and arrangements should be utilised and improved rather than creating new entities in an already crowded and complex operating environment. We note the recent announcement from the seven plant industry RDCs of a new initiative to improve coordination and co-investment for plant biosecurity RD&E as a positive move and practical demonstration of this concept in action.

The Council of Rural Research and Development Corporations (the Council) is the structure through which the 10 industry-owned companies and 5 statutory corporations, collectively known as the Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs), collaborate and coordinate efforts on matters of common interest.

Table 1: The 15 Rural Research and Development Corporations

Industry Owned Companies	Statutory Corporations & Authorities
Australian Egg Corporation	Cotton Research and Development Corporation
Australian Meat Processor Corporation	Fisheries Research and Development Corporation
Australian Pork Limited	Grains Research and Development Corporation
Australian Wool Innovation	Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation
Dairy Australia	Wine Australia (the Australian Grape and Wine Authority)
Forest & Wood Products Australia	
Horticulture Innovation Australia	
Livecorp (the Australian Livestock Exporters Corporation)	
Meat & Livestock Australia	
Sugar Research Australia	

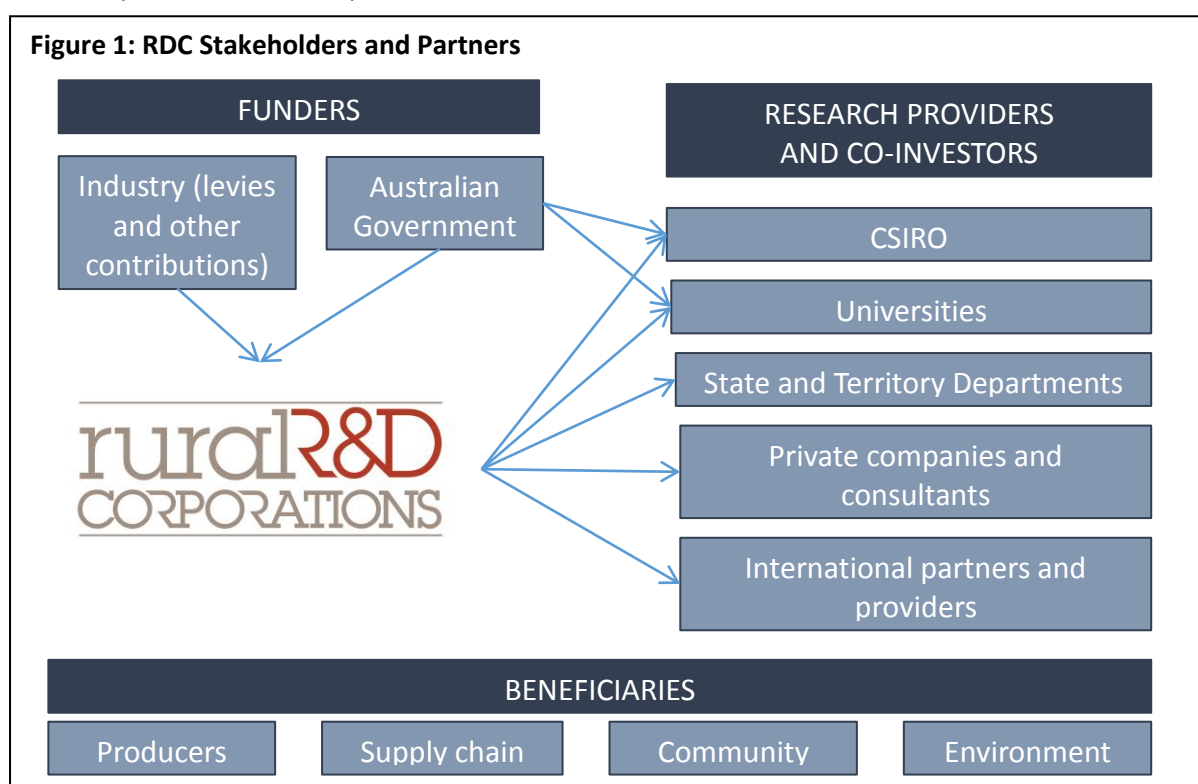
The role of the Council is to support and facilitate the RDCs to fulfil their broad purpose where collaborative actions will deliver better results and greater impacts. The Council provides a mechanism for the RDCs to harness the strength of their combined resources and networks, aggregate intelligence, amplify and disseminate messages and engage with common stakeholders. In particular the Council operates on behalf of all RDCs to promote, strengthen and provide advocacy for Australia's highly regarded rural RDC model, the research investment made and the benefits delivered. The Council does not have a role in RDC compliance, nor does it instruct or regulate the operations, activities or investments of the RDCs. The RDCs are all independent entities governed by their own boards with separate constitutional and legislative arrangements.

Throughout this submission, unless otherwise indicated, the term "RDC" refers collectively to the 10 industry-owned companies (IOCs), and 5 statutory research and development corporations, who have responsibility for research and development for their respective industries.

The Rural Research and Development Corporations

The rural RDCs are a long-standing partnership between industry and government to plan, invest in, manage and evaluate RD&E that delivers economic, environmental and social benefits for rural industries and the nation. They prioritise, coordinate and integrate the needs of industry and government and align the capabilities of research providers responsible for primary industries RD&E. The RDCs are unashamedly industry and impact-driven which increases the relevance of research for next and end users, and enhances adoptability of outcomes.

They are funded through a co-investment model which is based on levies on production and a matching government contribution for RD&E up to certain limits. The RDCs also take advantage of mechanisms that enable additional contributions from non-levy industry and other sources, and these contributions are of increasing importance to individual RDCs. Figure 1 provides a diagrammatic view of the relationships between the RDCs, their stakeholder contributors, key research providers and the spread of beneficiaries.



The RDCs are service providers to industry, and importantly, do not own, manage or maintain internal research capacity¹. Over time and where industries have determined there to be a benefit, in a number of cases separate industry services providers have been merged together. Subsequently, some of the RDCs also undertake market access, market development, promotion or other industry services, where there is explicit agreement from their industries and collection of levy funds for the purpose. Functions that are not related to RD&E are not eligible for matching funding from the Australian Government.

The RDCs support activities across the spectrum from basic research to applied science and product development, and they fund, manage and are engaged in the translation, extension and adoption of R&D outcomes. The RDCs balance effort across the whole production and supply chain — from the

¹ Except for Sugar Research Australia which owns and manages a number of research facilities on behalf of the Australian sugar industry, and does employ researchers acting in that capacity. Strict internal controls are maintained to ensure transparency and robust review of all RD&E projects funded from SRA's available funds.

environment in which production occurs, through transport, storage, processing and marketing of intermediate and consumer products, often well into our overseas markets. RD&E touches a wide range of industries, businesses and workers, and the benefits are felt widely throughout the community. While there are benefits that spill-over for the community and the environment, and these are important considerations in investment decisions, the core responsibility of each RDC is to deliver results for their industries.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR AUSTRALIA'S BIOSECURITY SYSTEM

Strong biosecurity systems are of vital importance for Australia's rural industries to protect and maintain productive capacity and take advantage of existing and emerging market opportunities. These systems are a shared responsibility between the Australia Government, state and territory governments and industry, and are underpinned by world class research, development and extension.

The review panel notes that Australia's biosecurity system is multi-layered, multi-faceted and complex. This complexity means that there is significant variation in understanding of what the system is and what it is supposed to do, in turn making it difficult to articulate and agree on where the lines of responsibility, accountability and authority lie. The concept of 'shared responsibility' suggests multiple individuals and organisations must be and are involved. However, the review also found that as a principle it is not well understood, and sets out a set of draft roles and responsibilities for national biosecurity system participants (table 1, page 11 of the review). The list of roles and responsibilities does not explicitly include any expectations relating to identifying, prioritising or funding research and innovation. The draft report puts forward two options for managing R&I, but this does not appear the proposed roles and responsibilities. Identifying where the panel believes responsibility for prioritising and funding research should lie would assist to identify the most appropriate structures and arrangements for managing and overseeing it.

Research and innovation will no doubt support, assist and enhance many of the activities identified in the list of roles and responsibilities. The absence of research in the list points to a major problem within the current system which is the almost total lack of connection between the biosecurity system and the rural innovation system. For example, there appears to be no link between the National Biosecurity Committee and the Research and Innovation Committee, despite the fact that both committees report to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AgSOC). There are National Primary Industries RD&E Framework strategies for animal and plant biosecurity but again, connections with the National Biosecurity Committee or their sub-committees are limited at best.

Through the Rural RDCs and other research funding organisations the system does not lack capacity in research management. There are opportunities to improve the coordination and co-investment of biosecurity RD&E, and these should be coupled with increased connection to the national biosecurity system as part of the process to identify both priorities and partners.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT REPORT

The Council acknowledged the efforts of the review panel in producing what is a thorough analysis of a complex space which cuts across all governments, industry and the broader community. It appears that there is coverage through existing organisations of most aspects of the national biosecurity system, although environmental biosecurity is a noted area of weakness. There are major challenges in terms of how different layers within the national system connect, overlap and interact with the others, noting that there are different drivers and influences at work. The interests,

priorities, requirements and expectations of industry and government can be quite different, let alone those of the broader community or the environment. Greater consideration could be given to those differences which have particular implications for research funding, prioritisation and partnership arrangements. One approach may be to look to the system through the lens of biosecurity activities across preparedness, surveillance and detection, response in the event of an incursion, and recovery following an outbreak. This would allow an exploration and discussion of how the responsibilities, interests and expectations of participants change at different points depending on circumstances.

Given the complexity of the environment, the range of organisations already in place and the functional coverage, it is the view of the Council that creating new entities for biosecurity should be avoided. The Council accepts that there are gains to be made by increasing capacity for coordinated action across the biosecurity RD&E system. This will require additional investment from the partners, but is expected to be more cost effective and faster than other approaches. The Council notes the action being taken by the plant industry RDCs to address this issue (see Appendix 1 for a press statement about the new plant RDC biosecurity research initiative).

Care must be taken to avoid conflating any one part with the overall system itself. For example, as noted in the report the RDCs provide about \$50 million of annual investment for biosecurity research. Because of the RDCs role and remit, this investment is necessarily focused on industry-related biosecurity issues. Other research investors and providers are also active in addressing biosecurity research priorities, although little information is available about the priorities being targeted or the level of investment being made. It would be an unfortunate outcome if the industry investment through the RDCs was seen as being sufficient and able to meet and address all of the requirements of all other system participants. However, the RDCs skills and expertise in prioritising and managing research investment could be utilised through co-investment partnerships to address broader goals.

Structures have already been established that could facilitate cross-sectoral coordination, most notably through the Plant and Animal Biosecurity RD&E Strategies, and through Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia. If it is deemed necessary to also have a higher-level integration of coordination functions with research management, that could be addressed through one of the Rural RDCs and most likely the Rural Industries RDC, as outlined in the panel's option 2. We refer the panel to the response provided by the Rural Industries RDC for details on what would be required to implement this option.

Like others parts of the biosecurity system, the coordination and delivery of biosecurity research is hampered by a lack of connection between the biosecurity functions and the research and innovation services. While multiple connections are implied, such as through the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee, and the animal and plant biosecurity RD&E strategies, in practice there is little engagement. We contend that a greater focus on the relationship between biosecurity service and delivery, and the research that informs and enhances these functions, would be a significant improvement for the overall system.

SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR FEEDBACK AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Council of Rural RDCs: Under current arrangements there is practically no relationship between the Rural RDCs and the national biosecurity system, although relationships are implied through the Animal and Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategies, through engagement with the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, and connections through peak industry bodies to, and in some cases RDC associate memberships of, Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia. Activities funded through the Rural RDCs are acknowledged as being important contributors to the success of the national biosecurity system. None of the draft roles and responsibilities of participants in the national biosecurity system speak to issues of identifying and prioritising research and related activities, or how this work should be funded and delivered.

Recommendation 1 *The NBC and the proposed Industry and Community Advisory Committee, through an open, transparent and collaborative process, should lead the development of a draft National Statement of Intent for public consultation that outlines:*

- *a vision, goal and objectives for the national biosecurity system*
- *principles for managing biosecurity*
- *the meaning and application of ‘shared responsibility’*
- *the roles, responsibilities and commitments of participants, including accountability measures*
- *governance arrangements for the national biosecurity system.*

The process should involve government (including local government), industry and the community.

Council of Rural RDCs: The experience of participants in the National Primary Industries Research, Development and Extension Framework suggests that an agreed Statement of Intent is a useful mechanism for outlining expectations and aligning activities across a distributed group of organisations. The Statement should not be seen as a static document but one that needs to be revisited and refreshed over time. However, the Statement on its own is not sufficient, and it needs to be supported by systems, structures and commitments to progress.

Recommendation 2 *The Primary Industries Technical Market Access and Trade Development Task Group, should seek to enhance engagement with industry to ensure that Australia’s market access strategies are aligned appropriately through an agreed priority setting process, and that the degree of transparency and communication is carefully weighed against its level of risk to trade activities.*

Council of Rural RDCs: The Council supports the view that market access is a central rationale for the national biosecurity system, alongside maintaining industry productivity, and community and environmental health. A number of the RDCs are explicitly funded and tasked by their industries to undertake market access, market development and promotion for those industries. All RDCs have an eye to market conditions, challenges and opportunities as part of ongoing strategic analysis and review. RDC engagement should be considered during the establishment of market access priorities and strategies, and to support delivery of the strategies and priorities once established.

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

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

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

Council of Rural RDCs: The Council supports the adoption of systematic processes for the development of research and innovation priorities that align with the agreed national priority pests and diseases. These processes should not be conducted in isolation but in ways that complement rather than duplicate existing practices. There are well established pathways for engaging with industry to identify biosecurity priorities (through the industry biosecurity plans) as well as identifying R&D needs (through RDC engagement processes). The Council acknowledges that more attention needs to be paid to bringing together investors in biosecurity RD&E to facilitate co-investment and complementary investment against cross-sectoral research priorities. To this end the plant industry RDCs have developed and agreed to resource a collaboration structure which will facilitate a deeper relationship between investors in plant biosecurity RD&E. This structure, as outlined in the submission made by Horticulture Innovation Australia, will also create the explicit links with the national biosecurity system that are currently implied but do not feature in business-as-usual. This move by the plant industry RDCs is a first important step which is expected to provide a model which could also be applied to animal biosecurity, and complement other efforts to improve the coordination of biosecurity RD&E in Australia. A statement on the initiative is provided at Appendix 1.

Identifying and agreeing on priorities is only one part of the equation. Equally important in terms of delivery of research and innovation are stable and sustainable funding arrangements. The ‘shared responsibility’ model for biosecurity investment is applicable to funding and decision making for biosecurity R&I. The process for investing in research need to support existing industry RDC processes, which provides an external check to ensure a prudent assessment and evaluation prior to committing substantial funds. Working through existing structures will reduce the potential for duplication of effort and investment.

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

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

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

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

Council of Rural RDCs: Council supports the position that leadership and coordination of cross-sectoral RD&E for biosecurity can be improved. It is the view of the Council that such leadership and coordination should be delivered through existing structures and processes rather than through the

establishment of new entities, and as such prefers option 2 over option 1. Building on existing structures will be a more efficient and economical approach, and a more formal national coordination process would limit the potential for duplication or fragmentation of effort and investment. It is foreseeable that the establishment of a new organisation in an already crowded environment could have a range of perverse outcomes and unintended consequences. The combination of increased administrative and overhead costs coupled with a potential withdrawal of other funders (assuming that biosecurity research was now covered) could see the overall level of investment in biosecurity RD&E significantly reduced.

We also note that among industry stakeholders there appears to be little appetite or support for a new biosecurity research entity. Those consulted in relation to a proposed new plant biosecurity research entity, and in relation to preparations of submissions for the IGAB review, all preferred a model that would limit duplication, keep costs to a minimum, and enhance existing structures.

The review has identified that the RDCs are collectively spending about \$50 million annually on biosecurity research. As research investors and service providers to industry and government, the RDCs carefully plan, prioritise, manage and evaluate research investments across multiple competing demands for multiple stakeholders and beneficiaries and in line with defined and explicit strategic plans. The RDCs are not locked into supporting a particular infrastructure or research capacity, and instead have the flexibility to invest where and as needed to deliver greatest value.

While the report does not suggest what may be considered short or long-term investment in biosecurity research, the contract period of a particular project is of less importance than whether that investment is made within an overall strategy, with understanding of what has been already completed and of the short, medium- and long-term needs of industries. The RDCs have the necessary systems, knowledge and capacity, and work hard, to ensure research investment is well targeted, designed and executed. Under the funding agreements with the Commonwealth, the RDCs are obliged to maintain a balanced portfolio with research investments that have short, medium and long periods to impact.

The Council also notes that, while there is some commentary of the perceived variability of RD&E expenditure on biosecurity across the RDCs, there is little discussion of the level or trends of investment from other participants. It is far from clear as to whether the issues surrounding the management of biosecurity research in Australia are related to the funding from the RDCs, or connected to other factors such as declining research investment and capacity within the states and territories, the lack of stable and prioritised funding for environmental biosecurity research, or trends within the university research sector. If anything the report suggests that RDC investment in biosecurity provides a foundation for the system, and should be maintained at a minimum.

One issue not canvassed in the Draft Report is how biosecurity research is defined and categorised. Research investments generally respond to a range of drivers and contribute to multiple outcomes across the spectrum of biosecurity activities for preparedness, surveillance and detection, incursion response in the event of an outbreak, and recovery after the fact, alongside other goals. For example, crop protection is a significant component of plant RDC investments. Biosecurity R&I is frequently complementary to this work, where innovative technologies have applicability for endemic pests as well as potential and emerging threats. This research would be biosecurity-relevant but not directly biosecurity-related. RDC investment in crop protection also supports specialists who can provide expert capacity in the event of an incursion.

RDC engagement in the coordination of biosecurity research will ensure that future activities build on and complement existing investments, and do not become isolated from other, ongoing industry research and innovation activities. Through ongoing management across productivity and sustainability issues the RDCs are able to maximise these connections, and provides a strong argument for not separating out the management of biosecurity RD&E functions into a separate entity.

CONCLUSION

The Council of Rural RDCs welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on the draft report of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Review. It is the view of the Council that the system does not lack research management capacity, and that improvements could be delivered through greater coordination of cross-sectoral biosecurity RD&E. The Council does not support the panel's position regarding the establishment of a new entity dedicated to investing in and managing biosecurity research, as such an organisation would likely increase duplication and fragmentation, would lack the awareness across other areas of related and complementary research investment and may lead to a perverse outcome of decreasing the overall level of investment in biosecurity RD&E.

The RDCs ensure research investment is well targeted, designed and executed within a clear and defined strategy that has a view to both past investments and learnings and the future needs of producers and other stakeholders. Under the funding agreements with the Commonwealth, the RDCs are obliged to maintain a balanced portfolio with research investments that have short, medium and long periods to impact.

There are major challenges in terms of how different layers within the national system connect, overlap and interact with the others, noting that there are different drivers and influences at work. The interests, priorities, requirements and expectations of industry and government can be quite different, let alone those of the broader community or the environment. Looking at the system through the lens of activities across preparedness, surveillance and detection, response in the event of an incursion, and recovery following an outbreak, alongside the organisational layering, would allow an exploration and discussion of how the responsibilities, interests and expectations of participants change at different points depending on circumstances.

Structures have already been established that could facilitate cross-sectoral coordination of research and innovation, most notably through the Plant and Animal Biosecurity RD&E Strategies, and through Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia. Like others parts of the biosecurity system, the coordination and delivery of biosecurity research is hampered by a lack of connection between the biosecurity functions and the research and innovation services. While multiple connections are implied, in practice there is little engagement. We contend that a greater focus on the relationship between biosecurity service and delivery, and the research that informs and enhances these functions, would be a significant improvement for the overall system.

APPENDIX 1 – Media statement re Plant RDCs biosecurity initiative



March 8, 2017

Research and Development Corporations unite to strengthen the nation's plant biosecurity

Australia's plant biosecurity is set to strengthen after the nation's seven plant Research and Development Corporations (RDC's) today announced a new partnership approach to protect and enhance timber, food and fibre production.

The group – comprising Wine Australia; Forest Wood Products Australia; Cotton Research and Development Corporation; Grains Research and Development Corporation; Rural Industry Research and Development Corporation; Sugar Research Australia and Horticulture Innovation Australia – is streamlining funding efforts and plans to grow bio-security investment partners.

Headed up by Horticulture Innovation Australia, the new partnership approach will see an increase in the research coordination, reduction in duplication and will fill gaps in plant biosecurity research and development.

The initiative will also create better linkages between industry research and the national biosecurity systems managed by the Australian and state and territory governments.

Horticulture Innovation Australia chief executive John Lloyd said this initiative has never been more vital for Australian producers.

"To date, Australia's approach to managing research investment and delivery for our plant industries has been fragmented and lacking coordination. This is simply because the biosecurity space is incredibly complicated, crossing more than 50 commodities, all states and territories, and countless stakeholder groups," he said.

Mr Lloyd said the new approach was a step change for the RDCs in their ongoing efforts to improve management of cross-sectoral research for the benefit of producers.

"The role of the Rural RDCs is to prioritise, invest in, manage and evaluate research and other activities that deliver impacts for producers and the broader community. We have the skills, people and systems to effectively deliver the research management we need for better biosecurity," he said.

"What has been missing for plant biosecurity is the link between the research effort and the biosecurity community. Building this connection will increase our capacity to make sure our research investments are targeting national research priorities."

Mr Lloyd said without direct co-involvement and coordination, innovation attempts will struggle. "This new initiative will see all funding and decision making parties at the table to ensure greater coordination and activation of biosecurity investment," he said.

The group has developed a list of principles for guiding plant biosecurity research to ensure the development of a successful cross-sectoral approach. Those principles will be used to coordinate plant biosecurity research and development decisions across all RDCs.

Mr Lloyd said identifying and funding national biosecurity research priorities with key investors, the Australian Government and Plant Health Australia would lead to a true 'shared partnership' approach to plant biosecurity RD&E. **Media contact:** Kelly Vorst-Parkes 0447 304 255 or Kelly.vorst-parkes@horticulture.com.au



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