

2020–21 Mid-Year Performance Report



Plant Health
AUSTRALIA



Improving national biosecurity outcomes through partnerships

Plant Health Australia is the national coordinator of the government industry partnership for plant biosecurity in Australia.

Purpose

The purpose of Plant Health Australia is to coordinate strong industry and government partnerships that minimise plant pest impacts on Australia, boosting industry productivity and profitability and enhancing market access.

Vision

Plant Health Australia is recognised nationally and internationally as the independent and trusted coordinator of a robust, shared and integrated Australian plant biosecurity system.

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FROM THE CEO

This Mid-Year Performance Report marks my first six months as CEO of Plant Health Australia (PHA) and the halfway mark in the financial year.

In my first 180 days as CEO, I've led our organisation in a changed world constrained by coronavirus (Covid-19) imposed restrictions – particularly challenging for a highly collaborative company that seeks to bring together and partner with stakeholders to solve problems and develop solutions, and achieve our collective goals.

It quickly became apparent that Covid-19 would affect our ability to deliver on KPIs reliant on face-to-face interactions and, in order to meet our KPIs, we would need to modify our approach.

Online meetings rapidly became the new substitute for face-to-face interactions. While some of us grappled with using new technology and adapting to online meeting etiquette, we realised the challenges this format provided in developing strategies – particularly with large numbers of stakeholders where active participation was required.

For these reasons, in this years' report you will see more orange coding in the KPI tables than in previous mid-year reports. Covid-19 related delays or format changes are indicated by new symbols to distinguish them from other types of delays to progress.

A positive outcome of Covid-19 is a greater awareness of the word 'biosecurity' and an appreciation of the multiple layers of protection implemented to prevent a pest or disease from making its way into and around Australia, and the resources deployed to minimise the impact on the Australian public.

I'm pleased to report that on the staffing front, we've appointed Melissa Hendrie as a part-time HR Consultant, Amanda Yong as our National Manager for Marketing and Communications and Evelina Zakaryan as Finance Officer.

Our current Strategic Plan comes to an end this year. To assist with the development of the next five-year PHA Strategic Plan 2022–27, we've engaged external consultant, Russell Cummings from SHIFFT. Over the coming months Russell will undertake consultation with our Board Directors, members, stakeholders and staff to develop a plan to deliver on priorities for plant health, manage transitions and change, and provide the foundation for long-term agricultural, economic and biosecurity outcomes for Australia.



Sarah Corcoran
CEO
24 February 2021

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The 2020–21 Mid-Year Performance Report summarises PHA's progress and achievements from 1 July to 31 December 2020.

Progress in each of the seven key result areas from PHA's Strategic Plan 2016–21 (see pages 3–5) are tracked against key performance indicators identified in the Annual Operational Plan for 2020–21. Since each Annual Operational Plan is finalised in May of the previous financial year, some additional projects which receive funding between May and the beginning of the next financial year appear in the Mid-Year Performance Report. Where this occurs (or where KPIs have changed) it is noted in the text accordingly. A colour code is used to report on performance, as shown below.

Performance reporting key

	KPI is on track or completed
	KPI is behind schedule or KPI has been modified
	KPI will not be met

Where a KPI has been modified due to Covid-19 restrictions, such as interstate travel or the size of events, the symbols  or  are used (courtesy of Iconfinder, LAFS).

Throughout the report, weblinks are indicated using this  link symbol.

Strategic Plan

2016–21

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Purpose

The purpose of Plant Health Australia is to co-ordinate strong industry and government partnerships that minimise plant pest impacts on Australia, boosting industry productivity and profitability while enhancing market access

Vision

PHA is recognised nationally and internationally as the independent and trusted coordinator of a robust, shared and integrated Australian plant biosecurity system

KEY RESULT AREAS

1 PARTNERSHIPS 2 EPPRD 3 PREPAREDNESS 4 SURVEILLANCE 5 DIAGNOSTICS 6 RD&E 7 COMPANY HEALTH

STRATEGIES & KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

- Strong working relationship with members
- Stakeholder engagement broadened along the value chain
- Established relationships with international partners
- Awareness programs expanded
- Farm biosecurity program strengthened



FACILITATE A NATIONALLY CO-ORDINATED SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

- Surveillance programs for nationally significant pests established
- Uptake of new surveillance technology
- Increased industry capacity
- Nationally co-ordinated data management



ENHANCE OPERATION AND INTEGRITY OF THE EPPRD

- Signatories comply with EPPRD obligations
- EPPRD review outcomes implemented
- Enhancement of policy and activities to promote early pest reporting
- Increased emergency response capacity and capability



IMPROVE THE DIAGNOSTIC SYSTEM

- Nationally co-ordinated diagnostic network
- Increased protocol coverage for Emergency Plant Pests
- Improved diagnostician capability



DEVELOP PEST MANAGEMENT AND PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMS

- Improved national management of recently introduced pests
- Established framework for management of exotic weeds and pests of pastures
- Programs for management of nationally significant pests established
- Risks identified and managed



CO-ORDINATE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANT BIOSECURITY RD&E

- AGSOC Plant Biosecurity RD&E Plan Implemented
- Nationally agreed RD&E priorities
- Monitor RD&E activities, capability and capacity
- Increased ability to fund plant biosecurity RD&E activities



MANAGE THE COMPANY EFFECTIVELY

- Attract and retain key staff skills
- PHA is in a sound financial position
- Legal and regulatory compliance obligations met
- Timely and accurate reporting



OPERATIONAL PLANS

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

Guides business to achieve strategic direction

PHA'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–21

PHA activities are organised into seven key result areas, consistent with the structure of the PHA Strategic Plan for 2016–21. The guiding strategies are explained below.



1. Strengthen partnerships

Australia can only be protected from new plant pests with cooperation between plant industries and governments. PHA has played a key role fostering effective partnerships since the company's inception in 2000, and company membership continues to increase, broadening PHA's reach.

Under the new strategic plan, PHA will continue to bring partners together to work collaboratively to strengthen Australia's biosecurity system. New members will be fostered, particularly new industries and new associate members – stakeholder organisations with roles to play in plant biosecurity. PHA will work to extend relationships further along the value chain and plans to enhance the reputation of the company and the plant biosecurity system internationally.

PHA's important role as a promoter of the importance of plant biosecurity will also be strengthened with more resourcing for the Farm Biosecurity Program and other awareness-raising initiatives.



2. Enhance operation and integrity of the EPPRD

As custodian of the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) PHA has a leadership role in eradication responses to serious new pest incursions. The EPPRD provides post-border protection for Australia's plant industries and associated rural communities, the environment and the national economy.

PHA will provide guidance to Parties to the EPPRD to ensure effective operation, as well as continually evaluating and improving the agreement to ensure that it keeps pace with the needs of signatories. Parties to the agreement will be assisted to increase their emergency response capacity.



3. Develop pest management and preparedness programs

PHA will assist stakeholders to find solutions to a wide range of nationally significant biosecurity issues where no existing framework applies, such as weeds, national fruit fly management, newly introduced pests and pests of pastures.

The company will do this by developing strategies, facilitating partnership approaches and managing large-scale programs. Through partnerships, PHA will also take the lead in identifying initiatives to improve preparedness including plant biosecurity research, development and extension. The work will inform the development of future strategic frameworks.

Preparedness initiatives include managing programs for newly introduced pests such as national management plans and facilitating industry-government partnerships that boost biosecurity planning for industries and contingency planning for high priority pests.



4. Facilitate a nationally coordinated surveillance program

Given the importance of detecting new pest incursions quickly, and the need to demonstrate area freedom, PHA will take leadership in developing systems of surveillance for high priority pests within Australia. PHA will assist industries to expand data collection for key exotic pests, work to establish farm or regional surveillance systems and through government-industry partnerships, work to implement biosecurity plans.

To maximise benefits from improved systems of checking for pests, PHA will invest in data management and reporting systems, with ongoing benefits to market access for Australian produce.



5. Improve the diagnostic system

Accurate and rapid identification of pests is a fundamental element of the plant biosecurity system. PHA will continue to boost Australia's diagnostic capability by building a coordinated network of experts that provides comprehensive coverage of expertise nationally. Efforts to increase diagnostic preparedness for priority plant pests will continue through improving the skills and knowledge of diagnosticians, as well as facilitating the development of protocols for the identification of key exotic pests.



6. Co-ordinate planning and implementation of plant biosecurity RD&E

With change pending in the structure of plant biosecurity science in Australia, PHA will increase its focus on coordinating RD&E across universities and other research organisations. This includes implementing the Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy, identifying areas of greatest need, identifying opportunities for cross-sectoral benefits and assisting in obtaining funding for needed research.



7. Manage the company effectively

With effective and transparent systems of governance, financial control and risk management PHA maintains a sound business. The company is committed to maintaining a highly skilled staff with a broad expertise base to assist members with their growing biosecurity needs.

BUDGET 2020–21

Subscription funded activities

Subscription funded programs	Budget (\$)
Partnerships	
National committees and working groups	70,772
Member liaison	200,345
National programs	299,557
Strategic planning and reporting	47,901
Corporate communication	484,715
Total	1,103,290
Emergency response	
National committees and working groups	15,668
EPPRD management	433,652
EPPRD training	364,362
Incursion management	147,693
Total	961,375
Preparedness	
National committees and working groups*	
Total	0
Surveillance	
National committees and working groups	15,749
Software development and support	13,343
Total	29,092
Diagnostics	
National committees and working groups	10,398
Software development and support	4,660
Total	15,058
RD&E	
National committees and working groups	4,038
National programs	50,020
Total	54,058
Company health	
Board management	185,994
Company finance and administration	588,095
Total	774,089
Total subscription expenditure	
	2,936,962

*This has been added since the approval of the Annual Operational Plan in May 2020.

Non-subscription funded projects

Non-subscription projects	Budget (\$)
Partnerships	
National programs	833,552
Levy programs	1,982,374
Total	2,815,926
Emergency response	
Software development and support	3,636
Biosecurity response preparedness	47,793
Total	51,429
Preparedness	
Biosecurity planning and review	654,486
Biosecurity programs	518,199
Biosecurity response preparedness	434,425
Total	1,607,110
Surveillance	
Surveillance programs	1,619,382
Software development and support	592,711
Professional development	196,089
Total	2,408,182
Diagnostics	
Software development and support	45,298
Biosecurity response preparedness	124,000
Professional development	58,629
Biosecurity coordination and enhancement	194,011
Total	421,938
RD&E	
National committees and working groups	165,364
Total	165,364
Total non-subscription	7,469,949



PARTNERSHIPS

PHA facilitates government and industry partnerships that strengthen the plant biosecurity system. The company's independence and broad membership structure creates the ideal environment for developing collaborative solutions to identified challenges.

Primary aims of this key result area include:

- Strong working relationships with members.
- Raising awareness of the importance of plant biosecurity.
- Boosting investment in farm biosecurity practices.
- Improving biosecurity along the value chain.
- International cooperation.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA is actively involved in government and industry committees where they fit with PHA's strategies, are appropriately funded and will deliver benefits to a majority of members.

National committees provide a formal mechanism for developing and coordinating key plant biosecurity policy and procedures that are nationally consistent.

The partnerships budget area includes PHA's engagement in the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) and its subcommittees, working groups and taskforces. As an observer at the NBC and subcommittees, PHA contributes to the formulation of biosecurity policy at the highest level.

PHA brings broad industry views to the national committee table but does not represent individual industries. This role is important for maintaining and enhancing the partnership between industry and government.

Staff member involvement in these committees allows the company to:

- Ensure that national plant biosecurity policy issues are raised and addressed.
- Facilitate national partnership approaches to solve these issues.
- Lead, coordinate, or participate in projects initiated by these committees where they fit with PHA's Strategic Plan.
- Contribute technical expertise, strategic insight and independent views.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
PHA contributed to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Biosecurity Committee  • Plant Health Committee (PHC)  • Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access (SDQMA)  • Environmental and Invasives Committee  • Northern Australia Biosecurity Framework Reference Group.  		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHA has attended all meetings of the key national plant biosecurity committees • PHA has led a number of items, particularly at PHC and SDQMA.

Corporate communication

PHA maintains a high standard of corporate communications to maintain the corporate brand, keep members informed of the activities of the company and raise awareness of biosecurity issues with a broader audience.

The PHA website  is central to corporate communication, holding many resources of value to members and their industries. The company also keeps members and stakeholders informed of what is happening in biosecurity through the e-newsletter Tendrils,  on social media through Twitter,  through media releases, articles in appropriate magazines and publications.

Corporate publications include the National Plant Biosecurity Status Report, Annual Report, Annual Operational Plan and Mid-Year Performance Report. Other publications such as biosecurity manuals and plans, strategies and fact sheets support PHA's programs and projects, many of which are designed in-house.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
E-newsletter Tendrils issued monthly to convey biosecurity and PHA news to five per cent more subscribers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five editions of Tendrils distributed to 4% more subscribers (1178).
Coverage of major PHA news items in the media increased by five per cent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iSentia (media monitoring contractor) captured 203 articles in this period mentioning Plant Health Australia. Other key words were also reported as requested.
The number of articles for targeted media and industry magazines increased by five per cent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven media releases issued and covered in rural, regional, industry and social media • Over 20 articles published in industry magazines.
Twitter posts on aspects of the biosecurity system and news promoted driving more followers and greater reach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Followers to @PlantHealthAust increased by 7% to 2091, improving the reach of the company on Twitter • 52 tweets were shared to promote biosecurity news, events and projects developed by PHA, our members and the broader biosecurity community • Tweets received a total of 84.2K impressions.
Corporate website and others for members well maintained, with increased usage by stakeholders		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PHA website was maintained with security patches and upgrades to the content management system • The ongoing addition of new content sustained good rankings by search engines, and links from Tendrils articles and tweets encouraged visitors to the site.

Publications produced to schedule and promoted effectively, with more online accessibility		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Report compiled, printed and distributed to members on schedule, and promoted in Tendrils Hard copy of the Status Report 2019 was distributed to approximately 150 PHA members and stakeholders and promoted by distributing a media release and inclusion in Tendrils The National Fruit Fly Strategy 2020–25 was printed on schedule, distributed to stakeholders and promoted with a media releases, resulting in multiple radio interviews and pick-up in rural media.
Contributed to the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH) in 2020 through boosting traffic to the IYPH website for Australia and helping to drive outreach activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosted and maintained the IYPH in Australia website. Due to Covid-19, many events planned to celebrate the IYPH were cancelled. Activities shifted online, with 38 profiles of Everyday Plant Health Heroes being posted on the IYPH site. These were included as items in Tendrils and their availability was tweeted to encourage visits to the site.
Timely and high-quality responses to significant reviews with the potential to affect Australia's plant biosecurity system.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reviews required submissions during the reporting period.

Member liaison

PHA places a priority on involving members in the setting, implementation and uptake of company program objectives and outputs. Staff meet with members to consult on proposed activities for the upcoming financial year. Twice a year, PHA hosts meetings of members to facilitate shared understanding of biosecurity issues and allow discussions that advance solutions.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Two general meetings held complying with legal requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AGM was held as required, with Covid-19 restrictions causing the meeting to be held virtually.
At least two plant industry forum meetings and a joint PHA–Animal Health Australia (AHA) forum held		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A virtual plant industry forum was held in November 2020, but no joint PHA–AHA forums have been planned at this point in time.
At least one consultative meeting for all members held between the annual general meeting and general meeting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each year PHA engages in March via webinar to discuss the AOP. This is scheduled for 31 March 2021.
Consulted with every member organisation person-to-person at least once and provided opportunities for input into operational priorities for 2021–22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the first half of 2020–21 FY the number of face-to-face meetings has been limited. PHA staff have, however, maintained one-on-one contact with all members, either via video or phone conversations. Depending on the specific activities being undertaken, some members are much more engaged than others, but effort is made to ensure contact is maintained.
Participated in industry/government meetings as requested by members		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHA accepted the requests for attendance at meetings from members.
Included board meeting communiqües in Tendrils.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A communique from the May Board meeting included in Tendrils.

Strategic planning and reporting

Each year, usually in July, the PHA Board reviews its activities against its strategic plan. PHA's yearly activities are guided by an AOP, with reporting against the plan occurring after six months in the Mid-Year Performance Report and in the Annual Report at the end of the financial year. This provides members and the Board with a clear line of sight between company activities and the company's vision and stated goals.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Members consulted in determining operational priorities for 2021–22		<ul style="list-style-type: none">This will occur after the AOP webinar in March 2021.
2021–22 Annual Operational Plan presented to members and approved by the Board in May 2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none">AOP planning to commence early 2021 and to be approved by the Board and presented to members in May 2021.
Annual Report 2020 and end of year financial statements presented to members at the 2020 annual general meeting		<ul style="list-style-type: none">These were presented to and approved by members at the AGM in November 2020.
Mid-year report against agreed key performance indicators approved by the Board and reported to members.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Work on Mid-Year Performance Report started in December 2020 and on-track for completion on schedule.

National Programs

National Plant Biosecurity Strategy implementation

PHA continues to monitor and implement aspects of the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy (2010),⁶ and is reviewing the strategy in 2020–21. The strategy review will be influenced by the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB) review which has now been endorsed by all government and the review of the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics Strategy (NPBDS) and the National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy (NPBSS) and development of a Preparedness Strategy (see page 16).

The new IGAB has an increased emphasis on environment and the community and these aspects will be included in the revised NPBS.

Completion of the revised NPBS has been delayed due to Covid-19. There has also been a change to the review process, further delaying its delivery. In 2010, the NPBS strategy was developed first, followed by the development of the diagnostics and surveillance strategies. A different approach is being taken this time to build the strategies from the bottom up with the diagnostic and surveillance strategies being reviewed first, and a new strategy for preparedness is being developed. When complete, they will inform the review of the overarching NPBS.

PHA members are being consulted throughout this process. Due to the change in the review process, members were advised that the new NPBS will be presented to them at the November 2021 meetings for consideration and approval.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
National Plant Biosecurity Strategy revised and endorsed by PHA members		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prior to revision and endorsement of version 2 of the NPBS, PHA is reviewing the surveillance and diagnostic strategies (which sit under the NPBS) and developing a new preparedness strategy Preparation of a draft version 2 of the NPBS has commenced. PHA is actively engaging with PHC and its subcommittees in this process Members were advised that PHA plans to present a draft version 2 NPBS to them at the November 2021 AGM.
PHA along with PHC and its subcommittees work to implement the NPBS and associated strategies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHA continues to implement the 2010 NPBS and the diagnostics and surveillance strategies. Examples include: the Bee Surveillance Portal (see page 35); industry liaison training (see page 22); working with SPHD on national minimum data standards; and WA traceability project (see page 18).
PHA reports to the Board on PHA activities undertaken to implement the strategy at each Board meeting.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHA management prepare a paper to the Board for each meeting on activities undertaken to implement the 2010 NPBS. The paper also includes implementation activities of other PHA members where they are known.

Farm Biosecurity Program

PHA operates the Farm Biosecurity Program jointly with Animal Health Australia (AHA)  to raise awareness and improve adoption of biosecurity management practices on farms.

There are three general aspects to the projects undertaken by the program. These are the development of resources; communication of messages; and research and assessment (of the program and target audience).

Communication activities centre on the Farm Biosecurity website  that provides practical information for producers to include aspects of biosecurity into everyday farm practices to mitigate the risks of introducing or spreading pests and diseases.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Resources developed for agronomists, consultants and veterinarians to help producers implement biosecurity measures.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content for five factsheets in designed template.
20 PHA Farm Biosecurity media releases or articles published online or in industry magazines.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 articles in total published on the Farm Biosecurity website, distributed in newsletters and submitted to magazines for publication.
Farm Biosecurity Producer Survey to determine the awareness of producers about biosecurity completed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written and verbal reports on the results of the 2020 Farm Biosecurity Producer Survey were completed, and a summary of results publicly available on the Farm Biosecurity website.
Nuffield Scholarship established to foster biosecurity leaders amongst producers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in the interview panels of Nuffield Australia and appointed a scholar – Claire Pettersen commercial hay and cattle producer from Collingullie in NSW – establishing the inaugural Farm Biosecurity Nuffield Scholar.

Software development and support

PHA has a role in developing online resources on aspects of biosecurity to enhance the national biosecurity system and continues to seek opportunities for funding for new sites and enhancements.

In addition to the PHA website, 13 other websites have been developed and maintained on aspects of biosecurity such as PreventFruitFly[®], Australian Interstate Quarantine[®], BeeAware[®], the Plant Surveillance Network Australasia-Pacific[®] and the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics Network[®] site. Some sites have associated e-newsletters to keep subscribers informed. The Biosecurity Portal also provides secure workspaces for many biosecurity related committees and working groups. The sites require technical maintenance, licences and other support, and those hosted by PHA also require hardware support.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Hardware maintained for hosting websites		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHA continues to move its hosting to the cloud and is consolidating hosting arrangements for increased efficiency, security and ease of maintenance.
Technical support provided to websites owned by PHA to ensure our service requirements maintained		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support for the websites managed by PHA is provided to members and external users• PHA receives external technical support to ensure the websites owned by PHA continue to function as expected and where possible enhancements are made.
Opportunities sought for the development of new websites		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHA staff have lodged several project funding applications for the enhancement of existing sites or the development of new websites to enhance the PHA portfolio.
Web security maintained to protect PHA and member organisations		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updates to content management systems and plugins done to maintain security of sites.
Funding sought for new sites and enhancements to existing sites		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essential and cosmetic alterations to National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics Network (+Portal) and Plant Surveillance Network Australasia Pacific sites were funded by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE).
Biosecurity Portal maintained.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Biosecurity Portal[®] is maintained, providing access to a number of public sites and secure workspaces for groups of stakeholders.

Non-subscription

National Programs

Member levy proposals

Member interest in developing industry specific biosecurity programs funded through statutory biosecurity levies continues to grow. PHA is working with several industries to establish levies to fund tailored programs that improve engagement, raise awareness of biosecurity risks and improve communication on farm management practices. For examples of specific programs funded by the grains, melon and vegetable industries, see pages 18-19.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Engaged with industry members to establish levies to fund biosecurity activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHA regularly engages with industries to establish, vary and monitor the use of biosecurity levies.

National Fruit Fly Council

PHA provides support to the National Fruit Fly Council (NFFC)  which brings together industry, government and research representatives to monitor and drive progress against the National Fruit Fly Strategy (NFFS).

PHA provides the NFFC Manager, the secretariat and executive support to hold productive Council meetings and help drive the national fruit fly agenda. Given the strategic importance of this initiative across many of PHA's members, the CEO's time in this area is funded from subscriptions.

The NFFC has entered its final year of a 3-year funding program which expires in October 2021. The NFFS was revised and a new strategy and annual implementation plan were launched in November 2020. The Council is focussing on activities of national significance and opportunities to build a collaborative approach to managing fruit flies which has support from all stakeholders. This includes emphasising the importance of year-round control programs across production regions, the importance of fruit fly control in urban and peri-urban areas and helping to link stakeholders with relevant information.

The NFFC has been hosting virtual regional meetings to work with industry in a two-way strategic approach – firstly to provide information to local growers and secondly to identify the priorities of the local growers so this can be fed back into the Council's planning activities for future years.

The NFFC has also been working with state and Australian governments to help facilitate the commissioning of The Strengthening of Australia's Fruit Fly System Research Program. This program is jointly funded by all states and territories (except the Australian Capital Territory (ACT)) and DAWE. The NFFC will be monitoring the progress of this program and will provide advice to research providers on further opportunities to support fruit fly management and market access.

The information gathered from these stakeholder interactions will be brought together at a National Fruit Fly Symposium planned for May 2021. The Symposium will provide a platform to raise awareness of key national fruit fly issues and to plan activities for future national success of horticulture industries.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Identified and prioritised key activities to improve the management of fruit flies across Australia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed in consultation with governments and fruit fly affected industries, a new National Fruit Fly Strategy 2020–25 which was launched in November 2020.
Held a minimum of three NFFC meetings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two ordinary NFFC meetings and one extra-ordinary meeting were held to discuss project proposals for the Strengthening Australia's Fruit Fly System Research Program.
Monitored and reported activities under the revised NFFS		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new strategy and implementation plan incorporated findings from an informal review of current fruit fly activities. The Council will formally report on progress against these new documents annually, commencing end June 2021.
Developed priority action list for RD&E		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council provided advice to the Australian Government on priorities for the Strengthening Australia's Fruit Fly System Research Program The Council also conducted a series of industry and government workshops which identified national issues of concern and associated RD&E priorities.
Developed annual NFFS action plan		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Implementation Plan (formerly an 'action plan') for 2020–21 was developed.
Convened a series of workshops with regional groups to engage on key issues of concern and to report RD&E outputs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council conducted over twenty small, focused workshops with industry and government. These workshops have identified national issues of concern and associated RD&E priorities which will be used to build future implementation plans and influence stakeholder activities.
Held a National Fruit Fly Symposium.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to Covid-19 there was no national symposium held in 2020 Instead of the symposium, four webinars were held to promote a shared understanding of national fruit fly issues and activities: Strengthening Australia's Fruit Fly System Research Program; Sterile Insect Technique for Medfly and Qfly; Phytosanitary Irradiation for Fruit Fly; and the Interstate Certification Assurance Scheme A steering committee is planning a symposium for May 2021.
Regularly updated and promoted Prevent Fruit Fly website.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Prevent Fruit Fly website has been updated regularly, including posting of new Council Terms of Reference, Council member biographies, meeting communiques and annual reports.
Produced an e-newsletter every eight weeks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six e-newsletters were produced in the reporting period and they are on the Prevent Fruit Fly website.
Developed communication articles as appropriate in association with industry journals.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two fruit fly articles were distributed to industry magazines. Advice was sought from approximately 10-15 magazines on the appropriate content for these articles.
Presented annual report to stakeholders.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2020 Annual Report was endorsed by the Council in November 2020 and is on the Prevent Fruit Fly website.

Review of the diagnostics and surveillance strategies and development of a preparedness strategy

DAWE has funded PHA to revise the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics Strategy and the National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy. DAWE has also funded the development of a 'Preparedness Strategy'. Preparedness is a key area of the national biosecurity system and it is not covered by a specific strategy. PHA commenced development of revised diagnostic and surveillance strategies in 2019–20 and the work on these will be finalised in 2020–21. Work on the Preparedness Strategy has been delayed due to Covid-19 and the need to engage industry and government stakeholders from the start of this process.

In addition to the work on the three strategies, PHA will develop corresponding implementation plans for each one to guide work over the next 10 years. The outputs of this work will then feed into the review of the overarching NPBS.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Revised National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Strategy endorsed by PHA members		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The draft revised National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Strategy has been through a number of versions and has been discussed at two SPHDS meetings. This strategy has been provided to industry, but it is the most government focused of the three strategiesIt is anticipated this strategy will be circulated to PHA members for endorsement in the first quarter of 2021.
Revised National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy endorsed by PHA members		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Revision of the National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy commenced after the diagnostics strategy and has followed a similar development path. The surveillance strategy has been referred to SNPNS on at least two occasions and has had more industry consultation, in recognition that industry is developing surveillance systemsPHA sought input from all members on this strategy.The plan is to circulate the surveillance strategy for endorsement in the second quarter of 2021.
First National Plant Biosecurity Preparedness Strategy endorsed by PHA members.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Preparedness Strategy has been intentionally delayed: being a new strategy it was felt a face-to-face meeting with a large range of stakeholders – which has not been possible due to Covid-19 – the best approach to takePHA has formed an industry–government working group to help develop this strategy, which has met on two occasionsPHA has also contacted all PHA members to seek their inputPHC formed the Plant Biosecurity Preparedness Working Group (see page 25) at its July 2020 meeting and PHA will work with that committee.

Network Coordination

PHA helps coordinate activities of the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network[©] and the Plant Surveillance Network, Australasia–Pacific.[©] Working with the Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics (SPHD) and the Subcommittee on Plant Health Surveillance (SNPHS), the coordinator develops new content for each website, prioritises activities to address capability gaps in these fields, coordinates the delivery of diagnostics and surveillance workshops and promotes the benefits of membership to these networks.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Content for the NPBDN and PSNAP websites updated regularly		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Content for both websites has been updated regularly to provide new material on professional development and resources available to network members.
Professional development programs for NPBDN and PSNAP members developed and implemented		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The first round of surveillance residential was advertised to PSNAP members July–September 2020, with two projects awarded for completion during 2021.The eighth round of diagnostic residential is ongoing, as three approved projects were delayed due to Covid-19.The ninth round of diagnostic residential was advertised July–September 2020, with five projects awarded for completion in 2021.A survey of NPBDN members was undertaken to assess current and identify further opportunities for professional development.
Delivered annual diagnostics and surveillance workshops		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Annual Surveillance Workshop was held as a 2-day virtual event in December 2020 (see also page 37).The last Annual Diagnosticians' Workshop was in March 2020 and planning for the 2021 workshop has commenced (see also page 42).
Network coordinated and memberships increased.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Membership of NPBDN has increased to a total of 550 members.Following the official launch of PSNAP, membership has increased to 280 members.

Traceability project*

PHA is working with the Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to develop a concept proposal to determine the extent of knowledge and mapping existing supply chain traceability systems across Australian plant industries. This project arose from the work in the DAWE in the Property Identification Code (PIC) and Traceability areas and has been supported by PHC. The concept being tested is that if good traceability systems are in place then they should include traceability back to the production unit, be it a farm or nursery. The project has been submitted to the DAWE for funding consideration under their Traceability Grants Program - Round 1.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Work with DPIRD WA to map existing traceability systems in Australia's plant industries.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHA industry members have been contacted to ask about traceability within their industry• Further interviews have been organised with 11 industries• PHA has regular meetings with the project team in DPIRD WA to ensure the project is on track.

*This project has been added since the approval of the Annual Operational Plan in May 2020 and the KPIs are from the project contract.

Biosecurity Levy Programs

Grains Farm Biosecurity Program

The Grains Farm Biosecurity Program[©] works to improve the management of and preparedness for, biosecurity risks in the Australian grain industry. A Grains Biosecurity Officer (GBO) is in each grain growing state and national management is provided by PHA.

Since July 2020 there has been a focus on coordinating strategic surveillance activities across the country, engaging industry at field days and industry events on farm management practices and assisting industry organisations in their biosecurity preparedness.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Grain biosecurity website promoted and continually updated.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website grainsbiosecurity.com.au[©] completed, with more content being continually added.
Fact sheets developed for critical exotic pests of the grain industry.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Six fact sheets drafted by the GBOs have been edited by the communications team and are being prepared for design.• Five fact sheets reviewed by GBOs have had minor updates and have been put in the current PHA fact sheet template with up-to-date logos.
Feature articles on key grain biosecurity risks published bi-monthly in the industry's Ground Cover newspaper.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four articles were published and two more have been submitted for inclusion in three editions of Ground Cover.

Melon Biosecurity Program

The Melon Farm Biosecurity Program is operated by the Australian Melon Association under an MoU managed by PHA. The current program focuses on improving the biosecurity capacity in relation to post-border preparedness and enhancing biosecurity practices across all aspects of melon production.

A technical advisory panel (the executive committee of the Australian Melon Association) has been established and a new Melon Industry Development Officer was appointed and commenced in July 2020.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
On-line biosecurity training courses promoted to growers through Melon E-news.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Melons Australia have developed a course and are promoting it through their communications channels.
Australian melon growers have access to farm biosecurity plans through the melon website melonsaustralia.org.au .		<ul style="list-style-type: none">On-farm biosecurity plan for CGMMV promoted to the melon industry through maintaining the latest industry versions on the melon website .melonsaustralia.org.au

Vegetable and Potato Biosecurity Program

The Vegetable and Potato Biosecurity Program  is entering its final year of its contract with AUSVEG. This year the program will be integrating monitoring and evaluation activities within its existing workplan to ensure that the program continues to deliver measurable impact across the industry.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Communication and engagement plan implemented.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Communication and Engagement Plan continues to be implemented with a focus on virtual activities and online engagement as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.
National grower survey conducted to establish baseline and measure improvements to change in knowledge and on farm management.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Biosecurity survey conducted with results indicating that there has been an increased willingness to engage in biosecurity practice across the vegetable and potato industries.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE

PHA plays a central role in plant biosecurity as custodian of the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) . The agreement between industry, government and PHA details arrangements to deal with emergency plant pests immediately upon detection, boosting chances of eradication.

The Emergency Response key result area covers all activities to do with the EPPRD, including managing responses to incursions of emergency plant pests, administering the agreement and improving its provisions and operation. The area also covers training of stakeholders who might be involved in a pest incursion, boosting Australia's capacity and capability to respond.

Primary aims include:

- Addressing policy issues associated with implementation of the EPPRD.
- Enhancing policy and operations to promote early pest reporting.
- Increasing emergency response capacity and capability.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA works on relevant emergency response committees and working groups to support national coordination and reform of aspects of the system. The national coordination achieved through participation in committees and working groups is strengthened by other cross-sectoral engagement activities centred on the emergency response agreements and biosecurity response training. PHA works closely with AHA and the Australian Government to promote consistency and a shared understanding across the EPPRD, the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement and the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement .

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Nationally agreed emergency preparedness and response training standards available, supported by required certification arrangements		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHA facilitated TOCAL delivery of an information session on the Biosecurity Emergency Response Training Australia (BERTA) competencies and the potential for uptake by industry at the industry forum.
Delivery of emergency preparedness activities nationally supported through participation in relevant national committees		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PHA has been actively engaged in forming the new Biosecurity and Agriculture Emergency Network (BAEN) and establishing its workplan. This is the replacement (government) group for the National Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Expert Group.

Outcomes of cross-sectoral biosecurity training outcomes in collaboration with AHA have enhanced consistency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work on collaboration and coordination of training delivered by PHA and AHA to ensure consistent messaging. Particular focus on engagement with industry in a liaison role. Exploration of options for co-delivery of this training, including production of a cross-sector guide, undertaken. AHA and PHA have provided support and evaluation of each other's training programs to identify common areas of training to allow for future streamlining of training.
Relevant aspects of harmonisation between EPPRD, the EADRA and NEBRA reported to Parties.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active engagement between PHA and AHA on response preparedness and operation of the EPPRD and EADRA during current responses.

EPPRD management

Drivers for the 2020–21 AOP remained largely consistent with prior years, with outcomes from recent evaluation activities including response debriefs and training exercises continuing to direct activity in addition to delivery of the 2016–21 Strategic Plan.

The key priority areas of focus during 2020–21 include:

- Continued implementation of priority actions to address debrief outcomes.
- Supporting Parties to meet their obligations under the EPPRD, including through development of guidance material and completion of the normal commitments review.
- Clarification and effective implementation of the Owner Reimbursement Costs provisions.
- Improving policy and awareness activities to support early reporting of an incursion.

The first six months of 2020–21 marked a key milestone for Parties, with 15 years since ratification of the EPPRD. The third formal review of the EPPRD was initiated prior to October 2020 (due to be completed by May 2021) providing a valuable opportunity for Parties to reflect on the operation and evolution of the EPPRD since ratification.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
2020 review of the EPPRD completed and outcomes considered by Parties in May 2021.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020 review of the EPPRD initiated October 2020 and progressed through meetings of the review reference group.
Variations to support equity for impacted owners agreed by Parties by May 2021.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variations to the EPPRD presented to Parties and intent supported. Further consultation and Parties approval to be sought early 2021.
Holistic review of the structure and format of PLANTPLAN completed by May 2021.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified improvements to the structure and format of PLANTPLAN supported by Parties December 2020. Further development of content to occur in consultation with Parties prior to endorsement being sought in May 2021.
Completion of the review of Parties' normal commitments by May 2021.	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normal commitments review to be reinvigorated and progressed in early 2021.

Key policy and process issues progressed and reported to Parties each EPPRD meeting.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parties provided in principle support for proposed variations to the EPPRD to implement the agreed approach to address vector-pathogen complexes. Improved clarity in respect of application of the EPPRD 'near border' achieved through Parties support of Issue Resolution Group outcomes.
Key guidance material developed and revised to support Parties understanding and implementation of the EPPRD.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance material on financial management of response plans and determining if a Plant Pest meets the definition of an Emergency Plant Pest being progressed.
Full compliance with PHA responsibilities in respect of administration of the EPPRD demonstrated quarterly to the PHA Board.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full compliance with obligations under the EPPRD demonstrated by PHA management.

EPPRD training

The National EPP Training Program, as a central provision of the EPPRD, supports Parties to develop and maintain appropriately skilled and prepared personnel that can effectively contribute to an EPP response.

Delivery of industry liaison training remained a key focus in the first six months, helping Parties identify appropriate representatives, develop appropriate support structures and provide a forum for networking amongst industry and government response personnel.

PHA continued to deliver tailored emergency preparedness and response training to all EPPRD Parties through existing mechanisms, adjusting delivery approaches to account for Covid-19 related travel restrictions.

In addition to the delivery of biosecurity training, PHA, together with AHA, provides the framework that allows members to deliver their own biosecurity accredited training through auspicing arrangements with Tocal College.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Four, Industry Liaison in a Biosecurity Response, Workshops delivered.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop delivered in September 2020 in SA. Four workshops scheduled for the first six months of 2021 in Tasmania, NSW, NT and Victoria.
Emergency preparedness and response training delivered and tailored to members' needs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced EPPRD awareness through training delivered to ACT Government, DAWE staff and Australian Grape and Wine members.
BISOPs for two Industry Parties completed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apple and Pear Australia BISOP finalised. Expressions of interest from Industry Parties for BISOP workshops to occur in the first half of 2021.
BOLT enhanced through delivery of new content and review of existing courses to support other training activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant Biosecurity in Australia – new course released in July 2020. Emergency Response Management – review of course commenced, with release scheduled for June 2021.

Incursion management

PHA plays a key role in incursion management, facilitating an effective and efficient response to plant pest notifications in line with the requirements of the EPPRD.

With a number of responses scheduled to conclude during 2020, there will be a continued focus on lessons management and continual improvement of EPPRD policy and process. PHA will continue to lead evaluation activities to inform opportunities for operational improvements and identification of areas to be sustained. The goal is to improve performance at the national level and preserve the relevance and integrity of the EPPRD whilst ensuring Parties needs and expectations are met.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Participated in Incidents and PHA roles and responsibilities fulfilled according to the specified terms and timeframes of the EPPRD.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full participation in all Incidents including current response plans:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ chestnut blight◦ citrus canker◦ exotic fruit flies in the Torres Strait◦ <i>Varroa jacobsoni</i>• PHA roles and responsibilities fulfilled for all incidents including current and recently completed response plans.
Parties supported during Incidents to fulfil their roles and responsibilities under the EPPRD.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full support provided to Parties for all Incidents including current and recently completed response plans.
Key findings from implemented debriefs reported to Parties in May 2021.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Findings from implemented debriefs being considered through 2020 review of the EPPRD and outcomes to be discussed with Parties in May 2021.

Non-subscription

Software development and support

Utilising the enhanced BOLT learning management system, PHA will provide low-cost hosting of biosecurity-related eLearning courses developed by industry and government members. This provides members with access to the BOLT platform's functionality and administration support from PHA.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Facilitated hosting of online training courses developed by PHA members through the BOLT system.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Biosecurity for Beekeepers – updated course released in July 2020 and made free to access thanks to funding from AHBIC and state and territory governments.Continued hosting of courses on foot and mouth disease for the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Biosecurity Response Preparedness

National Biosecurity Response Team management

The National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT)  is a cohort of trained and experienced staff with recognised skills in biosecurity emergency responses. NBRT members contribute to responses in their own jurisdictions and are also available for interstate deployment to enhance national response capability and capacity.

PHA sits on the NBRT Advisory Group, along with AHA, the Australian Government and at least two representatives from jurisdictions, to provide guidance to the program. Through this program, members are provided with professional development and response opportunities that build on the training and experience delivered by their own jurisdiction. The program aims to improve response capability nationally and across sectors (plants, animals, aquatic and environmental).

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Contributed to the National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT) program management.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regular attendance and contribution at NBRT advisory group meetings.
Contributed to the planning and delivery of the NBRT activities (recruitment, induction, professional development and exercises).		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contribution to the planning and scheduling of upcoming exercise, Exercise Muster.Management of NBRT bi-monthly webinars.Induction of new member.



PREPAREDNESS

The preparedness area covers activities for identifying, preparing for and managing threats to plant-based agriculture and the environment, as well as managing endemic or regionalised pests.

Primary aims of this key result area include:

- Facilitating the identification of pest risks and corresponding risk mitigation activities.
- Improving national management of establishing pests.
- Facilitating management of nationally significant pests.
- Facilitating a framework for managing exotic weeds and pests of pastures.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

The Plant Biosecurity Preparedness Working Group* (PBPWG) is a new working group that has been formed under the Plant Health Committee. This working group aims to improve priority plant pest and system preparedness through national coordination of government preparedness activities. As a member, PHA supports work to develop a preparedness implementation workplan including actions such as developing plant biosecurity stocktakes, supporting contingency planning, pest specific action plans and providing government input for biosecurity plans.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Participated in Plant Biosecurity Preparedness Working Group meetings and activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active participation in working group meetings.

*This has been added since the approval of the Annual Operational Plan in May 2020 and the KPI is derived from the work schedule of the committee.

Biosecurity planning and review

PHA brings industry and government members together to develop biosecurity plans that improves risk mitigation within each plant industry. These crop or industry specific plans identify, assess, and prioritise biosecurity risks and provide a framework for biosecurity risk mitigation and preparedness. All plans are jointly endorsed by governments and the respective industries. They contain action lists that guide industry and government members in implementing risk mitigation efforts over the life of the plan.

While industry specific biosecurity plans are funded by the relevant research and development corporation, PHA spends time working with PHC and other government groups to ensure plans meet the needs of industry and government.

One of the new elements PHA has introduced into the biosecurity planning process is the development of a biosecurity capability index. These indexes (one for each industry) allow PHA members to quickly see where capability or capacity gaps exist for each industry and enable industries to benchmark themselves against their peers. Although not intended to be anything more than a simple comparison, feedback indicates it is valued by members.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Maintained and updated PHA exotic pest database.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The PHA exotic pest database is updated when each new biosecurity plan version is released.
Prepared proposals for development and review of three biosecurity plans.	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Proposals being developed for relevant funding bodies for biosecurity plans for the cotton, grains, rice and citrus industries.
Biosecurity Capability Index updated after completion of each biosecurity plan.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Biosecurity Capability Index continues to be updated after each Biosecurity Reference Panel.
The Biosecurity Preparedness Portal is updated with the preparedness material for all PHA member plant industries as it becomes available.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The development and initial content population of the Biosecurity Preparedness Portal was completed in mid-2020, and it will continue be updated with new preparedness material as it is created or updated.

Non-subscription

Biosecurity planning and review

Biosecurity plans are updated regularly to identify new pest threats, new pathways and to incorporate changes in biosecurity legislation and risk assessment processes. The inclusion of Biosecurity Reference Panels in the biosecurity planning process also allows for the review of progress against the action items outlined over the life of the biosecurity plan.

This year PHA has been funded to review biosecurity plans for plantation forestry, production nursery and tropical fruit (lychee, papaya and passionfruit) cropping sectors. Reference panels for the avocado, banana, berry (Rubus and strawberry), cherry, ginger, mangoes, onion, plantation forestry, potato, summerfruit, sweetpotatoes, tea tree, vegetable and viticulture industries will be convened.

Biosecurity plans for the citrus, cotton, grains, honey bee, and rice industries are due for review. PHA will continue to work with the peak industry bodies and relevant RDC to facilitate a review of these plans at a time that suits the industry. Members are encouraged to consider development of biosecurity manuals as they provide valuable information to growers about each industry's high priority pests and significant endemic pests.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Biosecurity plans developed or revised for plantation forestry, production nursery and tropical fruit (lychee, papaya and passionfruit) industries.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Technical Expert Group meetings held for tropical fruit industries and production nursery industry.Plantation Forestry Biosecurity Plan endorsed by industry.
Reference panels held for avocado, banana, berry (Rubus and strawberry), cherry, ginger, mangoes, onion, plantation forestry, potato, summer fruit, sweetpotatoes, tea tree, vegetable and viticulture industries.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reference Panels have been held for avocados, ginger, mangoes, onions, potatoes, sweetpotatoes, summerfruit and vegetables.
Project proposals for the honey bee, citrus and grains industries developed.	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agreement in place for the development of a biosecurity plan for the honey bee industry. Proposals are being developed for relevant funding bodies for biosecurity plans for the citrus and grain industries.

Environmental biosecurity planning for mangroves and associated communities

The mangrove biosecurity plan was completed in June 2020. There was a clause in the contract for PHA to run a workshop if the outcomes of the biosecurity plan supported it. PHA has been discussing the workshop with the Australian Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer. There is in principle support with negotiations ongoing.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Workshop to map stakeholders and stakeholder engagement in a mangrove pest response held.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholder mapping activity completed and submitted to Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer.Workshop was delayed due to Covid-19. Planning is underway for workshop in first quarter 2021.

Environmental Biosecurity Assessment of Native Bees

PHA is in discussions with the office of the Australian Chief Environmental Biosecurity Officer to develop a project to consider the threats to Australian native bees and the broader Australian ecosystem. The project will consider the biosecurity risks and pathways that may allow exotic bees or pests to enter Australia and will develop a plan to facilitate cooperation across a broad range of stakeholders. These include environmental groups, native bee groups and the newly formed Australian Native Bee Association. The project will be based around the work PHA has done on acacia biosecurity and the project aims to try and develop agreed priorities and actions to protect the 1700 (approximately) named species of native bees in Australia. These differ significantly to the European honeybee in that they are predominately solitary species.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Biosecurity threat list developed for Australian native bees.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Existing literature reviewed, and a threat list has been consolidated.
Biosecurity risk pathways identified.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Background research to identify risk pathways is in progress.A workshop involving risk pathways experts is planned for early 2021 to confirm identified risks.
Recommendations developed to address potential impacts of pests on native bees.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommendations to address potential impacts of exotic pests on native bees will be developed and provided with the final Environmental Risk Mitigation Plan for Native Bee Species, due December 2021.
Developed appropriate awareness material.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Material is scheduled to be developed after the stakeholder workshop to be held November 2021.
Stakeholder workshop held.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">To be held by November 2021, in line with project milestones.

Biosecurity Programs

National Bee Biosecurity Program

PHA works with the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC)  and each state and territory government on a range of activities which form the National Bee Biosecurity Program.  Funding for this program and the employment of Bee Biosecurity Officers comes primarily from industry with in-kind support provided from each government agency. These activities provide enhanced preparedness of the honey bee industry for exotic bee pests, improved hive management and reducing the impacts of endemic pest and diseases, and support for national and international trade in bees and bee products.

Through this period, bee biosecurity officers have been operating in Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales, Western Australia and Queensland, with work undertaken to replace the bee biosecurity officer in South Australia.

The biosecurity officers continued to assist commercial and amateur beekeepers to implement the Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice,  building beekeeper skills in hive management to reduce the impact of endemic pests along with their ability to recognise exotic bee pests and exotic bees.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Finalised implementation of the program review.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review finalised, with five recommendation areas identified to support improvements in the program.
Managed the workplans of six Bee Biosecurity Officers.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular teleconferences held with officers. All bee biosecurity officer milestone reports have been completed and reviewed. Appointment of a new BBO in South Australia.
Assisted AHBIC with formal phase in of Honey Bee Industry Code of Practice.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bee Biosecurity Officers provided training, awareness material and support to undertake the adoption of the Honey Bee Industry Code of Practice.
Encourage increased level of participation by beekeepers in the online course 'Biosecurity for Beekeepers'.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The online course has been promoted nationally by the biosecurity officers, with a total of 1004 course completions since 1 July 2020.
Supported the National Bee Biosecurity Program Steering Committee.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A NBBP Steering Committee meeting was held in November 2020.
Supported the National Bee Biosecurity Program Harmonisation Committee.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHA presented a paper to the Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access meeting on this topic. The government regulators confirmed bees are now managed in the plant biosecurity area of all agencies and they requested AHBIC confirm their endemic priority pests. AHBIC have been asked to prepare a document outlining their domestic high priority pests.

Bee Health and Resources

The bee health and resources program has run over a number of years. Two national surveys of professional and amateur beekeepers have been done in the last two financial years, and PHA will liaise with AHBIC on the value of continuing annual surveys.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Beekeeper survey undertaken and reported to AHBIC.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of the 2019 Honey Bee Health Survey analysed and findings provided to AHBIC.
BeeAware pest ID app released.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BeeAware pest identification app was not progressed under advice from AgriFutures Australia. PHA has submitted a final report to AgriFutures Australia on this project.

Management of fall armyworm*

Management of the fall armyworm project was a Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) initiative led by Cesar Australia with project partners PHA, Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International, and the Queensland Department of Primary Industries.

Following the fall armyworm incursion in February 2020, and the decision that it was not technically feasible to eradicate, this project sought to inform Australian grains industry the potential impacts of the pest and its management, to minimise potential damage to the industry. A gap analysis of RD&E highlighted research priorities for investment by the Australian grain industry. A 'continuity plan' outlining the management options for fall armyworm was also developed.

The Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (PBRI) supported a series of podcasts featuring first-hand experience and learnings in managing fall armyworm from international experts. The episodes provided insight on the pest's biology and behaviour and exploring how its impacts can be minimised. Interviews with Australian growers, agronomists and researchers on their latest findings and observations were held.

PHA convened a National Fall Armyworm Forum held via Zoom in July 2020, funded by the DAWE. The forum was attended by forty-seven participants from industry, government, and research agencies, including representatives from New Zealand and the private sector. Participants identified gaps and opportunities for further research and development.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Contribution to a final RD&E gap analysis		<ul style="list-style-type: none">PHA submitted literature reviews on key components of an RD&E gap analysis and recommendations to guide future investments.PHA provided information on other activities being undertaken internationally, domestically and across industries, RDCs, jurisdictions and scientific organisations.
National Fall Armyworm Forum		<ul style="list-style-type: none">PHA led the delivery of the National Fall Armyworm Forum (virtual). PHA prepared and submitted a report on new RD&E ideas, gaps, opportunities and areas of collaborative partnerships.
Development a fall armyworm continuity plan for the Australian grains industry.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Fall Armyworm Continuity Plan for the Australian Grains Industry was developed and provided to GRDC. The plan is a reference document to guide industry in developing crop-specific management strategies for FAW within Australian farming systems.
Fall armyworm podcasts		<ul style="list-style-type: none">A series of nine open access podcasts available for download from media platforms were developed and delivered by PHA.

*This project has been added since the approval of the Annual Operational Plan in May 2020 and the KPIs are derived from the project contract.



SURVEILLANCE

Plant pest surveillance is a vital part of the plant biosecurity system. The main benefits of surveillance are twofold. It increases the likelihood of detecting a new exotic pest early and provides a record of evidence of absence of key pests, which can support market access negotiations.

Through engagement with stakeholders from plant industries, government members and the research community, PHA assists the coordination of all components that make up our surveillance system.

Primary aims of the surveillance result area include:

- Facilitating development of effective surveillance plans.
- Establishing surveillance programs for high priority pests.
- Facilitating industry data collection.
- Facilitating surveillance hubs in commercial production areas and peri-urban and urban areas.
- Facilitating farm or regional surveillance reporting systems.
- Supporting work undertaken by the Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

The Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance (SNPHS)  supervises the implementation of the National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy and facilitates the development and implementation of initiatives that promote domestic and international market access. As a member and deputy chair PHA supports work to review and implement the National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy in 2020. The subcommittee is contributing to improving the national collection of information through developing standards for surveillance protocols and data for targeted and general surveillance programs. It coordinates the Plant Surveillance Network Australasia-Pacific (PSNAP) and identifies professional development opportunities that will improve capacity, capability and development of resources for surveillance. As part of the work on SNPHS, PHA also provides a member of the Plant Surveillance Network Working Group (PSNWG).

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Participated in Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance meetings and activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active participation in subcommittee meetings and working groups.• Contributed to the strategic direction of the subcommittee and its activities as deputy Chair.
Participated in the National Plant Health Surveillance Consultative Committee.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This committee has not met during the reporting period.

International programs

The International Plant Sentinel Network (IPSN)  is an Eupresco initiative coordinated by Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) to link botanic gardens and arboreta, National Plant Protection Organisations and plant health scientists around the world. The network aims to provide an early warning system of new and emerging pest and pathogen risks. Member gardens contribute scientific evidence regarding known quarantine organisms and potential new risks to inform plant health activities.

Surveillance will focus on Australian native flora as well as plants important for agricultural production.

PHA co-ordinates the Australian engagement with the IPSN through BGCI alongside Better Border Biosecurity  from New Zealand, creating a joint Australia–NZ network. This links strongly with the non-subscription funded project, Botanic Gardens Surveillance Network (see page 36). PHA's expertise and experience with pest surveillance data sharing platform, AUSPestCheck™, will be part of the PHA input for this project.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Maintained linkages with international stakeholders.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Maintained contact with BGCI.
Developed a surveillance network with Australia's major botanic gardens to assist providing an early warning system of new and emerging pest and pathogen risks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provided support for a new BGCI–IPSN project in Australian and New Zealand botanic gardens and arboreta looking for pests on hosts of interest to the UK.

Software development and support

AUSPestCheck™ and MyPestGuide™

PHA will be working with members to undertake the operational deployment of AUSPestCheck™ for the national collection, visualisation and reporting of plant surveillance data. PHA will also commence the scoping and assessment of requirements for the deployment of MyPestGuide™ as a national app that supports industry, government and community report new pests or provide information on pest absence. Prior to national deployment, PHA will work with government members to develop triage and diagnostic processes within each jurisdiction to enable the transition of MyPestGuide™ into a national system. Data collected using MyPestGuide™ will be collated and aggregated into AUSPestCheck™, to provide data supporting our national surveillance system.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Mechanisms for sustainable funding for the national deployment of AUSPestCheck™ and MyPestGuide™ identified.*		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provided Chair and secretariat for the Systems Working Group, tasked by PHC to determine requirements for national deployment of AUSPestCheck™ and MyPestGuide™.Engaged with PHC members to investigate ongoing operational funding mechanisms for AUSPestCheck™ from July 2021.
Identify requirements for transition of the national deployment of MyPestGuide™ to PHA.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Worked with the PHC Systems Working Group to determine requirements for national deployment of MyPestGuide™.

*The terms AUSPestCheck and MyPestGuide were used in the Annual Operational Plan for KPIs. Both have been trademarked and are now referred to as AUSPestCheck™ and MyPestGuide™ throughout the Mid-Year Performance Report.

Non-subscription

Surveillance programs

Through its engagement with stakeholders from the research community as well as plant industry and government members, PHA assists the coordination of all components that make up our surveillance system. This year PHA will continue to manage or develop several surveillance programs for exotic pests of citrus, forestry, grains, honey bees, and pests that pose a risk to production in the north of Australia.

National Citrus Biosecurity Program

The Australian citrus industry has been strongly engaged in biosecurity for some time and 'Reducing Biosecurity Risks' was identified in the citrus industry's Strategic Investment Plan 2017–21 as one of four key areas for investment. The industry, through Hort Innovation, has invested in a biosecurity preparedness project which includes on surveillance, awareness, capacity building, response, and preparedness activities. It will build biosecurity capacity and technical capability for the citrus industry and develop a nationally coordinated program for surveillance activities for its high priority pests.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Surveillance data for high priority pests of citrus uploaded into AUSPestCheck™ from a minimum of three commercial production regions and two urban sites.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continued to work with citrus to upload 60,000 data records from surveillance undertaken through all commercial citrus production regions as a requirement for export protocols.Uploaded 153 surveillance records from 10 commercial, urban and peri-urban regions as part of the Asian citrus psyllid trapping program.
A minimum of two meetings of the National Citrus Biosecurity Steering Committee held each year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meetings of the National Citrus Biosecurity Steering Committee were held in September and November 2020.The committee was updated on surveillance activities and provided guidance on components of the next program of citrus biosecurity surveillance and preparedness.
Training undertaken with a minimum of three citrus industry groups.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Face-to-face training was postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions.Training guides have been developed and circulated to consultants and crop scouts participating in the Asian citrus psyllid trapping program.

National Forest Pest Surveillance Program

The objective of this project is to progress implementation of the National Forest Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy by facilitating the establishment of a National Forest Pest Surveillance Program. Through work undertaken by the National Forest Surveillance Coordinator, sustainable funding mechanisms will be put in place for surveillance for high priority pests of forests in high-risk sites, urban areas, and commercial plantations.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
National high risk site surveillance program for forest pests operating in three jurisdictions.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work has commenced in NSW, Queensland and Victoria in the national high-risk site surveillance program.• Work has commenced in SA, Tasmania and NT to map hosts of forest pests, provide input into the development of a forest pest reporting app and provide training for stakeholders on forest pest surveillance.• Contract negotiated with WA for development of a forest pest reporting app.
Governance arrangements and a sustainable funding mechanism for the National Forest Biosecurity Program in place.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership of the National Forest Biosecurity Steering Group has been expanded to include government jurisdictions.• A funding calculator has been developed and discussions have commenced with industry and government on the partnership for establishment of the National Forest Biosecurity Program.
A minimum of two meetings of the National Forest Biosecurity Steering Committee* held each year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings of the National Forest Biosecurity Steering Group were held in September and November 2020.

*National Forest Biosecurity Steering Group

National Bee Pest Surveillance Program

The National Bee Pest Surveillance Program (NBPSP) is an early warning system to detect new incursions of exotic bee pests and pest bees. The program involves a range of surveillance methods conducted at sea and airports throughout Australia considered to be the most likely entry points for bee pests and pest bees. The program also supports trade to facilitate the export of queen bees and packaged bees to countries sensitive to a range of bee pests and pest bees. It also provides technical, evidence-based information to support Australia's pest free status claims during export negotiations and assists exporters to meet export certification requirements.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Forty remote catchboxes deployed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of 40 remote catchboxes (RCBs) has been finalised.• An online training session was delivered in November 2020 with staff involved in the NBPSP. Deployment of RCBs to jurisdictions commenced in December 2020.

Nine bee pest surveillance activity periods per state undertaken each year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jurisdictions undertaking surveillance activities every six weeks. Since June 2020, 2,048 surveillance activities for 18 pests have been completed.
A minimum of two meetings of the NBPSP Steering Committee held.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A NBPSP Steering Committee meeting was held in November 2020. Review of the NBPSP completed with 13 recommendations provided to the NBPSP Steering Committee.

National Bee Pest Surveillance Program Enhancements

Funding from the Australian Government is supporting improved data capture from remote catchboxes and establishment of an automated connection from the NBPSP Bee Portal and AUSPestCheck™.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Enhanced web-based data collection system deployed and linked to AUSPestCheck™ from the bee portal* and remote catchboxes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Bee Pests Surveillance Program Portal  for the collection of NBPSP data has been finalised. Upload of data into AUSPestCheck™ is expected to occur in the first quarter of 2021. A website has been developed which provides connection and transmission of data and image files from remote catchboxes, and also allows open and close commands to be sent to each catchbox.

*National Bee Pest Surveillance Program Portal 

Surveillance in northern Australia

Work will be undertaken to investigate funding mechanisms and build partnerships to implement the Tropical Plant Industries Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy. Key stakeholders will be engaged and consulted on surveillance for plant pests in northern Australia through meetings, forums and establishment of a steering group with representatives from industries and governments with a focus in northern Australia. Surveillance and biosecurity awareness training will be delivered to build capacity and capability.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
A Northern Tropical Plant Industries Surveillance Steering Group established and a minimum of two meetings held each year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northern Tropical Industries Surveillance Steering Group has been established and meetings held in August and November 2020.
Training undertaken with a minimum of three industry groups in northern Australia.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A pest identification guide has been developed which provides surveillance and basic exotic pest information for eight tropical industries. The guide will be used for training to commence in the first quarter of 2021.

Botanic Gardens Surveillance Network

Work will continue to engage with the major Australian botanic gardens to develop a network for surveillance in Australia. Ongoing surveillance for pests and diseases of Australian native plants and introduced plant species through a national sentinel program, linked with the International Plant Sentinel Network, will provide significant opportunities for surveillance of species that are important for both commercial production and landscapes.

The Botanic Gardens Biosecurity Network will continue to work with volunteer and community groups within botanic gardens to provide practical information and advice to staff of botanic gardens, community interest groups and members of the public to develop awareness, knowledge and skills to contribute to general biosecurity surveillance activities.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Training undertaken with a minimum of two Botanic Gardens groups each year.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Due to Covid-19, instead of face-to-face training, eight webinars were provided to members of the Botanic Gardens Biosecurity Network, covering a range of topics on biosecurity, surveillance and key pests and diseases.
Botanic Gardens Surveillance Network actively participating in collection of surveillance data.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Participants in the Botanic Gardens Surveillance Network collected 301 absence records for the five target pests.Three surveillance blitzes by the public were held with seven reports made through MyPestGuide™ Reporter.

On-line plant health surveillance training and resources

This project will develop a set of online plant biosecurity surveillance training and awareness resources that can be used by a broad range of stakeholders to build and enhance knowledge and understanding of plant biosecurity surveillance principles. The resources will support surveillance practitioners in the early detection and monitoring of plant pests that threaten Australia's environment and agricultural industries. The resources will be delivered through the Plant Surveillance Network Australasia–Pacific website. 

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Developed a Biosecurity On-line Training module for surveillance.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">A Biosecurity On-line Training module has been developed and will be launched in the first quarter of 2021.
On-line surveillance resources collated for upload to the Plant Surveillance Network Australasia–Pacific website.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">On-line resources including the Biosecurity On-line Training module and three accompanying videos, were available on the Plant Surveillance Network Australasia–Pacific website in January 2021.

Professional development

The Annual Surveillance Workshop will be held in 2021 to continue to build the surveillance network and facilitate the development of plant health surveillance capacity and capability in Australia. In addition, professional development opportunities will be delivered through workshops and a program of residencies to support the Plant Surveillance Network Australasia Pacific.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Annual surveillance workshop held.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The 2020 Annual Surveillance Workshop was held as a 2-day virtual event in December 2020.
Professional development workshop held and training packages developed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of a professional development workshops has been postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions, however, planning and scoping of the workshops is ongoing to enable delivery when restrictions ease.

Software development and support

AUSPestCheck™

PHA will deploy AUSPestCheck™ to provide an accessible national repository of plant biosecurity surveillance data for the National Plant Health Surveillance Program in 2020. Work will also continue to trial AUSPestCheck™ for the collation and provision of animal health surveillance records. The work in the plant and animal sectors will ensure data are provided to nationally agreed standards, with a user-tailored data interrogation and reporting capability that meets plant health and pest status information needs at a domestic and international level.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
AUSPestCheck™ deployed as an accessible national repository and provider of plant biosecurity surveillance data.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The operational version (UAT) of AUSPestCheck™ was released in July 2020.Training was provided to administrators in each government jurisdiction in August 2020.
AUSPestCheck™ tested as a national repository and provider of animal biosecurity surveillance data.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The operational version (UAT) of AUSPestCheck™ was rolled out for jurisdictional animal health surveillance teams to continue the trial in 2020–21. Key stakeholders are testing the system with relevant data.



DIAGNOSTICS

Australia's biosecurity system relies on fast and accurate identification of pests especially where these may be exotic species. Resources are devoted to supporting systems for the network of diagnosticians around Australia and to ensuring that diagnostic tools such as lucid keys and diagnostic protocols exist for key pest threats.

Primary aims of the diagnostics key result area include:

- More diagnostic protocols developed for Australia's priority plant pest threats.
- Australia's diagnostic network enhanced.
- Diagnostician capability improved.
- Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics work supported.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

The Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics (SPHD)  provides national leadership in plant pest diagnostics policy, standards and coordination. As a member, PHA supports work to review and implement the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Strategy, which ensures the ongoing delivery of effective and accurate plant pest biosecurity diagnostics.

PHA leads the delivery of the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network (NPBDN) as the coordinator of the Network Implementation Working Group under SPHD. The network strengthens connections between diagnosticians and provides professional development opportunities to build national capability and capacity.

SPHD also provides national leadership in delivering agreed plant pest diagnostic standards for definitive identification and to support surveillance activities, facilitates the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program and is progressing the implementation of the National Plant Pest Reference Collections Strategy.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Participated in SPHD meetings and activities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active participation in subcommittee meetings and working groups.• A PHA staff member was appointed as one of two deputy chairs for the subcommittee.
Contributed to the strategic direction of SPHD.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributed to the strategic direction of the subcommittee and its activities through coordination of several key projects supporting professional development.

Software development and support

The NPBDN website is the primary mechanism for communication with network members and is the gateway to professional development and enhancement opportunities. PHA hosts the website and administers content, promoting development opportunities for network members.

PHA provides executive support for the Australian Plant Pest Database[©] (APPD) and currently liaises with CSIRO who manage the site. CSIRO's engagement is being discussed with overall management potentially returning to PHA. PHA maintains the user registrations and policy issues around APPD. APPD is the national collated view of individual reference collection databases that include plant pest voucher specimens and is the first point of reference in all new plant pest detections in Australia, providing supporting evidence for pest status determination and identifying specimens to aid in plant pest diagnostics. PHA works as a member of the APPD Steering Committee and SPHD to improve the utilisation of the system.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
APPD used to inform pest status in suspect EPP Incidents.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">APPD is routinely searched for plant pests notified to the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests.
NPBDN website available to members and regularly updated.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Website content has been updated regularly as well as minor revisions to the website accessibility and functionality.

Non-subscription

Software development and support

Redevelopment of the Australian Plant Pest Database

PHA is negotiating with the DAWE for a contract to investigate the most cost-effective way to manage APPD. An exploratory workshop will be held with stakeholders on the value they see in APPD and the features it should include.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Workshop held.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">PHA held two workshops with the end-users and managers of the reference collections that link into APPD to determine the functional requirements for a redeveloped APPD.
Plans for future development agreed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">A contract for the redevelopment of APPD has been secured, with work to commence in the first quarter of 2021.

Redevelopment of PaDIL

PaDIL (Pest and Disease Image Library) is a valuable tool that provides high quality diagnostic images of plant pests. PHA is one of the four owners of PaDIL IP and is working with the other PaDIL owners to ensure its ongoing delivery and the implementation of appropriate image standards.

PHA has been commissioned by DAWE to transfer PaDIL into the PHA IT systems. In undertaking this task PHA will work with a steering committee comprising the four original parties (DAWE, Museum Victoria, WA Agriculture and PHA) to determine enhancements for the system. Key stakeholders and end-users will also be engaged by PHA as part of this activity, with a revised PaDIL site to be launched during the year.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
PaDIL transferred to the PHA IT systems.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Transfer of the PaDIL code, text and images to the PHA operating environment is complete and URL redirection in place.
Workshop on IT enhancements held.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Two workshops with key stakeholder groups and the project steering committee were held in December 2020 to identify and refine the required IT enhancements for the PaDIL site.
IT enhancements developed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhancements to the PaDIL site have been undertaken in accordance with advice from the project steering committee. Text and logos have been updated and broken links and functions fixed. The PaDIL site code is outdated and any further functional changes will require a rebuild using new code. A scoping activity to ascertain the requirements of rebuilding PaDIL has been undertaken and a proposal provided to DAWE for consideration.
Revised site launched.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The refreshed PaDIL site was launched in December 2020 and increased use of the site has been promoted through PHAs networks and communication channels.

Biosecurity response preparedness

Development of National Diagnostic Protocols

National Diagnostic Protocols (NDPs) provide instructions for the definitive taxonomic identification of plant pests or groups of plant pests and are the agreed procedures to use in the event of a suspect EPP detection. Specific information on diagnostics to support surveillance is now included in the protocols to guide high throughput and field diagnostic activities. The protocols are developed by experts from the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network and endorsed by SPHD. PHA will work with the NDP Coordinator and SPHD to identify gaps and facilitate the development of new protocols for pests on the National Priority Plant Pest list or the Environmental Priority Pest list, and update of existing protocols as required.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Facilitated the development or review of National Diagnostic Protocols for agreed National Priority Plant Pests.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Two new NDPs have been uploaded to the NPBDN website.Four NDPs have been reviewed and revised.Two draft NDPs for eight pests have been submitted for review.Development of two new NDPs for five pests has commenced.

Proficiency testing of diagnostic laboratories

Verification of the Australian diagnostic system's reliability occurs through the delivery of the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program, which is run by the Australian National Quality Assurance Program under the guidance of SPHD. The proficiency testing program tests the ability of Australian diagnostic laboratories to reach the correct plant pest identification in blind testing. PHA supports this program by facilitating the provision of verified plant pest samples to the testing program prior to distribution to laboratories.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Facilitated the provision of samples to the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Seven sample panels have been identified for delivery in 2020.Review has been undertaken of specimen preparation documentation to facilitate national participation for provision of samples to the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program.

Implementation of the National Plant Pest Reference Collections Strategy

PHA is supporting the implementation of the National Plant Pest Reference Collections Strategy, in conjunction with the Reference Collections Implementation Plan Working Group of SPHD and Agriculture Victoria. The specimens of National Priority Plant Pests available in Australian reference collections are being analysed and guidance provided on the need to fill any gaps. This project will also look at developing standards for curation and vouchering of specimens in the collections.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Facilitated the analysis of reference sample coverage and needs for National Priority Plant Pests.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The coverage of NPPPs in the major plant biosecurity reference collections has been assessed and critical specimen gaps identified.
Developed a strategy for the development of curation and vouchering standards.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">National and international curation and vouchering standards have been reviewed and project pathways proposed.

Professional development

NPBDN Professional Development Framework

The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network Professional Development Framework, which is endorsed by SPHD, articulates specific activities that target identified gaps in diagnostic capability and capacity.

Under this framework PHA facilitates the delivery and evaluation of activities, including the Diagnostic Residential Program, pest- or technique-specific training workshops, and the well-regarded Annual Diagnostician's Workshop.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Led the delivery of the Annual Diagnostician's Workshop and training workshops.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Planning for the Annual Diagnostician's Workshop 2021 has commenced, with timing deferred to late 2021 to provide an opportunity for delivery as a face-to-face meeting.
Facilitated the delivery of the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network Professional Development Framework.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">A survey of NPBDN members was completed to identify professional development requirements.The ninth round of the residential program was advertised, with three residential placements awarded and a further two under consideration.

Rural Research for Profit – Boosting Diagnostic Capacity for Plant Production Industries*

The 'Boosting Diagnostics' project is managed by the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) and funded by all RDCs, the Australian, state and territory governments, the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research, Bio-Protection Research Centre of Lincoln University, AUSVEG, Cesar Australia and PHA.

The project aims to

- generate knowledge, technologies, products or processes that benefit primary producers
- strengthen pathways to extend the results of rural RD&E, including understanding the barriers to adoption
- establish and foster industry and research collaboration that forms the basis of ongoing innovation and growth of Australia and New Zealand agriculture.

PHA is a member of the RR4P – Boosting Diagnostics Steering Committee. Funding has been provided to plan and deliver a training workshop for diagnostician to increase understanding of in-field collection methods, identification of specimens and exchange of best practice methods and lessons learned. The workshop will be delivered in 2021–22.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
A field-based training workshop planned for diagnostician to build identification skills.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The workshop planning committee, led by PHA, has met twice and agreed on the workshop aim, objectives, scope, target audience and workshop title 'Pest Blitz', and has commenced defining the project activities.

*This project has been added since the approval of the Annual Operational Plan in May 2020 and the KPIs are derived from the project contract.



RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION

PHA invests in coordinating the planning and implementation of plant biosecurity research, development and extension (outreach) or RD&E. This ensures that plant biosecurity science carried out in Australia delivers maximum benefit.

PHA contributes some funding from subscriptions in addition to non-subscription funding.

Key aims of the RD&E area include:

- Facilitating the implementation of the Agriculture Senior Officers Committee Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy.
- Holding workshops to agree RD&E priorities.
- Monitoring RD&E activities, capability and capacity.
- Facilitating funding for more plant biosecurity science.

Member subscription and non-subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA developed a cross sectoral National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy^④ in 2013–14 for the Primary Industries Standing Committee, now the Agriculture Senior Officers Committee (AGSOC).^⑤

PHA had also provided the chair, strategy leader and an executive officer support for the strategy which was sponsored by Hort Innovation and Agriculture Victoria. The strategy aims to enable effective management of economic, environmental and social risks posed by pests that may enter, emerge, establish or spread within Australia, by strengthening biosecurity RD&E for Australia's plant industries and those dependent on them.

PHA has proposed a review of the RD&E strategy to work with parties in the biosecurity RD&E space to understand and align their future roles. There has been significant development in the plant biosecurity RD&E landscape since the strategy was originally written. This includes the formation of the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative (see page 45), and the involvement of NBC and its subcommittees in developing RD&E priorities. PHC now spends significant time at each meeting discussing RD&E priorities. In addition, the DAWE is developing RD&E needs around the top 42 National Priority Plant Pests. The NBC Environmental and Invasive Committee has also developed an Environment and Community Biosecurity RD&E Strategy.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Liaised with stakeholders to determine future role of strategy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy Implementation Committee meeting held in September 2020 to consider future options.
Executive support provided to the satisfaction of the committee.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PHA support to workshops, reports and committee meetings provided as required.
Reported to AGSOC Research and Innovation Committee on time.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfied AGSOC R&I reporting requirements through stocktake reports.
Attended Strategy Leaders Forums and presented to AGSOC R&I Committee.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AGSOC R&I committee postponed the Strategy Leaders Forum to a date to be advised.
Completed strategy revision.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy Implementation Committee still considering collective interest and commitment in reviewing the RD&E strategy and considering future options.

RDC partnership: Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative

Through the Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative seven plant based rural RDCs, DAWE and PHA are collaborating to streamline funding and improve the coordination of plant biosecurity programs. The RDCs include Wine Australia®, Forest Wood Products Australia®, Cotton Research and Development Corporation®, Grains Research and Development Corporation®, Agrifutures Australia®, Sugar Research Australia® and Hort Innovation®.

This year, PHA's CEO will be the Chair of PBRI from January to March 2021. PHA will work with this initiative directly and through its work on the National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy. An aspect of this work is collaboration with Euphresco in Europe and Better Border Biosecurity (B3)® New Zealand.

PHA supports PBRI assists implementation of the AGSOC cross sectoral plant biosecurity strategy.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Attended all agreed meetings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Two quarterly meetings were attended online in August and December 2020. The PHA CEO is Chair for the first quarter of 2021 in a new rotating Chair arrangement.
Provided advice to the Program Director.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advice on strategy and investment priorities for the PBRI has been provided in four online strategy and research prioritisation workshops.
Ensured PBRI work is aligned to national priorities identified through the AGSOC National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The PBRI members were invited and contributed to a National Plant Biosecurity RD&E strategy meeting. The PBRI strategy mid-term review has been finalised and aligns to the RD&E Strategy.
Strong project based engagement with Euphresco and B3.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The MOU with B3 NZ was renewed for a further three years in December 2020, after both parties agreed that the partnership had been productive. A greater focus on a more strategic approach to research development will occur over the next three years.The PBRI members will develop an Australian program for the B3 Conference held in Wellington in May 2021.Monthly meetings are held with the Euphresco Coordinator as part of the MOU with PBRI. Through the MOU, an Australian Xylella vector project has been formally linked to a Euphresco project led by SASA (Science Advice for Scottish Agriculture).A new MOU was signed with ACIAR in December 2020 to develop RD&E with ACIAR partner countries targeting capacity building for common pests such as the fall armyworm. In March 2021, shared research priorities will be discussed for further development.



COMPANY HEALTH

Sound management of PHA entails running the organisation with probity and in the interests of members. Transparent operating procedures, efficient business systems and maintaining expert and professional staff are major components in successful company management.

Good company health encompasses systems of governance relating to financial control, risk management, business processes and people that combine to enable PHA to fulfil its commitments to members.

Member subscription

Board management

PHA has a skills-based Board⁶ comprising no less than five and no more than nine directors. The Board has three formal subcommittees – the Finance and Audit Committee (F&AC), the People and Culture Committee (P&CC), and the Board Selection Committee – with other subcommittees established from time-to-time to undertake specific tasks.

The Board management budget area covers expenses associated with directors complying with company duties. This includes travel and accommodation, the Board selection process, operating Board committees and management and administration costs of arranging, supporting and attending meetings of PHA, the Board and its committees.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
Performance of PHA meets members' expectations.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A very positive member satisfaction survey was undertaken in 2018. A similar survey will occur in the first half of 2021.There has been no feedback received to indicate that performance does not meet expectations
Legal and Constitutional compliance requirements met.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All legal and constitutional compliance requirements were met.
Board satisfied with PHA secretariat support and follow up of Board meetings, F&AC meetings and other meetings attended by directors.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Support has met expectations of the Board.
Attendance of the PHA Board at over 80% of requested member and stakeholder meetings.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Director attendance at relevant meetings has exceeded the KPI.
Commence the 2021 Board Selection process.	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none">This is scheduled to commence at the February 2021 Board meeting.

Company finance and administration

The Company Finance and Administration area encompasses activities devoted to managing and maintaining PHA's capabilities to meet the business objectives outlined in the PHA Strategic Plan and Annual Operational Plan.

Expenditure relates to financial management and administration, internal and external audits, company performance reporting, human resource management, staff development and training, information services, travel costs, regulatory compliance, and legal and other professional advice on matters of corporate management.

Key performance indicators	Status	Achievements
All legal and Constitutional obligations met.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">All obligations were met.
Company Risk Management Plan reviewed quarterly and considered as a standing item for PHA Board and F&AC Meetings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Risk Management Plan has been regularly updated by the Executive Management Committee and subsequently reviewed at each F&AC and Board meeting.
Company Human Resources Plan reviewed and updated annually and presented to the Board.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The plan was reviewed by the Board at the November 2020 Board meeting.Board succession is to be discussed at the February 2021 Board meeting.
Annual financial statements externally audited and declared accurate and compliant.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">EY resigned as external auditor and have been replaced by Synergy.The 2020 financial statements and notes received a clean audit report from Synergy.
Internal audit program schedule met and findings addressed.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">The 2019–20 internal audit program was deferred to this financial year due to Covid-19 restrictions.Two internal audits will take place this financial year.
PHA's 2021–22 budget and AOP presented to members and subscriptions agreed in May 2021.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">AOP and budget preparation is in progress and on time.
The partnership between PHA and AHA continues.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cooperation between the two companies continues with a solid partnership in the areas of emergency response training, the Farm Biosecurity Program and communication.
Assistance provided to members with implementation and management of statutory biosecurity levies.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">PHA continues to work with members and the Commonwealth to establish statutory biosecurity levies as required.



Improving national biosecurity
outcomes through partnerships

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