

Queensland Biosecurity Capability Review

The Queensland Government commissioned an independent review into Queensland's biosecurity capability to ensure the state has the best biosecurity capability in place to deal with the risks it faces.

Biosecurity risks are increasing as the world continues to expand and ecosystems change, so a strong biosecurity system is needed that can swiftly respond to future disease and pest outbreaks in Queensland.

Review recommendations

There are 32 recommended actions put forward in the review report, which can be grouped into 14 areas and are summarised as follows:

- 1. Build the framework for the future Queensland Biosecurity System**
 - develop a biosecurity strategy and action plan (including a statement of shared responsibility)
 - work with the Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Council (BQMAC) as an interim vehicle to develop options for shared governance arrangements
 - explore an industry biosecurity fund
 - develop a project based framework for resource allocation within Biosecurity Queensland
- 2. Refocus Biosecurity Queensland**
 - transition non-biosecurity responsibilities into a separate organisational unit
 - review the Biosecurity Queensland organisational design to transition the agency to a system leader and enabler role
 - undertake a skills audit and training plan in key areas such as project and financial management, business and risk management and engagement and partnership development
- 3. Review and reprioritise investment in biosecurity programs**
 - review current biosecurity investments and develop an investment framework for risk-based resource allocation and decision making that will drive future investments away from low risk / return to higher value propositions and better value prevention and surveillance
- 4. Develop a Queensland biosecurity surveillance strategy**
- 5. Create incentives to report disease**
- 6. Dismantle red tape to improve flexibility for agricultural businesses**
- 7. Implement new approaches to build better support systems**
 - review cost recovery options for the tick fever centre and the Veterinary Surgeons Board for reinvestment into surveillance
 - review the Property Identification Code register and funding arrangements
 - implement a commercial in-house business model for diagnostic services to allow for greater investment in surveillance
- 8. Continue investment in flexible specialist systems**
 - ongoing investment in the Biosecurity Information Management System (BIMS)

9. Establish a preparedness and response unit

10. Establish a biosecurity network

- explore opportunities to utilise other response agencies and the private sector

11. Establish an innovation function and develop an innovation strategy

- include a focus on data capture, analysis and integration to achieve operating efficiencies in the areas of prevention, surveillance and response
- Consider innovation in resilience in farming systems

12. Build expert and regional capability

- recruit specialists in north and central Queensland
- access expert networks such as via a fellows program for retired staff and a mentoring program
- develop a succession plan
- establish a leadership position for marine biosecurity
- develop a biosecurity strategy for northern Australia
- implement a pilot project for volunteer local government authorities and natural resource management groups to coordinate investment regionally

13. Jointly invest in a coordinated on-farm biosecurity campaign with other organisations

14. Fine tune funding for responses

- increase annual allocation for special funds set aside to manage certain incursions
- develop a clearly understood reporting framework for response funding

To find out more about the key findings from the report, visit www.daf.qld.gov.au or call 13 25 23.

Current update

The government supports the majority of the panel's recommendations in principle, pending appropriate consideration with stakeholders on priorities, funding and resources. The government will be consulting with industry, staff and other interest groups to prioritise the recommendations and determine how we might collectively implement them.

Work will also commence on the development of a five-year Queensland Biosecurity Strategy and Action Plan to deliver a best practice biosecurity system.

Further information

For further information on the review and outcomes, contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 13 25 23 or visit www.daf.qld.gov.au