

# PROJECT SNAPSHOT

## Crisis management planning for livestock industries

The **Crisis management planning for livestock industries** project was identified as a national priority to strengthen preparedness for potential emergency animal disease (EAD) incursions.

The project aimed to build industry capability and ensure all livestock sectors have crisis management plans (CMPs) that are effective, ready to use and aligned with government and cross-industry responses.

CMPs are essential tools for preparing for and responding to EAD outbreaks, natural disasters and other emergencies. CMPs help organisations quickly understand the situation, assess options and implement the most appropriate actions.

To support rapid and coordinated responses, CMPs must align with government frameworks and complement other industry plans, particularly when multiple species may be affected. This project created an opportunity to improve consistency and interoperability across livestock industries' crisis management planning.

### Methodology

The project involved undertaking a comprehensive stocktake and gap analysis to better understand industry needs and perspectives around crisis management planning. This included reviewing existing CMPs and conducting surveys and interviews with livestock peak industry bodies and government staff. This process identified opportunities and potential challenges to consider when designing the CMP templates. Stakeholder mapping was completed with government and industry to identify where relationships and commodity-linkages could be strengthened.

CMP templates were then drafted to support clear and consistent crisis responses across livestock industries. The templates were tested in a face-to-face workshop that included livestock industry members and government representatives. The workshop, titled Exercise Multiplex, was held on 8 August 2025 in Adelaide and involved a scenario-based exercise. Participant feedback was then used to refine and finalise the CMP documents.

### Key findings

At the beginning of the project, some peak industry bodies did not have a CMP, while others had plans that varied in their focus, stage of maturity and readiness for implementation. A major gap identified across most industries was the limited availability of personnel both to support preparedness activities and operational roles during an EAD response. The project presented an opportunity to develop streamlined, easy-to-follow plans with clear guidance on communication and information flow during an EAD crisis. Importantly, industries strongly agreed on the value of crisis management planning and the benefits of improving consistency across sectors.

These findings informed the development of simple, user-friendly CMP templates that provide a minimum baseline for industries to adapt into their own industry-specific plans. This allows industries to prepare a plan in peacetime that can be used during a crisis and complement both other industries' CMPs and government-led responses. The documents explain how, when and where to access resources during a crisis response, and how to manage its many elements.



Participants attending and actively engaging in the crisis management planning workshop, Exercise Multiplex.

## Potential impact

The true value of this project will be realised when industry bodies adapt and customise the CMP documents to suit their sector and potential crisis risks. Participating peak industry bodies gained an improved understanding of their roles and responsibilities during an EAD crisis, including how they work collaboratively with governments and other industries, building trust and leading to a more coherent crisis response. Some industries with an existing CMP will benefit from comparing the new suite of documents to their existing plan/s and leveraging them to address any gaps and opportunities.

The new CMP templates help strengthen the EAD preparedness and training of Australia's livestock industries, providing them with tools to contribute to the ongoing resilience and enhancement of Australia's national biosecurity objectives.

## Actions and next steps

A series of short training videos were developed to guide peak industry body staff in using the CMP suite of documents. In addition, a dedicated portal was created to host the CMP files and related resources for access by livestock peak industry bodies. The portal and videos launched in early 2026 with AHA's members and can be accessed by contacting [aha@animalhealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:aha@animalhealthaustralia.com.au).

Another opportunity to test these resources in a scenario-based exercise is planned for mid-to-late 2026. Please contact AHA to register your interest in attending the workshop.

It is recommended that industry CMPs be exercised to test their effectiveness in potential EAD scenarios, with improvements made where necessary. This process is best undertaken collaboratively across multiple industries and governments to ensure all aspects of an EAD response are addressed. In addition, CMP documents should be periodically reviewed (at least annually) to remain current with changes in legislation, policy and other EAD response plans.

To further strengthen the capacity of all livestock industries to operationalise CMPs, future activities should include mentoring opportunities where industry members can observe other industry's exercises. This will be especially useful for smaller industries that may not have the resources to host their own training sessions.

## Acknowledgments

AHA acknowledges the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australian Pork Limited, the Goat Industry Council of Australia and AgriFutures Australia for their funding support in this project. We also acknowledge industry and government staff for their participation in the initial interviews and survey as well as the training workshop. Thank you also to Phoenix Resilience for developing the CMP templates and training videos as well as facilitating the training workshop.

## Learn more

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