Australian Biosecurity 2030 Workshop

FINAL REPORT

4–5 NOVEMBER 2020

Event summary

Animal Health Australia (AHA), the Invasive Species Council (ISC), the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) and Plant Health Australia (PHA) were pleased to welcome delegates to the virtual Australian Biosecurity 2030 Workshop on 4-5 November 2020.

The Workshop featured delegates from across the biosecurity collective – agriculture (animals and plants), humans, weeds, animal pests, wildlife, aquatics, and the environment.

Over two days of discussions, the Workshop focused on how to mobilise a 25-million strong biosecurity mass movement, a key element of the five-point plan launched at the 2019 Symposium to future-proof Australia's biosecurity. The Workshop aimed to:

- define a 2030-ready biosecurity system
- identify how we can make biosecurity a whole-of-Australia issue
- discuss how we can create and nurture our biosecurity champions on the ground
- build the foundations of a mass movement.

The Workshop was designed to feed into the 2021 Australian Biosecurity Symposium.

On behalf of AHA, ISC, CISS, and PHA, we thank all the delegates and presenters for participating in the Australian Biosecurity 2030 Workshop.

Kathleen Plowman
CEO, AHA

Andrew Cox
CEO, ISC

Andreas Glanznig
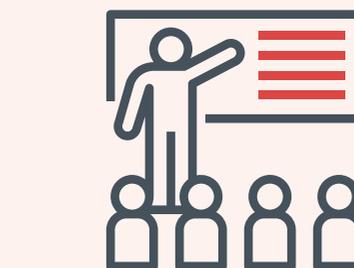CEO, CISS

Sarah Corcoran
CEO, PHA

2030 Workshop snapshot

250 delegates

151,000 users
on Twitter reached by #biosecurity2030

Representatives from 8 sectors

Livestock	Plants	Aquatics	Human	Environment	Pests	Wildlife	Weeds

4 key topics explored

1 collective goal –
to build a biosecurity mass movement

What happens next?

This report provides a strong framework for the next steps, which we'll focus on at our 2nd Australian Biosecurity Symposium on the Gold Coast in 2021.

The workshop's discussion revealed that action needs to happen in four key areas:

System capability	Collaboration	Engagement	Technology

Key activities to focus on include:

Defining the 2030 biosecurity system
- Connecting systems at all levels
- Fostering shared responsibility
- Creating an innovation-centred national biosecurity system

Supporting our biosecurity champions
- Celebrating exemplary groups and individuals and acknowledging where they have made a difference
- Supporting new biosecurity champions to emerge (e.g. through university scholarships in areas like animal and plant health)
- Educating kids early and getting them excited about biosecurity

Making biosecurity part of everyday life
- Developing a simple biosecurity message that can be targeted to specific groups and which speaks to them and their values
- Empowering our local communities through endorsement, encouragement, and investment
- Driving community engagement strategies and policies that are applicable at the local level – a bottom-up, not top-down, approach
- Ensuring biosecurity is easy to do – focus on the little things, the low-cost things that can make a difference
- Making this the decade of biosecurity

Creating a biosecurity mass movement
- Encouraging industry and community leaders to sign a shared biosecurity statement of intent
- Developing a support mechanism for biosecurity leaders and champions
- Setting up a platform to allow for sharing insights, analysis, and research on innovative and successful biosecurity initiatives, so people can access biosecurity information in their areas of interest
- Seeking inclusion of biosecurity programs into the school curriculum

Day One

Andrew Robinson, Director, Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Analysis and Professor of Biosecurity, University of Melbourne, was the workshop facilitator. Andrew launched the virtual workshop from his home in locked-down Melbourne!

Andrew Metcalfe AO, Secretary, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment set the scene for the proceedings over the next two days.

> " Australia's long-term success in biosecurity is tied to our place in the global economy... "

Key takeaways

- Australia's long-term success in biosecurity is tied to our place in the global economy, as biosecurity risk comes through trade and movement of people.
- The risks and challenges will continue to grow, as changes in travel, trade, supply chains, climate and global demand for products lead to increased spread of existing pests and diseases and the emergence of new ones. We need to collectively adapt to these challenges, focusing on science and innovation to allow better preparation for and response to the risks.

Day One

What does a transformed biosecurity system look like in 2030?

Dr Wendy Craik, Chair, Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity Review spoke about mainstreaming biosecurity in the community. Wendy used the 10-year National Red Imported Fire Ant Program, which is the largest eradication program of an invasive ant species in the world as a case study.

> " Sustained engagement and elimination of barriers are needed to ensure people know how to treat pests on land they own and manage, and will not introduce them back into eradication areas "

Key takeaways

- Market research has shown that if people are given the information and approval to act, there is potential for strong uptake of biosecurity action in the community.
- Sustained engagement and elimination of barriers are needed to ensure people know how to treat pests on land they own and manage, and will not introduce them back into eradication areas.
- Achieving successful biosecurity in Australia depends on everybody - federal, state and local governments and industries, environmental groups and the broader community - cooperating in shared responsibility.

Day One

What does a transformed biosecurity system look like in 2030?

Ms Penny Nelson, Deputy Director-General, Biosecurity New Zealand shared what New Zealand had learnt about weaving biosecurity into their social fabric.

Key takeaways

- Using *mycoplasma bovis* as an example, it is necessary for someone to raise the alarm, but also for whole communities to understand the bigger picture and get behind the effort, despite the potential for significant hardship and emotional stress.
- Success in 2030 would look like: 1) a farming community that does not see the national border as the solution to all their biosecurity concerns; 2) a farming community that recognises that each farm operates their own border controls; and 3) a group willing to see that biosecurity is a system of equally important safety nets and that takes the right actions to protect their own land.

- The focus of biosecurity in New Zealand is starting to shift into greater community and social responsibility, pushing it beyond being simply an issue for agencies to deal with on a crisis-to-crisis basis. Find out more **here**.
- The Ko Tātou – This Is Us program is reaching out to all parts of the community, to enable people to connect to and understand biosecurity and inspire and motivate them to protect what they have. Find out more **here**.
- Collaboration is crucial. For example, the Tauranga Moana biosecurity capital involves collaboration between local Iwi (Maori peoples), industry, business, science institutions, educators, community, and central and local government; and the biosecurity business pledge has seen 50 businesses from key primary sector associations and supply chains sign a pledge on good biosecurity and committing to various actions.
- There is a need to consider whether current regulations and laws allow the biosecurity system to do what is needed, and what the balance of responsibility is between government and industry actions.
- COVID-19 has brought increased understanding of biosecurity among the population and provided an opportunity to strengthen public awareness and support of biosecurity systems.

Day One

How can we support and create more biosecurity champions?

Attendees heard from four Australian biosecurity champions, which included people involved in the agriculture industry as well as everyday Australians just doing their jobs in sectors outside of agriculture. View the video **here**

Day Two

How do we make biosecurity part of everyday life?

Shane Fitzsimmons, Commissioner of Resilience NSW, spoke about his experience as Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) in light of the devastating 2019–2020 bushfire season. He noted how the challenges of bushfire management are not dissimilar to those of biosecurity.

Key takeaways

- He highlighted the strength of the community-based volunteer organisation (the RFS) that partnered with their local communities and land managers, foreign emergency service partners, Fire and Rescue, police, national parks, forestry and many functional areas across government. RFS members are deeply and personally invested in making a difference in their local community, thereby providing community leadership and buy-in.

- An upfront focus on preparedness and investment that has

community at the heart and will help with prevention and reducing impact, such as managing lands and investing in community awareness and understanding of necessary actions, is needed for planning and prioritising activities and events before an emergency happens.

- Despite high rates of awareness of the risk, low rates of people undertook appropriate planning or preparedness activities. After being affected, the same proportion of people reported wishing they made more investment in prevention and mitigation, indicating a need to better connect with the community to get them to invest in doing their part.

- National collaboration on development of a new matrix of fire warning levels and messaging resulted in a standardised, consistent methodology that reduces confusion and provides consistency and familiarity. The RFS also partnered with the media to train media personnel to understand the basics of bushfire science and its language, so they are able to provide consistent and accurate messages to the community that are understood and meaningful.

- Managing a response to a biosecurity event comes with the same elements and challenges: dealing with the event itself, followed by stages of recovery, rebuilding, repair, and healing

of emotional and psychological wellbeing and functioning of the community.

- The best planning, response, recovery and treatment is locally led but facilitated, empowered, sponsored, supported and coordinated by others – local, state and federal governments – to turn community-led analysis into action.

- A systematic planning framework can identify risks, assets and vulnerabilities in an area, some of which may be conflicting, then identify the broad actions needed and who is responsible for it.

- The challenge of disasters and emergencies is that they are very quickly out of sight and out of mind. COVID-19 has made it clear that everyone can be affected by an emergency.

- In biosecurity, it can be difficult to get the message across and trigger the behavioural changes needed, when outbreaks may be few and far between, but persistence and simplifying the process can help. People are more likely to respond if they understand why they are vulnerable to a threat, that they can get help with it and that even small actions can make a big difference.

- Authenticity and simple, clear, factual articulation of the biosecurity message, without being alarmist, is fundamental. People should be kept updated with

the latest information and what is expected of them to prepare. Leadership skills of authenticity, humility, empathy, mutual respect, courtesy, making decisions and taking action, and communicating as clearly, factually and fairly as possible but under the auspices of care, are important. Misinformation in the media or social media should be corrected quickly, with a single source of truth for information (e.g. the RFS website) identified.

- The motivations of urban and rural communities may be very different, and it is important to identify the priorities and needs of a local community to target the messaging to improve engagement and raise awareness in that community, and result in biosecurity action that makes a difference in preparedness.

- Clear, candid advice and evidence-based arguments are needed to justify to the government why there is a need to invest in resource building. The lead agency in biosecurity must also ensure it is leveraging jurisdictional and national capacity, so there are other agencies to call on when responding to an outbreak (e.g. for assistance with command-and-control systems, logistics, organisation and movement of people and management of information).

Day Two

How do we create a biosecurity mass movement?

Ms Elizabeth King, Manager, Skin Prevention Unit, Cancer Council NSW discussed her experience of what makes a good behaviour change campaign, based on the Cancer Council NSW's aim of reducing cancer risk through skin cancer prevention. Behaviour change is a critical topic for the biosecurity system as we look to improve adoption of biosecurity practices across all sectors.

> **"** Although skin cancer is Australia's most common and most costly cancer, it is also the most preventable, which makes it a clear opportunity to encourage prevention. **"**

Key takeaways

- Although skin cancer is Australia's most common and most costly cancer, it is also the most preventable, which makes it a clear opportunity to encourage prevention.
- The effectiveness of interventions can be improved with a range of strategies such as evidence-informed strategic planning, agenda setting and multi-component community wide interventions.
- SunSmart is an example of a public health campaign that has been through many iterations over the years, adapting as needed. It was a comprehensive approach, and a key theme was consistency and continuity. With 'Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide', four of these forms of sun protection rely on personal choice. This is not typical for public health, which usually relies on system change, but here the focus is on social normative change to encourage people to feel that it is just general practice ('what everybody does') to protect their skin.

- Community ambassadors (e.g. Costa for biosecurity) bring warmth and trust, and people will engage with them, unlike with governments.
- Tobacco and road safety are similar – the prevalence of daily smoking has gone down with the use of multiple policy factors (bans, advertising prohibition, campaigns, taxes, etc), and the same for road fatalities (speed limits, speed cameras, RBT, school flashing lights, etc).
- Road safety may be particularly relevant for biosecurity – it uses strategic frameworks, behavioural theories and the effectiveness of key countermeasures (e.g. deterrence theory, which makes people aware that getting caught is more likely than dying in a road crash). Road safety campaigns have many components that target different audiences in different settings. Find out more **here**.
- For effective behaviour change messaging, you need to know your audience and use social marketing theory or social marketing processes. There are different ways to change behaviour (e.g. normalising it, intrinsically thinking you're driven by it, 'everyone else is doing it', or 'I don't want to be caught. I would be ashamed if they knew').

- There is still a role for paid media, as it enables the message to be forced onto people who may not want to hear it (unlike social media, where they can avoid the message). It requires a more targeted approach.

> **"** For effective behaviour change messaging, you need to know your audience and use social marketing theory or social marketing processes. **"**

Insights from breakout rooms

During the workshop, participants split up into groups to discuss questions related to certain sessions. The findings from these discussions are outlined below.

What do we need the biosecurity system to look like in 2030?

- Uses technology to keep as many new invasive species/pests/diseases out of Australia
- Allows the community, industry, and government to share information
- Is everyone's priority – it is devised and owned by everyone
- Is clear and consistent across the country
- Focuses on all-natural resources
- Balances response with prevention and preparation

Recognises that biosecurity risk is multidimensional

- Easy to understand
- Captures the strength of the community by living up to their expectations for responsiveness and being action-oriented
- Has sustainable policy supported by ongoing funding

Has more proactive and preventive offshore risk management and profiling strategies to target areas of known risk

- Supports greater collaboration and communication between government departments, industry, stakeholders, agencies, and export partners and their systems
- No visible state borders apart from funding and administration
- Modern diagnostic platforms and tools to stop incursions at the border
- Consistency and greater linkages between traceability systems
- Real-time automated systems and smart technology
- Machine learning, big data, and analytics, particularly for surveillance and predictive capability

How do we build and maintain a mass biosecurity movement?

- Grow community understanding, influence culture and change behaviour
- Develop champions and ambassadors in the industry
- Move away from threatening people with penalties and towards positive messages that encourage people to behave in different ways
- Create targeted messaging to make the message relevant and relatable to people's everyday life and to forge emotional connections
- Focus on a common cause: protecting food supplies, human and animal health, and the environment

Get environmental biosecurity embedded as 'business as usual'

- Develop a single point of truth for stakeholders
- Understand each target audience's motivations and drivers through social market research
- Create a partnership with the community and reconsider the language we use – 'it's everybody's business' instead of 'shared responsibility'
- Empower individuals to know what they can and must do and where they fit into the system
- Agree on clear definable actions and behaviours that can be communicated simply
- Look for behavioural risks and devolve governance as much as possible, so the movement is driven from the ground up
- Work across states coherently and be consistent with the same brand
- Build partnerships between sectors, pool resources to develop better material, leverage existing support networks and have consistent engagement principles across sectors
- Consider further training and credentialling opportunities for careers in biosecurity
- Look at starting education with young children, via school curricula and other programs
- Use and build on citizen science and make greater use of existing readily accessible technology
- Engage with the research community and have research driven by local needs
- Develop baseline data and track outcomes over time so government will see evidence of the benefits and be willing to provide ongoing funding
- Look at where legislation can assist

Insights from breakout rooms

What do we need to do that's different from today?

- Place more emphasis on local government and local community, with less top-down management from state and national government departments
- Identify and prioritise risks to environment
- Increase focus on preparedness rather than response
- Consider a levy where those who create the risk contribute and there are significant penalties for biosecurity breaches
- Explore reducing reliance on chemicals as a treatment option
- Prepare contingency plans for environmental pests
- Seek more targeted investment, co-investment and shared responsibility
- Have good, collaborative leaders and clear roles and responsibilities within biosecurity
- Increase connectiveness between professionals/disciplines
- Have a greater focus on extension and adoption of research and development and build international scientific linkages

- Make the network of resources better coordinated and more visible
- Improve planning for recovery from biosecurity impacts
- Reconsider our evaluation metrics – what do we need to monitor for this transition?
- Increase consistency and coordination between programs, sectors, agencies, industries and jurisdictions, with consistent messaging and objectives
- Improve sharing of data between jurisdictions
- Integrate biosecurity operations and reduce duplication of effort
- Map or audit the system to understand the funding flows, partners, activities and science
- Involve large agribusiness wholesale supply companies
- Develop contingency plans with our trading partners
- Improve utilisation and linkage of datasets and use more real-time data
- Create a data-rich, risk-based information bank on which an artificial intelligence platform can be created
- Improve connectivity of IT systems (within and between governments and industries)
- Create a central registry of projects and activities
- Provide tools to support reporting and identification
- Use block chain technology for supply chain management

- Make messaging nationally consistent with a unifying driver that resonates with everyone and emphasises shared biosecurity benefits but is also locally relevant for greater community engagement
- Correct the common public misconception that biosecurity preparedness, surveillance and response are solely the responsibility of government
- Consider a one-stop shop for people to get biosecurity information and make reports
- Use increased public awareness of biosecurity from COVID-19 as a trigger to build on further engagement and communication
- Seek to sustain ongoing funding for communication and engagement activities
- Consider diverse ways of communicating with different audiences
- Consider the terminology used – people understand the importance of 'farmer livelihoods' more than 'farm biosecurity', and 'food security' rather than 'export markets'
- Incentivise identification and reporting to increase community investment
- Target people with high-risk behaviour
- Develop Indigenous and multicultural training and information materials
- Use the lessons of other community change programs
- Use social science to understand what motivates people to engage in biosecurity and ensure that programs and communications are relevant to this

- Use community education and the principles of citizen science
- Focus on helping local councils, community groups and organisations play an important role in driving community awareness

Make available resources and tools that would assist adoption of biosecurity practices

- Provide standard guidelines for industry reporting and community reporting
- Implement school programs so kids can then educate adults (Biosecurity Warrior program)
- Place greater emphasis on compliance and enforcement, targeting apathy and complacency among the community, industry and travellers who don't feel biosecurity is relevant to them
- Use a market mechanism to reward responsible players
- Combat fear of ostracism for 'dobbing in' a neighbour
- Nominate community members to be biosecurity officers (see NZ campaign)
- Make retail marketing of provenance more science-based and less spin