

AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY EMERGENCY PLAN

AUSVETPLAN

Overview

Version 5.1

AUSVETPLAN is a series of technical response plans that describe the proposed Australian approach to an emergency animal disease incident. The documents provide guidance based on sound analysis, linking policy, strategies, implementation, coordination and emergency management plans.

National Biosecurity Committee

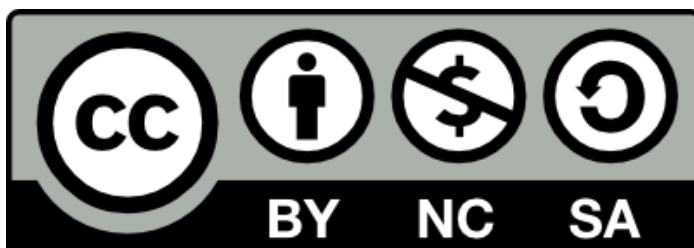
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Text under development

In this manual, text placed in square brackets [xxx] indicates that that aspect of the manual remains unresolved or is under development; such text is not part of the official manual. The issues will be further worked on by experts and relevant text included at a future date.

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EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE HOTLINE: 1800 675 888

The Emergency Animal Disease Hotline is a toll-free telephone number that connects callers to the relevant state or territory officer to report concerns about any potential emergency disease situation. Anyone suspecting an emergency disease outbreak should use this number to get immediate advice and assistance.

Publication record

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1991

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1 Introduction

1.1 This manual

1.1.1 Purpose

This document provides an overview of AUSVETPLAN (the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan).

1.1.2 Scope

This overview includes information on the following aspects of AUSVETPLAN:

- vision and purpose
- principles and scope
- structure
- development and approvals process
- expectations of members
- use in an emergency animal disease (EAD) response.

1.1.3 Development

This document has been produced in accordance with the procedures described in Section 5, and in consultation with Australian national, state and territory governments; the relevant livestock industries; nongovernment agencies; and public health authorities, where relevant.

In this document, text placed in square brackets [xxx] indicates that that aspect of the manual remains contentious or is under development; such text is not part of the endorsed document. The issues will be worked on by experts and relevant text included at a future date.

1.2 Other documentation

This document should be read and implemented in conjunction with:

- other AUSVETPLAN documents, including disease-specific response strategies and response policy briefs; operational, enterprise and management manuals; and any relevant guidance and resource documents. The complete series of manuals is available on the Animal Health Australia website¹
- relevant nationally agreed standard operating procedures (NASOPs).² These procedures complement AUSVETPLAN and describe in detail specific actions undertaken during a response to an incident. NASOPs have been developed for use by jurisdictions during responses to EAD incidents and emergencies

¹ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents/

² www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/emergency-animal-disease/nationally-agreed-standard-operating-procedures/

- relevant jurisdictional or industry policies, response plans, standard operating procedures and work instructions
- relevant Commonwealth and jurisdictional legislation and legal agreements (such as the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement,³ where applicable).

1.3 Training resources

1.3.1 EAD preparedness and response arrangements in Australia

The EAD Foundation Online course⁴ provides livestock producers, veterinarians, veterinary students, government personnel and emergency workers with foundation knowledge for further training in EAD preparedness and response in Australia.

³ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/emergency-animal-disease/ead-response-agreement/

⁴ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/emergency-animal-disease-training-program/

2 Vision and purpose of AUSVETPLAN

2.1 Vision

AUSVETPLAN – the Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan – is Australia’s nationally agreed approach to responding to emergency animal diseases (EADs) of national significance. It comprises resources that support efficient, effective and coherent responses to these diseases.⁵

2.2 Purpose

Effective responses to EAD incidents require planning at national, state and territory, and district levels. They also require the involvement of animal health authorities, livestock and affiliated industries, organisations in affected communities, and emergency management organisations.

AUSVETPLAN has been developed and agreed upon by governments and relevant industries in non-outbreak times to ensure that a coherent, efficient and effective EAD response can be implemented consistently across Australia with minimal delay.

In meeting this purpose, AUSVETPLAN:

- addresses foreseeable disease risks
- provides a framework for policy development for unforeseen risks that occur during an EAD response
- serves as nationally agreed reference material for EAD training and exercises
- assists governments and industries to fulfil their roles and meet their responsibilities under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA)
- contributes to identifying deficiencies in technical knowledge
- informs research priorities
- facilitates Australia’s access to export markets by supporting trading partners’ evaluation of the competency of Australia’s animal health services.

⁵ Refer to the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement, Clause 7.2; the Emergency Animal Disease Response Plan must be consistent with the relevant AUSVETPLAN management manuals and disease strategy.

3 Principles and scope of AUSVETPLAN

3.1 Principles

The guidance in AUSVETPLAN:

- results from collaboration between, and consultation with, government and industry stakeholders
- is evidence based, peer reviewed and contemporary
- provides flexibility to address the nature of individual emergency animal disease (EAD) incidents and the range of contexts across Australia
- recognises the need to balance a range of considerations (including animal health and welfare, human health, environmental, social and economic considerations) in the response to EADs
- undergoes continuous improvement to reflect changes in our understanding of EADs and the management of EAD responses in Australia's context.

3.2 Scope

The scope of AUSVETPLAN is agreed resources that guide decision making in the response to EADs in terrestrial and arboreal animals. An EAD is defined as meeting one of the following criteria:

- It is a known disease that does not occur in endemic form in Australia and for which it is considered to be in the national interest to be free from the disease.
- It is a variant, non-endemic form of an endemic disease that is caused by a strain or type of agent that can be distinguished by appropriate diagnostic methods, and would have a national impact if established in Australia.
- It is a serious infectious disease of unknown or uncertain cause, which may, on the evidence available at the time, be an entirely new disease.
- It is a known endemic disease, but is occurring in such a fulminant outbreak form (far beyond the severity expected) that an emergency response is required to ensure that there is neither a large-scale epidemic of national significance nor a serious loss of market access.
- It is a disease that does not otherwise meet any of the above criteria but is agreed by consensus of all Animal Health Australia's members to be of national significance.⁶

⁶ AUSVETPLAN response strategies that are proposed for diseases that are not nationally notifiable should be led by the relevant organisation proposing the response strategy in question.

4 Structure of AUSVETPLAN

AUSVETPLAN comprises disease-specific response strategies, operational manuals, enterprise manuals and management manuals. Additional supporting information is available in guidance and resource documents. The complete series of AUSVETPLAN manuals and documents is available on the Animal Health Australia website.⁷

4.1 AUSVETPLAN Overview

The **AUSVETPLAN Overview** (this document) provides background information about the components of AUSVETPLAN and their functional relationships, and the development and approval of AUSVETPLAN.

4.2 Disease-specific response strategies

For each disease listed in the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement, a specific response strategy has been developed.⁸ These contain the agreed policy (and supporting technical information) for the response to an incident – or suspected incident – of the disease in Australia.

Response strategies include information on:

- the nature of the disease (aetiology, host range, geographic distribution, incubation period, transmission, clinical signs, diagnosis, development of immunity, and availability of vaccination and treatment)
- principles of control and eradication (critical factors for formulating a response strategy, and options for control or eradication based on these factors)
- policy and rationale (the agreed Australian response policy and strategies for its implementation – such as the use of declared areas and premises classifications, recommended quarantine and movement controls, vaccination, treatment, destruction, disposal, decontamination, wild animal and vector control, public awareness and media).

4.3 Operational manuals

Operational manuals describe in detail the recommended procedures for activities that are common to most emergency animal disease (EAD) responses. The manuals are as follows:

- ***Destruction of animals*** – provides clear guidance on acceptable euthanasia techniques for most species in the most likely situations as part of disease control measures in an EAD response.

⁷ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents

⁸ The current disease strategies and response policy briefs are gradually being replaced with response strategies.

- **Disposal** – addresses the issues to be considered and provides a decision-making framework for disposing of waste, including animal carcasses and products, for disease control purposes.
- **Decontamination** – outlines the properties of the causative agents of diseases covered by AUSVETPLAN, the disinfectants and other methods available to inactivate them, and the decontamination procedures that need to form part of a decontamination plan. It also provides decontamination strategies for particular disease agents or groups of agents.
- **Livestock welfare and management** – describes the husbandry strategies, assessment procedures, roles and decision-making processes to be implemented in the event of an EAD incident to ensure that animal welfare requirements are met.
- **Valuation and compensation** – describes the operational procedures for valuation and compensation for animals and property that are destroyed, and animals that die, as a result of an EAD incident or of disease control measures in the response to the incident.
- **Wild animal response strategy** – provides information on the management of wild animals in an EAD incident, including information to underpin strategic planning; decision-making frameworks; and operational guidelines outlining procedures and techniques for surveys, sampling, population reduction and containment, multispecies operations and response management functions.

4.4 Enterprise manuals

Enterprise manuals are developed for specific types of enterprises that pose special economic or disease eradication problems, or are important in the spread or impact of certain EADs. They provide information and guidance on the structure and operations of the relevant type of enterprise, the key risks to enterprises – and posed by enterprises – in EAD incidents, and how these may be managed in an EAD response.

Enterprise manuals target personnel:

- involved in EAD response and decision making who may be unfamiliar with the operations of that enterprise or industry
- working in the enterprise or industry and seeking guidance on the
 - operational procedures that may be used in an EAD incident to exclude, contain or eradicate a disease
 - development of EAD preparedness, including contingency plans.

The manuals cover:

- artificial breeding centres
- feedlots
- meat processing

- pig industry
- poultry industry
- wool industry
- saleyards and transport
- zoos.

4.5 Management manuals

4.5.1 Control centres management (Parts 1 and 2)

The *Control centres management manual* provides a management structure for handling an EAD outbreak at national, state and territory, and local levels:

- **Part 1** describes the principles and arrangements for managing a response to an EAD, and introduces the structures for managing the response. It promotes consistent but flexible frameworks for response management across all jurisdictions and is aligned with contemporary incident management systems.
- **Part 2** describes the specific functions of state, territory and local EAD control centres and forward command posts; the functions of their response personnel during a response; and the wide range of field duties.

4.5.2 Laboratory preparedness

The purpose of the *Laboratory preparedness* manual is to assist veterinary laboratories to prepare an EAD contingency plan for an EAD emergency. The manual includes information on the Laboratories for Emergency Animal Disease Diagnosis and Response (LEADDR) network⁹ and how laboratories will cooperate to form an effective diagnostic network in a response.

4.6 Supporting documents

Guidance and resource documents support AUSVETPLAN manuals by providing information for stakeholders on specific topics. These supporting documents may be referenced in AUSVETPLAN manuals. Guidance documents provide general guidance to personnel involved in an EAD outbreak, to assist with understanding relevant policies and procedures. Resource documents provide information on specific technical issues relevant to managing an EAD outbreak – they are not endorsed AUSVETPLAN manuals.

Nationally agreed standard operating procedures (NASOPs)¹⁰ have been developed for use by jurisdictions during responses to EAD incidents and emergencies. NASOPs do not form part of AUSVETPLAN; however, they underpin elements of AUSVETPLAN and describe in

⁹ LEADDR is a national network of laboratories established in 2009 to effectively prepare for, and respond to, an Australian EAD incident. The network reports directly to the Animal Health Committee.

¹⁰ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/what-we-do/emergency-animal-disease/nationally-agreed-standard-operating-procedures

detail specific actions undertaken during a response to an incident. NASOPs cross-reference AUSVETPLAN manuals, where appropriate.

States and territories also have their own standard operating procedures to guide activities within the jurisdiction. These are supported by jurisdiction-specific work instructions, and forms and templates (nationally agreed or jurisdiction specific).

5 Development and approvals process

Development and approval¹¹ of AUSVETPLAN is a collaborative process between Animal Health Australia (AHA), its government, industry and associate members (ie. AHA members), and other stakeholders as required.

In the context of AUSVETPLAN development and approvals, the AUSVETPLAN Technical Review Group and Industry Forum ‘approve’ AUSVETPLAN manuals, whereas Animal Health Committee ‘endorses’ manuals.

AHA manages the ongoing maintenance and review of the AUSVETPLAN manuals to keep them current, accurate and fit for purpose. AHA actively engages all its government and industry members, and other stakeholders in the maintenance, review and ongoing development of AUSVETPLAN to ensure that they all have an adequate say in developing and approving manuals relevant to them. AHA does this by coordinating and managing industry–government expert writing or working groups and other forums to evaluate the latest information available, including lessons from recent emergency animal disease (EAD) exercises or actual responses.

More broadly, all stakeholders have input into AUSVETPLAN development and approval by contributing to and engaging in AHA member meetings (eg Members’ Forum, Industry Forum, Government Forum), and other relevant committees and groups (eg Animal Health Committee – AHC¹² – and associated task groups; AUSVETPLAN Technical Review Group – TRG;¹³ AUSVETPLAN writing groups and working groups; AHA governance, steering and reference groups).

AHA relies on input and engagement from its industry and government members, and other stakeholders to ensure that AUSVETPLAN continues to be fit for purpose and is used by governments and industries during responses to EAD incidents.

The AUSVETPLAN development and approvals processes are not meant to be laborious or overly lengthy, and it is recognised that perfection is not possible. The aim is to develop accurate and useful manuals that are concise and contain relevant information for use by jurisdictions to enable rapid responses to EAD outbreaks.

Under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity, the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) has the authority to approve AUSVETPLAN manuals. The NBC will only authorise AUSVETPLAN publications if support is demonstrated from all relevant government and industry signatories to the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA). The NBC has delegated authority for approval of certain types of

¹¹ In this manual, ‘approve’ means to give formal or official sanction whereas ‘endorse’ means to approve openly. Endorsement allows the party to confirm they have viewed, understood and agree with (endorse) the document.

¹² www.agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/animal/health/committees/ahc

¹³ AHA convenes and chairs the AUSVETPLAN TRG to assist with progressing the AUSVETPLAN work plan, and ensuring that AUSVETPLAN is fit for purpose and readily available.

AUSVETPLAN amendments and for certain AUSVETPLAN documents to AHA or AHC. The types of amendments, and their delegated authorisations, are:

- Type 1 – changes to an existing manual that are clear matters of fact or minor operational procedures (authorisation: AHA)
- Type 2 – more substantial changes to an existing manual, relating to significant technical issues or operational policies and procedures (authorisation: AHC)
- Type 3 – all new manuals and significant policy changes to an existing manual that have financial implications for stakeholders (authorisation: NBC).

The six phases in the development and approvals process for AUSVETPLAN manuals are identification, prioritisation, drafting, consultation, approval/endorsement and publication. Figures 1 and 2 outline this process.

5.1 Phase 1: Identification of need for new documents or revisions to documents under AUSVETPLAN

The need for revisions to AUSVETPLAN can arise in several ways, including from:

- routine (including time-based) review
- a change in the risk profile of a disease in the Australian context (eg a rapid global spread of a disease that would otherwise not be of significant risk to Australia)
- a change in the regulatory status of a disease
- changes in international standards (eg by the World Organisation for Animal Health – WOAHP)
- feedback from relevant exercises or EAD incidents in Australia or overseas
- changes in, or new, scientific or technical knowledge
- significant changes in disease epidemiology
- changes in priorities of industry and/or government members
- technological or other advances
- changes to EAD management arrangements in Australia.

5.2 Phase 2: Prioritisation of AUSVETPLAN work plan

Once the need for revision to an AUSVETPLAN manual has been identified, it is considered for inclusion in the AUSVETPLAN project plan and associated work plan. Prioritisation of AUSVETPLAN work is risk based. The AUSVETPLAN work plan, including manuals for rapid and regular reviews, is reviewed by AHA and the AUSVETPLAN Technical Review Group and endorsed each year by AHA's government and industry members through AHA's business planning process.

AUSVETPLAN manuals are further prioritised for 'regular' or 'rapid' reviews. Identification of the need for a rapid review — which usually falls outside of the normal annual work

planning process — may require reprioritisation of other reviews; AHA members will be advised accordingly.

5.3 Phase 3: Drafting

Type 1 amendments are typically drafted by AHA, with or without consultation with the parties that identified the need for the required change.

Type 2 or **type 3** amendments (ie more substantial reviews) are typically drafted by expert writing groups made up of relevant government and industry personnel. These writing groups are convened by AHA. In some cases, type 1 and type 2 amendments may be drafted by the proponent of a particular change (eg AHA, the AUSVETPLAN TRG or AHA members).

Chairs for the expert writing groups are usually AHA staff or members of the AUSVETPLAN TRG because of the importance of having a good understanding of the process. However, other personnel may chair expert writing groups if they have appropriate knowledge and understanding of national EAD response mechanisms and structures, the content of AUSVETPLAN, and the development and approvals process, and also have a close relationship with relevant personnel who can assist.

During the drafting phase, AHA government and industry members, and other stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to ensure that the information is current and accurate, and will be used to respond to EAD incidents.

Relevant industry and government members should provide nominees to be involved in maintenance, revision and ongoing development of AUSVETPLAN because all are accountable for ensuring that the manuals are usable and fit for purpose. Relevant stakeholders who are not AHA members may be asked by AHA to contribute to the writing groups.

Ideally, writing groups should be limited to a core group of about 5–8 members. AHA may call on others with specific expertise to contribute. These additional personnel would only attend those meetings in which the discussion is relevant to their expertise. Alternatively, they may be engaged by AHA out of session to provide specific input.

Writing group members are encouraged to actively consult within their organisation or industry peak body to ensure their input reflects the broader opinion of the group they represent. This also assists with the further approvals and endorsement process (see Section 5.5).

The terms of reference for each writing group will identify the scope of the review, and will be guided by AHA and the TRG, and drafted by AHA. Writing group members will have opportunity to comment on the terms of reference, and, if required, the terms of reference will be reviewed by the TRG.

5.3.1 Regular reviews

Regular reviews typically take the form of a series of writing group meetings (either physical or virtual) during which writing group members address the agreed terms of reference for the writing group and reach consensus¹⁴ on sections of the manual. Decisions made by the writing group at each meeting are included in the notes from each meeting as resolutions.

The groups aim to follow an agreed workplan, which is prepared by the chair of the writing group. Members typically meet every 3–4 weeks. A final meeting usually provides writing group members with an opportunity to review revised text with a view to identifying any consequential changes required, ensuring readability and confirming the terms of reference have been met.

Once the terms of reference are met, or agreement is made to address them through other processes, the manual, or part thereof, enters the consultation process if this has not been part of the drafting process.

5.3.2 Rapid reviews

Some reviews may need to be expedited because of an increased risk profile of a disease in the Australian context. This type of rapid review will only be used when it is needed and there are no alternative pathways, because it puts considerable strain on both internal and external resources and is not sustainable for business as usual. The criteria for determining whether a rapid review should take place include:

- a rapid global spread of a disease that would otherwise not be of significant risk to Australia
- a justifiable direct, urgent request from industry and/or governments to expedite the process
- an urgent need for a major update to the response policy (eg a new vaccine becomes available and would become a key element of the response strategy, especially where no vaccine has been available previously).

A rapid review may not encompass review of the entire manual; it may only need to include one section or a few sections of a manual. The scope of the review will be identified in the writing group's terms of reference. A rapid review may require parallel iterative review of several sections, allowing AHA to release updates to the manual in stages. It may also require the Chair to approve the formation of small subordinate working groups to concurrently advance the review of crucial sections of the manual for prompt discussion and decision by the writing group.

¹⁴ Under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement, 'consensus' is defined as 'the making of decisions by general agreement (which may involve a measure of compromise necessary to ensure a workable outcome), and that none of the Parties actively participating in the decision-making process opposes the decision'.

During a rapid review, AHA will need to maintain a rapid pace, and input from writing group members (both government and industry) will require a greater than usual commitment.

The process of a rapid review will include the need:

- for AHA to convene multiple writing group meetings (mostly via videoconference) at frequent intervals (eg fortnightly)
- for revised versions of the manual (incorporating updates discussed at the meetings) to be released to the writing group promptly
- to ensure that the writing group members reach consensus on sections of the manual and move on to the next section as quickly as possible (balancing the need for worthwhile consultation and discussion with moving on when issues are resolved).

5.4 Phase 4: Consultation for type 2 and type 3 changes

5.4.1 Regular reviews

The aim of the consultation phase is to ensure that any scientific and technical information is accurate, that it informs policy appropriately, and that any significant concerns with the policies and text proposed during the drafting phase have been addressed before approval and endorsement of the draft is sought.

During this phase, AHA consults as appropriate¹⁵ with its members – through the AUSVETPLAN TRG (government) and directly with Industry Forum members. AHA also consults with other stakeholders as appropriate, including non-member organisations such as public health authorities and wildlife health agencies.

For efficiency, parties to be consulted may be engaged during the drafting process as guests to the writing group, or consultation may happen separately but concurrently with the drafting phase.

5.4.2 Rapid reviews

When manuals are undergoing rapid reviews, following completion of the government–industry expert writing group drafting step, drafts are presented to non-affected Industry Forum members and other stakeholders for noting only.

For efficiency and when desirable, parties to be consulted may be engaged during the drafting process as guests to the writing group, or consultation may happen separately but concurrently with the drafting phase.

¹⁵ If the drafts involve only type 1 changes (changes that are clear matters of fact or minor operational procedures), they typically proceed directly to the approvals phase.

5.5 Phase 5: Approval and endorsement

After the consultation phase has been completed and all significant issues are adequately addressed, AUSVETPLAN manual drafts undergo approval¹⁶ through the TRG and Industry Forum, and endorsement¹⁷ by AHA, AHC or NBC depending on the type of amendment as described above. The aim of this phase is to ensure that only appropriately authorised and endorsed AUSVETPLAN documents are published and made publicly available.

5.5.1 Regular reviews

For type 1 amendments, AHA may approve — and endorse — the changes and move directly to publication of the updated manual. Depending on the nature of the changes, AHA may advise AHA members accordingly (for noting).

For type 2 and type 3 amendments, following the consultation step, AHA will provide the revised draft AUSVETPLAN manual to the AUSVETPLAN TRG and then to Industry Forum EADRA signatories for approval before progressing to the endorsement step. Non-EADRA signatory comments received will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Comments received from the AUSVETPLAN TRG and Industry Forum EADRA signatories are reviewed by AHA at each step with a view to resolution by consensus, and then for final progression to the AHC or NBC for endorsement.

The usual timeframe for the AUSVETPLAN TRG, Industry Forum and AHC/NBC to provide approval/comment at each step is 3–4 weeks.

5.5.2 Rapid reviews

When manuals are undergoing rapid reviews, in the case of type 2 or 3 amendments, following completion of the government–industry expert writing group drafting step, AHA provides the drafts to the TRG and Industry Forum EADRA signatories for approval with an indicative turnaround time of 2 weeks at each step. Drafts are presented to other stakeholders for noting only.

For type 2 and type 3 changes, AHA then provides the drafts to AHC members (government) for approval or endorsement. A 2-week turnaround time is proposed.

For type 3 changes, the AHC-approved drafts are presented to NBC for endorsement.

5.6 Phase 6: Publication

For regular reviews, AUSVETPLAN manuals and documents are professionally edited during the approval and endorsement phase and are then published on the AHA website.¹⁸

¹⁶ Approve/approval — means to provide the organisation’s (ie government organisation or industry peak body) formal and official sanction that the revised draft AUSVETPLAN manual is satisfactory, and can be provided by Animal Health Australia to Animal Health Committee and/or National Biosecurity Committee for endorsement.

¹⁷ **Endorse/endorsement** — Animal Health Committee (AHC) and/or National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) have the authority to endorse AUSVETPLAN manuals before publication. Endorse/endorsement means that every member of AHC and/or NBC confirms they have viewed, understood and agreed with (endorse) the revised manual for publication.

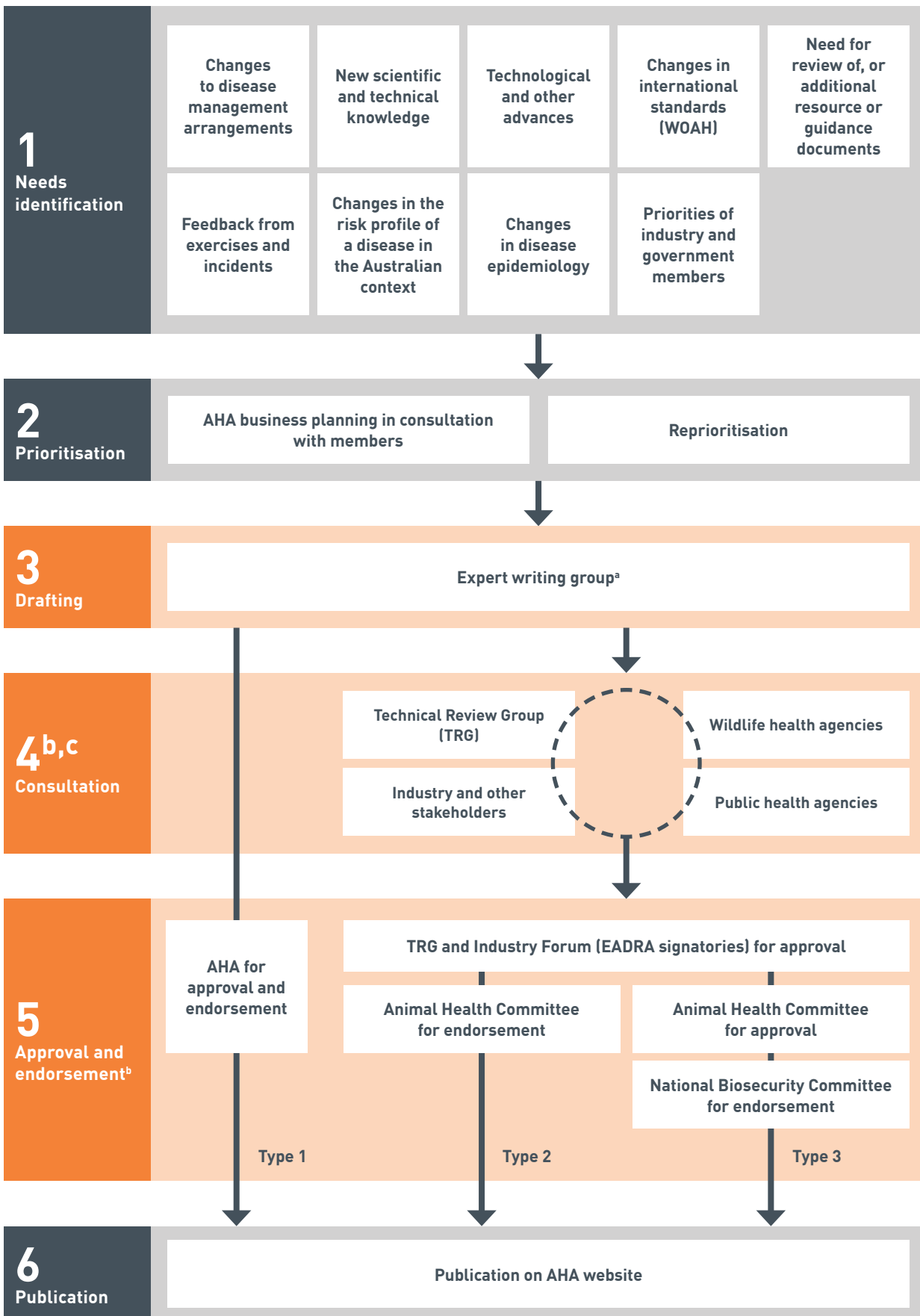
¹⁸ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents

However, for rapid reviews, the professional editing process may be undertaken concurrent with the drafting, consultation or approval and endorsement phase.

Further information on the development and approval of AUSVETPLAN is available from AHA.¹⁹

¹⁹ animalhealthaustralia.com.au

Regular review



AHA = Animal Health Australia; TRG = AUSVETPLAN Technical Review Group; WOAHA = World Organisation for Animal Health

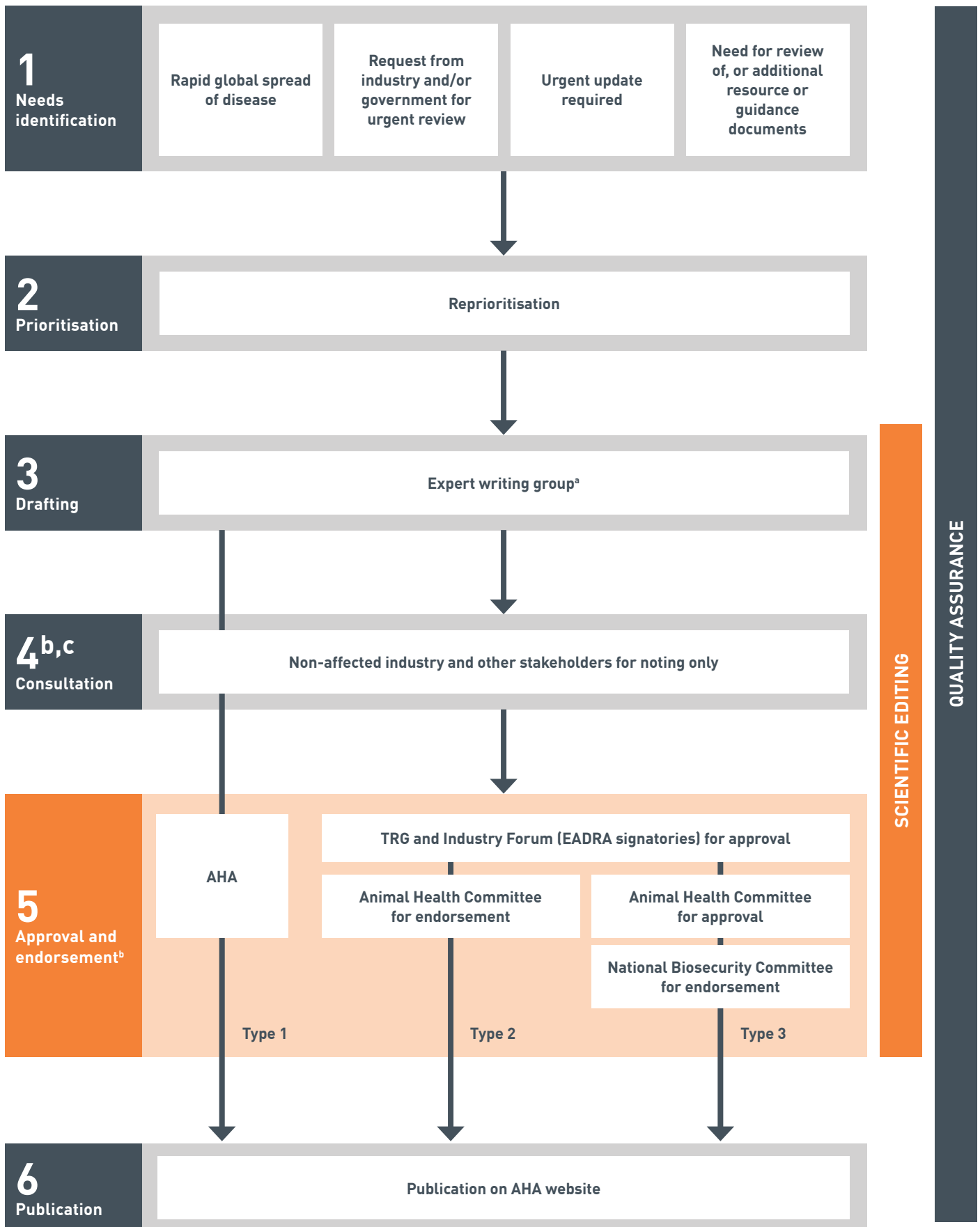
a. May not be required for type 1 amendments.

b. The usual timeframe for stakeholders to provide comment at each step is 4 weeks.

c. Parties to be consulted may be engaged during the drafting process.

Figure 1 Outline of the process for development, consultation, approval and endorsement of AUSVETPLAN (text, manuals and documents) — regular review

Rapid reviews



AHA = Animal Health Australia; TRG = AUSVETPLAN Technical Review Group; WOA = World Organisation for Animal Health

a. May not be required for type 1 amendments.

b. The usual timeframe for stakeholders to provide comment at each step is 2 weeks.

c. Parties requiring consultation may be engaged during the drafting process.

Figure 2 Outline of the process for development and approval/endorsement of AUSVETPLAN (text, manuals and documents) — rapid review

6 Expectations of members

The ongoing review process for AUSVETPLAN is always challenging, and Animal Health Australia (AHA) constantly balances available resources (both within AHA and externally – jurisdictional and industry resources), competing priorities and new information that needs to be incorporated into AUSVETPLAN in a timely manner.

The AUSVETPLAN project is heavily reliant on input and engagement from AHA's industry and government members. For various reasons, these external stakeholders may not always be able to contribute in the timeframes required by AUSVETPLAN business plans. For example, jurisdictional staff may be diverted to other priorities such as emergency animal disease responses.

To progress the AUSVETPLAN development and approvals process, members and others who contribute to the review of AUSVETPLAN manuals should be aware of, and adhere to, the following principles of participation:

- expectations in terms of the timelines for providing feedback on, and approving, AUSVETPLAN documents (ie no late comments are accepted, and a nil response is taken as endorsement)
- when providing comments, noting that AUSVETPLAN documents undergo professional editing and proofreading before publication, so feedback on copyediting (eg spelling, punctuation, grammar) is not needed – please adhere to the guidance provided in the document *Providing comments on AUSVETPLAN*²⁰
- the agreed approach to consensus in AUSVETPLAN approvals (ie if there is no active dissent raised, the matter is taken as endorsed)
- where consensus cannot be reached on a complete draft, publication of incomplete documents, with contentious sections marked as under development (ie placed in square brackets and greyed-out to clearly identify them)
- where consensus cannot be reached among government or industry members, escalation of the issue to Animal Health Committee for decision and resolution.

²⁰ www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au/our-publications/ausvetplan-manuals-and-documents

7 How AUSVETPLAN is used

An overview of Australia's emergency animal disease (EAD) response structures and governance is provided in the *Control centres management manual* and summarised below to highlight the role of AUSVETPLAN.

The chief veterinary officer (CVO) in the state or territory in which the incident occurs is responsible for instituting animal disease control action within that state or territory. The strategies to control the disease, including the budget for the proposed response actions, are documented in an Emergency Animal Disease Response Plan (EADRP). Where the EAD is suspected or confirmed to be a zoonosis, the EADRP is developed in collaboration with the chief health officer (CHO) of the affected state or territory.

For a response to be cost shared under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA), EADRP's must be consistent with, and guided by, any relevant AUSVETPLAN manuals. It is recognised that the Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD) can, if it thinks reasonable, recommend to the National Management Group (NMG) an EADRP even if part of the response plan deviates from AUSVETPLAN (eg due to new knowledge). For responses that are not cost shared under the EADRA, the development of response plans consistent with AUSVETPLAN is voluntary and is usual practice. AUSVETPLAN therefore serves as the authoritative reference on policies and guidelines for the management of EADs in Australia.²¹

The CVO is responsible for recommending the EADRP to the CCEAD. Unaffected jurisdictions may also need to develop response plans to address jurisdictional activities that may be eligible for cost sharing.

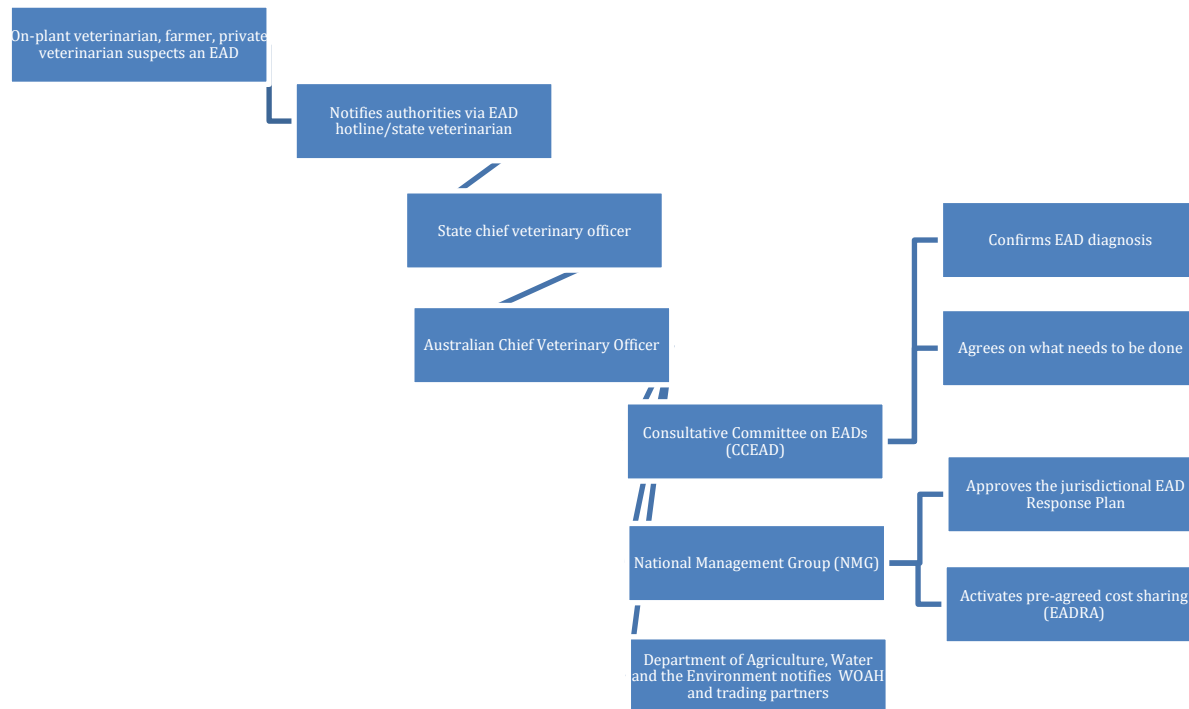
The CCEAD provides technical review of the EADRP and may recommend it to the NMG convened for the incident. The NMG decides on whether cost sharing will be invoked (following advice from the CCEAD) and whether to approve the EADRP.

CVOs and, where relevant, CHOs implement disease control measures as agreed in the EADRP and in accordance with relevant legislation. They make ongoing decisions on follow-up disease control measures – including termination of the response – in consultation with the CCEAD and, where applicable, the NMG, based on epidemiological information about the outbreak.

It is also important to note that the overall response policy contained in the various AUSVETPLAN manuals is used in informing responses to new and emerging diseases.

²¹ Because of the potentially wide range of circumstances occurring during an EAD incident, EADRP's may deviate from the described policies and guidelines in AUSVETPLAN with the agreement of the CCEAD and, where applicable, the NMG.

8 Summary of steps in the reporting of an EAD



Glossary

Animal Health Committee	<p>A committee whose members are the Australian and state and territory chief veterinary officers; the Director of the CSIRO Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness; and the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. The committee provides advice to the National Biosecurity Committee on animal health matters, focusing on technical issues and regulatory policy (formerly called the Veterinary Committee).</p> <p><i>See also</i> National Biosecurity Committee</p>
Animal products	<p>Meat, meat products and other products of animal origin (eg eggs, milk) for human consumption or for use in animal feedstuff.</p>
Australian Chief Veterinary Officer	<p>The nominated senior veterinarian in the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment who manages international animal health commitments and the Australian Government's response to an animal disease outbreak.</p> <p><i>See also</i> Chief veterinary officer</p>
AUSVETPLAN	<p>Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan. Nationally agreed resources that guide decision making in the response to emergency animal diseases (EADs). It outlines Australia's preferred approach to responding to EADs of national significance, and supports efficient, effective and coherent responses to these diseases.</p>
Carcass	<p>The body of an animal that died in the field.</p>
Chief veterinary officer (CVO)	<p>The senior veterinarian of the animal health authority in each jurisdiction (national, state or territory) who has responsibility for animal disease control in that jurisdiction.</p> <p><i>See also</i> Australian Chief Veterinary Officer</p>

Compensation	The sum of money paid by government to an owner for livestock or property that are destroyed for the purpose of eradication or prevention of the spread of an emergency animal disease, and livestock that have died of the emergency animal disease. <i>See also</i> Cost-sharing arrangements, Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement
Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases (CCEAD)	The key technical coordinating body for animal health emergencies. Members are state and territory chief veterinary officers, representatives of CSIRO-ACDP and the relevant industries, and the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer as chair.
Cost-sharing arrangements	Arrangements agreed between governments (national and state/territory) and livestock industries for sharing the costs of emergency animal disease responses. <i>See also</i> Compensation, Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement
Declared area	A defined tract of land that is subjected to disease control restrictions under emergency animal disease legislation. There are two types of declared areas: restricted area and control area.
Decontamination	Includes all stages of cleaning and disinfection.
Destroy (animals)	To kill animals humanely.
Disease agent	A general term for a transmissible organism or other factor that causes an infectious disease.
Disease Watch Hotline	24-hour freecall service for reporting suspected incidences of exotic diseases – 1800 675 888.
Disinfectant	A chemical used to destroy disease agents outside a living animal.
Disinfection	The application, after thorough cleansing, of procedures intended to destroy the infectious or parasitic agents of animal diseases, including zoonoses; applies to premises, vehicles and different objects that may have been directly or indirectly contaminated.
Disposal	Sanitary removal of animal carcasses, animal products, materials and wastes by burial, burning or some other process so as to prevent the spread of disease.

Emergency animal disease	A disease that is (a) exotic to Australia or (b) a variant of an endemic disease or (c) a serious infectious disease of unknown or uncertain cause or (d) a severe outbreak of a known endemic disease, and that is considered to be of national significance with serious social or trade implications. <i>See also</i> Endemic animal disease, Exotic animal disease
Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement	Agreement between the Australian and state/territory governments and livestock industries on the management of emergency animal disease responses. Provisions include participatory decision making, risk management, cost sharing, the use of appropriately trained personnel and existing standards such as AUSVETPLAN. <i>See also</i> Compensation, Cost-sharing arrangements
Endemic animal disease	A disease affecting animals (which may include humans) that is known to occur in Australia. <i>See also</i> Emergency animal disease, Exotic animal disease
Emergency Animal Disease Hotline	24-hour freecall service for reporting suspected incidences of exotic diseases – 1800 675 888.
Enterprise	<i>See</i> Risk enterprise
Epidemiological investigation	An investigation to identify and qualify the risk factors associated with the disease. <i>See also</i> Veterinary investigation
Epidemiology	The study of disease in populations and of factors that determine its occurrence.
Exotic animal disease	A disease affecting animals (which may include humans) that does not normally occur in Australia. <i>See also</i> Emergency animal disease, Endemic animal disease
Incubation period	The period that elapses between the introduction of a pathogen into an animal and the first clinical signs of the disease.
Local control centre	An emergency operations centre responsible for the command and control of field operations in a defined area.
Movement control	Restrictions placed on the movement of animals, people and other things to prevent the spread of disease.

National Biosecurity Committee	A committee that was formally established under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB). The IGAB was signed on 13 January 2012, and signatories include all states and territories except Tasmania. The committee provides advice to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee and the Agriculture Ministers' Forum on national biosecurity issues, and on the IGAB.
National Management Group (NMG)	A group established to approve (or not approve) the invoking of cost sharing under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement. NMG members are the Secretary of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment as chair; the chief executive officers of the state and territory government parties; and the president (or analogous officer) of each of the relevant industry parties.
Operational procedures	Detailed instructions for carrying out specific disease control activities, such as disposal, destruction, decontamination and valuation.
Premises	A tract of land including its buildings, or a separate farm or facility that is maintained by a single set of services and personnel.
Quarantine	Legally enforceable requirement that prevents or minimises spread of pests and disease agents by controlling the movement of animals, persons or things.
Risk enterprise	A defined livestock or related enterprise that is potentially a major source of infection for many other premises. Includes intensive piggeries, feedlots, abattoirs, knackeries, saleyards, calf scales, milk factories, tanneries, skin sheds, game meat establishments, cold stores, artificial insemination centres, veterinary laboratories and hospitals, road and rail freight depots, showgrounds, field days, weighbridges and garbage depots.
Stamping out	The strategy of eliminating infection from premises through the destruction of animals in accordance with the particular AUSVETPLAN manual, and in a manner that permits appropriate disposal of carcasses and decontamination of the site.

State coordination centre	The emergency operations centre that directs the disease control operations to be undertaken in a state or territory.
Surveillance	A systematic program of investigation designed to establish the presence, extent or absence of a disease, or of infection or contamination with the causative organism. It includes the examination of animals for clinical signs, antibodies or the causative organism.
Tracing	The process of locating animals, people or other items that may be implicated in the spread of disease, so that appropriate action can be taken.
Vaccination	Inoculation of individuals with a vaccine to provide active immunity.
Vaccine	A substance used to stimulate immunity against one or several disease-causing agents to provide protection or to reduce the effects of the disease. A vaccine is prepared from the causative agent of a disease, its products or a synthetic substitute, which is treated to act as an antigen without inducing the disease.
Vector	A living organism (frequently an arthropod) that transmits an infectious agent from one host to another. A biological vector is one in which the infectious agent must develop or multiply before becoming infective to a recipient host. A mechanical vector is one that transmits an infectious agent from one host to another but is not essential to the lifecycle of the agent.
Veterinary investigation	An investigation of the diagnosis, pathology and epidemiology of the disease. <i>See also</i> Epidemiological investigation
Wild animals	
– native wildlife	Animals that are indigenous to Australia and may be susceptible to emergency animal diseases (eg bats, dingoes, marsupials).
– feral animals	Animals of domestic species that are not confined or under control (eg cats, horses, pigs).
– exotic fauna	Nondomestic animal species that are not indigenous to Australia (eg foxes).

Zoonosis

A disease of animals that can be transmitted to humans.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full title
ACDP	Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness
AHA	Animal Health Australia
AHC	Animal Health Committee
AUSVETPLAN	Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan
CCEAD	Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CVO	chief veterinary officer
EAD	emergency animal disease
EADRA	Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement
EADRP	Emergency Animal Disease Response Plan
NMG	National Management Group
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
TRG	Technical Review Group
