

A NEW BIOSECURITY STRATEGY FOR KANGAROO ISLAND

INTRODUCTION

Biosecurity is the protection of the terrestrial and marine environment, agricultural industries and human health from the adverse impacts of pest, diseases and weeds.

Kangaroo Island values its 'clean green image' and is recognised as one of the tourism icons of Australia. Kangaroo Island is truly unique. With an incredible natural environment, authentic wildlife experiences, food and wine produced in balance with nature, agricultural products which are safe and protected and art inspired by peaceful surrounds (Authentic KI website 2015). These values support both a buoyant domestic and international tourism sector as well as produce that is lauded and in demand both in Australia and internationally. The environment is natural, pristine and vulnerable to incursions by a range of pests, weeds and diseases and their impacts.

The protection of Kangaroo Island through effective biosecurity arrangements is extremely important due to the bearing that pests, weeds and disease would have on the environmental biodiversity, agricultural sustainability and social amenity. The geographical isolation, along with the existing policies and the promotion of awareness of high risk goods has assisted in managing biosecurity over recent years. The potential financial impacts on some agricultural industries and the tourism sector if particular pests were to establish on KI would be significant with niche agricultural enterprises such as the apiary industry relying heavily on freedom from pests and disease, uniqueness of species and Kangaroo Island provenance.

The biosecurity protection of Kangaroo Island is based on informed compliance with an emphasis on providing visitors with information about quarantine risks and requirements through tourism websites, brochures, media and strategically placed signage. The local community is encouraged to share the responsibility for protecting Kangaroo Island through awareness of the requirements, reporting of potential risks and managing controls of existing issues.

Biosecurity works best the earlier a potential risk is identified and dealt with. In the case of Kangaroo Island, the management of biosecurity risk prior to entry, i.e. on the mainland, is ideal. As far as cost effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of biosecurity services the approach of 'prevention is better than cure' is most applicable. If the risk is kept offshore then the outcome and impact on Kangaroo Island is negligible.

This document outlines the current environment and past governance arrangements for managing biosecurity over the last 10 years. It describes the six strategies and examples of operational delivery defines the strategic vision, outcomes and action for the Strategy for the next five years.



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KANGAROO ISLAND'S BIOSECURITY CONTEXT

There a number of factors that have influenced the need for the development of a new Kangaroo Island Biosecurity strategy. These include:

An increased biosecurity risk environment

The movement of people onto Kangaroo Island and the associated goods brings with it a higher risk of new pests and diseases arriving. The rapid means of travel, expanding tourism sector, use of the internet for purchasing of goods, changes in environmental conditions due to climate change, all provide a challenge that needs a contemporary strategy to manage.

Efficient use of resources

The need for regulatory agencies to be efficient and effective in the delivery of services whilst still providing support for biosecurity on Kangaroo Island requires a broader approach to the biosecurity effort. Ensuring there is 'bang for our buck' requires an approach that is targeted, focussed and involves supporting the community in the effort. The use of new means of communication assists in providing information and awareness in order to increase understanding through 'informed compliance.'

Changes in state biosecurity arrangements

The approach by the state to biosecurity seen some strategic developments that need to be reflected in the approach on Kangaroo Island. Whilst the fundamentals and intentions remain fairly constant, in many ways the system needs to be adaptive in the management approach. The working relationship between Biosecurity SA and the Natural Resource Management Board remains a key in the delivery of biosecurity protection for Kangaroo Island.



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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Kangaroo Island Biosecurity Strategy provides the framework for relevant policies and operational plans. The strategy is guided by five principles that provide the parameters for what needs to be considered:

- **No such thing as zero risk:** Anything arriving on Kangaroo Island poses some level of biosecurity risk and to limit this to zero risk is not possible.
- **Not all biosecurity challenges for Kangaroo Island are covered by legislation:** This means that if goods being brought to Kangaroo Island are not bound by any legislative or policy requirement then there is no provision to prevent them from being imported. Where these gaps occur, other activities will be utilised such as awareness, best practice guidelines, MOUs and other regional arrangements. Whilst there is a focus on the protection of the environmental biodiversity, agricultural sustainability social amenity in some cases this will be achieved through a sense of responsibility to do the right thing.
- **Environments and industries being protected are both terrestrial and marine:** The importance of both is significant to Kangaroo Island in terms of environmental biodiversity and commercial production. The biosecurity system for Kangaroo Island will also support higher standards for agricultural commodities being exported from the island.
- **Regional specific risk drivers for Kangaroo Island:** As a region and an island there are significant differences in its biosecurity status compared to mainland South Australia. This relates to the absence of certain pests and diseases as well as to the potential impact if they were to be introduced and become established on Kangaroo Island. Some pests and disease will be considered higher risk than they are on the mainland for this reason.
- **Linkage with PIRSA / Biosecurity SA:** The co-ordinated approach to biosecurity for Kangaroo Island relies heavily on co-operation of State Government agencies in both legislative and policy setting and operational activities.

FOUNDATIONS OF THE KANGAROO ISLAND BIOSECURITY STRATEGY

1. Prevention is better than cure
2. Risk based approach
3. Shared awareness and responsibility
4. Response arrangements



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EXPLANATION OF THE FOUNDATION PILLARS OF THE STRATEGY

1. Prevention is better than cure

The cost and impact of introduced pests and diseases is well documented and it is recognised that the most efficient investment is in preventative actions rather than action to eradicate. Once a species has become established the cost of containment and asset protection provide limited return on investment.

In the case of Kangaroo Island, prevention is assisted by the geographical barrier of the 'water gap' and community awareness but still requires investment in monitoring activities by relevant agencies

2. Risk based approach

A risk based decision making approach is required to ensure that the Strategy supports an effective biosecurity system. The evaluation of any biosecurity risk requires an assessment of the likelihood and consequence of that event (pest or disease) arriving on Kangaroo Island. Consideration is also given to other environmental factors that may support or otherwise the establishment of a particular biosecurity risk. An example being climate change and the potential this has in supporting weeds that previously were unable to establish on Kangaroo Island. The ability to respond, control or contain a new pest is also factored in as part of the risk assessment. Some environments are challenging in respect to managing incursions such as the marine environment where containment can be very difficult.

Likelihood is based on the probability of a pest and disease arriving on Kangaroo Island. All goods and people arriving pose a biosecurity risk but the degree to which a pest and disease arrives is based on a case-by-case assessment.

Risk based approach will inform the Strategy to ensure that the highest biosecurity risks are focussed on whilst being responsive to new and emerging risks.

3. Shared responsibility – awareness

The importance of the protection of Kangaroo Island from biosecurity threats needs to be fully understood by the community and visitors. It is essential that stakeholders support the biosecurity system and have a clear understanding of their role. Some of the biosecurity risks have more impact on certain members of the community but by being aware and having knowledge of what all individuals can do to assist in the prevention, detection and management of biosecurity risks will contribute to a more effective biosecurity system.

The current, *Too Good To Spoil* program, relies heavily on community awareness and the sharing of the responsibility for biosecurity protection for both environmental outcomes and agricultural sustainability. These two areas require engagement and capacity building in order to protect the island from new incursions.



4. Response arrangements

Maintaining a high biosecurity status requires structured surveillance, monitoring and reporting programs and the capability to respond rapidly to incursions. The early detection, reporting, assessment, identification and resource allocation activities need to be in place and understood by relevant stakeholders.

Appropriate planning and documentation of response arrangements need to be in place and include training of relevant personnel, equipment and clear processes to assist in the investigation and implementation of actions to limit the risk as safely and practically as possible.

A means of evaluating the veracity of biosecurity reports is needed as information may be provided by the community but there is often limited physical evidence.

Strong networks with other agencies, regulatory officials and sources of technical knowledge are essential.

LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT AND OBLIGATIONS TO STATE

The region operates under the South Australian Government's Biosecurity Policy – PIRSA State Biosecurity Policy 2013-16. This policy establishes the purpose and approach of the government to biosecurity matters in South Australia and its priorities are reflected in this strategy.

The South Australian Government has shown commitment to the biosecurity protection of Kangaroo Island through specific legislation to protect the island from both animal and plant pests and diseases.

The state is also signatory to Inter-Governmental Agreement on Biosecurity which outlines cost sharing arrangements in the event of animal, plant and marine pest incursions and other environmental biosecurity threats.

In particular the state legislative framework to protect Kangaroo Island encompass both agricultural enterprises and environmental impacts of biosecurity threats.

Natural Resources Management Act 2004 manages natural resources in respect to pest plant and animal species and Kangaroo Island. In particular the biosecurity emphasis of this act outlines the responsibilities relating to the ownership, movement, sale or control of specific animals and plants.

The *Livestock Act 1997* is important in respect to the honey industry on Kangaroo Island as it affords the island 'sanctuary' status and provides particular protections to the introduced bees. The act outlines the requirements for movements of used bee equipment and bee products onto Kangaroo Island with the express purpose of protecting the highly favourable pest and disease free status of the bee population.

The protection of another major agricultural industry on Kangaroo Island is dealt with by the *Plant Health Act 2009*. The relatively pest and disease free seed potato industry has biosecurity safeguards



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through the provision of regulations covering used potato machinery, seed potatoes and those for consumption that are not clean or commercially packaged.

STRATEGIES

1. Kangaroo Island's biosecurity decision making is based on a risk assessment approach that is consistent with the regulatory framework and local policies.
2. The community and visitors are made aware of the biosecurity requirements and their role and responsibility in protecting and supporting Kangaroo Island's biosecurity system.
3. Surveillance and monitoring activities are in place to assist in early detection of biosecurity threats to Kangaroo Island.
4. Response and control arrangements and capability to manage high biosecurity risks to Kangaroo Island are in place.
5. Management of existing introduced species is co-ordinated across the public and private sectors in order to support the biosecurity system on Kangaroo Island.
6. Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to ensure effective planning and review of the biosecurity arrangements on Kangaroo Island

OUTCOME AND ACTIONS FOR KANGAROO ISLAND'S BIOSECURITY SYSTEM

The biosecurity system for Kangaroo Island is based on the six strategies outlined above. These strategies can be further broken down into outcomes associated with the delivery of a contemporary and community based biosecurity system for Kangaroo Island. Further examples of actions that relate to each outcome are provided although these are not comprehensive and additional actions will be outlined in associated operational plans for activities that support biosecurity activities on Kangaroo Island.

1. Kangaroo Island's biosecurity decision making is based on a risk assessment approach that is consistent with the regulatory framework and local policies.

Outcomes

- Broad community understanding of current biosecurity risks to Kangaroo Island.
- Emerging risks are identified and assessed in accordance with framework that considers consequences to Kangaroo Island.
- Impacts of climate change are factored into risk assessments
- Policy for managing biosecurity risks are reviewed to ensure they are consistent and contemporary.

Actions

- Awareness sessions with key stakeholders and the community are provided to outline the biosecurity risk assessment process for Kangaroo Island.



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- Ongoing feedback and review of biosecurity risks and threats to Kangaroo Island are undertaken and documented.
- Review of emerging threats including changes in dispersion of native species due to human movement or climatic changes.
- Engagement with State agencies to ensure Kangaroo Island's biosecurity status is recognised and supported.

2. The community and visitors are made aware of the biosecurity requirements and their role and responsibility in protecting and supporting Kangaroo Island's biosecurity system.

Outcomes

- Awareness of Kangaroo Island's biosecurity requirements are made available to all who visit the Island.
- Stakeholders are engaged with at every opportunity to ensure they recognise their role and responsibilities in the protection Kangaroo Island.
- Effective working relationships are established with local and State Governments.

Actions

- Development of awareness materials including signage, flyers and media promoting biosecurity requirements are made available at every opportunity.
- Participation of relevant industry representatives in engagement opportunities where biosecurity is discussed or presented.
- Identifying key industry groups who have the opportunity to promote biosecurity requirements to visitors to Kangaroo Island.
- Identify industry champions to assist in contributing to the delivery of Kangaroo Island biosecurity system.
- Work with stakeholders to establish efficient means of delivery of biosecurity regulations and policies in a way that is efficient and least-restrictive.

3. Surveillance and monitoring activities are in place to assist in early detection of biosecurity threats to Kangaroo Island.

Outcomes

- Structured surveillance systems are in place on Kangaroo Island for high biosecurity risk pests and diseases.
- The community contribute to effective monitoring activities with mechanisms in place to receive reports and observations.
- Survey systems and sharing intelligence from other agencies and stakeholders are utilised where possible.



- Linkages are established with appropriate organisations to assist in diagnostic and identification as part of the surveillance system.

Actions

- Utilisation of the community and stakeholders as part of citizen science approach to monitoring activities.
 - Data capture and recording is in line with survey and surveillance activities used by other related agencies.
 - Regularly communicate with other state agencies to ensure activities complement each other, data is shared and avoid duplication.
 - Ensure community participation is encouraged and promoted as part of a biosecurity system where all members are aware and contribute to good biosecurity outcomes for Kangaroo Island.
4. Response and control arrangements and capability for high biosecurity risks to Kangaroo Island are in place.

Outcomes

- Response arrangements for biosecurity incursions or outbreaks are documented and formalised.
- Role and responsibilities for management of incursions, including those for other agencies, are defined.
- Preparedness program put in place to ensure capability and resources are identified.
- Communication arrangements with key stakeholders and agencies are identified and understood in respect to biosecurity response management.

Actions

- Development of generic or specific biosecurity risk response plans for Kangaroo Island are completed.
 - Undertake incursion response management training and testing of specific documented plans.
 - Review existing biosecurity incursion and response plans.
 - Engage with key stakeholders and the community to develop constructive partnerships and understanding of roles and responsibilities of all parties.
5. Management of existing introduced species is co-ordinated across the public and private sectors in order to support the biosecurity system on Kangaroo Island.

Outcomes

- Systems are in place to regulate and monitor existing controls introduced pest and diseases on Kangaroo Island



- Community recognise and accept their obligations and responsibilities in supporting the management of introduced pests and disease on Kangaroo Island.
- Compliance with legislative requirements by landholders and property owners for regulations relating to the control of species that impact Kangaroo Island's biodiversity.

Actions

- A risk assessment approach is used to identify pests that are present on Kangaroo Island and the feasibility of eradication, control or containment.
 - Information is provided to all stakeholders of their biosecurity responsibilities and management of pests that have become established on Kangaroo Island.
 - Maintaining a system that supports landholders in managing introduced species including access to technical advice and resources.
 - Respond to reports regarding introduced species to assess and take action appropriately.
 - Maintain infrastructure and resource capacity to ensure delivery on regulatory obligations.
 - Awareness is promoted to the island community regarding the responsibility to ensure that pests are not exported from Kangaroo Island.
6. Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to ensure effective planning and review of the biosecurity arrangements on Kangaroo Island.

Outcomes

- Formal participation by relevant stakeholders in biosecurity system review and implementation for Kangaroo Island.
- Productive and effective relationships with key State Government agencies and Local Government representatives.
- Direct connection with stakeholders who are recognised to impact on the delivery and implementation of the biosecurity system for Kangaroo Island.

Actions

- Maintain an effective Biosecurity Advisory Committee with membership from the Kangaroo Island Natural Resource Management Board, industry, community, relevant expertise and other stakeholders who are committed to supporting the biosecurity system for Kangaroo Island.
- Engagement with key representative groups with influence on the functioning and delivery of the biosecurity system on Kangaroo Island.
- Work with key Kangaroo Island stakeholders to develop opportunities for self-regulation and compliance with biosecurity requirements.



REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

The Kangaroo Island Biosecurity Strategy will set the foundation for activities to support the management of biosecurity issues. The delivery of the strategies will involve the continued development of operational activities, response plans, policies and risk assessments in consultation with the community and stakeholders.

The review mechanisms that will be put in place will be driven in the main by the Biosecurity Advisory Committee and the Kangaroo Island Natural Resources Management Board.

Annual reviews will be conducted.



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