

## Plant health officer

This job card outlines the responsibilities of the plant health officer (PHO) during all phases of a response to an Emergency Plant Pest under the EPPRD.

This checklist is provided as a guide and does not contain every action that may be required in responding to an emergency/incident. The checklist is not in any particular order.

### Revision history

Version	Date issued	Amendment Details	
		Section(s)	Details
1.0	5 Dec 2013	All	Reformatted from Appendix 1 of PLANTPLAN (V1 Nov 2011). SPCHQ/LPCC changed to SCC/LCC, and Internal references to Appendices in PLANTPLAN removed.

## Specific tasks through PLANTPLAN phases

### Investigation and Alert Phase

Where there are grounds for suspicion of an EPP, the PHO should notify the Chief Plant Health Manager (CPHM) of the notification, details of the premises and EPP suspected and then:

- Check to ensure adequate supplies are carried in their vehicle.
- Notify office staff where possible of intended actions and request that the investigation be kept confidential.
- Proceed to the Suspect Premises (SP).
- Examine affected plants.
- Discuss the details of the suspected pest and the actions that will be taken with the property owner/manager.
- Notify the CPHM of the outcome of the investigation and provide verbal details and ensure the following details are entered in the Information Management System
  - the name, address and phone number of the property owner/manager
  - the nature of the pest suspected
  - the exact location of the suspected case(s)
  - findings from the examination of affected plants
  - the need for a diagnostic team to re-examine the case
  - the need (or otherwise) for quarantine
  - the property identification code (unique property identifier or GPS).
- Determine the need for
  - any urgent tracings
  - other assistance
  - decontamination procedures that may need to be arranged for people, produce, vehicles or machinery that have recently left the property.

## Operational Phase

In addition to the actions listed above, where there is a high level of suspicion of an EPP, the PHO should:

- Quarantine or arrange for quarantine of the premises to stop the movement of plants, produce and other objects into and out of the suspect property.
- Serve or arrange to have the owner or manager served with a notice of quarantine.
- Restrict the movement of people and plants within the property.
- Arrange for boundaries to be secured so that only one gate, which can be controlled, is left as an entrance to the premises.
- Ensure they are readily contactable by phone or other appropriate means.

When the diagnostic team (if requested) arrives at the SP, the PHO must arrange for plants showing the full range of symptoms to be presented for examination. Before leaving the SP, the PHO should ensure procedures are in place to allow personal/family movement on and off the property for essential purposes.

When leaving the property, ensure full decontamination procedures are followed.

At the IP the PHO or delegate must act as site supervisor until relieved, and consult with and liaise with the owner/manager to plan IP activities to ensure owner/manager involvement in the process. This may include:

- Reinforcing the provisions of quarantine and ensure adequate property security.
- Implementing appropriate decontamination procedures.
- Providing advice to the LCC (or the SCC) if necessary on the resource requirements for preliminary but urgent, destruction and disposal of infected and 'at-risk' plants and produce and contaminated materials.
- Making a preliminary assessment of suitable destruction procedures and locations
- Maintaining records and an accurate inventory of plants and produce for valuation purposes.
- Ensuring communications from the LCC are facilitated.
- Advising the LCC (or SCC if necessary) of further urgent tracings and priority nearby properties which should be visited.
- Ensuring the welfare of the personnel on the property by ensuring their short-term needs for food and other requirements are met.