

SWINE COMPENSATION FUND

COMMITTEE UPDATE AND SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

2022-2023

Issued August 2023

OVERVIEW

Victoria's Swine Compensation Fund (SCF) is established under the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.

The fund collects livestock duties paid on the sale of pigs or the carcasses of pigs under the *Duties Act 2000*. The Swine Compensation Fund receives approximately \$0.16 for each pig or each carcass sold.

Money in the Fund may be invested in any manner in which money may be invested under the *Trustee Act 1958* or any other manner that the appropriate Minister approves.

The Minister for Agriculture must not make a payment from the fund unless the Minister has considered any relevant recommendations from the Swine Industry Projects Advisory Committee (SIPAC).

MEMBERSHIP

The Minister for Agriculture appoints the Chair and members of the SIPAC under the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994*.

SELECTION PROCESS CHANGES

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

All future appointments will be appointed by the Minister for Agriculture after considering recommendations from the Secretary and having regard to each appointee's experience in one or more of the following areas:

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

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

The current membership was appointed on the nomination of the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) and the former Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR):

- Chair - currently vacant
- Mr Tim Kingma – member – previously nominated by the VFF (term expires 14 November 2024)
- Ms Cherie Collins – member – previously nominated by the VFF (term expires 14 November 2024)
- Mr Rob Bayley – member – previously nominated by the VFF (term expires 14 November 2024)

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

The current membership was appointed in 2021.

Effective from 21 October 2022, Ms Anja George resigned as the previously DJPR nominated member and effective 31 March 2023, Mr Mark Byatt resigned as Chair (previously DJPR nominated member), given conflicting priorities.

An appointment process is underway for the role of Chair and two additional committee members. The SIPAC currently does not meet quorum however the three members are engaging with Agriculture Victoria to progress work plan items where possible.

FUNDING ROUNDS

Since the last report of 15 June 2021, the Swine Compensation Fund has been a part of the following Livestock Biosecurity Funds Grant Program rounds:

2022 EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE TARGETED FUNDING ROUND

In June 2022, SIPAC agreed to participate in a joint targeted funding round, together with the Cattle and Sheep and Goat livestock advisory committees.

The three committees identified a gap in emergency preparedness in the projects funded by the Livestock Biosecurity Fund given the outbreaks of Lumpy Skin Disease and Foot and Mouth Disease in Indonesia.

Invitations were sought from Agriculture Victoria, with two successful projects recommended by the SIPAC and approved by the Minister for Agriculture:

- Strategic holding facilities for use during a livestock standstill (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA).
- On farm disposal tool (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA).

2022 FUNDING ROUND

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

The SIPAC assessed six applications for this funding round and recommended three projects to the Minister for Agriculture for approval on 31 March 2023:

- Sustainable control of parasites in Victorian pigs (University of Melbourne – Werribee Vet Clinic)
- Victorian Significant Disease Investigation (SDI) Program (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)
- Online 'Pathology of the Pig' Resource (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)

The Minister approved these projects on 2 June 2023.

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT CHANGES

As of 1 January 2023, Agriculture Victoria transitioned from the previous Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

Project recipients listed in this report reflect the current department which may be different from the department at the time of application.

SUMMARY OF SCF PROJECTS

ACTIVE

Project (Recipient)	Expected completion	SCF contribution*	Achievements to date
<p>Animal Disease Investigation Course (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To deliver training in investigation, field, epidemiology, biosecurity and advanced necropsy techniques for Victorian veterinary practitioners.</p>	Aug 2023	\$36,000.00 Jointly funded with Cattle and Sheep and Goat Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered Animal Disease Investigation (ADI) training courses in 2021, 2022 and 2023 for large and mixed animal veterinarians working in Victoria, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 34 private veterinarians from 24 practices across Victoria participated in the May/June 2021 course. ○ 39 attendees (30 private veterinarians and 9 government) participated in the March/April 2022 course. ○ 44 attendees from 28 practices across Victoria participated in the April/ May 2023 ADI courses. These courses were run across the state rather than one location due to a dramatic increase in interest and attendance. Courses in 2023 were held at Ellinbank, Elmore, Rutherglen and Hamilton. ○ Based on attendance and positive feedback, the course is set to run at different locations across Victoria in the future.
<p>Victorian Significant Disease Investigation (SDI) Program (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> <p>The next iteration of this project was supported as part of the 2022 LBF grant round, continuing through to 2026.</p>	Aug 2023	\$10,998.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project supports an improvement in the number and quality of investigations into significant disease events in pigs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ providing subsidies to private veterinarians to undertake comprehensive investigations. ○ providing subsidies to livestock producers when they engage a private veterinarian to investigate disease outbreaks. ○ providing laboratory testing at no cost to the producer.

Project (Recipient)	Expected completion	SCF contribution*	Achievements to date
<p>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>	Sept 2023	<p>\$1,000.00</p> <p>Jointly funded with Cattle and Sheep and Goat Funds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal tool co-developed with the Environment Protection Authority and is available here The tool provides guidance regarding required approvals, site assessment, pit location requirements, soil structure and composition, associated infrastructure, conservation and aboriginal cultural heritage areas, pit construction and carcass burial. Enhancements are currently under way for the Navigation Farm Developments Tool to reflect the disposal guidance published on the Agriculture Victoria website. These enhancements are planned for completion by the end of August 2023.
<p>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>	Sept 2023	<p>\$2,000.00</p> <p>Jointly funded with Cattle and Sheep and Goat Funds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable locations able to receive livestock across Victoria were cross analysed with livestock transport data to identify 11 active saleyards as ideal holding site facilities. Training delivered to each of the holding site facilities, with ongoing plans to develop operational planning and capability of these facilities into the future.
<p>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>	Jan 2024	<p>\$39,433.97</p> <p>Jointly funded with Cattle and Sheep and Goat Funds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feasibility study in progress to identify gaps in livestock biosecurity risk and current and future demand for truck wash and effluent disposal facilities. Consultant's report is expected to be delivered in October 2023.
<p>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 capability of pig veterinarians and enhanced disease surveillance.</p>	Sept 2024	<p>\$59,705.50</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two workshops successfully held in Bendigo (April and May 2023). Participant feedback following workshops shows strong advocacy, enhanced knowledge and an appetite for more. Development of online content and reparations for next series of face-to-face workshops in March and April 2024 is underway.

Project (Recipient)	Expected completion	SCF contribution*	Achievements to date
<p>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>	Jan 2025	\$223,067.61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project design, trial farm visits, and procedural document validation stage completed including engagement and contract confirmation with the laboratory undertaking the parasitology testing. Commencement of farm visits by Animal Health and Welfare staff with 40 visits completed to date. The visits have successfully reached a varied pool of pig owners diverse in location, farming system, reasoning for keeping pigs, and pig herd size. Year one progress report is expected in September 2023

CLOSED

Project (Recipient)	Project Timeline	SCF contribution*	Outcomes
<p>Abattoir Based Pig Health Surveillance in Victoria (Biosecurity Victoria, DEECA)</p> <p>To improve the investigation of deaths in yards and in transport with the view to set up infrastructure to examine carcasses.</p>	2020	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$45,000.00 was approved for a twelve-month project in the 2020 LBF round. Project was later withdrawn by applicant in 2022 due to COVID impacts with funds returned to the SCF.
<p>Surveying Clostridial toxins in piglets (Monash University)</p> <p>To conduct research to survey for Clostridial toxins in piglets which could lead to the development of updated vaccines for the prevention of piglet scours.</p>	2021	Nil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$49,408.00 was approved for this project in the 2021 grant round. Project was later withdrawn by applicant in 2022 due to COVID impacts with funds returned to the SCF.

Notes:

* As at time of publication of this report.