



October 2009 Achievements

In this edition:

Collaboration	1
Consistency	1
The Application	2
Training	2

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Collaboration

Rupert Woods from the **Australian Wildlife Health Network (AWHN)** and Karrie Rose from the **Australian Registry of Wildlife Health (ARWH)** met with BioSIRT on **October 6** to discuss using BioSIRT for **wildlife surveillance** in the near future. As a result of the meeting, Wildlife Health will be hosting BioSIRT **training** sessions at Taronga Zoo in **December**.

The **Animal Health Committee (AHC)** had a face to face meeting in **Hobart** on **13-14 October**. Debra Riddell, the National BioSIRT Program Manager, travelled to Hobart to provide the AHC with an update on BioSIRT activities including the recent Swine Influenza Virus (SIV) response in New South Wales and Queensland, and the **Abalone Viral Ganglionneuritis (AVG)** response in Tasmania.

The **National BioSIRT Standards Committee (NBSC)** also had their face to face meeting on **15 October** in **Adelaide**. The NBSC meeting is featured below.

Debra Riddell attended the **2nd International Conference on Risk Analysis and Crisis Response (RACR)** held at **Peking University** in Beijing, China from **19-21 October**. A

special feature on the RACR will be provided in next month's BLog.

A presentation on BioSIRT was made to the **Technical Review Group (TRG)** for their meeting on **28 October**. The TRG is a group of technical experts representing the Australian Government and each state and territory's agriculture department, and the CSIRO. **Foot and Mouth Disease** was the example **emergency response** demonstrated in BioSIRT, showing the event types by staff in Control Centres. The **integrated mapping facility** was of great interest and the ability of a trained BioSIRT **Administrator** to make changes during a response was particularly welcomed as it is a rare emergency response that runs according to plan.

Consistency

The National BioSIRT templates for **Varroa Mite of Bees (VMB)** and **Kapra Beetle (KHB)** will be presented to the NBSC for review in **November**.

Varroa mites (*Varroa destructor*) are external parasites of bees. The **Asian honey bee** (*Apis cerana*) and the Western honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) are the mites hosts. The mite causes **varroosis**, a very serious and complex parasitic mite infestation of honey bees resulting in **deformed bees**, reduced lifespan and ultimately the **destruction** of the colony or hive.



The most obvious **threat** posed by VMB is to bee and honey industries resulting in reduced **honey production**. Additionally crops that rely on **pollination** by honeybees would also be affected i.e. almonds, avocados, cotton, stone fruits, melons and pumpkins.

Varroa mites were discovered in **New Zealand** in 2000 and have already had an **immense** economic impact, with production, crop yields and export revenue. VMB is currently

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National BioSIRT Standards Committee F2F Meeting

The NBSC had a **face to face** meeting on **15 October** in **Adelaide**. A big thank you to the Dept. of Primary Industries and Resources South Australia (**PIRSA**) for hosting! An NBSC member from almost every **jurisdiction** was in attendance, as well as new members from the **Australian Biosecurity Information Network (ABIN)**, and the **Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL)**. The face to face meet provided a fantastic opportunity for open discussion on the Generic Disease (GDI) template that had recently been released. Further information on the GDI template is available overleaf. The Northern Territory has volunteered to host the **next** face to face meeting scheduled for **April 2010** in **Alice Springs**.

present on all continents except Australia.

The Application

The **Version 2.0 (V2.0)** installation package has been delivered to the **National Coordination Team (NCT)**. Version 2.0 includes **significant enhancements**. **Crystal Reporting** has been simplified to enable easier reporting across most aspects of BioSIRT data with a new set of views.

V2.0 has more **User features** and **Administrator tools** such as:

- Event records are now explicitly identified, making it easier to find records.
- Two new Instrument form fields.
- The same template can now be imported multiple times enabling quick setup for unexpected incidents.
- Standardisation of report parameters.
- "Save as" for quicker Event Filter creation

Training

The **NCT** will be providing **Administrator training** at the **Taronga Zoo** in **Sydney** from **1-3 December 2009**. For further information contact Karen.Absolon@daff.gov.au

A combined **Reports/ Resource Management Package (RMP) Workshop/ National BioSIRT Development Committee (NBDC)** meeting will take place in Canberra on **8-10 December**. For further information please contact Stephen.Pratt@daff.gov.au

...New Faces...

Stephen Pratt



*I joined the BioSIRT team in September after working in DAFF's Bureau of Rural Sciences for three years on projects with a **biosecurity** theme. A major focus was my collaboration with the **Urban Surveillance Program** run by the Office*

*of the Chief Plant Protection Officer. We developed methods to help State Agencies direct their limited surveillance effort against a range of potential **exotic plant pests** and target **high-risk** locations within **metropolitan** areas. We also helped them measure the efficacy of their surveillance.*

*I studied **organic chemistry** and have worked in research roles ranging from herbicide synthesis to industrial R&D and gas analysis. I worked extensively on the **grain fumigant phosphine** before doing my PhD on the mode of action of phosphine on grain insects. I have also had a strong interest in **IT**, developing **database systems** and learning several **computer languages** as a way to justify my 'need' for the latest, fastest computer at home.*

*I have lived in **Canberra** on and off; I keep on coming back! However I am now in the process of taking over my parents' farmlet on the **Richmond River** so planting rainforest trees in the warmth of winter provides a good counterpoint to the hectic pace of the **Nation's Capital**.*

Generic Disease Template

To prepare for a range of **potential threats**, the NBSC decided at the face to face meeting earlier this year in April on a **strategy** to develop a set of generic templates. The generic templates that were decided for development were the Generic Disease (GDI), Generic Disease with Vector (GDV), Generic Health Pest (GHP) and a Generic Pest Species (GPS) template. The first of these generic templates, the **Generic Disease (GDI) Template**, was released in October.

The GDI template is to be imported in response to a "Disease" where there is no template specific for the "Disease" available on the BioSIRT National Reference Library. The template was designed to be used across animal health including aquatic/marine, and plant health.

The **GDI template release package** was presented to the NBSC at their face to face meeting in October. The BioSIRT National Senior Administrator demonstrated the **GDI End to End Workflow**, the **GDI Event Process** and the **GDI template specification**. All of these are available to view on GovDex (www.govdex.gov.au).

The template is also available for national distribution on the **BioSIRT National Reference Library**.

