

# CEO MESSAGE

## Transcript

Every year we work to strengthen the partnerships that deliver a strong and resilient plant biosecurity system, with our strategic plan providing foundational priorities for a response ready, innovative, and integrated national approach.

At the end of November each year we host our Members over two days to facilitate and deliver industry and government engagement on biosecurity priorities. This year we held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Government Members Forum, the 36<sup>th</sup> Plant Industry Forum, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM), the 13<sup>th</sup> Plant Health Australia (PHA) Members Forum and the 38<sup>th</sup> Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed Signatories Meeting, both online and in-person. Over the two days we hosted discussions on the public consultation on the draft agricultural levies, the National Biosecurity Implementation Plan, Plant Property Identification Codes and presented on our digital systems which provide critical national infrastructure that supports industry and government data sharing opportunities, network coordination of diagnostics specialists and surveillance practitioners, bee biosecurity and why it's more important than ever, and how the Forest Watch biosecurity program is an evolution of critical surveillance projects and a shining example of the future collaboration needed.

At the AGM, we farewelled our Chair Steve McCutcheon who served eight years on the board and six of those as chair. We also farewelled Directors Joanne Daly and Robert Prince, both having served two four year terms and three new Directors; Roslyn Baker, Jolyon Burnett and Ron Glanville were appointed. Kathy Kelly was re-appointed to a second term and Jeremy Burdon was appointed by the Board for two years, following the resignation of Prof. Simon McKirdy in September. We thank all of our outgoing Directors for their contribution and service to PHA and wish them well in the future - I know they will continue to be plant biosecurity champions!

Board Meeting 113 was held straight after our Members meetings, where we welcomed our new Directors to the Board and held elections for the Chair and Deputy Chair. I'm pleased to let you know that Kim Halbert is PHA's new Chair and Doug Phillips is Deputy Chair. Kathy Kelly returns as the Chair of Finance and Audit Committee and all Directors have a role on either the Finance and Audit or People and Culture Committees.

Earlier this month, we launched the much anticipated National Biosecurity Training Hub – and this is exciting because it's Australia's first one-stop online shop for biosecurity training. A collaboration between the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Agriculture Victoria, New South Wales Department of Primary Industries, Animal Health Australia and led by PHA, the Hub demonstrates the power of partnerships in improving cross-sectoral national biosecurity capability and capacity to prepare us for future biosecurity risks. Visit the hub at [biotraininghub.com.au](http://biotraininghub.com.au).

A much anticipated event coming in 2024 is the inaugural FutureAg Expo taking place 17-19 April at the Melbourne Showgrounds. PHA have partnered with Hannover Fairs to bring you this three day event. Registrations are now open and all PHA members will receive a 10% discount off tickets. More information on this event is in this month's edition of Tendrils.

As another productive year draws to a close, I'd like to thank our Members, stakeholders and staff for your support, commitment and contributions throughout the year. The PHA team will taking a well-deserved break from Thursday the 21st of December re-opening our doors on the 3rd of January. From all of us at PHA, we wish you a happy and safe festive season and look forward to the opportunities 2024 will bring.