

BIOSECURITY ACT 2015

Overview

Biosecurity is a shared responsibility

'GOVERNMENT, INDUSTRY AND THE PEOPLE OF NSW WORKING TOGETHER TO PROTECT THE ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY FROM THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS PESTS AND DISEASES, WEEDS AND CONTAMINANTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL PEOPLE IN NSW.'

From 1 July 2017, the *Biosecurity Act 2015* changes the way government, industry and the community manages biosecurity in NSW.

Supporting regulations, policies and procedures underpinning the Biosecurity Act, developed in consultation with our industry, community and government partners, have established a regulatory framework that can effectively respond to and manage biosecurity risks.

BACKGROUND

The NSW Government's NSW Biosecurity Strategy 2013 – 2021 is based on the principle that biosecurity is a shared responsibility between governments, industries and individuals. The Strategy outlines how government, industry and the community need to work together to identify, prevent, eradicate, minimise, respond to and manage biosecurity risks.

The Biosecurity Act complements that principle, and provides for a range of tools and powers that can be used to support risk based management and allow for increasing efficiency and decreasing regulation. We no longer need to wait before a pest or disease is listed before response action can be initiated, the Biosecurity Act allows for a response regardless of whether we know what the actual biosecurity matter is.

The Biosecurity Act has been developed to harmonise (where possible) with biosecurity legislation across Australia. It is a significant piece of modern legislation that will provide NSW with the essential tools and powers to manage animal and plant pests and diseases, weeds and contaminants that threaten the NSW economy, environment and community.

WHY IS BIOSECURITY IMPORTANT?

Biosecurity is important because it protects our economy, environment and community from the negative impacts of pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants.

Increased global trade, recreational travel and population are some of the factors contributing to increased biosecurity risks. The risks can impact market access both internationally and domestically, the supply of safe food, biodiversity and our social amenity

In NSW we have over 39,000 agricultural businesses, 42,000 farms and 66,000 people employed in the agriculture sector alone. This provides a contribution of over \$14 billion to the NSW economy, helping to secure regional growth and deliver on health and education outcomes.

Over 39 million people visit our 850 national parks and reserves per year. There are more than 350 species, populations and communities considered to be threatened by the impacts of pest animals across NSW, impacting on the quality of the experience for visitors.

Pests such as ticks impact negatively on like cattle horses and other stock but also have a significant and debilitating impact on human health. Hendra virus carried by bats can kill horses, dogs, and people if untreated. Red imported fire ants can destroy infrastructure such as landing lights on airport runways, debilitate primary industries, make sporting fields unusable and the weekend barbeque a thing of the past.

Not only is biosecurity vital for industry, it allows us to enjoy our unique natural landscape and healthy environment that is the envy of many.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE BIOSECURITY ACT?

The broad objectives for biosecurity in NSW are to manage biosecurity risks from animal and plant pests and diseases, weeds and contaminants by:

- preventing their entry into NSW
- quickly finding, containing and eradicating any new entries
- effectively minimising the impacts of those pests, diseases, weeds and contaminants that cannot be eradicated through robust management arrangements.

Specifically, the Biosecurity Act:

- embeds the principle that biosecurity is a shared responsibility
- provides modern, flexible tools and powers that allow effective management of pests and diseases, weeds and contaminants across the landscape regardless of whether it is private or public land
- minimises delays and defines responsibilities in emergency situations
- provides for risk-based decision making that enables a flexible approach to responding and managing biosecurity risks, regardless of the type of biosecurity matter
- supports a national approach to biosecurity and gives effect to intergovernmental biosecurity agreements.

The Biosecurity Act provides a flexible and responsive statutory framework to help achieve these objectives for the benefit of the NSW economy, environment and community. It allows for consideration of economic, environmental and community issues proportionate to risk when determining management arrangements. It also allows for an educative and advisory approach to be taken with stakeholders to help manage biosecurity risks.

It provides greater flexibility and choice for those who do the right thing in relation to biosecurity. For the minority of people who do the wrong thing, the Biosecurity Act includes strong enforcement tools, including significant penalty provisions especially for wilful or reckless acts.

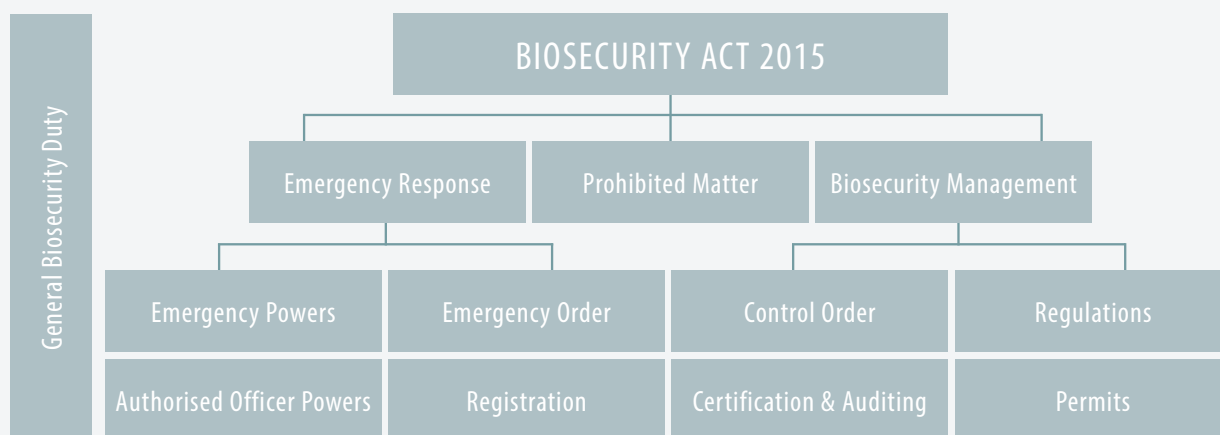
The Biosecurity Act applies to all land within NSW and all waters within the limits of the State.

WHAT ARE THE MANAGEMENT TOOLS IN THE BIOSECURITY ACT?

The Biosecurity Act includes a range of tools for the management of biosecurity threats and risks. The tools allow for the management response and practical requirements to be proportionate to the risk and include:

- a high-risk category known as prohibited matter, that acknowledges the severe consequences of some pests and diseases (such as foot and mouth disease and parthenium weed);
- emergency powers that allow swift action to be taken to respond to significant biosecurity risks to the economy, environment and community;
- a general biosecurity duty that provides that people who deal with biosecurity matter or a carrier, and who have knowledge of the biosecurity risks posed are to take reasonable steps to manage those risks; and
- numerous other management tools such as biosecurity zones control orders, registration, biosecurity certificates, biosecurity directions and permits.

OVERVIEW OF MANAGEMENT TOOLS



For more information about the Act, visit our website or contact us:

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