

CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

Welcome to the 22nd Annual General Meeting of Plant Health Australia held both in-person in Canberra and virtually for those unable to attend in-person.

Before we begin, I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of our country. Today, I come to you from Ngunnawal land, and we pay our respect to their elders, past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

On the agenda for today are the Directors' Report, Financial Statements and Independent Audit Report for the financial year ending 30 June 2022. A presentation from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Executive Management Team updating you on delivery of the actions and key performance indicators detailed in the 2022-23 Annual Operational Plan will be provided, with an ordinary resolution on Director's remuneration before we commence preliminary discussions on the preparation of next year's Annual Operational Plan.

CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS

Throughout 2022, we've continued to bring stakeholders together to invest in and strengthen Australia's plant biosecurity system. Similarly, we've continued to cultivate strong member relationships through various virtual, hybrid and face-to-face meetings, webinars, forums and communications, designed to keep you, our members, informed and involved in the setting, implementation and uptake of company activities and objectives.

In our recently published 2022 Annual Report, we documented milestones and achievements against the key performance areas under the 2016-21 Strategic Plan. The 2022-27 Strategic Plan, which was launched last November, and operationalised under the 2022-23 Annual Operational Plan, builds on our role as the trusted coordinator of the Australian plant biosecurity system with activities designed to generate solutions that improve biosecurity outcomes to ensure the system is future-orientated and solutions-focused. The new five-year strategy sets PHA's direction until 2027 and considers challenges and opportunities that may present in the coming years. These include changing trading patterns and supply chains; shifts in geopolitics; merging of pest and disease regions; and climate and land-use changes. These drivers and the cumulative effects of multiple incursions all impact the future of plant biosecurity and have been considered in formulating the new strategy.

Last September, we advised our Member base of the proposed amendments to the Plant Health Australia (Plant Industries) Funding Act 2002. These amendments achieved full support in the House of Representatives in February, and we continue to work with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to see these amendments through the Australian Parliament.

In September, PHA prepared a submission and was called to attend the public hearing for the Senate Inquiry into the adequacy of Australia's biosecurity measures and response preparedness with a focus on Foot and Mouth Disease and Varroa mite. CEO Sarah Corcoran and General Manager Dr Susanna Driessen, provided information on our current honey bee surveillance programs, funding and the impact of Varroa mite on the honey bee industry. We also provided support to the Plant Industries Forum submission and other plant industry members' submissions.

We are all aware that Australia's biosecurity system is facing increased pressure and that building and strengthening our biosecurity system, requires long-term sustainable funding. This is why PHA has prepared a submission to DAFF's 'Have your say' on making national biosecurity funding sustainable, addressing our industry and government members concerns regarding the current significant funding constraints for plant biosecurity and the inequity in investment despite plant industries being responsible for an estimated 57% of production in the 2021-22 year.

Each year the Board requests Internal Audits be carried out to ensure the accuracy and integrity of PHA's financial position. In addition to the year-end financial audit, a cyber security and an internal audit are also undertaken most years.

In the next few months, a Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plan audit will be completed. This will test the effectiveness of our preparedness for possible adverse events and assist in identifying areas where more effort is required.

Since a cyber security audit was completed in July 2021, we have been busy improving our defences against attacks. Another cyber security audit is currently being performed to test the effectiveness of our improvements and provide direction on future enhancements. This is quite timely given recent high profile cyber security breaches.

In respect of finance, completed audits have provided assurance over the accuracy and completeness of financial records and compliance with relevant legislative requirements.

We have commissioned Kynetec, an agricultural market research company to conduct the 2022 PHA member survey. Our member survey seeks to evaluate PHA's performance specifically against our Strategic Plan and priorities as well as the implementation of programs, initiatives, communications and engagements. The survey will also help us better understand what our members see as the most important biosecurity challenges ahead. The survey is currently underway and is expected to be completed by the end of the week.

The Board selection process will commence mid-to late next year. In line with our company constitution, Director appointment is done by the Selection Committee which is comprised of five people: the Chairperson, two plant industry representatives and two government member representatives. More information on the selection process can be found in our company constitution which is available on our website.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the PHA team for their continued commitment to building a strong and resilient plant biosecurity system. I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work that our CEO, Sarah Corcoran, has achieved. She has not only expertly navigated COVID-19 related challenges and risks associated with maintaining business continuity, but built an internal culture of excellence, transparency and care that has reinvigorated the team to once again, deliver solid results.

Finally, a big thank you to our valued members for your continued partnership and commitment to improve plant biosecurity for the benefit of the economy, environment and community. The company's achievements over the past 12 months could not have been made without your support and input.

- **Steve McCutcheon**