

# 2019 Australian Biosecurity Symposium



## FINAL REPORT

12-13 June 2019 • Gold Coast



# Event summary

Animal Health Australia (AHA), the Invasive Species Council (ISC) and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) hosted the inaugural *Australian Biosecurity Symposium* on the Gold Coast on 12-13 June 2019. The Symposium focused on preventative biosecurity practices, research and innovation, outside of the box thinking and the exchange of knowledge and ideas across the biosecurity collective.

The event was a resounding success, bringing together close to 400 biosecurity champions from across Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and Mexico to form Australia's first biosecurity movement.

It was a fantastic couple of days, with more than 96% of delegates satisfied with the event overall, and over 95% of delegates indicating that they would attend another Symposium. In particular, delegates noted the positive, energetic atmosphere; the depth and variety of the program; and our fabulous MC Costa Georgiadis and scribe Jessamy Gee.

We hope you enjoyed the Symposium and look forward to welcoming you to future events.

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Kathleen Plowman  
CEO, AHA



*Andrew Cox*

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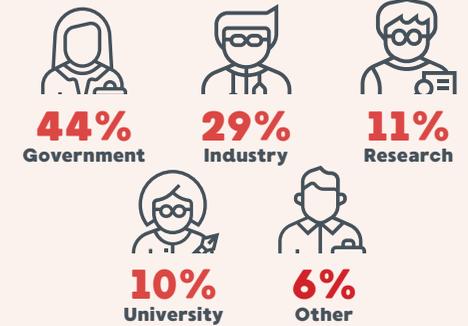
*Andreas Glanznig*

Andreas Glanznig  
CEO, CISS

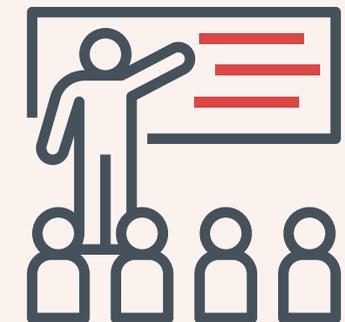
# Symposium snapshot



**1,200 tweets**  
posted to **222 accounts**,  
reaching more than  
**2.5 million users**



## Representatives from 8 sectors



**95 presentations**  
showcasing  
**100 speakers**

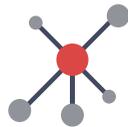
# Key insights

The keynote presentations and concurrent sessions stimulated great discussion amongst delegates, with some key findings emerging from these talks.



## Prevention

- Australia's biosecurity system is facing unprecedented challenges. To build a biosecurity system by 2030 that can address these issues, we need to start now – using trust, ambition (being bold like our NZ colleagues) and generosity (thinking beyond what our own organisation or sector needs). We must do something differently to keep up with the increasing risks.
- How do we get better at preventative biosecurity practices? Prevention is always better than cure. It's crucial to keep pests and diseases out of Australia – we can do this by sharing information and working together on compliance.
- To manage the effectiveness of biosecurity, we need to match the interventions to the primary causes of behavior. The economics of biosecurity mean that we must invest at pre-border; if it stays clean it doesn't have to get clean (i.e. custody and control).
- How do we avoid adoption resistance and maintain and extend our reach?



## Collaboration

- Transforming biosecurity into a profession with a career path and training is essential to achieving our goals.
- We need to work together to increase the total pool of funding for biosecurity. We need to work smarter and design our programs to ensure they deliver multiple benefits – increased productivity, improved biosecurity and reduced carbon emissions.



## Technology

- Digital disruption creates many opportunities in the biosecurity space; what's important is how we adapt to those advances.



## Community

- The notion of community is not homogenous and it is not a single entity. We should never discount the values of communities when working with them to collaboratively solve problems. The legitimacy of other stakeholders is essential for the evolution of biosecurity – it allows us to tap into other knowledge. Major government and biosecurity reform will only occur through strong community-driven support.
- It's imperative to integrate cultural and social norms into response strategies as not one size fits all. Local knowledge counts. We need to establish an early detection network that builds on existing data, groups, planning and policy.
- We need to understand the barriers, motivators, success indicators and communication preferences for all stakeholders in the system and identify champions in the community.



## Value

- You can't put a dollar value on social amenity, the environment and our unique wildlife – we try but it falls short of reflecting its true intrinsic value.



## Climate change

- Climate change is affecting many aspects of biosecurity across terrestrial and marine animals. Pests, diseases and weeds will be more problematic and management more costly with further climate changes. The need for prevention is rising like our temperatures and we need enhancement of monitoring and early warning systems. We need to make climate change and its impacts relevant to farmers and communities so that they can take action at the local level.

## What did we achieve together?

At the Symposium close, the CEOs of AHA, ISC and CISS delivered a five-point plan to future-proof Australia's biosecurity system.

1. Setting 2020-2030 as the decade of biosecurity.
2. Designing an innovation-centred biosecurity system.
3. Developing a national biosecurity strategy and sustainable investment plan.
4. Creating a formal national biosecurity partnership agreement between government, industry and the community.
5. Mobilising a 25-million strong biosecurity mass movement.



## Next steps

### Save the date

#### 2020 Australian Biosecurity Workshop (Date TBA)

Join us as we discuss and refine the five-point plan to future-proof Australia's biosecurity system. The key focus of the workshop will be biosecurity prevention and creating the biosecurity mass movement. More information to come.

#### 2021 Australian Biosecurity Symposium

The Symposium will return to the Gold Coast in June 2021.

# Day 1 highlights

Symposium MC, Costa Georgiadis kicked off the Symposium with a video of Gold Coast locals talking about what biosecurity means to them.



This was followed by sessions on transdisciplinary learnings and insights, digital detection, different biosecurity approaches and forensic surveillance.



Then Stacie and Lenny from Dreamworld welcomed us into the house of the local Yugambah people.



**Why are we here?** Andrew Cox, ISC CEO set the scene for the next two days, floating the idea of a biosecurity movement focused on future-proofing the Australian biosecurity system.

**“We can do this through trust, ambition and generosity – the values that bring excellence to any movement.”**



Professor Hugh Bradlow, President of the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering, delivered the first keynote, speaking about the role technology could play in disrupting or enhancing biosecurity.

Delegates enjoyed visiting the trade and exhibition area during the breaks, as well as grabbing a photo in front of our ivy wall!



Julia Martin, General Manager Operational Excellence and Health, Environment, Safety at Chevron, kicked off the afternoon session with a presentation about the worth of industry-led biosecurity partnerships to protect valuable environmental resources.

**Then it was time for talks on behaviour change, risk-based objectives, eradication and disease prevention.**

Before the focus shifted to climate-proofing biosecurity, the interaction between biosecurity and human health, optimising policy decisions and leadership and engagement in biosecurity.



Meanwhile our fabulous scribe Jessamy Gee from Think in Colour visually captured the discussion. View her graphics [here](#).



**After a big day of collaborating, it was time to sit back and relax at the Symposium dinner.**



Delegates heard from Andreas Glanznig, CISS CEO and Diamond Sponsor representative Dr Ian Thompson, Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer at the Department of Agriculture (DoA).

Then Costa delivered his keynote and gave us all the giggles!



**With the formalities over, delegates enjoyed networking and visting the photobooth!**



\*Symposium dinner photo credit: Photographer at Large.

# Day 2 highlights

Kathleen Plowman, AHA CEO reflected on her insights from the previous day, reiterating the purpose of the Symposium.



**We want to create a platform that paves the way for the transformational change Australia needs over the next decade to meet the challenges facing our biosecurity system.**



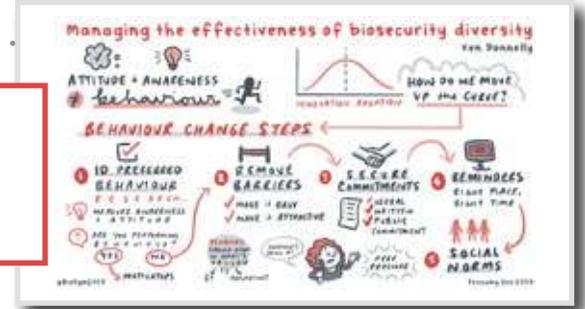
Professor Don Hine from the School of Psychology at the University of New England then spoke about the role of behaviour change in managing Australia's biosecurity challenges and the importance of knowing how to engage with your audience.

Before Udon, one of Australia's biosecurity detector dogs, stole the show as part of DoA's presentation.



Next up were presentations on biosecurity in Indigenous communities, matching policy to future thinking, changing mindsets to motivate change and non-traditional surveillance.

Then we explored managing the effectiveness of biosecurity, aquatic biosecurity, technology and policy and targeted methods for behaviour change.



The afternoon session began with Malcolm Letts, Chief Biosecurity Officer of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; Lyn O'Connell, Deputy Secretary at DoA, and Roger Smith, Head of Biosecurity from Biosecurity New Zealand, discussing biosecurity at the jurisdictional, national and international level.

Then Kathleen Plowman, Andrew Cox and Andreas Glanznig joined Roger Smith and Matt Koval, First Assistant Secretary at DoA to discuss future-proofing Australia's biosecurity system.



**"We need a smarter, more efficient system through resourcing, innovation and international cooperation."**

Kathleen, Andrew and Andreas closed the Symposium with the launch of the five-point plan, which will be further refined at the 2020 Biosecurity Workshop.



**What an incredible two days! We can't wait to see you all again next time!**

# Thanks to our sponsors for generously supporting this event

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