

BIOSECURITY 2025

Making it happen

Issue 1 | 15 May 2017

Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of *Biosecurity 2025: Making it Happen*, where we'll keep you regularly updated on what's happening to implement the [Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement](#).

It's your gig too

Biosecurity 2025 has given clear direction – we are now putting together the detail on how to get there. But the only way we're going to achieve the goals set out in Biosecurity 2025 is for the community to work together and share information and ideas. This e-newsletter has been developed to capture and share this information so we're really keen to hear what's happening out there and welcome your input and ideas for future issues.



**Roger Smith, MPI's Chief
Operations Officer and Chair of the
Biosecurity 2025 Steering Group**

[A message from Roger Smith, MPI's Chief Operations Officer and Chair of the Biosecurity 2025 Steering Group.](#)

Having problems downloading the link? You can read Roger's message here.

"Hi, I'm Roger Smith and I'm the Chief Operations Officer at MPI. In my day job I live and breathe biosecurity, so I was very lucky to be there last November for the launch of the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement. Part of that strategy is about ensuring that everyone is engaged in what we're doing and can contribute to what we're doing.

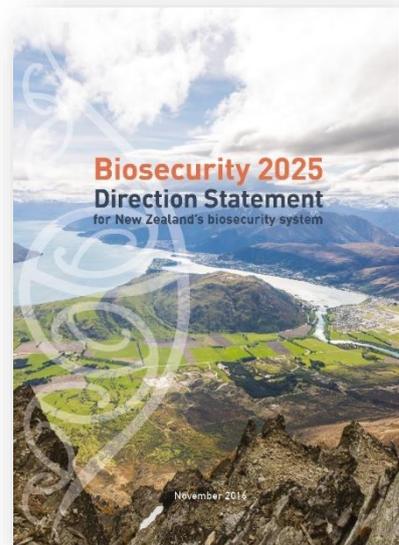
We need 4.7 million people in this project. So today we launch the Biosecurity 2025 newsletter, and I'm asking you to be part of our team. Read our newsletter, provide us feedback on our newsletter, tell us what you're thinking, and share your thoughts. And let's make Biosecurity 2025 a reality for everybody."

Strong response to public consultation

During August and September 2016, New Zealanders were asked to have their say on proposals for a Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement for New Zealand to update the existing biosecurity strategy. MPI received 139 written submissions from a range of people and organisations across New Zealand.

The opportunity to comment on the discussion document was only one of the ways that people engaged in developing the Direction Statement. Forums for engagement included 21 public meetings held in eight centres across the country, hui in six centres and seven other stakeholder workshops. Workshops were also held to gather feedback on the draft Direction Statement before it was approved by Cabinet.

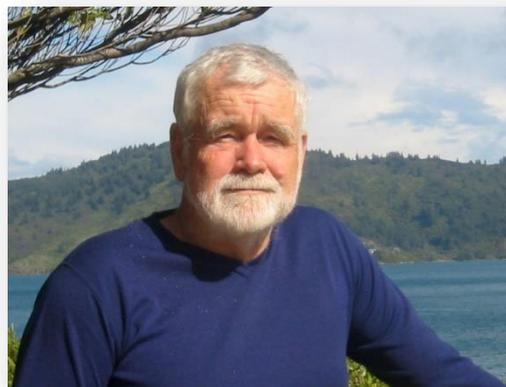
The Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement which was launched late last year by the Minister for Primary Industries Nathan Guy at the Biosecurity Forum, will guide our biosecurity system through to 2025 and beyond. We're now in the next phase, which is to develop the Biosecurity 2025 Implementation Plan to turn the Direction Statement into a reality.



Dr John Hellstrom: biosecurity pioneer

For Dr John Hellstrom, developing new systems for protecting native biodiversity and agriculture from pests and disease in New Zealand has been his life's work.

Widely regarded as a pioneer of biosecurity, John has held a number of influential positions during his 45-year career, including developing the 2003 Biosecurity Strategy. He's also received several awards and accolades such as the inaugural Minister's Biosecurity Award in 2016 and a New Zealand Order of Merit. Fourteen years on from developing the 2003 Biosecurity Strategy, his dedication to biosecurity still runs strong having recently chaired the Biosecurity 2025 Independent Peer Review Panel to provide independent oversight to Minister Guy on the Biosecurity 2025 project. We talk to John about his support for Biosecurity 2025 and what it's going to take to deliver it.



Dr John Hellstrom

Laying the foundations

The origins of a strategic direction for our biosecurity system stems from the vision of Simon Upton, the first Minister for Biosecurity, who established the now defunct Biosecurity Council in 1997.

"Before the 2003 strategy was developed, only a small group of New Zealanders knew about biosecurity and how it all worked, and even fewer saw themselves as having a significant role in supporting it," says John.

The six-year process to develop the 2003 strategy laid the foundations for one of its key goals to engage all New Zealanders in supporting biosecurity programmes. This goal is still relevant today.

Managing risk

"It's hard to believe that it's been 14 years since the original strategy was published and I'm proud to see that the work of the Biosecurity Council established is an enduring legacy that has guided the development of our current sophisticated and highly integrated biosecurity system. However, while

the direction of the 2003 strategy is still relevant, the risk profiles and the technologies available to mitigate threats have changed beyond imagination."

John is pleased to see how much better we've got at risk management to guide our decision-making and resource use over the last decade and a half.

"New Zealand is now world-leading in the way it analyses and manages biosecurity risk. There's a very clear separation of these two roles within the MPI structure and it's an important part of this strength. New Zealand is widely respected as taking a balanced rather than an extreme position. The focus on better tools, better information and better skills in Biosecurity 2025 builds on this strength."

"Because we can never eliminate risk, constantly getting better at identifying and responding to threats is our only option to effectively utilise our biological resources."

“*Because we can never eliminate risk, constantly getting better at identifying and responding to threats is our only option to effectively utilise our biological resources.*”

Engaging a whole new generation of players

John believes the themes set out in the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement have very broad support and that's exactly what's needed to strengthen our biosecurity system.

"For Biosecurity 2025 to reach its targets, it must engage a broad range of people and businesses. This means the process for Biosecurity 2025 is as important as its content."

He says that good governance is an important part of delivering the Biosecurity 2025 Implementation Plan.

"Wisdom and inclusiveness in leadership and governance is central to fulfilling that insight that we identified in 2003 – the concept that biosecurity is everyone's responsibility – and that concept is even more relevant in today's faster moving and riskier world."

"Biosecurity is much bigger than MPI, and all the players need to buy-in to what's being proposed. The process so far has worked pretty well and I'm optimistic that it can all come together."

Got a story to share? We'd love to hear from you. If you'd like to be profiled or have a story included in the next issue, please [email us](#).

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Implementation planning update

Once you've agreed a direction, you need a plan to get there – this is the Implementation Plan.

A Biosecurity 2025 Implementation Planning team is currently being established at MPI to lead the process of planning the implementation of the Direction Statement. This team will also provide secretariat support to the Steering Group and Working Groups.

A Steering Group and five Working Groups (one for each of the strategic directions) will do the heavy lifting to plan the implementation of Biosecurity 2025. Here's an update on the status of these groups.

The Steering Group

A Steering Group, made up of biosecurity system leaders, has been set up to oversee the work of the Working Groups and the development of the Implementation Plan to turn the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement into a reality. We need a Steering Group because the range of people and organisations is so diverse and because we need all the Working Groups to coordinate their work.

Their first meeting was held in early April and it was agreed that the role of the group is to lead the establishment and initial stages of the Biosecurity 2025 implementation process until more enduring governance arrangements are made.

Roger Smith, MPI's Chief Operations Officer and also Chair of the group, says he was enthused about the group's commitment. "I was impressed by the enthusiasm and willingness of participants to give up their time and expertise to get involved in this project," says Roger. "This is evidence of partnership in action. It's important that we all work together as we can only deliver this in partnership."

Members of the Steering Group Team

- Roger Smith – (Steering Group Chair) MPI
- Julie Collins – MPI
- Kimberley Crewther – Dairy Companies Associations of NZ (DCANZ)
- Steve Rich – GIA Secretariat
- Rob Phillips – Environment Southland
- Allan Ross – Department of Conservation
- Glenice Paine Māori/iwi
- James Buwalda – Better Border Biosecurity (B3)
- Graeme Marshall – Biosecurity Ministerial Advisory Committee (BMAC)
- Caroline McElnay – Ministry of Health
- Other members still outstanding will be from the border sector and the environmental sector
- Janet Chambers – MPI Secretariat

The Working Groups

Each Working Group will develop a Work Plan. The Working Group for Strategic Direction 1: A biosecurity team of 4.7 million, is developing a Work Plan which is also its Engagement Plan to help reach that broad group. Each Work Plan will set a course of action for a strategic direction up to 2025. The individual plans will contribute to the Biosecurity 2025 Implementation Plan which is expected to be completed by the end of 2017.

Strategic Direction 1 (SD1) is seen as central to delivering the other four directions, therefore the SD1 Working Group has been the first Working Group to be convened. The other Working Groups are currently being established and we'll keep you updated on these in the coming months.

SD1: A biosecurity team of 4.7 million – Working Group

Tim Fraser is leading the collaborative process to develop the 4.7 Million Engagement Plan. Feedback from the first meetings has been positive with people commenting on the enthusiasm of system participants to get involved.

Because there was so much interest in joining the working group for SD1, two groups were set up for this working group: a Core Group, which attends all the meetings, and a wider Reference Group is also being established. They will be kept informed of the work of the Core Group, provide input during the planning process, and will review and comment at key milestones. The Core Group and Reference Group may be brought together for specific workshops.

“We don't want those people who've put their names forward to miss out on the opportunity to have input,” says Tim Fraser. “They've put their hands up and we want to make sure they're heard too. For the plan to be successful, people need to feel as though they've had a hand in helping shape it.”

Members of the SD1 Working Group

- John Walsh – (interim Chair) MPI
- Andrew Harrison – Kiwifruit Vine Health
- Edy MacDonald – Department of Conservation
- Kelvin Hastie NEXT Predator Free Community Champion
- Alison Greenaway – Landcare Research
- Ed Massey – NZ Winegrowers
- Davor Bejakovich – Wellington Regional Council
- Dave Hodges – DairyNZ
- Brett Butland – Auckland Regional Council
- Melanie Mark-Shadbolt – Lincoln University and Alby Marsh – Plant and Food. Providing a Māori perspective
- James Ryan – TradeMe
- Richard Palmer – Horticulture NZ
- Kelly Bingham – Geography honours student, providing a youth perspective

Tim Fraser, MPI Planning Manager to build a team of 4.7 million

When he's not working on an engagement plan to build a biosecurity team of 4.7 million in his role as MPI's Planning Manager, Tim Fraser is working outdoors as a wood chopper and weed grubber on his recently acquired Wairarapa lifestyle block. We talk to Tim about his new role in leading the development of the 4.7 Million Engagement Plan and what it's going to take to build a biosecurity team of 4.7 million New Zealanders.

Describing himself as a master generalist, Tim's held a number of varied positions across different industries, most of which will be valuable in his current role. He developed the first-ever carbon credit sale in New Zealand, he's owned a textile manufacturing and export business, and a furniture upholstery design business, negotiated commercial partnerships for DOC, and worked in the Office of Treaty Settlements as a Deputy Director.

"And now, here I am, engaged in writing a plan to build a biosecurity team of 4.7 million which will undoubtedly be the biggest and most exciting challenge yet, and one that involves the entire country," says Tim.

Everyone has a stake in the success of our country's biosecurity system and the Engagement Plan will enable New Zealanders to understand the relevance of biosecurity in our everyday lives, he says.

"Unwanted pests and diseases entering and making a home in our country affects everyone. From seeing your favourite trees die, a river being degraded so the grandkids can't go out fishing with grandad, to being attacked by Argentinian fire ants or swarms of Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs at your BBQ, all of us could be affected at some level."

"We all need to pitch in to do our bit – if everyone's aware and understands the importance of biosecurity and develops some form of biosecurity behaviour like simply cleaning or checking for unwanted seeds or other nasties, New Zealanders will be able to enjoy the outdoors in years to come."

The Engagement Plan will identify some audiences and behaviours that could have a positive impact on biosecurity. Tim says that having a plan is only the first step – it's the actions that follow that will engage people. "To be successful we need, over the long term, to bed-in some simple behaviours that help minimise the risk of unwanted pests entering and taking hold in New Zealand. This isn't about developing a flash ad campaign promoting 'feel good' factors, it's about playing the long-game to achieve long lasting behaviour change".

Tim's had first-hand experience of potential biosecurity incidents much closer to home having recently upped sticks from Wellington city life for a taste of rural life in the Wairarapa. His spare time involves general paddock management and utilising all manner of petrol-powered tools and vehicles under the auspices of being a 'gentleman-farmer'.



Tim Fraser, Planning Manager, MPI

Unwanted pests and diseases entering and making a home in our country affects everyone.

This isn't about developing a flash ad campaign promoting 'feel good' factors, it's about playing the long-game to achieve long-lasting behaviour change.

“It’s amazing how many everyday biosecurity issues I’ve come across. I recently brought a quad bike back from the Marlborough Sounds. Half way across on the ferry I realised that it would’ve been a good idea to have hosed the mud off the bike before loading it – that would’ve been a good example of biosecurity in action.”

Tim says that one of the critical things about the Engagement Plan is that, like building a biosecurity team of 4.7 million, it needs to be developed and owned by everyone.

“Biosecurity is everyone’s responsibility,” says Tim. “For us to be successful, biosecurity needs to be collectively owned and implemented by all system participants – if it isn’t, we’ll have failed.”

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Take part in a nation-wide stocktake of biosecurity activities, coming soon

To help us develop an Engagement Plan for Strategic Direction 1: A biosecurity team of 4.7 million, we need to take a snap shot of what biosecurity activities and programmes are underway at an industry/stakeholder, takiwa and community level across New Zealand.

We'll use this information to identify what campaigns/activities could be expanded on or developed to support building a biosecurity team of 4.7 million.

A formal request to complete a survey will be going out to all biosecurity system participants soon. Please keep an eye out for it in your inbox.

Working together to tackle myrtle rust

Earlier this month, the discovery of myrtle rust at a Northland plant nursery sparked a major biosecurity operation of Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) staff on the ground, aided by staff from Department of Conservation and other agencies and industry partners under the Government Industry Agreement.

Myrtle rust is a serious fungal disease that threatens plants in the myrtle family, which includes some of New Zealand's iconic native trees such as pōhutukawa, rata and Mānuka. It also includes eucalypts and feijoa.



Myrtle rust

MPI's Chief Operations Officer, Roger Smith said that while it's unfortunate that myrtle rust has arrived in New Zealand, it's a good example of how building a biosecurity team of 4.7 million can benefit New Zealand's biosecurity system.

"It's thanks to the diligence of nursery staff who spotted and reported the find to us that we've been able to act so quickly. The earlier we find something, the better our chances of being able to deal with it," says Roger.

"We've also had a number of industry bodies and groups working with us, and the public has been called upon to become a 'biosecurity risk manager' by keeping an eye out for it."

“*...The earlier we find something, the better our chances of being able to deal with it.*”

“These are all great examples of New Zealanders playing a role in biosecurity and exactly the type of behaviour we're trying to encourage.”

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The fungus is thought to have arrived on the wind from Australia, which has had the plant disease since 2010. At this time it's not known how myrtle rust will behave in New Zealand conditions and what the impact would be on Mānuka, but it could have the potential to devastate native flora and the Mānuka honey and fruit industry.

Everyone is encouraged to keep an eye out for signs of myrtle rust. It appears as bright yellow/orange powdery patches on leaves of myrtle plants. Affected leaves may buckle or die off.

If you think you've seen myrtle rust, don't touch it or try to take a sample. Instead, take a photo, including of the affected plant, and contact MPI on 0800 80 99 66.

Primary industry stakeholders are rising to the challenge

There's a number of industry initiatives currently underway to deliver the goals and outcomes in the Biosecurity 2025 Direction Statement.

Biosecurity Ministerial Advisory Committee (BMAC) and Vice Chairman of Kiwifruit Vine Health, Graeme Marshall says that it's positive to see many industry groups already beginning to widely embrace Biosecurity 2025 as a key part of their own business strategies.

"Stakeholders across industry are rising to the challenge. I'm seeing a lot of passion and commitment amongst industry to protect not only sustainable commercial operations, but also the biodiversity of this beautiful country," says Graeme.

"They want to be, and are demanding to be, involved in those conversations. There's also a real richness in the exchange of information that's creating a much greater connection and understanding between a diverse range of stakeholders which is seeing people working together with the opportunity to forge wider partnerships – it's exciting to be a part of it."



Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr

Behaviour change workshop

A good example of an initiative instigated and led by industry is a workshop hosted by Kiwifruit Vine Health and DairyNZ in March on the application of science and psychology for behaviour change initiatives.

Around 60 participants from the primary sector took part in a workshop with international community-based social marketing expert, Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr, to explore how social marketing can strengthen on-orchard and on-farm biosecurity practices.

"The workshop helped us to better understand how people make behavioural decisions. We learned that we need to provide them with the right information, at the right time, and in a way that encourages them to commit to the biosecurity actions we're asking of them," says Graeme.

The initiative which was hatched at the Biosecurity 2025 launch late last year, was sponsored by MPI and nine organisations across the animal and horticulture sectors.

Graeme says that it's positive to have government and industry working together. However, MPI's role as a regulator sometimes affects its ability to share information which would enable greater understanding, and collaboration to support the opportunities available to everyone in B2025.

"Collaboration and partnership will be vital to the success of the project. It will become even more necessary to build on the momentum that's already been achieved."

"Watch this space for more biosecurity leadership initiatives from the primary sector."

MPI's latest Brown Marmorated Stink Bug awareness raising campaigns

In February, MPI launched a [new video](#) about the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug with 'Bug man' Ruud Kleinpaste. It is targeted at the general public to raise awareness of the threat it poses to New Zealand's horticulture industry.

The video has already reached over 200,000+ people through MPI's social media channels, industry groups, and the mainstream media <http://bit.ly/2mr3yzA>.

Two animated videos have also been launched, reminding people to check their overseas post or luggage if they've been travelling, for any pests that may have snuck a ride to New Zealand.

Check these out on YouTube:

Mail: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE2AA6GMRJ0>

Traveller: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AWXnsB6yrE>



The 'stinky' Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (not to scale)