



**ACT**  
Government

# PROPOSED BIOSECURITY LEGISLATION FOR THE ACT

CONSULTATION SUMMARY  
REPORT

AUGUST 2018

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the consultation process that the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (the Directorate) carried out regarding the proposed new Biosecurity legislation for the Australian Capital Territory.

A community consultation period commenced on 12 June and concluded on 10 August 2018.

This summary report provides an overview of the consultation data provided to identify the key themes and a summary of the issues identified and the Directorate's response to those issues where appropriate.

## CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

The consultation methods used were designed to meet the Directorate's objective to ensure all stakeholder's views, concerns and ideas were both heard and captured.

Consultation methods are generally qualitative or quantitative and used together are complementary. To maximise exposure and participation in the consultation process a combination of these methods was chosen.

The following opportunities were devised and implemented to allow people to present their views in person and/or for people to participate from remote locations:

### INFORMATION SESSION

This session was devised to provide information to the community and enabled people to provide views and ask questions around the proposed new legislative framework.

### ONLINE SURVEY

Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected around each point of discussion within the discussion paper.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Posts placed on the Directorate's social media webpage informed the public of the biosecurity consultation and how to get involved.

## **PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

The Directorate promoted the review within the broader community and with key stakeholders in the following ways:

### **INFORMATION SESSION**

An information session was advertised and held in the local area to raise awareness of the consultation and provide people with additional information on the proposed legislation. The session was held in a central location with the aim of being available to answer questions for those who were aware of the consultation.

### **ONLINE SURVEY**

An online survey on the ACT Government's engagement website, YourSay, allowed the public to make submissions on the proposed biosecurity legislation.

### **NOTIFICATIONS TO OTHER AGENCIES**

Letters were sent to the Australian Government, the NSW Government, industry associations and local rural landholders to notify them of the proposed legislation and the consultation process and to request their assistance and participation.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Posts on the Directorate's social media webpage informed the public of the biosecurity consultation process and how to get involved.

## **PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSE RATE**

### **SURVEY RESPONSE**

The YourSay site was viewed 573 times during the survey period and received 439 visits; 19 submissions were received.

### **INFORMATION WORKSHOP**

25 participants attended the information workshop. Whilst no major issues or concerns were raised by the attendees during the session there was some discussion regarding how a person's biosecurity duty would be discharged. An information sheet will be prepared explaining this concept.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A list of existing stakeholders was developed for the engagement activities, with varying levels of involvement required. The Directorate notified all industry groups and all rural land holders about the consultation. The following stakeholders were consulted:

- > Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment
- > Animal Health Australia
- > ACT Weed Advisory Group
- > United Ngunnawal Elders Council
- > Nursery & Garden Industry Australia
- > Meat & Livestock Australia
- > Sheep meat Council
- > Cattle Council of Australia
- > ACT Rural Landholders Association
- > ACT Equestrian Association
- > ACT Beekeepers Association
- > Australian Veterinary Association
- > Emergency Services Authority
- > Department of Agriculture
- > NSW Department of Primary Industry
- > Plant Health Australia
- > AUSVEG

## SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS

The majority of submissions addressed current policy positions embedded in the present legislative framework while others proposed a stricter approach to biosecurity regulation in the Territory. All submissions reflected a general consensus that consolidated biosecurity legislation for the ACT is necessary.

Participants were in support of new legislation that is in concert with NSW's biosecurity legislative framework due to the geographically unique position of the ACT being landlocked and entirely surrounded by NSW. In addition, due to the lack of natural barriers between the ACT and NSW, biosecurity risks in NSW are intertwined with those of the ACT. Participants thought it is, therefore, appropriate that the ACT adopt a similar approach to the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)* in order to address the need for an efficient and unified response strategy to biosecurity threats.

### ISSUES RAISED

Participants were invited to share their views through responding to questions designed to harvest current concerns and ascertain the level of public awareness of biosecurity threats.

When asked to identify what they considered to be the main biosecurity threats to the ACT, participants said:

- > international flights
- > movement of stock or disease interstate
- > introduced vertebrates (including rabbits, pigs, deer, carp and Indian Myna) and transmission of zoonotic disease, e.g. Q fever
- > European Wasps and African Lovegrass and other invasive plant species
- > poor community understanding and lack of awareness of Biosecurity
- > destruction of natural habitat
- > chemical exposure to pollinators
- > movement of tropical disease and plants to lower latitudes due to changes in climate
- > multi-resistant organisms.

When asked to consider whether the proposed biosecurity legislative framework should be consistent with that currently in force in NSW legislation, the majority of participants were in support of a consistent legislative framework to ensure consistency and efficient cross-border management of biosecurity threats.

Participants were asked to consider whether the ACT needs a stricter compliance and enforcement regulatory framework. The majority of responses reflected the view that a stricter compliance and enforcement power is highly desirable. Some respondents took the view that a stricter framework is unnecessary as it has the potential to hinder innovation and creativity.

Participants listed the following activities when asked to identify three measures they would personally do to protect Australia's Biosecurity:

- > Report sightings of new incursions
- > Be mindful when returning to ACT after travel
- > Maintain private gardens/backyard and remove invasive plants
- > Be mindful of personal actions
- > Take part in Park-Care groups removing weeds
- > Use monitoring stations privately if permitted
- > Increase awareness of biosecurity

## PROPOSED BIOSECURITY LEGISLATION FOR THE ACT

Participants were invited to consider whether any additions would be necessary to the proposed legislative framework and provided the below suggestions:

- > Develop large-scale whole-of-country planning supporting weed and feral management
- > Provide incentives in the form of monetary payments for weed collection or feral animal hunting
- > Introduce strict liability offences for severe infringements based on intergenerational loss of productive landscapes
- > Introduce stricter tenure lease conditions (including on residential housing) to support wildlife
- > Implement stricter quarantine regulations at Australian ports and airports
- > Include all non-native fish species listed as noxious
- > Implement greater stakeholder engagement to ensure a robust end product
- > Develop a rigorous cost-benefit analysis before introducing the new legislative framework
- > Provide public access to nature reserves to enable the public to get involved in combating weeds and feral animals

Other general comments included suggestions to increase funding for weed removal programs.

A few submissions raised a concern that some existing plants with heritage values might also be classified as weeds due to Canberra being a landscape with many cultural heritage plantings as well as natural heritage value. The submissions emphasised the need to protect, conserve and manage these cultural heritage plants. Participants stressed the need for the proposed legislation to have regard to, and to reconcile, such conflicting values by drawing a distinction between garden landscapes and heritage plants.

### ACTION TAKEN

Submissions that raised concerns over current policy positions on the management of biosecurity in the ACT have been passed to the Parks and Conservation Services area within the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate for consideration. Submissions that addressed the proposed legislative framework are being considered in conjunction with the proposed new legislation.

### WHERE TO NEXT

Following confirmation through community engagement that an ACT Biosecurity Act is required, legislation will now be drafted. All submissions and survey responses that related to the biosecurity framework will be considered in the development of the new legislation. The community will have the opportunity to comment on the draft legislation, anticipated in November 2019.

# PROPOSED BIOSECURITY LEGISLATION FOR THE ACT

**ACT Parks and Conservation Service**  
12 June · 🌐

Many pests and diseases have found their way to our shores over the last 200+ years - think rabbits, European wasps, exotic weeds and equine influenza. We want your views on plans to improve the Territory's biosecurity so we can better respond to new and current biosecurity threats [www.yoursay.act.gov.au](http://www.yoursay.act.gov.au)

**5,279** People reached    **124** Engagements    **1,136** Clicks    [Boost Post](#)

👍 61    10 Comments    13 Shares

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share    🌐

### Performance for your post

**5,279** People Reached

**124** Reactions, comments & shares 📊

<b>83</b> Like	<b>61</b> On post	<b>22</b> On shares
<b>1</b> Love	<b>0</b> On post	<b>1</b> On shares
<b>26</b> Comments	<b>17</b> On Post	<b>9</b> On Shares
<b>14</b> Shares	<b>13</b> On Post	<b>1</b> On Shares

**1,136** Post Clicks

<b>475</b> Photo views	<b>30</b> Link clicks	<b>631</b> Other Clicks 📊
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**NEGATIVE FEEDBACK**

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<b>0</b> Report as Spam	<b>0</b> Unlike Page

Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

**ACT Parks and Conservation Service**  
22 June · 🌐

Biosecurity is the bee's knees for protecting the ACT's environment, agriculture industry and urban environment. Have your say about the new proposed legislation for managing pests and disease. [bit.ly/BiosecurityYourSay](http://bit.ly/BiosecurityYourSay)

**2,507** People reached    **29** Engagements    **20** Clicks    [Boost Post](#)

👍 Matt Kendall, Denis Jones and 25 others

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share    🌐

### Performance for your post

**2,507** People Reached

**29** Likes, Comments & Shares 📊

<b>28</b> Likes	<b>28</b> On Post	<b>0</b> On Shares
<b>0</b> Comments	<b>0</b> On Post	<b>0</b> On Shares
<b>1</b> Shares	<b>0</b> On Post	<b>1</b> On Shares

**20** Post Clicks

<b>8</b> Photo views	<b>4</b> Link clicks	<b>8</b> Other Clicks 📊
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# PROPOSED BIOSECURITY LEGISLATION FOR THE ACT

**Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development**  
29 June · 🌐

Prickly pear, feral pigs and carp are all biosecurity threats. We want your ideas on how we can better detect and manage these and other invasive pests and diseases to protect our environment and agriculture industries. [bit.ly/BiosecurityYourSay](http://bit.ly/BiosecurityYourSay)



**2,892** People reached    **50** Engagements    **363** Clicks    [Boost Post](#)

Henry Corcoran, Steve Dundee and 15 others · 10 Comments 4 Shares

Like    Comment    Share    🌐

**Performance for your post**

**2,892** People Reached

**50** Likes, Comments & Shares 📈

<b>25</b> Likes	<b>18</b> On Post	<b>7</b> On Shares
<b>21</b> Comments	<b>16</b> On Post	<b>5</b> On Shares
<b>4</b> Shares	<b>4</b> On Post	<b>0</b> On Shares

**363** Post Clicks

<b>130</b> Photo views	<b>10</b> Link clicks	<b>223</b> Other Clicks 📈
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Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts

**Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development**  
shared an event.  
18 June · 🌐

Discover how the ACT is protecting our environment and agriculture through new biosecurity legislation at our community information night this Wednesday. You can also have your say at [www.yoursay.act.gov.au/act-biosecurity-act](http://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/act-biosecurity-act)



**WED, 20 JUN**

**ACT Biosecurity Act information session**  
Ainslie Football Club · Ainslie  
42 people interested    [★ Interested](#)

**921** People reached    **3** Engagements    **13** Clicks

Cass Andra, Amir Saleem and Lin Burridge

Like    Comment    🌐

**Performance for your post**

**921** People Reached

**3** Likes, Comments & Shares 📈

<b>3</b> Likes	<b>3</b> On Post	<b>0</b> On Shares
<b>0</b> Comments	<b>0</b> On Post	<b>0</b> On Shares
<b>0</b> Shares	<b>0</b> On Post	<b>0</b> On Shares

**13** Post Clicks

<b>0</b> Photo views	<b>2</b> Link clicks	<b>11</b> Other Clicks 📈
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