

PART 1 EPP response management

Disclaimer and warranty

This publication is not legal or professional advice and should not be taken as a substitute for obtaining proper legal or other professional advice. This publication is not intended for use by any person who does not have appropriate expertise in the subject matter of the work. Before using this publication, you should read it in full, consider its effect and determine whether it is appropriate for your needs. This publication was created in December 2021. Laws, practices and regulations may have changed since that time. You should make your own inquiries as to the currency of any relevant laws, practices and regulations that may have changed since publication of this work.

No warranty is given as to the correctness of the information contained in this work, or of its suitability for use by you. To the fullest extent permitted by law, Plant Health Australia and the other contributing parties to the work:

- are not liable for any statement or opinion, or for any error or omission, contained in this work;
- disclaim all warranties with regard to the information contained in this work including, without limitation, all implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose; and
- are not liable for any direct, indirect, special or consequential losses or damages of any kind, or loss of profit, loss or corruption of data, business interruption or indirect costs, arising out of or in connection with the use of this work or the information contained in it, whether such loss or damage arises in contract, negligence, tort, under statute, or otherwise.

Contents

Contents	i
Revision history	iii
Acronyms	vi
Terms and definitions	vii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose	1
1.2 Structure	1
1.3 Scope and application	3
1.3.1 Application of the EPPRD for near border detections.....	3
1.3.2 Management of linked and unlinked Incidents	3
1.4 Management of PLANTPLAN	3
2. Structure and management of an EPP response	5
2.1 Biosecurity legislation	5
2.2 National decision making during a response	5
2.2.1 National Management Group	5
2.2.2 Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests	6
2.2.3 Scientific Advisory Panel.....	6
2.3 National resourcing arrangements	6
2.3.1 National Biosecurity Response Team.....	6
2.3.2 Interstate deployment arrangements for biosecurity responses	6
2.4 National communication arrangements	7
2.4.1 National Biosecurity Communication and Engagement Network.....	7
2.4.2 Biosecurity Incident Public Information Manual.....	7
2.5 Incident management system	7
2.5.1 National incident management.....	9
2.5.2 State/Territory incident management.....	9
2.5.3 Incident Management Team.....	10
2.6 Laboratories dealing with EPPs	11
2.6.1 Laboratory standards.....	11
2.6.2 Control of access to and movements within the laboratory.....	11
2.6.3 Managing samples and recording of data from diagnostic tests.....	11
2.7 Information management systems	12
3. Phases of an EPP response	13

3.1	Investigation and alert phase.....	13
3.1.1	Notification of an Incident and initial actions.....	14
3.1.2	Convening the CCEPP.....	15
3.1.3	Situation reporting.....	15
3.1.4	Diagnostics.....	15
3.1.5	Determining the extent of the Incident.....	16
3.1.6	Emergency Containment measures	17
3.1.7	Communication and public information.....	18
3.1.8	Decision on eradication or alternative action	19
3.1.9	Incident termination process during the investigation and alert phase	27
3.1.10	Relief and recovery	27
3.2	Operational phase	27
3.2.1	Response Plan implementation and progress.....	28
3.2.2	Coordination of Cost Sharing.....	29
3.2.3	Communication and public information.....	29
3.2.4	Finalisation of an eradication program	30
3.2.5	Relief and recovery	30
3.3	Stand down phase	30
3.3.1	Review of intra and interstate quarantine arrangements.....	31
3.3.2	Communication and public information.....	31
3.3.3	Finalisation of Cost Sharing, financial audit and determination of total costs	31
3.3.4	Incident debriefs.....	32
3.3.5	Relief and Recovery	32
3.4	Transition to Management Phase.....	32
3.4.1	Commencement of the Transition to Management Phase	33
3.4.2	Revision and approval of the Response Plan.....	33
3.4.3	Response Plan implementation.....	33
3.4.4	Coordination of Cost Sharing.....	33
3.4.5	Communication and public information.....	34
3.4.6	Finalisation of the Transition to Management Phase	34
3.4.7	Finalisation of Cost Sharing, financial audit and determination of total costs	34
3.4.8	Transition to Management debrief	34

Revision history

Version	Date issued	Amendment Details	
		Section(s)	Details
1.0	5 Dec 2013	All	<p>Full review of entire document. Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation of main PLANTPLAN document and appendices into supporting documents. • Alignment with BIMS. • Full reformat.
2.0	17 Dec 2014	All	<p>Full review of entire document. Key sections/topic areas edited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement restrictions • Communication and public information • Feasibility of eradication (including incorporation of technical feasibility criteria from NEBRA) • Response Plan trigger points • Accounting and reporting • Abbreviations (new table added) • Terms and Definitions (acronyms column removed, definition source added)
2.1	6 Jan 2016	All	<p>Review of sections of document. Sections/topics edited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EPP categorisation (flow diagram moved to section 4.1.6) • Communication and public information • Decision on eradication or alternative action • Decision on EPP status (new section) • Terms and Definitions • Appendix 1: Register of supporting documents (update) • Minor formatting and editing throughout for clarity
3.0	29 Nov 2016	All	<p>Full review of entire document. Key sections/topic areas edited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporation of the Transition to Management Phase (section 4.5) and reference to the phase throughout the document where relevant. • Communication and public information • Addition of reference to phased responses • Terms and Definitions • Appendix 1: Register of supporting documents (update) • Minor reformatting and editing throughout for clarity
3.1	30 Nov 2017	All	<p>Full review of entire document. Key sections/topic areas edited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource documents • National resourcing (new section) • Communication and public information • Incident termination process during the investigation and alert phase • Response Plan implementation and progress • Transition to Management Phase • Terms and Definitions • Appendix 1: Register of supporting documents (update) • Minor reformatting and editing throughout for clarity

3.2	30 Nov 2018	All	<p>Full review of entire document. Key sections/topic areas edited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of linked and unlinked Incidents (new section) • CCEPP seeking of advice and Scientific Advisory Panels • Roles and responsibilities of Parties • Minor edits to Figure 1 to ensure consistency with BIMS • Communication and public information • Phased responses and Response Plan trigger points • Incident debriefing • Transition to Management Phase (update), and finalisation of the Transition to Management Phase (new section) • Appendix 1: Register of supporting documents (update) • Minor editing throughout for clarity
3.3	26 Nov 2019	All	<p>Full review of entire document. Key sections/topic areas edited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry Liaison • Confirmatory diagnosis • Technical feasibility of eradication criteria (Table 2) • Relief and recovery • Transition to Management Phase (addition of subheadings and update) • Terms and definitions (update) • Appendix 1: Register of supporting documents (update) • Minor editing throughout for clarity
4.0	8 Dec 2021	All	<p>Holistic review and restructure of entire document. Key changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update of copyright and disclaimer • Update of terms and definitions and acronyms • Revision to the management of PLANTPLAN with all Parts of PLANTPLAN including PLANTPLAN documentation (previously referred to as supporting documents) managed under the same process • Removal of content duplicated within the EPPRD or no longer consistent with scope of PLANTPLAN including information on EPP categorisation, biosecurity preparedness, planning and training • Removal of the stand-alone sections on roles and responsibilities of Parties and communication and integration of relevant content into the phases of a response • Expansion of existing content on the incident management system including addition of description of response centre functions • Removal of relief and recovery as a stand-alone phase and addition of a new section with expanded content on relief and recovery in each relevant phase of a response • Clarification of existing content related to the following topic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Situation and expenditure reporting – Governance arrangements for implementation of Transition to Management – CCEPP processes related to seeking advice from Plant Health Committee subcommittees • Streamlining of content throughout to remove information duplicated within PLANTPLAN documents • Minor editing throughout for clarity

4.1	13 December 2022	All	<p>Full review and following key amendments made to reflect relevant variations to the EPPRD adopted October 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update of terms and definitions• Updating cross references to EPPRD clauses• Clarifying that Owner Reimbursement Costs may also be applicable in the absence of a Response Plan• Adding references to 'Vector' as appropriate• Clarifying that Transition to Management may cover a period of more than 12 months under exceptional circumstance if agreed <p>Minor editorial changes throughout for clarity.</p>
-----	------------------	-----	--

Acronyms

Acronym	Term
ACPPO	Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer
BIMS	Biosecurity Incident Management System
CPHM	Chief Plant Health Manager
CCEPP	Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests
CA	Control Area
EPP	Emergency Plant Pest
EPPRD	Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed
ILC	Industry Liaison Coordinator
ILO	Industry Liaison Officer
IMT	Incident Management Team
IP	Infected Premises
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
LCC	Local Control Centre
NBCEN	National Biosecurity Communication and Engagement Network
NCC	National Coordination Centre
NDP	National Diagnostic Protocol
NMG	National Emergency Plant Pest Management Group (National Management Group)
ORC	Owner Reimbursement Costs
PIDS	Preliminary Information Data Sheet
PHA	Plant Health Australia
RA	Restricted Area
SAP	Scientific Advisory Panel
SCC	State Coordination Centre
SDQMA	Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access
SPHD	Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics

Terms and definitions

Term	Definition	Definition source
Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer	The individual, holding the position of the Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer of the Commonwealth of Australia.	EPPRD
Biosecurity	A set of measures designed to protect a Crop, Crops or sub-group of Crops from Plant Pests and Vectors at national, regional and individual farm levels.	EPPRD
Chief Plant Health Manager	The individual, holding the position of Chief Plant Health Manager (CPHM) (or the equivalent role), of a State or Territory.	EPPRD
Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests	The committee of technical representatives of the Parties convened according to Parts 2 and 3 of Schedule 8 of the EPPRD.	EPPRD
Contact Premises	Premises (or locality) containing susceptible host plants which are known to have been in direct or indirect contact with an Infected Premises.	BIMS glossary
Control Area	An area around the restricted area where movement is controlled but not restricted. The area is intended to reduce likelihood of the Plant Pest spreading beyond the Restricted Area.	BIMS glossary
Cost Sharing	The process of proportional funding of Shared Costs by Government Parties and Industry Parties, as described in the EPPRD.	EPPRD
debrief	A meeting at the end of an operation with the purpose of assessing the conduct or result of an operation.	BIMS glossary
decontamination	A combination of physical and/or chemical processes that kills or removes infectious agents from media, water, equipment and people. Includes all stages of cleaning and disinfection.	BIMS glossary
delimiting survey	Surveillance conducted to establish the boundaries of an area considered to be infested by or free from a Plant Pest.	International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures 5
Emergency Containment	A set of measures (which may include the use of Quarantine) that are implemented by a Lead Agency in response to an Incident in order to try to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) restrict an EPP (or a Plant Pest or a Vector reasonably believed to be an EPP) to a defined area; and (b) preserve the opportunity for eradication of that EPP, Plant Pest or Vector. 	EPPRD
Emergency Plant Pest	Refer to definition in clause 1.1 of the EPPRD.	EPPRD
Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed	Government and Plant Industry Cost Sharing Deed in respect of Emergency Plant Pest Responses.	EPPRD

Term	Definition	Definition source
Formal Notification to the CCEPP	Occurs when a State or Territory Chief Plant Health Manager notifies the Chair of the CCEPP, either orally or in writing, that an Incident has occurred within that State or Territory. Written notification must be used to confirm oral advice and must be in the form agreed from time to time by the Parties.	EPPRD
Forward Command Post	A field operations centre, subsidiary to a Local Control Centre.	BIMS glossary
Incident	Means: (a) a confirmed occurrence of, or reasonably held suspicion of the occurrence of an EPP; or (b) the occurrence of an uncategorised Plant Pest or Vector which is reasonably believed to be an EPP (not including circumstances in which an investigation comes to a provisional finding or diagnosis that the Plant Pest or Vector is already established in Australia).	EPPRD
Industry Party	Any member of Plant Health Australia that both represents a Cropping Sector and is a signatory to the EPPRD, and Industry Parties means two or more of them, as determined by the context.	EPPRD
Infected Premises	Premises (or locality) at which an EPP is confirmed or believed to exist.	BIMS glossary
Lead Agency	The agency of a State(s) or Territory responsible for leading the conduct of the response to an Incident within their State or Territory. For clarity, there may be more than one Lead Agency (each from a different State or Territory) for an Incident.	EPPRD
Local Control Centre	The operations centre from which all field operations aimed at containing and eradicating the EPP are managed in a defined area.	BIMS glossary
National Coordination Centre	The centre established by the Australian Government Department responsible for biosecurity ¹ to coordinate national and international activities and resource support to jurisdictions.	BIMS glossary
National Emergency Plant Pest Management Group (National Management Group)	The group with the constitution and role set out in Part 1 of Schedule 8 of the EPPRD.	EPPRD
Owner Reimbursement Costs	Has the meaning given in Part 4.4 of Schedule 6 of the EPPRD.	EPPRD

¹ The Australian Government Department responsible for biosecurity is referred to as "the Australian Government" throughout PLANTPLAN

Term	Definition	Definition source
pest free area	An area which a specific pest is known not to occur as demonstrated by scientific evidence and in which, where appropriate, this condition is being officially maintained.	BIMS glossary
Plant Pest	Any species, biotype or strain of invertebrate pest or pathogen that meets each of the following criteria: (a) It is injurious to Plant Health, Unprocessed Plant Products, Bees or Fungi. (b) It is discrete, identifiable and genetically stable. (c) It is not a genetically modified organism.	EPPRD
Response Plan	An integrated plan for undertaking a response to one or more EPPs that is: (a) in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the EPPRD, developed by one or more State or Territory CPHM(s), endorsed by the CCEPP and approved by the NMG; and (b) subject to Cost Sharing in accordance with the EPPRD. The Response Plan may include Emergency Containment actions so as to enable the payment of Owner Reimbursement Costs and Cost Sharing if considered appropriate by the CCEPP and approved by the NMG.	EPPRD
Restricted Area(s)	A relatively small area (compared to a Control Area) around an Infected Premises that is subject to intense surveillance and movement controls.	BIMS glossary
Scientific Advisory Panel	A panel of experts which may be appointed by the CCEPP to provide specific technical information on matters relating to an Incident.	
Shared Costs	Those costs that are shared by the Parties as described in clause 9 of the EPPRD.	EPPRD
State Coordination Centre	The emergency operations centre established at a state level, that coordinates the EPP control operations to be undertaken in that state or territory.	BIMS glossary
surveillance	Activities to investigate the presence or prevalence of a Plant Pest in a plant or plant product(s) (including bees and their hives) or in the environment.	BIMS glossary
Suspect Premises	Premises (or locality) containing plants which may have been exposed to an EPP and which will be subject to quarantine and intense surveillance.	BIMS glossary
tracing	The process of locating plants, plant material, persons, or things which may be implicated in the spread of an EPP.	BIMS glossary
Transition to Management	The undertaking of activities to transition the management of an EPP from seeking to achieve eradication of the EPP under a Response Plan to management of the EPP outside of the EPPRD.	EPPRD

Term	Definition	Definition source
Vector	Means any species, biotype or strain of invertebrate pest that meets each of the following criteria: (a) It carries and transmits a Plant Pest to a Crop. (b) It is discrete, identifiable and genetically stable. (c) It is not a genetically modified organism.	EPPRD

1. Introduction

Australia is fortunate to be free of many of the world's most destructive plant pests that are common elsewhere; a benefit that confers significant advantage to Australian agriculture. An Emergency Plant Pest (EPP) could cause serious production losses, jeopardise exports of plant and plant products or have serious implications to the environment, amenity values or regional communities.

To effectively respond to an EPP, a formal and legally binding agreement – the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) – has been agreed between Plant Health Australia (PHA), the Australian Government, all state and territory governments and national plant industry body signatories (collectively EPPRD Parties; referred to hereafter as 'Parties'). The EPPRD covers the management and funding of responses to EPPs, including the potential for Owner Reimbursement Costs (ORCs) for Owners, and formalises the role of Parties in decision making as well as their contribution towards the costs. Under the EPPRD, beneficiaries of the eradication of an EPP pay an appropriate and equitable proportion to the costs of mounting a response, based on an assessment of the relative public and private benefits of eradication.

PLANTPLAN is part of schedule 5 to the EPPRD, is endorsed by all Parties and supports operational implementation of the EPPRD in response to an Incident.

1.1 Purpose

PLANTPLAN provides nationally consistent guidelines for managing a response to an Incident at national, state/territory and local levels, describing the national procedures, management structures and information flow systems. Each phase of the response (investigation and alert, operational, stand down and Transition to Management Phase) and key roles and responsibilities of Industry and government Parties during each of these phases are specified. PLANTPLAN documentation includes guidelines, job cards, procedures and forms/templates which provide more detailed nationally consistent guidance on response procedures, roles/responsibilities in an Incident or address national gaps in operational response elements.

PLANTPLAN incorporates best practice in EPP responses and is consistent with contemporary incident management systems which are widely recognised and used throughout Australia for managing incidents. This includes the approach under the *Biosecurity Incident Management System (BIMS)*, endorsed by the National Biosecurity Committee for use when responding to biosecurity incidents. Further information and copies of the BIMS document are available from agriculture.gov.au.

1.2 Structure

PLANTPLAN is comprised of the following parts.

Part	Name/sections	Description/purpose
Part 1 – EPP response management	Revision history	Captures the details of key amendments made to Part 1 of PLANTPLAN.
	Acronyms	Provides a list of acronyms and related terms used within Part 1 of PLANTPLAN.
	Terms and definitions	Describes the terms and definitions used within Part 1 PLANTPLAN including the source of each.
	Introduction	Outlines the purpose, scope and management of PLANTPLAN.

	Structure and management of an EPP response	Outlines the national and state/territory arrangements and systems in place for responding to an Incident.
	Response phases	Describes the specific actions undertaken and the roles and responsibilities of Parties in each of the phases of an EPP response.
Part 2 – Job cards	Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests	Provide a written list of responsibilities for a specific role or function and describe the tasks to be carried out under that role or function during an EPP response.
	Industry Liaison functions	
	Local Control Centre Controller	
	National Management Group	
	Scientific Advisory Panel	
	State Coordination Centre Director	
Part 3 – Guidelines	Collection of suspect Emergency Plant Pests	Provide a consistent approach for personnel involved in a response, and more broadly to Parties in understanding and implementing response procedures.
	Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests operating guideline	
	Debriefing (<i>in draft</i>)	
	Delimiting surveys	
	Diagnosis of suspect Emergency Plant Pests	
	Disinfection and decontamination	
	National talking points	
	Normal Commitments for Parties to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed	
	Response Plan development	
	Transport of suspect Emergency Plant Pests	
	Transition to Management	
	Urban and peri-urban biosecurity	
Part 4 – Procedures	Chain of evidence	Provide detailed actions for completion of a specific activity by response personnel and a platform for national consistency between jurisdictions and from one EPP response to another.
	Planning eradication at affected properties	
Part 5 – Forms and templates	National talking points	Provide a format for response personnel to use for a specific task and ensure that the required minimum information or data is collected in a consistent and harmonised manner.
	Preliminary Information Data Sheet	
	Response Plan for eradication	
	Response Plan for Transition to Management	

	Technical feasibility of eradication criteria	
	Situation report (<i>in draft</i>)	

PLANTPLAN is accessible through the following formats, each of which is available from planthealthaustralia.com.au/plantplan.

- The complete manual which consists of all Parts.
- Individual Parts.
- Individual PLANTPLAN documents (job cards, guidelines, procedures and form/templates).

Online links to each individual PLANTPLAN document are also included via cross references found throughout Part 1 of PLANTPLAN.

1.3 Scope and application

PLANTPLAN must be used by all Parties to the EPPRD (Industry and government) in the management of a response to an Incident. Specific terms used in PLANTPLAN that are capitalised (excluding names) are a reference to the defined terms under the EPPRD (clause 1.1). Where there is any conflict between the terms and conditions contained in the clauses of the EPPRD and PLANTPLAN, the clauses of the EPPRD will take precedence (EPPRD schedule 1).

Application of PLANTPLAN is triggered by a detection of an EPP or suspect EPP and all Response Plans must conform to PLANTPLAN unless otherwise agreed by the National Emergency Plant Pest Management Group (NMG) (EPPRD clause 6.2). PLANTPLAN applies to all Incidents, regardless of whether a Response Plan proceeds.

The steps of a response outlined in PLANTPLAN may occur in a slightly different order depending upon the type and scale of the response. Some steps may also occur concurrently.

It may be possible to merge some of the roles described in PLANTPLAN, depending on the nature and size of the response, the availability and capability of personnel, and the progress of the response.

1.3.1 Application of the EPPRD for near border detections

The EPPRD (and PLANTPLAN) only applies post-border.

Details on the geographic locations that the Parties have agreed are post-border and application of the EPPRD for near border detections can be found in the *Application of the EPPRD for near border detections* guideline.

1.3.2 Management of linked and unlinked Incidents

Multiple detections of an EPP that are directly linked to one another will be managed as a single Incident under the EPPRD.

Multiple detections that are not known to be directly linked to one another should be managed as separate Incidents under the EPPRD, consistent with the requirements under clause 5.5 of the EPPRD.

1.4 Management of PLANTPLAN

Authority for the development and maintenance of PLANTPLAN rests with PHA. To ensure that PLANTPLAN and its documentation continues to represent best practice in emergency management, PLANTPLAN will be reviewed and updated as required to incorporate new information or address gaps identified through its activation, the outcomes of reviews (e.g. Incident debriefs) and/or testing in exercises

and workshops. Recommendations for amendment from Parties or requests for the development of new resources may also be forwarded to PHA for consideration.

Existing technical working groups (such as the Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics (SPHD)) are expected to have a lead role in the development and review of relevant PLANTPLAN documentation. However, if no technical committee exists to develop or review documentation PHA will either:

- Coordinate the formation of a small working group with nominees from interested Parties, or
- Use internal expertise (if and where available).

Revision of PLANTPLAN (all Parts) is considered a process pursuant to the EPPRD, so formal amendments to PLANTPLAN are conducted in accordance with clause 16 of the EPPRD. PHA will seek consideration of proposed changes from Parties, generally at an EPPRD Parties' meeting. Following consultation, and if Parties endorse the amendments, formal notification will be sent to all Parties in writing and a copy of the new version of the relevant Part(s) of PLANTPLAN will be made available on the PHA website (EPPRD part 1 of schedule 5).

Endorsement may be sought for amendments to Part 1 of PLANTPLAN and individual PLANTPLAN documents in Parts 2 to 5 (job cards, guidelines etc) independently. Version control for Part 1 of PLANTPLAN will therefore be managed separately to PLANTPLAN documentation with each job card, guideline etc retaining its own individual revision history and versioning to maintain corporate knowledge of amendments.

2. Structure and management of an EPP response

Australia has well established national and state/territory arrangements for managing the response to an Incident. This section describes these arrangements and provides an overview of how responses are structured and managed at the national, state/territory and local levels. National standards for diagnostic laboratories and the management of information in a response are also described.

When a potential EPP is detected, the operational responsibility for responding to the Incident resides with the relevant state/territory government (Lead Agency). The Lead Agency will manage its responsibilities in accordance with relevant national and state/territory plant health and emergency management arrangements (including the EPPRD and biosecurity legislation). The EPPRD provides strategic direction at the national level by specifying industry and government responsibilities in decision making and how the response investment will be shared by the beneficiaries of eradication. National arrangements are also in place to support human resourcing and consistent national communications during a response to an EPP.

Together these arrangements ensure that Australia is prepared to respond as well as possible and can do so rapidly and effectively to significantly reduce the impact of the EPP.

2.1 Biosecurity legislation

Australia's biosecurity system operates under both Commonwealth and state/territory legislation administered and managed by the respective agricultural and environmental agencies. The legislation covers a range of activities involving domestic and international movement of people and goods into and around the country, and the export of agricultural commodities. Also contained within the legislation are other relevant functions relating to biosecurity emergency response and reporting.

Regulatory authority for biosecurity controls at Australia's borders is vested in the Australian Government department responsible for biosecurity (referred to hereafter as the Australian Government). Each state and territory department responsible for biosecurity has responsibility for post-border biosecurity, including prevention, detection, response and eradication of EPPs within and across its borders, and administers its own plant protection legislation.

The plant protection legislation in the states and territories provide powers for Emergency Containment and eradication actions, enabling state and territory agencies to undertake such actions as:

- Declaring pests of concern and making orders for the purpose of eradication.
- Entering properties to survey for pests including EPPs.
- Inspecting and taking samples of plants or plant products.
- Establishing and maintaining quarantine zones.
- Restricting movement of plants, plant products, equipment, vehicles and other potential sources of plant pests.
- Issuing orders for the destruction of infested plant material.

2.2 National decision making during a response

The following committees support effective and collaborative decision making during a response.

2.2.1 National Management Group

The National Management Group (NMG) makes the policy and financial decisions regarding responses to Incidents (EPPRD part 1.2 of schedule 8) and is comprised of Representatives from PHA, government and Affected Industry Parties (EPPRD part 1.1 of schedule 8). The NMG approves Response Plans including all funding requirements if it is agreed technically and economically feasible to eradicate the EPP.

Refer to the [National Management Group](#) job card for information on the roles and responsibilities of the NMG.

2.2.2 Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests

The Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) is a technical committee that makes recommendations to the NMG on technical and budgetary matters related to the response to an Incident (EPPRD clause 11.2). Representatives from PHA, government and Affected Industry Parties constitute the CCEPP (EPPRD part 3 of schedule 8). Further detailed information for CCEPP members and observers on the operations of the CCEPP is described in the [Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests operating guideline](#) and the [Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests](#) job card.

In discharging its responsibilities, the CCEPP must develop a rational process to assess the grounds for eradication of an EPP. Quality technical advice is essential for sound risk management decision making. At any stage of an EPP response, the CCEPP may determine that eradication cannot be justified and will recommend to the NMG that eradication is not technically feasible or cost beneficial and should either not be attempted or should cease. The costs of eradication, overall benefits and technical feasibility of removing the EPP from the Australian landscape are all factors to be considered by the CCEPP.

The CCEPP may need to seek technical advice on specific matters relevant to the EPP response. This will occur by default through the formation of a Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) unless there is an existing government or industry mechanism that can adequately address the matter.

2.2.3 Scientific Advisory Panel

The role of the SAP is to provide expert advice on specific aspects of the Incident as identified in the terms of reference agreed by the CCEPP. This may include those related to pest biology, diagnostic methods, surveillance systems, pest epidemiology and control options that could be incorporated into a Response Plan or may be required to inform decision making.

Further information is described in the [Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests operating guideline](#) and the [Scientific Advisory Panel](#) job card.

2.3 National resourcing arrangements

The Lead Agency is responsible for resourcing the response to an Incident. The following national arrangements are however in place to support resourcing biosecurity emergency responses and have been endorsed by the National Biosecurity Committee.

2.3.1 National Biosecurity Response Team

The National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT) is a national pool of trained and experienced response personnel, drawn from government biosecurity agencies across Australia who can be deployed to a Lead Agency to provide additional capacity for a biosecurity emergency response. The NBRT is comprised of two cross-sectoral cohorts sourced from the plant, animal, aquatic and environmental sectors. The mentor cohort is deployed to guide less experienced staff from the Lead Agency, and the functional cohort is deployed to fill key biosecurity response functions.

2.3.2 Interstate deployment arrangements for biosecurity responses

The *Interstate Deployment Arrangements for Biosecurity Responses* are a national framework for coordinating the deployment of personnel between the jurisdictions during biosecurity emergency responses. The arrangements are intended for deployment of personnel employed by government agricultural departments (including members of the NBRT) and can be applied whether or not national Cost Sharing under an approved Response Plan is occurring. Further information is available from agriculture.gov.au.

2.4 National communication arrangements

The Lead Agency is responsible for leading response communications and ensuring the public and relevant stakeholders are kept informed of response activities. National collaboration in communications and consistency in messaging is facilitated through the National Biosecurity Communication and Engagement Network (NBCEN).

2.4.1 National Biosecurity Communication and Engagement Network

The NBCEN supports national preparedness for communication and engagement activities during an EPP response and plays a key role ensuring consistent national messaging during a response through the development of national talking points and national coordination of communications.

Standing members of the NBCEN comprise of communication managers from agricultural health organisations (including PHA) and the Australian, state and territory government agencies responsible for biosecurity. During a response to an Incident, the NBCEN chair will invite communication managers (or an alternative contact) from Affected Industry Parties to participate in the NBCEN.

The NBCEN publishes current information on national eradication programs on the Outbreak website (outbreak.gov.au).

2.4.2 Biosecurity Incident Public Information Manual

In order to guide effective communication during an EPP response, the NBCEN has developed a *Biosecurity Incident Public Information Manual* which aligns to the public information function within BIMS. This manual guides the activities of personnel performing a function in public information and ensures they understand their role and how each of the jurisdictions work with industry to deliver consistent information to stakeholders and the public.

The *Biosecurity Incident Public Information Manual* includes job cards/role descriptions and templates specific to the public information functions carried out in control and coordination centres. The document is available as an AUSVETPLAN resource document from the Animal Health Australia website (animalhealthaustralia.com.au).

2.5 Incident management system

During an EPP response, the Australian Government and affected states/territories (Lead Agency) will manage their operational responsibilities in accordance with relevant biosecurity legislation and emergency management arrangements. PLANTPLAN is aligned with the BIMS, which sets out the incident management system used for managing the 'on ground' response to a biosecurity incident, irrespective of its size or scale. BIMS co-exists with and complements plant sector specific and state/territory emergency management arrangements and guides personnel working within operational response centres established at national, state/territory and local levels. BIMS applies across all biosecurity sectors and is nationally endorsed through the National Biosecurity Committee. The document is available from agriculture.gov.au.

The incident management system for responding to an Incident operates in parallel with the national arrangements (EPPRD) which provides the strategic policy and direction for the response. It also recognises the 'Agency Executive' has a key role in managing an Incident and forms a vital link between the jurisdiction and the national aspects of the response. The relationship between the national committees convened under the EPPRD (NMG, CCEPP), the Agency Executive and operational response centres that may be established in an Incident are shown in Figure 1.

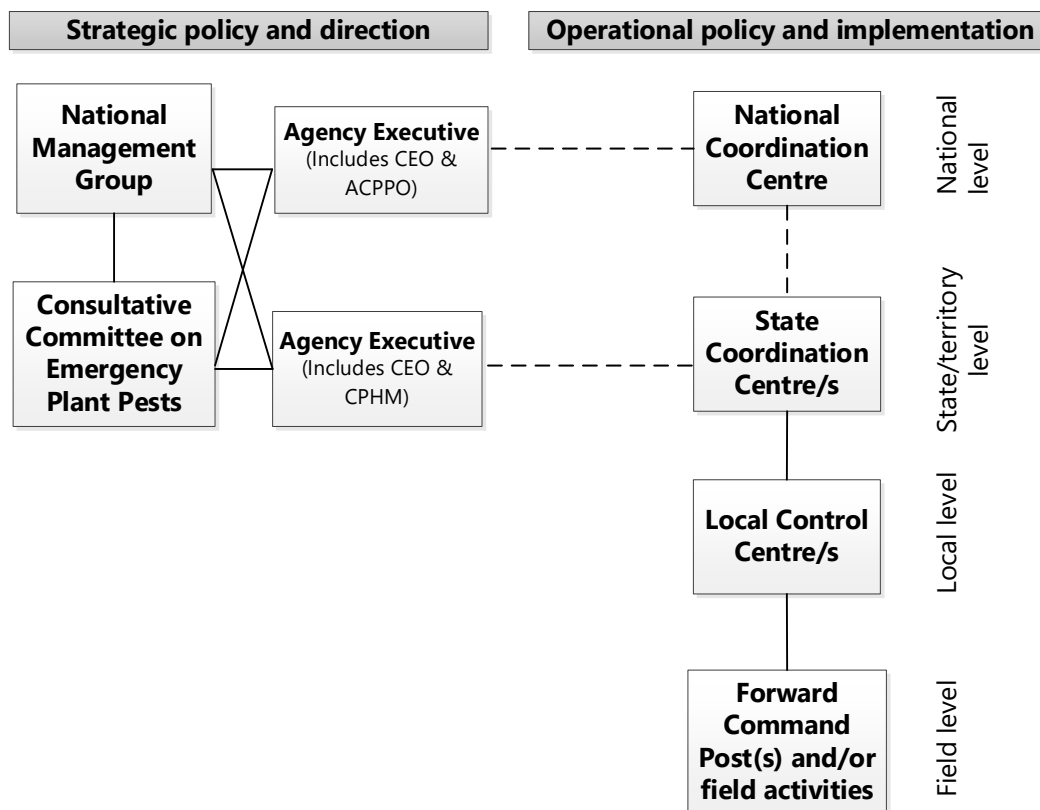


Figure 1: Relationship between the CCEPP, NMG and operational response centres that may be established in response to an Incident (adapted from BIMS).

The management of an EPP response is underpinned by the following principles as specified in BIMS:

- **Management system flexibility:** Establishing coordination, control and command centres at the national, state/territory and local level according to the needs of the response as structure and staffing may vary considerably between emergency responses and during the course of a single response.
- **Management by objectives:** A process of consultative management where the Incident Management Team determines the objectives and then communicates these to those involved.
- **Span of control:** Acknowledges the number of people or groups which can be effectively supervised by each person involved in the response.
- **Functional approach:** Specific functions are identified and used to manage the response (Figure 2).

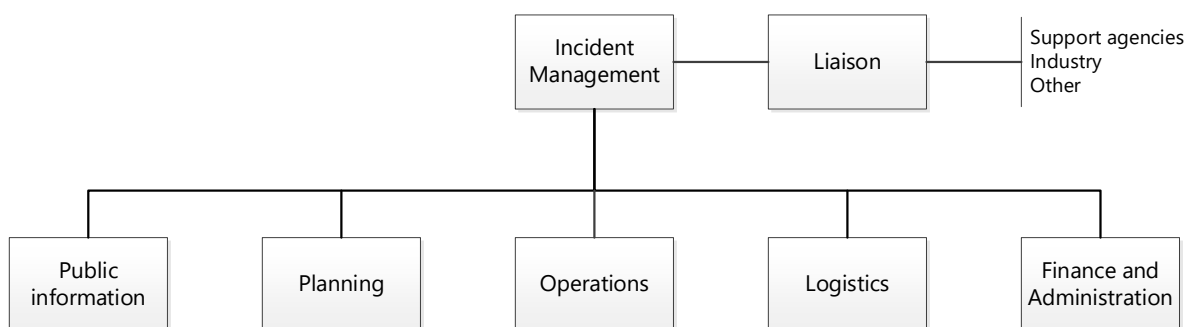


Figure 2: Incident management functions (adopted from BIMS)

Importantly it is also recognised that biosecurity incidents can vary in scale, complexity, degree of delegations required, duration and the number of individuals, groups, agencies and resources involved. Therefore, the classification or level of the biosecurity incident is identified and communicated to ensure effective coordination, resources and support during a response. These levels are described within BIMS.

The way in which the incident management system is implemented during a response to an Incident and their relevant responsibilities at the national, state/territory and local levels are described below.

2.5.1 National incident management

The centre from which the Australian Government manages its responsibilities is known as the National Coordination Centre (NCC). The NCC's role is dependent on the scale of the response though if required it provides national leadership and coordination in managing an emergency such as an EPP response. This may occur for example in a Level 4 Incident as described in BIMS as follows. Where one or more state/territory are involved in managing the response to an Incident and one or more of the jurisdiction's resources or established arrangements are insufficient for the response and the NCC is required to coordinate nationally available support to the affected jurisdiction(s). Irrespective of the level of Incident, an NCC may be operating to deal with national issues such as international trade.

2.5.2 State/Territory incident management

There are three different types of centres (state/territory, local and forward) which may be established by the Lead Agency during an Incident to manage the response at the state/territory, local and field levels. The structure and resourcing of these centres will vary according to:

- Nature of the Plant Pest incursion.
- Location of the incursion.
- Size of the incursion.
- Stage of progress of the response.

The Chief Plant Health Manager (CPHM) of the Lead Agency(s) will have primary carriage of a response to an Incident including to make decisions on response actions in consultation with the CCEPP and through liaising with the response centre staff.

In a multi-jurisdiction Incident (linked detections in multiple states/territories) there will be more than one Lead Agency and each will establish the required response centres and work together to lead the EPP response.

All personnel and contractors appointed to positions within the EPP response should be trained in the specifics of the role they will be performing and must go through a response specific induction process. Training is provided by a number of organisations including PHA and jurisdictions. PLANTPLAN documents (e.g. procedures, job cards) and jurisdictional specific materials should be used during training and induction as appropriate.

State Coordination Centre

The State Coordination Centre (SCC) will have primary responsibility for the coordination of activities across the state/territory. The SCC gives specific direction to the LCC however generally should not become involved in the management of on ground activities. In some circumstances it may be appropriate to combine state/territory and local operations in one centre.

Local Control Centre

The Local Control Centre (LCC) will have primary responsibility for planning, conducting and supporting all operational activities within its operational footprint. Depending on the complexity or extent of the response it may be necessary to establish more than one LCC. The LCC Incident Management Team will identify what needs to be achieved by the LCC, how this will be achieved and allocate responsibilities.

These arrangements will normally be documented in an incident action plan which is approved by the Incident Controller at the local level and disseminated to those with responsibility for implementing activities.

Forward Command Posts

Forward Command Posts may be established under the control of the LCC to manage specific field level activities. The Forward Command Post will report directly to the manager of the Operations function in the LCC.

2.5.3 Incident Management Team

The Incident Management Team (IMT) is established by the Incident Controller and works from its designated response centre (NCC, SCC or LCC). The number of personnel performing various functions will vary according to the scale of the response and may change as the response matures. Personnel may be appointed to defined functions or may work within a section of the response providing scope for flexibility. The latter approach relies on staff being multi-skilled across a range of functions. The various functions are outlined below. Further information on each is available from BIMS (agriculture.gov.au).

Incident Management: Responsible for the overall management of all activities within the response centres area of responsibility. This includes ensuring all response activities are conducted in accordance with national response arrangements and state/territory legislation. This function may be performed by one person (the Incident Controller) or in larger scale or complex responses, duties may be shared with a Deputy Incident Controller or amongst a small team of personnel. Further information is provided in the [Local Control Centre Controller](#) job card and [State Coordination Centre Director](#) job card.

Public Information: Responsible for the management of public information and perceptions via the interface between stakeholders and the media. This includes managing the public information generated from and received by the operations centre through the general public, affected individuals, businesses and the media.

Planning: Manages the collation, analysis and dissemination of information in the form of written plans and reports. The function also provides information that contributes to the situational awareness of all those involved in the response and provides operational objectives and resource projections for the timelines established by the overall response strategy.

Operations: Responsible for the tasking and application of resources required to achieve the operational objectives set out by the Incident Management function or IMT. The Operations function will monitor and manage operational performance against the set objectives.

Logistics: Responsible for the acquisition and provision of human and physical resources, facilities, services and materials required to achieve the operational objectives set by the Incident Management function or IMT.

Finance and Administration: Manages the finance, records, information flow and miscellaneous items required for the smooth and efficient running of a response centre. This includes management of and accounting for all financial transactions (those for which a claim for Cost Sharing will be submitted and non-Shared Costs/normal commitments).

Liaison: The Liaison function provides the link between the Incident Management function and external agencies and organisations. Typical groups for liaison include:

- Affected industries through the Industry Liaison functions – Industry Liaison Coordinator (ILC) and Industry Liaison Officer (ILO)
- State/territory departments for biosecurity and agriculture

- Other agencies or organisations (e.g. those that support recovery activities in a response).

The Liaison function is a member of the IMT and is responsible for facilitating access of the Industry Liaison functions and other support agencies to IMT members and promoting engagement with the response centre functional areas. In the majority of EPP responses this function will be undertaken by the Incident Controller or Deputy Incident Controller.

Industry Liaison functions

The Industry Liaison functions are vital to the EPP response and include delegates at state/territory and national levels (ILC in the SCC) as well as at the local level (ILO in the LCC and potentially the Forward Command Post).

The Lead Agency CPHM must invite the Affected Industry Party(s) to provide one or more Industry Liaison delegates to participate in the response centres (clause 11.4.3 of the EPPRD). The CPHM will engage the Affected Industry Party(s) immediately following the detection to enable delegates to be promptly identified. The Affected Industry Party has the responsibility of identifying the delegates and appointing them to the ILC and/or ILO functions.

For responses of any size the Industry Liaison functions will engage across the response centre functional areas (refer to Figure 2) to provide input and receive relevant information. This will occur through direct communication and engagement with the Incident Controller and mechanisms established to facilitate:

- Regular communication with the IMT (whether through attendance at IMT meetings or an alternative meeting mechanism); and
- Situational updates being provided (e.g. through attendance at daily response centre briefings).

More detailed information on the ILC and ILO is provided in the [Industry Liaison functions](#) job card.

2.6 Laboratories dealing with EPPs

During an EPP response it is essential that each laboratory involved in processing response related samples meets required standards and has documented procedures that ensure biological security during normal operation. Manuals containing these procedures should be readily available to all laboratory staff at all times.

2.6.1 Laboratory standards

Laboratories handling suspected EPP samples will be either Class 5.2 (Biosecurity Containment [BC] Level 2) or Class 5.3 (BC Level 3) Approved Arrangements, as appropriate to the pest in question. The Australian Government approves a BC2 or BC3 facility based on national Approved Arrangements criteria and Australian/New Zealand Standards. Further information is available from agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/arrival/arrangements/sites.

2.6.2 Control of access to and movements within the laboratory

The number of people allowed access to the laboratory should be tightly controlled. A log of every person entering an area and records of training given during an EPP response should be kept (both as legal defence and as a matter of good practice).

Depending on biology of the EPP there should be an exclusion period for people who have visited an infected area before being allowed to access the laboratory. Similarly, there should be an exclusion period for people exiting the laboratory before they are allowed access to a production area.

2.6.3 Managing samples and recording of data from diagnostic tests

All samples taken for diagnostic testing must be managed in accordance with relevant standards and procedures. Chain of evidence requirements for samples must also be met. An unbroken chain of evidence

must be maintained for results to be admissible in court. This requires that appropriate security measures and documentation procedures are followed at all times. Refer to the [Chain of evidence](#) procedure for directions.

The following (minimum) key points must be addressed when recording data from diagnostic tests:

- Results must record the unique sample identification number.
- Data (inclusive of such items as photographic records of gels, host symptoms from pathology tests, records from automatic analysis and sequence information) should be entered in an approved data recording system.
- All relevant data should be linked to the sample and to personnel who entered the data.
- Results should be entered into the data recording system by approved staff, checked for errors and verified by the diagnostic specialist.

2.7 Information management systems

All information critical and relevant to a response must be recorded in a manner to satisfy an audit. Information management systems and procedures for managing information must be in place to support this. An efficiency or financial audit may be required under the EPPRD. The financial audit must comply with Australian Auditing Standards (EPPRD part 2 of schedule 11) so all information should be of an auditable nature.

The information management system selected for use by agencies must allow for the collection of:

- Owner and location.
- Case number.
- Area status.
- Frequency of visits.
- Statistics for surveillance and tracing activities.
- Staff movement details.
- Reports or information provided by the public or industry.
- Records of expenditure.
- ORC valuations.
- Market access status of the affected premises.

Information management systems may also allow for:

- Tracking of samples and diagnostic progress.
- Generation of progress reports on destruction and decontamination.
- Computerised tracing models.
- Generation of forms for scheduled property visits.

3. Phases of an EPP response

Responding to an Incident is broken down into three phases in PLANTPLAN:

- Investigation and alert phase
- Operational phase
- Stand down phase.

A Transition to Management Phase may be initiated under certain circumstances (refer to section 3.4.1).

The PLANTPLAN phases are operational in nature and describe the actions which must be taken to successfully respond to an Incident. The following should be noted:

- While the phases of PLANTPLAN are depicted as separate events, they should all be viewed as part of a continuous process.
- Due to the potential urgency and evolving timeline of an Incident and response, the operational phase can be commenced prior to all activities in the investigation and alert phase being completed. This may occur for example if a phased response approach is implemented through the early development and NMG approval of a Response Plan.
- The actions described in these phases are not a definitive list and the course of an EPP response may require fewer or additional actions to be performed.

3.1 Investigation and alert phase

The aim of this phase is to complete a detailed scoping of the Incident to determine the extent of the emergency and the appropriate course of action. The phase is activated when the Australian Government or relevant state/territory government (Lead Agency) is notified of the report of a suspect EPP and the detection is being investigated. Key issues to be addressed include:

- Whether the Incident relates to an EPP or not.
- Whether the EPP can be effectively contained and eradicated.
- The potential for the EPP to spread rapidly.
- The potential for the EPP to cause significant industry or wider economic and trade losses.
- The potential environmental consequences.

Activities carried out during this phase are performed as part of the Lead Agency's normal commitments. Refer to the [Normal Commitments for Parties to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed](#) guideline for further information on agreed normal commitments.

Broadly, during the investigation and alert phase:

- The Lead Agency will provide Formal Notification to the Chair of the CCEPP (Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer; ACPPO) as required under the EPPRD.
- One or more CCEPP meetings will be convened via email, videoconference, teleconference or face-to-face and recommendations agreed.
- A NMG may be established.
- Confirmation of the diagnosis will occur by a second independent laboratory.
- Key response staff will be designated and placed on standby to respond if necessary. This includes the identification by industry of delegates to participate in response centre functions (ILC, ILO) following invitation by the CPHM immediately following the EPP detection.
- Precautionary measures will be implemented.

- Emergency Containment measures may be implemented.
- The extent of the Incident will be determined and control measures identified.
- The appropriate course of action (e.g. whether to proceed with eradication or not) will be determined and preparation of a Response Plan may occur (if required).

The activities undertaken during the investigation and alert phase and the organisations responsible for them are further detailed below. These activities are grouped according to function and not necessarily in the sequence of events. For relevant Incidents specific consideration should be given to urban and peri urban biosecurity issues. Information is available in the [Urban and peri urban biosecurity](#) guideline.

3.1.1 Notification of an Incident and initial actions

The initial report of a potential EPP will most likely be received by a local departmental officer or diagnostic laboratory who must report it to the relevant CPHM within 24 hours. Reports may also be received directly from the public via the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881) which must then be investigated. The CPHM will coordinate the collection of all relevant information and investigation of the initial report.

Where there are grounds for suspicion of an EPP, the CPHM will:

- Formally notify the ACPPO (see below).
- Establish required response centres (SCC, LCC; refer section 2.5.2).
- Coordinate collection of initial details and any urgent trace backs or trace forwards.
- Take immediate steps and adopt precautionary Emergency Containment measures to limit spread of the suspect EPP and preserve the opportunity to eradicate. This may include putting into place appropriate interim quarantine measures on affected properties. Emergency Containment measures may include:
 - Restrictions on the movement of vehicles, equipment and plant material/products on and off the affected property.
 - Interim control or containment measures.
 - Establishment of buffer zones around affected properties.
- Ensure sufficient preliminary information regarding the Incident is collected and documented, and samples collected are forwarded to an appropriate laboratory for diagnosis.

Formal notification

Under the EPPRD (clause 4.1.1), the CPHM must notify the Chair of the CCEPP (ACPPO) within 24 hours of becoming aware of an Incident (the detection of a suspected EPP). Failure to notify within this timeframe may lead to a situation where the jurisdiction receives no payment for their actions in relation to the detection (EPPRD clause 4.2). Notification from the CPHM may initially be provided verbally however, any verbal advice must be confirmed in writing using the form agreed by Parties (EPPRD clause 1.1 – definition of 'Formal Notification to the CCEPP'), the [Preliminary Information Data Sheet](#) (PIDS) form.

The CPHM in the Lead Agency will advise relevant Representatives from Affected Industry Parties immediately following the EPP detection, facilitating early and ongoing engagement and collaboration.

Preparation of the Preliminary Information Data Sheet

The PIDS details information relevant to the Incident and is completed by the Lead Agency. It must be provided as part of the overall notification process. However, convening a CCEPP meeting can occur prior to the PIDS being submitted to address factors including urgent information or action requirements relating to the Incident.

The PIDS should include all currently available information to help inform the CCEPP's considerations as well as informing the identification of potential Affected Industry Parties.

Notifying CCEPP representatives

The ACPPO must immediately notify the Incident to CCEPP representatives following receipt of the formal notification. This will generally be done by email distributed by the CCEPP Secretariat. PHA will provide advice to the CCEPP Secretariat regarding the potential Affected Industry Parties that will form part of the CCEPP. This advice is based on the host list of the Plant Pest in question as provided to PHA, as well as the Crops represented by the Industry Parties under the EPPRD (part 3 of schedule 7).

3.1.2 Convening the CCEPP

The ACPPO (through the CCEPP secretariat) will arrange a meeting of the CCEPP as soon as practical after receipt of the formal notification. It is not expected that all information will be available for this first meeting, however all available information must be presented. Information that should be presented and issues that should be covered at the meeting is outlined in the [Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests operating guideline](#).

Subsequent CCEPP meetings will be convened as required. The information presented and factors to be considered will depend on the specific Incident and its progression. Further information is provided in the [Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests operating guideline](#).

3.1.3 Situation reporting

Regular situation reports are to be provided by the Lead Agency to inform the CCEPP and the NMG. This includes a standing paper prior to each CCEPP meeting. Sufficient detail should be provided to support situational awareness, to enable the CCEPP and NMG to be informed of key changes to the situation and the progress being made with response activities. A template for situation reporting is under development (*Situation report* template).

3.1.4 Diagnostics

Required laboratory standards for diagnostics are outlined in section 2.6.1. Results from initial and confirmatory diagnostic tests may only be disclosed to the CPHM in the first instance.

Protocols for diagnosis are in section 2.6.3. Refer to the [Collection of suspect Emergency Plant Pests](#) guideline, [Transport of suspect Emergency Plant Pests](#) guideline and [Chain of evidence](#) procedure for specific directions.

Where available International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) protocols or endorsed National Diagnostic Protocols (NDP) should be used for diagnosis of samples.

NDPs are standard methodologies for the accurate identification of specific pests or groups of pests. These protocols provide transparency when comparing diagnostic results between laboratories and include information on the collection of samples, diagnostic techniques and often include detailed images. NDPs are developed by the SPHD, validated by independent specialists and endorsed by all Australian government Parties for use in the event of an Incident. The NDPs are available from plantbiosecuritydiagnostics.net.au/resources.

When an NDP does not exist or a new/alternative protocol to the current NDP is considered more appropriate for diagnosing the EPP, SPHD can rapidly endorse an Emergency Diagnostic Protocol for use in the EPP response. Information on the submission and endorsement process can be found in the SPHD Reference Standard 3 available from plantbiosecuritydiagnostics.net.au/work/subcommittee-on-plant-health-diagnostics.

The CCEPP may need to determine the most appropriate diagnostic method where there are no accepted/agreed protocols available. The [Diagnosis of suspect Emergency Plant Pests](#) guideline includes further information on diagnostics.

Initial diagnostics

Following the report of a suspect EPP, the Lead Agency will arrange for a diagnostic or sampling team to be dispatched to the Suspect Premises. All protocols must be followed as outlined above.

Confirmatory diagnosis

The initial diagnosis of a suspect EPP must be confirmed by a second independent laboratory to mitigate opportunities for legal action and prevent a full scale response to a false positive. Confirmatory diagnosis must be completed prior to the NMG approval of a Response Plan and is only required to occur once during an Incident.

The CCEPP may assist in determining the most appropriate laboratory to be used in confirming a diagnosis. International laboratories may be utilised for confirmatory diagnoses as positive controls may not be available in Australia for many EPPs. Samples must be sent as per the [Collection of suspect Emergency Plant Pests](#) guideline and the [Transport of suspect Emergency Plant Pests](#) guideline.

The CPHM of the Lead Agency will notify the ACPPO immediately once the identification of the suspect EPP is confirmed. Once confirmatory diagnosis is completed the detection will no longer relate to that of a 'suspect EPP'.

The CCEPP will meet to review the situation following confirmation of the diagnosis. After consultation with the CCEPP, the ACPPO will formally declare the detection at a national level concurrently with the Lead Agency.

3.1.5 Determining the extent of the Incident

The Lead Agency will coordinate delimiting surveys of the area to determine the extent of the distribution of the EPP and inform the extent of necessary quarantine zones (refer to section 3.1.6). These activities also provide important information to inform the CCEPP's discussions regarding technical feasibility and economic benefit of eradication and assist development of a Response Plan if required.

Minimum standards for surveillance will be specified by the CCEPP to determine the extent of the incursion with a reasonable degree of confidence. Where available, nationally approved surveillance protocols (developed by the Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance) should be used for delimitation and to determine if the EPP is present in other areas/jurisdictions. Information to inform survey planning may also be available in pest-specific contingency plans planthealthaustralia.com.au/pidd or the Contingency Planning Portal (portal.biosecurityportal.org.au/Pages/ CPP_Landing). Further guidance on delimiting surveys is outlined in the [Delimiting surveys](#) guideline.

The CPHM will coordinate survey teams to conduct trace backs to determine where the EPP may have originated from and trace forwards to identify where the EPP may have spread. Survey teams must consult with property owners or managers to identify:

- Movement of plant materials and products that may assist in the spread of the EPP.
- Equipment which is shared between properties.
- Personnel or contractors that may have moved between affected and unaffected properties.
- Linkages between affected properties.

Decontamination and disinfection practises are critical to restrict movement of the suspect EPP. Refer to the [Disinfection and decontamination](#) guideline for further information.

The Australian Government is responsible for tracing plants and plant products that have been exported prior to or since the initial report of the Incident, and those that have entered the country which are suspected of having a role in the Incident.

3.1.6 Emergency Containment measures

In the event of an Incident it is important to implement precautionary Emergency Containment measures as soon as possible while the feasibility of eradication is investigated. This may include the establishment of quarantine zones.

Where available, relevant technical information to inform control measures may be obtained from pest-specific contingency plans (planthealthaustralia.com.au/pidd) or the Contingency Planning Portal (portal.biosecurityportal.org.au/Pages/ CPP_Landing).

Establishing quarantine zones

Outcomes from delimiting surveillance will inform the establishment of quarantine zones and identify the Restricted Area(s) (RA), Control Area (CA) and the pest free area. The size of quarantine zones will be determined by a number of factors, including the:

- Location of the incursion.
- Climatic conditions.
- Biology of the EPP.
- Proximity of Infected Premises (IP) to each other.

Restricted Area – Data collected from surveys and tracing will be used to identify the first quarantine zone known as the RA, which comprises all properties where the EPP has been confirmed (IP), properties which have come into direct or indirect contact with an IP or infected plants (Contact Premises) and properties which may have been exposed to the EPP. Trace back and trace forward information will be considered in defining the RA.

Control Area – A buffer zone or CA is established around an RA to control the movement of susceptible hosts and other regulated materials until the extent of the incursion is determined. There may be multiple RAs within one CA.

When the extent of the Incident has been confidently defined, the RA and CA boundaries and movement controls may need to be modified, and where possible altered in size commensurate with appropriate controls.

Establishing movement restrictions

The CCEPP may consult with the Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access (SDQMA) regarding the development and modification of movement controls out of the CA to ensure that the least restrictive conditions required to achieve successful Emergency Containment are applied. This consultation will occur through the CCEPP requesting advice directly from Plant Health Committee. Interstate movement restrictions of risk items, such as host plants, plant products and machinery, should be risk-based, applied consistent with those restrictions applied to the CA and ideally be nationally consistent².

Where interstate movement restrictions are enacted by a jurisdiction(s) a notification must be provided to the CCEPP Secretariat as soon as practicable for circulation to all Affected Parties.

Control strategies

The Lead Agency will coordinate an investigation to identify chemical controls or other control procedures which may be available for use during an EPP response. This may involve gaining permits for emergency use of unregistered products or for off-label use of registered products from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority. The Lead Agency will also coordinate investigation of non-chemical control and monitoring strategies³.

² A *Rapid risk assessment template* is available and may inform movement restriction considerations through the assessment of pest risk pathways

³ Refer to the [Technical guidelines for development of pest specific Response Plans](#) for further considerations on control strategies.

3.1.7 Communication and public information

During an Incident the Lead Agency is responsible for ensuring the public and stakeholders are kept informed of response activities. Industry Parties also play a key role in supporting communication activities, in particular communication and engagement with growers and other industry stakeholders. Where an EPP is present in, or spreads to more than one jurisdiction, the Australian Government is responsible for the national coordination of public information.

Timely and effective communication with those affected by an Incident is key to a successful response. It supports response activities by helping the community and affected stakeholders understand how to prevent the spread of the EPP, comply with new regulations, such as movement restrictions and controlled quarantine areas and to look out for and report possible new detections. Keeping the public informed also improves the perceived effectiveness of a response and can assist with response recovery.

All communications during an Incident must occur in accordance with the confidentiality requirements of the EPPRD (clause 29). If information related to the Incident is to be communicated to the public, it must be based on the agreed national talking points. To facilitate rapid communication, it is therefore important that national talking points are developed, agreed and distributed as soon as possible following the detection of an EPP.

Advice to property owners

In the early stages of the investigation and alert phase, the Lead Agency will provide all necessary information regarding the situation to property owners or managers that are or will be affected by the response. This information should include advice:

- That diagnostic tests have identified a suspected EPP that may require quarantine controls.
- That all staff working on the Incident have been instructed to maintain strict confidentiality.
- About the need for cooperation in applying voluntary movement control on plants, plant products, equipment, and personnel. If cooperation is not offered it should be explained that a quarantine order can be placed on the property.
- What will happen in respect of national recommendations on containment and eradication and resulting impacts to the property owner.
- About availability of counselling services to assist with social, economic or other issues.
- That they will be advised of the outcome of final diagnostic tests.
- On where they can seek support and further information about the detection.

When appropriate, affected property owners should be provided with a comprehensive explanation of the intended response actions. Affected property owners need to be advised of the potential for ORCs to be paid, noting that such payments are not guaranteed and are dependent on a number of factors including the NMG agreeing to invoke national Cost Sharing arrangements under the EPPRD.

Communication strategy

To support the Response Plan, a communications strategy should be developed to guide communication and engagement activities. When an EPP is present in one jurisdiction, the communication strategy will be drafted by the Lead Agency in collaboration with the Affected Industry Parties. Where there are multiple jurisdictions affected and where the response warrants it, the Australian Government will coordinate a national communication strategy and provide it to the CCEPP for endorsement. CCEPP members must, where applicable, liaise with their NBCEN member to provide relevant technical input into the communication strategy.

The nature and extent of the communication strategy will depend on the Incident and should consider the impacts on all stakeholder groups including local and national industry groups, growers, media and the

wider community. It should also cover all relevant phases of the response and support the objectives of the response as agreed to by the CCEPP and the NMG. Guides and templates are included in the BIPIM (refer to section 2.4.2).

National talking points and media releases

National talking points are prepared to provide nationally agreed, consistent and timely information about an Incident that can be used by Affected Parties, both proactively and reactively, when communicating to stakeholders and the wider public. Approved national talking points will form the basis of the information used when developing media releases, website content, as well as in other public information materials and industry/community engagement activities.

The process for development of national talking points is coordinated through the NBCEN with participation from Affected Industry Parties. All draft national talking points are approved by the ACPPO. Further information on the process for development and approval of national talking points is included in the [National talking points](#) guideline and a [National talking points](#) template is also available.

Media releases should be shared with Affected Parties prior to release and coordinated as much as possible to enable consistent public messaging. For consistency of messaging, communications with the media will be restricted to the delegated media contacts within Affected Parties.

International trade impact and notifications

The Australian Government will consider potential international trade implications, notify relevant trading partners and commence any necessary negotiations for the continuation of trade to minimise the impact of the Incident on market access for affected Australian product(s). CCEPP members should be informed of the implications of the Incident for export trade in the affected crop(s).

In satisfying Australia's international reporting requirements, the Australian Government will also report relevant changes in national pest status through the IPPC where necessary. The CCEPP will consider draft notifications to the IPPC during the course of the Incident.

3.1.8 Decision on eradication or alternative action

There are a number of key recommendations that the CCEPP must make to the NMG in order to initiate a decision to eradicate an EPP under the EPPRD processes (refer to Figure 3). Firstly, the CCEPP must make a recommendation on whether the Incident relates to an EPP (EPPRD clause 5.1.2(a)(i)). Secondly, if the CCEPP agrees that the Incident relates to an EPP a recommendation must be made to the NMG on the feasibility of eradicating the EPP. For the CCEPP to recommend to the NMG that eradication is feasible (EPPRD clause 5.1.2(a)(ii)), the CCEPP must be satisfied that it is both:

- (a) technically feasible to eradicate the EPP; and
- (b) cost beneficial to eradicate the EPP.

The CCEPP does not need to consider the cost-benefit of eradication if the recommendation to the NMG is that the EPP is not technically feasible to eradicate.

The CCEPP is also able to provide advice to the NMG on alternative actions if it considers the EPP is not technically feasible to eradicate.

In making an initial recommendation on eradication or alternative action, some assumptions may need to be made by the CCEPP, including whether:

- Biology, dispersal and host range information is correct.
- Effective control treatments have been identified and are available.
- The cost/benefit considerations are accepted as an appropriate economic risk assessment summary.

- Survey data represents a realistic and up-to-date summary of the distribution of the incursion for risk management decisions.

The CCEPP will meet to review the situation, following confirmation and declaration of the Incident and as necessary throughout the Incident, to determine and make recommendations to the NMG regarding the feasibility of eradicating the EPP.

Decision on EPP status

The CCEPP must make a recommendation to the NMG whether the Incident relates to an EPP (refer to Figure 3); that is, the Incident relates to the occurrence of:

- a confirmed or reasonably held suspicion of an EPP that is listed in schedule 13 of the EPPRD, or
- an uncategorised Plant Pest or Vector that is reasonably believed to meet the definition of an EPP (EPPRD clause 1.1).

In forming a recommendation on whether an uncategorised Plant Pest or Vector is reasonably believed to be an EPP, the CCEPP must consider available information against the EPP criteria listed in clause 1.1. The guideline for *Determining if an established Plant Pest is an Emergency Plant Pest under subclause (d)* provides detailed information to assist the CCEPP and NMG in determining whether an established Plant Pest meets the definition of an EPP under the criteria listed in subclause (b)(i)D of the EPPRD.

Technical feasibility

The CCEPP should reach a considered decision on a recommendation to the NMG regarding technical feasibility of eradication given the information available at the time. Where it is apparent that there are critical gaps in available information such that the CCEPP cannot make such a determination, the CCEPP may need to promptly seek further information.

Table 1 lists the criteria and underpinning factors that should be considered when assessing technical feasibility of eradication⁴. The CCEPP should consider all of the criteria, however not all the criteria (or factors within) need to be fulfilled for eradication to be considered feasible. The relative importance placed on each criterion will be dependent on the Incident in question and it will be for the CCEPP members to consider when forming a recommendation on the technical feasibility of each eradication. Assessment of the criteria will also inform development of a feasible response strategy.

An overall measure can be indicated (in column 3 of Table 1) on whether each criterion *supports* or is an *impediment* to successful eradication of the EPP or whether this is currently *unknown* and further information needs to be gathered.

The [Technical feasibility of eradication criteria](#) (as listed in Table 1) are available in template form for ease of completion.

⁴ A *technical feasibility of eradication decision making support tool* is also available and can be utilised by the CCEPP (at the discretion of the CCEPP Chair) for a more detailed and rigorous analysis of technical feasibility of eradication.

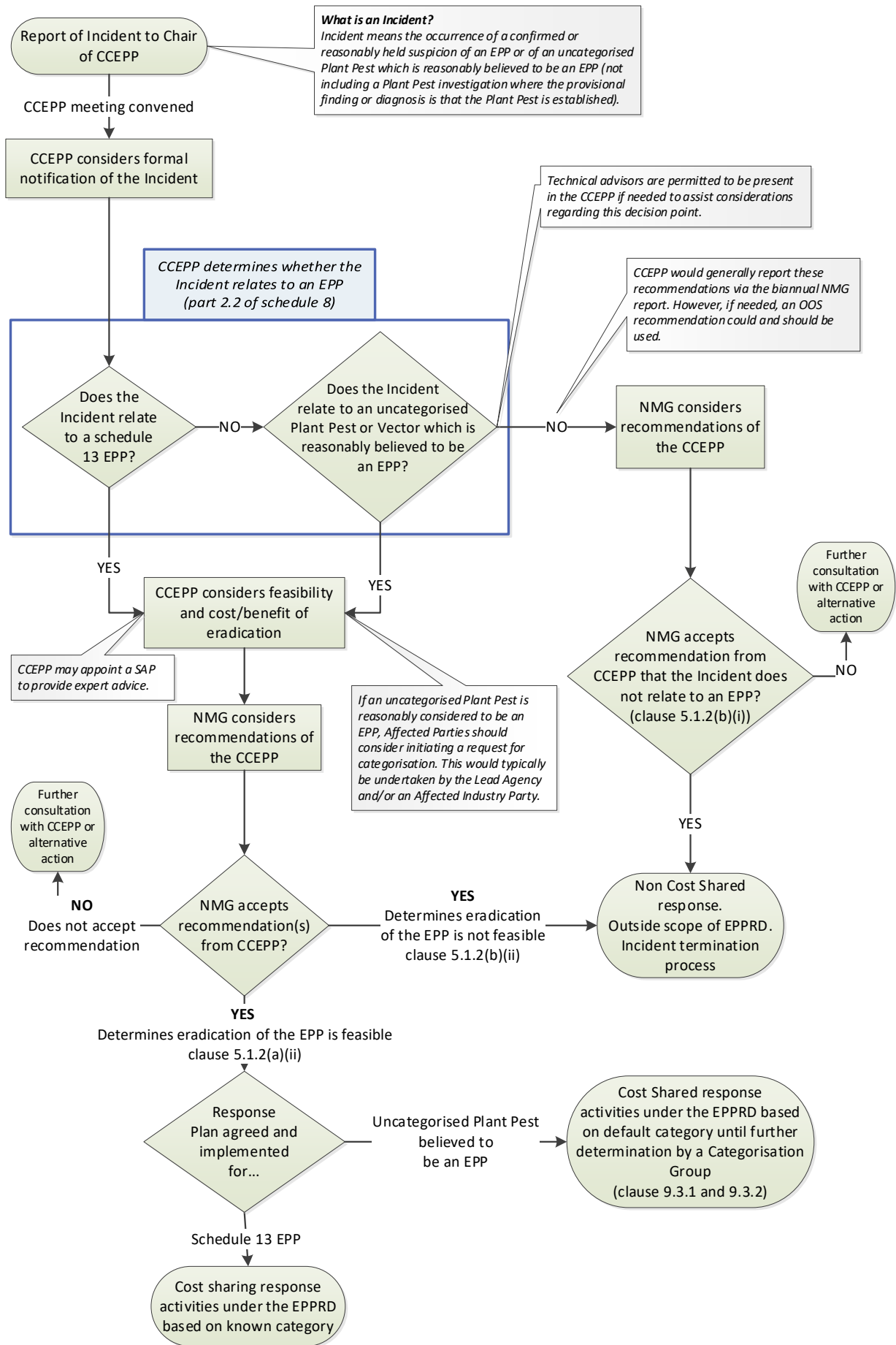


Figure 3: Flow diagram highlighting key decision points for the CCEPP and the NMG during the investigation and alert phase of a response to an Incident

Table 1: Factors to consider regarding the technical feasibility of EPP eradication⁵

Technical feasibility of eradication criteria	Factors to be considered <i>Note: not all factors listed may be relevant to the EPP or Incident and/or there may be additional factors to consider</i>	Supports or is an impediment to successful eradication or is unknown
1. Aspects of the species biology that influence the ability to eradicate the EPP		
1.1. Ability of the EPP to establish and spread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of climate/environmental conditions EPP can survive/reproduce in • Extent of natural (e.g. wind, rain, invertebrate vectors) and human assisted (e.g. people, equipment, machinery) pathways of spread • Broad versus narrow host range (including alternate/weed hosts) • Reproduction rate, infectivity/virulence • Lifecycle/ability to rapidly reproduce/generate offspring, ability to infect at low inoculum load 	e.g. supports successful eradication
1.2. Ability of the EPP to persist in the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistence in soil, water, plant debris, vectors • Dormant stage, latency period and/or asymptomatic infections 	
2. The current circumstances of the Incident that influence the ability to eradicate the EPP		
2.1. Suitability of current circumstances to establishment and spread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current EPP prevalence/inoculum load • Likely time from introduction to initial detection • Current extent of EPP distribution • Suitability of climate/environmental conditions in the affected area to establishment and spread • EPP likely to be present and persisting in soil, water, plant debris • Extent of host distribution (how wide and densely distributed) in the affected area (including alternate/weed hosts) • Presence and distribution of natural vectors in the affected area 	
2.2. Ability of quarantine and other measures to contain the EPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infected Premises quarantined • Pathways and risk mitigation measures known or can be determined • Quarantine areas can be determined and implemented 	
3. The ability to accurately diagnose the EPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliability of diagnostic method/protocol 	

⁵ The [Technical feasibility of eradication criteria](#) are available as a template

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitivity of diagnostic method/protocol (can detect EPP at low levels) • Resolution of taxonomy • Availability of diagnostic equipment/expertise 	
4. The ability to find all sites in which the EPP may be present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detectability of the EPP (e.g. symptoms can be visualised or a variant form of an established pest can be easily differentiated) • Reliability of surveillance methodology • Sensitivity of surveillance methodology (e.g. detect at low expression/prevalence) • Extent of host range (wide versus narrow host range) • Extent of host distribution (density/abundance and how widely distributed) • Ability to find and identify hosts • Affected areas accessible • Ability to successfully conduct trace-back and trace-forward investigations • Pathways of movement/spread can be identified • Ability to model natural spread pathways (e.g. wind, water, vector distribution) 	
5. The presence of an effective control method that will remove or destroy all EPPs present		
5.1 An effective control method is available/accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method effective at destroying/removing EPP • Chemicals, traps etc available and accessible • Control method has been used elsewhere to successfully eradicate • Availability of resistant crop varieties • Ability of EPP to rapidly develop resistance to chemicals/control • Effectiveness of control method at low prevalence levels 	
5.2 Control method can be implemented to remove the EPP at a faster rate than it can propagate/spread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of infestation • Extent of distribution and accessibility of hosts (including alternate/weed hosts) • Reproduction rate/virulence/infectivity • Persistence of EPP in plant debris, soil and water • Control effective during dormancy • Limitations to timely manual removal of affected hosts 	

<p>5.3 Whether there are control methods commonly employed for endemic pests and diseases, that may limit the establishment, spread and/or impact of the EPP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemicals or cultural controls commonly in use in the affected area are likely to be effective at suppressing or controlling the EPP • Extent to which establishment, spread and/or impact of the EPP may be limited through common use of control methods for endemic pests and diseases 	
<p>6. The likelihood of repeated introductions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to identify pathway of entry into Australia or out of a defined area of containment within Australia • Whether likely pathway is regulated or non-regulated (e.g. entry through natural means) • Effectiveness of controls in place to mitigate re-entry 	
<p>7. The recommended response strategy is acceptable to stakeholders and the general public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct impacts on industry • Flow on effects to allied /downstream industries • Impacts on health, community and lifestyle (e.g. cultural and social impacts, amenity and landscape impacts) and public acceptability of control methods • Environmental, non-target impacts • Stakeholder consultation and support 	
<p>8. Any legislative impediments to undertaking an emergency response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impediments to use of control methods e.g. environmental impacts • Ability to effectively apply legislation • Ability to access properties/land 	
<p>9. The resources e.g. chemicals, personnel etc. required to undertake an emergency response are accessible or available</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chemicals/traps etc. available • Permits can be obtained • Expertise available • Work health and safety impediments • Logistical impediments (e.g. sufficient personnel available/accessible) 	

Cost-benefit analysis

In addition to an EPP being technically feasible to eradicate, it also needs to be cost beneficial to undertake the eradication. The CCEPP will consider the cost-benefit of the proposed eradication option to assist decisions on response activities.

If necessary the CCEPP and/or the NMG can request, at any stage during an Incident, that a formal cost-benefit analysis be completed by a recognised provider of economic analysis services, such as the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences, to provide assistance with a determination of whether it is cost-beneficial to eradicate. The NMG must approve the cost of the economic analysis if it is substantial.

CCEPP recommendations to the NMG

Following analysis of both technical feasibility and cost-benefit, the CCEPP will make a recommendation to the NMG regarding eradication. The CCEPP may make the recommendation to do one of the following:

- attempt eradication and implement a Response Plan;
- continue with current quarantine controls pending further information being obtained; or
- take no further action under the EPPRD (refer to section 3.1.9).

The recommendation to the NMG needs to include sufficient detail and justification for the outcome of the technical and economic feasibility analysis to assist the NMG in decision making. The recommendation will take into account the relevant factors listed in Table 1.

If the recommendation to the NMG is to attempt eradication and implement a Response Plan, the recommendation must demonstrate that the Incident relates to an EPP, the EPP has been diagnostically confirmed and that based on the information available at the time, eradication is both technically feasible and cost-beneficial.

The CCEPP should endeavour to provide advice to the NMG as soon as possible to facilitate the early consideration of a Response Plan. At the early stage of an Incident the CCEPP may not know with certainty whether an EPP is technically or economically feasible to eradicate. The Lead Agency may still be gathering information on the extent of the Incident, and there may be uncertainty regarding the full scope of actions required to achieve eradication. Under these circumstances the CCEPP may recommend to the NMG that eradication be pursued through an early phase Response Plan whilst further information on the extent of the Incident is being gathered. As new information is gathered the Response Plan can be revised. Further information on the phased approach to response planning can be found below.

Development of the Response Plan and indicative budget

If the recommendation of the CCEPP is that eradication should be attempted and a Response Plan is required, the CCEPP may prepare a preliminary report to the NMG to enable the NMG to make their determination. However, generally a draft Response Plan will accompany the CCEPP paper which details the recommendations.

The draft Response Plan should be prepared by the Lead Agency in collaboration with Affected Industry Parties and reviewed by the CCEPP. The Lead Agency, with the assistance of the CCEPP Secretariat, may request the assistance from CCEPP members in the initial drafting of the Response Plan. An indicative budget for response activities must be included in the draft and provide sufficient transparency in allocation of costs proposed for Cost Sharing and normal commitments. The Lead Agency should engage with PHA early during the development of the Response Plan budget to assist with this process. The CCEPP must critique the indicative budget and advise the NMG if it represents a cost-effective means to deliver on the response strategy and if the costs proposed for Cost Sharing are above the normal commitments benchmarks specified in the [Normal Commitments for Parties to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed](#) guideline.

Development of the Response Plan must comply with the requirements of the EPPRD (clause 6) including required content (EPPRD part 1 of schedule 4). Refer to the [Response Plan development](#) guideline and [Response Plan for eradication](#) template for additional guidance on the development of Response Plans.

Where available contingency plans should be used to support development of Response Plan content. Contingency plans provide background information on the biology of a specific pest and the control measures currently available, along with guidelines and options to be considered when developing an effective response strategy. A number of contingency plans are available from the PHA website (planthealthaustralia.com.au/pidd) and component modules are available on the Contingency Planning Portal (portal.biosecurityportal.org.au/Pages/PPP_Landing)⁶.

Phased responses

A phased approach to response planning may be implemented during the initial stage of the response when information on the extent of the Incident is still being gathered and there is uncertainty in the full extent of response activities required for the 'whole of life' response. This approach allows for rapid development of a Response Plan that contains a response strategy based on the best available information at the time facilitating rapid decision making and increasing certainty in funding. As with any Response Plan, the development of robust trigger points for review of the response strategy and agreed funding limits (consistent with the EPPRD provisions) will be crucial to effectively manage the uncertainty or unknowns in a response.

The [Response Plan development](#) guideline provides additional guidance on the phased approach to response planning and the minimum requirements of a phased approach Response Plan.

Response Plan trigger points

The Response Plan should specify clear and robust trigger points for the review of the response strategy and associated activities under the Response Plan. The trigger points are used to monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and its delivery as well as address any uncertainty and/or external factors that might suggest the response strategy will not achieve its objectives. The trigger points will depend on the particular EPP response. Each must be measurable and be monitored by the Lead Agency and CCEPP throughout the duration of the operational phase of the response. Examples of potential triggers can be found in the [Response Plan development](#) guideline.

Approval of the Response Plan by the NMG

The NMG is responsible for making the final decision on the action to be taken following confirmation of an EPP (refer to Figure 3). The NMG will consider the draft Response Plan provided by the Lead Agency and the CCEPP and will review the indicative budget. If the NMG approves the Response Plan, the Incident will move into the operational phase. The Response Plan and associated Cost Sharing will then be implemented.

The Response Plan indicative budget is an approximation of the likely costs of implementing the Response Plan, including the breakdown of normal commitments of the Lead Agency and shared costs. There is implied flexibility in the indicative budget so long as the Lead Agency spends the amount implementing the Response Plan and the amount spent is eligible for Cost Sharing. When approving the Response Plan the NMG must set an "Upper Limit on Expenditure", which may be the amount set out in the indicative budget or another specified amount, however it must not exceed the Agreed Limit for the Response Plan (EPPRD part 2 of schedule 10). The NMG must monitor expenditure throughout the course of the response.

In endorsing the Response Plan the NMG must also agree on a number of other Cost Sharing and financial matters. Details on the responsibilities of the NMG are contained in the [National Management Group](#) job card.

⁶ Information to support development of Response Plan content may also be found in the [Technical guidelines for development of pest specific Response Plans](#).

3.1.9 Incident termination process during the investigation and alert phase

Based on the outcomes of the investigation and alert phase, either the operational (refer to section 3.2) or stand down (refer to section 3.3) phase of PLANTPLAN will be activated.

As indicated in previous sections, the investigation and alert phase can be terminated and the stand down phase activated by the following occurrences:

- If the Incident relates to an uncategorised Plant Pest that is not reasonably believed to meet the definition of an EPP, or
- If the eradication of an EPP is not considered feasible, or
- If the investigation and alert phase indicates the EPP is no longer present (e.g. single pest find).

In the above instances, the CCEPP will advise the NMG, providing relevant and reasonable justification, that either:

- the Incident does not relate to an EPP (EPPRD clause 5.1.2(b)(i)), or
- the Incident does relate to an EPP but eradication of the EPP is not feasible (EPPRD clause 5.1.2(b)(ii)).

For the situation in which the investigation and alert phase indicates that the EPP is no longer present (e.g. single pest find), the CCEPP will provide a recommendation to the NMG that is worded specifically for the particular Incident. The recommendation should include that the Incident relates to an EPP and provide reasonable justification for why the CCEPP considers that the EPP is no longer present (e.g. as the EPP has not established).

The NMG will then make its determination (in accordance with the voting procedure outlined in part 1 of schedule 8 of the EPPRD). The resolution should include the relevant reasons for termination as identified above.

3.1.10 Relief and recovery

Relief and recovery is the coordinated approach of supporting affected individuals and communities both during and following an emergency response. Activities occur from day one and whilst some will continue throughout and following stand down of the Incident (e.g. social support/assistance services), others will be implemented directly under a Response Plan (e.g. ORCs), though associated activities should commence prior to Response Plan approval. Each jurisdiction has a responsibility to provide relief and recovery throughout an Incident and have systems and processes in place to support their delivery. Relief and recovery activities will also be delivered through industry and local communities.

Relief and recovery activities that may occur in the investigation and alert phase include:

- Providing information of the response, potential impacts and access to social support and financial counselling and assistance services.
- Working with growers to develop options to support business continuity.
- Preparing affected Owners for the potential that ORC valuations may occur and initiating associated activities in preparation.

3.2 Operational phase

The aim of this phase is to eradicate the EPP. The operational phase commences once the Response Plan is endorsed by the NMG.

The operational phase in PLANTPLAN aligns with the Emergency Response Phase in the EPPRD and where the response is successful, is also inclusive of the Proof of Freedom Phase in the EPPRD. Cost Sharing

under the EPPRD is implemented following endorsement of the Response Plan (refer section 3.2.2). Not all costs of responding to an Incident are eligible to be Cost Shared between Affected Parties. Information can be found in the *Financial management of a Response Plan* guideline and the [Normal Commitments for Parties to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed](#) guideline.

Broadly, during the operational phase the Lead Agency will:

- implement the NMG agreed Response Plan
- provide regular written and verbal situation reports to the CCEPP
- provide regular expenditure reports to the CCEPP and the NMG
- conduct proof of freedom activities.

The NMG will declare the EPP eradicated where the Response Plan is successful and may appoint an Efficiency Auditor to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of a Response Plan.

The activities undertaken during the operational phase and the organisations responsible for them are further detailed below. These activities are grouped according to function and not necessarily in the sequence of events.

3.2.1 Response Plan implementation and progress

The CPHM of the Lead Agency(s) will be responsible for overall management of the Response Plan and will lead the implementation of the plan under direction from the CCEPP. The office of the ACPPO will coordinate the national consultation and decision making in addition to any international aspects of the Incident and response.

Guidance for operational planning and implementation of eradication activities is outlined in the [Planning eradication at affected properties](#) procedure.

The CCEPP will be convened as required during the implementation of the Response Plan and will monitor its progress, provide input into communications where necessary and prepare reports for the NMG.

The NMG will be convened promptly as required, particularly during the operational phase, to make decisions based on the recommendations provided by the CCEPP, or as otherwise necessary.

Situation and expenditure reporting

The Lead Agency must provide regular written and verbal reports to the CCEPP (via the Secretariat) throughout the EPP response. This includes a written situation report as a standing paper prior to each CCEPP meeting. At each relevant CCEPP meeting convened following NMG approval of the Response Plan, the Lead Agency must also provide a written expenditure report in the form stipulated in schedule 10 of the EPPRD which sets out the budgeted, committed, and actual expenditure under the Response Plan to date (EPPRD clause 12.2.1). A relevant meeting of the CCEPP may be one that is convened prior to an upcoming NMG meeting (e.g. to consider outcomes of an efficiency audit), following the breach of a Response Plan trigger point, at a mid-Response Plan review point, or any meeting where the CCEPP has requested a report be provided. Once a Response Plan is approved situation and expenditure reporting must also occur at the frequency as specified in that Response Plan.

Situation and expenditure reporting by the Lead Agency will ensure the CCEPP and the NMG receives appropriate notice and information to evaluate the progress of the EPP response and make appropriate recommendations and determinations.

The *Financial management of a Response Plan* guideline is available to assist the Lead Agency(s) to meet the expenditure reporting obligations.

Evaluating the progress of the EPP response

In addition to considering the progress of the response through situation and expenditure reporting by the Lead Agency(s), if any of the specified trigger points for review (as agreed by the NMG and outlined in the Response Plan) are met, the Lead Agency must advise the CCEPP, who will then review the Response Plan and consider whether the response strategy is still appropriate and whether eradication of the EPP continues to be feasible. Depending on the outcome, the Response Plan may be amended and resubmitted to the NMG for approval, or alternatively a recommendation made to the NMG that it is no longer feasible to eradicate the EPP (refer section 3.2.4).

If key elements of the response strategy are being proposed for revision, the CCEPP should actively consider the need for expert review by a SAP or other means.

External reviews of the eradication program (Efficiency Auditing – EPPRD clause 12.3) may take place as determined by the NMG.

In monitoring the progress of the response, the CCEPP will determine if the eradication activities set out in the Response Plan have been successfully completed and if the response should enter the Proof of Freedom Phase under the EPPRD (clause 5.3.3). There will often be a set minimum length of time between the end of eradication activities and declaration of area freedom from the EPP. Proof of freedom activities may therefore continue for some time until eradication can be declared. The specific activities and anticipated timeframe to achieve proof of freedom must be detailed in the Response Plan⁷.

3.2.2 Coordination of Cost Sharing

Each Affected Party must initially meet its own costs arising from involvement in the implementation of an agreed Response Plan or payment of ORCs in the absence of a Response Plan (EPPRD clause 10.2). All Affected Parties must abide by the Cost Sharing principles under the EPPRD (clause 10.3). PHA is responsible for coordinating, verifying and collating claims for Cost Sharing. Details on the cost claiming process can be found in the *Financial management of a Response Plan* guideline.

3.2.3 Communication and public information

Communication and engagement during the operational phase will continue as described in the Investigation and alert phase with the Lead Agency taking the lead in ensuring the public and stakeholders are kept informed of response activities (refer section 3.1.7). The communication strategy drafted during the investigation and alert phase and implemented under the Response Plan will also provide guidance.

Advice to property owners

The Lead Agency will advise affected and other relevant property owners of the decision to implement a Response Plan and will provide updates on progress and other relevant information related to the response as outlined in section 3.1.7.

National talking points and media

National talking points will need to be reviewed and updated during the course of the eradication response to ensure the information remains up to date and supports the changing communication needs of Affected Parties. The process for review will be coordinated through the NBCEN with participation from Affected Industry Parties and approval provided by the ACPPO. Any Affected Party may request, at any time, that the talking points are updated, and may put forward proposed changes for consideration. Where agreed, the NMG will also issue its own communiqués in the course of a response. Further information on the process for review of national talking points is included in the [National talking points](#) guideline.

⁷ Refer to the [Technical guidelines for development of pest specific Response Plans](#), the [Sampling to support claims of area freedom](#) tool and where available, pest-specific contingency plans (planthealthaustralia.com.au/pidd:portal.biosecurityportal.org.au/Pages/CPP_Landing) for considerations on proof of freedom strategies.

Media updates will be provided throughout the course of the response. Where relevant, social media may also be used as a platform to support communication and engagement activities.

3.2.4 Finalisation of an eradication program

An eradication program will be finalised when the NMG agrees that the EPP has been eradicated and proof of freedom has been demonstrated, or that it is no longer feasible to eradicate the EPP. The stand down phase will then commence.

When implementation of the Response Plan is successful and objectives are being met, there will be a progressive wind down of response activities towards the end of the operational phase and the LCC(s) and SCC will require fewer resources.

The CCEPP recommends the EPP has been successfully eradicated

When proof of freedom activities have been successfully completed, the Lead Agency will present a report to the CCEPP (and subsequently to the NMG) and seek endorsement that the criteria for successful eradication of the EPP have been met⁸.

The CCEPP will make a recommendation to the NMG to formally determine that the Response Plan has been successfully completed and the EPP has been eradicated (EPPRD clause 5.3.4(a)).

The CCEPP recommends that eradication of the EPP is no longer feasible

If during the course of an eradication program the CCEPP concludes that eradication of the EPP is no longer feasible, the CCEPP will make a recommendation to the NMG that eradication of the EPP is not feasible and either:

- the emergency response should come to an end, in which case the Response Plan will be terminated (EPPRD clause 5.2.4 (b)(i)), or
- the emergency response should enter a Transition to Management Phase (EPPRD clause 5.2.4(b)(ii); refer section 3.4).

3.2.5 Relief and recovery

Relief and recovery activities will continue in the operational phase with a focus on supporting impacted growers, businesses and the community. Specific aspects such as the availability of social support services and ORCs (where relevant) will be identified in the Response Plan.

Some of the relief and recovery activities that may occur in the operational phase include:

- Providing information on the response, potential consequences and impacts and access to / availability of industry and government support services that provide practical assistance, emotional support, referrals, counselling and financial assistance.
- Working with growers, industry and jurisdictions to support business continuity, including measures to enable continuation or resumption of trade or transition to alternate activities where required.
- Implementation of ORCs through the identification of impacted Owners and completion of valuation and payment processes.

3.3 Stand down phase

The aim of this phase is to provide guidance for moving from emergency response arrangements to normal business.

⁸ A proof of freedom framework is available to facilitate the documentation of evidence to support successful eradication. Guidance on completing the framework is provided in the *Proof of freedom framework* guideline.

The stand down phase is activated by one of the following:

- The investigation and alert phase indicates the EPP is not present (refer to section 3.1.9).
- The NMG agrees (upon advice from the CCEPP) that the Incident does not relate to an EPP (refer to section 3.1.8 and 3.1.9).
- The eradication of an EPP is determined by the NMG (upon advice by the CCEPP) not to be feasible (refer to section 3.1.8 and 3.1.9).
- Following implementation of a Response Plan, the NMG declares that the EPP has been successfully eradicated (refer to section 3.2.4).
- Following implementation of a Response Plan, the NMG formally declares that eradication is no longer considered feasible and a Transition to Management Phase is not considered appropriate (refer to section 3.2.4).

Activities carried out during the stand down phase are not eligible for Cost Sharing under the EPPRD. The one exception is the undertaking of an external financial audit of the Response Plan ledger following the completion of a Response Plan (EPPRD clause 12.4.1). A decision made to enter the stand down phase does not prevent jurisdictions and relevant industries from responding to a Plant Pest outside the EPPRD. The relevant states/territories in conjunction with the relevant industries may consider alternative strategies to adopt following stand down, such as long-term control methods, however these activities are outside of the scope of the EPPRD.

The activities undertaken during the stand down phase and the organisations responsible for them are further detailed below. These activities are grouped according to function and not necessarily in the sequence of events.

3.3.1 Review of intra and interstate quarantine arrangements

If the eradication campaign is unsuccessful or the Response Plan is terminated prior to completion, the SDQMA and the Australian Government will consider the most effective methods to support interstate and international trade respectively.

If the EPP is declared eradicated then all intra and interstate quarantine arrangements should be lifted and trading partners notified accordingly.

3.3.2 Communication and public information

The focus of communications in the stand down phase will vary depending on whether the EPP has been successfully eradicated or not. Regardless, the national talking points should be updated in a timely manner to reflect the outcome of the Incident. Where agreed, the NMG will issue a communiqué.

If the eradication campaign is successful, the Australian Government will:

- Advise relevant international trading partners.
- Provide an IPPC notification.
- Negotiate arrangements to reinstate international trade if necessary.

3.3.3 Finalisation of Cost Sharing, financial audit and determination of total costs

All Parties must finalise the Cost Sharing arrangements that were implemented during the operational phase and provide information to enable the total cost of responding to the Incident to be determined. This includes all Affected Parties providing an estimation of the normal commitments/in-kind contribution incurred during implementation of the Response Plan and other activities associated with responding to the Incident (e.g. CCEPP/NMG/SAP meetings etc). Details on timeframes for reporting and compliance are provided in the *Financial management of a Response Plan* guideline.

The Lead Agency must also arrange for an external audit of the Response Plan ledger account following completion of the Response Plan where the total Cost Shared amount is equal to or exceeds \$500,000⁹. The cost of the financial audit is a Cost Sharable item that is specified in the Response Plan budget. Further information including timeframes for providing the audit report to Affected Parties can be found in the *Financial management of a Response Plan* guideline.

3.3.4 Incident debriefs

Incident debriefs are a critical component of the stand down phase as they provide an opportunity for participants to highlight areas requiring improvement as well as positive outcomes.

Incident debriefs will be held at local, state and national levels following termination of the EPP response. It is essential that relevant personnel involved in the response are included in the debriefing process.

PHA and the ACPPO will coordinate a debriefing in regard to the operation of the EPPRD and PLANTPLAN to help inform any appropriate changes to PLANTPLAN or the EPPRD.

Other committees (non EPPRD) engaged in the response including the NBCEN and SDQMA should conduct a debrief of their operation and activities during the Incident and report their findings to PHA for incorporation into the national debrief outcomes.

Further information on the EPPRD Incident debriefing process is provided in the *Debriefing* guideline.

3.3.5 Relief and Recovery

Relief and recovery activities during and following the stand down phase will depend on the specific circumstances and outcome of the Incident including whether it occurred in a rural or urban environment and if the EPP has been eradicated or not. Regardless of the outcome of the Incident recovery activities will occur through government and industry and will include continued dissemination of information regarding access to and availability of support services.

Where the EPP has been eradicated recovery activities may also include a continued focus on supporting growers and businesses return to pre-Incident levels of activity through appropriate measures. Community recovery may extend to restoration of environmental and /or amenity values.

Where the EPP is unable to be eradicated, recovery activities will change focus to supporting growers, businesses and the community to adjust to "living with" and managing the EPP. This is one of the key elements of Transition to Management (see below). Communication and extension activities to make growers and the community aware of the newly established EPP and options to manage and mitigate its impact will also be a focus of activity.

3.4 Transition to Management Phase

The EPPRD includes provisions for Cost Sharing of Transition to Management activities in the circumstance where eradication has been attempted under a Response Plan and the NMG has determined eradication is no longer feasible. Not all circumstances in which eradication is determined no longer feasible will require a nationally coordinated program of activities to Transition to Management. The need is considered on a case by case basis and will depend on the circumstances of the EPP and the stage and nature of the unsuccessful eradication program.

Transition to Management under the EPPRD is a structured process to enable transition from seeking to achieve eradication of the EPP under a Response Plan to management of the EPP outside of the EPPRD. The Transition to Management Phase will only occur if the NMG determines (on advice from the CCEPP)

⁹ The amount of \$500,000 will be adjusted as at 1 July each year after 30 June 2011 using the change in the Consumer Price Index over the four quarters that have been most recently published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics at that date (EPPRD part 2 of schedule 11).

that it is necessary to orderly stand down/exit from eradication, and that Transition to Management (under a revised Response Plan) is achievable within a defined and reasonable timeframe of up to 12 months. The NMG may agree to extend the time in which Transition to Management is considered achievable to a defined and reasonable timeframe exceeding 12 months, but only if the NMG (on the advice of the CCEPP) determines that there are exceptional circumstances. Some EPP responses will only require a short period of Transition to Management activity (e.g. 3 or 6 months).

3.4.1 Commencement of the Transition to Management Phase

The Transition to Management Phase commences when the NMG agrees (upon advice from the CCEPP) that it is no longer feasible to eradicate the EPP, and that the emergency response should enter a Transition to Management Phase. In its recommendation to the NMG, the CCEPP will provide advice on:

- Why Transition to Management is appropriate/required - the gap that needs to be addressed to enable industry, government and the community to be best prepared for “living with” or managing the EPP.
- The potential scope and objectives of Transition to Management.
- The proposed activities to be incorporated into the revised Response Plan.

3.4.2 Revision and approval of the Response Plan

During the period following the commencement of the Transition to Management Phase the Response Plan will be revised to incorporate activities for Transition to Management. This will occur through early engagement and collaboration between the Lead Agency and Affected Industry Parties. The CCEPP may also assist in identifying activities required to achieve the intended Transition to Management objectives. The [Transition to Management](#) guideline, [Response Plan development](#) guideline and [Response Plan for Transition to Management](#) template include information on the possible additions to the Response Plan.

The revised Response Plan will be provided to the NMG for approval, on the advice of the CCEPP.

3.4.3 Response Plan implementation

Implementation of the revised Response Plan will continue in the same manner as under the operational phase (refer to section 3.2.1).

Situation reports should continue to be provided by the Lead Agency to keep the CCEPP/NMG informed and assist the CCEPP in its role to monitor the progress of Response Plan implementation. A dedicated Transition to Management reference group will be formed to support the CCEPP in this role by providing operational oversight of activities implemented under the response Plan. The convening of the reference group will also provide a mechanism to support close engagement/partnership between the Lead Agency and Affected Industry Party(s) during the period of Transition to Management. Further detail can be found in the [Transition to Management](#) guideline.

If trigger points for review (as agreed by the NMG and outlined in the Response Plan) are met, the CCEPP will review the Response Plan and consider whether Transition to Management is still appropriate. Depending on the outcome, the Response Plan may be amended and resubmitted to the NMG for approval, or alternatively a recommendation made to the NMG that the Transition to Management Phase should end, in which case the Response Plan will come to an end (refer section 3.4.6).

3.4.4 Coordination of Cost Sharing

As Transition to Management will be part of an existing Response Plan, there will be no changes to the Cost Sharing arrangements. Coordination of Cost Sharing will occur in the same manner as the operational phase (section 3.2.2), with further information provided in the *Financial management of a Response Plan* guideline.

3.4.5 Communication and public information

Communication and engagement will be critical components of Transition to Management. The focus will be on providing industry and the community with the information they require to adjust to “living with” or managing the EPP. Relevant aspects should be included in the Response Plan. The national talking points should also be updated in a timely manner to reflect that the EPP is no longer feasible to eradicate and that there is a Transition to Management program being implemented under the revised Response Plan. The NMG may also issue a communique.

3.4.6 Finalisation of the Transition to Management Phase

On completion of the Transition to Management activities under the Response Plan, the Lead Agency will present a report to the CCEPP detailing the activities completed under the Response Plan. The CCEPP will then provide advice to the NMG regarding successful completion of the Response Plan. Once the NMG agrees that Transition to Management has been completed (as the activities in the Response Plan have been successfully completed) the Transition to Management Phase will end.

The Transition to Management Phase may also be finalised if the NMG determines (on advice from the CCEPP) that the Transition to Management Phase should end, in which case the Response Plan will come to an end (for example if the Response Plan has been triggered as described at section 3.4.3 above).

3.4.7 Finalisation of Cost Sharing, financial audit and determination of total costs

Finalisation of Cost Sharing arrangements, requirements for a financial audit and determination of total costs will occur as described in the stand down phase (section 3.3.3).

3.4.8 Transition to Management debrief

A debrief should be held either during, or at the finalisation of the Transition to Management Phase. The outcomes of this debrief can then be fed back into any future use of the Transition to Management Phase and to help inform any appropriate changes to PLANTPLAN or the EPPRD.