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New course available to up-skill biosecurity responders

The release of a national biosecurity qualification means Australian states and territories can conduct more effective and rapid responses to biosecurity emergencies, with all biosecurity response personnel being trained to the same standard.

Personnel with a Certificate III in Public Safety (Biosecurity Response Operations) are better prepared for a role in a local or state control centre or in undertaking field operations during an emergency biosecurity response.

The more effective the response, the sooner affected industries can return to market following an outbreak.

The Certificate III is the first qualification rolled out under the Biosecurity Emergency Response Training Australia (BERTA) project, representing more than two years of collaboration between the Australian Government, state and territory governments, Tocal College, Animal Health Australia (AHA) and Plant Health Australia.

“BERTA’s resources and subsequent training will be invaluable to government teams likely to be involved in a biosecurity response,” said Tocal College Principal Darren Bayley.

“Most importantly, staff will be able to lend their expertise across jurisdictions, with managers feeling confident that they have received the same standard of training.”

With ‘biosecurity emergencies’ being so diverse, the development of BERTA materials required an enormous collaborative effort across governments and sectors.

“This project has been among the largest and most complex we’ve managed, involving a huge number of people working towards a common goal,” said AHA CEO Kathleen Plowman.

“The release of the Certificate III is a significant milestone, considering the enormous efforts of everyone involved and I would like to acknowledge and thank all those involved.”

The Certificate III will be followed by both a Certificate IV in Public Safety (Biosecurity Response Leadership) and Diploma in Public Safety (Biosecurity Response Management), enabling personnel to participate in and lead an incident management team.

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Media enquiries: Jackie Poyser, AHA Communications and Training Executive Manager 0410 994 410, jpoyser@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

About Biosecurity Emergency Response Training Australia (BERTA)

BERTA is a collaboration between the Commonwealth, all states and territories, Tocal College, Animal Health Australia and Plant Health Australia. BERTA delivers training and assessment materials designed to prepare government staff across Australia for a role in an emergency biosecurity response.