

CHAIRPERSON ADDRESS

PHA 23rd General Meeting

30 May 2024

For over 24 years, PHA has been an integral part of the Australian plant biosecurity system, coordinating industry-government partnerships to maintain and strengthen our world-class biosecurity system.

Within the past few years, the plant biosecurity system has experienced mounting pressure from a range of external factors which has necessitated the need for system transformation and sustainable funding. Similarly, in order to continue to fulfil our role as the trusted coordinator of the Australian plant biosecurity system, PHA is required to be agile to support the pace of operations and increased levels of support needed by our Members.

Over the past few months, this change has been reflected in:

- a new Board composition with a new Chair and Deputy Chair and a varied skill set
- a heightened operating environment awareness and
- a strategic focus on our business model to ensure we leverage opportunities and continue to deliver Member value.

The proposed levy legislative reforms; notably the Biosecurity Protection Levy and the Modernising Agriculture Levies work, has required an ongoing watching brief, preparation of multiple Have Your Say submissions and Member liaison and engagement to determine potential Member impact. As a Member-centric organization, connection to our Members is a priority and is why as a Board we ensure our Board meetings are held in different locations across Australia on a rotational basis to keep us connected to regional priorities for plant biosecurity and provide opportunities to connect with our Members in these locations.

In the coming months, the implementation of our new Enterprise Resource Planning system, which includes a new financial system, will ensure PHA has a fit-for-purpose system that provides accurate, relevant and timely information to enable rapid decision making in a quickly evolving environment.

As we look ahead to the new financial year, the 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan presents PHA's key activities and targets to support PHA's vision of being a valued leader of a strong, integrated plant biosecurity system. The portfolio of work to be undertaken in the next 12 months is categorised under each of our three strategic priorities; Respond effectively, Strengthen Partnerships and Enhance integration as well as our two operational priorities; improve governance and administration and enhance communication and engagement. Most of you would have seen the draft AOP at the March webinar and received an electronic copy after the webinar. Thank you to those Members who provided feedback during the consultation period. This feedback was incorporated in the revised AOP.

Subject to a Member vote, PHA subscriptions will be subject to a Consumer Price Index based increase of 4.1%. This means a core funding increase of \$115,952 from our government and industry Members. PHA also expects to receive \$11.908 in non-subscription project funding. This project funding not only aligns with and supports our Strategic Plan but allows PHA to be agile and leverage skills and expertise across the organisation and have surge capacity and capability when needed. A breakdown of these figures is given in the AOP.

Finally, I would like to thank the PHA team for arranging the Plant Industry Forum, General Meeting and Members Forum and for preparing a portfolio of work that continues to maximise Member benefits, support emerging Member needs and focuses on strengthening the plant biosecurity system for the benefit of the economy, environment and community.

Thank you for your attendance today and for your support over the past 12 months. I look forward to seeing you at the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium in August as well as at our AGM in November.