**Invitation to tender for Internal Audit**

**on**

**Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

The need for effective business continuity and disaster recovery plans is particularly important to protect Plant Health Australia’s (PHA’s) reputation and operations in the event of a disaster or security incident for example. Cyber security is currently reviewed on a frequent basis; however, it is also important to ensure business as usual can be restored quickly in the event of an outage, disaster or other event/incident and there is no critical loss for PHA.

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of PHA is to strengthen the Australian plant biosecurity system for the benefit of the economy, environment, and community.

PHA is the trusted coordinator of the Australian plant biosecurity system. We bring expertise, knowledge and stakeholders together to generate solutions that improve biosecurity outcomes to ensure that the system is future-oriented and solutions-focused.

PHA is recognised nationally and internationally as the independent and trusted coordinator of a robust, shared, and integrated Australian plant biosecurity system. We are the national coordinator of the government-industry partnership for plant biosecurity in Australia.

PHA’s core activities are funded from annual subscriptions paid by members. The Australian Government, State and Territory Governments and plant industry members each meet one third of the total annual membership subscription. This tri-partisan funding model ensures the independence of the company.

In addition to subscription-funded activities, PHA undertakes separately funded projects for individual members or subsets of members. The main sources of non-subscription funding are Government grants (both Federal and State), Research and Development Corporations (RDCs), and Statutory Levies.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

Plant Health Australia Limited is a public company limited by guarantee, incorporated in Australia and domiciled in Australia.

The Company is a not for-profit, private sector entity which is not publicly accountable. Therefore, the financial statements of the Company are tier 2 general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures (AASB – RDRs) (including Australian Interpretations) adopted by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and the *Corporations Act 2001*.

PHA strives for a system of corporate governance that allows the Board and management enough freedom to drive the organisation forward, with an effective framework of accountability.

Responsibility for the operation and administration of the company is delegated by the Board to the CEO and the Executive Management Team.

PHA maintains accounts and records of its transactions and affairs in accordance with accepted principles generally applied in commercial practice and with legislative requirements.

**4.0 ABOUT THIS TENDER**

**4.1 Outline**

The aim of this internal audit is to review the adequacy of Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans and associated arrangements to ensure these can be successfully and effectively deployed in the event of a business continuity event or disaster.

**4.2 Invitation**

We invite tenders for the provision of internal audit services during the first quarter of the 2023 calendar year.

The objectives for this tender process are to:

* secure a high-quality provider of this internal audit service
* appoint an auditor who will provide high standards of professional service and value
* appoint an auditor who will provide practical and relevant recommendations that will lead to improved systems and controls at PHA.

The audit services will include, but will not be limited to:

* provide opinion on whether PHA has implemented disaster recovery plans and detailed recovery procedures for all key business systems, including documented roles and responsibilities and clear communication plans
* assess the adequacy and effectiveness of existing plans to support the prompt recovery of crucial enterprise functions and Information Technology (IT) facilities in the event of major failure or disaster
* determine whether current systems work economically and efficiently
* evaluate the performance of PHA’s business continuity plans during the COVID 19 pandemic as a recent test of our plans
* evaluate whether PHA has assessed their IT skillsets to effectively conduct disaster recovery activities
* evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of internal controls currently in place and identify opportunities to enhance systems and processes
* fully describe any weakness or deficiencies, including possible reasons and frequency of occurrence and potential consequences or ramifications
* provide recommendations and suggestions to assist management improve systems as efficiently as possible whilst retaining an adequate control environment
* provide opinions on whether PHA has identified, assessed and considered all disaster recovery and business continuity related risks
* report on best practices in comparison with our current business continuity and disaster recovery plans
* report on compliance with all legal obligations
* provide recommendations and suggestions to assist management improve systems and controls as efficiently as possible.

**5.0 INSTRUCTIONS TO TENDERERS**

**5.1 Requirements for Tender of Internal Audit Function**

The internal audit firm is expected to appoint a partner to oversee the audit and meet with PHA management as required. Additional information to be included in the Tender is presented at Schedule 1.

Tenders must detail the applicant’s internal audit capability (including skills and experience), personnel to be involved including qualifications and the fixed price budget for the audit (including hourly charge out rates of various personnel). Tenders must also specify two relevant client referees that PHA may contact.

As part of this tender process, PHA will provide tenderers with any further relevant information upon request to enable prospective tenderers to provide a clear and accurate proposal.

**5.2 Term of Contract**

The term of the contract will be for the period of this engagement.

**5.3 Submission of Tender**

Tenders to be emailed to [mmilne@phau.com.au](mailto:mmilne@phau.com.au)

**5.4 Closing date for Tender**

Close of business 25 January 2023.

**6.0 OTHER INFORMATION**

**6.1 Location**

The PHA head office is located at level 1, 1 Phipps Close, Deakin, ACT.

**6.2 Staffing**

Approximately 36 staff are employed of which 8 are located interstate.

**6.3 Internal Audits**

Internal audits are undertaken regularly to compliment the external audit. Tenders are generally sought from at least three parties for the internal audit.

**7.0 RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

**PHA Constitution**

[Company Constitution – Plant Health Australia](https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/about-us/corporate-documents/company-constitution/)

**PHA Annual Report 2022**

[2022-AnnualReport.pdf (planthealthaustralia.com.au)](https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/2022-AnnualReport.pdf)

**2022-23 Annual Operational Plan**

[Annual-Operational-Plan-2022-23.pdf (planthealthaustralia.com.au)](https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Annual-Operational-Plan-2022-23.pdf)

**Strategic Plan**

[Our Strategic Plan 2022-27 – Plant Health Australia](https://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/about-us/corporate-documents/our-strategic-plan-2022-27/)

It is requested that tenders include the following information:

**The firm**

* A description of the internal audit firm including organisation structure as it relates to this engagement
* Summary of the potential benefits to PHA of selecting your firm
* Information regarding relevant experience with comparable clients to PHA in organisational status and size.

**Resourcing**

* Details of the core service team, location, and relevant experience.

**Approach and Transition**

* The process by which the audit firm will obtain an understanding of PHA’s organisational needs and risks
* Explanation of the audit approach and how this would be aligned to PHA’s specific needs
* Details of the technology to deliver audit-related services
* How findings will be reported to management.

**Quality Assurance**

* Describe the internal processes used for quality assurance.

**Independence and Governance**

* Details of your firm’s policies and practices to ensure compliance with independence requirements and the processes to deal with conflicts of interest
* Confirmation from your firm that it will take all necessary steps to ensure its ongoing independence.

**Insurance and terms & conditions**

* Evidence of adequate professional indemnity insurance
* The audit firm’s terms and conditions to provide the audit service.

**Fees**

* The basis on which fees will be determined including charge out rates
* General overview of the schedule and timing of billings.