



Appendix three – About the audit

Audit objective

This audit assessed the effectiveness and economy of DPI's biosecurity prevention, focusing on compliance activities, and emergency response practices.

The Department of Primary Industries, within the Department of Industry, is the appropriate administrative authority for the purposes of the *Biosecurity Act 2015* and the *Biosecurity Regulation 2017*.

Audit criteria

We addressed the audit objective with two lines of enquiry and criteria as follows:

How well does DPI undertake its biosecurity prevention activities, focusing on compliance?

- Does DPI measure, monitor and report on the effectiveness of its prevention activities and does it apply lessons learnt to improve practices?
- Does DPI measure, monitor and report on the economy of its prevention activities and does it apply lessons learnt to improve use of its resources?

Is DPI able to respond effectively to emergency biosecurity outbreaks?

- Does DPI measure, monitor and report on the effectiveness of its emergency response activities and does it apply lessons learnt to improve practices?
- Does DPI measure, monitor and report on the economy of its emergency response activities and does it apply lessons learnt to improve use of resources?

Audit scope and focus

The audit acknowledges that DPI undertakes a range of prevention activities including; compliance, education, training, and community awareness campaigns. DPI has sole responsibility for management of compliance activities. The scope of the audit focuses on these activities.

In assessing the audit criteria, we examined whether:

- DPI's biosecurity emergency response management approach reflects accepted standards for biosecurity risk management
- DPI applies good practice risk-based measures in managing biosecurity prevention and emergency response activities
- DPI sets appropriate performance indicators for biosecurity emergency response plans, including:
 - documenting expected outcomes of the biosecurity emergency response plans
 - actively engaging partners in biosecurity emergency response management
 - ensuring that biosecurity emergency response procedures are up to date and readily available to teams
 - analysing data on emergency responses to improve its biosecurity activities
- DPI sets appropriate performance indicators for prevention activities, including:
 - documenting expected outcomes for biosecurity prevention activities
 - actively engaging partners in prevention activities
 - ensuring that prevention procedures are up to date and readily available to teams
 - analysing data to identify any links between biosecurity outbreaks and compliance practises

- DPI applies the lessons learnt from its biosecurity prevention and emergency response activities to improve its effectiveness, including:
 - applying the lessons learnt from post incident biosecurity emergency responses to prevention practices
 - applying the lessons learnt from post incident biosecurity emergency responses to emergency response practices.

We assessed economy by examining whether:

- DPI sets appropriate budgets for biosecurity prevention and emergency response activities, including:
 - setting appropriate budgets for all biosecurity activities (by appropriate we mean that the scale of budget matches the risk to industry (and others) of the biosecurity threat)
 - accurately capturing and reporting the expenditure and resources used against budgets for biosecurity prevention and emergency response activities
- DPI analyses expenditure and resource data from its biosecurity prevention and emergency response activities to improve budget forecasting.

Audit exclusions

The audit did not seek to:

- identify existing biosecurity workforce capability and capacity gaps or adequacy of training provided by DPI. This was the focus of an internal audit of Local Land Services (LLS) and DPI recently completed by the Natural Resource Commission (NRC)
- identify whether the biosecurity emergency response objective outlined in individual response plans were appropriate
- question the merits of government policy objectives.

Audit approach

Our procedures included:

1. Interviewing key staff of the Department of Primary Industries' Biosecurity and Food Safety Division, particularly those involved in:
 - a) developing and reporting on performance measures
 - b) review of policies and procedures for biosecurity prevention and compliance activities
 - c) application of biosecurity risk assessment frameworks
 - d) application of biosecurity policy and procedures
 - e) implementing biosecurity plans and systems
 - f) monitoring and assessing biosecurity practice and compliance with standards.
2. Interviewing government and industry bodies involved in:
 - a) review and evaluation of the effectiveness of biosecurity prevention functions
 - b) research and technical advisory roles in biosecurity to identify good practice risk assessment systems, approaches, and standards where these exist.
3. Examining:
 - a) data collected on biosecurity surveillance and compliance activities
 - b) monitoring and reporting on biosecurity emergency response activities
 - c) policies and procedures for biosecurity practice adopted by DPI
 - d) trend reporting against biosecurity activity KPIs that measure economy
 - e) feedback and data contributed from biosecurity partner organisations
 - f) biosecurity implementation plans and budgets.

4. Understanding the relevant biosecurity policy and practice regarding:
 - a) biosecurity emergency response management processes
 - b) biosecurity activity data collected and reported
 - c) internal audits and evaluations of DPI's biosecurity activities
 - d) risk frameworks for biosecurity pests and diseases
 - e) assessment frameworks and good practice models for risk assessment in biosecurity.
5. Engaging experts in biosecurity risk management and economic impact to advise the audit team at key phases of the audit including planning, analysis, findings and reporting.
6. Quality assurance processes within the Audit Office to ensure compliance with professional standards complement the audit approach.

Audit methodology

Our performance audit methodology is designed to satisfy Australian Audit Standard ASAE 3500 Performance Engagements and other professional standards. The standards require the audit team to comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance and draw a conclusion on the audit objective. Our processes have also been designed to comply with requirements specified in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Acknowledgements

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Audit cost

Including staff costs and overheads, the estimated cost of the audit is \$387,000.