

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Swine Compensation Fund

2023-24 Outcomes Summary



Further information regarding the Livestock Biosecurity Funds may be obtained from:

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Swine Industry Projects Advisory Committee

The Swine Industry Projects Advisory Committee (SIPAC) provides recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture for expenditure from the Swine Compensation Fund (SCF), through the annual Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program. Successful projects and programs prevent, monitor, and control diseases, thereby enhancing animal health, biosecurity and market access for the benefit of Victorian swine industry.

The Minister for Agriculture appoints the SIPAC chairperson and members on the basis of their skills and experience in the prescribed areas under the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* (the Act).

The SIPAC met 5 times in the 2023-2024 financial year, supported by Agriculture Victoria as secretariat.

Activities of the Committee

Key activities since July 2023 include:

- The assessment of 2024 Livestock Biosecurity Funds grant program and contributing to the continuous improvement of the annual grant rounds
- Finalisation of a SIPAC Strategic Communications and Engagement Strategy, that is being rolled out over the next 3 grant rounds
- Reviewed the strategic focus for the 2024 Livestock Biosecurity Funds grant program
- Contributed to the new member's selection process and improved induction and handover to new membership
- Oversight of the SCF and milestones for successful projects

Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program

Since the last report, the SIPAC has been a part of the following Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program rounds. See background below for more detail.

The SIPAC assessed every application received against the selection criteria set out in the Guidelines. In finalising their recommendation and supporting justification to the Minister, the SIPAC considered their individual assessments, the available balance of their fund and a report from an independent assessment panel to determine the successful projects. An independent Probity Advisor oversaw the conflict-of-interest declarations and recommended the appropriate treatment of each.

2022 Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program

The 2022 Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program was open from 27 October to 23 December 2022.

The SIPAC assessed all applications in early 2023 and recommended 3 projects, totalling \$241,546, to the Minister for Agriculture for approval:

- Sustainable control of parasites in Victorian pigs
- Victorian Significant Disease Investigation (SDI) Program
- Online 'Pathology of the Pig' Resource

2024 Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program

The 2024 Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program was open from 4 March to 15 April 2024, including a webinar to launch the round, presented by all 4 committees.

The SIPAC assessed all applications in mid-2024 and recommended and recommended 5 projects, totalling \$290,746, to the Minister for Agriculture for approval:

- Assessing in-field decontamination for EAD responses using ATP metering
- Identifying transmission pathways to inform management of vector-borne diseases
- Infected Premises - Livestock Producers Awareness Course
- Informing disease transmission risks at the feral-domestic pig interface
- Private veterinary practitioner up-skill, online project

Improvements to the governance and operation of the committee

Improved communications and engagement

The SIPAC developed a Communications and Engagement Strategy that outlines the tools, channels and activities to ensure the grant round attracts quality applications, and the benefits of the SCF projects are shared with industry. The SIPAC Communications and Engagement Strategy will be implemented over the next 3 rounds and reviewed every 3 years.

As part of the rollout of the SIPAC Communications and Engagement Strategy, the inaugural webinar to launch the 2024 grant round was held on 4 March 2024. The 4 chairpersons presented an overview of the 2024 Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program and its strategic focus, eligibility, requirements and how to apply and held a Q&A session. The recording is available on the [Program Website](#).

Strategic focus for annual rounds

The SIPAC reviewed the strategic direction for the SCF in late 2023 and identified 5 key themes:

1. Preparedness for response to biosecurity events – build prevention and response capability, capacity and planning of government and industry.
2. Traceability – enhance system integrity and effectiveness.
3. Early detection – improved surveillance and monitoring, including domestic and feral pigs, to inform decision making.
4. Education – awareness and training for industry to better manage biosecurity risks, including swill feeding, traceability, mixed species awareness and interaction, and small producer legal and biosecurity obligations.
5. Research – particularly technologies for testing and treatment (eg vaccines).

This strategic focus formed the selection criteria for the 2024 grant round and was incorporated in the Guidelines.

Member selection changes and improved committee inductions and handover

From October 2022, changes were made to the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*, to allow for a maximum of 9 members appointed by the Minister for Agriculture based on skills and experience.

The Minister for Agriculture makes an appointment after considering a candidate's experience in one or more of the following areas:

- the pig and allied industries
- biosecurity or market access
- quality assurance and food safety
- finance, legal practice, or business management
- agricultural, animal or veterinary science
- public policy
- any other area the Minister considers relevant to the functions of the Committee

The livestock advisory committees were consulted on the legislative changes and in the development of the selection process in 2022 and 2023.

The SIPAC also worked with the Secretariat to develop the additional criteria for the selection of SIPAC members and an improved induction package for the new SIPAC membership.

Appointment of a new committee

The previous chairperson and one member resigned in March 2023, with the remaining 3 members due to expire on 15 November 2024. An Expression of Interest process for SIPAC membership was open from 30 October to 20 November 2023 to seek appointment of a new membership.

A Selection Panel, chaired by Agriculture Victoria and including industry representation, assessed all applications against the selection matrix. The Selection Panel conducted interviews and probity checks and recommended the preferred candidates to the Minister for Agriculture.

The Minister for Agriculture appointed the below members for a 3-year term, from 25 March 2024.

- Mr Tim Kingma (chairperson)
- Dr Cherie Collins (member)
- Mr Robert Bayley (member)
- Dr Robert Smits (member)
- Ms Kylie Hewson (member)
- Dr Pat Mitchell (member)

LBF grant program projects

Milestone management of the successful projects is overseen by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), in consultation with the SIPAC.

A summary of project activity since 1 August 2023 to 30 September 2024 is below.

Summary of active SCF projects

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total allocated from SCF	Achievements to 30 September 2024
<p>21.10 Pig Biosecurity Management Planning (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To drive producer interest and engagement in biosecurity plan development (including those that wish to meet the new requirements under the <i>Livestock Management Act 2010</i>) by aligning it with a simple parasitology survey.</p>	<p>Aug 2022 to Jan 2025</p>	<p>\$223,067</p>	<p>Pig Biosecurity Project Plan Aug 2022 – Jan 2025 complete.</p> <p>Farm visits have been completed with 3 herds to road test the documentation and procedural documents developed for the projects.</p> <p>Laboratory results for those 3 farms have been received and advice provided to the farms.</p>

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total allocated from SCF	Achievements to 30 September 2024
<p>22.26 Sustainable control of parasites in Victorian pigs (University of Melbourne)</p> <p>Research into the prevalence and intensity of internal parasites in commercial and backyard pigs, and associated risk factors, (ii) a new serological diagnostic test for the early detection of <i>Ascaris suum</i> and (ii) the parasite control practices presently used by pig producers, to promote pig health, welfare, and biosecurity.</p>	<p>Jul 2023 to Jun 2025</p>	<p>\$147,656</p>	<p>The University of Melbourne has provided ethical clearance for working with Victorian piggeries, pig producers and vegetarians. The online questionnaire survey is underway to assess the parasite control practices used by pig producers and veterinarians. A cross-sectional study to unravel the parasites in Victorian pigs is approximately 70% completed. An assessment of a serological test that detects antibodies against <i>A. suum</i> infection in pigs is also underway. The field and laboratory work related to various components of the project is expected to be completed by December 2024 so that the report can be written in early 2025. This project also provides capacity-building opportunities in pig parasitology to two Bachelor of Honours in Veterinary Science students enrolled at the University of Melbourne. Three papers have been accepted for oral presentations at the annual meeting of the Australian Society for Parasitology, which will be held on 26-29 August 2024 in Auckland, New Zealand.</p>

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total allocated from SCF	Achievements to 30 September 2024
<p>22.27 Significant Disease Investigation (SDI) subsidies (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To enhance the capacity for early detection and control of diseases of livestock that could impact human health, animal health, farm productivity and market access and trade</p>	Jul 2023 to Oct 2026	\$30,000	<p>Communication and engagement plan presented.</p> <p>There were 35 pig disease investigations, from 27 different properties, undertaken and reported to Agriculture Victoria between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024.</p>
<p>22.07 Online 'Pathology of the Pig' resource (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>Recreating the content rich 'Pathology of the Pig – A diagnostic guide' text book into a user friendly, online pathology of the pig resource, accessible anywhere, any-time, principally for veterinarians.</p>	Aug 2024 to Apr 2025	\$63,890	<p>Written support received from APL.</p> <p>Project plan complete and in place</p> <p>Online repository created.</p> <p>All chapters of Pathology of the Pig resource uploaded</p>
<p>24.08 Assessing in-field decontamination for EAD responses using ATP metering (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>This project explores the feasibility of using Hygiene Ensure luminometer ATP devices, commonly used in food and medical settings, alongside visual (photographic) and microbiological testing to enhance Cleaning & Disinfection (C&D) practices in Emergency Animal Disease scenarios. The study aims to establish parameters for</p>	Aug 2024 to Apr 2025	\$40,686	<p>Project commenced 28 August 2024</p>

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total allocated from SCF	Achievements to 30 September 2024
interpreting ATP test results and assess the effectiveness of current C&D practices in the piggery industry.			
<p>24.22 Identifying transmission pathways to inform management of vector-borne diseases (University of Queensland)</p> <p>This project will identify the transmission pathways of vector-borne diseases that threaten swine health and deliver a mosquito management strategy to Victorian commercial piggeries</p>	TBC to Jun 2026	\$44,000	Contract negotiations pending.
<p>24.29 Infected Premises - Livestock Producers Awareness Course (P2r2 Consulting Pty Ltd)</p> <p>This project aims to inform livestock producers as to what happens on an Infected Premises after an emergency animal disease has been diagnosed. This includes what quarantine and movement restrictions look like and the sequence of on-farm control activities that are required for the producer to be able to return to normal production.</p>	Aug 2024 to Feb 2026	\$41,060	Project commenced 29 August 2024.
<p>24.38 Informing disease transmission risks at the feral-domestic pig interface (Western Plains Pork Trust)</p>	Aug 2024 to Apr 2028	\$155,000	Project commenced 30 September 2024.

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total allocated from SCF	Achievements to 30 September 2024
<p>This pilot project aims to map contact between feral and domestic pigs to understand disease transmission risks, enhance and sustain land manager participation, optimise industry preparedness, enhance risk management, develop decision support capacity and capability and promote biosecurity behaviour change by land managers.</p>			
<p>24.16 Private veterinary practitioner up-skill, online project (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>This project aims to increase the capability and confidence of private veterinary practitioners (PVP's) to identify and respond appropriately to the suspicion of significant diseases (SD's) in cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. PVP's will be provided with the opportunity to upskill and then maintain diagnostic skills.</p>	<p>Aug 2024 to Jan 2026</p>	<p>\$10,000</p>	<p>Project commenced 28 August 2024.</p>
<p>21.11 Pig Necropsy Learning Workshops (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To deliver face to face, interactive post-mortem workshops (supported by access to online collateral) led by a specialist pig pathologist to facilitate elevated knowledge and</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>\$59,705.50</p>	<p>Completion of consultations with pig veterinarians as to their needs and appetite for attending a pig post-mortem workshop supported by online content.</p> <p>Professor John Glastonbury ran 2 workshops, and they were favourably received by audience with contributions</p>

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total allocated from SCF	Achievements to 30 September 2024
capability of pig veterinarians and enhanced disease surveillance.			to the discussion from all participants throughout the day.

Summary of SCF projects closed - July 2023 to June 2024

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total SCF contribution	Outcomes
<p>21.17 Truck wash and effluent disposal review (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To enhance biosecurity measures in the Victorian livestock industry by reviewing the existing state-wide network of publicly accessible truck wash and effluent dump facilities.</p>	January 2024	\$39,434	<p>The report addresses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevant trends and prospects in livestock industries 2. Demand and need for truck washing services and gaps in existing network of facilities 3. Need for additional facilities: number, their location(s) and infrastructure requirements 4. Relevant Environment Protection Authority (EPA) guidelines and regulations on effluent management 5. Indicative current costs of constructing and operating a new facility 6. Likely steps needed to improve truck washing in the event of a disease outbreak (noting the difficulty in prescribing specific or effective requirements for the wide range of possible individual disease outbreaks) 7. A financial analysis of the capacity of a well-located new truck wash facility to be a profitable investment and self-supporting (or a commercial operation)

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total SCF contribution	Outcomes
			8. Next steps in further exploring viable options to improve the truck wash network in Victoria.
<p>20.24 Significant Disease Investigation (SDI) subsidies (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To enhance the capacity for early detection and control of diseases of livestock that could impact human health, animal health, farm productivity and market access and trade</p>	Aug 2023	\$5777.68	There were 66 pig disease investigations from 39 different properties between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023. There was a single investigation identified as a subsidised investigation under the Significant Disease Investigation (SDI) program. The property was located in Mitchell Shire. This single investigation reported the syndrome as abortions or stillbirths and excluded Japanese encephalitis, African swine fever, classical swine fever and porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome.
<p>22.06 Strategic holding facilities for use during a livestock standstill (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To provide saleyard staff at strategic holding sites the capability and a targeted training package to manage stock receipt and biosecurity during a livestock standstill.</p>	September 2023	\$2,000	The 'Strategic holding facilities for use during a livestock standstill' project has been successfully completed by Agriculture Victoria staff to support our emergency preparedness efforts in the event of a foot-and-mouth disease outbreak. During the project, suitable locations able to receive livestock across the state of Victoria were cross analysed with livestock transport data to identify 11 active saleyards as ideal holding site facilities. Specific training was delivered to each of the holding site facilities, with ongoing plans to develop operational planning and capability of these facilities into the future

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	Total SCF contribution	Outcomes
<p>20.04 Animal Disease Investigation Course for veterinary practitioners (ADI) (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To deliver training in investigation, field, epidemiology, biosecurity and advanced necropsy techniques for Victorian veterinary practitioners.</p>	July 2023	\$26,966	Over the three years of the project a total of 106 private veterinarians and 27 animal health staff were trained in disease investigation. These attendees were from across Victoria and some from South Australia that conduct livestock work in Victoria.
<p>22.03 On Farm Disposal Tool (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To develop a self-assessment tool to assist farmers in identifying suitable on farm disposal options as part of biosecurity planning.</p>	September 2023	\$1,000	AgVic and the Environment Protection Authority have co-developed a tool to help farmers plan for and respond to an emergency animal disease outbreak where large numbers of carcasses need to be buried and can be done so on farm. This tool can be used by farmers to update their biosecurity plans about if, where and how carcasses can be buried on their properties if necessary.

Background

SCF

Victoria's Swine Compensation Fund (SCF) is established under *the Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* (the Act) and funded from duty collected on the sale of pigs or pig carcasses.

The duty paid is 2 cents (\$0.02) for every \$5 or part of \$5 of the sale price for one pig or carcass sold singly, or the total amount of the sale price for any number of pigs or carcasses sold in one lot.

The maximum duty for any one pig or carcass (sold singly or as part of a lot) is 16 cents (\$0.16).

The Act sets out how the money in the SCF may be used. This is generally for projects and programs that benefit the Victorian swine industry, compensation for specified endemic diseases and administration of the SCF.

All expenditure from the funds require approval from the Minister for Agriculture, after considering the advice from the Swine Industry Projects Advisory Committee (SIPAC).

Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program

The Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program is administered by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, with funding from the respective fund:

- Cattle Compensation Fund
- Sheep and Goat Compensation Fund
- Swine Compensation Fund
- Honey Bee Compensation and Industry Development Fund.

The Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant 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.

Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant 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.

Each of the funds has a statement of strategic intent, outlining areas for investment and outcomes within the purpose and objectives of the Act. These are included in the Guidelines each year.

For more information on the Program, see agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources/funds-grants-programs/livestock-biosecurity-funds.

Current membership

- **Mr Tim Kingma** (chairperson) is a Manager and part part-owner of Gunpork Joint Venture, a 1400-sow piggery, KEPiggery, a 500-sow piggery & Pentagon Feeds, producing around 900T/wk of pellets in North Central Victoria.

Tim has a Bachelor of Agricultural Science from the University of Melbourne and has completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course.

- **Dr Cherie Collins** (member) has over 20 years of experience within the swine industry and pig production. She is a research scientist who has extensive experience in pig nutrition and animal welfare, completing her PHD in Protein restriction and compensatory growth responses in pigs.

Dr Collins is currently a Pig Operations Manager at Rivalea (Australia) and manages all the Rivalea piggery sites and contact systems.

- **Mr Robert Bayley (member)** is a fifth-generation farmer, who currently manages Blackwood Piggery which was originally established by his father in the 1980's. Rob's eye for numbers and efficiency measures has brought new modern farming methods to the West Gippsland piggery.


Rob is a member of Australian Pork Emerging Leaders group and a committee member of the Victorian Farmers Federation

- **Dr Patricia Mitchell** (member) has been involved in the Pig Industry for over 30 years in several roles including, farm hand, farm manager (including family pig enterprise), industry training, extension officer, researcher and technical support.

Pat has previously worked for APL for 10 years as R & I Manager - Production Stewardship; she was also the Program Leader for Program 2-Herd Health Management, for the Pork CRC. Since June 2018, Pat has been employed by PIC Australia as Genetic Technical Services Manager, managing the technical Newsletters, Production Tools and Benchmarking/Percentile Reports; Pat is also the PIC Field services representative in Victoria and southern NSW.

Pat's family are fifth-generation farmers.

- **Dr Robert Smits** (member) has been part of the Australian Pork industry since 1992. For 25 years Rob managed key projects including the registration for Reporcin (porcine somatotrophin, pST), Improvac (immunocastration vaccine), Paylean (porcine ractopamine), as well as research into many feed additives, veterinary medicines and vaccines, and meat quality, welfare and new pork product development for the Rivalea brand and Coles, Woolworths, Aldi and Costco.



Rob has also worked as a Director for Research and Innovation at Australian Pork Ltd representing the pork industry in biosecurity

- **Ms Kylie Hewson** (member) is the Lead for Animal Health and Environment in the Minimising Antimicrobial Resistance Mission at CSIRO.

Kylie played an integral part in response to the COVID-19 and the Avian Influenza outbreaks in 2020, Program Manager for the industry's levied R&D program, Chair of Animal Health Australia's Industry Forum, is the current chair of Animalplan, Australia's National Action Plan for Terrestrial Agricultural Animal Health, and started (and still manages) the company Sativus Pty Ltd which supports quality science and science communications in Australia, working primarily with rural industry research and development corporations and companies.

Previous membership

- Mark Byatt (chair) Department nominee
- Anja George (member) Department nominee
- Tim Kingma (member) VFF nominee
- Cherie Collins (member) VFF nominee
- Rob Bayley (member) VFF nominee