

## APPENDIX 1 – ABOUT ANIMAL HEALTH AUSTRALIA

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Animal Health Australia (AHA) is a not-for-profit company established by all Australian governments and the major livestock industries. There are 25 members in four categories:

- Australian Government
- State and territory governments
- Livestock industry organisations
  - Australian Alpaca Association Inc.
  - Australian Chicken Meat Federation Inc.
  - Australian Dairy Farmers' Limited
  - Australian Egg Corporation Limited
  - Australian Honey Bee Industry Council
  - Australian Horse Industry Council
  - Australian Lot Feeders' Association Inc.
  - Australian Pork Limited
  - Australian Racing Board
  - Cattle Council of Australia Inc.
  - Goat Industry Council of Australia
  - Harness Racing Australia
  - Sheepmeat Council of Australia Inc.
  - WoolProducers Australia
- Non-program participants/service providers
  - CSIRO – Australian Animal Health Laboratory
  - Australian Veterinary Association
  - Australasian Veterinary Deans Committee (membership pending)

The Company has adopted the following ‘defining statement’:

*Animal Health Australia is a dynamic partnership of governments and livestock industries that strengthens Australia’s animal health status and reinforces confidence in the safety and quality of our livestock products in domestic and overseas markets.*

*The partnership initiates and manages collaborative programs that improve animal and human health, food safety and quality, market access, animal welfare, livestock productivity and national biosecurity.*

Since AHA was established in 1996, the Company has established a credible record in managing a wide range of significant national animal health projects. It has also gained a commendable reputation for enhancing and strengthening Australia’s national animal health status by facilitating a variety of collaborative partnerships between AHA Members and other stakeholders in the interests of the national animal health system.

The national animal health system includes all organisations, government agencies, commercial companies and individuals that are involved in livestock production and their use. It is focused mainly on the production of food and fibre from terrestrial livestock species.

The system works to improve animal and human health, market access, food safety and quality, animal welfare, livestock productivity, biosecurity and the level of protection against emergency diseases.

AHA has developed a strategic framework for the national animal health system; refer to Appendix xx. The framework is designed to focus the priorities of participants in the system and report on progress of activities to achieve those priorities. It complements broader strategies covering other components of Australia's biological asset base. The strategic framework is linked to, and consistent with, the *Australian Biosecurity System for Primary Production and the Environment* (AusBIOSEC), and recognises the critical linkages with other areas including human health and food safety.

In the development of national animal health policy AHA, in conjunction with its Members, has influence at different levels through its membership of the Primary Industries Standing Committee and Primary Industries Health Committee; the latter has now been subsumed by the National Biosecurity Committee, where the Company will again be represented (see diagram p xx). The Company is a core participant of the Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre but has only a limited role in the coordination and prioritisation of research through the R&D corporations.

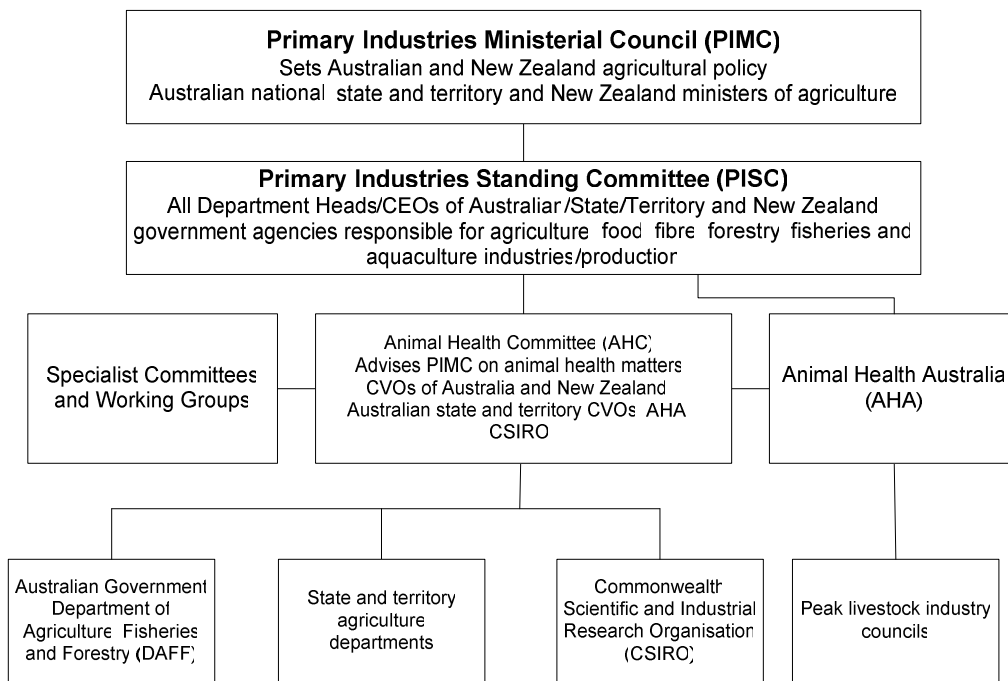
AHA plays a pivotal role in initiating, managing and brokering the funding for more than 50 national projects, in collaboration with our Members and other stakeholders in the national animal health system. It is important to note that these projects are jointly funded and jointly managed, and cover the broad areas of:

- National Animal Health Performance Standards
- Emergency animal disease preparedness, including EAD training
- Disease risk mitigation
- Endemic diseases
- Animal disease surveillance, including the National Animal Health Surveillance Strategy
- National animal health laboratory network
- Biosecurity planning
- Transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) freedom assurance
- Emergency animal disease vaccines
- National Johne's disease control
- Livestock welfare
- *Protect Australian Livestock Campaign*
- EAD communications.

AHA maintains a close working relationship with its counterpart organisation, Plant Health Australia (PHA), particularly in the development of biosecurity communications programs and emergency response planning. AHA and PHA are the custodians of two national Agreements involving all governments and major livestock and plant industry organisations –

the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement (EADRA) and the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed respectively. The two Agreements are essentially similar in the obligations placed on all signatories – including requirements for biosecurity planning and maintenance of an adequate response capability.

There are significant synergies that have been identified in addressing the need for broadly-uniform emergency response arrangements and plans. The further integration of communication networks through such initiatives as the *Australian Biosecurity Intelligence Network (ABIN)* and the *Biosecurity, Surveillance, Incident Response and Tracing (BioSIRT)* tool, is viewed as an important requirement of any emergency response in the future; ABIN and BioSIRT are covered in more detail, elsewhere in this submission.



**Some major relationships across the national animal health system**