This document is the strategic plan for the implementation of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy.

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Further Information:
Executive Officer (Tasmanian Biosecurity Committee)
Department of Primary Industries,
Parks, Water and Environment.

GPO Box 44
Hobart 7001

Email: Biosecurity.Strategy@dpipwe.tas.gov.au
Web: www.dpipwe.tas.au/biosecurity

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Foreword

In February 2007 the first Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy was released by the Tasmanian Government as its plan for the Tasmanian Biosecurity System and to ensure the benefits of Tasmania’s relative pest and disease free status are maintained for the benefit of our environment, industries, public well-being, health and safety. For the first time we had a clear and long term plan to guide biosecurity decision-making in the State and one that would implement our published state biosecurity policy.

The strategic plan has served us well over the last five years and has clearly articulated to the world that we are serious about maximising Tasmania’s natural island advantage and that we are committed to implementing and maintaining a modern, scientifically-based biosecurity system. The enhancements to State biosecurity under this strategy have been numerous and include the development and implementation of transparent biosecurity decision-making, a comprehensive stakeholder biosecurity communications system, and the development of constructive working partnerships with stakeholders in operating our biosecurity system.

It is appropriate then that five years on our strategic plan is comprehensively updated. The last five years have seen pressures on our biosecurity system increase with continued growth in movement of people and commodities around the world. The emergence and development of new and different types of biosecurity threats, and developments nationally with respect to co-operative approaches to biosecurity across Australia means the next five years will see large challenges for all of us with an interest in maintaining Tasmania’s biosecurity status at its high level.

This updated strategic plan builds upon the success of the first plan and continues to reiterate Government commitment to biosecurity, recognising it as being at the very core of our brand and our advantage as an island State. In this respect, it contributes towards Tasmania’s Economic Development Plan and its outcomes. The strategy has been developed jointly by a broad range of biosecurity stakeholders in Tasmania through a process of consultation. The strategy seeks to ensure we have the appropriate infrastructure in place. It demonstrates clear recognition that our system for managing biosecurity risk needs to take into account the importance of Tasmania’s unique regional characteristics. This strategy also recognises the importance of protecting our environmental assets from pests and diseases. Finally it spells out clearly that we can only be successful through practical stakeholder partnerships.

Biosecurity is an important issue for all Tasmanians and I look forward to the next five years of strategy implementation with Government working closely in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure this strategic plan is a success and the benefits of our unique biosecurity status continue to flow to Tasmania.

Bryan Green MHA
Minister for Primary Industries and Water
March 2013
# Contents

Foreword 1  
Introduction 4  
  Drivers of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy since 2007 5  
Policy Principles 7  
The Foundations of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy 8  
  The Biosecurity Continuum 9  
  Intelligent Risk Management 10  
  Partnerships 10  
  Tasmanian Biosecurity Commitments 11  
The Strategy at a glance 12  
Strategic Direction 13  
The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy - Outcomes and Actions 14  
Outcomes and Actions that Apply Pre-Border 15  
  1. Risk-based Decision-Making 15  
Outcomes and Actions that Apply at the Border 17  
  2. Border Protection 17  
Outcomes and Actions that Apply Post-Border 18  
  3. Surveillance & Monitoring 18  
  4. Biosecurity Emergency Management 19  
Outcomes and Actions Apply to the Whole of the Biosecurity Continuum 20  
  5. Policy & Planning 20  
  6. Roles & Responsibilities 21  
  7. Legislation & Regulation 23  
  8. Partnerships 24  
  9. Training & Education 25  
  10. Research, Development and Extension 26  
  11. Communication 27  
Implementation, Review and Evaluation 28  
Bibliography and Websites 29  
Acknowledgements 30  
Acronyms 31  
Glossary 32  
Appendices 33  
  Appendix A: Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB) - Schedule Summary 33  
  Appendix B: Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy 34  
  Appendix C: Statutes that provide legislative support to the Tasmanian Biosecurity System 36
Introduction

Biosecurity is the protection of public health and wellbeing, industries and the environment from the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds.

Biosecurity underpins the Tasmanian brand. In many cases, the development and maintenance of domestic and international export markets are based on the demonstrated absence of certain pests and diseases. Tasmania’s unique natural environment is vulnerable to incursion by a range of pests and disease agents and to the consequent impacts of those incursions.

Effective biosecurity is critically important to the people of Tasmania, to the economy and to the environment. Tasmania’s high level of biosecurity is a result of its island geography, as well as regulatory quarantine systems that have been in place for many decades. However, as biosecurity pressures and threats increase so does the potential loss of those trade advantages through pest and disease incursions.

New and emerging issues include globalisation with increased movement of goods and people, greater trading opportunities and requirements, increased disease and pest incidents occurring overseas or interstate, potential threats of bioterrorism and many other factors increasing pressures on biosecurity services nationwide.

In 2007 the Tasmanian Government implemented its first biosecurity strategy that provided the basis for the operation of the Tasmanian Biosecurity System. Key achievements included the development and publication of the biosecurity risk analysis framework, enhanced communications and consultation through the development of the stakeholder register, and amendments to import regulations. The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy 2013 to 2017 builds on that first strategic plan and describes the type of actions that will be implemented over the coming five years to maintain and enhance the Tasmanian Biosecurity System to manage current and future biosecurity risks.

This document first describes the drivers and changes that have taken place over the past five years as the first plan was being implemented. It then outlines the eight policy principles that guide the updated strategic plan, describes the four foundations on which the Strategy is based, and then defines the strategic vision, outcomes and actions for the Strategy in the coming years.
Drivers of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy since 2007

**Increasing biosecurity risk and threats:** The movement of goods and people around the world has increased significantly over the last five years. The threat of introduction of new high risk pests and diseases is increasing with globalisation. Expansion of overseas travel and trade has resulted in increased risks to Tasmania’s natural and productive resources. New high risk pests and disease problems emerge from a range of sources including trade (e.g. nurseries, Internet) and changing environmental conditions (e.g. climate change). This strategy takes a precautionary position and assumes a steadily increasing biosecurity threat from external sources such as trade and movement of goods and people entering Tasmania.

**National biosecurity developments:** Over the last five years there have been significant strategic developments with respect to biosecurity at a national level. The Beale inquiry into biosecurity and quarantine systems in Australia, the development of an Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB), implementation of a National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement (NEBRA), National Plant Biosecurity Strategy, Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD), and the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA) to name a few. Some of these developments have included agreements which the Tasmanian Government is a signatory to or is supportive of with respect benefits for the Tasmanian Biosecurity System. This Strategy recognises those agreed elements and incorporates them at a state level.

**Risk-based biosecurity decision-making:** The Tasmanian Government has developed and published its risk-analysis based methodology and framework used in biosecurity decision-making processes in the State. This methodology has now matured and is an integral part of the State biosecurity system. This strategy is based on that system being in place and assumes ‘risk return’ principles apply in the application of the Strategy.

**Regional differences in risk status:** For many years, biosecurity decision-making in Tasmania has taken into account real differences in biosecurity status compared to other parts of Australia, claiming Tasmania has a regional difference with respect biosecurity. That principle has been further developed over the last five years and has been included as a separate and additional Tasmanian biosecurity policy principle. The strategy has been updated taking this additional principle into account.

**Climate change:** Climatic changes lead to changes in risk potential for a range of pests and diseases either making an area less or more susceptible to existing pests or decreasing or increasing the risks associated with establishment.

Biosecurity status: Market access for many countries is centred on the biosecurity status of the exporting country. Increased rigour in biosecurity and biosecurity demands of export and potential export countries has dramatically increased the importance of maintaining a favourable biosecurity status if existing markets are to be kept and new ones found.

Systems approaches as a basis for biosecurity status recognition: Traditionally products that posed a potential biosecurity threat could be imported from areas free of a particular biosecurity threat or treated to make them safe. With changes in the availability of traditional treatments e.g. chemicals and in some cases those treatments being no longer accessible, system approaches are being proposed as equivalent. This is requiring increased assessment of those systems for equivalence to traditional treatments.

Partnerships: The importance of effective partnerships and stakeholder engagement has become increasingly important over the last five years as the complexity of biosecurity systems increases and effectiveness of maintaining a biosecure environment rests with co-operative approaches to biosecurity activities.
Policy Principles

The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy describes the approach taken to deliver the Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy. A full copy of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy is at Appendix B and a summary of the policy principles is provided below.

The policy is given effect through the adoption of eight policy principles:

1. Appropriate Level of Protection: Zero risk is not possible. The Tasmanian Government supports Australia’s setting of a ‘very low level of acceptable risk’ associated with biosecurity.

2. Least-restrictive Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures: The Tasmanian Government acknowledges our international obligations and will endeavour to apply sanitary and phytosanitary measures that are least trade-restrictive to meet our Appropriate Level of Protection.

3. Evidence Based Risk Analysis: The Tasmanian Government is committed to an evidence based decision-making process that is transparent, consistent and technically based. This commitment, and how decisions are made, is described in the Import Risk Analysis: A Framework of Context, Concepts, Methods and Administrative Procedures available online.

4. Regional Difference in Risk Status: As an island State, Tasmania has genuine regional differences with respect to its biosecurity. This is due not only to current pest/disease status but potential differences in consequence of pest establishment. These regional differences must be taken into account when considering biosecurity risk management.

5. Risk Based Resource Allocation: The Tasmanian Government invests biosecurity resources according to assessed risk. Resources are thus allocated to achieve the greatest reduction in the highest priority risks.

6. Cost-Benefit Decision-Making on Control and Eradication: The Tasmanian Government will only commit public resources to control and eradication programs that provide a cost-effective benefit for the community and the environment.


8. Shared Responsibilities: The Tasmanian Government recognises it has a leadership role in biosecurity in Tasmania but also acknowledges a successful State biosecurity system is the shared responsibility of Government, industry, the broader Tasmanian community, and visitors to our State. Thus all who benefit from our status should share in the resourcing and management of the Tasmanian biosecurity system supported by formal and informal partnerships.

The Objective of Tasmania’s Biosecurity Policy is “to protect and enhance Tasmania’s biosecurity status for the benefit of Tasmania’s industries, environment and public well-being, health, amenity and safety.”
Foundations of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy

The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy is built on four foundations. These are:

1. The Biosecurity Continuum.
2. Intelligent Risk Management.
3. Partnerships.

These foundations are described in detail below.
The Biosecurity Continuum

The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy is based on the principle that an effective biosecurity system needs to manage risks across the entire Biosecurity Continuum; with pre-border, border and post border activities designed to work together to mitigate risks (Fig 1).

This approach is consistent with the approach being adopted nationally following the Beale Review\(^2\) (2008) into Australia’s quarantine and biosecurity services which recommended a change in emphasis from the narrow concept of ‘quarantine’ to the broader one of ‘biosecurity’:

“The Tasmanian Government recognises the importance of managing risk across the whole of the biosecurity continuum. While recognising the importance of the border, significant consideration and action will be directed towards allocation of resources to mitigation of biosecurity risk off-shore as well as being subsequently prepared for post-border incursions. Programs will operate to address pre-border, border, and post-border areas of the system.

Footnotes:

Intelligent Risk Management

Integral to the system is an intelligent risk management approach. The approach in Tasmania supports recommendations made by the Gorrie Review (2004) that argues that ‘a “zero risk” system is unachievable’ and the Beale Review that “the balance and level of biosecurity resources across the continuum should be determined by a consistent analysis of risks and returns across programs”. The risk management approach targets resources to where they will have the greatest impact.

The Tasmanian Government will continue to base its biosecurity decision-making on the principles of cost-effective risk management. The application of the principles of risk analysis outlined in its risk analysis framework will be retained in the Tasmanian Biosecurity System. Resources will be focussed at addressing the highest biosecurity risks to the State with best chances of risk mitigation.

Partnerships

The Tasmanian Biosecurity System recognises that land managers, government agencies and the community are jointly responsible for pest and disease management. Historically, government has focused on the management of widespread and established pests and diseases. Under this biosecurity approach, the Tasmanian Government’s role is also focused on supporting land managers, industry and the community to manage high risk pests and diseases in accordance with risk management principles.

The Tasmanian Government will engage with biosecurity stakeholders through its biosecurity plans, and establishing genuine working partnerships with industries, environmental representatives, and the broader Tasmanian community. These partnerships will seek to share the benefits of an effective biosecurity system and share the costs of achieving those benefits. The Tasmanian Government will work closely with industry to determine effective investment models to ensure an effectively resourced biosecurity system.

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Tasmania’s Biosecurity Commitments - National and International

Tasmania honours international protocol obligations in developing and delivering its biosecurity system. Australian Government policy and national agreements are also taken into account.

i) International Biosecurity Commitments: Actions in the Strategy are consistent with requirements as specified in international agreements and instruments under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and International Maritime Organisation (IMO). In particular this includes the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement and the IMO International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments.

ii) National Biosecurity Commitments: The Strategy actions assist the State to fulfil its obligations under national animal and plant cost-sharing agreements in relation to emergency animal disease\(^5\), plant pest incursions\(^6\), marine pest incursions\(^7\) and environmental biosecurity threats\(^8\). The Strategy also supports many of the national initiatives documented in the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Biosecurity (Appendix A). The Strategy also contributes to national objectives and targets for biodiversity conservation\(^9\) and to marine pests through the Marine Pest IGA.

iii) State Biosecurity Commitments: The Tasmanian Government is committed to science-based protection of the biosecurity status of Tasmania’s industries and environment and to the protection of public well-being, health, amenity and safety. The Government is committed to our biosecurity regional difference and pest/disease pressure differences when protecting the biosecurity status of Tasmania. This commitment is represented by the Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy and the Strategy implementing that policy and our regulatory frameworks.

The Tasmanian Government will honour national and international biosecurity commitments in a consistent and complementary manner. It will contribute positively to the National Biosecurity System and participate in key national instruments for maintaining effective biosecurity in Australia. The Government will take into account Tasmanian biosecurity interests first with respect to its regional differences and decisions will be consistent, transparent, and based on science.

\(^5\)Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA).
\(^6\)Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD).
\(^7\)Inter-Governmental Agreement on the National System for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pest Incursions (Marine Pest IGA).
\(^8\)National Environmental Biosecurity Response Agreement (NEBRA).
The Strategy at a glance...

VISION
A State biosecurity system built on co-operative and productive stakeholder partnerships that support strong biosecurity infrastructure, risk management, rewarding trade opportunities, and a biosecure natural environment.

PURPOSE
Protect and enhance Tasmania’s biosecurity status for the benefit of Tasmania’s industries, environment and public well-being, health, amenity and safety.

TASMANIAN BIOSECURITY POLICY

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

TASMANIAN BIOSECURITY STRATEGY

OPERATIONS

IMPLEMENTATION

STAKEHOLDER WORK PLANS

OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

- Regional Difference
- ALOP
- Least Restrictive Measures
- Science-based
- Risk-based
- Cost: Benefit
- Whole-of-Government
- Shared Responsibility

- Risk-Based Decision Making
- Border Protection
- Surveillance and Pestiocide Management
- Biosecurity Emergency Management
- Policy and Planning
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Legislation and Regulation
- Partnerships
- Training and Education
- Research, Development and Extension
- Communication
Strategic Direction

Vision: A State biosecurity system built on co-operative and productive stakeholder partnerships that support strong biosecurity infrastructure, risk management, rewarding trade opportunities and a biosecure natural environment.

Purpose: To protect and enhance Tasmania’s biosecurity status for the benefit of Tasmania’s environment, industries, public well-being, health amenity and safety. This leads to benefits such as integrity of the natural environment, lifestyle, economic, and trade opportunities.

Scope: The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy gives effect to the Government’s policy on biosecurity at a State level. Its scope includes actions that:

1. Maintain and enhance the biosecurity of Tasmania’s environment, primary and other industries and public well-being, health, amenity and safety.

2. Address biosecurity threats that are animal pests and diseases (non-human but including zoonoses); plant diseases and pests; weeds and invasive species (invertebrate, vertebrate, terrestrial, freshwater, and marine).

3. Relate to pre-border, border and post-border components of the biosecurity system.

4. Provide for effective governance, planning and coordination of Tasmania’s biosecurity system which encourages true partnerships and shared responsibilities for managing Tasmania’s biosecurity risks.

The strategy does not include Genetically Modified Organisms, animal welfare, or chemical contamination or residue issues. These are dealt with under other arrangements or processes.
The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy - Outcomes and Actions

The Strategy outlines 11 outcomes and associated system requirements to ensure the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of a complete and effective biosecurity system for Tasmania. Each outcome is listed along with background information and example strategic actions required to achieve the outcome. Though many of these actions are related to government activity, actions are not restricted to government but also need to be undertaken by stakeholder partners if the outcomes are to be fully realised.

The outcomes and actions are divided into sub-groups based on the biosecurity continuum. The first three groups list outcomes and actions for pre-border, border, and post-border parts of the continuum. The final group relates equally to the whole biosecurity continuum. The Strategy concludes with a description of how it will be implemented and the review and evaluation requirements needed to ensure it is being appropriately delivered.

It should be noted that the actions listed in relation to each outcome are examples only and are not exhaustive. Much of the detail in relation to actions will be contained in operational plans developed by biosecurity stakeholders with guidance from this strategic plan.
Outcomes and Actions that Apply Pre-Border

1. Risk-Based Decision-Making

Background: As part of implementing the first Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy, risk-based decision-making processes were developed, documented and published. The document Import Risk Analysis: A Framework of Context, Concepts, Methods and Administrative Procedures is central to Tasmania’s biosecurity system. A framework such as this is an essential component of an effective international standard biosecurity system, especially the regulation of potential biosecurity-risk imports. In the context of the international and national arrangements, the biosecurity risk analysis process is conducted by the government as ultimately the government has the legislative responsibility in decision-making. However an important part of the risk analysis process is consultation so that at a State level, opportunities exist for other biosecurity stakeholders to comment on risk analysis findings and to help inform the process through formal consultation stages.

International Agreements: An important component of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) arrangements is the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement. This agreement requires the least trade restrictive quarantine barriers possible, but allows member countries to take sanitary and phytosanitary measures necessary to protect human, plant and animal life or health in their jurisdiction provided they are scientifically based, non-discriminatory and consistently applied. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments provides guidelines for ballast water management including guidelines on ballast water risk assessment. Arrangements to manage ballast water under the Tasmanian biosecurity system must be consistent with the IMO Convention.

Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP): The importance and validity of Australia having a single national ALOP was first recognised by members of the Primary Industries Ministerial Council in 2002. The ALOP provides a consistent basis against which to measure the biosecurity risks of certain activities. The Australian Government’s ALOP is stated as “a high or very conservative level of protection aimed at reducing risk to very low levels, while not based on a zero risk approach.” The Tasmanian Government has determined an ALOP consistent with the Australian Government’s ALOP but with greater detail and more quantifiable measures of risk. The ALOP is probably the single most important policy statement in relation to implementing a biosecurity system because all biosecurity activities must be consistent with the ALOP. In addition, a defined ALOP and how decisions are based in relation to that ALOP are necessary to satisfy the requirements of the SPS Agreement ensuring that Tasmania is contributing to Australia meeting its obligations as a WTO member. The decision-making process that underpins that ALOP must be science-based, transparent and consistent.

Outcome 1:
Biosecurity decision-making processes based on scientific risk assessment principles that are consistent with Tasmania’s ALOP, national and international trade obligations.
Also of importance to Tasmania is the recognition by all state, territory and the Australian governments of regional differences in pest status and biosecurity risks. At present, regional differences are taken into account with respect to pest status and establishment potential. The Tasmanian Government believes two additional criteria should be used: differences in magnitude of potential consequences; and feasibility of practically implementing measures where other criteria identify a higher risk. This then would take account of potential negative impacts on small economies and regional brand-based economies, and can consider appropriate risk mitigation measures that are feasible due to such factors as geographic barriers.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**

- Transparent and consistent biosecurity decision-making process consistent with international obligations.
- Criteria enabling clear priority determination of eradication/management activities based on optimal environmental, economic and social benefits for Tasmania.
- A system able to model risks and assess suitability of risk mitigation measures where risks are identified, with feedback mechanisms to improve model operation.
- Broad community understanding of risk, ALOP and biosecurity risk decision-making process used by the Tasmanian Government.

**This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:**

- Consistently applying Tasmania’s risk analysis framework when making biosecurity related decisions.
- Publication of risk analysis reports that State biosecurity regulations and requirements are based on.
- Development and delivery of training and information sessions for all biosecurity stakeholders on ALOP and the biosecurity risk decision-making process used by the Tasmanian Government.
Outcomes and Actions that Apply at the Border

2. Border Protection

**Background:** Quarantine activities conducted at the border are designed to help prevent the entry of biosecurity threats. Quarantine Tasmania, through the Biosecurity and Product Integrity Division (BPID) of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE), provides a range of domestic and international import and export quarantine services under various Commonwealth and State legislation. Services under Commonwealth legislation are provided under a Service Level Agreement with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Biosecurity. Activities are supported by a team of quarantine officers and detector dogs located at various points of entry throughout the state.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**
- Effective and appropriately resourced quarantine activities that provide levels of protection from biosecurity threats based on risk-return.
- Best practice tools and processes to complement other State biosecurity system activities.
- Appropriate tools and infrastructure to handle illegal imports/quarantine risk materials detected at the barrier.
- Electronic certification systems in relation to imports and exports.

This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:
- Maintaining an effective quarantine barrier as a component of the biosecurity continuum.
- Providing audit services as part of co-regulatory approaches to biosecurity regulation.
- Developing and implementing digital systems of certification and record keeping.

**Outcome 2:**
Effective risk-based border protection from pest incursions that pose a biosecurity threat to the State.
Outcomes and Actions that Apply
Post-Border

3. Surveillance and Monitoring

Background:
As an island state with natural geographic barriers, Tasmania can prevent many biosecurity threats being realised. The Strategy recognises the need for internationally-compliant surveillance and survey systems delivered by a range of stakeholders to provide confidence in determining pest and disease status in Tasmania. An essential component is being aware well in advance of the possibility of threats and this is achieved in part by national and international networks identifying potential incursions at an early stage. The role of the broader community, including landholders and Natural Resource Management organisations in surveillance activities through active and passive surveillance programs, citizen science initiatives, and general awareness campaigns is yet to be fully realised but will be built on in this Strategy. The other essential component to survey and surveillance mechanisms is a contemporary diagnostic capacity supported by modern laboratory infrastructure and skilled staff.

Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:
• An advanced integrated early warning system for pests and diseases based on a combination of field surveillance and technological assessments.
• Effective gathering of community observations as part of a State surveillance system.
• Survey and surveillance technologies and systems that are employed as they become available to ensure a leading edge surveillance system.
• Nationally-agreed and internationally-consistent surveillance standards.
• Suitably accredited and modern diagnostic tools and laboratories to support survey, surveillance and biosecurity response activities in Tasmania.
• Government participation in national diagnostic networks.
• Appropriate sharing of information and knowledge on biosecurity issues between stakeholders both locally and nationally.

This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:
• Developing a partnership approach to survey and surveillance work using available advanced trapping technologies and digital capture of survey data.
• Using nationally consistent approaches to survey and surveillance activities that meet national standards and allow for data aggregation.
• Pursuing and maintaining national accreditation of government biosecurity diagnostic laboratories including the maintenance of appropriately registered quarantine facilities.
• Community participation in surveillance activities resulting in a much more alert and aware population.

**Background:** The key to maintaining a high biosecurity status includes maintaining the capability to respond to incursions and outbreaks that threaten Tasmania’s biosecurity status.

‘Capability’ means trained people; partnerships; systems; agreed arrangements; equipment and supplies ready for safe, efficient and effective response and recovery operations.

Therefore the Tasmanian Biosecurity System includes an emergency preparedness program. Its objective is to ‘develop and maintain a Tasmanian capability to effectively respond to and recover from biosecurity emergencies affecting people, terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals in production industries and the natural environment’.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**

- Formalised cost-sharing arrangements for biosecurity incursions and outbreaks.
- Defined authority, roles and responsibilities for biosecurity emergency management.
- Active and constructive partnerships for biosecurity emergency management between Governments, industries and relevant organisations.
- Pre-agreed state-wide arrangements for all biosecurity hazards with complementary issue-specific contingency plans where appropriate.
- A preparedness program that provides for a Tasmanian capability and addresses national targets.

**This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:**

- Implementing and maintaining appropriate funding arrangements that enable effective response to biosecurity incursions and outbreaks.
- Advocating for, and contributing to, a comprehensive, consistent and sustainable national approach to biosecurity emergency management for Tasmania.
- Growing and refining the existing Tasmanian biosecurity emergency management capability, especially with regard to trained and competent people.
5. Policy and Planning

**Background:** Biosecurity responsibilities are spread across the private sector and a range of State Government agencies. For example, animal diseases that may infect humans (zoonoses) involve the DPIPWE and the Department of Health and Human Services as well as emergency services such as the Department of Police and Emergency Management. Strategic biosecurity approaches require policy and planning that complement the biosecurity activities of all organisations. This minimises conflict and improves the efficiency of the whole biosecurity system. Though biosecurity policy is a complex area, policies that are transparent, consistent and science-based are defensible at an international level.

The Strategy is built on eight policy principles (Appendix B). This ensures the State’s approach to biosecurity is consistent with the rest of Australia and the world while clearly identifying the basis for maintaining and improving on the high level of biosecurity in Tasmania. Tasmania participates in the biosecurity policy development process at a national level through its representation on relevant Government technical committees, standing committees and ministerial councils. Biosecurity matters are routinely discussed and addressed across all states/territories and in conjunction with the Australian Government.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**
- The Tasmanian Biosecurity Committee (TBC) as the lead committee to develop policy advice for the Tasmanian Government and to oversee the implementation of a strategic approach to biosecurity in Tasmania.
- Co-ordination of biosecurity activity across the whole-of-Government with appropriate stakeholder engagement via oversight of the TBC.
- A consistent approach to biosecurity risk prioritisation and investment to address Tasmanian biosecurity policy objectives.
- Engagement with national biosecurity developments with State representation guided by the Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy.

This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:
- Operation of the TBC on behalf of the Tasmanian Government by Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water, and Environment.
- Consistently applying Tasmania’s risk analysis framework when making biosecurity related decisions.
- Ensuring appropriate State representation in the national biosecurity forum through participation in national biosecurity advisory and decision-making committees.
6. Roles and Responsibilities

**Background:** All Tasmanians and visitors to Tasmania have a role to play in protecting the biosecurity status of Tasmania. For example:

- Importers must be aware of, and comply with, quarantine regulations.
- Those entering the State have a responsibility to abide by Tasmania’s quarantine laws and declare items of quarantine concern or dispose of those items before they enter the State.
- Transport industries have a responsibility to comply with quarantine regulations and adopt sound hygiene procedures.
- Tourism operators must abide by quarantine regulations and address biosecurity issues in the conduct of their business.
- Primary producers in Tasmania are responsible for good farm biosecurity planning and practice. They are required to advise the appropriate authorities of anything unusual and to manage biosecurity risks on their properties.
- All land managers should be vigilant and report anything unusual or of concern and manage biosecurity risks on their land.
- Private animal health providers and crop advisers should report anything unusual in animals and crops.
- Hobby farmers and those with small blocks of land should understand and act on the importance of biosecurity.
- Recreational users of our environment should be alert to anything unusual that may pose a biosecurity threat and report it.
- Government has a responsibility to raise awareness and provide information to assist stakeholders to identify and report the unusual and to implement appropriate regulatory structures. All sections of Government must work together to address biosecurity matters to maintain maximum efficiencies.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**

- A Biosecurity State Consultative Committee to advise Government and facilitate co-operative decision-making.
- Defined roles and responsibilities for all biosecurity stakeholders especially in biosecurity policy, planning, operational delivery and emergency management with supporting agreements and memoranda-of-understanding where appropriate.
- Recognition and acceptance by all stakeholders (government, industry, broader community and users of the environment) of their responsibilities in protecting Tasmania’s biosecurity status.
• Baseline infrastructure standards (facilities, capacity and capability) are met as required under national agreements and cost-sharing deeds that the Tasmanian Government is party to.

This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:

• Informing biosecurity stakeholders of biosecurity developments and providing them the opportunity to contribute to the biosecurity system development through consultation wherever possible.

• Communication programs that inform stakeholders of their biosecurity responsibilities and obligations.

• Maintaining appropriate biosecurity system infrastructure to deliver on State responsibilities.

• Maintaining a mechanism for the reporting of unusual biosecurity events and diseases.
7. Legislation and Regulation

**Background:** A number of pieces of legislation (many with accompanying regulations) impact on biosecurity capacity and the delivery of an effective biosecurity system (Appendix C). Tasmania’s emergency management legislation, the *Emergency Management Act 2006*, provides a framework for a whole-of-government approach to planning, preparedness, operational coordination, community participation, and recovery in an emergency response. Compliance and investigation activities in the lead biosecurity agency, DPIPWE, are covered by an overarching compliance and enforcement policy. Investigative activities are currently conducted according to the relevant legislation but consistent with this policy.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**

- Comprehensive, complementary and current State legislation that both protects and enhances Tasmania’s biosecurity.
- Published and accessible import requirements and regulations.
- Ongoing review of all existing legislation that contributes to the biosecurity system in Tasmania.
- Co-regulatory approaches to import requirements investigated and adopted where appropriate with recognition of competent third party inspection.

**This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:**

- Developing and implementing a review program for biosecurity related legislation to ensure laws and regulations supporting the Tasmanian Biosecurity System are contemporary and current.
- Develop, publish, and maintain electronic and searchable databases of quarantine import requirements.
- Work with stakeholders to identify and develop co-regulatory opportunities for equivalence to biosecurity regulations to ensure application of regulation is least-restrictive but meets biosecurity system requirements.

**Outcome 7:**

Comprehensive and complementary State legislation that assists domestic trade, helps Tasmania comply with its rights and obligations in international trade, provides risk-based protection for Tasmania’s natural environment, and effectively protects and enhances Tasmania’s biosecurity status.
Outcome 8: Relevant stakeholders effectively engaged in partnerships with Government to manage biosecurity risks.

8. Partnerships

**Background:** Biosecurity issues generally impact on a range of stakeholders. Partnership approaches to developing preventative and responsive mechanisms can have significant benefits for all involved. Some formal partnerships exist, e.g. Biosecurity Technical Group (BTG), industry-government working groups, and a range of informal partnerships also have been established.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**

- Formal partnerships of stakeholders (Government and non-Government) involved in biosecurity system implementation to maximise efficiency and effectiveness.
- Effective working relations with jurisdictions in other States/Territories and the Commonwealth as well as with Local Government.
- Co-regulatory approaches to import requirements investigated and adopted where possible with recognition of competent third party inspection.
- Recognition of stakeholder responsibilities implementing the Tasmanian Biosecurity System.

**This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:**

- Formation and operation of a Biosecurity State Consultative Committee with membership of government, industry, and other stakeholders who are partners in the effective operation of the Tasmanian Biosecurity System.
- Investigation of co-investment opportunities for stakeholders to assist in delivering on Tasmanian Biosecurity System requirements.
- Work with stakeholders to identify and develop co-regulatory opportunities for equivalence to biosecurity regulations to ensure application of regulation is least-restrictive but meets biosecurity system requirements.
9. Training and Education

**Background:** Biosecurity is of great importance to Tasmania. It is essential that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the what, why and how of the biosecurity system. Importantly, stakeholders need to have the appropriate knowledge of what they can do on an individual basis and the measures available to them to manage biosecurity risk or to achieve their biosecurity goals.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**
- Access to biosecurity educational and training material.
- Internet based training and awareness systems available for all biosecurity stakeholders.

**This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:**
- Development of a State biosecurity system portal with easy access to available online biosecurity training and awareness material.
- Participation of relevant industry biosecurity representatives in State biosecurity emergency preparedness training activities.
- Formal recognition of non-government biosecurity stakeholders who are leaders and champions in contributing to the operation of the Tasmanian Biosecurity System.

**Outcome 9:**
Biosecurity stakeholders understand how the Tasmanian Biosecurity System operates and contributes to the minimising of biosecurity risks and threats.
10. Research, Development and Extension

**Background:** Research, development and extension activities are important to generate, refine and disseminate new knowledge relevant to biosecurity. Pest and diseases pose an evolving threat with emerging invasive species, new strains of existing species and changed distribution of species potentially altering biosecurity risk. Biosecurity requirements for import and export may periodically change and it is important to update and disseminate knowledge relating to risk of incursions, regional pest and disease status and disinfestation processes. It is also important to continually improve diagnostic capabilities to support these processes.

**Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:**

- Research, development and extension capacity and activities that support the identification, evaluation and management of biosecurity risks.
- Targeted surveys and surveillance for pests and diseases of biosecurity interest to support area freedom status, monitor pest and disease incidence and spread, early detection of potential threats to the natural environment, and provide early warning of incursions.
- Development and implementation of models to evaluate risk of invasive species if incursion occurs.
- Development and implementation of improved diagnostic systems for pest and disease detection and differentiation.
- Continual improvements in knowledge of the biology, strain diversity and pest risk of evolving biosecurity threats.
- Development and implementation of new or improved disinfestation or eradication procedures as appropriate.

**This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:**

- Alignment of State biosecurity research, development, and extension programs with national institutions and programs wherever possible to ensure maximum leverage in generating information to support the Tasmanian Biosecurity System.
- Review of current survey and surveillance activities to ensure such activities are contemporary, apply available technologies, and are consistent with State and national standards for data collection.
- Application of contemporary diagnostic procedures in operation of State animal and plant health diagnostic facilities.
II. Communication

Background: Communication programs help prevent biosecurity risks by raising awareness among stakeholders, the community and visitors to Tasmania. DPIPWE’s stakeholder advisory service has more than 750 registered biosecurity stakeholders. It provides regular updates on relevant biosecurity-related matters. There are a broad range of approaches available to ensure the community is aware of the Tasmanian biosecurity system in operation including the traditional print, radio and TV media as well as the new media including social networking.

Tasmanian Biosecurity Requirements:

• Increased awareness of biosecurity issues and the importance of the biosecurity system in the community and among Tasmanian stakeholders.

• Targeted communications programs for industry and other stakeholder groups, with emphasis on small holders/hobby farmers, importers, exporters, and recreational users of the environment.

• High profile communication vehicles such as publications, books and web-based resources profiling biosecurity activity in Tasmania.

• Biosecurity information consolidated on a dedicated website in Tasmania to provide public access to all relevant information as well as training/educational material.

• Identified, trained and credible spokespeople to act as the public face of biosecurity in Tasmania delivering consistent biosecurity messages.

• Active participation in the development and implementation of the national engagement and communication framework.

This outcome will be achieved and requirements met through actions including:

• Development and delivery of a State Biosecurity Communications plan of activities and developments that target biosecurity stakeholders with an objective of influencing behaviours and improving understanding.

• Use of a range of traditional communication channels including various media such as print, radio and television.

• Application of contemporary communication tools and technologies such as social media, mobile information technology applications and information delivery.

• Alignment of biosecurity communication activities amongst stakeholders such as government, industry, and Natural Resource Management groups.

• Integration into national biosecurity engagement and communication frameworks through the development of complementary communication activities and adoption of national communication messages.

Outcome 11:
Community awareness of biosecurity and confidence in the capability and effectiveness of the Tasmanian Biosecurity System.
Implementation, Review and Evaluation

The Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy guides the Tasmanian Government’s action on biosecurity issues. The Strategy outcomes will be achieved through the development and delivery of organisational work plans at a government and non-government level.

Government biosecurity programs and plans will be guided by the Strategy to ensure maximum synergies are achieved.

A set of milestones will be developed in order to track the progress of implementation of the Strategy. The milestones will be reported in an annual progress report to TBC. This information will be used to update all biosecurity stakeholders in Tasmania.

Interim reviews will be conducted by TBC on an annual basis with a formal review and evaluation by TBC and other biosecurity stakeholders during 2016 ahead of strategy finalisation in 2017.
Publications


Websites

Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water, and Environment (Tasmania)
www.dipwe.tas.gov.au

Tasmanian consolidated legislation online
www.thelaw.tas.gov.au

National pests and disease outbreaks
www.outbreak.go.au

Weeds Australia: An Australian Weeds Committee Initiative
www.weeds.org.au

Plant Health Australia Ltd.
www.planthealthaustralia.com.au

Animal Health Australia
www.animalhealthaustralia.com.au

Biosecurity New Zealand
www.biosecurity.govt.nz

AQUAVETPLAN
www.affa.gov.au/aquavetplan

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Biosecurity New Zealand
www.biosecurity.govt.nz

AQUAVETPLAN
www.affa.gov.au/aquavetplan
Many people and organisations assisted in the review and update of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy and it is not possible to name everyone but the Tasmanian Biosecurity Committee would like to particularly thank the following individuals and organisations who were members of the writing team:

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Acronyms

ALOP: Appropriate Level of Protection
BTG: Biosecurity Technical Group
DPIPWE: Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (Tasmania)
EADRA: Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement
EPPRD: Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed
IGAB: Inter-Governmental Agreement on Biosecurity
IMO: International Marine Organisation
SPS: Sanitary Phytosanitary Agreement
TBC: Tasmanian Biosecurity Committee
WTO: World Trade Organisation
Glossary

**Appropriate Level of Protection:** In the context of international agreements, the Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP) defines a WTO member’s accepted level of risk in the context of international trade. Risks associated with imports, for example, are subsequently assessed against the ALOP. Where risks are deemed not to satisfy ALOP, mitigation measures would be imposed to the point where the ALOP is reached. If risk cannot be mitigated to the level of the ALOP, the activity (import) is deemed unacceptable. Tasmania’s ALOP is set at a ‘very low risk’ level.

**Biosecurity:** Biosecurity is the protection of industries, the environment and public well-being, health, amenity and safety from the negative impacts of pests, diseases and weeds.

**Phytosanitary Measure:** Any legislation, regulation or official procedure with the purpose of preventing or minimising the introduction and/or spread of plant quarantine pests.

**Risk Analysis:** Refers to the consistent application of a process of assessing the risk of an activity/situation, determining if the risk can be managed (mitigated) to an acceptable level, and communicating the results of the risk assessment and possible mitigation measures. In the Tasmanian biosecurity system this is undertaken using the Tasmanian Biosecurity Risk Analysis Framework.

**Standard Operating Procedures:** Formal set of documented procedures designed to ensure consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness across an organisation in undertaking a range of activities.

**Zoonoses:** Diseases of animals, such as rabies or psittacosis that can be transmitted to humans.
Appendices

Appendix A: Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (IGAB) - Schedule Summary

The purpose of the IGAB is to "enhance Australia’s biosecurity system and strengthen the collaborative approach between the Commonwealth of Australia and state and territory governments to address Australia’s broad range of biosecurity issues"\textsuperscript{11}.

Schedules describing areas of collaboration:

• **Schedule 1**: Refers to governance and administrative arrangements of the Agreement.

• **Schedule 2**: A consistent approach to biosecurity risk prioritisation and investment to address economic, environmental and social objectives across the biosecurity continuum.

• **Schedule 3**: A collaborative approach to collecting, collating, analysing, storing and sharing biosecurity information to improve decision-making and enhance operational efficiency.

• **Schedule 4**: Early detection and accurate, timely diagnosis of pests and diseases of concern to reduce economic, environmental and community impacts using an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach.

• **Schedule 5**: A strategic, consistent, scientific, risk-based approach to managing the impacts of established pests and diseases.

• **Schedule 6**: Improved cooperation between the Parties to increase stakeholder and beneficiaries awareness, and enhance the effectiveness, of biosecurity activities through communication and engagement.

• **Schedule 7**: An enhanced level of preparedness and consistent response arrangements across jurisdictions to assist in the effective and timely management of biosecurity incidents and emergencies.

\textsuperscript{11} Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity: An agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia, state and territory governments to strengthen the national biosecurity system. 2011. P.2
Appendix B: Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy

Tasmania’s biosecurity policy objective is “to protect and enhance Tasmania’s biosecurity status for the benefit of Tasmania’s industries, environment and public well-being, health, amenity and safety.”

This policy objective is to be realised through the effective adoption of the following eight policy principles. The policy objective and these principles form the Tasmanian Biosecurity Policy.

1. Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP)

Tasmania’s ALOP is set at a ‘very low level of risk’. Each World Trade Organisation (WTO) member country determines its own ALOP. The ALOP is applied through the setting of sanitary and phytosanitary measures on imports. These measures must be scientifically based, transparent and consistently applied. The Australian Government’s ALOP is stated as “a high or very conservative level of protection aimed at reducing risk to very low levels, while not based on a zero risk approach.” Similarly, Tasmania recognises that zero risk is not possible and a managed approach to risk is practical and desirable. The Australian Government’s ALOP statement is considered acceptable as an over-arching statement provided that it is suitably qualified so as to avoid arbitrary interpretation and outcomes. The Tasmanian Government has determined an ALOP that is consistent with the Commonwealth’s ALOP. In practical terms: Tasmania’s appropriate level of protection (ALOP) is a high or very conservative level of protection aimed at reducing risk to very low levels, while not based on a zero risk approach.

Tasmania’s ALOP requires that for any disease/pest, one of three criteria must be met before the importation of a commodity will be permitted:

- The disease/pest must be assessed by the hazard identification step in the biosecurity decision-making process as not being a disease/pest of concern; OR
- The risk estimate for the disease /pest in association with a particular commodity must result in a “very low risk” (acceptable without additional risk management) or lower on the risk evaluation matrix ; OR
- “Risk management measures” are implemented to reduce the risk estimate for the disease/pest associated with a particular commodity so that it results in a “very low risk” or lower on the risk evaluation matrix.

2. Least Restrictive Sanitary and Phytosanitary Requirements

The Tasmanian Government applies a range of sanitary and phytosanitary measures that are the least trade-restrictive measures available that will satisfy our ALOP. This approach is consistent with our international obligations.
3. Evidence-Based Risk Analysis
The Tasmanian Government’s biosecurity decision-making is founded on a scientific-based risk analysis framework consistent with Tasmania’s ALOP. Tasmanian biosecurity decisions and subsequent quarantine measures and/or management are based on processes that employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative risk assessments based on expert opinion, published information and risk assessment models. Methodology is applied consistently and in a transparent manner. This forms the Tasmanian Biosecurity Risk Analysis Framework.

4. Regional Difference
The Government believes that as an island State, Tasmania has a genuine regional biosecurity difference. This is with respect to not only current pest/disease status and potential for establishment but potential differences in consequence and Tasmania’s ability as an island State to implement quarantine measures that may not be available to States without similar geographic barriers.

5. Risk-Based Resource Allocation
In assessing, and responding to biosecurity risks, the Tasmanian Government recognises that resources should be allocated according to risk. Thus resources for pre-barrier, barrier and post-barrier services are allocated to achieve the greatest reduction in the highest priority risks.

6. Cost-Benefit Decision-Making on Control and Eradication
The Tasmanian Government bases its decisions on the control and eradication of pests, diseases, and weeds on cost-benefit considerations. Public resources therefore are only allocated to the control and eradication programs that provide the most cost-effective benefit for the community.

7. Whole-of-Government Approach to Biosecurity
The Tasmanian Government recognises that the maintenance and enhancement of Tasmania’s biosecurity status can be effectively addressed only with a whole-of-Government strategic approach. Progressing this approach is the prime responsibility of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Committee.

8. Shared responsibilities
The Tasmanian Government has a leadership role in biosecurity but a strong and active biosecurity system is a shared responsibility of Government, the Tasmanian community, the corporate sector and visitors to Tasmania. All levels of Government, public sector agencies, primary producers, importers, exporters, transport industries, environmental managers (State and private), non-Government organisations, service providers, tourism operators, visitors to Tasmania, and the Tasmanian community have a role to play. Our relative freedom from pests, diseases and weeds that occur elsewhere is a part of what makes Tasmania a good place to live. It also provides a strong competitive marketing advantage for our primary produce both in Australia and overseas. Recognising this, all who benefit from Tasmania’s biosecurity status should share in the resourcing and management of Tasmania’s biosecurity system.
Appendix C: Statutes that provide legislative support to the Tasmanian Biosecurity System

**State**
- Plant Quarantine Act 1997
- Animal Health Act 1995
- Seeds Act 1985
- Weed Management Act 1999
- Inland Fisheries Act 1995
- Animal Welfare Act 1993
- Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1995
- Gene Technology Act 2001
- Nature Conservation Act 2002
- Vermin Control Act 2000
- Biological Control Act 1985
- Genetically Modified Organisms Control Act 2004
- Police Powers (Public Safety) Act 2005
- Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994
- Forestry Act 1920
- Cat Management Act 2012
- Public Health Act 1997 (Tas)
- International Health Regulations Act 1974

**Commonwealth**
- Quarantine Act 1908\(^\text{12}\)
- Export Control Act 1982
- Imported Foods Control Act 1992
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

\(^{12}\text{At time of writing this document, the Australian Government was seeking comment on the Biosecurity Bill 2012 intended to replace the Quarantine Act 1908.}\)