



## Boosting our Northern Biosecurity Frontline

We are protecting our agricultural exports and emerging industries in Northern Australia and building resilience to manage biosecurity threats while delivering biosecurity job opportunities for remote Indigenous communities, with efforts initially focusing on lumpy skin disease of cattle.

### What's in this year's budget

The Australian Government is boosting our biosecurity frontline across our northern borders to table current and emerging biosecurity threats at our doorstep.

#### Strengthening our biosecurity capacity across northern Australia

The 2022-23 Budget is providing \$61.6 million over four years to enhance biosecurity capability in northern Australia and protect the region from increasing biosecurity risks, including those with human health implications. This funding will target actions in regions of growth and high biosecurity risk in northern Australia to strengthen biosecurity, support agriculture, and proactively de-risk investment and business operations for the future.

#### What is being proposed

- **Enhancing biosecurity awareness, capability and surveillance in Northern Australia:** \$16.9 million over four years for projects and activities that build biosecurity awareness, surveillance and capability, with an early focus on lumpy skin disease.
- **Building regional resilience to manage biosecurity risks in Northern Australia:** \$17.0 million over four years, in partnership with northern state and territory governments, through the development and implementation of regional biosecurity plans, and deliver critical biosecurity infrastructure. Regional biosecurity plans will focus on lumpy skin disease, African swine fever and other priority pests and diseases.
- **Building technical preparedness and response capability to a potential outbreak of lumpy skin disease:** \$15.0 million over four years to reduce the risk of lumpy skin disease reaching Australia and to prepare our response capabilities if it does, including vaccine research, development and approval, building diagnostic capability and working with our near neighbours to support their preparedness and response capabilities..
- **Enhancing frontline biosecurity risk management across Northern Australia:** \$12.7m over four years to provide additional frontline capability to manage biosecurity risks in northern Australia, including additional Indigenous biosecurity officers, dedicated detector dogs in the north and fee for service to Indigenous service providers to deliver biosecurity functions in remote locations.

## Why is this important

Northern Australia is our frontline for biosecurity due to its proximity to near neighbours, such as Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste, and the presence of biosecurity risks close to Australian boundaries, which are able to spread via prevailing wind and sea conditions. Biosecurity risks are increasing in northern Australia due to the rapid current and projected economic growth in the region, which will open up new potential pathways for diseases, weeds and pests.

Implementation of the Government's *Our North, Our Future: 2021-2026 – Targeted Growth* will generate new economic growth opportunities across the north. These growth opportunities will generate new biosecurity risk profiles which require targeted actions to proactively minimise risk for investment and business operations, and provide better information for decision-makers. This proposal gives priority focus to de-risking regions across the north with heightened risks and that align with the Government's developing northern Australia agenda.

Lumpy skin disease has never been closer to our northern borders. This viral disease affects cattle and is spread primarily by biting insects which can cause fever, nodules on the skin and also lead to death. Without control measures, this disease has the potential to cause significant impacts on our cattle industry if it arrives in Australia.

Investment in the scientific understanding of the risks and the coordination of surveillance and response, including harnessing emerging technologies, must keep pace with the increasing biosecurity risks. This measure will implement targeted solutions to address current and emerging risks.

This measure will assist in the implementation of the 2030 Northern Australia Biosecurity Strategy which aims to address a critical 'care and capability' gap by creating a strong northern Australia biosecurity network. The Strategy connects government, industry, farmers, land managers and Indigenous communities to form an integrated general surveillance and reporting capability for northern Australia. The Northern Australia Biosecurity Reference Group, comprising of representatives from the northern jurisdictions and plant, animal and aquatic industry sectors, will play an important role in delivery of this measure. An associated Memorandum of Understanding between Commonwealth and northern jurisdictions is already in place and the existing governance structure is mature.

## How much will this cost

	2022-23 \$m	2023-24 \$m	2024-25 \$m	2025-26 \$m	TOTAL \$m
<b>Boosting our Northern Biosecurity Frontline</b>	10.4	18.6	17.2	15.4	61.6

## More information

For more information about our investment in biosecurity, visit [awe.gov.au/budget](http://awe.gov.au/budget)

For more information about the 2022-23 Budget visit [budget.gov.au](http://budget.gov.au)

