

National Biosecurity Strategy

During his National Press Club Address on the 9th of August, The Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Senator Murray Watt released the first National Biosecurity Strategy.

While state and territory governments have previously undertaken their own biosecurity planning, the overarching national plan harmonises mitigation and recovery strategies, in a bid to tackle the escalating and progressively more complex biosecurity issues.

The plan includes an agreement of cooperation between the states to boost awareness and education campaigns, review state and federal responsibilities, enhance surveillance and early detection programs, and undertake regular preparedness exercises to test responses.

Priority areas

The Security Strategy is underpinned by six priority areas:

Shared biosecurity culture

- Build on and develop national awareness and education programs, including through including biosecurity in the curricula
- Drive positive biosecurity behaviours and incentivise compliance through exploring new channels of engagement
- Revitalise national communication, engagement and reporting mechanisms
- Determine opportunities to embed biosecurity as a consideration into broader decision-making, risk and business planning

Highly skilled workforce

- Strengthen professional development programs and exchanges between biosecurity stakeholders to facilitate knowledge and information sharing, improve skills and support workforce retention
- Identify current and future skills needs in key areas
- Develop a national workforce strategy to build, retain and deploy capability
- Build upon and expand existing cooperative and partnership arrangements

Integration supported by technology, research and data

- Continue to invest in and roll out transformative technologies to digitise and automate processes, and support rapid and accurate detection, identification, traceability and response.
- Actively share data and research
- Enhance the accessibility and use of surveillance and interception data
- Further support innovations to build science and research capacity in areas such as pathway risk assessments, species identification and treatments.
- Encourage the uptake of existing and emerging technologies, systems and processes
- Increase the use of citizen science, Indigenous knowledge and on-the-ground insights as valued sources of expertise, data and information.

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- Encourage greater private sector investment in the development and delivery of biosecurity innovation

Stronger partnerships

- Review governance arrangements to ensure they include relevant stakeholders
- Strengthen understanding of antimicrobial and pesticide resistance and zoonotic pathways
- Strengthen the involvement of environmental agencies and environmental and community groups Identify and implement opportunities for greater industry and community involvement in decision-making bodies
- Enhance partnerships and engagement with Indigenous Australians Collaboratively review and refine roles and responsibilities
- Deepen international partnerships and capacity building
- Coordinate our international advocacy efforts to help shape global standards, rules and conditions

Sustainable investment

- Identify funding needs and determine priorities, including for critical assets, infrastructure and research
- Strengthen frameworks to agree and deliver priority investments
- Advance co-funding and investment strategies with stakeholders
- Increase the transparency of biosecurity funding
- Complete the development of a system performance and evaluation framework to inform future investment decisions

Coordinated preparedness and response

- Undertake and promote regular national preparedness exercises
- Advance regionally based planning activities
- Continually review and update risk information to inform priorities
- Actively embed continuous learning by enhanced post-incident reviews and evaluation practices to ensure lessons are captured and incorporated
- Strengthen traceability arrangements
- Enhance our national surveillance and early detection arrangements
- Evolve our national information management frameworks

National Biosecurity Strategy Reference Group

A reference group of biosecurity stakeholders has been established to provide strategic insights and advice during the development of the strategy.

The members of the National Biosecurity Strategy Reference Group are:

- Australian Banana Growers' Council
- CSIRO
- Freight and Trade Alliance
- Invasive Species Council
- National Farmers' Federation

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- Rural Research and Development Corporations representative - Australian Pork Limited
- Seafood Industry Australia
- Torres Strait Regional Authority

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