Developing a new Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria

Biosecurity Strategy Workshop Series Report

February – March 2023

# Biosecurity Strategy Workshop series overview

Over 370 stakeholders from biosecurity system participated in regional workshops and influenced the development of the new Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria.

## Workshop objectives

To help shape the biosecurity strategy for Victoria by:

* understanding different perspectives on how well biosecurity risks are currently managed
* testing the levels of support for Biosecurity Statement as the foundation for reform and improvement in biosecurity
* identifying specific, tangible ways to deliver a better biosecurity system.

## Stakeholders represented

* Business and supply chain
* Community groups
* Education providers
* Emergency responders
* Environment non-government organisations
* Farmers and land managers
* Industry peak bodies
* Local and regional agencies
* Research and development agencies
* State and federal government
* Traditional Owners
* Water authorities.

## Workshops conducted across Victoria

The following table details the dates, locations and number of participants at the ten workshops held across February and March 2023.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Location** | **Number of participants** |
| 7 February 2023 | Ararat | 38 |
| 8 February 2023 | Bendigo | 40 |
| 13 February 2023 | Online workshop for all regions | 92 |
| 14 February 2023 | Gippsland (online) | 47 |
| 16 February 2023 | Camperdown | 26 |
| 20 February 2023 | Benalla | 40 |
| 21 February 2023 | Attwood | 47 |
| 24 February 2023 | Mildura | 27 |
| 9 March 2023 | Online workshop with Victorian Farmers Federation members who could not attend regional workshops | 13 |
| 20 March 2023 | Bairnsdale | 44 |

# Key quantitative results from regional workshops

At each workshop participants were asked two initial questions:

1. In your view, how well do we currently manage biosecurity risks in Victoria?
2. To what extent are you on board with the key shift described?

The key shift presented was – in response to growing pressures, we need a system-wide approach to prevent and manage the harms caused by pests and diseases, and the impact they have on what we value most.

This means we (industry, community, government) will need to:

* decide together, set priorities together, work together to deliver better biosecurity outcomes
* mobilise coordinated and sustained action/behavioural change across the system based on a much better understanding of the key biosecurity risks
* get inspiration from the many great examples of collaboration and partnering that are already occurring, e.g., varroa mite response, Victorian Rabbit Action Network (VRAN), hawkweed.

Participants were then asked to provide rating scores for both questions, with one being low or unsupported and five being high or very supported.

The rest of this section provides the average participant responses to the questions and the top three priorities identified at each workshop.

## Ararat

The participants at the Ararat workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 3.3 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 3.8 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Ararat workshop were:

1. More community education targeted at non-producers.
2. More region-specific, tailored strategies that take into account local contexts.
3. Strengthen enforcement and penalties.

## Bendigo

The participants at the Bendigo workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 2.9 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 3.7 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Bendigo workshop were:

1. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries.
2. Empower (resource) industry groups to be the messenger and/or be the champion for good biosecurity.
3. Focusing on communication so that we have effective and viable acceptance at a grassroots level, that is consistent and timely.

## All regions (online)

The participants at the online workshop for all regions rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 3.1 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 3.7 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the online workshop for all regions were:

1. Enhance community awareness of biosecurity risks and shared responsibilities at a grass-roots level.
2. Proper resources to gain an accurate picture of costs and resource the full scope of programs.
3. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries.

## Gippsland (online)

The participants at the Gippsland online workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 3.2 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 4.0 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Gippsland online workshop were:

1. Enhance community awareness of biosecurity risks and shared responsibilities at a grass-roots level.
2. Secure resources for the full scope of programs.
3. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries.

## Camperdown

The participants at the Camperdown workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 2.7 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 4.0 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Camperdown workshop were:

1. Develop a series of case studies about what we've done and could do better regarding biosecurity.
2. Introduce more incentives or disincentives to leverage change through the supply chain.
3. Improve engagement with the wider community concerning biosecurity through different channels and languages.

## Benalla

The participants at the Benalla workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 2.8 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 3.5 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Benalla workshop were:

1. Education – share information to raise awareness on the high value of biosecurity.
2. #nextgenbiosecurity plan – target younger generations (content, channels) to improve awareness of biosecurity.
3. Build a culture of ongoing learning and improvement (e.g., constant and consistent investment in education and communication).

## Attwood

The participants at the Attwood workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 3.2 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 3.5 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Attwood workshop were:

1. Develop a more sustainable funding model at the state level.
2. Ensure that there is a whole of government and whole of environment approach to tackling biosecurity, with Agriculture Victoria acting as a system steward.
3. Enhance Traditional Custodian involvement in the biosecurity system.

## Mildura

The participants at the Mildura workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 3.0 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 2.9 out of 5.

The top three priorities identified at the Mildura workshop were:

1. Introduce accountability and measurability into the actions that come out of the strategy, and ensure it is publicly clear.
2. Use a regional lens to manage biosecurity risks for more harmonisation across borders.
3. Industry, government, community to agree on standards to increase uptake of biosecurity measures.

## Victorian Farmers Federation

The participants at the Victorian Farmers Federation workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 2.9 out of 5. This group were not asked to rate the key shift because this was a shorter workshop.

The top three priorities identified at the Victorian Farmers Federation workshop were:

1. Develop a more sustainable funding model / secure resources for the full scope of programs.
2. More region-specific, tailored strategies that take into account local contexts for high priority areas.
3. Enhance community awareness of biosecurity risks and shared responsibilities at a grass-roots level.

## Bairnsdale

The participants at the Bairnsdale workshop rated the current management of the biosecurity system as a 2.6 out of 5 and their support for the key shift as a 3.8 out of 5. Noting that the voting methodology in this workshop was different as it was done offline.

The top three priorities identified at the Bairnsdale workshop were:

1. Focus on cross-tenure problem solving and priority setting approaches to biosecurity that better coordinate relevant stakeholders.
2. Enable flexible/local level plans (with appropriate boundaries) that help local organisations respond to local issues.
3. Use formal agreements (accords) to manage biosecurity risks (e.g., a specified list of pests) in a particular region.

# Top 15 priorities identified at each workshop

Participants at each workshop were asked: ‘What are the most important, tangible and specific things we can do to mobilise coordinated and sustained action to deliver a better biosecurity system?’ Participants gave their suggestions and then individuals were asked to rank the list in order of priority using an online survey tool. This allowed weighted ranking to develop a priority list for each workshop.

The rest of this section presents the top 15 priorities identified at each workshop and some participant quotes from the workshops.

## Ararat

Twenty-seven participants at the Ararat workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. More community education targeted at non-producers. Weighted ranking of 2.6.
2. More region-specific, tailored strategies that take into account local contexts. Weighted ranking of 2.2.
3. Strengthen enforcement and penalties. Weighted ranking of 1.4.
4. Increase longer-term funding. Weighted ranking of 1.4.
5. More exercises and training to bring people together – response capability building. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
6. Expand community-based forums on invasives for local stakeholders to make decisions and share information. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
7. Provide legislation to address identified gaps. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
8. Work with industry bodies on biosecurity manuals relevant to the industry. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
9. Sort out the traceability database – integrity systems. Weighted ranking of 0.7.
10. Focus on improving biodiversity for increased resilience. Weighted ranking of 0.7.
11. All industries to collaborate on traceability to enable fast response and maintain trade. Weighted ranking of 0.5.
12. Increase and sustain the focus on environmental biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
13. Educate service providers, including wind farms, to enforce good systems. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
14. More tools in the toolbox to respond to biosecurity threats e.g., aerial shooting. Weighted ranking of 0.2.
15. Streamline commercial operators’ endorsements through improved access to training. Weighted ranking of 0.2.

**Participant quotes from the Ararat workshop include:**

*“[We need] education about the importance of biosecurity across everything, including the natural environment.”*

*“[We need] a regional, as opposed to state strategy. [Conduct] analysis of risks and consequences, then tailor it to local strategies.”*

*“Improve enforcement so that people take biosecurity seriously.”*

## Bendigo

Twenty-five participants at the Bendigo workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries. Weighted ranking of 2.2.
2. Empower (resource) industry groups to be the messenger and/or champion for good biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 1.9.
3. Focus on communication so that we have effective and viable acceptance at a grassroots level, that is consistent and timely. Weighted ranking of 1.8.
4. Awareness building campaign to explain the relevance of biosecurity, build a shared sense of responsibility and establish role clarity to enable lasting cultural change. Weighted ranking of 1.8.
5. Provide incentives for people/businesses to follow the correct processes and procedures. Weighted ranking of 1.3.
6. Strengthen enforcement penalties for those that break the rules. Weighted ranking of 1.3
7. Find ways to generate more income by demonstrating the relevance of biosecurity to broader audiences and metropolitan radars. Weighted ranking of 0.7.
8. Focus the education system to enact biosecurity awareness. Weighted ranking of 0.7.
9. Enact effective cultural change within Agriculture Victoria to achieve aligned strategic intents to be true to community engagement aspirations. Weighted ranking of 0.6.
10. Break down biosecurity to make it easier to understand for the wider public e.g., endemic (weeds), exotic (foot-and-mouth disease [FMD]), etc. Weighted ranking of 0.6.
11. Focus on place-based engagement to enable broader engagement pathways, targeting events that already exist, e.g., farm field days, cricket clubs, footy clubs etc. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
12. Support service providers such as vets to provide education information to producers. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
13. Digitised and standardised biosecurity plans that can be incrementally updated. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
14. Demonstrate to industry the return on their investment in biosecurity by clearly articulating the potential losses that biosecurity incursions will cause to their livelihoods. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
15. Build recognition of good biosecurity into other schemes e.g., becoming a recognised sustainable tourism business. Weighted ranking of 0.2.

**Participant quotes from the Bendigo workshop include:**

*“Reduce duplication for industry.”*

*“We need to increase awareness of how biosecurity affects everybody.”*

*“Biosecurity is an umbrella. It needs to be broken down into endemic, exotic, etc. [for different stakeholders to understand it].”*

*“A significant cultural change needed within Agriculture Victoria to make this strategy a reality.”*

## All regions (online)

Forty-eight participants at the online workshop for all regions responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Enhance community awareness of biosecurity risks and shared responsibilities at a grass-roots level. Weighted ranking of 2.3.
2. Proper resources to gain an accurate picture of costs and resource the full scope of programs. Weighted ranking of 1.9.
3. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries. Weighted ranking of 1.8.
4. More community education targeted at non-producers, including through the education system. Weighted ranking of 1.7.
5. Strengthen enforcement/penalties to ensure compliance across the whole biosecurity system. Weighted ranking of 1.3.
6. More region-specific, tailored strategies for high priority areas. Weighted ranking of 1.3.
7. Empower and resource industry groups to be the messengers or champions for biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 1.1.
8. Broaden participation in response activities through initiatives such as joint planning. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
9. Deliver legislative reform to address identified gaps and key barriers. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
10. Develop incentives to encourage good biosecurity practices – e.g., accreditations. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
11. Doing the right scientific research of pathogens/diseases to enable appropriate response measures. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
12. Increase the emphasis on environmental hygiene on public land to prevent the spread of invasives. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
13. Empower industry and community-led decision-making and action on local issues – e.g., via local forums. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
14. Clarify the roles and responsibilities of new incursions. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
15. Focus on interconnectivity between environmental, human and animal health. Weighted ranking of 0.8.

**Participant quotes from the online workshop for all regions include:**

*“Compiling and publishing case studies of successful past interventions would help with media and education across the range of impacted stakeholders.”*

*“Prevention is smart, but if assets are already being hammered, there is no point ignoring existing threats to target a new one.”*

*“There needs to be increased collaboration and communication between the levels of government to ensure they know what the others are doing.”*

*“We need to look beyond the [agriculture] industry.”*

## Gippsland (online)

Twenty-seven participants at Gippsland online workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Enhance community awareness of biosecurity risks and shared responsibilities at a grass-roots level. Weighted ranking of 2.1.
2. Secure resources for the full scope of programs (pest management, ongoing surveillance, reporting, not just response). Weighted ranking of 2.0.
3. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries. Weighted ranking of 1.8.
4. More community education targeted at non-producers, including through the education system. Weighted ranking of 1.6.
5. Develop incentives to encourage good biosecurity practice and more broadly develop coalitions in the community predisposed to good practice. Weighted ranking of 1.6.
6. 'One biosecurity approach' with increased coordination and transparency across the themes and spectrums of agencies and organisations. Weighted ranking of 1.5.
7. Where possible, focus on building on existing community and agency networks, rather than building new networks. Weighted ranking of 1.3.
8. Striking the right balance between industry and environmental risks (e.g., through decision-making on resource allocation). Weighted ranking of 1.0.
9. Deliver legislative reform to address identified gaps and key barriers. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
10. Establish a formal process/structure for identifying new and emerging threats. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
11. Broaden participation in response activities e.g., through joint planning. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
12. Being much more specific about key objectives to track and evaluate progress and programs. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
13. Empower communities to set priorities within localised regions such as shires in collaboration with other relevant organisations. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
14. Ensure leaders in the community are adequately supported and facilitated to mobilise action. Weighted ranking of 0.7.
15. More region-specific, tailored strategies for high priority areas. Weighted ranking of 0.6.

**Participant quotes from the Gippsland online workshop include:**

*“[We need] more conversations about biosecurity risks.”*

*“[We need to] strike the right balance between industry and environment. A mechanism to triage it is to allocate limited resources better (e.g., using environmental economics).”*

*“[We need to] have resources to respond adequately in a timely manner.”*

*“We need a ‘One biosecurity’ approach – more coordinated communication and effort.”*

## Camperdown

Twenty-one participants at the Camperdown workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Developing a series of case studies, inspired by storytelling, about events, what we've done and could do better regarding biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 2.8.
2. Introduce more incentives/disincentives to leverage change through the supply chain. Weighted ranking of 2.1.
3. Improve engagement with the wider community (e.g., peri-urban, culturally and linguistically diverse [CALD]) concerning biosecurity through different channels and languages. Weighted ranking of 1.6.
4. Define who the leadership group is for driving Victoria's strategic plan around biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 1.5.
5. Create more focused data systems to track and respond to biosecurity risks. Weighted ranking of 1.5.
6. Putting more people on the ground, in ongoing roles. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
7. More collaborative projects with local land holders, crown land holders - building on goodwill. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
8. Sort out who delivers the messages (e.g., Meat and Livestock Australia, National Farmers Federation, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Animal Health Australia) or at least who coordinates the delivery of these messages. Weighted ranking of 1.1.
9. Improve how we communicate effectively with communities regularly, particularly across generations and varying digital literacy levels. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
10. Employ best practices in behavioural change. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
11. Make the why relevant to the individual who is not invested in biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
12. Deliver and communicate the strategic plan with clear goals/priorities. Weighted ranking of. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
13. Expand government innovation grant schemes to support biosecurity innovation. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
14. Dovetail biosecurity into things that are already delivered (e.g., current projects/programs). Weighted ranking of 0.9.
15. Help farmer understand the economic costs/benefits of biosecurity plans (e.g., economic benchmarks). Weighted ranking of 0.8.

**Participant quotes from the Camperdown workshop include:**

*“Using storytelling, share lessons learned for other farmers (including from other markets). [It is a type of] peer-to-peer engagement.”*

*“The introduction of traceability in livestock did not get traction because incentives were missing.”*

*“Understand the ‘why’ for individuals to make communication relevant.”*

## Benalla

Twenty-six participants at the Benalla workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Education - share information to raise awareness of the high value of biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 2.4.
2. #nextgenbiosecurityplan - target younger generations (content, channels) to improve awareness of biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 1.8.
3. Build capacity into local communities to address biosecurity awareness and capability via face-to-face relationships. Weighted ranking of 1.6.
4. Build a culture of ongoing learning and improvement (e.g., constant and consistent investment in education and communication). Weighted ranking of 1.5.
5. Coordinate and confirm information in databases to centralise and improve quality of data and increase equity of access. Weighted ranking of 1.5.
6. Boost active participation: find opportunities for people to do things that raise awareness on biosecurity rather than just reading about it (e.g., biosecurity day, old airport aircraft sprays). Weighted ranking of 1.4.
7. Build in (dis)incentives to ensure good community/industry engagement and behaviour (e.g., monetary incentives, accreditations, improved funding for existing/new programs). Weighted ranking of 1.3.
8. Break down borders - national approach to biosecurity to break down state borders. Weighted ranking of 1.3.
9. Provide more tailored biosecurity risk information to help people better understand specific and relevant risks (e.g., biosecurity risk profiles for specific business types, regions). Weighted ranking of 1.2.
10. Work towards people feeling safe rather than fearful to report. Weighted ranking of 1.1.
11. Make sure all legislative tools are fit for purpose and delivering the intended outcomes (not just enforcement, tools to support community action, industry accreditation). Weighted ranking of 1.0.
12. Keep linking back to and checking-in with community much more (doing with, not to). Weighted ranking of 1.0.
13. Ensure we practice place-based biosecurity engagement that is tailored, not cookie cutter. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
14. Encourage and showcase more private sector leadership and good practice – working together with industry (pull). Weighted ranking of 0.7.
15. Make landowners accountable to a baseline standard of knowledge around biosecurity risks when they acquire land (e.g., attaching mandatory training to Property Identification Code [PIC] applications). Weighted ranking of 0.6.

**Participant quotes from the Benalla workshop include:**

*“We need to provide information to the community on the high value of biosecurity and our messaging needs to be consistent.”*

*“There needs to be better education for the younger generation. They are going to drive the change.”*

*“We need to focus on building extension back into the community. Face-to-face relationships are important.”*

## Attwood

Thirty participants at the Attwood workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Develop a more sustainable funding model at the state level. Weighted ranking of 3.0.
2. Ensure that there is a whole of government and whole of environment approach to tackling biosecurity, with Agriculture Victoria acting as a system steward. Weighted ranking of 2.3.
3. Enhance Traditional Custodian involvement (e.g., support better relationships with landholders, highlight biosecurity in Country Plans, provide an opportunity to lead environmental biosecurity). Weighted ranking of 1.7.
4. Embed training, capacity and knowledge within communities to enable improved response and recovery capabilities (for surge capacity in emergencies). Weighted ranking of 1.5.
5. Develop a broad ranging communication strategy that doesn't explicitly use the word biosecurity (use terminology people got comfortable with during COVID-19). Weighted ranking of 1.4.
6. Enable existing systems, such as Landcare and Catchment Management Authorities, to do more within biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 1.4.
7. Develop measures to understand and track progress of new and existing programs/ initiatives. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
8. Link into accreditation schemes to help people demonstrate they're doing the right things (e.g., nature accreditations, recognising that there are good quality assurance systems). Weighted ranking of 1.1.
9. Invest in relationship building, particularly with staff in the pest and weed area. Weighted ranking of 1.1.
10. Enhance compliance for those that don't respond to incentives, helped by removing constraints on reporting. Weighted ranking of 1.1.
11. Motivate the community to become more involved in biosecurity by highlighting the importance of exports to Australia. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
12. Create a platform for champions of good biosecurity (within community, industry and government) to highlight best-practices. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
13. Foster better relationships between industries and Agriculture Victoria or other agencies to supplement other systems, for example the varroa mite State Quarantine Response Team. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
14. Incentivise smaller land holders to be compliant (e.g., discounts on animal feed, tax breaks to participate in otherwise expensive accreditations schemes). Weighted ranking of 0.8.
15. Emphasise the value of the green wedge to have standards that we expect of people (e.g., in planning schemes). Weighted ranking of 0.4.

**Participant quotes from the Attwood workshop include:**

*“The funding model is a real issue. There isn't enough money.”*

*“A lot of this [the key shift] is happening now but needs more coordination.”*

*“Aboriginal people should play a larger role in biosecurity, if they are willing.”*

## Mildura

Twenty-one participants at the Mildura workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Introduce accountability and measurability into the actions that come out of the strategy. Weighted ranking of 2.2.
2. Use a regional lens to manage biosecurity risks for more harmonisation across borders. Weighted ranking of 2.1.
3. Industry, government and community to agree on standards to increase uptake of biosecurity measures. Weighted ranking of 1.7.
4. Strengthen connections between biosecurity and food security/environmental health in order to improve community/non-industry understanding. Weighted ranking of 1.7.
5. Be more proactive in ongoing work with the federal government. Weighted ranking of 1.6.
6. Improve online access to live information and data, such as accreditations and traceability. Weighted ranking of 1.5.
7. Greater emphasis on community education, including consumers, multicultural communities and school kids. Weighted ranking of 1.4.
8. Increase industry specific Development Officer roles to translate the science and actual practical implementation (a go-to person to solve these industry problems). Weighted ranking of 1.3.
9. Harmonise rules across government departments in their approach to weeds and pests. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
10. More simulations to help us surface what we don't know and understand who is in the system in Victoria and other states. Weighted ranking of 1.1.
11. Make the case through a strong, concise and broadly supported biosecurity strategy to gain more funding. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
12. Explore more predictive modelling across regions to increase information around pest and disease forecasting, and treatment advice. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
13. Focus more effort on connecting with people that are not in industry using easily accessible platforms. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
14. Put biosecurity in the curriculum for younger children to better inform the next generation. Weighted ranking of 0.7.
15. Find ways to support people struggling through things like industry transition or poor years to help protect the wider industry (e.g., recovery plans for industry shocks). Weighted ranking of 0.6.

**Participant quotes from the Mildura workshop include:**

*“[We need] clarity around the accountability and measurability for the actions that come out of the strategy.”*

*“There needs to be more tri-state discussions between Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales [on biosecurity risks].”*

*“[We need to] develop standards in consultation with industry if we want this to work.”*

## Victorian Farmers Federation

Ten participants at Victorian Farmers Federation workshop responded. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Develop a more sustainable funding model/secure resources for the full scope of programs. Weighted ranking of 2.4.
2. More region-specific, tailored strategies that take into account local contexts for high priority areas. Weighted ranking of 2.2.
3. Enhance community awareness/understanding of biosecurity risks and shared responsibilities at a grass-roots level. Weighted ranking of 2.1.
4. Stronger links with Local Government Authorities, Emergency Management Victoria, and the emergency management sector, especially in the face of newer outbreaks – understand relationships in practice 2.1.
5. More attention to contractors (e.g., utility contractors entering farms without notification), and the range of other people traffic through farms. Weighted ranking of 2.0.
6. Have biosecurity considerations on the wider political agenda (e.g., issues like riverside camping), noting we require strong producer support for politicians to listen. Weighted ranking of 1.9.
7. We need partnership approaches (e.g., planning collaboratively before the start of outbreaks). This will involve hard truths and trade-offs from everyone involved. Weighted ranking of 1.7.
8. Ensure that there is a whole of government and whole of environment approach to tackling biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 1.4.
9. Harmonise biosecurity policy across national, state, and local boundaries that draws on best-practice and learnings, such as with traceability. Weighted ranking of 1.2.
10. Focus on transport sector risks – decontamination zones for transport would give peace of mind. Weighted ranking of 1.0.
11. Work towards cross-industry buy-in for managing key biosecurity threats (e.g., foot-and-mouth disease threatens all industries) – working with rural councils is a good mechanism for this. Weighted ranking of 0.9.
12. Work on AUSVETPLAN should continue and Memorandums of Understanding should be kept up to date. Weighted ranking of 0.8.
13. Empower and resource industry groups to be the messengers and champions for biosecurity. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
14. More war gaming of scenarios – sensitise people to risks. Weighted ranking of 0.4.
15. Ensure resourcing is adequate for the first response by Agriculture Victoria (e.g., flying squads, first response teams). Weighted ranking of 0.3.

**Participant quotes from the Victorian Farmers Federation workshop include:**

*“Tick box approach comes because of funding [limitations].”*

*“[There is a] big need for education with utility managers.”*

*“The thing that is missing so far is the reference to partnership between government, industry and community.”*

*“Biosecurity has to be a key objective of crown land management.”*

## Bairnsdale

Forty-four participants at the Bairnsdale workshop responded.

The ranking of priorities was done differently to the other workshops. Rather than using the online polling system, participants were asked to vote for their top four priorities. Rankings were then determined by the number of votes. The results are presented from highest to lowest priority.

1. Focus on cross-tenure problem solving and priority setting approaches to biosecurity that better coordinate relevant stakeholders. Received 28 votes.
2. Enable flexible/local level plans (with appropriate boundaries) that help local organisations respond to local issues. Received 22 votes.
3. Use formal agreements or accords to manage biosecurity risks in a particular region, such as a specified list of pests. Received 20 votes.
4. Establish community coordinators for place-based, localised biosecurity plans that can also support community and industry to interpret science. Received 16 votes.
5. More effective compliance for those that do not make an attempt to address weeds infestations (public or private); strike the right balance between incentives and penalties. Received 16 votes.
6. Focus more on the new and emerging risks before they get too big. Received 13 votes.
7. Build the 'burning platform' messaging to win government support and resources. Received 11 votes.
8. Ensure consistent policy at the top and that biosecurity plans are engaged at the coalface, in a hands-on manner. Received 11 votes.
9. Set up Rapid Assessment Teams (RATs) to assess weeds/issues, advise on programs and funding availability. Received 9 votes.
10. Incentives, such as tax breaks, for biosecurity plans that people follow. Received 6 votes.
11. Work with media to promote a culture of 'empowerment and enablement' by reducing the fear of failure, such as less penalising of people that are trying to fix issues. Received 5 votes.
12. Finance 'boots on the ground' by tapping into new development opportunities, such as renewable energy investments. Received 5 votes.
13. Tailor strategies to both commercial operators and non-commercial operators. Received 4 votes.
14. Shorten the list of declarations of weeds and ensure they are tailored for different localities. Received 4 votes.
15. Improve coordination and communication across borders to reduce the duplication of effort. Received 4 votes.

**Quotes from the Bairnsdale workshop include:**

*“We need to adequately resource local organisations to ensure that they have the tools to respond locally.”*

*“There needs to be a mechanism to deal with these parties [that disregard infestations or refuse assistance] on both public and private land.”*

*“Classification [of new and emerging threats] is too slow. We need to prioritise it, before it gets too big, with a cross-tenure framework.”*

*“[Community coordinators] are more than just extension support, they would deliver localised place-based biosecurity plans connecting industry and community.”*