2017/18

Annual Operational Plan

Plant Health AUSTRALIA

Improving national biosecurity outcomes through partnerships

Plant Health Australia is the national coordinator of the government-industry partnership for plant biosecurity in Australia.

Purpose

The purpose of Plant Health Australia is to coordinate strong industry and government partnerships that minimise plant pest impacts on Australia, boosting industry productivity and profitability and enhancing market access

Vision

PHA is recognised nationally and internationally as the independent and trusted coordinator of a robust, shared and integrated Australian plant biosecurity system

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FOREWORD

From the Chairman and the CEO

The Annual Operational Plan (AOP) for 2017–18 presents PHA activities planned for the coming financial year. There are two key components to the income stream:

- subscription income of $2,581,500 which is allocated according to member priorities
- an additional $6,500,774 invested in projects by key stakeholders including members, groups of members and non-members.

This year, activities are organised into seven areas, consistent with the structure of the new five-year PHA strategic plan for 2016–21, which is detailed on pages 5 and 6. The seven key result areas are:

- Partnerships
- Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed
- Preparedness
- Surveillance
- Diagnostics
- Research, Development & Extension
- Company Health.

Members will find that the layout of the AOP aligns with the PHA Strategic Plan 2016-21, which clearly shows PHA's work across all aspects of Australia's plant biosecurity system.

Many of the programs and projects are a continuation of existing work, however, there are new projects described in the following pages.

Once again, a large part of the proposed subscription budget is dedicated to the work generated by administering and applying the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD). More than a decade after ratification, operations under the agreement are in full-swing. PHA is managing seven eradication responses as we approach the 2017–18 year. In addition to incursion management, work continues on improving the agreement itself, and on ensuring that those involved are well-trained.

Members will be familiar with three national programs that PHA continues to support the Farm Biosecurity Program, the National Fruit Fly Council and implementation of the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy. All three programs have huge scope to improve Australia's plant biosecurity status, and all exemplify the benefits of partnerships between industry and government. As such, they are truly national programs.

The company will maintain its role in coordinating and facilitating the national network that provides diagnostic services in Australia, with professional development opportunities, laboratory residential courses, training workshops and proficiency testing for diagnosticians all planned for 2017–18.

PHA provides support for information technology systems across all areas of the plant biosecurity system, a role that has grown in recent years. This includes contributions to ensure that digital resources including the Biosecurity Portal, Pest Information Document Database and the Australian Plant Pest Database all function well. These resources provide fast access for stakeholders to essential pest information, which is crucial in the event of a suspected plant pest incursion.

AusPest*Check*, the virtual coordination centre for surveillance data, continues to be rolled out. Over two million records have now been entered into the system, and the potential for further data capture and aggregation is vast.

Websites and e-newsletters established and maintained by PHA ensure that important information is only a few clicks away, and keep members, stakeholders, producers and the broader public informed about developments in plant biosecurity. The Biosecurity Portal provides a gateway to an array of biosecurity information sources, as well as secure workspaces for closed groups including emergency response decision-makers. Other sites include those for the diagnosticians' network, beekeepers and pollination service users, fruit fly prevention and interstate quarantine.

The work supporting plant biosecurity research, development and extension continues, with PHA bringing together government, industry and research funders and providers to ensure that research dollars bring the maximum benefit. Implementation of the National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy continues and a new pivotal role, assisting the coordination of plant biosecurity research across seven rural RDCs, has been added.

Developing and revising biosecurity plans which identify and mitigate biosecurity risks for plant production systems and the environment continues apace this year, including new plans for native plants, acacia and tea tree. PHA is also working with industries to establish and support biosecurity officers who raise awareness of biosecurity among producers and others along the supply chain. This year a number of new biosecurity programs are being added to the existing work in the grains, citrus, honey bee, vegetable and potato industries, all funded from monies raised by biosecurity levies.

Across all areas, our staff will be contributing to national committees and workgroups to advance the aims of members.

This challenging workplan shows PHA's willingness to work across the full gamut of plant biosecurity areas, in line with the priorities of members and the needs of the system.

We have every faith that the plan for the year will be achieved by the company's expert and dedicated staff. We look forward to working with each of you over the coming year.

Darral Ashton
Chairman
May 2017

Greg Fraser
Executive Director & CEO

PHA'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2016–21

This year, activities are organised into seven areas, consistent with the structure of the PHA Strategic Plan for 2016–21. The seven strategies are:

1. Strengthen partnerships

Australia can only be protected from new plant pests with cooperation between plant industries and governments. PHA has played a key role fostering effective partnerships since the company's inception in 2000, and company membership continues to increase, broadening PHA's reach.

Under the new strategic plan, PHA will continue to bring partners together to work collaboratively to strengthen Australia's biosecurity system. New members will be fostered, particularly new industries and new associate members – stakeholder organisations with roles to play in plant biosecurity. PHA will work to extend relationships further along the value chain and plans to enhance the reputation of the company and the plant biosecurity system internationally.

PHA's important role as a promoter of the importance of plant biosecurity will also be strengthened with more resourcing for the Farm Biosecurity Program and other awareness-raising initiatives.

2. Enhance operation and integrity of the EPPRD

As custodian of the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) PHA has a leadership role in eradication responses to serious new pest incursions. The EPPRD provides post-border protection for Australia's plant industries and associated rural communities, the environment and the national economy.

PHA will provide guidance to Parties to the EPPRD to ensure effective operation, as well as continually evaluating and improving the agreement to ensure that it keeps pace with the needs of signatories. Parties to the agreement will be assisted to increase their emergency response capacity.

3. Develop pest management and preparedness programs

PHA will assist stakeholders to find solutions to a wide range of nationally significant biosecurity issues where no existing framework applies, such as weeds, national fruit fly management, newly introduced pests and pests of pastures.

The company will do this by developing strategies, facilitating partnership approaches and managing large-scale programs. Through partnerships, PHA will also take the lead in identifying initiatives to improve preparedness including plant biosecurity research, development and extension. The work will inform the development of future strategic frameworks.

Preparedness initiatives include managing programs for newly introduced pests such as national management plans, and facilitating industry-government partnerships that boost biosecurity planning for industries and contingency planning for high priority pests.

4. Facilitate a nationally coordinated surveillance program

Given the importance of detecting new pest incursions quickly, and the need to demonstrate area freedom, PHA will take leadership in developing systems of surveillance for high priority pests within Australia. PHA will assist industries to expand data collection for key exotic pests, work to establish farm or regional surveillance systems and through government-industry partnerships, work to implement biosecurity plans.

To maximise benefits from improved systems of checking for pests, PHA will invest in data management and reporting systems, with ongoing benefits to market access for Australian produce.

5. Improve the diagnostic system

Accurate and rapid identification of pests is a fundamental element of the plant biosecurity system. PHA will continue to boost Australia's diagnostic capability by building a coordinated network of experts that provides comprehensive coverage of expertise nationally. Efforts to increase diagnostic preparedness for priority plant pests will continue through improving the skills and knowledge of diagnosticians, as well as facilitating the development of protocols for the identification of key exotic pests.

6. Co-ordinate planning and implementation of plant biosecurity RD&E

With change pending in the structure of plant biosecurity science in Australia, PHA will increase its focus on coordinating RD&E across universities and other research organisations. This includes implementing the Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy, identifying areas of greatest need, identifying opportunities for cross-sectoral benefits and assisting in obtaining funding for needed research.

7. Manage the company effectively

With effective and transparent systems of governance, financial control and risk management PHA maintains a sound business. The company is committed to maintaining a highly skilled staff with a broad expertise base to assist members with their growing biosecurity needs.

Strategic Plan 2016–21

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Purpose

The purpose of Plant Health Australia is to co-ordinate strong industry and government partnerships that minimise plant pest impacts on Australia, boosting industry productivity and profitability while enhancing market access

Vision

PHA is recognised nationally and internationally as the independent and trusted coordinator of a robust, shared and integrated Australian plant biosecurity system

KEY RESULT AREAS

1 PARTNERSHIPS
2 EPPRD
3 PREPAREDNESS
4 SURVEILLANCE
5 DIAGNOSTICS
6 RD&E
7 COMPANY HEALTH

STRATEGIES & KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1 STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

- Strong working relationship with members
- Stakeholder engagement broadened along the value chain
- Established relationships with international partners
- Awareness programs expanded
- Farm biosecurity program strengthened

2 ENHANCE OPERATION AND INTEGRITY OF THE EPPRD

- Signatories comply with EPPRD obligations
- EPPRD review outcomes implemented
- Enhancement of policy and activities to promote early pest reporting
- Increased emergency response capacity and capability

3 DEVELOP PEST MANAGEMENT AND PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMS

- Improved national management of recently introduced pests
- Established framework for management of exotic weeds and pests of pastures
- Programs for management of nationally significant pests established
- Risks identified and managed

4 FACILITATE A NATIONALLY CO-ORDINATED SURVEILLANCE PROGRAM

- Surveillance programs for nationally significant pests established
- Uptake of new surveillance technology
- Increased industry capacity
- Nationally co-ordinated data management

5 IMPROVE THE DIAGNOSTIC SYSTEM

- Nationally co-ordinated diagnostic network
- Increased protocol coverage for Emergency Plant Pests
- Improved diagnostician capability

6 CO-ORDINATE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANT BIOSECURITY RD&E

- AGSOC Plant Biosecurity RD&E Plan Implemented
- Nationally agreed RD&E priorities
- Monitor RD&E activities, capability and capacity
- Increased ability to fund plant biosecurity RD&E activities

7 MANAGE THE COMPANY EFFECTIVELY

- Attract and retain key staff skills
- PHA is in a sound financial position
- Legal and regulatory compliance obligations met
- Timely and accurate reporting

OPERATIONAL PLANS

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

Guides business to achieve strategic direction

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Subscription and non-subscription income

Subscription income for 2017-18 is set at $852,500 each for the Australian Government, state and territory governments and industry peak bodies. The Board has agreed to maintain minimum subscriptions for smaller industries at $1,500 per annum and associate member subscriptions at $2,000 per annum.

A summary of total income and expenditure budgeted for 2017–18 is presented in Table 1. A surplus of $4,152 is forecast for the year, which maintains reserves within the PHA reserves policy.

Subscription income accounts for 28 per cent of the total for 2017–18. Company Health expenditure is forecast to be 9.6 per cent of total expenditure.

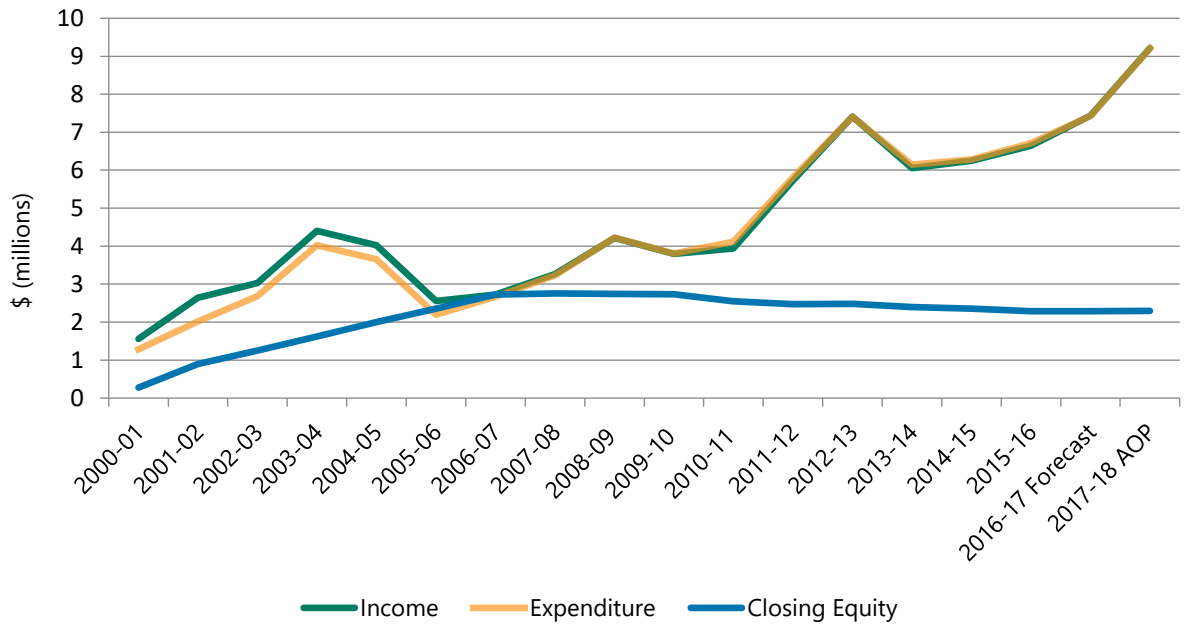
Table 1: Income and expenditure, 2017-18

2017–18	$	%
Income:		
Subscription	2,581,500	28.0
Non-subscription	6,500,774	70.6
Interest	130,509	1.4
Total income	**9,212,783**	**100.0**
Expenditure:		
Partnerships	1,037,277	11.2
EPPRD	1,077,493	11.7
Preparedness	3,322,059	36.1
Surveillance	2,188,902	23.8
Diagnostics	422,518	4.6
RD&E	278,949	3.0
Company Health	881,433	9.6
Total expenditure	**9,208,631**	**100.0**
Result: surplus	**4,152**	

Income and expenditure trends

Figure 1 gives the actual, forecast and budgeted movement in income, expenditure and equity since PHA was established, showing the historically close tracking of income and expenditure.

Figure 1. Income, expenditure and closing equity, 2001–18

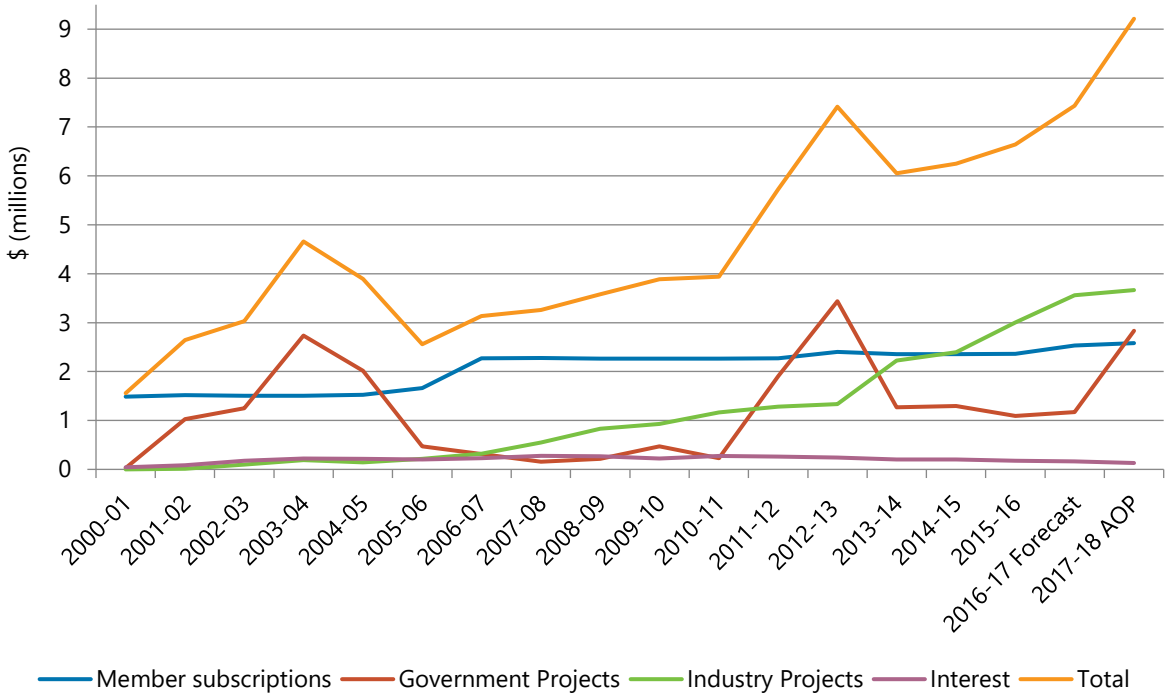


Sources of funding for PHA's activities over time are presented in Figure 2. Spikes in government project funding over the life of PHA are due to Australian Government seed funding during the establishment of PHA and the EPPRD, transition to management programs for Asian honey bees and myrtle rust, and more recently funding for PHA's leadership roles in various national programs outlined in this Annual Operational Plan.

Over recent years there has been a strong increase in funding from industry and although this has plateaued slightly, it will continue to grow through statutory levy funded programs.

With the outlook on interest rates in the short to medium term conservative at best, PHA is planning for reduced interest income in comparison with 2016–17.

Figure 2. PHA sources of income, 2001–18



Subscriptions for 2017–18

Members will be asked to approve total subscriptions by member category at PHA's 16th General Meeting on 31 May 2017.

Note that individual subscription levels vary between years due to shifts in Local Value of Production (LVP)[1] for industries which, in turn, affects the relative proportion of individual member subscriptions calculated in accordance with the three-year rolling average formula set out in the PHA Constitution.

The 2017–18 draft subscriptions were calculated using data over the 2012–13, 2013–14 and 2014–15 years. LVPs are calculated from figures provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) or, if neither of these two options is available, a source deemed appropriate by PHA's directors.

[1] [1]Local value is the value placed on recorded production at the place of production, including indirect taxes. The local value of a commodity is calculated by subtracting total marketing costs from gross value.
Gross value is the value placed on recorded production at wholesale price(s) realised in the market place. The market place is defined, in general, as the point(s) of valuation of a commodity where ownership of the commodity is relinquished by the agricultural sector. For example, fruit can be sold into the fresh fruit market, to factories for processing and/or export.
Marketing costs are the costs of moving the agricultural product from the place of production (i.e. farm) to the market place. These include freight, cost of containers, commission, insurance, storage, handling and other charges necessarily incurred by the producer in delivering commodities to the market place.

Table 2. Proposed PHA member subscriptions in 2017–18

Member	Actual 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18	Change $
Australian Government	**835,000**	**852,500**	**17,500**
State and territory governments			
Australian Capital Territory	1,500	1,500	0
New South Wales	204,798	209,942	5,144
Northern Territory	1,838	1,957	119
Queensland	159,899	160,839	940
South Australia	114,833	120,587	5,754
Tasmania	15,207	16,765	1,558
Victoria	154,453	156,924	2,471
Western Australia	182,472	183,986	1,514
Total state and territory governments	**835,000**	**852,500**	**17,500**
Associate members			
AgNova Technologies Pty Ltd	2,000	2,000	-
Australian Grape and Wine Authority	2,000	2,000	-
Cotton R&D Corporation	2,000	2,000	-
CSIRO	2,000	2,000	-
Grains R&D Corporation	2,000	2,000	-
Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited	2,000	2,000	-
Lawn Solutions Australia	-	2,000	2,000
NT Farmers	-	2,000	2,000
Plant Biosecurity CRC Limited	2,000	2,000	-
Sugar Research Australia	2,000	2,000	-
Victorian Farmers Federation	2,000	2,000	-
Vinehealth Australia	-	2,000	2,000
Total associate members	**18,000**	**24,000**	**6,000**

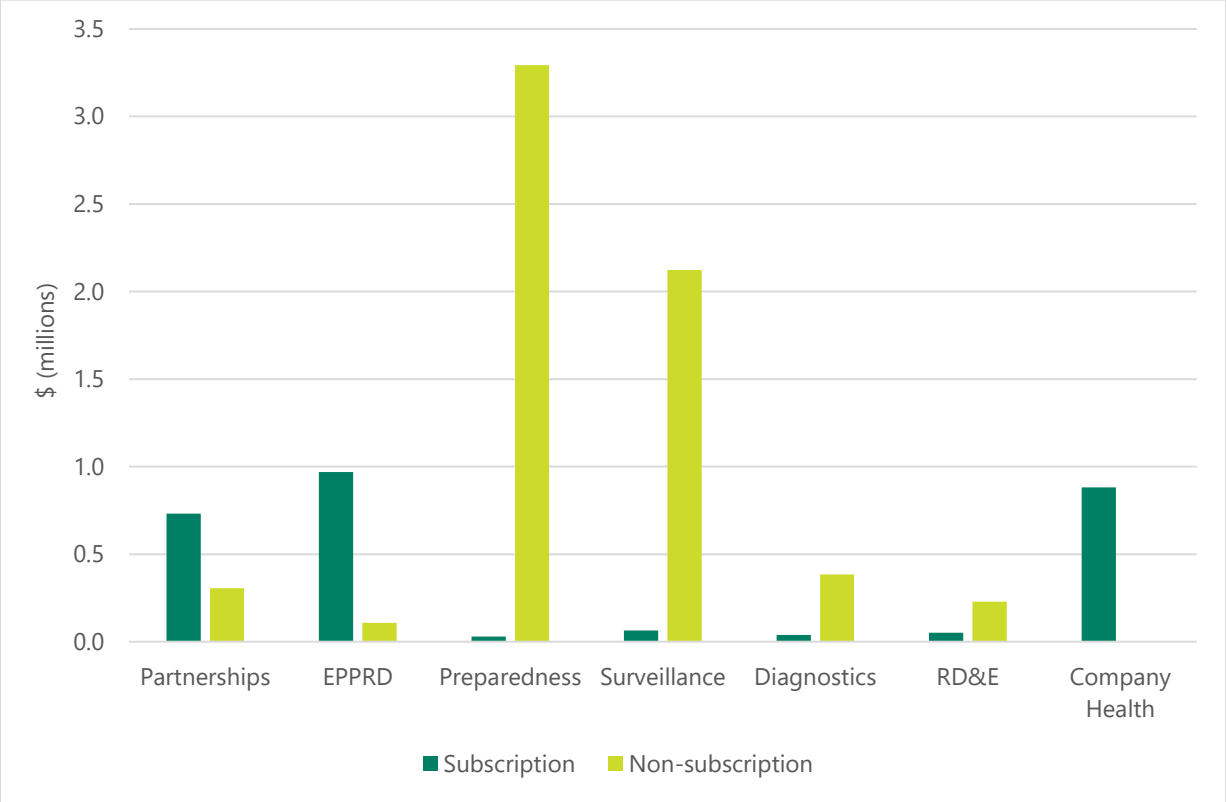
Table 2. Proposed PHA member subscriptions in 2017–18, continued

Member	Actual 2016-17	Proposed 2017-18	Change $
Industries			
Almond Board of Australia Inc.	8,929	9,057	128
Apple and Pear Australia Ltd	16,037	16,268	231
Australian Banana Growers' Council Inc.	13,246	13,437	191
Australian Blueberry Growers' Association	-	3,063	3,063
Australian Forest Products Association Ltd	44,053	44,689	636
Australian Ginger Industry Association	1,500	1,500	-
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc.	2,626	2,664	38
Australian Lychee Growers' Association Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Australian Macadamia Society Ltd	3,440	3,490	50
Australian Mango Industry Association Ltd	2,861	2,902	41
Australian Melon Association Ltd	5,775	5,858	83
Australian Olive Association Ltd	5,399	5,477	78
Australian Processing Tomato Research Council	1,500	1,500	-
Australian Sweet Potato Growers Inc	-	2,083	2,083
Australian Table Grape Association Inc.	8,496	8,619	123
Australian Truffle Growers' Association	-	1,500	1,500
Australian Walnut Industry Association	1,500	1,500	-
AUSVEG Ltd	72,521	72,874	353
Avocados Australia Ltd	5,437	5,515	78
CANEGROWERS	38,864	39,425	561
Canned Fruits Industry Council of Australia	1,500	1,500	-
Cherry Growers of Australia Inc.	3,765	3,820	55
Chestnuts Australia Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Citrus Australia Ltd	14,425	14,633	208
Cotton Australia Ltd	70,816	71,839	1,023
Dried Fruits Australia Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Grain Producers Australia Ltd	423,929	430,053	6,124
GROWCOM	1,746	1,500	-246
Hazelnut Growers of Australia Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Nursery & Garden Industry Australia Ltd	22,393	22,716	323
Onions Australia	5,903	5,988	85
Passionfruit Australia Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Pistachio Growers' Association Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Raspberries and Blackberries Australia Inc.	1,500	1,500	-
Ricegrowers Association of Australia Inc.	8,569	8,693	124
Strawberries Australia Inc.	7,059	7,161	102
Summerfruit Australia Ltd.	6,390	6,483	93
Wine Grape Growers of Australia	25,821	26,193	372
Total industry members	**835,000**	**852,500**	**17,500**
Total subscription funding	**2,523,000**	**2,581,500**	**58,500**

Expenditure for 2017–18

The PHA budget for the 2017–18 year has been allocated into seven areas in line with the PHA Strategic Plan 2016-21. Planned subscription and non-subscription expenditure is identified in Figure 3.

Figure 3. PHA subscription and non-subscription expenditure by budget area, 2017–18

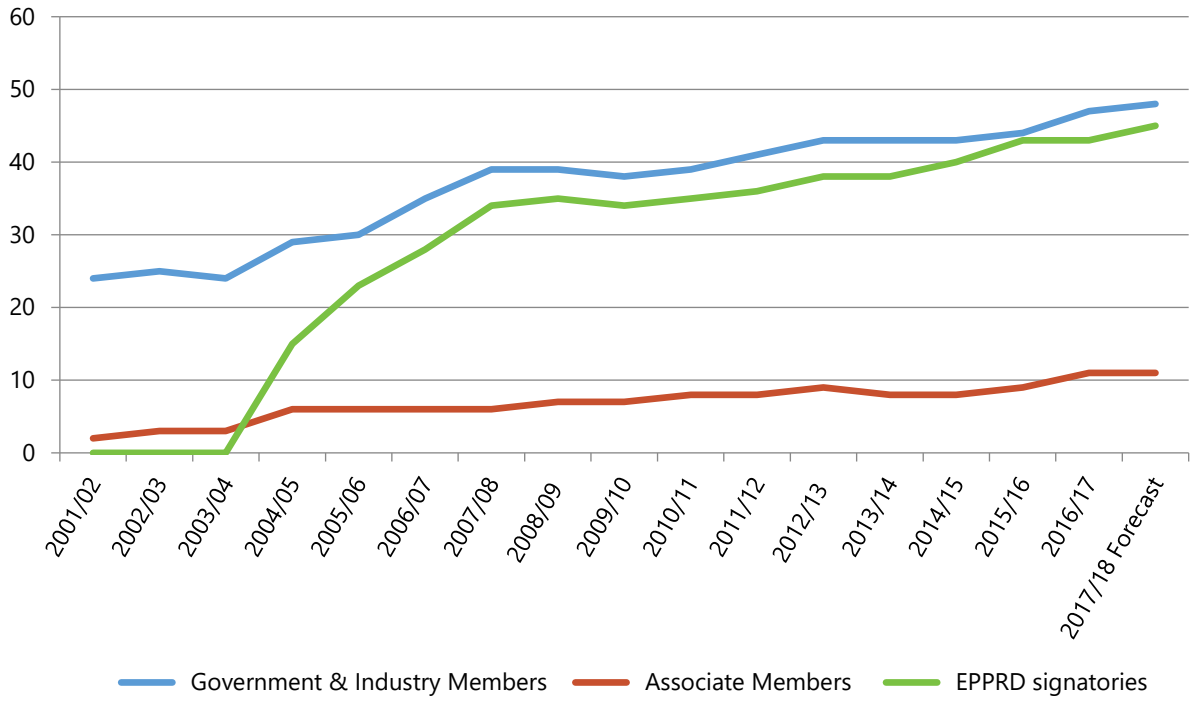


PHA membership and EPPRD signatories

The number of PHA members and signatories to the EPPRD since the company's formation are shown in Figure 4. PHA begins the 2017–18 financial year with nine government, 38 industry and 11 associate members. This continues a trend of steady growth since establishment.

There were no new EPPRD signatories in the past twelve months so the total number of signatories (including PHA) remains at 43, which together covers the majority of plant production in Australia. A number of the new PHA members have expressed interest in becoming signatories to the EPPRD.

Figure 4. Number of PHA members and EPPRD signatories, 2001–18



ACTIVITIES 2017–18

Subscription funded activities

Subscription funded programs	Budget ($)
Partnerships	
National committees and working groups	64,092
Member liaison	159,915
National programs	132,487
Strategic planning and reporting	36,726
Corporate communication	339,110
Total	**732,330**
EPPRD	
National committees and working groups	45,717
EPPRD management	361,951
EPPRD training	268,732
Incursion management	292,856
Total	**969,256**
Preparedness	
National committees and working groups	17,305
Biosecurity planning processes	12,039
Total	**29,344**
Surveillance	
National committees and working groups	27,944
International programs	21,949
Software development and support	15,068
Total	**64,961**
Diagnostics	
National committees and working groups	30,028
Software development and support	7,922
Total	**37,950**
RD&E	
National committees and working groups	7,510
National programs	42,964
Total	**50,474**
Company health	
Board management	246,206
Company finance and administration	635,227
Total	**881,433**
Total subscription expenditure	**2,765,748**

Non-subscription projects

Non-subscription projects	Budget ($)
Partnerships	
National programs	300,720
Software development and support	4,227
Total	**304,947**
EPPRD	
Software development and support	10,392
Biosecurity response preparedness	56,902
Simulation exercises	40,943
Total	**108,237**
Preparedness	
Biosecurity planning for industries	380,552
Biosecurity programs	2,753,372
Biosecurity response preparedness	158,791
Total	**3,292,715**
Surveillance	
Surveillance protocols and programs	2,105,128
Software development and support	10,773
Professional development	8,040
Total	**2,123,941**
Diagnostics	
Software development and support	6,020
Biosecurity response preparedness	231,541
Professional development	147,007
Total	**384,568**
RD&E	
National committees and working groups	108,145
National programs	120,330
Total	**228,475**
Total non-subscription	**6,442,883**

PARTNERSHIPS

PHA's purpose is to facilitate government and industry partnerships that strengthen the plant biosecurity system. The company's independence and broad membership structure creates the ideal environment for this to happen. PHA has a proven track record of bringing together partners who wish to make investments in the same biosecurity area to negotiate effective and lasting projects.

Key aims of the partnerships program include:

- strong working relationships with members
- raising awareness of the importance of plant biosecurity
- boosting investment in farm biosecurity practices
- improving biosecurity along the value chain
- international cooperation.

The key performance indicators for Partnerships are given at the end of the section.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA is actively involved in recognised government and industry committees, where they fit with PHA's strategies, are appropriately funded, and will deliver benefits to a majority of members.

Staff member involvement in national committees allows the company to:

- Ensure that national plant biosecurity policy issues are raised and addressed.
- Facilitate national partnership approaches to solve these issues.
- Lead, coordinate, or participate in projects initiated by these committees where they fit with PHA's Strategic Plan.
- Contribute technical expertise, strategic insight and independent views.

The partnerships budget area includes the National Biosecurity Committee and its subsidiary committees, groups and taskforces.

National Biosecurity Committee (NBC): as an observer, PHA contributes to the formulation of biosecurity policy at the highest level.

PHA staff contribute to the following subsidiary committees of the NBC:

- **Plant Health Committee** (PHC): PHA attends meetings of the peak plant biosecurity government committee. The committee works to establish national standards, and facilitates a consistent national approach to legislative outcomes and standards within the plant biosecurity sector. It also oversees implementation of the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy from a government perspective, and

provides a mechanism to support engagement with industry. In addition to involvement on PHC, PHA provides leadership on the following PHC subcommittees.

- **Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access** (SDQMA): PHA is the independent chair of the committee, which facilitates and brokers development and agreement of harmonised domestic market access conditions for plants and plant products across the country. SDQMA also drives appropriate certification arrangements to ensure barriers to trade for plant industries are minimised.
- **Invasive Plant and Animal Committee** (IPAC): This group (which reports to NBC) was established to guide national action to keep Australia's economic, environmental and social assets secure from the impacts of vertebrate pest animals, freshwater invertebrate pests and weeds. PHA contributes to discussions on weed related issues
- **National Biosecurity Information Governance Expert Group** (NBIGEG): PHA is a participant (observer), contributing expertise on sharing biosecurity data, including the provision of national data standards for biosecurity information exchange. The ability to seamlessly source and analyse real-time data aggregated from all jurisdictions in the event of biosecurity incidents, is fundamental to the effective management of biosecurity responses, and the ability of Australia to fulfil its international reporting obligations.
- **NBC Weeds Taskforce**: PHA's experience as custodian of the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) and plant expertise is provided to the committee, which was formed to determine the best approach to deal with exotic weed responses.
- **Northern Australia Biosecurity Framework Reference Group:** PHA joined this group in 2016, at the request of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, to provide advice on plant biosecurity to support a strong biosecurity framework for Northern Australia.

Member liaison

PHA places a priority on involving members in the setting, implementation and uptake of company program objectives and outputs. In March–April, staff meet with members to consult on proposed activities for the upcoming financial year. Twice a year, PHA hosts meetings of members in Canberra to facilitate shared understandings of biosecurity issues and allow discussions that advance solutions. Every few years, PHA commissions an independent survey of member satisfaction and current biosecurity concerns to ensure that company activities are in line with member priorities.

National programs

PHA subscriptions fund input into three national programs:

Farm Biosecurity Program

PHA operates the Farm Biosecurity Program jointly with Animal Health Australia to raise awareness and improve adoption of biosecurity practices on farm. This highly cost-effective program centres around a website that provides practical information for producers to include aspects of biosecurity into everyday farm practices to mitigate the risks of introducing or spreading pests. It communicates information for both plant and animal producers, recognising the high rate of mixed farming in Australia.

In addition to providing generic farm biosecurity advice – all framed around the six essentials – the website holds short instructional videos, the Farm Biosecurity Action Planner, biosecurity manuals, templates for records and a personal profile builder to select relevant content for producers. The FarmBiosecurity planning app, which is based on the Farm Biosecurity Action Planner, was launched in 2016 and is available on the App Store and Google Play.

Under the Farm Biosecurity brand, PHA disseminates articles about plant biosecurity issues to producers, via an e-newsletter and through articles published in newspapers, industry magazines and online outlets. The program also advertises the availability of resources nationally in print and online media outlets.

National Plant Biosecurity Strategy implementation

The Strategy sets out the agreed direction for the plant biosecurity system to 2020. It maps out goals for the key functional areas of plant biosecurity: emergency response, diagnostics, surveillance and communications.

During 2014–15 PHA undertook a midterm review of the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy to assess how well the agreed reforms have been implemented, and a progress report with remaining targets was published in the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy Implementation Plan 2016–20. In 2017–18, PHA will work with members to advance remaining reforms.

Strategic planning and reporting

PHA's activities are guided by an Annual Operational Plan, and reporting against the plan occurs after six months and at the end of the financial year. This provides members and the Board with a clear line of sight between company activities and the company's vision and stated goals.

Corporate communication

PHA maintains a high standard of corporate communications to keep members informed of the activities of the company and raise awareness of biosecurity issues. The PHA website is central to corporate communication, holding many resources of value to members. The EPPRD and PLANTPLAN are housed there, along with hundreds of documents on pests in the Pest Identification Document Database and links to other online resources such as the Australian Plant Pest Database.

The company endeavours to keep members and stakeholders informed of what is happening in biosecurity through media releases, articles in appropriate magazines and the e-newsletter *Tendrils*. PHA uses Twitter to disseminate news about plant biosecurity, including the news of members.

Communication also covers production of annual editions of the National Plant Biosecurity Status Report, a major document that tracks the performance of the plant biosecurity system and supports market access negotiations. One section of the report contains a full listing of all plant biosecurity RD&E projects underway in Australia, categorised by crop type and pest type. This annual audit also informs implementation of the Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy.

Non-subscription

National programs

National Fruit Fly Council
PHA provides support to the National Fruit Fly Council, the industry and government committee that is responsible for implementing the National Fruit Fly Strategy (NFFS). PHA provides secretariat and executive support to hold productive Council meetings and to map, prioritise and coordinate fruit fly management activities across Australia.

A National Manager, Fruit Fly Council has been appointed at PHA to ensure progress is maintained, promote the PreventFruitFly website, develop regional resources for growers and gardeners, and work with Hort Innovation's Queensland Fruit Fly Area Wide Management Coordinator. These activities are funded externally, however, given the strategic importance of this initiative, the CEO's time in this area is funded from subscriptions

The Council has reviewed the NFFS Action Plan and has included R&D projects identified by Hort Innovation and the Plant Biosecurity CRC and is working with stakeholders identify and prioritise key activities to improve the management of fruit flies across Australia.

Software development and support

Increasingly PHA has taken a leading role in developing online resources on particular aspects of biosecurity to enhance the system.

The Biosecurity Portal is a key resource that PHA maintains, providing fast access to a number of public sites such as BeeAware and the National Fruit Fly Council, as well as to secure workspaces for groups of stakeholders. One secure workspace collaboration site supports the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests, the group established to make decisions concerning an Emergency Plant Pest response. In 2017-18, PHA will advance the third stage of the portal project.

PHA has also developed many websites on aspects of biosecurity such as PreventFruitFly, Australian Interstate Quarantine, BeeAware, the National Diagnosticians Network site and sites for transition to management programs. Some have associated e-newsletters to keep subscribers informed. These sites require technical maintenance, licences and other support, and those hosted by PHA also require hardware support.

Contingency plan development site
PHA is in discussions with the Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources about the development of a database of contingency plans for priority pests to be hosted on the Biosecurity Portal.

The central location for documents, based on a customised template with specified fields for data, will make information more accessible and more readily updated than is currently the case. On completion of the project, users will be able to browse plans and generate an output document that includes only the required fields or sections of information.

Contract being negotiated

Biosecurity Emergency Management Knowledge Base
When preparing for, responding to and recovering from biosecurity incidents, response personnel generally need to access a wide variety of information from a number of disparate online sources, and collate and assess information in a timely and effective manner. While a vast amount of publically available documents exist online, it may take valuable time to search for and locate the information relevant to a particular pest.

PHA has recently scoped the feasibility of developing a site to be used by the Biosecurity Emergency Management Working Group when collating pest information for committee referral in the event of an incursion.

This project aims to develop a site which will be hosted on the Biosecurity Portal that is capable of performing a customised search of a predefined list of sites which meets specified metadata characteristics, and which then compiles the information to more easily locate and retrieve the documentation required.

Contract being negotiated

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

Partnerships	
National committees and working groups	• PHA will contribute to: o National Biosecurity Committee o Plant Health Committee o Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access o Invasive Plant and Animal Committee o National Biosecurity Information Governance Expert Group o NBC Weeds Taskforce o Northern Australia Biosecurity Framework Reference Group.
Member liaison	• Two General Meetings held in 2017–18 with all legal requirements for these meetings met. • At least two Plant Industry Forum meetings held in 2017–18. • At least one consultative meeting for all members held between the Annual General Meeting and General Meeting. • Person-to-person consultation with every Member at least once in 2017–18, including opportunities to provide input into operational priorities for 2018–19. • Participation in industry-government meetings as requested by members.
Strategic planning and reporting	• Members consulted in determining operational priorities for 2018–19. • 2017–18 Annual Operational Plan presented to members and approved by the Board in May 2017. • Annual Report 2017 presented to members and end of year financial statements approved by members at the 2017 Annual General Meeting. • Effective mid-year reporting against agreed key performance indicators with report approved by the Board and reported to members.
Corporate communication	• E-newsletter *Tendrils* conveys biosecurity and PHA news to stakeholders on a regular basis. • Corporate website and others for members well maintained, with good usage by stakeholders. • Excellent quality communications support provided to management, the Board and members. • Obtain media coverage for every major PHA news item. • Production of professional publications that are useful and accessible including the National Plant Biosecurity Status Report.

	• Prepare timely and high quality responses to significant reviews with the potential to affect Australia's plant biosecurity system, in consultation with members. • Develop articles for media and industry magazines on the importance of biosecurity. • Develop social media posts promoting aspects of the system and biosecurity news. • Increased number of Twitter followers.
Software development and support	• Maintain the Biosecurity Portal. • Implement plans for portal expansion (including sites for the development of contingency plans and the Biosecurity Emergency Management Knowledge Base). • Maintain hardware to continue hosting websites. • Provide technical support to websites owned by PHA to keep them operational.
National programs	• Farm Biosecurity Program: o Website maintained and updated regularly. o Improved web site visitor statistics. o 20 PHA Farm Biosecurity media releases or articles published online or in industry magazines. o Steering Committee continues to implement the program. • National Plant Biosecurity Strategy implementation: o Develop National Minimum Data Standards for biosecurity data systems. o Facilitate systems for disseminating data from R&D and surveillance programs. o Develop industry-specific biosecurity awareness packages. o Develop national decision making tools to assist in assessing likely spread and impact of established pests. • National Fruit Fly Council: o Publish six editions of the Prevent Fruit Fly newsletter. o Convene a workshop to review and update the National Fruit Fly Strategy Action Plan o Provide advice on strategic needs to support fruit fly management and trade opportunities. • Member levy proposals submitted for: o Australian Table Grapes Association o Raspberries and Blackberries Australia.

EPPRD

The Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) lies at the heart of the industry-government partnership arrangement for plant biosecurity and incursion management, and is a centrepiece of PHA's business.

As a landmark emergency response agreement, the ratification of the EPPRD in 2005 significantly increased Australia's ability to efficiently respond to incursions of exotic pests deemed to be Emergency Plant Pests (EPP).

The value of the EPPRD extends beyond emergency management, providing a platform for preparedness for Parties, including the development of biosecurity plans and increasing the profile of plant biosecurity in Australia.

Key aims of this area include:

- Addressing policy issues associated with implementation of the EPPRD.
- Enhancing policy and operations to promote early pest reporting.
- Increasing emergency response capacity and capability.

The key performance indicators for the EPPRD are given at the end of the section.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA works on a number of emergency response committees to ensure national coordination and reform of aspects of the system.

- PHA's representative on the **Biosecurity Incident National Communication Network** participates in the process of agreeing talking points during Emergency Plant Pest (EPP) incidents and undertakes national communication preparedness activities with the group. PHA has worked to smooth the talking points approval process and ensures that plant biosecurity issues are given appropriate priority.
- As an active member on the **National Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Expert Group** (NBEPEG) PHA is working to meet the changing needs of government and industry in emergency preparedness and response matters. Reporting to the National Biosecurity Committee on strategic policy issues, NBEPEG's role is to enhance Australia's biosecurity emergency preparedness and initial response and recovery arrangements. PHA's membership ensures that relevant issues and opportunities in the areas of preparedness, training, simulation exercises and evaluation are captured for all members.

- Through the **Evaluation and Lessons Management Specialist Task Group** (ELMSTG) PHA ensures that best practice approaches are captured in all processes and systems and that lessons learnt from evaluations are effectively shared across the biosecurity sectors. Participation on the Task Group also provides the opportunity to highlight current approaches undertaken in the plant sector to ensure they are incorporated in the broader outcomes of the ELMSTG.
- **Training Specialist Task Group** (TSTG) provides a forum for PHA to support all members through the development and maintenance of appropriate emergency response training standards, which are consistent across sectors. In addition, working through TSTG provides greater influence with key players in the wider Vocational Education and Training sector to ensure issues facing biosecurity training are appropriately addressed.

The national coordination achieved through participation in these committees is strengthened by other cross-sectoral engagement activities centred on the emergency response agreements and biosecurity response training. PHA works closely with Animal Health Australia and the Australian Government to promote consistency and a shared understanding across the EPPRD, the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement and the National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement. In addition, the collaborative delivery of the BOLT e-learning platform and the underpinning arrangements for the provision of biosecurity accredited training between PHA and AHA promotes consistency across the biosecurity sector.

EPPRD management

As custodian, PHA ensures that administration of the EPPRD is undertaken effectively and in accordance with both the requirements and intent of the EPPRD, thereby minimising the possibility of legal challenges to the arrangements and safeguarding its integrity. PHA itself has a number of key administrative responsibilities with which it must comply. The company also works to ensure that policies and provisions embedded in the EPPRD continue to meet the needs and expectations of Parties.

In 2017–18, in addition to ongoing administration, there will be a strong focus on resolving key policy issues raised during the 2015 review of the EPPRD and other forums, including:

- Decision making capacity and capability of key committees during an incursion.
- Equity for initial reporters of a suspect EPP in order to continue supporting timely notifications.
- Support and clarification for those developing and administering Owner Reimbursement Costs (ORC) in the event of a cost shared Response Plan.
- Support for the cost sharing, accounting and general financial management aspects of a response.
- Processes associated with categorisation of EPPs.

Effective decision making during the operation of the EPPRD underpins the confidence of Parties. In 2017–18 PHA will continue to work with members to develop tools that will assist Parties to make decisions, even in the absence of complete information. This includes a continued focus on addressing any barriers to the effective implementation of a phased approach to Response Plan agreement, which, in combination with a fuller suite of tools, will enhance the decision-making capacity of Parties.

Also in 2017–18, PHA will undertake activities that focus on improving the financial management of a response, including the budgeting, reporting and cost sharing processes used by Parties. PHA will

continue to work with Parties to identify their needs, and resolve any barriers to development of a streamlined process that functions transparently from budgeting of a response through to finalisation of Cost Sharing. Guidance material will also be developed to assist Parties in implementing improved processes.

Recent reviews of past responses have revealed areas where current provisions for ORCs are not meeting the expectations and needs of Parties. A review of the current provisions will continue this year to determine strategies to address the issue.

PHA will also convene and manage several Issue Resolution Groups to identify feasible and appropriate options for issues including:

- Developing a robust system to support effective decision making.
- Ensuring fair and equitable mechanism(s) to achieve equity for initial reporters of suspect EPPs.
- Calculating ORCs in cases where more than single year's loss of income is involved.

PHA will continue to play a key role in supporting Parties to meet their responsibilities under the EPPRD. This will include assisting Parties to review their normal commitments and address any identified gaps in capacity and capability, in line with their obligations under the agreement.

PHA will also focus on debriefing and lessons management in collaboration with Parties to ensure that key observations for incursion management are captured and addressed appropriately. PLANTPLAN will, as usual, be subject to annual review to ensure that it reflects findings from evaluation and simulation activities.

EPPRD training

The National EPP training program is a central provision of the EPPRD, with Parties acknowledging the need to invest in training to have appropriately skilled and prepared personnel available to represent their organisation in the event of an incursion.

The aim of the program is to ensure that members have the knowledge and capability to undertake their roles and responsibilities under the EPPRD, including the key role of an Affected Party in a response. The program uses a range of training delivery approaches and appropriate support tools developed and provided by PHA.

In 2017–18, PHA will work with several industry and government members to trial the development of organisation-specific response management plans through scenario-based workshops. Each response management plan will outline how each organisation facilitates their role in a response, documenting corporate knowledge, identifying any critical gaps and ensuring a shared understanding within the organisation.

Scenario-based biosecurity workshops tailored to each Party's needs will continue to be an integral aspect of the program, with PHA delivering these workshops at locations convenient to Parties, and as standalone or integrated activities.

The Biosecurity Online Training (BOLT) e-learning platform provides rapid, convenient and accessible biosecurity training for members and the wider biosecurity community. New content will be developed for online delivery that combines with the simulation exercises and face-to-face workshops to address identified capability gaps. In addition, extension of the BOLT platform capability continues with a focus on improving the learner experience and adding value for members. This includes the hosting of e-learning courses on behalf of members, who can take advantage of the platform's capability at a subsidised cost.

Incursion management

Suspected EPP notifications under the EPPRD occur frequently throughout the year. The aim of the program is to facilitate an effective and efficient response undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the agreement.

Components of the program that support the aim include PHA personnel fulfilling key roles during an incursion as well as leading evaluation activities to inform continual improvement of the EPPRD and other related emergency management aspects. PHA also has a key role in providing support to Parties during an incursion, to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as required under the EPPRD. The vast majority of activities undertaken by PHA are considered ordinary operating costs (normal commitments) as they provide benefits to all members over the long term.

PHA has a number of key roles and responsibilities under the EPPRD in the event of an incursion. While some are mandated by the EPPRD, others result from our role as custodian and a non-funding, independent Party. During 2017–18, PHA will continue to address our roles for all existing and new responses by providing appropriately skilled and supported staff to undertake activities including:

- Representation on the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests and the National Management Group.
- Providing advice on the intent and application of the agreement.
- Brokering agreement between Parties.
- Chairing Scientific Advisory Panels and providing additional scientific expertise where available.
- Coordinating financial management arrangements for approved Response Plans.
- Briefing committee chairs (CCEPP/NMG) in respect of anticipated issues or opportunities.
- Assisting with implementation of funding mechanisms.
- Developing or reviewing key response documents, such as the Response Plan, committee papers and communication material.

Ultimately, the ongoing relevance and integrity of the EPPRD relies on effective operation in the event of an incursion, so regular evaluation of performance is imperative. In 2017–18, response debriefs will occur for three responses: the giant pine scale response which will be conducted during the Transition to Management Phase of the response, the chestnut blight response and the tomato potato psyllid response.

Non-subscription

Software development and support

Utilising the enhanced BOLT learning management system, PHA will provide low-cost hosting of biosecurity-related e learning courses developed by industry and government members. This provides members with access to the BOLT platforms functionality and administration support from PHA.

Biosecurity Response Preparedness

National Biosecurity Response Team management

Following the transition to a cross-sectoral resource, the National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT) is now jointly managed by Animal Health Australia, the Australian Government and PHA. The NBRT is a cohort of trained and experienced staff that are available for deployment nationally to enhance the delivery of biosecurity emergency responses. PHA joins the NBRT Planning Team, providing guidance on recruitment and the delivery of professional development activities to improve members' capability, including functional simulation exercises.

Simulation exercises

Exotic fruit fly emergency response simulation exercise

Specific aspects of national capability to detect, diagnose and report exotic fruit flies captured through the fruit fly trapping network will be planned and delivered in 2017. The exercise will provide an accurate picture of elements in Australia's fruit fly preparedness.

For completion by October 2017

Cotton incursion workshop

An incursion workshop based on a simulated biosecurity incident affecting the cotton industry will be delivered in 2017. The workshop will test industry stakeholders' capability to undertake defined roles in an EPP response and identify key gaps in preparedness.

For completion by December 2017

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

EPPRD	
National committees and working groups	• Nationally agreed emergency preparedness and response training standards available, supported by required certification arrangements. • Support the delivery of emergency preparedness activities through participation in the National Biosecurity Emergency Preparedness Expert Group and its underpinning Specialist Task Groups. • Enhance consistent cross-sectoral biosecurity training outcomes in collaboration with Animal Health Australia. • Support harmonisation between the EPPRD and relevant aspects of the animal and environmental sector response agreements.
EPPRD management	• Progress on identified key policy and process issues achieved and reported to Parties each EPPRD meeting, including: o Appropriate tools developed to improve decision making during a response. o Improved equity for those reporting a suspect EPP. o Improved financial management of responses. o Review of Parties normal commitments. o Continue to progress the review of the Owner Reimbursement Costs provisions. • Annual PLANTPLAN review completed and outcomes presented at the November 2017 EPPRD meeting. • Guidance material, including PLANTPLAN supporting documents, developed and revised as required. • Full compliance with PHA responsibilities in respect of administration of the EPPRD demonstrated quarterly to the PHA Board. • Support Parties to implement their obligations under the EPPRD.
EPPRD Training	• Emergency preparedness and response training delivered, tailored to members' needs and consistent with training plans. • Industry Party response management plan template available to Parties, with at least two scenario-based workshops undertaken and completed response management plans endorsed by target Industry Party by June 2018. • BOLT enhanced through new content and delivery of learning management functionality that supports other training activities.

Incursion management	• Participate in Incidents and fulfil PHA roles and responsibilities according to the specified terms and timeframes of the EPPRD. • Provide support to Parties during Incidents to assist them fulfil their roles and responsibilities under the EPPRD. • Debrief for the chestnut blight eradication program conducted and key findings reported to all Parties. • Debrief of the giant pine scale response conducted and key findings reported to all Parties.
Software development and support	• Facilitate hosting of training courses being developed by Queensland government
National Biosecurity Response Team management	• Contribute to the National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT) program management • Contribute to the planning and delivery of the NBRT activities (recruitment, induction, professional development and exercises).
Exotic fruit fly emergency response simulation exercise	• Simulation exercise that covers functional aspects of fruit fly detection and identification delivered and reported successfully.
Cotton incursion workshop	• Scenario-based workshop that covers the cotton industry's roles and responsibilities in a plant pest response delivered and reported successfully.

PREPAREDNESS

This budget area covers activities for identifying, preparing for and managing threats to plant based agriculture and the environment, as well as managing endemic or regionalised pests.

Key aims of this budget area include:

- facilitating the identification of pest risks and corresponding risk mitigation activities
- improving national management of establishing pests
- facilitating management of nationally significant pests
- facilitating a framework for management of exotic weeds and pests of pastures.

The key performance indicators for Preparedness are given at the end of the section.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA has been asked to sit on the **Imported Seeds Regulation Working Group**, a new industry-government consultative group that seeks to engage across sectors on seed biosecurity risks and their effective management.

Biosecurity planning and review

PHA works with industry and government members to develop biosecurity plans to improve risk mitigation. These documents are crop or industry specific plans that identify, assess and prioritise biosecurity risks and provide a framework for biosecurity risk mitigation and preparedness. All plans are jointly endorsed by governments and the respective industries and contain action lists that guide industry and government members in risk mitigation efforts over the life of these plans.

While industry specific biosecurity plans are funded by the relevant Research and Development Corporation, a small amount of PHA subscription funding is assigned to progress planning. This includes time working with Plant Health Committee and other groups to ensure plans meet the needs of both industry and government. In addition, subscription funding enables PHA staff to negotiate new and revised plans with industries and funding agencies.

An improved biosecurity planning process being put in place means that once plans for particular industries are developed, they are continually monitored to assess progress of risk mitigation efforts and supplemented or extended with the development of new tools such as diagnostic protocols.

Non-subscription

Biosecurity planning and review

Since 2014–15, biosecurity plans have had a stronger focus on implementation, to guide industry and government members that share responsibility for biosecurity, throughout the life of these plans. Biosecurity plans need to be updated regularly to identify new pest threats, new pathways and to incorporate changes in biosecurity legislation and risk assessment processes. In 2016–17, reference panels were established to ensure regular plan review and to assess progress of the risk mitigation activities identified in the implementation plans.

In 2017–18, PHA has been funded to review biosecurity plans for vegetables, lychees, papaya, passionfruit, sweet potato, avocados, mangoes, strawberries, bananas, cherries, onions, tea tree and summerfruit/canned fruit. A new biosecurity plan will also be developed for the non-member body for the coffee industry. The first environmental biosecurity plan for acacia will be developed, and reference panels for the cherry, onion, citrus, potato and vegetable industries will be convened.

Biosecurity manuals will be developed for onions, cherries, citrus, vegetables and potatoes.

Biosecurity programs

The number of industries establishing biosecurity programs continues to grow. PHA works with all of them to tailor programs to raise awareness of biosecurity and improve the use of measures on-farm to mitigate risk.

This year PHA will be working to set up and maintain biosecurity programs for the following industries: strawberries, grains, melons, avocados, citrus, bananas, honey bees, production nurseries, vegetables and potatoes, pineapples, rice, sweet potatoes and wine grapes.

Key among the programs are fruit fly preparedness projects, national biosecurity development and bee and pollination biosecurity.

Fruit fly preparedness

- **Fruit Fly Code of Practice**
  Updating the Fruit Fly Code of Practice is central to a project funded by Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to enhance Australia's preparedness for exotic fruit flies and to mitigate the impacts on market access. It is generally recognised that the current Code of Practice needs to be revised to reflect current and future best practises, and to meet the needs of the end users who rely on this important framework to support management systems and operational needs. The revised documents will facilitate trade both domestically and internationally.
- **Regional plans for fruit fly**
  In this project, regional snapshots of crops grown, fruit flies present, treatment options available and other aspects related to market access will be developed. The aim of these regional snapshots

is to bring together relevant parties, and coalesce market opportunities that will support the growers and the region.

For completion December 2017

Rural Research for Profit

PHA is part of a Hort Innovation led consortium to develop a mobile cross-industry plant pest surveillance network, which will provide primary producers and government staff information on established, trade sensitive or exotic pests. It will underpin existing surveillance initiatives, and provide a foundation for a nation-wide surveillance network. This project is an example of a truly collaborative approach to improving biosecurity engagement with all seven plant research end development (R&D) funding bodies.

Producers of grains, cotton, sugar, horticultural products, wine and forestry products will gain by receiving timely and accurate knowledge of the types of plant pests and prevalence of these pests in their region, enabling informed pest management decisions to be made.

Industries' seasonal needs for pest information will be met, and a cross-industry approach will provide high quality, consistent data on plant pests that are economically relevant to multiple industries.

Five year project ending 30 June 2022

Workshops for high priority pests

Pending funding being secured, a series of workshops will be held to investigate and address preparedness gaps on National Priority Plant Pests. The focus of each workshop will be based on requirements for each pest and could include improving awareness, strengthening engagement between industries, governments and community or assessing surveillance or diagnostic gaps.

For completion by June 2018

Biosecurity response preparedness

The aim of this group of projects is to ensure that Australia is prepared for responses to exotic pest incursions. Much of the work involves preparing permits for pesticide use pre-emptively, to avoid delays in the event of a new pest detection.

This year PHA is working on two projects on pests of grains as well as assisting with emergency permits for treatment for vegetable leaf miners.

Pre-emptive APVMA emergency permit development for grains industry

Incursions of exotic plant pests must be dealt with quickly because of their adverse effects on productivity, trade and market access. This Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) funded project builds on a previous project that concluded in June 2016. The project continues the development of emergency permits to support preparedness of the grains industry to manage future incursions of high priority exotic plant pests.

For the 2017–18 financial year, four additional permits will be developed to control a further six pests. This will be in addition to the eight applications covering 20 pests that have already been submitted to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) for assessment through the previous project.

Contract ends June 2020

CRC Biosecurity Preparedness

PHA is completing a three-year study *Extending biosecurity preparedness and surveillance strategies and developing a chemical supply framework for pest incursion for the grains industry*. For the 2017–18 financial year, a final report will be prepared summarising activities across the three modules of the project. This project is being funded by the GRDC through the Plant Biosecurity CRC.

For completion October 2017

Program for control, eradication and preparedness for vegetable leaf miner

This Hort Innovation funded project will be led by the Centre for Environmental Stress and Adaptation Research (cesar) in partnership with PHA, AUSVEG, Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy and the University of Melbourne. There are several aspects to this project, one of which is a review of the appropriate use of chemicals to support the application(s) for emergency permits to control vegetable leaf miners. On completion of the review, applications will be submitted to the APVMA and activated in the event of an incursion of vegetable leaf miner.

For completion by January 2020

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

Preparedness	
National committees and working groups	• Participated on the Imported Seeds Regulation Working Group.
Biosecurity planning and reviews	• Improved biosecurity plan template implemented. • Five Biosecurity Reference Panels established to assess progression of biosecurity plan actions. • The biosecurity capability index tested with a minimum of three industries. • Industry members consulted on the development or review of biosecurity plans. • Biosecurity plans for industries developed, reviewed or extended as required. • Biosecurity manuals for cherry, onion and potato industries delivered.
Biosecurity programs	• Milestones met for all industry biosecurity programs: o Biosecurity programs developed in collaboration with Nursery and Garden Industry Australia, Australian Melon Association, Australian Banana Growers' Council and GROWCOM. o Biosecurity programs managed and surveillance initiatives developed for honey bee, grains, vegetable and citrus industries. o New biosecurity plans developed for tea trees, acacia, coffee and sweet potatoes. o Biosecurity plans for lychees, papaya, passionfruit, avocados, strawberries, summerfruit, bananas, onions, cherries, vegetables and potatoes revised. • Fruit Fly Code of Practice: o Biosecurity Portal site developed. o Framework management document developed. o Framework developed. o Standard operating procedures. • Five fruit fly regional snapshots: o Model of regional snapshots approved. o Five regional snapshots developed. o Research paper published from Body of Knowledge. • Rural Research for Profit: o A series of pest instances developed on AUSPest*Check*. o Data contributed to modelling platforms. o Pest alerts for individual pests developed. o Mapping capability provided for all pests.
Biosecurity response preparedness	• Contract obligations met on time for each externally funded project.

SURVEILLANCE

Plant pest surveillance is a vital part of the plant biosecurity system. The benefits of surveillance are twofold: it increases the likelihood of detecting a new exotic pest early, and it provides a record of evidence of absence, which can be requested during market access negotiations.

Key aims of this budget area include:

- facilitating development of effective surveillance plans
- expanding biosecurity officer data collection
- establishing surveillance programs for high priority pests
- facilitating industry data collection
- facilitating surveillance hubs in commercial production areas and peri-urban and urban areas
- facilitating farm or regional surveillance reporting systems
- supporting work undertaken by the Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance.

The key performance indicators for Surveillance are given at the end of the section.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

On the **Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance (SNPHS)** PHA supports work to implement the National Plant Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy. SNPHS contributes to the collection of information that describes the systems supporting general surveillance as well as to the development of guidelines for protocols for targeted surveillance programs and the development of a surveillance network.

In order to boost capacity nationally, in 2017–18 PHA will coordinate the Annual Surveillance Workshop.

The **Plant Heath Surveillance Consultative Committee** has been formed to assist guide Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper investment to progress national arrangements for plant health surveillance. PHA is a member of this consultative group which will review and advise on activities in the national surveillance system, support plant health surveillance investment and monitor White Paper plant health surveillance initiatives.

PHA is a member of the **Post Entry Plant Industry Consultative Committee (PEPICC)**. This is the principal advisory forum for the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to consult on relevant quarantine issues with the plant importing industries including state and privately operated quarantine facilities, botanic gardens, nurseries and floriculture industry.

International surveillance programs

The International Plant Sentinel Network (IPSN) is being developed to facilitate collaboration amongst institutes around the world with a focus on linking botanic gardens and arboreta, National Plant Protection Organisations and plant health scientists. The aim is to provide an early warning system of new and emerging pest and pathogen risks. Member gardens will help to provide scientific evidence regarding known quarantine organisms and potential new risks to inform plant health activities. PHA's expertise and experience with AUSPest*Check* as a platform for sharing pest surveillance data will be the foundation for this project.

Software development and support

AUSPest*Check*

With a grant from the Australian Government, PHA developed AUSPest*Check*, the surveillance virtual coordination centre, that brings together surveillance data to build a national picture of pests. In 2017–18, PHA will continue to expand both the number of species and the stakeholders entering the data.

NPSRT

National Plant Surveillance Reporting Tool (NPSRT) records the outcomes from surveillance activities nationally. It catalogues the active searches that are undertaken to look for exotic pests. Records of pest absence are very valuable, providing evidence of absence that supports market access negotiations. PHA continues to maintain administrative support for NPSRT.

Non-subscription

Developing surveillance protocols and programs

Through its engagement with stakeholders from the research community as well as plant industry and government members, PHA assists in the coordination of all components that make up our surveillance system. This year staff will develop surveillance programs for exotic pests of citrus, honey bees and pests that pose a risk for production in the north of Australia.

Various completion dates

Professional development

Pending funding being secured, the Annual Surveillance Workshop will be held. This workshop aims to strengthen surveillance networks and facilitate the development of capacity and capability for plant health surveillance in Australia.

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

Surveillance	
National committees and working groups	• Participated on the Subcommittee on National Plant Health Surveillance. • Participated on the National Plant Health Surveillance Consultative Committee. • Participated on the Post Entry Plant Industry Consultative Committee.
International surveillance programs	• Establish key linkages with international stakeholders. • Develop surveillance plan with Australia's major botanic gardens.
Software development and support	• AUSPest*Check* national implementation continued: o Support obtained for data to be added to AUSPest*Check*. o Work with national committees to develop policy to support ongoing use of AUSPest*Check*. o KPIs to be further developed during project negotiations. o Facilitate and support funded upgrades. • National Plant Surveillance Reporting Tool: o System maintained. o Records added.
Developing surveillance protocols and programs	• National Bee Pest Surveillance Program: o Nine bee pest surveillance runs per state undertaken. o Six monthly reports provided. o Virus diagnostic protocols established. o 40 remote catch boxes upgraded and deployed. o Number of sentinel hives increased. • Northern Australian surveillance protocols: o Potential surveillance protocols for northern Australia identified. o Draft surveillance protocols for peri-urban and commercial production developed. o Industry working groups for citrus & mangoes formed. • Area freedom project: o Target species determined. o Tenders for collection of surveillance data received. o Data uploaded to AUSPest*Check*. • Northern Australia Biosecurity Management Plan: o Industry liaison officer appointed. o Material for northern Australia developed. o Relevant industries consulted.
Professional development	• Annual Surveillance Workshop held.

DIAGNOSTICS

Australia's biosecurity system relies on fast and accurate identification of pests especially where these may be exotic species. Resources are devoted to supporting systems for the network of diagnosticians around Australia and to ensuring that diagnostic tools such as lucid keys and diagnostic protocols exist for key pest threats.

Key aims of this budget area include:

- increased protocol coverage for emergency plant pests
- facilitating Australia's diagnostic network
- improving diagnostician capability
- supporting work undertaken by the Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics.

The key performance indicators for Diagnostics are given at the end of the section.

Member subscriptions

National committees and working groups

On the **Subcommittee on Plant Health Diagnostics (SPHD)**, PHA provides support that drives the implementation of the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Strategy, ensuring ongoing delivery of effective and accurate plant pest diagnostics to support responses to Emergency Plant Pests. The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network, which strengthens connections between diagnosticians to build national capability and capacity, is another key initiative led through PHA's involvement on SPHD.

SPHD also provides national leadership in delivering agreed plant pest diagnostic standards for definitive identification and to support surveillance activities, coordinates the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program and is progressing the strategy for ensuring maintenance of valuable plant pest reference collections.

PHA also contributes to the strategic direction of the **Modern Diagnostics Project** as a member of the Steering Committee. This project delivers the diagnostic elements of the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper through the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy program. PHA also facilitates strong linkages of the Modern Diagnostics Project with SPHD and the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network.

Software development and support

PHA maintains the Australian Plant Pest Database (APPD), which is hosted by the Atlas of Living Australia. APPD is the national collation of reference collection databases for identifying plant pest voucher specimens. It is the first point of reference in all new plant pest detections in Australia, providing supporting evidence for pest status determination and identifying specimens to aid in plant pest diagnostics. PHA works as a member of the APPD Steering Committee and SPHD to improve the system.

The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network website is the primary mechanism for communication with network members. PHA hosts and maintains the website on the Biosecurity Portal infrastructure, and supports SPHD in administering the site. PHA also supports a range of other websites of value to the delivery of plant pest diagnostics, including participating on the PaDIL (Pest and Disease Image Library) Steering Committee.

Non-subscription

Biosecurity response preparedness

Update the fruit fly identification handbook

PHA has combined with Queensland University of Technology, Department of Agriculture and Food WA, and Queensland Department of Agriculture Fisheries to undertake a major review of the *Australian Handbook for the Identification of Fruit Flies*.

This initiative is a comprehensive 3-year study that aims to develop a suite of fruit fly-specific genetic markers for key species including exotic and endemic pest and non-pest flies. The resulting genetic and behavioural data will assist with the identification of flies within the Queensland fruit fly complex.

The end product will be a 'next generation' identification resource delivered as a revised and updated version 3.

Completed by 30 May 2018

Reference collection strategy

In the National Plant Pest Reference Collections Strategy, SPHD is setting out a long-term vision to ensure the maintenance, improvement and ongoing access to reference specimens to support plant pest identification. This year, PHA will design and publish the strategy to promote linkages with the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy and the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics Strategy.

Proficiency testing

Verification of the Australian diagnostic system's reliability occurs through the delivery of the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program, which is run by the Australian National Quality Assurance Program (ANQAP) under the guidance of SPHD. The proficiency testing program tests the ability of Australian diagnostic laboratories to reach the correct plant pest identification in blind testing. PHA supports this program by facilitating the provision of verified plant pest samples to ANQAP prior to distribution to laboratories.

Professional development

The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Network Professional Development Framework, which is endorsed by SPHD, articulates specific activities that target identified gaps in diagnostic capability and capacity. Under this framework PHA facilitates the delivery and evaluation of activities, including the Diagnostic Residential Program, pest- or technique-specific training workshops, and the well-regarded Annual Diagnosticians' Workshop.

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

Diagnostics	
National committees and working groups	• Participate in SPHD meetings and activities. • Contribute to the strategic direction of SPHD as deputy Chair. • Provide strategic input to the Modern Diagnostics Project Steering Committee.
Software development and maintenance	• Australian Plant Pest Database used to inform pest status in suspect EPP Incidents. • Diagnostic Network website supported.
Biosecurity response preparedness	• Support the development of the fruit fly diagnostic handbook version 3, and facilitate uptake in the broader diagnostic community. • Examine novel methods for publishing the information included in the fruit fly diagnostic handbook to enhance the usability for diagnosticians. • Design the National Reference Collections Strategy consistent with the National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Strategy and provide to members. • Facilitate the provision of the National Plant Health Proficiency Testing Program.
Professional development	• Lead the delivery of the Annual Diagnosticians' Workshop and training workshops • Facilitate the delivery of the NPBDN Professional Development Framework.

RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION

PHA invests in coordinating the planning and implementation of plant biosecurity research, development and extension (outreach).

Key aims of the RD&E budget area include:

- facilitating the implementation of the Agriculture Senior Officers Committee Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy
- holding workshops to agree RD&E priorities
- monitoring RD&E activities, capability and capacity
- facilitating funding for more plant biosecurity science.

The key performance indicators for RD&E are given at the end of the section.

Member subscription

National committees and working groups

PHA developed a cross sectoral National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy (NPBRDES) for the Primary Industries Standing Committee (now the **Agriculture Senior Officers Committee (AGSOC)**) in 2013–14. An implementation committee was formed to advance the strategy, comprising representatives from PHA, the Australian Government, state governments, the Plant Biosecurity CRC, CSIRO, Grains Research and Development Corporation, Wine Australia, Hort Innovation and Council of Rural RDCs. PHA provides the chair strategy leader and an executive officer to support the strategy. The AGSOC National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy Implementation Committee, sponsored by Hort Innovation and the Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, aims to enable effective management of economic, environmental and social risks posed by pests that may enter, emerge, establish or spread within Australia, by strengthening biosecurity RD&E for Australia's plant industries and those dependent on them.

For the 2017–18 financial year the implementation committee plans to facilitate a workshop, complete an audit of viticulture RD&E, work with stakeholders on environmental RD&E, update the Cross Sectorial RD&E Report and review and revise the National Plant Biosecurity RD&E Strategy (NPBRDES). The PHA executive will be working with the National Biosecurity Committee and the Plant Health Committee to identify national cross sectorial RD&E priorities from a policy and regulatory perspective. Priorities will be presented to the NPBRDES Implementation Committee for consideration and prioritisation. PHA will also work closely with the newly formed Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative. This is a collaboration between the seven plant RDCs and it will provide a conduit for the work of the NPBRDES to be discussed and potentially funded as cross sectoral RDC projects (see next page).

Rolling contracts with annual review point in June

National programs

Plant Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre

The Australian Government's Cooperative Research Centre program provides funding to build critical mass in research ventures between end-users and researchers that tackle clearly-articulated, major challenges for the end-users. PHA is a participant of the Plant Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre (PBCRC) which was established in 2012, following on from the CRC for National Plant Biosecurity.

A small part of PHA subscriptions allows the company to attend Participant and Management Committees, contribute to the Regulatory Advisory Panel and provide advice on research projects. This financial year will be see some additional work in this area as the PBCRC transitions towards finalisation which will occur 30 June 2018.

PHA is an end-user advocate for a number of projects, facilitates adoption of the scientific findings and also plays a role as an ongoing custodian for research outcomes beyond the life of the CRC.

Over the next 12 months PHA will be working with the PBCRC and its partners to ensure the legacies of the PBCRC are captured and housed appropriately so that the R&D findings are not lost to the plant biosecurity sector. In addition, PHA will be working to identify PBCRC projects where additional R&D could be undertaken to further develop the project. These projects will be considered by the NPBRDES and then forwarded to the Plant Research Biosecurity Initiative for funding consideration.

RDC partnership: Plant Research Biosecurity Initiative

In March 2017, seven plant based rural RDCs – Wine Australia, Forest Wood Products Australia, Cotton Research and Development Corporation, Grains Research and Development Corporation, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Sugar Research Australia and Horticulture Innovation – agreed to work in partnership to streamline funding and improve coordination of plant biosecurity programs. PHA will work with this initiative through its work on the NPBRDES.

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

RD&E	
RD&E Strategy implementation	• Executive support provided to RD&E Strategy Implementation Committee to the satisfaction of the committee. • Strategy Leader meets expectation of AGSOC Research and Innovation Committee. • At least two projects that highlight a plant biosecurity RD&E gap identified. • At least two projects that highlight a cross sectoral plant biosecurity opportunity identified. • Linkage to the Plant Research Biosecurity Initiative developed and at least two potential projects presented for consideration. • Strategy review undertaken and completed.
Plant Biosecurity CRC	• Average annual 0.7 FTE commitment to Plant Biosecurity CRC met. • PHA continues to provide input into steering committees for relevant projects. • Participate in Regulatory Advisory Committee meetings. • Assess projects for their potential to integrate into PHA activities. • All milestone and reporting commitments for PBCRC projects met. • Contribute as required to the winding up of the PBCRC.

COMPANY HEALTH

Sound management of PHA entails running the organisation with probity and in the interests of members. It encompasses the systems of governance, financial control and risk management, plus the business processes and people that combine to enable PHA to fulfil its commitments to members.

Transparent operating procedures, efficient business systems and maintaining an expert and professional staff are major components in successful company management.

The key performance indicators for Company Health are on the next page.

Member subscription

Board management

PHA has a skills-based Board comprised of nine directors, eight of whom are selected by a formal selection process. The other director is the company Executive Director and CEO. The Board has two formal subcommittees, the Finance & Audit Committee (F&AC) and the Remuneration Committee, with other sub-committees established from time-to-time to undertake specific tasks.

Four PHA Director positions will be up for re-election in the 2017–18 year.

The Board Management budget area covers expenses associated with directors complying with company duties. This includes travel and accommodation, the Board selection process, operating Board committees and management and administration costs of arranging, supporting and attending meetings of the Board and its committees.

Company finance and administration

The Company Finance and Administration area encompasses activities devoted to managing and maintaining PHA's capabilities to meet the business objectives in the Annual Operational Plan that are not associated directly with the management of specific separately budgeted programs. This includes financial management and administration, internal and external audits, company performance reporting, human resource management (including the development of policies and procedures), staff development and training, information services and business development, as well as aspects of servicing and supporting the PHA Board. Other activities include consultancies on issues specific to corporate management, travel costs of staff representing PHA that are not attributable to specific programs, regulatory compliance, and legal and other professional advice on matters of corporate management.

Key performance indicators for 2017–18

Company Health	
Board management	• Performance of PHA meets members' requirements (as measured every three years, or as agreed with Board, by the PHA member survey and through other member consultation processes). • Legal and Constitutional compliance requirements met. • Board satisfaction with PHA secretariat support and follow up of Board meetings, F&AC meetings and other meetings attended by directors. • Attendance of the PHA Board at over 80% of requested member and stakeholder meetings. • Complete Board selection according to schedule.
Company finance and administration	• All legal and Constitutional obligations met • Company Risk Management Report reviewed quarterly and considered as a standing item for PHA Board and F&AC Meetings. • Company Human Resources Plan reviewed and updated annually and presented to the Board. • Annual financial statements externally audited and declared accurate and compliant. • Internal audit program schedule met and findings addressed. • PHA's 2017–18 budget presented to members and subscriptions agreed in May 2017. • Continue implementation of the MoU between PHA and Animal Health Australia that agrees to strengthen the partnership between the two companies.

Plant Health AUSTRALIA

Improving national biosecurity outcomes through partnerships

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