

Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program

(Incorporating Cattle, Sheep,
Goat, Swine and Honey Bee)

Guidelines

October 2022

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LIVESTOCK BIOSECURITY FUNDS GRANT PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE

This document provides information for the Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program (Incorporating Cattle, Sheep, Goat, Swine and Honey Bee) (the Program). Interested applicants will find guidance on:

- the legislative background to the Program
- grant funding opportunities
- application requirements
- due diligence requirements
- application assessment process
- funding award and grant agreements
- statement of strategic intent for the individual program funds.

2. REGULATORY CONTEXT

The Livestock Disease Control Act 1994

The Program is administered by the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (the department) and funds are established under the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* (the Act).

The Act, in concert with the *Duties Act 2000*, provides a statutory arrangement for the collection of duties generated by the sale of cattle, sheep, goats and pigs and their carcasses in Victoria. These duties are collected to support the following funds:

- Cattle Compensation Fund
- Sheep and Goat Compensation Fund
- Swine Compensation Fund.

The Act also provides for the collection of registration and annual fees for honey bees which support the Honey Bee Compensation and Industry Development Fund.

The funds deliver outcomes for the four industry areas and are aligned to the purposes and objectives of the Act, as well as the rules legislated for the expenditure of the levied funds.

The main purposes of the Act are to provide:

- for the prevention, monitoring and control of livestock diseases, and
- compensation for losses caused by certain livestock diseases.

The objectives of the Act are to:

- protect public health by preventing, monitoring and controlling diseases transmissible from livestock to humans
- protect domestic and export markets for livestock and livestock products by preventing, monitoring and controlling livestock diseases
- provide for the preventing, monitoring and eradication of exotic livestock diseases
- provide compensation for certain losses caused by livestock diseases
- facilitate the operation of livestock identification and tracking programs for disease and residue control and market access.



Expenditure from the Funds

The Act sets out the broad purposes for which each fund may be used, generally for compensatory purposes, as well as projects and programs that may benefit the respective livestock industries in Victoria.

All expenditure from the funds require approval from the Minister for Agriculture, after considering the advice from the respective advisory committee. The four advisory committees are:

- Cattle Compensation Advisory Committee
- Sheep and Goat Compensation Advisory Committee
- Swine Industry Projects Advisory Committee
- Apicultural Industry Advisory Committee.

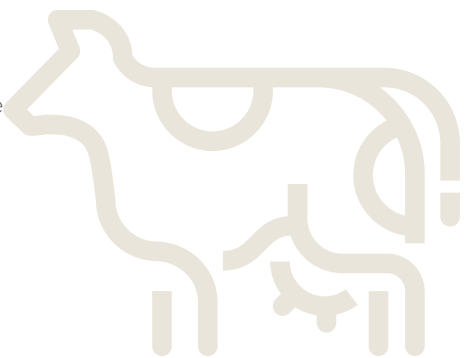
The current membership was nominated by the following industry bodies, consistent with the Act:

- Victorian Farmers Federation
- Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association
- Australian Meat Industry Council
- Victorian Apiarists' Association.

The department is also required to nominate individuals to the advisory committees.

The Minister for Agriculture may also approve funding from the respective livestock funds for projects which are not part of the competitive process outlined in these guidelines, and which are deemed the most effective and efficient solution to an issue covered by the funds.

Such projects may be delivered by other means such as through a procurement process or by a Victorian state government entity and are reviewed and considered after the competitive round or as a part of a targeted process. Such approvals are subject to consideration and recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture from the relevant livestock compensation advisory committee.



3. GRANT FUNDING

Vision

The Program aims to fund projects and programs that prevent, monitor, and control diseases, thereby enhancing animal health, biosecurity and market access for the benefit of Victorian cattle, sheep, goat, swine and honey bee industries.

Principles

Program funds are used for projects producing outcomes consistent with the Act which demonstrates the following principles:

- Innovative solutions and emerging technologies for unsolved livestock biosecurity issues, needs or gaps.
- Collaboration where possible across value chains.
- Quantifiable benefits to the whole of the livestock industries, which are measured and evaluated with evidence and data.

Funding Streams

The Program comprises four streams covering the cattle, sheep, goat, swine and honey bee industries.

Each of the funds has a statement of strategic intent, outlining areas for investment and outcomes within the purpose and objectives of the Act. Please refer to Appendices 1 to 4 for details.

4. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Overview

The program is managed on a competitive basis and all applicants must apply for funding by submitting an online application at agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources/funds-grants-programs/livestock-biosecurity-funds during the designated funding round (refer Table 1).

The department will not accept physical (hardcopy) applications, nor accept late applications.

All sections of the online application form must be completed in full including the project implementation plan which requires:

- the project timelines
- budget
- key project members
- the applicant's methodology to deliver on and measure the required outcomes as stipulated by the relevant statement of strategic intent.

Please ensure that you provide detailed responses to each of the sections of the application form to provide sufficient information to enable the advisory committees to make their recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture.

All applications must be signed by the organisation's authorised officer.

Eligible applicants

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible:

1. Are one of the following types of entities and has a valid Australian Business Number (ABN):
 - private sector businesses
 - universities and research institutions
 - cooperatives where the objectives of the cooperative align with the Program
 - State Government department or entity
 - local governments
 - incorporated associations.
2. Conduct the proposed activities in Victoria.
3. Meet all industrial relations obligations as an employer in accordance with the National Employment Standards.
4. Agree to participate in future program evaluation activity.

Ineligible applicants

The following are not eligible to apply:

- individuals/sole traders
- trusts
- partnerships
- federal government entities.



Ineligible expenditure

Applications will not be considered for the following conditions:

- requests for retrospective funding
- lobbying activities
- funding an organisation's core business activities
- capital expenditure
- costs for activities which do not directly align with achievement of the outcomes stipulated by each fund.

Co-funding contributions

There is no requirement for matched funds from applicants. However, the assessment of a project or program application needs to include budget and collaboration considerations. This identifies financial and other in-kind support.

Funding from external organisations must be confirmed by way of a formal letter at the time of the application.

Project proponents may apply for funding from more than one fund. However, a separate application must be lodged to each individual fund and will be assessed against that funds' Statement of Strategic Intent.

There is no guarantee that an application will be successful in receiving funding. This includes applications seeking funding from more than one fund. Applicants must ensure that each project or program can be delivered in its own right for each of the applications.

GST

All project costs included in the application must be exclusive of GST. If your organisation is required to pay GST on the funding payment it receives, your tax invoices may include the additional GST component.

Financial, probity and reputational checks

If the applicant is a company, the Department will undertake probity checks to identify if there are any actions, claims or disputes with any of the directors, whether any of the directors have been disqualified from acting as a director, or whether there are any adverse findings against the applicant.

Private sector and not-for-profit applicants requesting funding of over \$50,001 will be required to provide financial information to enable a financial risk assessment to be completed:

1. Audited financial reports for the last three financial years. This should be the 'final accounts' with Director's Report and Declaration and should include:
 - profit and loss statement
 - balance sheet
 - cash flows
 - notes to the accounts.
2. If the latest financial report is more than six months old:
 - up-to-date management or interim accounts for the current year including profit and loss statement and balance sheet
 - in case of public listed corporations, half yearly financial report.

Any of these checks may be taken into consideration prior to awarding the grant.



Submission requirements for previously funded projects

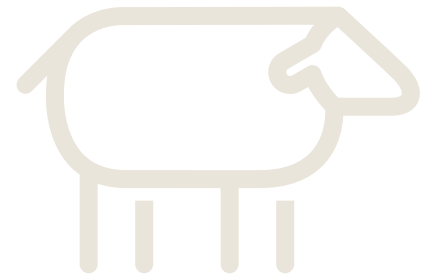
If the application is a project proposal which has previously been funded, an independent evaluation of the project must be included in the application.

This evaluation report will be included as part of the assessment of the application. The report must demonstrate that the previous investment has realised benefits back to the industry in accordance with the Act and the respective Statement of Strategic Intent (Refer to Appendix 1 – 4).

Table 1: Timetable for 2022 Applications

Stage	Dates
Applications close	11:59PM Friday 23 December 2022
Review of applications	January 2023 – March 2023
Applicants notified of outcome	From April 2023
Grant Agreements commence	From 1 July 2023

The approval process can take up to six months from applications closing to notification of the outcome. Please take the timing into account when making your application.



5. APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

Assessment Process

Applications are assessed on merit on a competitive basis through an independent process. Applicants that rank highest against both the assessment criteria and other applications may be offered funding.



Applications will be assessed by an independent panel administered by the Department. An assessment and recommendation report will be prepared by the panel for review by the appropriate livestock compensation advisory committee.

The advisory committee will consider the report prepared by the independent panel as part of its assessment process and then make recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture.

The Minister for Agriculture will consider the recommendations received from the advisory committees and determine whether to approve an application.

Probity Advisor

An external probity advisor is appointed to ensure a high standard of probity in the administration of the grants program. The Probity Advisor works as an independent expert and manages any potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the assessment process.

Assessment Criteria

Applications are assessed using the following:

- information provided against the assessment criteria in the application form
- project implementation plan and any supporting attachments
- letters of support from collaborators.

Applicants must address the following four assessment criteria categories.

Please note that applicants must relate their responses back to the applicable program funding stream, where appropriate.

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
A. Quality of project proposal Assessed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how well the project is aligned with the nominated livestock compensation fund’s areas for investment and how suitable and innovative the project is for solving the problem/s it addresses (refer to Statement of Strategic Intent, Appendices 1 – 4)• how well designed the proposed project is to deliver its activities and for project impacts to reach the appropriate industry beneficiaries, this includes value for money considerations. Relevant application responses must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an outline of the scale of problem being addressed, percentage of industry affected, monetary impact on industry or potential threat to industry• solution and proposed methodology and any evidence that this solution is best or likely to work• how risk is effectively managed• how the project results contribute to agricultural extension, ie the communication and delivery of the information, knowledge and/or technology outcomes of the project to industry stakeholders (including, where relevant, beyond the life of the grant).	30%

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
<p>B. Project Impact</p> <p>Assessed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how well the project outcomes align to the outcomes identified for the nominated livestock compensation fund (refer to Statement of Strategic Intent, Appendices 1 –4) • how impactful the expected longer-term outcomes are for the nominated industry. <p>Relevant application responses must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying the quantifiable impacts or benefits to the industry as a whole • how the project will be measured and evaluated. 	30%

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
<p>C. Organisational Capability and Capacity</p> <p>Assessed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • industry knowledge and demonstrated track record in delivering similar projects by the applicant's organisation and any collaborative partners • whether sufficient and appropriate project resourcing has been allocated to the project. <p>Relevant application information must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • track record of key staff allocated to the project • a collaborative approach with a range of partners and resources to undertake the project and extend the results. 	20%

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
<p>D. Need for expenditure from the funds</p> <p>Assessed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the urgency of the problem the project addresses • whether there is a gap in the provision of a solution for the problem the project addresses that has not already been met (i.e. does not duplicates services or activities currently available) • how likely it would be for this project to occur without expenditure from the funds, including impact on its timing and ability to access resources • whether the project is better implemented through another government funding program. <p>Relevant application responses must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • articulation of why the project solves an urgent need that addresses the objectives and outcomes of the fund • identification of a window of opportunity that could be met with grant funding. 	20%

The Department reserves the right to request additional information from applicants if there are gaps in the information provided to assess the application. However, providing comprehensive responses to the assessment criteria is strongly recommended.

6. FUNDING AWARD AND GRANT AGREEMENT/ MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Overview

Successful applicants will be sent a Letter of Offer inviting them to enter into a grant funding agreement with the Department detailing all funding obligations and conditions.

The project must not commence until a grant agreement or memorandum of understanding has been duly executed by both the Department and the recipient.

Once the grant agreement or memorandum of understanding has been signed, the recipient of the funds (the recipient) will be required to commence the project within the agreed timeframe. If a recipient does not commence the project by the commencement date, the Department has at its absolute discretion the option of terminating the agreement.

Milestone deliverables and dates are finalised as a part of the grant agreement and memorandum of understanding negotiations with the successful applicants, subsequent to the approval by the Minister for Agriculture.

An example of a grant agreement can be found at agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestockbiosecurityfunds.

Post Completion Evaluation Report

All successful applicants must provide a Post Completion Evaluation Report at the Completion Date of the Project and must include the following:

- Evaluation of the impact of the completed project.
- Evaluation of how the project has met the objectives and provided benefits to industry.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the project and identified improvements.

Payment Conditions

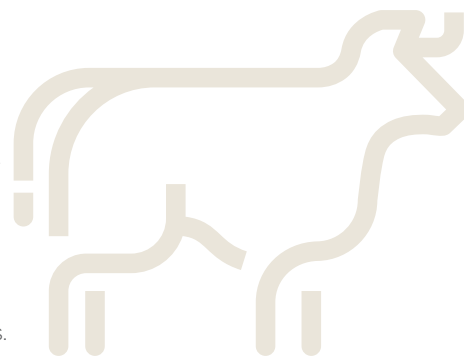
Grant agreements are structured to ensure that funds are paid in instalments corresponding to the delivery against agreed milestones and payments proportional to the size of the project expenditure or pro-rata against deliverables.

Grant payments will only be made as per the executed grant agreement.

All project expenditure is to be incurred only after the grant agreement has been executed. Funding will not be provided for retrospective activities prior to execution of the grant agreement.

Applicants will need to meet the cost of any ineligible expenditure associated with their project.

Projects that are completed for less than the expected budget, will be paid on a pro rata basis.



7. TARGETED APPLICATION PROCESS

If there are obvious gaps in projects or programs needed to meet the statement of strategic intent for the respective funds, the Department, upon the advice of the advisory committees, can undertake a targeted approach, pending available funds.

A targeted process will be used where there are few providers available in the market, as a result of the highly specialised service or expertise required, geographical consideration, or time constraints.

Targeted projects will be required to complete the same assessment criteria and selection process as the competitive funding round.

8. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Commercially sensitive information

If an applicant wishes to provide information that it regards as commercially sensitive, it should nominate that information as being commercially sensitive.

The Program, and any persons engaging with applicants, will respect all reasonable nominations and maintain security and information handling procedures appropriate to the nature, content and volume of the information provided.

Confidentiality

Any personal information about the applicant or a third party in the application will be collected by the Department for the purpose of grant administration.

This information may be provided to other Victorian Government agencies for the purposes of assessing the application.

If personal information about third parties is included in the application, those third parties must be made aware of the contents of this privacy statement. The Department's privacy policy is available at economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Any personal information about the applicant or a third party obtained through correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and other applicable laws.

The Department is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. Enquiries about access to information should be directed to privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.



Local Jobs First Policy

The Local Jobs First (LJF) Policy is a procurement policy that ensures that small and medium size enterprises are given full and fair opportunity to compete for both large and small government contracts, helping to create job opportunities, including for apprentices, trainees and cadets. This means that grant recipients using grant funding to procure goods and services must comply with LJF Policy.

Grant programs greater than \$1 million for regional projects, and \$3 million for metropolitan Melbourne or statewide projects are subject to LJF. Please refer to localjobsfirst.vic.gov.au for more details.

Potential recipients are also encouraged to engage with the Industry Capability Network (ICN) at the time of their application. Please refer to icn.org.au for more details.

Publicity

Recipients must agree to cooperate with the Department in the promotion of the Program. This may include involvement in media releases, case studies or promotional events and activities.

The Department may request recipients to fact check any text and seek approval to use any owned imagery associated with the activity prior to the publication of any such promotional materials.

Details of successful grants are to remain confidential until formally announced by the Victorian Government.

All funded projects will be publicly listed in an annual report which is published on Agriculture Victoria's website.

Recipients must ensure that when publishing any documents related to the project that the relevant compensation fund is attributed as the source of the project's funding.



Post Project Evaluation

As a condition of funding, recipients agree to participate in any evaluation of the Program. This may be a small end of grant survey or a short interview case-study.

This evaluation survey is important for the Department to be able to assess the effectiveness of the successful projects in providing improvements to the industries to ensure the Program is being utilised to provide the best outcomes for Victorian producers. It is also important for the Department to improve its support to Victorian businesses and to ensure that grants under the Program can be better tailored to meet the needs of Victorian businesses in the future.

9. RIGHT OF AMENDMENT

The Department reserves the right to amend the conditions and processes outlined in these guidelines where appropriate.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on the Program please visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestockbiosecurityfunds.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 – STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT FOR THE CATTLE COMPENSATION FUND

Focus areas for investment

Key focus areas:

- Initiatives to strengthen the Victorian biosecurity system addressing topical, endemic, and exotic disease preparedness issues and risks:
 - preparedness capability and capacity building across industry representative bodies and participants, and their networks
 - active and updated biosecurity and animal health plans
 - early detection and awareness of exotic and endemic diseases.

Other focus areas:

- Livestock disease (endemic and zoonotic, exotic) detection, prevention, management and/or eradication.
- Ensuring product integrity of current NLIS, NVD, Animal Health Statements and biosecurity (e.g. traceability, antimicrobial stewardship).
- Initiatives to strengthen the Victorian biosecurity system addressing topical, endemic, and exotic disease preparedness issues and risks:
 - demographic and generational changes in agriculture (peri-urban, corporate, new entry farmers etc.)
 - awareness of increased risk through intensification of animal production
 - enhanced integrated data management and animal health feedback
 - issues of livestock treatment and potential residues (e.g., traceability, WHP, antimicrobial stewardship)[#]
 - climate change and changes to livestock and disease movement.

[#] Note animal welfare is out of scope as per the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.



Medium-term outcomes (3–5 years)

- Livestock industry participants are working collaboratively, fully engaged and adopting better practice management of animal health, biosecurity, and zoonotic diseases.
- Develop and maintain a targeted pool of trained industry participants in biosecurity to build preparedness capability and contribute back to industry.
- Victorian cattle value chain is informed of CCF funded projects and see the benefits of these investments.
- Adoption of proactive management and reporting of endemic and emerging diseases across the supply chain.
- Investments are aligned with statutory requirements of the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.
- Victoria is viewed as a leader in traceability and biosecurity by jurisdictions and trading partners.

Long-term outcomes (10 + years)

- Domestic and export markets for livestock and livestock products are maintained and enhanced (including food security).
- Indirect benefits beyond the scope of the purposes/objectives of the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*:
 - public health is protected
 - improved animal health
 - broader community confidence in the food supply chain
 - improve future of the Victorian livestock industry
 - Victoria maintains a competitive advantage in market access
 - supply chain has collective capability and is responsive and resilient to market threats
 - improved on farm biosecurity
 - improved preparedness for disease outbreaks
 - improving sustainability and profitability for the benefit of Victorian cattle producers.

APPENDIX 2 – STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT FOR THE SHEEP AND GOAT COMPENSATION FUND

Focus areas for investment

Key focus areas:

- Initiatives to strengthen the Victorian biosecurity system addressing topical, endemic, and exotic disease preparedness issues and risks:
 - preparedness capability and capacity building across industry representative bodies and participants, and their networks
 - active and updated biosecurity and animal health plans
 - early detection and awareness of exotic and endemic diseases.

Other focus areas:

- Livestock disease (endemic and zoonotic, exotic) detection, prevention, management and/or eradication.
- Ensuring product integrity of current NLIS, NVD, Animal Health Statements and biosecurity (e.g. traceability, antimicrobial stewardship).
- Initiatives to strengthen the Victorian biosecurity system addressing topical, endemic, and exotic disease preparedness issues and risks:
 - demographic and generational changes in agriculture (peri-urban, corporate, new entry farmers etc.)
 - awareness of increased risk through intensification of animal production
 - enhanced integrated data management and animal health feedback
 - issues of livestock treatment and potential residues (e.g., traceability, WHP, antimicrobial stewardship)
 - climate change and changes to livestock and disease movement.

Note animal welfare is out of scope of the *LDC Act*.

Medium-term outcomes (3-5 years)

- Livestock industry participants are working collaboratively, fully engaged and adopting better practice management of animal health, biosecurity and zoonotic diseases.
- Develop and maintain a targeted pool of trained industry participants in biosecurity to build preparedness capability and contribute back to industry.
- Victorian sheep and goat value chain is informed of SGCF funded projects and see the benefits of these investments.
- Adoption of proactive management and reporting of endemic and emerging diseases across the supply chain.
- Investments are aligned with statutory requirements of the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.
- Victoria is viewed as a leader in traceability and biosecurity by jurisdictions and trading partners.
- Domestic and export markets for livestock and livestock products are maintained and enhanced (including food security).
- Indirect benefits beyond the scope of the purposes/objectives of the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*:
 - public health is protected
 - improved animal health
 - broader community confidence in the food supply chain
 - improve future of the Victorian livestock industry
 - Victoria maintains a competitive advantage in market access
 - supply chain has collective capability and is responsive and resilient to market threats
 - improved on farm biosecurity
 - improved preparedness for disease outbreaks
 - improving sustainability and profitability for the benefit of Victorian sheep and goat producers.



APPENDIX 3 – STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT FOR THE SWINE COMPENSATION FUND

Focus areas for investment

- Training and capability of government and industry (on prevention, control etc.).
- Surveillance – domestic and feral pigs (e.g. anti-biotics), exotic disease; collection and use of information to inform decision making.
- Supporting industry on technical/legal advocacy regarding policy.
- Research and development – e.g. vaccines and other identified priority areas.
- Building/consolidating and sharing swine data sources for control management etc. (sharing between govt and industry).
- Improved preparedness for outbreaks including farm level contingency plans.
- Addressing succession planning and corporate knowledge of evolving pig industry.
- Education and extension:
 - consumer, community and students
 - swill feeding – better awareness
 - traceability
 - mixed species awareness and interaction
 - small producer legal and biosecurity obligations.

Medium-term outcomes (3-5 years)

- Adoption and compliance with the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* (including biosecurity related) requirements.
- Active participation in education and training programs (e.g. Pigs In Schools, online education platforms).
- Victorian swine industry is informed of SCF funded projects and see the benefits of these investments.
- Investment by the SCF provides value for money and actively mitigates risks of disease.
- Vigilant about biosecurity risks and proactive engagement through active purchasing of Victorian pork products.

Long-term outcomes (10 + years)

- Improved animal health.
- Long term sustainability and productivity of the pig industry in Victoria.
- Proactive approaches used to detect and manage swine disease.
- Strong capability of government and industry to effectively respond to outbreaks.
- Strong homeland biosecurity.
- Sound understanding of disease within herds and the feral pig population.
- Improved awareness and understanding of the benefits of the pig industry.



APPENDIX 4 – STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT FOR THE HONEY BEE COMPENSATION AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT FUND

Focus areas for investment

- Research and Development:
 - development of innovative control techniques to prevent and manage AFB
 - nutrition and AFB genetic breeding programs
 - benchmarking against national and international AFB standards.
- Assistance to beekeepers in relation to:
 - building honey bee resistance to AFB
 - understanding of supplementary feeding of bees/husbandry practices to maintain healthy honey bee pollination stocks
 - improving bee keeper competency through initiatives such as education, awareness, disease treatment and management and training.

Medium-term outcomes (3-5 years)

- Bee keepers are accurately identifying and reporting AFB.
- Implementation of a robust model of cover for industry and government to effectively respond to a biosecurity apiary incident.
- Government and industry actively share data and intelligence for purposes of prevention and control management of AFB.
- State government continues to protect key public land sites (e.g. state forests) in alignment with the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.
- Industry actively participates in preparation, control and eradication education, awareness and training programs.

Long-term outcomes (10 + years)

- Ongoing effective early detection and prevention of AFB to minimise the spread and impact.
- Higher standards of bee keeping are achieved to maintain a viable apiary industry through application of best practice.
- Enhanced international market access and product integrity.
- Maintaining and enhancing collaborative relationships between government and industry.

