



# 2023-24

## Annual Report





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## Welcome to our 2023-24 Annual Report

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# Chair's Foreword

Sharon Starick

AHA was proud to play our part in the avian influenza response, with the EADRA successfully used to cost share and coordinate national arrangements and the relevant AUSVETPLAN response plan enacted to support response arrangements.

As we reflect on the Animal Health Australia (AHA) 2023-24 financial year, it is clear the year has been marked by both achievements and challenges across Australia's national biosecurity system.

From AHA's perspective, we made strong strides enhancing biosecurity measures, most notably with key activities across AHA's two flagship programs – Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA) and the Australian Veterinary

Emergency Plan (AUSVETPLAN).

These improvements have, of course, only been achieved with the collaborative efforts of our members, leading to solutions that continue to strengthen our animal health framework.

Financially, despite the economic challenges faced globally AHA has maintained a strong fiscal position with our prudent management allowing us to invest in essential

programs and initiatives while ensuring accountability and transparency.

However, the year has not been without its challenges, with the ever-present threat of incursions on our border. Foot-and-mouth disease and lumpy skin disease in Indonesia and further outbreaks of avian influenza and African swine fever across the globe, combined with the increasing threat of climate change continue to put pressure on our biosecurity system.

In May we saw this threat become a reality with avian influenza detected in Victoria, with further outbreaks in NSW and the ACT. Whilst concerning to see such incidents, the rapid and effective response of both government and industry to take action has meant there have been no further cases of avian influenza detected since June. Importantly, the avian influenza strains detected across the three jurisdictions are not the same as the H5N1 strain that is causing concern

globally, with Australia remaining free of the H5N1 strain. It has however reinforced the importance of preparation and response in an everchanging landscape.

AHA was proud to play our part in this response, with the EADRA successfully used to cost share and coordinate national arrangements for emergency responses to the three separate detections of avian influenza and the relevant AUSVETPLAN response plan enacted to support response arrangements.

This year saw the departure of AHA's long-serving Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Kathleen Plowman. The Board would like to thank Kathleen for her contributions over her 10-year tenure and wish her all the very best in her future endeavours.

As with any resignation, this brought the opportunity for change and fresh perspectives with the AHA Board engaging the services of an external search firm to ensure a transparent and robust recruitment process. After a highly competitive process, AHA announced Dr Samantha Allan as its new CEO, marking a new era for the organisation.

Dr Allan had been acting CEO for a number of months and was in her previous role as AHA General Manager of Emergency Preparedness, Animal Health and Biosecurity for five years. Her extensive experience in emergency animal disease (EAD) response activities is a skill set even more essential for AHA's leadership, with EAD responses occurring more frequently and having larger impacts. The Board welcomes Dr Allan and looks forward to working with her and the AHA team in the years to come.

I would like to thank my fellow Board Directors for their unwavering support and guidance and AHA staff for their dedication and hard work. Last but not most importantly, I would like to acknowledge all our members for their trust, commitment and collaboration. Together, we will continue to develop solutions and advocate for the highest standards of animal health and welfare in Australia.

**Sharon Starick**

*Chair*

Animal Health Australia



(right to left) Sharon Starick (AHA Chair), Dr Samantha Allan (AHA CEO) with Egg Farmers of Australia representatives Melinda Hashimoto (CEO), Kylie Jackson (Organisation Coordinator) and Kirsty Boswood (Administration Assistant).

# About AHA

## Our role

AHA is the trusted and independent national animal health body in Australia, bringing together government and industry to deliver animal health and biosecurity. With our members we scan the horizon for threats and opportunities, advocate for and drive solutions and take a whole-of-sector approach to ensure the long-term success of Australia's animal health and biosecurity system.

## Our vision

A national biosecurity system that provides every opportunity for Australian agriculture to succeed at home and overseas.

## Our mission

Informing government and industry about national action required and delivering solutions together that enhance, strengthen and protect animal health and the biosecurity system.

## Our values

Our work will be guided by our commitment to:

- **lead with integrity** — we listen, learn and deliver with the courage to shape a better future
- **connect and collaborate** — we understand the power of working together; as a collective we are stronger
- **innovate and grow** — we evolve and adapt, striving to find better ways and creative solutions
- **be bold and open** — we take action, add value and welcome hard conversations
- **embrace diversity** — our individual differences strengthen our efforts
- **customer-centric** — we listen to our customers, provide options, meet their specific needs and build solutions.

# Board of Directors

AHA's Board comprises seven non-executive part-time Directors, all of whom are committed and passionate about shaping AHA's future and the Australian animal health system. The primary role of the Board is to set and monitor the implementation of the company's strategic direction and establish goals by which the achievement of this may be measured.



Lucinda Corrigan



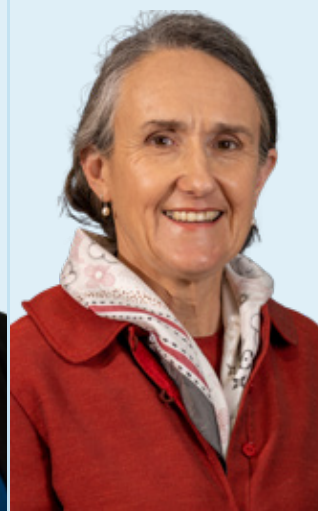
Malcolm Letts



Michelle Gorman



Sharon Starick (Chair)



Renata Paliskis



Dr Len Stephens



Stuart Crockett

# Our Members

The key factor behind the success of our projects is the ability of our members to work together through partnerships, to strengthen animal health and biosecurity in Australia and maximise confidence in the safety and quality of Australia's livestock products in domestic and international markets, enabling outcomes that would never be possible if the parties operated alone.

## Australian, State and Territory Governments



## Livestock Industries



## Associate Members





# CEO Report

Dr Samantha Allan

The collective willingness to engage, compromise and work through differences to find solutions, make certain we are best placed to tackle the increased threat of biosecurity outbreaks.

In my inaugural year as CEO of AHA, it has been a tremendous privilege to work alongside the AHA Board, staff and members. There has never been a more challenging period for biosecurity in the modern Australian agricultural landscape and the shared commitment to future-proof the agriculture sector, ensures our livestock industries are supported to produce world-class food and fibre.

## Key achievements

As the trusted national body dedicated to protecting Australia's animal health and biosecurity system, the past 12 months have seen some key achievements:

- Currency of the EADRA maintained through the Five-Year Review Report and an updated version of endorsed by all parties.
- Continuation of AHA's input of subject matter expertise to various



industry and government-led activities, including exercises and discussion forums.

- AUSVETPLAN continuing to progress reviews of manuals through extensive consultation and negotiation to achieve consensus.
- Prioritisation of the full review of the avian influenza AUSVETPLAN manual, recognising the heightened risk profile to Australia.
- EAD Training Program contributing to the EAD preparedness of AHA members through activities that also support members meet their EADRA preparedness obligations.
- Better on farm practices promoted to industry, leading to a more sustainable and resilient agricultural sector.
- Evaluated database options to ensure the key national animal health programs will be supported by a modern, secure database system into the future.
- Progressed planning of the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium, a collaborative project with Plant Health Australia, Invasive Species Council and Centre for the Invasive Species Solutions.

A significant highlight for me has been the continued strong engagement by our members at our bi-annual Member Engagement Weeks where open, collegiate, challenging and wide-ranging discussions about biosecurity matters continue to take place. Forums such as these, where there is a collective willingness to engage, compromise and work through differences to find solutions, make certain we are best placed to tackle the increased threat of biosecurity outbreaks.

### Leadership

In our last Annual Report, we spoke about results from our mid-term review of the *AHA 2020-25 Strategic Plan*. Results showed we were on track to deliver on our three strategic priorities, but in line with our philosophy of continual improvement there were areas of opportunity identified. One of these was to better define AHA's role as a leader in the biosecurity space. From this feedback, the AHA leadership team developed three themes to guide us now and into the future.

- In peacetime and response, we work productively and collaboratively, focussed on our core responsibilities.



100 years of the World Organisation of Animal Health, 20 Feb 2023, Canberra.

- We proactively identify issues and then bring people together, enabling conversations to deliver solutions.
- In periods of heightened biosecurity risk, we will distribute timely information and collateral to assist our members to respond.

AHA will continue to work with our members to ensure our activities effectively and efficiently strengthen the overall resilience of the livestock sector.

### Looking ahead

As we move forward, our focus will remain on fostering collaboration, embracing innovation and addressing emerging challenges in animal health. We recognise the importance

of adaptability in an ever-changing biosecurity risk landscape and are committed to working with our members to strengthen animal health and biosecurity in Australia, maximising confidence in the safety and quality of Australia's livestock products in domestic and international markets.

I am looking forward to leading AHA into this new period, building on our mission to deliver solutions that enhance, strengthen and protect animal health and the biosecurity system.

**Dr Samantha Allan**

CEO

Animal Health Australia



# Financial Overview

Ashley Turner FGIA CPA  
AHA's Company Secretary & Head of Finance

The operating surplus for AHA in FY24 was \$3.1 million. While this is a favourable outcome and is higher than anticipated in our AOP, it is important to recognise that these upside surprises in income are unlikely to be replicated in 2024-25.

From a financial perspective, the financial year 2023-24 was an overall positive year for AHA.

Income was up 5.6% on the prior year, driven by higher-than-anticipated levy growth and better-than-expected investment returns for reserves on the back of increased interest and distribution income from higher rates and positive investment markets. Pleasingly, and despite some challenges in FY24, overall expenditure aligned with our Annual Operating

Plan (AOP) and increased by 1% on the previous financial year.

The operating surplus for AHA in FY24 was \$3.1 million. While this is a favourable outcome and is higher than anticipated in our AOP, it is important to recognise that these upside surprises in income are unlikely to be replicated in 2024-25, with increasingly uncertain weather conditions potentially impacting levies, and while at the same time facing a challenging investment environment.

## Income

Levy income was up on the prior year by 0.7m (up 9%), primarily as a result of a 12% increase in Cattle Levies and a 10% increase in Sheep and Lamb levies.

The EADRA levy collected in 2023-24 was \$0.4m. This levy washes in and out of the statements as it is subsequently returned to the Commonwealth as per Priority 3 section 4.5.a of the Australian Animal Health Council (Livestock Industries) Funding Act 1996 (AAHC Act).

With the detection of avian influenza in Victoria, NSW and the ACT in May and June 2024, there will be a material increase in the EADRA levy and corresponding fund expenditure in 2024/25.

As endorsed by members at the June 2023 General Meeting, subscription income received from government, non-levy industry and associate members was \$3.3 million. Revenue from non-subscription programs fell to \$3.6m, a decrease of \$0.4m from the prior year, as several programs

returned to normal activity from a post-COVID catch-up across FY23 (Refer to Note 2 of the AHA 30 June 2024 Financial Statements).

Higher interest income from the sharp uplift in interest rates combined with a strong investment environment increased the return on AHA investment by \$0.5m (up 53%). The impacts of a strong recovery in domestic and global markets saw an unrealised gain of \$0.5m in the value of AHA's medium and long-term investments at 30 June. Throughout the financial year, the Board has retained its relatively conservative investment strategy at 84% defensive and 16% medium and long-term growth assets.

Other Income was in line with the preceding year, with AHA support services generating a majority of the other Income.

## Expenditure

Total expenditure increased marginally. Higher expenditure in subscription program activity (\$0.2m to a total of \$5.9m) was partially offset by minor reductions in the overall cost of

Throughout the financial year, the Board has retained its relatively conservative investment strategy at 84% defensive and 16% medium and long-term growth assets.

non-subscription program activity. Pleasingly, the 2023-24 AOP program ran to schedule with no material variations. (Refer to Note 3 of the AHA 30 June 2024 Financial Statements).

## Balance Sheet

The resulting operating surplus and increase in equity of \$3.1 million is reflected in a \$4.4 million increase in total assets (\$4.6 million increase in cash & investments less a \$0.5 million write-down of the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) Vaccine bank) and a \$0.8 million increase in total liabilities (\$1.6 million in trade and other payables offset by a

\$0.07m decrease in contracted liabilities).

## Summary

While AHA welcomed its operating surplus of \$3.1m in 2023-24, the income factors that drove this cannot be counted on to be replicated moving forward. The headwinds of persistent inflation and cost pressures, uncertainty around weather conditions, markets and biosecurity threats reinforce the criticality of prudent management of finances and reserves and continuing prioritisation of resources.

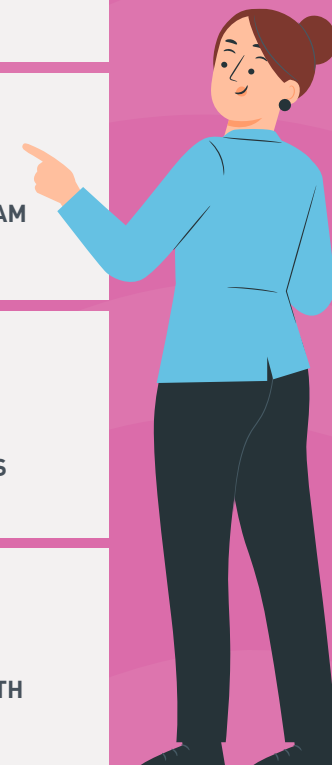
# Financial Snapshot



View our full financial statements by scanning here or visiting the corporate publications section of our website.



<b>16.5m</b> Total Revenue	<b>13.4m</b> Total Expenditure
<b>8.0m</b> LEVIES	<b>6.5m</b> NON-SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAM ACTIVITY
<b>7.0m</b> SUBSCRIPTION AND NON SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAM INCOME	<b>5.9m</b> SUBSCRIPTION PROGRAM ACTIVITY
<b>1.3m</b> INTEREST / DISTRIBUTIONS	<b>0.5m</b> ASSET WRITE-DOWNS
<b>0.2m</b> OTHER INCOME	<b>0.4m</b> EADRA COMMONWEALTH LEVY REPAYMENT



# Strategic Plan 2020-2025

The world around us is changing. AHA's Strategic Plan 2020-25 considers the changing operating environment and seeks to overcome challenges facing the animal health and biosecurity system. AHA's strategic direction is supported by three strategic priorities.

## 1 Prepared and ready to respond



Screw Worm Fly Surveillance and Preparedness Steering Committee's annual meeting, Sep 2023.

## 2 Better health and biosecurity practices



WormBoss Sheep Workshop, Sep 2023.

## 3 Connecting systems for stronger biosecurity



AAPSP Roadshow in Brisbane, Jun 2024.

Strategic  
Priority

Enhancing Australia's capability to detect and respond to emergency animal disease (EAD), supporting Australia's domestic and international market access.

## Key Wins



EADRA successfully used to cost share and coordinate national arrangements for emergency responses to three separate detections of H7 subtypes of highly pathogenic avian influenza.



Six AUSVETPLAN manuals were updated and published, and two new AUSVETPLAN resource documents were published.



National Arbovirus Monitoring Program (NAMP) supported an overseas trade delegation reviewing bluetongue virus control in Australia.



EADRA Five-Year Review Report and updated version of the EADRA endorsed by all parties.



Development of the Liaison-Livestock Industry (LLI) online course.



The National Biosecurity Committee approved continuing the National Biosecurity Response Team (NBRT) program for a four-year arrangement.

# Subscription projects

TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA) Operation and Integrity</b>	Ensure the EADRA remains a nationally agreed, contemporary, and legally binding Deed that enables a rapid, effective and efficient response to EADs.	EADRA successfully supported cost shared responses to detections of three separate subtypes of H7 highly pathogenic avian influenza. Fourth five-year review of EADRA completed and report approved. Variations for version 24 of the EADRA signed off by all Parties.	
<b>Informing Emergency Animal Disease Responses</b>	Maintain a government and industry endorsed suite of evidence-based EAD policy resources (AUSVETPLAN) which inform decision making to underpin a nationally agreed and cost-shared EAD response plan.	Six AUSVETPLAN manuals were updated and published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Response strategy: Avian influenza</i> (part update – published as a working draft)</li> <li>• <i>Response strategy: Foot-and-mouth disease</i> (part review)</li> <li>• <i>Guidance document: Declared areas and allocation of premises classifications in an EAD response</i></li> <li>• <i>Operational manual: Decontamination</i></li> <li>• <i>Management manual: Laboratory preparedness</i></li> <li>• <i>Enterprise manual: Wool.</i></li> </ul> Two new AUSVETPLAN manuals were published: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Resource document: African swine fever response operational guidelines for pig abattoirs</i></li> <li>• <i>Resource document: Tracing and product recall from export-certified abattoirs affected by African swine fever.</i></li> </ul>	

Cont'd

Project Tracker

Completed

On track

Not on track





TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Increase Response Capability</b>	Deliver tailored training and education that builds the response capability of AHA and our members.	The development of the LLI online course and delivery of several interactive scenario-based face to face workshops for key national EAD response roles have developed member capability and supported stakeholder EAD awareness.	

 Project Tracker
  Completed
  On track
  Not on track





# Non-subscription projects

TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) Vaccine Bank Management</b>	Enhance Australia's preparedness for an FMD outbreak by ensuring access to the appropriate FMD vaccines, if required for use in a response.	<p>Australia has an agreement in place with a major international manufacturer of veterinary pharmaceuticals in Europe (UK and France) to provide FMD vaccines within seven working days, to be used as part of an emergency response.</p> <p>The agreement is on-track for renewal by the mid-December 2024 timeframe following completion of a tender process. This included an external review of the antigens in the bank and independent risk assessments.</p>	
<b>Anthrax Vaccine Bank Management</b>	Enhance Australia's preparedness for a significant anthrax outbreak by maintaining a local inventory of anthrax vaccine.	The anthrax vaccine bank project ensures that a local supply of imported anthrax vaccine (specially manufactured to Australian specification) is available immediately should it be needed to respond to a large-scale outbreak of anthrax. It has not needed to be used but it is an important tool in Australia's emergency preparedness toolbox.	
<b>Johne's Disease (JD) and Anthrax Reference Laboratories</b>	<p>Provide Reference Laboratory services to support national disease management programs for animal diseases such as JD and those with a high public health risk such as anthrax.</p> <p>These services underpin national control, eradication and market assurance programs, facilitate interstate and international trade, optimise public health through zoonosis recognition and support biosecurity measures.</p>	The Anthrax and Johne's Disease Reference Laboratories continued to function as centres of excellence in diagnostic services for these regionally important diseases. They also contributed to national and international scientific collaboration.	

Cont'd



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track



TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Maintain Access to Arbovirus Sensitive Markets</b>	Monitor the distribution of economically important arboviruses of livestock such as Bluetongue, and their vectors.	The National Arbovirus Monitoring Program (NAMP) continued to be an invaluable resource for supporting market access for livestock.  NAMP supported the visit of an overseas trade delegation which was reviewing bluetongue virus control in Australia.	
<b>Enhance Surveillance for Significant Exotic Diseases of Pigs</b>	Generate evidence of absence data for specified exotic pig diseases to support the Australian Government's substantiation of animal health status and support trade negotiations.	This project, initiated by the pig industry, continued to encourage veterinarians to submit samples from relevant cases to support Australia's animal health status in relation to major exotic diseases of pigs.	
<b>National Biosecurity Response Team Program (NBRT) and NBRT Cadet Program</b>	Build the capability and capacity of a national team of jurisdictional biosecurity emergency response personnel.	Delivered a comprehensive professional development program through face-to-face workshops and webinars.  NBRT contributed sponsorship towards the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium and members to attend.  Program underwent a review and evaluation of the four-year arrangements period 2020-24 and received approval from the National Biosecurity Committee for another four-year arrangement period commencing July 2024.	
<b>Maintain Australia's Freedom from Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs)</b>	Carry out sufficient TSE surveillance to meet international requirements, assure markets that Australian animals and animal products are free of TSEs and to ensure the early detection of a TSE (should it occur).  Demonstrate that no restricted animal material is fed to ruminants.	A new business plan commenced with a significantly reduced budget for the project.  Adequate surveillance carried out for scrapie and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and information provided to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) ensured our BSE negligible risk status was maintained.	

Cont'd



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track



TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Monitoring for an Exotic Zoonotic Pest</b>	Conduct surveillance for screw-worm fly, monitor the risk of an incursion, and make appropriate preparations.	Continued to undertake targeted surveillance for screw worm fly nationally and to promote awareness about screw worm fly to animal health stakeholders.	
<b>EADRA Wool Levy Creation</b>	Support the submission of a proposal for the establishment of a zero-levy mechanism (EADRA Levy) to meet the wool industry's cost sharing obligations under EADRA.	With the announcement of a proposed Biosecurity Protection Levy by the Commonwealth Government, work was put on hold for this project.	

# Strategic Priority

# 2

With a focus on prevention and strengthening on-farm and supply chain biosecurity practices, we will ensure animal health, welfare and product integrity are protected, reducing the impacts of disease and improving producer and supply chain outcomes.



## Key Wins



ParaBoss Phase III almost complete, delivering a producer-centric website and rolling out successful tailored and targeted producer communications and extension activities.



Nearly 12 million sheep inspected as part of the National Sheep Health Monitoring Project.



Better on farm practices continued to be promoted with:

- the Horse Venue Biosecurity Workbook updated for the first time in 13 years
- new caprine arthritis encephalitis module in a revamped GoatMAP launched
- revision of the National Sheep Health Declaration commenced.

# Subscription projects

TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Better On-Farm Biosecurity</b>	<p>Increase the implementation of biosecurity practices on-farm and throughout the supply chain.</p> <p>Assist livestock producers to manage the health conditions of their animals.</p>	<p>The Horse Venue Biosecurity Workbook was updated for the first time in 13 years.</p> <p>A new National Ratite Biosecurity Manual was finalised.</p> <p>Work commenced on the update of the National Feedlot Biosecurity Manual, which had been delayed for some time.</p> <p>Farm Biosecurity Nuffield Scholar, Dr Regan Lynch, commenced her studies and will complete her report early next financial year.</p>	
<b>Improve Livestock Welfare</b>	<p>Facilitate national solutions that maintain and increase market access through effective partnerships for livestock welfare, policy development and implementation.</p>	<p>Participated in various national animal welfare groups and discussions.</p> <p>Provided a submission on the renewal of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy.</p>	

Project Tracker

Completed

On track

Not on track

# Non-subscription projects

TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>ParaBoss</b>	Develop targeted producer communication and extension activities to improve producer and grower awareness of ParaBoss and improve their on-farm management of worms, flies, lice and ticks.	ParaBoss Phase III is almost complete, delivering a modern producer-centric website and rolling out successful tailored and targeted producer communications and extension activities such as an e-newsletter, monthly webinars and pilot producer workshops.	
<b>Scoping Parasitic Resistance Database</b>	Scoping study to engage stakeholders and assess options in developing a potential independent parasitic resistance database for producer use, distributed through the ParaBoss website.	With significant work required on delivering the final elements of ParaBoss Phase III, work on developing this project was delayed.	
<b>Fit to Lamb Database</b>	The Fit to Lamb project aims to reduce impacts of dystocia for the Australian sheep industry. The first phase involves the collation and analysis of historical data in a newly developed database that AHA will manage.	A challenge has been where to build this new database due to trial of NAHIP in AUSPestCheck® over the last 12 months. Building it will be a priority for 2024-25.	
<b>Goat Health</b>	Provide the framework for a nationally integrated approach to health conditions and biosecurity within the Australian goat industry.	New caprine arthritis encephalitis module in a revamped GoatMAP launched. Revised National Goat Health Declaration released.	
<b>Cattle Health</b>	Provide the framework for a nationally integrated approach to health conditions and biosecurity within the Australian cattle industry.	Activities delivered as per project plan.	

Cont'd



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track





TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>National Management of Johne's Disease (JD)</b>	Manage the cross-sectional issues associated with JD in alpacas, cattle, goats and sheep.	Ongoing work with a working group of laboratory staff looking at JD test issues as well as early planning for the International Colloquium on Paratuberculosis (Oct 2024).	
<b>Sheep Health</b>	Provide the framework for a nationally integrated approach to health conditions and biosecurity within the Australian sheep industry. Monitor sheep health and productivity conditions through abattoir monitoring, reporting back to producers.	Nearly 12 million sheep inspected as part of the National Sheep Health Monitoring Project. All data now being returned to producers via MLA's myFeedback portal. Revision of the National Sheep Health Declaration commenced. National Footrot working group stood up and met twice.	
<b>National Sheep Industry Biosecurity Strategy (NSIBS)</b>	Work with Sheep Producers Australia and Wool Producers Australia to deliver the NSIBS. Identify gaps within the sheep industry related to biosecurity and either address them directly or leverage other projects to do so.	Lack of extension capacity has made this project challenging. Early planning for the next Strategy period commenced.	
<b>National Sheep Industry Biosecurity Strategy (NSIBS) on-farm Biosecurity Extension</b>	Provide support, tools and resources for sheep and wool producers that build awareness and understanding of farm biosecurity practices, resulting in practice change.	Lack of extension capacity has made this project challenging. Development of this capacity will be a priority in 2024-25.	

Cont'd



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track



TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>National Sheep Industry Biosecurity Strategy (NSIBS) - Tasmania</b>	Collation and reporting on animal health surveillance information as well as providing biosecurity extension to Tasmanian producers.	Consultant delivered 12 reports and had high levels of engagement in biosecurity extension in Tasmania.	
<b>Prohibited Pig Feed (PPF) Compliance &amp; Awareness</b>	Harmonise compliance and awareness work performed by state/territory jurisdictions and industry, to prevent the potential introduction and spread of EADs due to the feeding of prohibited pig feed (swill) to pigs.	Adequate PPF compliance activities carried out nationally with very low levels of PPF non-compliance detected.	
<b>Accreditation Program for Australian Veterinarians</b>	Provide a contemporary, accessible online learning platform, which allows registered veterinarians to access training and become accredited to participate in government veterinary programs.  Maintain a database of accredited veterinarians and business services to ensure currency and accreditation fees are paid.	The database of accredited veterinarians was maintained in support of associated certification programs.	
<b>Australian Government Accredited Veterinarian Training</b>	Provide a contemporary, accessible online learning platform to allow private veterinarians to become accredited to undertake export certification work on behalf of governments.	The online learning platform was maintained.	

Cont'd

Project Tracker

Completed

On track

Not on track





TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Northern Beef Breeding (NB2)</b>	Working with MLA and Indigenous Land & Sea Corporation to upskill Indigenous property managers and staff in cattle production including biosecurity and EAD awareness.	Two producer workshops held and a new Cattle EAD augmented reality app was scoped for development next financial year.	
<b>Goat pain relief</b>	Working with GICA and MLA, investigate a pathway for registration of one pain relief product for goats, and develop a plan to do so.	The consultant completed the project and a possible product was identified. Additional funding was also successfully obtained through the DAFF AgVet Chemical Grants round in late 2023, which will help with the next phase of this work.	
<b>Trust in Australian Wool</b>	The Trust in Australian Wool handbook and website provide information on sheep health, welfare and biosecurity practices, as well as the world-leading sustainability and traceability processes that underpin the Australian wool industry.	The website and handbook were updated and relaunched at significant wool events. Content was also translated into Hindi, Mandarin and Vietnamese to allow a broad international audience.	



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track





Strategic  
Priority

Delivering cross-sectoral outcomes that improve the status and integrity of regional, state and national biosecurity systems, contributing to the protection of current market access pathways and the identification of new opportunities.

## Key Wins



Provided a summary of lumpy skin disease (LSD) exclusion testing results which supported an Australian Government dossier demonstrating Australia's freedom from LSD.



Industry and Government Forum's continued to hold wide ranging discussions about biosecurity matters at their respective forums in September 2023 and March 2024.



Collaborated with our members to improve data standards and data quality across key national animal health programs.



Progressed planning of the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium, a collaborative project with Plant Health Australia, Invasive Species Council and Centre for the Invasive Species Solutions.



The Australian Animal Pathology Standards Roadshow continued to support and enhance national veterinary diagnostic capability.

# Subscription projects

TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Surveillance Support</b>	Collaborate on the development, delivery and evaluation of national animal disease surveillance initiatives including the National Animal Health Surveillance Plan and its supporting activities.	Played an important role in national surveillance initiatives such as Northern Australian Biosecurity Strategy and the Lumpy Skin Disease Surveillance Strategy subgroup within the National Surveillance and Epidemiology Advisory Group.	
<b>Collaborative Disease Investigations</b>	Increase engagement with private veterinarians. Deliver tailored programs with the aim of increasing the quantity and quality of livestock and wildlife disease investigations reported nationally.	Continued to support the quality and quantity of veterinary investigations of significant diseases of livestock and wildlife. The program supports effective collaboration between non-government veterinary practitioners and governments through training and provides financial support for veterinary investigations of complex cases.	
<b>National Animal Health Laboratory Coordination</b>	Support the development and delivery of the National Diagnostics Business Plan, including delivering on AHA commitments in the business plan. Participate in the Animal Health Committee (AHC) subcommittee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards (SCAHLs). Support initiatives for improving laboratory and diagnostics outcomes. Provides a means for industry concerns to be heard at SCAHLs.	Continued to play an important role in SCAHLs which strengthens animal health diagnostics in Australia. Led a joint workshop which included members of SCAHLs and the National Animal Health Information Program (NAHIP) advisory committee, resulting in improvements in national animal health surveillance data quality, and improved linkages between animal health diagnostics and surveillance.	

Cont'd



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track






TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Supporting Market Access</b>	<p>Provide governance for the collation, analysis and reporting of an agreed national surveillance dataset.</p> <p>Maintain an online database of national animal health information which is accessible to governments to support trade negotiations and market access.</p> <p>Manage the production of agreed national surveillance publications.</p>	<p>Managed the agreed animal health surveillance dataset and database and published national surveillance reports such as <i>Animal Health Surveillance Quarterly</i> and the <i>Animal Health in Australia</i> Annual Report.</p> <p>Provided a summary of LSD exclusion testing results from our datasets which supported an Australian Government dossier demonstrating Australia's freedom from LSD.</p>	

 Project Tracker

 Completed

 On track

 Not on track


# Non-subscription projects

TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Biosecurity 2030</b>	<p>Meet challenges and work with the collective to future-proof Australia's biosecurity system to protect our livestock, economy, environment and way of life.</p> <p>Develop a platform and resources to connect government, industry, and community to pave the way for transformational change over the next decade – a biosecurity mass movement.</p>	<p>Planning for the 3rd Australian Biosecurity Symposium (August 24) on-track with over 400 delegates expected.</p>	
<b>Biosecurity RD&amp;E Strategy</b>	<p>Promote and identify cross-sectoral, collaborative RD&amp;E opportunities where gaps exist, including identification of funders and providers.</p> <p>Identify and reduce duplication of RD&amp;E to increase the efficiency of resource allocation and use.</p>	<p>New Strategy was finalised for 2023-28.</p> <p>Some outputs delayed with a renewed focus in the 24-25 year.</p>	
<b>Supporting National Veterinary Pathology Expertise</b>	<p>Enhance national veterinary pathology diagnostic and expert knowledge capabilities by providing pathology training, continuing education, and quality assurance programs.</p>	<p>Continued to maintain and enhance national veterinary diagnostic capability through initiatives such as the Australian Animal Pathology Standards Roadshow.</p> <p>In May-June 2024, Dr Dave Dorman from North Carolina State University presented on toxicology in five locations across Australia. Excellent feedback was received from participants.</p>	

*Cont'd*


Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track





TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>National Livestock Identification System (NLIS)</b>	Work with members and stakeholders to deliver a range of outputs relevant to NLIS business rules and SAFEMEAT initiatives.	AHA supported the development of new NLIS Sheep & Goat Standards which were successfully agreed by SAFEMEAT in June 2024.	
<b>Alpaca Traceability</b>	Work with the Australian Alpaca Association to develop and implement a traceability system for alpacas and Llamas.	New Business Rules approved by SAFEMEAT at the beginning of year. NLIS database able to accept alpaca movements. Australian Alpaca Association moving to make electronic ID tags mandatory for shows.	
<b>National Wild Dog Action Plan</b>	Support the coordination and roll out of the newly endorsed National Wild Dog Management Action Plan	All planned activities carried out by the National Wild Dog Coordinator.	
<b>Modernising the Central Animal Health Database</b>	Upgrade the national animal health database that supports national coordination and collaboration of datasets.	Evaluated database options to ensure that the key national animal health programs will be supported by a modern, secure database system into the future. Collaborated with our members to improve data standards and data quality across key national animal health projects.	

Cont'd



Project Tracker



Completed



On track



Not on track






TITLE	PURPOSE	IMPACT STATEMENT	
<b>Industry Forums</b>	Provide a forum for industry discussion and collaboration with a focus on EAD readiness, crisis management planning and exercises.	<p>Face to face forums held in September 2023 and March 2024 with wide ranging discussions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis Management Plans Project Proposal</li> <li>• Work to support EAD Preparedness including the National LSD Action Plan and Joint Interagency EAD Taskforce actions</li> <li>• The new Australian Animal Welfare Strategy</li> <li>• EAD awareness training and the development of networks to support LLIs</li> <li>• Funding of biosecurity</li> </ul> <p>One Industry Forum representative attended the WOAHA General Session in Paris in May 2024.</p> <p>Members of Industry Forum have continued to provide input into AUSVETPLAN manual reviews and training resources to support EAD preparedness.</p>	

 Project Tracker

 Completed

 On track

 Not on track


# Member, Strategy & Operations Function

Member, Strategy and Operations comprise the Member Value, Communications, Governance, Finance and Office Management functions. These teams work collaboratively internally and externally to ensure AHA project activities are grounded in member needs and delivered efficiently. This function, through the Chief Executive, Board and its committees, maintains the infrastructure, systems, business support and services for AHA staff, members and related entities. This function assists the company to meet its strategic objectives by:



implementing effective human resources, IT and governance systems.



dedicating resources and capability toward partnerships with members.



providing efficient project delivery capability.



producing timely and robust financial and project reports.



communicating effectively to support AHA's contribution to members and the animal health and biosecurity system more broadly.



providing members with opportunities to engage with the broader AHA membership.



Members and staff at the September 2023 Member Engagement Week.



# Corporate Governance

## **IN ADDITION TO CORPORATIONS LAW REQUIREMENTS, AHA IMPLEMENTS THE FOLLOWING:**

### **Appointment of AHA's Board of Directors**

AHA's constitution prescribes the selection criteria for Directors of the Board and the composition of an independent selection committee with member representatives from the Commonwealth, State/Territory Governments and Industry, and a representative of the National Farmers Federation and the AHA Chair or director nominee, which recommend appointments for members' approval at a general meeting.

### **Board charter**

Responsibilities and activities of the Board are covered in detail in the Board charter. The charter sets out the responsibilities and role of the Board, the Chairperson, the CEO and the Company Secretary, and addresses all aspects of Board appointments, activity and performance. Directors have the right of access to all company information and to the company's Executive and, subject to prior consultation with the Chairperson, may seek independent professional advice at the company's expense. The Board meets in person at least five times during the year, and additionally via teleconference or through consideration of out-of-session papers as required.

### **Conflicts of interest**

Directors declare at each Board meeting any changes to their statement of interests, affirming that they have no specific interests that will impact on their ability as a director and that any potential or perceived conflicts of interest will be declared to the Board.

### **Legal compliance**

Both the People Culture and Performance Committee (PCPC) and the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) are charged with different aspects of monitoring assurance systems. The Company Secretary manages compliance and reporting to both committees, which in turn provide advice and recommendations to the Board. The responsibilities of the committees are set out in their respective charters. Membership comprises of at least three Directors. The committees meet at least twice each year. Auditors are provided notice of general meetings of members and are invited to present to the ARMC when annual financial statements are considered.

## **AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

### **Financial policies and procedures**

Comprehensive practices are established and included in the company's policy and procedure manuals such that all unbudgeted expenditure and commitments require prior Board approval; financial exposures are controlled; investment of funds is governed by a specific investment policy; work health and safety standards and management systems are monitored and reviewed; and business transactions are properly authorised and executed.

## **RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

### **Member consultation and communications**

The Board aims to ensure that all members are informed of all major developments affecting the company.

## Company General meetings

The Board encourages full participation of members at the AGM. Full participation is also encouraged at a general meeting held by the company in June each year at which the AOP is presented, and subscription funding is formally agreed on by members for the upcoming financial year.

## Code of conduct

The Board Charter contains a Directors' Code of Conduct with which each Director is expected to comply. In addition, the company has documented standards that each manager and employee of the company is expected to operate within. The requirement to comply with these ethical standards is communicated to all employees. Directors, managers and employees are expected to strive at all times to enhance the reputation and performance of the company.

## RECOGNITION AND MANAGEMENT OF RISK

### Risk management

Monitoring of corporate and program risks is a specific responsibility of the ARMC. The company's process of periodic risk assessment and review covers the business environment, work health and safety, property, financial reporting, IT including cyber security and internal control. Internal audit reviews are undertaken periodically at the direction of the ARMC.

## ENHANCEMENT OF PERFORMANCE

### Board performance evaluation

The Board is committed to the ongoing development of both individual Directors and the Board as a whole. Evaluation regularly involves the engagement of independent external expertise.

## Company performance evaluation

AHA uses a monitoring and evaluation framework to report on key deliverables as outlined in the *2020-2025 Strategic Plan* to members.

## Staff performance evaluation

Each staff member is employed under an employment contract that specifically calls for performance reviews every six months as part of our employee engagement cycle which is measured by the staff member's manager. The performance of the CEO is evaluated on the same basis by the Chairperson and Board.

## FAIR AND RESPONSIBLE REMUNERATION

### Directors' remuneration

The remuneration payable to Directors is approved at a general meeting of the company as stipulated in the constitution. There are no schemes for retirement benefits, aside from statutory superannuation.

### Employee remuneration

The remuneration of the CEO is set by the Board and reviewed annually as part of the CEO performance review. The remuneration of all other staff is set and reviewed by the CEO as part of the employee engagement cycle.

# Communications & Member Value Highlights

## MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

AHA was mentioned in **373** media items (across online and broadcast media) resulting in an impressive audience reach of **1.46 million**. Key topics spotlighted on avian influenza, biosecurity protection levy, launch of national biosecurity training hub, and Australia's preparedness activities.

## PUBLICATIONS & DOWNLOADS

Our publications (i.e. PDFs) on the AHA website were downloaded **14,812** times. Top downloads of recent publications include:

**1,369** African swine fever response operational guidelines for pig abattoirs (released Mar 24)

**2,702** Animal Health Australia Annual Report 2022-23 (released Oct 23)

**2,865** Animal Health Australia Financial Statements 2022-23 (released Oct 23)



# Cultivating Community: Social Media Overview

AHA sent out **1,063** posts across our X (Twitter), Facebook and LinkedIn pages to **16,435** followers (growth of **10.2%**). Through sharing and strategically boosting our posts we impressed upon **798,843** accounts.

Our average engagement rate is at **3.1%** (where industry average sits at **2%**), showcasing strong interest in our content. LinkedIn is our most engaged platform with a **5.9%** engagement rate.

Overall, we received **10,078** click throughs and **18,086** video views from our posts to our content.



ACMF attends AHA Member Engagement Week!

Exciting discussions unfolded at the AHA Member Engagement Week as industry took delved into critical topics within biosecurity preparedness.

Our conversations highlighted the importance of collaboration with state and federal governments.

By aligning efforts and expertise, we can fortify biosecurity measures, enhance animal health protocols, and bolster resilience against emerging biosecurity challenges.

ACMF is committed to forging stronger partnerships and leveraging collective insights to safeguard the Australian chicken meat industry.



Great article with useful info for all cattle producers. I encourage my NT pastoralists to read and apply to their individual circumstances, with a particular focus on clostridial diseases, especially botulism. Nice work AHA.



Vaccine vigilance is key to safeguarding your cattle herd! 🦠

Discover essential factors in developing an effective vaccination ...more



1 comment

Like Comment Repost Send



Thanks to [Animal Health Australia](#) for hosting a great member engagement week in Canberra. A unique opportunity for government and industry to come together and collectively progress biosecurity and animal health matters. Expertly facilitated by the team at AHA.



# M&E Progress

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) continues to be a strong internal focus, allowing AHA to track and analyse progress against key deliverables to support the successful delivery of strategic objectives and outcomes.

Our M&E framework covers the three priorities within the AHA 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

- **Strategic Priority One: Prepared and ready to respond**
- **Strategic Priority Two: Better health and biosecurity practices**
- **Strategic Priority Three: Connecting systems for stronger biosecurity**

As we head beyond the half-way mark of delivery against the AHA 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, progress continues to be strong. M&E results inform future planning highlighting areas for growth, improvement and refinement.

AHA's M&E practices ensure we are accountable to our members, embrace a results-based culture and learn from our successes and failures.



# Committee Representation

Animal Health Committee (subcommittee of NBC) (observer)

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Animal Health Committee Subcommittee on Emergency Animal Diseases (SCEAD)

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Animal Health Disease and Defect Standard WG

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Animal Industry Anti-Microbial Stewardship Steering Committee (observer)

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Australian Strategic & Technical Advisory Group on AMR

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ABARES General Surveillance Project Steering Committee

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Beef Sustainability Framework Consultative Committee

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Biosecurity and Agricultural Emergency Network (observer)

---

CSIRO Health and Biosecurity Advisory Committee

---

Decade of Biosecurity Steering Committee

---

Environment and Invasives Committee (subcommittee of NBC) (observer)

---

FMD Vaccine Bank Contract Advisory Committee

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Intergovernmental Emergency Animal Disease Taskforce (member)

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Live Export Animal Welfare Advisory Group

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Livestock Communication Network Group

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National Animal Health Training Reference Group (chair, secretariat, member)

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National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) (observer)

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National Biosecurity Communications and Engagement Network (subcommittee of NBC) (member)

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National Biosecurity Communications and Engagement Network behaviour change research working group (member)

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National Biosecurity Communications and Engagement Network digital working group (member)

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National Biosecurity Response Team Advisory Group (secretariat, member)

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Sub-committee Animal Health Laboratory Standards (of Animal Health Committee, observer)

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National Primary Industries Animal Welfare RD&E Strategy Committee (observer)

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Northern Australia Biosecurity Framework Implementation Committee

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Northern Australia Biosecurity Framework Reference Group

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Northern Australia Biosecurity Surveillance Working Group

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NSW Collaborative Pig Group

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QLD Animal Biosecurity Market Access Liaison Group

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Red Meat Statistics Working Group

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SAFEMEAT Partners (observer)

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SAFEMEAT Advisory Group (observer)

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SAFEMEAT National Feed Standards WG

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SAFEMEAT NVD WG

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Southern Australian Livestock Research Council (associate member)

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Wildlife Health Australia Coordinator Group

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Wool Industries Australia Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Working Group

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WoolProducers Health and Welfare Committee

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# Abbreviations

**AAPSP** Australian Animal Pathology Standards Program

**ABARES** Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics Sciences

**ACDP** Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness

**AGM** Annual General Meeting

**AHA** Animal Health Australia

**AAHC** Australian Animal Health Council

**AHC** Animal Health Committee

**AHiA** Animal Health in Australia

**AOP** Annual Operating Plan

**APL** Australian Pork Limited

**ARMC** Audit and Risk Management Committee

**AUSVETPLAN** Australian Veterinary Emergency Plan

**AWI** Australian Wool Innovation

**BSE** Bovine spongiform encephalopathy

**CAE** Caprine arthritis encephalitis

**CCEAD** Consultative Committee on Emergency Animal Diseases

**CEO** Chief Executive Officer

**CSO** Customer, Strategy and Operations

**DAFF** Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

**EAD** Emergency animal disease

**EADRA** Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement

**FY** Financial Year

**FMD** Foot and mouth disease

**GICA** Goat Industry Council Australia

**HPAI** Highly pathogenic avian influenza

**IF** Industry Forum

**JD** Johne's disease

**JeV** Japanese encephalitis virus



**LLI –** Liaison - Livestock Industry

**M&E** Monitoring and evaluation

**MLA** Meat & Livestock Australia

**NABRDES** National Animal Biosecurity Research, Development and Extension Strategy

**NAMP** National Arbovirus Monitoring Program

**NB2** Northern Breeding Business

**NBC** National Biosecurity Committee

**NBRT** National Biosecurity Response Team

**NFF** National Farmers Federation

**NLIS** National Livestock Identification System

**NMG** National Management Group

**NSHMP** National Sheep Health Monitoring Project

**NSIBS** National Sheep Industry Biosecurity Strategy

**NSW** New South Wales

**NWDAP** National Wild Dog Action Plan

**NZ** New Zealand

**NZVA** New Zealand Veterinary Association

**PCPC** People Culture and Performance Committee

**PDF** Portable document file

**PHA** Plant Health Australia

**PPF** Prohibited Pig Feed

**PIRSA** Primary Industries and Regions South Australia

**QLD** Queensland

**RDE** Research, Development and Extension

**SA** South Australia

**SCAHLs** Subcommittee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards

**SOPs** Standard Operating Procedures

**SWF** Screw-Worm Fly

**SPA** Sheep Producers Australia

**T2M** Transition to Management

**TRG** Technical Review Group

**WOAH** World Organisation for Animal Health

**WPA** Wool Producers Australia







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