

Audit report of the 2024–25
annual performance statements

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Forestry



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT on the 2024-25 Annual Performance Statements of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

To the Minister for Finance

Conclusion

In my opinion, the 2024-25 Annual Performance Statements of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF):

- present fairly DAFF's performance in achieving its purpose for the year ended 30 June 2025; and
- are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of Division 3 of Part 2-3 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

Audit criteria

To assess whether DAFF's annual performance statements complied with Division 3 of Part 2-3 of the PGPA Act, I applied the following criteria, regarding whether DAFF's:

- key activities, performance measures and specified targets are appropriate to measure and assess DAFF's performance in achieving its purposes;
- performance statements are prepared based upon appropriate records that properly record and explain DAFF's performance.
- annual performance statements present fairly DAFF's performance in achieving its purposes in the reporting period.

Emphasis of Matter – variation to performance information from Corporate Plan 2024-25

I draw attention to the following disclosures within the annual performance statements included in the following tables:

- *Table A1 Strategic Objective 1 Sector growth, changes to key activities from Corporate Plan 2024-25*
- *Table A2 Strategic Objective 1 Sector growth, change to performance measures from Corporate Plan 2024-25*
- *Table A3 Strategic Objective 2 Sector resilience and sustainability, change to key activities from Corporate Plan 2024-25*
- *Table A4 Strategic Objective 2 Sector resilience and sustainability, change to performance measures from Corporate Plan 2024-25*
- *Table A5 Strategic Objective 3 National biosecurity, change to key activities from Corporate Plan 2024-25*
- *Table A6 Strategic Objective 3 National biosecurity, change to performance measures from Corporate Plan 2024-25*

These disclosures provide information which is fundamental to a reader's understanding of the reported performance information in the annual performance statements.

My conclusion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Accountable Authority's responsibilities

As the Accountable Authority of DAFF, the Secretary is responsible under the PGPA Act for:

- the preparation of annual performance statements that accurately present the DAFF's performance in the reporting period and comply with the requirements of the PGPA Act and any requirements prescribed by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014* (the Rule);
- keeping records about DAFF's performance as required by the PGPA Act, and
- establishing internal controls that the Accountable Authority determines are appropriate to enable the preparation of annual performance statements.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the performance statements

My responsibility is to conduct a reasonable assurance engagement to express an independent opinion on DAFF's annual performance statements.

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which include the relevant Standard on Assurance Engagements (ASAE) 3000 *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* issued by the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

Procedures were planned and performed to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the annual performance statements of the entity present fairly the entity's performance in achieving its purposes and comply, in all material respects, with the PGPA Act and Rule.

The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures depend on my judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, in the annual performance statements. In making these risk assessments, I obtain an understanding of internal controls relevant to the preparation of the annual performance statements in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my conclusion.

Independence and quality control

In undertaking this assurance engagement, I have complied with the independence and other relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements, and applied Auditing Standard ASQM 1 *Quality Management for Firms that Perform Audits or Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, or Other Assurance or Related Services Engagements*.

Inherent limitations

Because of the inherent limitations of an assurance engagement, it is possible that fraud, error or non-compliance may occur and not be detected. An assurance engagement is not designed to detect all instances of non-compliance of the annual performance statements with the PGPA Act and Rule as it is not performed continuously throughout the period and the assurance procedures performed are undertaken on a test basis. The reasonable assurance conclusion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Australian National Audit Office

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Jago', with a stylized, cursive script.

Carla Jago

Group Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

22 October 2025

Part 1: Annual performance statements

Accountable authority statement

As the accountable authority for the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, I present the 2024–25 annual performance statements as required under paragraph 39(1)(a) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In my opinion, these performance statements accurately present the department’s performance for the financial year ending 30 June 2025 and comply with subsection 39(2) of the PGPA Act (section 16F of the PGPA Rule).

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) is yet to finalise its audit of the 2024–25 annual performance statements. I am aware that the ANAO may also form a view that the performance statements for certain measures do not meet the requirements of the PGPA Act.

The department will continue to improve its performance reporting, including through consideration of the ANAO’s feedback.



Justine Saunders APM
Acting Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

29 September 2025

Performance overview

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) is the lead government agency for the agricultural sector (agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries) in Australia. Our purpose is working together to safeguard and grow sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry for all Australians.

We deliver our role, vision and purpose through 3 strategic objectives:

- 1) Sector growth – Support Australia’s agricultural sector, including the food and fibre industries, to be increasingly prosperous and internationally competitive in an ever-changing world.
- 2) Sector resilience and sustainability – Increase the contribution agriculture, fisheries and forestry make to a healthy, sustainable and low-emissions environment.
- 3) National biosecurity – Strengthen our national biosecurity system to provide a risk-based approach and an appropriate level of protection to Australia’s people, our environment and economy.

Alignment with our Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25

In 2024–25 we had 2 outcome statements across 15 programs in the [Portfolio Budget Statements \(PBS\) 2024–25](#). During the year, [we updated our key activities and performance measures](#) to more directly align to our purpose, strategic objectives and PBS outcomes. Our 3 strategic objectives aligned with these outcomes and programs as shown in [Table 1](#).

Table 1 Department PBS outcomes, strategic objectives, key activities and programs, 2024–25

PBS 2024–25 outcome	Corporate Plan 2024–25 strategic objectives	New key activities	PBS 2024–25 program
PBS Outcome 1: More sustainable, productive, internationally competitive and profitable Australian agricultural, food and fibre industries through policies and initiatives that promote better resource management practices, innovation, self-reliance and improved access to international markets.	Strategic objective 1: Support Australia’s agricultural sector, including the food and fibre industries, to be increasingly prosperous and internationally competitive in an ever-changing world.	Key activity 1.1: Support sector productivity growth and innovation.	1.1 Agricultural Adaptation 1.3 Forestry Industry 1.4 Fishing Industry 1.5 Horticulture Industry 1.6 Wool Industry 1.7 Grains Industry 1.8 Dairy Industry 1.9 Meat and Livestock Industry 1.10 Agricultural Resources 1.12 Rural Programs
		Key activity 1.2: Regulate exports and enable, improve and protect access to international markets.	1.13 International Market Access
	Strategic objective 2: Increase the contribution agriculture, fisheries and forestry make to a healthy, sustainable and low-emissions environment.	Key activity 2.1: Promote better resource management practices, sustainability and self-reliance in the agricultural sector.	1.2 Sustainable Management – Natural Resources 1.11 Drought Programs
		Key activity 2.2: Support the agricultural sector to adopt emissions reduction activities that strengthen productivity and competitiveness.	1.2 Sustainable Management – Natural Resources 1.11 Drought Programs

PBS 2024–25 outcome	Corporate Plan 2024–25 strategic objectives	New key activities	PBS 2024–25 program
PBS Outcome 2: Safeguard Australia’s animal and plant health status to maintain overseas markets and protect the economy and environment from the impact of exotic pests and diseases, through risk assessment, inspection and certification, and the implementation of emergency response arrangements for Australian agricultural, food and fibre industries.	Strategic objective 3: Strengthen our national biosecurity system to provide a risk-based approach and an appropriate level of protection to Australia’s people, our environment and economy.	Key activity 3.1: Effectively prepare for the management of biosecurity risks, imported food and human health through risk assessment, pre-border controls and assurance programs, inspection, treatment, certification and education.	2.1 Biosecurity and Export Services 2.2 Plant and Animal Health
		Key activity 3.2: Regulate to safeguard Australia’s animal, plant, human health, environmental and food safety status by inspecting, detecting and minimising biosecurity risks at the border.	2.1 Biosecurity and Export Services 2.2 Plant and Animal Health
		Key activity 3.3: Protect the economy and environment from the impact of exotic pests and diseases in Australia through appropriate post-border measures, including regulation and emergency management capabilities.	2.1 Biosecurity and Export Services
		Key activity 3.4: Manage non-compliance with biosecurity and other relevant portfolio legislation.	2.1 Biosecurity and Export Services

Performance summary

Our annual performance statements report on the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. The statements detail our performance against the 24 performance measures set out in our *Corporate Plan 2024–25* and *Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25*.

Our *Corporate Plan 2024–25* included a mix of output, efficiency, effectiveness and proxy performance measures and associated targets. Where available, the 2023–24 performance results are provided alongside the 2024–25 results, to enable readers to compare our results over time.

Of the 24 performance measures, 14 were achieved, 7 were partially achieved and 3 were not achieved. Table 2 summarises these results.

Table 2 Results against performance measures, 2024–25

Performance measure	Measure type	2024–25 result
SG-01 Greater growth in average agricultural productivity (adjusted for climate and weather effects) for the past 10 years, compared with average annual market sector productivity growth over the same period.	Quantitative effectiveness.	Achieved.
SG-02 Equal or reduced cost of levies administration compared with levies disbursed.	Quantitative efficiency regulatory.	Achieved.

Performance measure	Measure type	2024–25 result
SG-03 Proportion of farm businesses making new capital investments.	Quantitative effectiveness.	Not achieved.
SG-04 Grow access to a diverse range of international markets for Australian exporters of agricultural, fisheries and forestry products.	Qualitative output.	Achieved.
SG-05 Significant representation of Australian interests on multilateral standard-setting bodies.	Quantitative proxy.	Achieved.
SG-06 Effective delivery of regulatory responsibilities for relevant export applications under the <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> .	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Achieved.
SG-07 Increase in the number of electronic certificates issued for export.	Quantitative efficiency regulatory.	Achieved.
SG-08 Encourage forestry industry investment in innovation.	Quantitative output.	Not achieved.
RS-01 Increased pathways to support the understanding and adoption of emissions reduction opportunities, technologies and practices.	Quantitative output.	Partially achieved.
RS-02 Sustainable farming practices are funded through the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.	Quantitative output.	Partially achieved.
RS-03 Increased investment in activities to build economic, social and environmental resilience to drought.	Quantitative output.	Partially achieved.
RS-04 The proportion of Australian Government managed fish stocks that are sustainable.	Quantitative effectiveness.	Achieved.
BI-01 Proportion of biosecurity risk assessments completed within regulatory and target timeframes.	Quantitative output regulatory.	Achieved.
BI-02 The import permit service standard is met.	Quantitative output regulatory.	Achieved.
BI-03 Increased pre-border biosecurity assurance arrangements to manage biosecurity risks in countries exporting to Australia.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Partially achieved.
BI-04 Targeted public communication and engagement activities.	Quantitative output.	Achieved.
BI-05 Strengthened emergency management capabilities.	Quantitative qualitative effectiveness.	Achieved.
BI-06 Reduction in risk of significant disease threats because of biosecurity measures implemented by the department.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Partially achieved.
BI-07 Number of consignments of imported goods with khapra beetle detections is reduced as a result of biosecurity measures implemented by the department.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Achieved.
BI-08 Reduced levels of non-compliance with biosecurity regulations that apply to high value cargo.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Achieved.
BI-09 Rates of non-compliance with regulations that apply to international travellers.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Partially achieved.
BI-10 Rates of non-compliance with regulations that apply to approved arrangements.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Not achieved.
BI-11 Biosecurity service standards conducted at the border are met.	Quantitative effectiveness regulatory.	Partially achieved.
BI-12 Investigate and respond to incidents of high-risk non-compliance through compliance and enforcement measures.	Quantitative output regulatory.	Achieved.

Changes to our key activities and performance measures

In 2024–25, we reviewed the key activities presented in our *Corporate Plan 2024–25* and consolidated them – from 21 to 8 – to more directly align to our purpose, strategic objectives and

PBS outcomes. The 2024–25 performance measures were updated and re-aligned to the new key activities. Further details on the changes to our performance measures can be found in [Performance results](#) and a summary of the changes are found in [Appendix A](#).

Our [8 key activities](#) collectively advance our 3 strategic objectives and directly support our 2 PBS outcomes by targeting agricultural sector productivity and sustainability, and national biosecurity.

Together, these key activities contributed to the success of the agricultural sector in 2024–25. Our support helped the sector to thrive financially, operate sustainably and remain protected from biosecurity threats in an increasingly complex global environment.

Regulator performance reporting

We administer regulatory functions across our portfolio legislation including the [Biosecurity Act 2015](#) (Biosecurity Act), [Export Control Act 2020](#) (Export Control Act), and [Imported Food Control Act 1992](#).

Our regulatory performance measures demonstrate achievements against each of the 3 principles of regulator best practice, as set out in the Australian Government’s Resource Management Guide – Regulator Performance ([RMG 128](#)). In 2024–25, we monitored our regulatory performance against 13 performance measures.

Performance results

Strategic objective 1 Sector growth

Support Australia’s agricultural sector, including the food and fibre industries, to be increasingly prosperous and internationally competitive in an ever-changing world.

Connecting our performance to sector growth

Australia’s agricultural sector is central to the nation’s prosperity, driving economic growth, supporting regional jobs and ensuring food and fibre security. Our 8 sector growth performance measures demonstrate how we strengthen productivity, improve market access, encourage innovation and increase trade to keep the sector competitive in the global market.

Productivity and capital investment lay the foundation for growth. We drive agricultural productivity growth (SG-01) through research and development, policy leadership and international collaboration. These efforts support the sector’s goal of reaching \$100 billion by 2030, and maintain Australia’s reputation as a supplier of safe, high-quality products.

Encouraging new capital investment in farm businesses (SG-03) supports producers to invest in the infrastructure, technology and capabilities needed to remain competitive. Our programs also help farmers to build financial resilience and to access tools that support them to manage climate risks.

Industry-led investment in research, marketing and biosecurity relies on a fair, transparent and efficient levies administration system. We administer levies cost-effectively (SG-02) and work closely with industry to strengthen compliance, improve understanding of levy benefits and maximise producers’ return on investment.

Australia’s economic prosperity relies on diverse and stable market access (SG-04). We negotiate and maintain trade requirements that enable exporters to access new markets while protecting existing

ones. We advocate for evidence-based rules that facilitate trade and protect the interests of Australian exporters through our representation on international standard-setting bodies (SG-05).

We invest in efficient, trusted export systems to remain agile and competitive. We ensure timely delivery of regulatory responsibilities under the Export Control Act (SG-06), enabling exporters to meet market requirements without unnecessary delay. We modernise trade processes through electronic certification (SG-07), which provides faster, more secure assurances to our international trading partners.

We encourage the forestry industry to invest in innovation (SG-08) by adopting new wood processing technologies to meet future timber demand and strengthen regional economies.

Key activity 1.1

Support sector productivity growth and innovation.

In 2024–25, we continued to support sector growth and innovation while also identifying areas for improvement to be addressed in 2025–26.

Agricultural productivity growth (SG-01) was sustained at a higher rate (0.80%) than the average annual market sector growth rate (0.19%). Levy administration costs (SG-02) were maintained at 1.10% ensuring efficient administration and compliance.

The proportion of farm businesses making new capital investments (SG-03) did not increase, suggesting a lack of confidence, difficult weather conditions or less positive expectations about the future. While only 21.14% of the 30% target of total funding for the Accelerate Adoption of Wood Processing Innovation Program (SG-08) was delivered, overall program delivery remained on track.

For more detail refer to the individual performance results.

Measure SG-01

SG-01	Greater growth in average agricultural productivity (adjusted for climate and weather effects) for the past 10 years, compared with average annual market sector productivity growth over the same period.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness.	
Target	Greater than or equal to 0% difference over the past 10 years.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Agricultural productivity growth was 0.11 percentage points higher than the market sector growth rate.	Agricultural productivity growth was 0.61 percentage points higher than the market sector growth rate.
Tolerances	Achieved: Average annual growth in agricultural productivity (climate-adjusted) exceeds average annual market sector productivity growth over the same period. Partially achieved: Not applicable. Not achieved: Average annual growth in agricultural productivity (climate adjusted) is lower than average annual market sector productivity growth over the same period.	

Context

We aim to support sector growth by expanding access to markets and strengthening Australia’s reputation in those markets. We work to foster innovation by co-investing with industry in research and development, and we develop policies and manage programs that help primary producers maintain and grow productivity. Internationally, we collaborate with counterparts and share Australia’s expertise in food security, productivity, trade, sustainability and climate resilience across the agricultural sector. We use agricultural productivity as a measure of our effectiveness at achieving sector growth and expanding market access. Over the long term, it measures the efficiency of production and indicates how technological advancements can impact on industry progress.

This measure tracks productivity over a 10-year period, offering insight into long-term trends. Productivity is best measured over long periods, as short-term fluctuations may reflect temporary factors such as changes in input and output prices rather than efficiency trends.

Analysis

In the 10 years to 2024–25, agricultural productivity growth (adjusted for climate and weather effects) averaged 0.80% per year. This was higher than market sector productivity growth with an average of 0.19% per year.

There are many factors that affect productivity growth, including global prices, supply chains, consumer demand and trading partner decisions.

Our work also contributes to agricultural productivity growth, although it is difficult to measure the exact influence we have on these results. For example, in 2024–25 we finalised delivery of the Support Regional Trade Events Program. These events promote innovation and investment in the agricultural sector by providing opportunities to attract overseas customers, showcase the industry and its products and services, and establish connections between businesses. Trials, new

technologies and techniques, and expanded trade avenues may contribute to increased profitability, sustainability and productivity outcomes and benefit agribusinesses across the supply chain.

We also streamlined and modernised the agricultural levies and charges legislation, providing contemporary, flexible and efficient legislation to underpin the levy system. The legislation is now easier to understand and administer; more consistent across industries, and research and development corporations (RDCs); and simplifies matching funding, providing more investment certainty to RDCs. The levy system supports industries in responding to opportunities and threats, to ensure ongoing and improved productivity.

In 2024–25, Australia chaired the World Wine Trade Group, a government–industry partnership. Chairing responsibilities were shared between our department and industry representative body Australian Grape & Wine. The World Wine Trade Group brings together government and industry representatives from key winemaking countries to simplify international trade in wine through information sharing, discussion and coordination on regulatory issues in wine markets, and joint actions for the removal of trade barriers. Being chair provided opportunities to advance our trade priorities, strengthen collaboration with other members and pursue other positive outcomes for Australian wine producers.

Methodology and data sources

We obtained climate-adjusted productivity estimates for the broadacre industry from ABARES, who publish climate-adjusted productivity statistics. The ABARES statistics are derived from model estimates under various climate scenarios, adjusting for climate and weather effects. The methodology for producing these statistics has been peer-reviewed and published in an [academic journal](#).

Climate-adjusted productivity estimates measure Australia’s broadacre industries, including farm businesses mainly involved in the production of crops for fodder or grain, beef, sheep or a mix of cropping and livestock.

We obtained our market sector productivity estimates from the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ (ABS’s) [estimates of industry multifactor productivity](#).

The market sector productivity measure included 16 market sector industries as defined by the Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia (SESCA) and the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC).

The 2024–25 forecasts for agricultural productivity and overall market sector productivity were based on historical growth rates and assume that productivity growth will be equal to the longer-term average.

We then compared the average annual growth rate of each series from 2015–16 to 2024–25 to compare average annual productivity growth rates.

Caveats and disclosures

The agricultural productivity result is for Australian broadacre industries only. Farm businesses engaged in other types of agricultural sector production were not included in this performance measure because climate-adjusted productivity data is not available. Broadacre industries account

for about two-thirds of Australia’s agricultural industry production by value and the majority of agricultural land use. As a result, broadacre industries are the primary driver of overall agricultural sector productivity.

Climate-adjusted productivity estimates largely remove the effects of climate and weather variability, revealing the underlying productivity trend. However, some residual climate and weather impacts, such as price changes, may be present in the estimates. Temporary effects such as higher prices caused by drought conditions tend to impact short-term measures of productivity. In the long term, these effects are likely to be small and difficult to measure.

Due to the time lag between measurement, data publication and the performance reporting deadline, we used a forecast for the most recent year. Consideration was not given as to whether the forecast constituted the ‘likely’ result but rather, ensured measurement consistency, transparency and impartiality.

Results were dependent on the accuracy of ABARES and ABS productivity statistics.

Change from corporate plan

The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure SG-02

SG-02	Equal or reduced cost of levies administration compared with levies disbursed.	
Measure type	Quantitative efficiency and regulatory.	
Target	Levies administration cost is less than or equal to 1.2% of levies disbursed.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Cost was \$4.65 million or 0.77% of levies disbursed.	Cost was \$6.94 million or 1.10% of levies disbursed.
Tolerances	Achieved: Levies administration cost is less than or equal to 1.2% of levies disbursed. Partially achieved: Not applicable. Not achieved: Levies administration cost is more than 1.2% of levies disbursed.	

Context

We administer the agricultural levies system, a government–industry partnership. This partnership enables primary industries to collectively invest in research and development, marketing, biosecurity activities, residue testing and biosecurity responses. Our role is underpinned by our levies legislative framework.

We regularly liaise with key industry bodies to share insights on trends, developments and compliance matters. Through this engagement, we identify risks, develop targeted compliance projects and enhance stakeholder understanding of the levies national compliance program (NCP). The program increases staff awareness of industry-specific issues, risks and the benefits levies provide to levy payers.

This measure tracks whether levy administration costs remain at or below 1.2% of levies disbursed. We collect levies and levy return forms from collection agents, distribute funds to designated recipient bodies and conduct compliance inspections to ensure the integrity of the system. We recover the cost of these activities while striving for efficiency and maintaining optimal administration and compliance costs.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We use a business improvement program (BIP) to improve the capability and effectiveness of levy administration and regulation. Our operational procedures and guidelines are reviewed annually and updated under the BIP to support consistency across the country. We use inspection tip sheets as a reference for levies officers to perform record inspections and training. We conduct annual reviews of the NCP to assess its ongoing effectiveness and to inform future compliance activities. Our review helps to improve compliance outcomes through more tailored compliance measures. We improve business outcomes through the early identification of efficiency gains and optimal resource allocation, with the aim of reducing compliance costs for industry.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – We deliver a risk-based and data-driven NCP to support levy payers to comply with legislation and provide sufficient documentation. We undertake field visits and inspect transaction records of levy collection agents across the country. Levy collection agents are assigned a risk rating via our levies information management system which informs field visits. The NCP highlights levy collection agents who collect approximately 20% of levy revenue. Approximately 500 inspections are completed annually.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – We regularly liaise with key industry representatives to share information on developments and compliance. These activities help identify industry-wide trends and risks, generating more informed strategic compliance projects. As a result, our projects are better able to target risk, inform industry on compliance and increase staff awareness of levy benefits. Our engagement with levy payers and collection agents provides real-time stakeholder feedback. This is used to inform our approach to helping levy agents understand their obligations and encourage compliance.

Analysis

In 2024–25, we disbursed \$628.67 million in levy revenue at a cost of \$6.94 million. The cost was 1.10% of levies disbursed.

In 2024–25 the NCP delivered positive outcomes against our operational compliance and targeted compliance assessment programs. We identified \$2.28 million in levy adjustments, including \$0.15 million received in 2024–25 from new participants identified in the 2023–24 NCP. The outcomes comprised \$1.02 million in levy overpayments and \$1.26 million in levy underpayments.

Employee expenses are the biggest cost driver for levies administration costs. These costs increased in 2024–25 to deliver the implementation of the new levies legislative framework, which commenced on 1 January 2025 and the recruitment of staff to fill several vacant positions.

Methodology and data sources

The performance result for 2024–25 was calculated by dividing the total levies administration cost by the total levies disbursed.

Administration costs were sourced from the Activity Based Costing system and our financial management system, TechnologyOne, while levy disbursement data was generated by our levies management information system, Phoenix.

Caveats and disclosures

Levy returns are submitted in arrears and not all participants pay on time. This results in time lags which may affect the levies disbursed amount.

Results are comparable year on year as the target is measured as a percentage rather than nominal dollars which can fluctuate. The effectiveness of levy collection – including the receipt of funds and necessary levy information from collection agents – may vary over time.

Change from corporate plan

The target review timeline has been updated from 2025–26 to 2026–27 to reflect that the review is to be undertaken after levies reform has been fully implemented by 2025–26. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure SG-03

SG-03	Proportion of farm businesses making new capital investments.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness.	
Target	Increase in percentage of farm businesses making new capital investments compared to previous year (based on a 5-year moving average).	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12.	
2024–25 outcome	Not achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	In the 5 years to 2022–23, 53% of farm businesses made new capital investments. This was a 1.9% decrease from the 54% of farm businesses making new capital investments reported in the 5 years to 2021–22.	In the 5 years to 2023–24, 53% of farm businesses made new capital investments. This was unchanged from the 53% of farm businesses making new capital investments reported in the 5 years to 2022–23.
Tolerances	Achieved: If the proportion of farms making new capital investments increases (based on annual reporting of a 5-year moving average). Partially achieved: Not applicable. Not achieved: If the proportion of farms making new capital investments decreases or is the same (based on annual reporting of a 5-year moving average).	

Context

This performance measure assesses the impact of our work on farm businesses making capital investments, with a focus on building farmers' financial sustainability. Agricultural industry growth relies on farm businesses investing and taking advantage of new opportunities. While income and profitability affect investment decisions, government interventions that enhance farmers' confidence can also contribute.

Farmers are more likely to make capital investments when they are confident or have positive expectations about the future. Their confidence is influenced by access to suitable skills, tools and financial resources to manage drought and other climate-related risks. Our programs support this by building skills, providing tools and improving access to financial resources. These interventions help strengthen farm business confidence and, in turn, encourage capital investment.

The Farm Management Deposits Scheme supports farmers' capacity to plan for and undertake capital investment by encouraging them to set aside cash reserves to draw on in low-income years. It also aims to support business preparedness and financial risk management by helping primary producers manage their capital and fluctuating cash flow. The additional support creates a financial buffer for the agricultural industry, resulting in increased resilience to economic downturns, climate variability and natural disasters.

The Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) administers the Australian Government's concessional loans for farmers and farm-related small businesses. The RIC offers loan programs to support the long-term strength, resilience and profitability of eligible Australian farm businesses.

Two programs, the Farm Household Allowance (FHA) program and the Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS), provide assistance to those in – or at risk of – financial hardship to manage their financial situation and build their financial stability.

The FHA program offers income support allowances and professional financial assessments for farm businesses. It also provides case management, funding for skill development, access to training and professional advice to help businesses plan for the future by making sustainable improvements, or by exiting the industry.

The RFCS program delivers free, independent financial counselling to build farmers' financial knowledge and skills, helping them navigate future challenges.

Analysis

In the 5 years to 2023–24, new capital investments remained at 53% for broadacre and dairy farms, resulting in this performance measure not being achieved. The percentage of farm businesses making capital investments in 2023–24 fell to 46% (down from 54% the previous year). The result reflected declines in broadacre farm incomes in 2023–24 due to lower commodity prices, particularly for beef cattle, sheep and lambs, as well as drier seasonal conditions in many regions.

The drier seasonal conditions continued throughout 2024–25, particularly in South Australia and Victoria. This has resulted in increased demand for our farm support and hardship programs in those regions.

In 2024–25, over 220 Commonwealth-funded concessional loans were delivered through the RIC, in comparison with 207 loans in 2023–24. The largest increase in the number of settled loans occurred in South Australia (103.7%) and Victoria (50%), compared with the previous year.

At 30 June 2025 the 10-year rolling average of farm management deposit account holdings increased in real terms by 1.4% to \$7.6 billion. In comparison, the annual increase in nominal terms to 2024–25 was 0.9%, with a decline in holdings in South Australia of 6.7% over the same period.

The RFCS and FHA programs are available to eligible farm businesses experiencing hardship.

To June 2025, the RFCS provided free and confidential financial counselling to over 6,950 eligible farmers, fishers, foresters and related small businesses. This is up from around 6,660 at 30 June 2024, and the number of clients supported in Victoria and South Australia increased in the same period by 12% and 97% respectively.

Nearly 4,150 farmers and their partners received support through the FHA program in 2024–25. While the total number of recipients is down from nearly 5,590 in 2023–24, the number of recipients supported in South Australia increased by over 38%.

Methodology and data sources

Data for this measure was sourced from the ABARES *Australian Agricultural and Grazing Industries Survey* (AAGIS) and the *Australian Dairy Industry Survey* (ADIS).

ABARES surveys are designed to be representative of the target population. For AAGIS and ADIS, the target populations are broadacre and dairy farms respectively, with an estimated value of agricultural operations (EVAO) greater than \$40,000. ABARES draws a random sample of farm businesses stratified by geographical location (region), industry (ANZSIC) and financial size.

The survey design samples a relatively higher proportion of larger farms than smaller farms. This is because larger farms are less homogeneous than smaller farms and account for a greater proportion of total farm production and variation in observed estimates. Resulting bias in the sample is corrected by calculating a weight for each sample farm. A weight is assigned to each sample unit and the set of variables used to calibrate weights varies according to farming practice in different regions.

The sample farm businesses are contacted and visited by ABARES field officers. Data is collected through face-to-face interviews and entered into the Survey Collection and Management Program (SCAMP). The data relevant to this measure is collected as part of measurement of the value of farm assets and additions or disposals to these assets during the financial year.

The electronic data collection tool has built-in edit checks that prompt field officers to correct errors at the time of data collection. Further quality assurance processes are conducted post-interview to ensure the data is recorded accurately, and to consider outliers or errors.

Data is stored in the Farm Survey Database, a secure and purpose-built database within the Databricks environment. Access to the database is restricted to individuals within ABARES Farm Analysis program.

Survey estimates are produced by calculating the weighted mean of data collected in the survey.

The percentage of farms making capital investments is derived from data collected on expenditure on capital items, specifically taking the percentage of farms where additions to capital items is greater than zero.

Caveats and disclosures

For this measure the proportion of farm businesses making new capital investments is used as a proxy for confidence, based on the premise that farmers are more likely to invest when they feel confident about the future.

The ABARES surveys cover broadacre and dairy businesses – these represent 63% of the total farm business population. Relevant data for the remaining farm businesses was unavailable at the time of reporting.

Survey data is collected with a one-year lag, meaning the data for any given financial year reflects the previous financial year. As a result, the measure for the year ending 30 June 2025 will be based on data from 2023–24.

There may be other external factors which will influence farm businesses' investment levels, such as interest rates and input prices; however, these factors are beyond our influence or control.

The use of a 5-year moving average reduces the impact of annual fluctuations from seasonal conditions and is reported as an annual result.

Change from corporate plan

Minor update to measure wording to align to the target wording. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure SG-08

SG-08	Encourage forestry industry investment in innovation.	
Measure type	Quantitative output.	
Target	Deliver 30% of total committed grant funding for active grants at the end of the financial year.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12.	
2024–25 outcome	Not achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Grant expenditure of \$30.54 million exceeded the target of 30% (\$30.22 million) of overall total grant program funding of \$100.7 million.	Grant expenditure of \$21.29 million did not achieve the target of 30% (\$30.22 million) of overall total committed grant funding for active grants of \$100.7 million.
Tolerances	Achieved: 70–100% of grants have met their milestone requirements to enable grant payments to be made in the year. Partially achieved: 50–69% of grants have met their milestone requirements to enable grant payments to be made in the year. Not achieved: 0–49% of grants have met their milestone requirements to enable grant payments to be made in the year.	

Context

Forestry and forest products play an important role in the Australian economy by supporting regional jobs and supplying timber for the construction industry. While forestry operations are regulated by state and territory or local government planning laws, we contribute through national policies, strategies and delivery of support programs.

This measure relates to our administration of the Accelerate Adoption of Wood Processing Innovation Program. The program supports wood processing businesses to adopt new or innovative technologies that enhance their medium- to long-term sustainability. By integrating innovative

technologies into production, wood processing facilities will be better positioned to meet Australia's timber needs into the future.

Our program offers grant funding of up to 40% of total project costs with the remaining 60% to be met by grantees. Grant funding of \$100.7 million has been allocated across 33 projects between 2022–23 and 2025–26. Grantees can use their funding to implement innovative technologies that diversify or improve efficiency in existing product lines or enhance carbon efficiency. They may also use it to carry out minor capital works necessary to support the installation of new technologies, such as upgrades to electrical systems or building infrastructure. Investment through this program aims to strengthen domestic supply of high-demand timber products, improve the use of existing timber resources and increase industry resilience to future supply chain disruptions.

Analysis

In the 2024–25 financial year grant payments totalling \$21.29 million were made, representing 21.14% of total program funding. The target for the year was \$30.22 million (30%) of total program funding. Therefore, the measure target was not achieved.

Although the target was not met in 2024–25, the overall program delivery remains on track. Slower than expected project implementation by grantees has resulted in some payments being adjusted or deferred in this financial year, impacting on the achievement of the target. This represents an appropriate and responsible approach to grant management by the department.

The continued slowing of the housing and construction markets has impacted the confidence of some grantees. This has seen several grantees delay some elements of their projects or defer receipt of grant funding until next financial year. Grantees have also communicated that ongoing supply chain delays and increased costs (resulting from inflation or changing exchange rates) have affected the delivery of equipment sourced from overseas. In response, and to maintain an appropriate and responsible approach to grant management, we have delayed the release of some grant payments to reflect the progress of grant activities.

Overall, current market conditions have resulted in a more cautious approach to project implementation. This has directly affected program expenditure, with both grant funding and grantee co-contribution expenditure being lower than anticipated. For 2024–25, grantees reported spending \$14.37 million of their grant funding and \$13.03 million of their co-contribution amounts, resulting in total project expenditure of \$27.39 million.

After the grant program is completed, an evaluation will be conducted to review the impact of the program on individual businesses and the sector more broadly.

Methodology and data sources

Grantees submitted an activity work plan and budget to us in June and December. Our program delegate reviewed milestones and determined funding approval. We notified the Community Grants Hub (CGH) to release payment for approved submissions, and recorded payment details provided by the CGH in our program master spreadsheet and milestone tracking sheet.

We sourced monthly Excel expenditure reports from the Department of Social Services (DSS) and verified their data against our records. Individual payments were cross-checked with grant agreements and approval minutes for assurance. Total grant expenditure was then compared to

targets to assess whether the measure was on track. Measure data is stored on our records management system Content Manager and shared network drive.

Analysis of our measure target included how much grant funding grantees have spent, along with project co-contributions. This data was sourced directly from grantees' accepted activity work plan reports and budgets. While the measure target relates to our grant expenditure and not to grantee spending, we have included both in the analysis to provide a more holistic overview of the implementation of the program and the challenges grantees are facing.

Caveats and disclosures

This performance measure reflects payments made to grantees once their milestone reports – due in June and December – are accepted. As reports often take 2 to 3 months to finalise at the required standard, payments may not occur in the same quarter the milestone is due.

This measure captures expenditure under the related grant program. Due to the nature of the program, we cannot assess the funding's impact on individual businesses or the broader sector until after the grant period.

Established in 2023–24, this measure includes targets through to the program's conclusion in 2025–26. It captures 80% of total grant payments, with the remaining 20% excluded as they were administered in 2022–23 prior to the measure's establishment.

Given current pressures in the housing and construction markets, many grantees have raised concerns about their ability to continue project delivery. We are currently working with a number of grantees who have opted to terminate their grant or reduce the value of their grant. This will reduce the target expenditure for 2025–26. This reduction is necessary to ensure the measure accurately reflects the program's overall financial position.

Our targets and tolerances are based on the requirement that milestone reports must be provided and accepted before payments can be made. If reports do not meet the required standards or are not submitted, payments cannot be made and this will impact our ability to meet the target.

Change from corporate plan

Target wording was updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Key activity 1.2

Regulate exports and enable, improve and protect access to international markets.

In 2024–25, we achieved all 4 targets set to regulate our exports and strengthen international market access. Technical market access was either opened, improved, restored or maintained across 79 export pathways (SG-04). We attended 48 key multilateral trade and standard-setting bodies to represent Australia's trade interests (SG-05). We delivered export processes effectively, with 99.8% of applications finalised within legislated timeframes (SG-06). We also advanced our transition to paperless trade, with a 12.5% increase in electronic certificates issued across commodities and markets (SG-07).

Collectively, these results demonstrate the effectiveness of our processes and our commitment to enhancing Australia’s access to international markets.

For more detail refer to the individual performance results.

Measure SG-04

SG-04	Grow access to a diverse range of international markets for Australian exporters of agricultural, fisheries and forestry products.	
Measure type	Qualitative output.	
Target	Each year, the department can qualitatively describe the impact of technical market access achievements and how these achievements grow access for Australian agricultural, fishery and forestry (AFF) producers. Achievements may include opening, improving, maintaining or restoring access. Examples need to be provided to demonstrate that different markets and commodities have had their technical access progressed.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 1.13.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – measure updated for 2024–25 reporting.	Examples of new, improved, maintained and restored market access have been achieved, with a clear beneficial impact for Australian producers. Examples cover a range of different markets and commodities.
Tolerances	Achieved: If the department provides examples of opening, improving, maintaining and restoring technical market access for different markets and different commodities. Examples of market access changes have been implemented and are available to AFF exporters. Partially achieved: If the department provides examples of opening, improving, maintaining or restoring access but not all 4. Alternatively, if the examples do not demonstrate that clear benefits have been achieved for different markets and commodities (i.e. examples are all focused on a single market or commodity, or the achievements are not of value to Australian exporters). Examples of market access changes have been implemented and are available to AFF exporters. Not achieved: If the department cannot provide any examples of opening, improving, maintaining or restoring access to any markets or commodities.	

Context

Australia’s agricultural sector must have access to international markets to achieve our objective of sector growth. Approximately 70% of agricultural, fisheries and forestry production is exported to overseas markets supporting food security around the world. In 2023–24 agriculture contributed 2.4% to Australia’s gross domestic product, according to ABARES data.

This measure reflects availability of access to international markets, facilitated by the department’s negotiation of protocols and assurances to meet importing country requirements. We create new and improved market access by establishing technical (non-tariff) requirements for trade. These include treatment and testing protocols for biosecurity and food safety, labelling and certification requirements. We also act to maintain and restore existing technical access in response to trade disruptions. Once technical requirements are agreed, implementation is regulated under the Export Control Act and associated legislation. Cumulatively, these efforts ensure Australian exporters have stable, reliable and economically viable access to international markets.

Analysis

In 2024–25 we:

- Opened 10 new export pathways, including gaining access for mixed meat products to Taiwan. Departmental officials corresponded with Taiwanese counterparts to negotiate technical requirements and develop supporting certification. For the first time, Australian exporters can send mixed meat products consisting of pig, cattle, sheep and goat to Taiwan. This expands industry's access to the Taiwanese meat market, which was worth \$457 million in the 2024 calendar year.
- Improved 44 export pathways, including improved treatment options for macadamias to India. Previously the heat-treatment schedule required to access this market affected nut quality, making it commercially unviable. Departmental officials engaged Indian counterparts, providing evidence that alternative heat-treatment protocols would address biosecurity risks without adversely affecting product quality. By leveraging scientific evidence, we were able to achieve improved trading conditions for Australian exporters. In 2022, industry estimated that this market could be worth \$50 million to the Australian macadamia industry, and this achievement makes this market viable.
- Maintained 17 export pathways; for example, we mitigated the expected impact of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). Under the EUDR, a range of exports to the EU will have to meet new rules relating to deforestation. We liaised with the EU to ensure they considered accurate data when assessing Australia's risk ranking. As a result, the European Commission classified Australia as a low-risk country. The low-risk rating means that only 1% of Australian exporters sending regulated goods from Australia and other low-risk countries to the EU will be subject to annual checks. It also means that regulated goods originating from Australia will be subject to the simplified due diligence process set out in the EUDR.
- Restored 8 export pathways. For example, exports of Australian live rock lobsters to China were successfully restored in December 2024. This is the result of significant effort across the department, working with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to leverage engagements at all levels of government. Prior to trade being impeded in 2020, Australian live rock lobster exports to China were worth over \$700 million in 2019. This positive outcome reflects complex and sustained negotiations in a sensitive geopolitical context.

Methodology and data sources

We maintained internal registers of market access requests and the status of negotiations to identify finalised trade outcomes. Finalised outcomes are where conditions of trade have been agreed with overseas trading partners and made available to Australian exporters. These were reviewed internally and included in a central register of trade outcomes. This internal review ensured all achievements were relevant, accurate and within scope for this measure. In scope activities are grouped into 4 categories:

- 1) Opening new access – A commodity or product gains access to a market for the first time or regains access to a market after at least 5 years of no access.
- 2) Improved access – The conditions for a commodity or product entering a market are now more favourable to Australian exporters. This includes reducing the time, cost or requirements for exporters to access a given market.

- 3) Maintained access – Trade was threatened or ceased, but the disruption was avoided or resolved within 6 months due to our remedial actions.
- 4) Restored access – Trade ceased for between 6 months and 5 years due to concerns related to technical market access (including biosecurity and food safety concerns), but we were able to negotiate to restore access.

As part of the internal review, we selected qualitative examples that could demonstrate market access was progressed for a diverse range of markets and commodities. This was done by selecting examples that covered each of the categories (new, improved, maintained, restored) and which also maximised coverage of different markets and commodity types.

Caveats and disclosures

Results do not include overarching activities that promote open and free trade for agricultural sector products. Out of scope activities include contributions to bilateral and regional trading agreements and international forums that support open and free trade. Results do not incorporate market losses, which frequently occur due to international factors outside of our influence and which are complex to measure.

We may open, improve, maintain or restore market access through establishing agreed protocols for trade, but whether exporters access all available markets is a commercial decision made by each business. Factors outside of our control that influence such decisions include:

- global prices, exchange rates and market conditions (supply and demand) and other factors such as external shocks to the global supply chain
- Australia’s domestic market conditions, including climate, yield and domestic demand, which determine how much product is available for export.

Unilateral decisions made by trading partners may also impact on our ability to negotiate technical market access. These may occur outside of our influence or remit (for example, punitive tariffs or non-tariff barriers implemented against a range of commodities including non-agricultural trade). In these instances, we would be unable to maintain access and could only work to restore trade.

Outcomes may be under-reported, due to a reliance on manual tracking and reporting on the progress of trade negotiations.

Change from corporate plan

The target wording was updated slightly for greater clarity. The measure type, target and tolerances were updated to reflect transition to a qualitative performance measure. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure SG-05

SG-05	Significant representation of Australian interests on multilateral standard-setting bodies.	
Measure type	Quantitative proxy.	
Target	At least one meeting, with in-person attendance, to each of the multilateral trade standard-setting bodies (WTO, OECD, WOH, IPPC, and Codex).	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 1.13.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – new measure for 2024–25.	Representatives of the department attended 7 meetings with the WTO, 12 with the OECD, 8 with the WOH, 15 related to the IPPC and 6 with CODEX.
Tolerances	<p>Achieved: There is evidence the department has represented in-person at each of the multilateral trade standard-setting bodies WTO, OECD, WOH, FAO (IPPC and Codex).</p> <p>Partially achieved: There is evidence the department has represented in-person at least one, but not all, of the WTO, OECD, WOH, FAO (IPPC and Codex).</p> <p>Not achieved: The department does not participate in-person at any of the WTO, OECD, WOH, FAO (IPPC and Codex).</p>	

Context

Stable trade is underpinned by shared standards and shared mechanisms for resolving disputes. In agricultural trade specifically, alignment in food safety testing and biosecurity protocols allows food and agriculture products to transit smoothly between international markets. It is important that we proactively engage with international trading partners to ensure trading protocols and standards for agriculture, fishery and forestry products are evidence-based and achieve their objectives without unduly burdening Australian exporters.

This measure uses in-person attendance at 5 key multilateral, standard-setting forums as a proxy for our representation of Australia’s interests internationally. The multilateral forums in scope have been chosen because academic modelling exists to quantify the benefits of these specific forums for enabling fair, open and stable trade. They are:

- the World Trade Organization (WTO), which provides shared trade rules and a process to settle disputes, promoting an open global trading system
- the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which sets standards and recommendations across a broad range of domains, including agriculture
- the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which manages multiple initiatives to harmonise trade and international standards. Australia engages in various FAO forums, including:
 - the Codex Alimentarius Commission (or Codex) for food safety and quality standard setting
 - the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), which develops, adopts and promotes phytosanitary standards for trade in plants and plant products.

- the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), which allows transparent assessment of global risks to animal health and publishes health standards for international trade in animals and animal products.

Over the long term, this engagement is expected to grow Australia’s status as a trusted trading partner with valued contributions to setting international standards for agriculture, fisheries and forestry trade.

Analysis

In 2024–25 we had in-person representation at each of the required forums including 7 meetings with the WTO, 12 with the OECD, 8 with the WOA, 15 under the IPPC, and 6 with Codex.

Notable meetings and outcomes included:

- Meetings with the Committee on Technical barriers to trade (TBT) under the WTO, throughout 2024–25. In this forum, the department and other Australian delegates prosecuted industry and government concerns on the application of the EUDR, alongside 18 other WTO members. Australia also hosted information exchange sessions in the margins of the TBT committee with affected WTO members to enhance Australia’s understanding of how other countries were approaching the issue. Australia called for a delay in the implementation and a risk-based approach to the EUDR in the TBT committee and other WTO forums. Following intense pressure from multilateral stakeholders and EU member states, the EU has since formally approved the delay of the EUDR by one year. More recently, Australia has been designated a low-risk country under the EUDR, following the department’s bilateral engagements with the EU and our WTO advocacy.
- An OECD workshop ‘Environmental Impact of Agricultural Support: Current evidence and knowledge gaps’ in September 2024. This workshop was sponsored by Australia and is a topic of key interest for our agricultural exporters. Agricultural support policies provided by international governments to their producers (such as tariffs, price floors and payments) can distort international markets as well as cause negative environmental outcomes. The workshop was attended by key partner organisations and was designed to strengthen the collective understanding of the impact of harmful agricultural support policies.
- The 92nd General Session of the World Assembly of Delegates, which is WOA’s key annual meeting. Delegates including departmental representatives voted on international standards on animal health and welfare, including standards for safe trade of animals and animal products. The meeting also discussed global animal disease control, organisational governance and provided an opportunity for bilateral meetings with key trading partners on technical market access issues.
- The 19th meeting of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), which governs the IPPC, held in March 2025. The CPM made decisions on the strategic direction of the IPPC’s work program and also adopted 2 International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) relating to the trade of mangoes and wood. Our representatives attended, presented and contributed to this key annual meeting of the CPM.
- The 27th session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS27) which Australia hosted and chaired in September 2024. CCFICS27 made

progress developing draft guidelines on food fraud, traceability and equivalence agreements. The committee also agreed to 4 new work proposals including guidance on information and data exchange to support import and export assurance. The CCFICS plays an important role in reducing barriers to trade through establishing international standards, providing consistency for exporters and importers.

Methodology and data sources

We maintained internal records of international multilateral engagement activities. At the end of each quarter, activities that had been undertaken were summarised and submitted to a central register. We then undertook an internal review to ensure all activities were within scope for this measure and accompanied by:

- when the meeting occurred, where it occurred and who attended
- what the outcomes of the meeting were and a description of our role in the meeting
- supporting evidence, which may take the form of registration details, meeting minutes or similar documentation.

We then assessed whether the target of in-person meetings at each of the 5 selected forums had been achieved. Examples of key meetings and outcomes were selected to support this result and to qualitatively describe the value of this engagement for the Australian agricultural sector.

Caveats and disclosures

This measure uses engagement as a proxy for soft diplomacy outcomes that cannot be directly measured. ‘Significant representation’ is defined as in-person attendance and does not include virtual attendance or written submissions. We require evidence of this to qualify for inclusion against the target. Outcomes of the meetings attended cannot be wholly attributed to our influence and are also subject to the contributions and decisions of other trading partners.

Measurement is reliant upon line areas manually reporting and recording outcomes and may therefore be under-reported.

Change from corporate plan

The tolerances have been updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure SG-06

SG-06	Effective delivery of regulatory responsibilities for relevant export applications under the <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> .	
Measure type	Quantitative, effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Establish a baseline.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 1.13.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – new measure for 2024–25.	99.83% of all relevant export applications were completed within the requisite consideration period. This sets the baseline.
Tolerances	Achieved: Over 95% of all relevant export applications are completed within the requisite consideration period specified by the <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> . Partially achieved: Over 85% of all relevant export applications are completed within the requisite consideration period specified by the <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> . Not achieved: Under 85% of all relevant export applications are completed within the requisite consideration period specified by the <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> .	

Context

Exporters must apply for, and progress through, requisite regulatory processes under the Export Control Act to become approved and licensed to conduct export operations.

The Export Control Act is administered so that successful regulatory decision-making by authorised officers occurs when they complete their assessment and approval of specified types of applications within the specified consideration period defined within the Export Control Act. Exporters will be delayed in getting to market unless they receive streamlined and effective regulatory services.

This measure is designed to capture how effective we are in delivering our administrative obligations as an export regulator under the Export Control Act. It tracks how quickly we assess 4 different types of export applications – prescribed goods under the Export Control Act – which are considered key indicators of our success. These are:

- applying for an establishment to be registered for exports
- applying for accreditation of a farm property to meet the requirements of the European Union Cattle Accreditation Scheme (EUCAS)
- requesting to vary an approved arrangement an occupier of a registered establishment holds
- obtaining a license to export meat and meat products from Australia.

Measuring the proportion of relevant export applications that were – and were not – processed within the appropriate timeframe will allow us to gauge our success in delivering streamlined regulation that enables industry to get their goods to market.

To facilitate trade, we demonstrate to our trading partners the integrity, safety and traceability of prescribed export agricultural commodities from Australia. We show that our regulated industry

complies with traceability, sanitary and phytosanitary standards through actions such as inspections, quarantine procedures, seals and certifications.

People seeking to export from Australia are required to obtain a minimum amount of approval and permission from the Australian Government.

We are the identified competent authority for the purposes of regulatory decision-making for exporter applications under the Export Control Act.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We have developed formal staff training resources (standard operating procedures) to actively build staff capability and encourage them to take a broad perspective of the regulatory environment. We have also created a culture that articulates the type of regulators we want our staff to be – transparent, accountable, fair and responsive. This required a holistic review of the way we manage export applications, improving the overall process across the Exports and Veterinary Services Division. We have also established a cross-commodity working group and are active members of the National Regulators Community of Practice where we share learnings and insights and take a broad perspective across agencies and jurisdictions of the regulatory environment.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – Before the development of this measure we were not making data-driven decisions about resource allocation for these types of export regulatory services. We can now identify our risk levels for export applications and use intelligence and data to inform a risk-based approach to our decisions. We have also become better at actively monitoring and planning for risks, such as changes in the market that may have flow-on effects for operations.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – The export applications covered by this performance measure are handled by several separate teams across the division. Each application has gone through a co-design process with industry stakeholders, including regulated entities. For some applications, for instance the Export Establishment Workflow system, regulated entities are informed via a notice of intention prior to an adverse decision being taken, and have the ability provide feedback and/or further information.

Analysis

In 2024–25 this measure was introduced to assess our effectiveness in processing export applications that are subject to a consideration period under the Export Control Act. As this is the baseline year, no prior year target or comparative data exists.

The result for this measure is classified as achieved as we processed more than 99.83% of valid applications within the regulatory consideration period, exceeding the indicative baseline target of >95%. This provides strong evidence of effective regulatory service delivery across the regulated commodities.

This new measure has allowed us to consolidate and analyse performance data across multiple commodities and application types for the first time.

This strong baseline result supports the decision to revise the success thresholds for future years, with full success set at >99%, partial success between 95–99%, and failure at <95%.

Key factors contributing to the strong outcome included:

- process standardisation across commodities
- system improvements in export documentation platforms
- continued investment in staff capability and procedural guidance.

As this was the first year of measurement, no downward trend or problematic patterns were observed. Ongoing monitoring in future years will assess year-on-year consistency and inform further system or resourcing adjustments.

The overall result for 2024–25 supports our contribution to delivering efficient, modernised regulation and advancing Australia’s international market access objectives.

Methodology and data sources

The 2024–25 result is the baseline for relevant export applications.

The measure encompasses accreditation, registration, approved arrangements and meat export commodity licences completed by our authorised officers within the valid consideration period specified by the Export Control Act. The initial consideration period starts the day after we receive a complete and valid application.

Data is extracted each quarter from a number of systems, including the 3 distinct program areas of: the EUCAS, the export meat licensing data sets and the Export Establishment Workflow.

The result is calculated by taking the total number of applications assessed on time, dividing by the total number of valid applications received and multiplying by 100 to obtain the percent of success.

Each indicator follows its own unique pathway; however, the common elements are:

- The submitted application is reviewed – noting that the consideration period only starts when we receive a complete and valid application. This requires an initial rapid assessment to take place before the clock commences. When an application is deemed to be not valid or incomplete it will be returned to the applicant.
- The application undergoes a technical assessment.
- A fit and proper person assessment of the applicant is made, which includes a review of any debts and liabilities they may owe to the Commonwealth.
- The delegate makes their decision.

At each of these steps the assessing officer may need to ‘stop the clock’ on the consideration period and return the application to the applicant to request further details or to resolve an outstanding issue. The consideration period is paused until the issue is rectified.

This measure only captures valid applications which were eligible for assessment. Where an application was withdrawn, incomplete or lapsed due to actions of the applicant, it is considered out

of scope for inclusion in the measure. The performance measure only measures applications we failed to assess within the requisite considerations period when we should have.

Caveats and disclosures

The Export Control Act sets a 120-day initial consideration period for the 4 identified indicators. However, the total time from submission to assessment outcome can be protracted if the process is paused, for example, when applicants must amend their application or provide additional information. This measure uses the phrase ‘valid consideration period’ rather than referring to 120 days to avoid confusion.

Results are derived from the number of applications that we failed to assess within the valid consideration period. Applications that are withdrawn, incomplete or lapsed due to actions of the applicant are considered out of scope.

Benchmarking in the first year will enable us to determine how best to capture applications that are already in train when a year begins, and those that are yet to be completed when a year ends.

Change from corporate plan

The tolerances and methodology were updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure SG-07

SG-07	Increase in the number of electronic certificates issued for export.	
Measure type	Quantitative efficiency and regulatory.	
Target	Plus 2% of what the final 2023–24 eCert number is.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 1.13.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	21.9% increase in the number of electronic certificates issued for export (74,661 in 2023–24 compared with 61,237 in 2022–23).	12.5% increase in the number of electronic certificates issued for export (84,180 in 2024–25 compared with 74,661 in 2023–24).
Tolerances	Achieved: 2% or more increase. Partially achieved: 1–1.99% increase. Not achieved: Less than 1% increase.	

Context

This measure tracks the uptake of electronic certification for exports via eCert – our initiative to modernise sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) certification.

Electronic certification enables us to be more responsive and efficient to changes in agreed certification. These benefits are appealing to importers and may support increased exports to key destinations.

This measure also tracks Australia’s transition from a paper-based certification system – vulnerable to loss, damage and fraud – to a more modern secure digital system. This shift improves the integrity

of our certification process, provides faster assurance to overseas governments and enhances our reputation as a reliable and efficient trading partner. With Australia already known for high-quality goods, faster and more secure certification is likely to strengthen our position as a preferred export partner.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – This eCert measure is one that demonstrates our drive for continuous improvement in how we conduct cross-border trade. Direct exchange of certificate data helps to build trust and confidence with our trading partners.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – eCert provides a focus on how we use data to state that we are meeting the requirements set out by our trading partners.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – eCert heavily encourages collaboration and engagement with trading partners. As part of the eCert process we are required to discuss how the eCert exchange will work, what commodities are included, as well as possible joint ventures to support further work in developing international standards.

Analysis

The percentage increase for the past 12 months was 12.5%, meaning we achieved the target set for this year. The success this year was helped by an increase in trade to those markets that are paperless. Targeting those markets helped to ensure that a number of our high-volume and high-value markets were covered by paperless certification. This meant that those markets and our exporters had the opportunity to maximise the benefits associated with paperless certification.

Another key aspect of the improvement has been the addition of 2 new paperless exchanges over the course of the year. Both fish meal to New Zealand and edible seafood to the Republic of Korea have both transitioned to paperless certification, helping to improve our paperless certification numbers.

Methodology and data sources

This measure tracks the number of eCerts for exports issued per financial year. This figure is then compared with the total number of all export certificates to calculate the proportion of eCerts issued over the period.

We compare this overall result against figures from the previous financial year to determine if there has been an increase.

The number of electronic certificates issued to exporters in 2024–25 is extracted from our internal Export Documentation System (EXDOC) and Next Export Documentation System (NEXDOC) databases.

These results are extracted, reviewed and collated by the eCert team to determine an overall result.

Caveats and disclosures

Only the number of eCerts issued to markets using electronic certification processes was within scope for this measure. It did not account for how certification was applied for, nor does it reflect the overall proportion of electronic certificates issued relative to all certification activity.

Change from corporate plan

The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Strategic objective 2 Sector resilience and sustainability

Increase the contribution agriculture, fisheries and forestry make to a healthy, sustainable and low-emissions environment.

Connecting our performance to sector resilience and sustainability

A healthy, sustainable and low-emissions environment is a key factor in building a prosperous and competitive agricultural sector. By improving resource management, fostering sustainability and self-reliance, and encouraging the adoption of emissions reduction practices, we aim to help the agricultural sector balance environmental stewardship with economic growth. By embedding sustainability into routine operations, producers strengthen their resilience to climate and market volatility, meet consumer and trading partner expectations, and position themselves to capitalise on emerging low-emissions opportunities.

Our 4 resilience and sustainability performance measures support our objective of supporting a healthy, sustainable and lower-emitting agricultural sector.

We increase pathways to support the understanding and adoption of emissions reduction opportunities, technologies and practices (RS-01). We fund investments in sustainable practices that reduce environmental impacts while enhancing productivity, ensuring long-term viability for both producers and the environment (RS-02). Through the Future Drought Fund, we build the drought resilience of farming businesses by enabling preparedness, risk management and financial self-reliance (RS-03). We develop and review legislative and policy settings to ensure Commonwealth fisheries are sustainably managed (RS-04).

Together, these measures show how targeted support, innovation and encouraging emissions reduction activities can deliver lasting benefits for industry, communities and the environment, helping Australia remain a leader in sustainable food and fibre production.

Key activity 2.1

Promote better resource management practices, sustainability and self-reliance in the agricultural sector.

In 2024–25, we improved resource management, sustainability and self-reliance for the agricultural sector by progressing major initiatives. The Climate-Smart Agriculture Program funding (RS-02) was partially delivered with over \$55 million (80.0%) of allocated funding spent. While the Future Drought Fund issued a substantial investment of \$66.8 million to strengthen farmer and industry resilience to long-term drought conditions, only 55% of the 2024–25 funding allocation was spent (RS-03). Effective sustainable fisheries management contributed to an increase in the volume of fish stocks that were not subject to overfishing (RS-04), up from 74% in 2023 to 76% in 2024.

Collectively, these results demonstrate our progress and commitment to supporting adaptive, resilient and sustainable agricultural practices, safeguarding natural resources and building long-term sector self-reliance.

For more detail refer to the individual performance results.

Measure RS-02

RS-02	Sustainable farming practices are funded through the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.	
Measure type	Quantitative output.	
Target	Deliver 100% of 2024–25 funding profile according to agreed milestones for Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.2, 1.11.	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	80.7% of 2023–24 funds for the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program delivered.	80.0% of 2024–25 funds for the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program delivered.
Tolerances	Achieved: 100% of relevant financial year funding profile for Climate-Smart Agriculture Program funding delivered. Partially achieved: 80–99% of relevant financial year funding profile for Climate-Smart Agriculture Program funding delivered. Not achieved: 0–79% of relevant financial year funding profile for Climate-Smart Agriculture Program funding delivered.	

Context

This measure monitors the rollout of the \$302.1 million Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). The program supports farmers to build climate resilience, increase market access and agricultural growth, and achieve sustainability outcomes.

NHT investments are governed by the [Natural Heritage Trust of Australia Act 1997](#). Each phase of the NHT is funded over a 5-year cycle. The current phase commenced in 2023–24 and will operate to 2027–28. The program is jointly managed between our department and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

The program is being staged over the 5 years via a series of grant and procurement investments. It aims to contribute to building capacity and knowledge and accelerating the uptake of sustainable agricultural practices in the agriculture sector. Funding will support trials, on-farm demonstrations and practices that address local, regional and national natural resource management and sustainable agriculture priorities, with the aim of delivering long-term sustainable agriculture outcomes.

The program investments are being managed by the Australian Government and delivered by third parties, including regional natural resource management organisations, industry, research organisations and academia, non-government organisations (NGOs), community groups and First Nations organisations. On-ground challenges can influence the preferred timelines of programs and therefore the timing of funding commitments and delivery.

The program complements the Partnering to implement the National Soil Action Plan Budget measure, which is establishing Federation Funding Agreement schedules with states and territories. This will support projects that make a measurable impact on the priority actions of the *National Soil Action Plan 2023 to 2028*.

Analysis

During 2024–25 a total of \$55,387,996 was spent against the total allocation of \$69,245,728 (inclusive of an urgent ‘movement of funds’ submitted to the Department of Finance) for the NHT’s Climate-Smart Agriculture Program (Table 3). This represents 80.0% of allocated funding that was spent over the 2024-25 period, noting that this accounts for accrued expenses.

Results are expected to improve. Over 90% of investments have finalised agreements, with project payments being made according to agreed milestones, subject to unforeseen events like major natural disasters or economic disruptions that can slow progress of on-ground activities. The remaining uncommitted investment relates to a new grants round which was under evaluation by the end of the financial year.

Table 3 Climate-Smart Agriculture Program funding delivered, 2024–25

Measure	Profile (\$) ^a	Delivered (\$)
2024–25 Climate-Smart Agriculture Program funding	69,245,728	55,387,996
Total	69,245,728	55,387,996

^a Inclusive of an urgent movement of funds submitted to Department of Finance.

Methodology and data sources

Reporting against the measure comes from our financial management systems (FMS) with connections to the DCCEEW and the DSS CGH systems.

The program finance team draws reports from the FMS and compares expenditure to the financial year budget allocation.

Quality assurance involves preparing the calculation and approval of the result submission. Access to financial data is restricted to appropriate staff by system owners.

Records of financial commitments forecast and expended are held by program managers responsible for the delivery of budget measures and NHT funding. These are verified against the FMS. Files are stored in accordance with our Information Management Policy.

Program teams ensure that work orders and grant payments are created and reflected in the FMS with administrative support from the program finance team. The FMS tracks all work orders and grant agreements including the commitments, any variations and amounts expended.

Data about the budget appropriation comes from DCCEEW.

Caveats and disclosures

Program investments are delivered in partnership with regional natural resource management organisations, industry, research organisations, NGOs, community groups and First Nations organisations, through a variety of arrangements including grants and procurements. The capacity of delivery partners and unforeseen on-ground challenges can impact program timelines and the timing of funding commitments, and this is monitored by DAFF through reporting and regular management meetings.

The program is jointly managed with DCCEEW and with supporting services from DSS. Program reporting depends on the accurate and timely sharing of data between these agencies and DAFF.

Change from corporate plan

The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure RS-03

RS-03	Increased investment in activities to build economic, social and environmental resilience to drought.	
Measure type	Quantitative output.	
Target	\$52 million.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.2, 1.11.	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	\$110.38 million was spent under the Future Drought Fund (FDF) in 2023–24.	\$66.8 million of an available \$100.1 million was spent under the FDF in 2024–25. \$29 million of an available \$52.9 million was spent under the FDF (Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2024 to 2028) Determination 2024. A further \$37.8 million of an available \$47.2 million was spent from 2023–24 unspent funds from the FDF (Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020 to 2024) Determination 2020.
Tolerances	Achieved: 70–100%. Partially achieved: 50–69%. Not achieved: 0–49%.	

Context

The Future Drought Fund (FDF) provides secure, continuous funding for initiatives that support farmers and regional communities to prepare for and build resilience to drought and other climate impacts. The FDF is a long-term investment that demonstrates our ongoing commitment to enhancing drought preparedness and resilience in the agricultural sector. Our approach to the delivery of FDF programs is outlined in the *Australian Government Drought Plan* and the [National Drought Agreement](#).

FDF investments are governed by the [Future Drought Fund Act 2019](#) (Future Drought Fund Act) and the Drought Resilience Funding Plan which is renewed every 4 years. In 2024–25, the [Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2024–2028](#) was the governing document. The strategic objectives of the plan are to build economic, social and environmental resilience to drought.

Investments follow a 4-year funding plan, targeting an outlay of \$400 million over the period. A key objective is to strengthen the resilience of farming businesses by promoting preparedness, risk management and financial self-reliance. The FDF may allocate less funding in some years as programs are established and to maintain prudent financial management. In other years, greater investments may be made to align with the total funding available for the funding period.

Analysis

For the 2024–25 financial year, we transitioned from the [Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020–2024](#) to the Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2024–2028.

The government allocated \$519.1 million over 8 years from 2024–25 from the FDF for initiatives that provide improved support to farmers and communities to manage drought and adapt to climate change. Throughout 2024–25 some programs from the previous determination continued.

In 2024–25 the FDF spent \$66.8 million which related mostly to continuing programs under the previous funding determination to meet existing contractual obligations. This funding was part of an FDF ‘movement of funds’ of \$47.2 million from 2023–24 to 2024–25. Reasons for the underspend generally relate to initial delays establishing the foundational programs under the previous Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2020–2024, including protracted contract negotiations and the resulting delay in planned activity. Any unspent funds are returned to or retained in the FDF special account. This is a requirement of the Future Drought Fund Act.

Of the \$52.9 million available under the current Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2024–2028, \$29 million or 55% was spent in 2024–25 (partially achieved). Delays in establishing programs and negotiating contracts contributed to underspends, which we will seek to move to the 2025–26 financial year to continue program implementation.

In 2024–25, the FDF invested in 5 broad themes to build drought resilience:

- 1) Partnering for local solutions – working with regions and communities to help them manage their own drought and climate risks.
- 2) Partnering for First Nations initiatives – recognising First Nations peoples' connection to Country and partnering with First Nations communities to manage drought and climate risks.
- 3) Building knowledge, skills and capability – supporting farmers and communities to make informed decisions about drought.
- 4) Innovating for transformation – trialling innovative solutions and driving transformational change, building on the sector’s long-term drought resilience.
- 5) Measuring progress and knowledge sharing – funding activities to show how, and to what extent, the fund contributes to its priorities.

A review of the Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs was also completed with the final report submitted to government in March 2025.

Methodology and data sources

On 9 February 2024, the new Future Drought Fund Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2024–2028 came into effect. Our minister also issued an [FDF Investment Strategy](#) on 23 January 2025, which provides additional information regarding activities, ensuring that all funding decisions align with the funding plan. The investment strategy responds to a recommendation from the Productivity Commission 2023 inquiry. The Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee continued to advise the minister on consistency of the program arrangements and grants to be made under the FDF Drought Resilience Funding Plan 2024–2028, in accordance with Section 36E of the Future Drought Fund Act. Under the Future Drought Fund Act, \$100 million is made available each financial year. Australian Government approval for proposed spending on FDF programs was received through the 2024–25 budget process.

The Minister for Finance transfers \$100 million each financial year from the FDF Special Account to the Agriculture Future Drought Resilience Special Account. These funds are used to meet Australian

Government commitments for drought resilience initiatives and grants. We assessed each program, individual grant or arrangement for consistency with the FDF Drought Resilience Funding Plan (2024–2028) prior to approval. Financial management data was sourced from our financial management system (TechnologyOne) and the CGH for each grant or arrangement. We published payment information for each program on our website as required under section 27A of the Future Drought Fund Act.

We worked with our Financial and Investment Division to maintain current and accurate summary information on FDF administered funds. This included spreadsheets to track monthly forecast and actual expenditure by program for the financial year.

Standard operating procedures were also developed detailing how this information is maintained, serving as the foundation for reporting FDF administered expenditure and this performance measure.

Caveats and disclosures

FDF investments are delivered in partnership with industry, universities, non-government organisations, and state and territory governments through grants, procurement and Federation Funding Agreements. The capacity of delivery partners, on-ground conditions and challenges can impact program timelines and the timing of funding expenditure.

System limitations in TechnologyOne require a variety of spreadsheets to be maintained outside of the financial system to accurately manage forecasts and expenditure against the programs. These spreadsheets require manual updating by staff and this increases the chance of errors in transferring data.

Change from corporate plan

The target was updated to align with funding approved and announced as part of the 2024–25 Budget. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure RS-04

RS-04	The proportion of Australian Government managed fish stocks that are sustainable.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness.	
Target	The proportion of fish stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ is maintained or increases year-on-year.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.2, 1.11.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	The proportion of fish stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ decreased from 80% in the previous year to 73% in 2022. This is a total of 75 out of 102 stocks not subject to overfishing, compared with 81 out of 101 in the previous year.	The proportion of fish stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ increased from 74% in 2023 to 76% in 2024. This is a total of 78 out of 102 stocks not subject to overfishing, compared with 75 out of 102 in 2023, and 75 out of 102 in 2022.
Tolerances	Achieved: The proportion of Australian Government-managed fish stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ is maintained or increases compared with the previous year. Partially achieved: Not applicable. Not achieved: If the proportion of Australian Government-managed fish stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ decreases compared with the previous year.	

Context

We are responsible for ensuring that Commonwealth fisheries are sustainably managed. We do this by developing and reviewing legislative and policy settings that are designed to maximise the benefits to the Australian community from the management of these fisheries.

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) undertakes the day-to-day management of Commonwealth fisheries, including implementing licensing arrangements and harvest control measures. This must occur in accordance with relevant fisheries legislation and the policy settings established by us.

Our *Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy* requires stocks to be managed within sustainable limits. This can be achieved by implementing total allowable catch limits, fishing gear restrictions and seasonal and spatial closures. AFMA selects the most appropriate control measures based on the specific needs of each fishery. The policy also articulates the Australian Government’s preferred approach for stocks managed jointly by a regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) or other international arrangement.

We lead Australia’s engagement within RFMOs that manage fishery resources that migrate between the jurisdictional waters of different countries and the high seas. We work directly with the relevant RFMOs to set management measures, monitor compliance and ensure the sustainability of internationally shared fish stocks of importance to Australia. Through this engagement we help secure Australia’s access to its share of these resources while promoting long-term sustainability.

This performance measure tracks stock status trends in Australian Government-managed fisheries, providing an indicator of sustainable management. It is informed by an independent assessment of the biological status of fish stocks undertaken by ABARES.

Analysis

A total of 78 out of 102 stocks were ‘not subject to overfishing’ in 2024 according to the fishing mortality metrics in the ABARES *Fishery status reports 2025*, compared with 75 out of 102 in 2023. Six stocks were ‘subject to overfishing’ in 2024 compared with 7 in 2023. The remaining 18 stocks assessed in 2024 were categorised as ‘uncertain’, compared with 20 in 2023.

The total proportion of stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ in 2024 was 76%, compared with 74% in 2023, 74% in 2022 and 80% in 2021. The proportion of fish stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ has increased since 2022, after a decrease from 2021.

We will continue to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of fisheries policy and programs for maintaining the sustainability of Australian Government-managed fish stocks. We have nearly completed the 5-year review of the *Commonwealth Fisheries Harvest Strategy Policy* and the *Commonwealth Fisheries Bycatch Policy*. The reviews considered emerging issues that have impacted the success of rebuilding strategies for overfished stocks, and uncertainty in stock assessments. This includes the impact of climate change on productivity of fish stocks, difficulty accounting for all sources of mortality and loss of commercial catch data to support stock assessments when fisheries are closed to address stock decline. The review will identify actions to address these challenges.

Methodology and data sources

To establish the result, the proportion of fish stocks that are ‘not subject to overfishing’ in the reporting year (2024) has been compared with the proportion of fish stocks ‘not subject to overfishing’ in the previous year (2023) to identify whether there is a change (trending upwards or downwards).

The proportion of sustainable fish stocks is calculated by dividing the number of stocks assessed as ‘not subject to overfishing’ in the annual ABARES Fishery status reports by the total number of assessed stocks. The total number of assessed stocks included stocks classified as ‘not subject to overfishing’, ‘subject to overfishing’ and those with ‘uncertain’ stock levels.

Our data was sourced from the [Fishery status reports 2025](#) prepared by ABARES. The report assesses biological status for 2024.

Caveats and disclosures

The most recent information available is the *Fishery status reports 2025*. It is important to note that the Fishery status reports assess stock status using information that is available to ABARES at the time of preparation and assesses the previous year’s performance. In some instances, biological status is assessed using newly available data that was not available to AFMA to inform its management decision-making for the period being assessed.

The *Fishery status reports 2025* categorised 18% of stocks as ‘uncertain’. Reduced availability of fishery catch and effort data, the impact of climate change on productivity and declining quality of total mortality data (including commercial discards, recreational and Indigenous catch) is making it increasingly difficult to confidently classify stock status.

The publishing of the *Fishery status reports 2025* was brought forward to September, after historically being published in October each year. This means the previous annual performance statement was based on the *Fishery status reports 2023* because the 2024 report was not available at

the time. This year the performance result was calculated using data from the *Fishery status reports 2025* and compared with results from the *Fishery status reports 2024* and *Fishery status reports 2023*. The trend compared to previous years is provided in the *Fishery status reports 2025* overview chapter.

It is important to note there is variability in the reporting period for status across fisheries due to differing fishing seasons which impact when new data becomes available. The *Fishery status reports 2025* did not assess the Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF) or the Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) because its fishing season runs from 1 May to 30 April, and new data was not available in time to enable assessments to be completed for a September release of the report. The status of SESSF and SPF has therefore not changed since assessments were undertaken for the *Fishery status reports 2024*. However, as the 2023–24 annual performance statements were based on the *Fishery status reports 2023*, an assessment of the status of the SESSF and SPF has still occurred since the last reporting cycle. These fisheries have still been included in the performance measure results for 2024–25. From 2026, the assessment of status of SESSF and SPF will align with the reporting periods across all fisheries.

Change from corporate plan

The methodology was updated to reflect more timely access to data for reporting results over the period. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Key activity 2.2

Support the agricultural sector to adopt emissions reduction activities that strengthen productivity and competitiveness.

In 2024–25, we made progress in supporting the agricultural sector to adopt emissions reduction activities (RS-01). As a composite measure, RS-01 had 4 targets set for the period of which half were achieved.

Over the period, we delivered several international engagement activities, including 2 with New Zealand relating to climate research in agriculture and agricultural emissions. Public consultation continued to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan and the plan progressed in line with government expectations; however, it has not yet been delivered to government as planned. While emissions reduction activities progressed, timing of the delivery arrangements for these activities resulted in only 19.45% of administered funding being spent according to agreed milestones.

For more detail refer to the performance result.

Measure RS-01

RS-01	Increased pathways to support the understanding and adoption of emissions reduction opportunities, technologies and practices.	
Measure type	Quantitative output.	
Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted consultation to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan. Deliver the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan to government. Deliver 100% of 2024–25 funding according to agreed milestones for Budget measures related to emissions reduction activities. Undertake 2 engagement activities with another country. 	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 1.2, 1.11.	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Public consultations were held to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan with funding announced for relevant measures in the 2024–25 Federal Budget, and Climate-Smart Agriculture Program round one grants opened. We held a technical research workshop with our New Zealand counterparts. Overall result: achieved.	Public consultation to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan continued in 2024–25. The Agriculture and Land Sector Plan was progressed in line with government expectations but was not delivered to the government in 2024–25. The first annual partner payment for the Zero Net Emissions Agriculture Cooperative Research Centre was delivered, the Integrated Approaches to Building On-Farm Emissions Knowledge: Gap Analysis grants process resulted in the delivery of 19.54% of 2024–25 funding and the Improving Consistency of On-farm Emissions Estimates Program progressed through a two-stage grant process to identify a grantee. Engagement activities were delivered with New Zealand, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, Pacific Island nations and Ireland, and multilaterally through the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases. Overall result: Partially achieved.
Tolerances	Achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders consulted to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan. Agriculture and Land Sector Plan is delivered to the government in 2024–25. 100% of relevant financial year funding for Budget measures delivered. Planned engagement with other countries is delivered. Partially achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder consultation to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan planned but not delivered. 80–99% of relevant financial year funding for Budget measures delivered. Engagement with other countries is planned but not delivered. Not achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders not consulted to inform the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan. Agriculture and Land Sector Plan not delivered in 2024–25. 0–79% of relevant financial year funding for Budget measures delivered. No engagement with other countries is planned or delivered. 	

Context

The agriculture sector accounted for 17.8% of Australia’s total net emissions in the year to December 2024, making it key in the nation’s efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change and achieve net-zero goals. We are responsible for delivering on the Australian Government’s commitment to supporting the agriculture industry to sustainably reduce emissions and manage the impacts of climate change, including the challenge of increasing food production to meet global demand while reducing the impact of agricultural production on the environment. Accelerated access to innovative technologies and farming practices will position farmers to increase productivity and competitiveness while contributing to Australia’s net-zero goals.

DCCEEW is the lead agency on the government’s climate policies. We deliver projects, programs and activities that support agriculture’s contribution to the government’s net-zero targets.

This performance measure demonstrates the extent of our contribution to assisting the agricultural sector to build an understanding of emissions reduction opportunities and adopt technologies and practices over time.

Analysis

The measure was partially achieved in 2024–25, with 2 targets fully achieved and 2 targets not achieved.

- Building on consultation in 2023–24 to inform the development of the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan, we engaged in targeted consultation and held 5 round tables to discuss opportunities to support on-farm practice change through the value chain and to provide stakeholders with an update on the development of the plan and an opportunity to discuss key priorities. The consultation helped identify opportunities for farmers and land managers to contribute to Australia’s net-zero goal, providing the certainty needed to underpin investments in Australia’s low-emissions future.
- Over 2024–25, the Agriculture and Land Sector Plan progressed in line with government expectations but was not delivered to government as planned. The plan is being finalised and will be released subject to whole-of-government timeframes and processes.
- We entered a formal partnership with the Zero Net Emissions Agriculture Cooperative Research Centre (ZNE-Ag CRC) in February 2025. The first annual partnership payment was made in May 2025. The ZNE-Ag CRC was established in July 2024 as a vehicle for the long-term research required to support emissions reduction from agriculture.

In 2024 we commenced the first stage of delivering the Improving Consistency of On-farm Emissions Estimates Program via a call for expressions of interest (EOI). The EOI process closed in December 2024 and following an assessment process, successful respondents were invited to apply for the grant of up to \$6.8 million by April 2025. The second assessment process was completed in mid-June 2025. Timing did not allow for a grantee to be selected and a funding agreement to be executed in time for funding to be delivered in 2024–25 as originally targeted.

In 2024–25 we commenced delivery of the Integrated Approaches to Building On-Farm Emissions Knowledge: Gap Analysis grants, through the Carbon Farming Outreach Program. Grants totalling \$1,504,601 (including GST) were provided to 12 RDCs – through a targeted grant round – to determine current gaps in publicly available and accessible commodity-specific information, and

appropriate information formats and delivery channels. This represents 19.54% of the 2024–25 funding.

- In December 2024 we undertook one technical exchange with New Zealand to develop deeper relationships between Australian and New Zealand researchers on climate in agriculture, and a policy exchange with New Zealand officials regarding agricultural emissions. We also supported policy exchanges with Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, Pacific Island nations and Ireland, including a presentation on Australia’s climate policy settings at Thailand’s Sustainability Expo in October 2024. Australia also engaged multilaterally through representation at the annual meeting of the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases in June 2025.

Methodology and data sources

This performance measure has 4 targets, each with a different methodology to obtain results.

- Following each engagement period, relevant information – such as event planning, stakeholder consultation, attendance lists and incurred costs – was collected and stored. A designated team member assessed progress by verifying evidence of targeted consultation, including the number of stakeholders consulted and records of relevant SES stakeholder meetings.
- Following each major draft development, relevant information – such as government agency feedback on exposure and final drafts and major communications relating to delivery of the plan – was collected and stored. A designated team member reviewed records to assess whether we were on track to meet the target, verifying evidence that major drafts were developed within relevant reporting periods and the timeframe set by the Net Zero Economy Committee.
- TechnologyOne reports were used to verify evidence of the relevant budget measure’s financial year-to-date administered expenditure and compare it against the forecasted funding.
- Following each international engagement, relevant records – such as emails confirming the engagement, meeting notes and travel arrangements – were collected and stored. A designated team member assessed progress by verifying evidence of engagement, such as meetings, workshops and conferences held.

To calculate the overall result, all 4 targets were equally weighted and a score was applied to establish if the measure was achieved (2 points), partially achieved (1 point) or not achieved (0 points). The end-of-year result was based on the thresholds:

- Overall achieved = total score across the 4 targets is 8 points
- Overall partially achieved = total score across the 4 targets is 3–7 points
- Overall not achieved = total score across the 4 targets is 0–2 points.

The overall score for the measure was 4 points giving a result of partially achieved.

Caveats and disclosures

Activities associated with the agricultural sector make up a significant part of Australia’s – and the world’s – greenhouse gas emissions. While the Australian Government does not directly regulate or have responsibility for on-farm emissions management practices, it is committed to supporting the agricultural sector to sustainably reduce emissions and manage the impacts of climate change. Many of the initiatives being delivered by our department that will support the sector to reduce its

emissions commenced in 2024–25. There are other variables that impact the pace and extent to which industry will adopt emissions reduction tools and techniques, and the consequential reduction in emissions achieved. This includes other government programs that directly or indirectly support upskilling of the agriculture industry and emissions reduction activities.

Change from corporate plan

The targets and tolerances were updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity. The measure type was updated for consistency.

Strategic objective 3 National biosecurity

Strengthen our national biosecurity system to provide a risk-based approach and an appropriate level of protection to Australia's people, our environment and economy.

Connecting our performance to national biosecurity

Australia depends on a strong, integrated biosecurity system. This system prevents, detects and responds to threats from pests and diseases to support safe trade, sustainable sector growth and the protection of our unique environment. Our 12 national biosecurity performance measures demonstrate how we provide a risk-based approach and an appropriate level of protection to Australia's people, our environment and economy.

Pre-border – Preventing risks before they arrive

Before goods or people approach our borders, proactive measures reduce the likelihood of threats reaching Australia. Through biosecurity risk analyses (BI-01), we develop import conditions, negotiate safe trade arrangements and set clear import requirements. The import permit service standard (BI-02) ensures permit applications are assessed promptly and consistently, balancing efficiency with risk controls. By expanding pre-border assurance arrangements (BI-03) with exporting countries, we strengthen offshore management of pests and diseases, enabling faster clearance and fewer border interventions. Public communication and engagement (BI-04) supports our efforts by fostering a shared responsibility for biosecurity across industry, travellers and the public.

At the border – Detecting and managing risks on arrival

Despite strong pre-border measures, some threats still arrive at our ports, airports and mail facilities. We safeguard against the arrival of these pest and disease threats (BI-06) through strict protocols for goods, mail and travellers, preventing incursions such as African swine fever (ASF) and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). We target high-impact pests such as khapra beetle through tailored surveillance and treatments to reduce the risk of hitchhikers on imported goods (BI-07) and take a risk-based approach to reduce non-compliance in high-value cargo (BI-08). We focus on ensuring aircraft, sea vessels, containers, goods and packaging meet Australian standards. We target non-compliance by international travellers (BI-09) through education, inspection and enforcement. For approved arrangements (BI-10), we work with industry operators to share responsibility for managing biosecurity risks while supporting efficient trade. We minimise regulatory burdens and delays through our biosecurity service standards (BI-11) improving confidence in our processes.

Post-border – Responding to and containing risks

We respond to biosecurity breaches with rapid, coordinated action. As part of our emergency management capabilities (BI-05) we work in partnership with industry, non-government

organisations and government agencies to manage pest and disease outbreaks. We investigate and enforce compliance under relevant legislation, deterring future offences and maintaining Australia's reputation as a credible regulator (BI-12).

Key activity 3.1

Effectively prepare for the management of biosecurity risks, imported food and human health through risk assessment, pre-border controls and assurance programs, inspection, treatment, certification and education.

In 2024–25, we improved pre-border controls with the finalisation of 75% of non-regulated risk analyses (BI-01) and processing of standard (99%) and non-standard (89%) import permit applications (BI-02). Although growth in international biosecurity arrangements was only partially achieved (BI-03), we continued to demonstrate the effectiveness of our inspection and treatment measures as seen by the reduction in khapra beetle detections (BI-07). In addition, 4 biosecurity awareness campaigns (BI-04) were delivered which informed and engaged stakeholders and reinforced our shared responsibility for biosecurity management.

Collectively, our results demonstrated that the pre-border controls in place are effective at managing and safeguarding Australia's biosecurity, food safety and human health.

For more detail refer to the individual performance results.

Measure BI-01

BI-01	Proportion of biosecurity risk analyses completed within regulatory and target timeframes.	
Measure type	Qualitative, output and regulatory.	
Target	Risk analyses are completed within regulatory and target timeframes.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – measure updated for 2024–25 reporting.	Achieved – 75% of risk analyses finalised within regulated and target timeframes.
Tolerances	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ≥75% of non-regulated risk analyses finalised within the target 24 months from announcement. • ≥75% of regulated risk analyses finalised within 30 months from announcement. <p>Partially achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50–75% of non-regulated risk analyses finalised within the target 24 months from announcement. • 50–75% of regulated risk analyses finalised within 30 months from announcement <p>Not achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <50% of non-regulated risk analyses finalised within the target 24 months from announcement. • <50% of regulated risk analyses finalised within 30 months from announcement. 	

Context

We undertake biosecurity risk analyses to shape import policies and regulations, negotiate risk management with trading partners and industry, and implement import conditions to ensure safe trade. This reduces the risk of pests and diseases entering, establishing or spreading in Australia. Risk analyses strengthen our biosecurity system and support reciprocal export market access. This measure directly supports key activity 3.1 by preparing for the management of biosecurity risks before they enter Australia.

This is a regulatory measure because the Biosecurity Act and Biosecurity Regulation 2016 mandate the process for conducting Biosecurity Import Risk Analysis (BIRA) including the timeframe for completion. Measuring the impact and effectiveness of risk analysis is challenging due to trade delays, complex and evolving biosecurity risks and long latency periods. The number of risk analyses performed is influenced by market demand, new or evolving biosecurity threats, and action by other importing industries and other governments. We use the proportion of analyses finalised within the financial year that have been completed within regulated and targeted time frames as the measure of our performance.

This is a composite measure with several targets and tolerances that define how we measure our performance.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We improve import regulations using import risk analysis to ensure import policies are fit-for-purpose, reflective of industry and pre-export risk management processes, and are science-based.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – We conduct risk analysis to determine the appropriate import conditions required to reduce the biosecurity risk of imported goods. Risk analysis considers biosecurity risks, relevant import trade data and appropriate mitigation and/or management options.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – We engage with stakeholders during import risk analysis to ensure risk assessments reflect contemporary science and risk management practices.

Analysis

This measure was designed to assess our performance against 2 criteria: regulated and non-regulated risk analyses. The regulated BIRA process involves more steps as prescribed by the Biosecurity Regulation 2016. The department criteria for undertaking a BIRA include when relevant risk management measures have not been established or there is a significant variation in risk from similar goods previously assessed. Over the 2024–25 period, there were no regulated analyses (or BIRAs) required or conducted. Consequently, our results this year focus only on our performance against the non-regulated risk analyses conducted.

In 2024–25, 75% of risk analyses were finalised within regulated and target timeframes.

We completed 4 non-regulated risk analyses, of which:

- 3 risk analyses were finalised within the target 24 months
- 1 risk analysis was finalised outside the target 24 months, taking an additional 781 days to complete.

The analysis finalised outside of the target timeframe reviewed dairy products for human consumption. The delay was the result of consideration of draft submissions and new scientific research that resulted in significant changes to the final document to ensure a contemporary and fit-for-purpose risk analysis. This additional body of work was supported by the dairy industry, who have upheld it as an example of science-based policy development with a clear focus on trade facilitation. We released a second draft report for consultation for these changes to be considered by stakeholders.

In addition to finalised analyses, we completed supporting milestones that contribute to future finalisation of risk analyses. These were:

- 4 draft non-regulated risk analyses were published on our website for formal comment
- 47 stakeholder submissions were received, considered and addressed in the risk analysis finalisation process.

Methodology and data sources

Our performance in delivering risk analyses was measured by the proportion of analyses finalised within 2024–25 that met the targeted timeframes.

For non-regulated analyses the target is a 24-month completion timeframe as published on our website. Non-regulated import risk analyses were progressed following our import risk [analysis and trade implementation steps](#). For BIRA, the Biosecurity Regulation 2016 mandates a 30-month completion timeframe.

The BIRA process was not required in 2024–25 as no risk analysis met the department criteria for a BIRA.

Our risk analysis methods were consistent with international standards and codes and included a range of assessment tools and a risk estimation matrix. Risk analyses are announced as commenced on our public website, and this includes determination of risk analysis type – fulfilment of BIRA criteria or non-regulated analysis – based on preliminary assessment of pests and risk management methods. Key risk analysis milestones are the publication of draft reports and formal stakeholder engagement sessions prior to finalisation.

The quality of our analysis is measured using supporting data of the number of submissions received via a public consultation period as an indicator of the appropriateness, trust and satisfaction with the analysis and proposed policy conditions.

All feedback is assessed, where relevant incorporated, and responded to as demonstrated through publication of feedback in a summary form on the department's website or within the final import risk analysis document.

Caveats and disclosures

The regulated BIRA process is only used when risk management measures have not been established or there is a significant variation in risk from similar goods previously assessed. There were no risk analysis targets that met the departmental criteria for a BIRA process during 2024–25.

Our supporting data is reliant on the quality of stakeholder input submitted through our Have Your Say survey.

We used Biosecurity Advice publication dates as the commencement date to measure delivery timeframe for this performance measure. Separate published announcements were not made for 2 risk analysis finalised during 2024–25. Release of the draft report was used as commencement date for these analyses as it was not possible to identify an equivalent announcement date. Going forward, improvements are planned for the risk analysis planning process that include a public announcement informing commencement of analysis.

Change from corporate plan

The performance measure wording, target and tolerances were revised to focus on import risk analyses. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-02

BI-02	The import permit service standard is met.	
Measure type	Quantitative output and regulatory.	
Target	50% or more of Category 1 (standard goods) permit applications are processed and finalised within 20 business days. 50% or more of Category 2–5 (non-standard goods) permit applications are processed and finalised within 40 business days.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	49% of import permit applications processed with a decision made within 20 business days.	99% of import permit applications processed for standard goods, with a decision made within 20 business days. 89% of import permit applications processed for non-standard goods, with a decision made within 40 business days.
Tolerances	Achieved: (if both criteria are met): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard goods: Target % of Category 1 permit applications are processed and finalised within 20 business days. Non-standard goods: Target % of Category 2–5 applications are processed and finalised within 40 business days. Partially achieved: If only one of the target criteria are met, but not both. Not achieved: If neither of the target criteria are met.	

Context

We safeguard Australia’s animal and plant health to protect Australian agriculture, trade, the economy, environment and our way of life. A critical part of biosecurity involves assessing and managing import permit applications to ensure goods are effectively regulated.

Timely and efficient permit assessments reduce regulatory burden, support industry compliance and build trust through sensible governance for evolving needs of safe trade. Predictable timeframes allow businesses and the community to plan import trade with confidence. Goods can be imported in a timely manner yet are safe and trusted, with the Australian economy and environment remaining protected from exotic pests and diseases.

Under the Biosecurity Act, we have up to 123 business days to assess permit applications and decide whether to grant an import permit. However, we aim to deliver timely and reliable service through an import permit service standard:

- Category 1 standard applications processed and finalised within 20 business days
- Category 2–5 non-standard applications within 40 business days.

In 2024–25 the timeframe for category 2–5 non-standard permit applications was extended to more accurately reflect that complex applications require longer to complete. We also allocated more regulatory officers into our permit processing areas.

The 2024–25 target of 50% or more within timeframe was set to reflect the time required to train regulatory officers, as they need both scientific knowledge and understanding of regulatory processes and procedures. The long-term target is to achieve 90% of applications within the timeframe. We will continue to monitor performance and adjust operational strategies as needed to maintain a timely and reliable regulatory service.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – During 2023–24 we identified the need for more regulatory officers for permit processing, hiring an additional 29 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. This represented a 45.7% increase for the relevant permit processing areas. Targets for 2024–25 were set to reflect the time required to recruit and train, as well as meet import permit service standards. In addition, we also conducted a quality assurance activity to investigate the accuracy of the pause functionality in the Biosecurity Import Conditions (BICON) system, with improvements planned for 2025–26.
- 2) Risk-based and data driven – We continue to apply risk-based decision-making throughout the permit application process while improving our overall processing timeframes. In 2024–25 BICON remained the primary system for biosecurity risk management, processing over 20,000 permit applications and operating as the data source for this measure.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – BICON continues to support effective communication and engagement with businesses and the community. During 2024–25 our biosecurity import requirements have been continuously maintained and updated as necessary to provide accessible step-by-step guidance and support around the permit application process.

Analysis

In 2024–25, 99% of category 1 import permit applications were processed and finalised within 20 business days (compared to the target of 50% or more) and 89% of category 2–5 applications were processed and finalised within 40 business days (compared to the target of 50% or more).

Therefore, the performance measure target was achieved for this reporting period.

Table 4 Biosecurity import permit service standard results, 2024–25

Target 2024–25	Total number finalised	Total finalised within timeframe	2024–25 final result
50% or more of category 1 permit applications are processed and finalised within 20 business days.	4,969	4,943	99% (Achieved)
50% or more of category 2–5 applications are processed and finalised within 40 business days.	21,414	19,086	89% (Achieved)

A total of 26,383 permit item assessments were completed. This is a 47.5% increase on the previous year when 17,857 assessments were completed.

Previously, all import permit applications were measured and reported as a single group, regardless of complexity. This approach did not account for the variation in processing time between category 1 applications for standard goods and category 2–5 applications for non-standard goods. In 2023–24 only 49% of all applications were processed within the 20-business day target.

In 2024–25 we separated timeframes and targets for standard and non-standard assessments, aligning with more realistic import service standards. Category 1 standard permit applications retain the 20-business day timeframe as they take less time to complete. Category 2–5 non-standard permit applications are now subject to a 40-business day timeframe reflecting their complexity.

The additional 29 FTE hired were a strategic investment aimed at addressing the underperformance and following through on our commitment to streamline policy requirements, improve processes and identify efficiencies, so we could meet the import permit service standard.

In 2025, Germany, Hungary and Slovakia notified the WOA of FMD outbreaks. We responded rapidly to manage the biosecurity risks. This included the risk assessment and processing of a significant number of import permit variation applications to implement new risk management measures.

We also acted swiftly when Germany was declared free from FMD on 16 June 2025. This event involved processing import permit variation applications to enable safe resumption of trade. Of these:

- 6,140 import permit applications were processed and finalised in response to FMD outbreaks
 - 100% of 1,430 category 1 standard applications met the service standard
 - 100% of 4,710 category 2–5 non-standard applications met the service standard
- 20,243 related to other import permit applications
 - 99% of 3,539 category 1 standard applications met the service standard
 - 86% of 16,704 category 2–5 non-standard applications met the service standard.

These results demonstrate our agility and commitment to meeting our national biosecurity strategic objective by responding quickly and effectively to emerging biosecurity risks.

The results and key events in 2024–25 will not change the import permit service standard or performance measure targets for our *Corporate Plan 2025–26* as they remain appropriate and achievable under normal resourcing and operating conditions.

Methodology and data sources

BICON is the system we use to communicate import conditions and management of biosecurity risk for goods imported into Australia. Australian businesses and individuals can submit permit applications in BICON for higher biosecurity risk goods that require an import permit.

The permit application timeframe begins once an application is submitted and the relevant fees are paid. The timeframe may be paused under certain circumstances, such as when additional information is needed to support the application. Following assessment, recommendations are made to an independent authorised delegate of the director of biosecurity. The timeframe ends when a final decision is made by the delegate on the application.

Timeframes are logged by BICON to the closest minute. Data from BICON is extracted into a data warehouse for analysis and reporting and is used to calculate whether the processing timeframes met the service standards. Results are based on a standard 8-hour business day and exclude weekends and ACT public holidays.

Caveats and disclosures

The timeframes recorded in BICON are critical to obtaining results on whether we achieved the target. Permit application timeframes may pause under certain circumstances, such as when additional information is needed to support the application.

A quality assurance activity conducted on applications received in 2023-24, identified up to a 6.7% inaccuracy due to manual pause timer usage, resulting in additional permits being reported as meeting the import permit service standard. After applying this adjustment to 2024–25 results, the performance measure target remains achieved:

- 93% of category 1 standard applications met the 20-business day service standard.
- 83% of category 2–5 non-standard applications met the 40-business day service standard.

System functionality of the BICON pause timer was also identified as an issue and has since been resolved via a system fix.

Change from corporate plan

The target and tolerances were updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-03

BI-03	Increased pre-border biosecurity assurance arrangements to manage biosecurity risks in countries exporting to Australia.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Government-to-government and/or government-to-industry arrangements are in at least 22.5% of countries in the world.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.2.	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – measure updated for 2024–25 reporting.	17.0% or 34 countries.
Tolerances	Achieved: A 1% or more increase on the prior year (2023–24 figure was 21.5%). Partially achieved: Between a 0.25% and a 0.99% increase on the prior year. Not achieved: Less than a 0.249% increase on the prior year.	

Context

This measure demonstrates our commitment to safeguarding against biosecurity risks. Establishing and maintaining pre-border biosecurity arrangements helps reduce biosecurity risks before they reach Australia, preventing incursions and minimising the scale and cost of border interventions. These arrangements include both government-to-government and government-to-industry agreements. Expanding the number of countries with pre-border arrangements leads to greater assurance that biosecurity risks are being comprehensively managed.

Offshore arrangements increase understanding of Australia’s import requirements and support faster clearance of commodities at our borders. This helps minimise the risk of pests and diseases

reaching Australia, protecting the economy, agricultural production and our preferred partner trading status.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – by being subject to regular internal and external reviews that confirm compliance with regulatory requirements. During the reporting period, 6 countries expressed interest in joining biosecurity assurance arrangements, with several progressing through active negotiations. These active negotiations involve scoping of the countries' regulatory controls, and training and extension activities.
- 2) Risk based and data driven – by applying regulatory focus where required, based on the global and transnational biosecurity risks identified by the data. By partnering with international and domestic stakeholders, we reinforce strong and effective relationships based on mutual trust to address biosecurity risks. Enhancements to the treatment certificate portal have improved our data capture and assessment process. For example, in the 2023–24 and 2024–25 brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) risk seasons, we managed 76,565 and 62,033 treatment certificates in the respective seasons. Of these, approximately 1,534 treatment certificates were identified as non-compliant prior to arrival in Australia.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – by establishing relationships with domestic and international authorities including government-to-government-level and state and local authorities domestically. We delivered the Quarantine Regulators Meeting (QRM) in the Philippines, attended by representatives from 38 countries. The QRM fosters collaboration, innovation and regulatory agility in response to shared biosecurity challenges.

Analysis

Despite progress in strengthening offshore biosecurity risk management, we were unable to meet the targeted increase in the number of countries with pre-border assurance arrangements during the reporting period. Planned expansion to address khapra beetle risk pathways could not proceed due to delays in the delivery of key interdependent projects. In addition, international negotiations with partner agencies progressed more slowly than anticipated.

However, we partially met the tolerances set for this measure, due to a 0.5% increase in the number of countries under an arrangement (representing one additional country). However, we did not meet the target as an incorrect baseline of 22.5% was established (representing 43 countries).

This figure was based on companies from all the countries that were registered under the offshore BMSB treatment providers scheme (BMSB scheme), the [Offshore Irradiation Treatment Providers Scheme](#), the [Ethylene Oxide Offshore Treatment Providers Scheme](#) and the [Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme](#) (AFAS). During 2024–25, the BMSB scheme was replaced by AusTreat (a new offshore treatment assurance scheme) and several inactive treatment providers that were counted in the baseline were purged from the system. This meant the total number of countries with a registered treatment provider at the start of 2024–25 (33 countries) was lower than the original baseline. As a result of the incorrect baseline, and a 0.5% increase in the number of countries under an arrangement, a revised baseline for 2025–26 has been established.

Methodology and data sources

All pre-border biosecurity arrangements are published on our [Treating cargo outside Australia](#) webpage.

All government-to-government arrangements are published under the AFAS. A government-to-government arrangement is deemed to be in place when a formal partnership between our department and the government of the exporting country has been established. Treatment providers that are registered under these arrangements are published on our department's [List of treatment providers](#).

All companies with a government-to-industry arrangement are published on our List of treatment providers. A government-to-industry arrangement is deemed to be in place when an agreement between our department and the respective treatment provider within the exporting country has been formalised.

To determine the result, a report of all countries that currently have pre-border arrangements in place is generated from the underlying data source of the list of treatment providers and divided by the total number of countries in the world (determined by the United Nations declaration at the time of compiling the data – 195 currently) and multiplied by 100. Treatment providers with a status of 'approved', 'under review', 'suspended' or 'withdrawn' on the list of treatment providers are included in this count.

Caveats and disclosures

If the total number of countries in the world changes from the previous year, the baseline percentage will be affected, making it appear as though the number of arrangements in place has changed.

Change from corporate plan

The tolerances were updated to compare performance with the prior year. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-04

BI-04	Targeted public communication and engagement activities.	
Measure type	Quantitative output.	
Target	Conduct at least 2 targeted biosecurity awareness campaigns per financial year.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Two biosecurity awareness campaigns were completed – international travellers and online shopping.	Four biosecurity awareness campaigns were completed – international travellers and biosecurity, hitchhiker pest awareness, pork products biosecurity awareness and H5 avian influenza (bird flu) awareness.
Tolerances	Achieved: At least 2 targeted campaigns (paid or unpaid) are conducted per year. Partially achieved: One targeted campaign (paid or unpaid) is conducted per year. Not achieved: No targeted campaigns are conducted.	

Context

Everyone – whether living in Australia, travelling to the country or sending goods by post or cargo – plays a role in managing biosecurity risk. Communication and engagement activities are an important element in helping Australians understand what biosecurity risk is, their role in helping to minimise exotic pests and diseases, and what to do if they suspect a biosecurity risk.

The most effective way of managing biosecurity risk in Australia is to prevent its arrival. Well-informed audiences are a key contributor to a shared biosecurity culture where everyone plays their part to support a strong national biosecurity system.

This measure tracks the number of public awareness campaigns (communication and engagement activities as defined in the methodology) conducted to improve public compliance with biosecurity regulations. These align to the National Biosecurity Strategy and our DAFF Biosecurity 2030 Roadmap.

Analysis

In 2024–25 we conducted 4 targeted biosecurity awareness campaigns:

- International travellers and biosecurity (advertising ran from 1 December 2024 to 9 February 2025)
- Hitchhiker pest awareness (advertising ran from 2 September 2024 to 14 October 2024)
- Pork products biosecurity awareness (advertising ran from 23 March 2025 to 27 April 2025)
- H5 avian influenza (bird flu) awareness (advertising ran from 13 December 2024 to 28 June 2025).

The international travellers and biosecurity campaign was designed to raise awareness of Australia’s biosecurity requirements, promote compliance among travellers arriving in Australia and to reduce the risk of biosecurity risk material entering the country through the traveller pathway. The target

audience included Australian travellers, international passengers travelling to Australia and culturally and linguistically diverse audiences.

The hitchhiker pest awareness campaign was developed to highlight the biosecurity risks posed by hitchhiker pests, to encourage reporting of any suspected detections via our ‘See. Secure. Report’ hotline or online form, and to support ongoing efforts to reduce the risk of these pests entering and establishing in the country via the sea container pathway. Target audiences included stakeholders involved in handling imported sea containers and goods, such as those in the shipping, logistics and transport industries, as well as warehouse and retail workers. The campaign prompted these audiences to stay alert to the presence or signs of hitchhiker pests in workplace settings and to report anything unusual. It also directed traffic to our dedicated hitchhiker pest awareness website.

The pork products biosecurity awareness campaign focused on increasing awareness of the risks associated with bringing or sending pork products to Australia. ASF is a significant exotic disease of porcine animals and the economic consequences of an outbreak of ASF in Australia would be significant. The target audience included returning Australian travellers, Australian online shoppers and Australian recipients of international mail. The campaign directed traffic to our website and educated the audience about Australia’s biosecurity requirements.

A national information campaign was also delivered to raise awareness of the H5 avian influenza (bird flu) threat and support understanding of Australia’s preparedness actions. It was developed through a coordinated whole-of-government approach, incorporating the One Health concept, which recognises the interconnection between the health of people, animals and the environment. It was also delivered in collaboration with state and territory governments. Communication products included a new website (birdflu.gov.au), social media assets, digital public notices, posters, postcards and a fact sheet. The target audience included the public, industry and key stakeholders.

The performance measure target was exceeded as additional public awareness campaigns were required to address emerging biosecurity risks. An annual campaign is usually conducted to support the peak Christmas holiday period for international travellers. Three additional campaigns – hitchhiker pests, pork products and H5 avian influenza – were conducted to address emerging and existing high biosecurity risk issues. The hitchhiker pest campaign was also a deliverable of the broader Hitchhiker Pest Program.

Methodology and data sources

We consider any communication activity a ‘campaign’ if it was a time-limited, targeted program designed to inform and educate a specific audience.

The goal of a campaign is to influence behaviour or behavioural intentions. Unpaid campaigns use our existing channels and resources while paid campaigns are funded by our department but developed externally. All campaigns must align with the [Australian Government Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns by non-corporate Commonwealth entities](#).

Records relating to our communication campaigns are held on internal records management software. Data relating to our unpaid campaigns was sourced from our social media management software and public website. For paid advertising campaigns, data including performance against industry benchmarks was provided by Universal McCann.

Caveats and disclosures

The definition of a campaign outlined in the methodology varies from that in the *Australian Government Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns* by non-corporate Commonwealth entities. This includes broader advertising activities.

Change from corporate plan

The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-07

BI-07	Number of consignments of imported goods with khapra beetle detections is reduced as a result of biosecurity measures implemented by the department.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Reduction in the number of consignments of imported goods where khapra beetle is detected compared to the 2020–21 baseline.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.1	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	A reduction in or no interceptions across all 6 import pathways from the 2020–21 baseline data.	A reduction in or no interceptions across all 6 import pathways from the 2020–21 baseline data.
Tolerances	Achieved: The number of khapra beetle interceptions falls across all import pathways or remains at zero. Partially achieved: The number of khapra beetle interceptions falls for at least one import pathway but not for all import pathways. Not achieved: The number of khapra beetle interceptions does not fall for any import pathway.	

Context

Khapra beetle is a serious and highly invasive pest that is not present in Australia. It is our second-highest National Priority Plant Pest and the highest ranked pest for the grain industry. The introduction and spread of khapra beetle in Australia would have severe economic consequences, particularly for agricultural and food production.

After observing an increase in khapra beetle interceptions during 2020–2021 we introduced urgent actions. These included:

- import bans on high-risk plant products in mail articles, personal effects and low-value freight
- offshore treatment of specific sea containers from [khapra beetle target-risk countries](#)
- offshore treatment of high-risk plant products from khapra beetle target-risk countries
- revised phytosanitary certification requirements for specific goods.

This measure evaluates how effectively our actions reduced the number of imported consignments arriving infested with khapra beetle. Our results demonstrate a reduction in biosecurity risk and indicate that we are achieving our objective of strengthening the national biosecurity system.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – A draft [pest risk analysis](#) on khapra beetle was developed and is scheduled for release in late 2025. This will review the urgent actions to ensure they are fit-for-purpose and technically justifiable and may lead to refinement of existing measures or identification of alternative measures to address the risk.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – We conducted an initial risk assessment to identify actions that may reduce the risk of khapra beetle entering Australia. The risk assessment considered khapra beetle’s biology, available treatment options (including data on effectiveness), interception data, likelihood of incursion and recommended actions for each pathway. The strength of each urgent action was proportionate to the likelihood of khapra beetle entering on a pathway. We developed a compliance policy that articulated our approach to managing non-compliance including risk information to inform decision-making.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – We engaged actively and extensively with domestic and international stakeholders, including trading partners, importers, domestic agriculture production peak industry bodies, treatment providers and the shipping industry. This engagement was to obtain feedback for ongoing improvements, provide timely notification of operational change, highlight obligations and responsibilities, and encourage voluntary compliance.

Analysis

The number of consignments of imported goods where khapra beetle was detected reduced from a baseline of 19 in 2020–21 to:

- 4 in 2021–22
- 9 in 2022–23
- 2 in 2023–24
- 4 in 2024–25.

Our 2024–25 result indicates the number of khapra beetle detections reduced, or remained at zero, since the implementation of the urgent actions in 2020–21. Continued reduction in detections relative to 2020–21 may also be attributed to positive engagement with our stakeholders on risk management.

Table 5 Number of consignments of imported goods with khapra beetle detections, by import pathway, 2020–21 to 2024–25

Category	Country of export	2020–21 (baseline)	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
High-risk plant products	Target-risk countries	6	0	4	1	1 ^a
	Other risk countries	2	1	0	0	0
Other risk plant products	Target-risk countries	0	0	1	0	0
	Other risk countries	0	0	2	0	0
Other goods (including empty sea containers)	Target-risk countries	0	0	1	0	0
	Other risk countries	11	3	1	1	3 ^b
All goods	All countries	19	4	9	2	4

a Detection of dead khapra beetle in a commercial consignment of rice. **b** Detection of khapra beetle likely due to contamination of sea container from previous cargo.

Of the 4 detections in 2024–25:

- three were associated with other goods arriving as commercial cargo from countries not known to have khapra beetle. These detections were likely due to contamination of the sea container from previous cargoes. To address this risk, we have engaged with the international community to lobby for improvements to hygiene standards and the design of sea containers.
- one was associated with a high-risk plant product imported from a khapra beetle target-risk country. The goods were treated prior to export and only dead specimens were detected; however, the detection was included as the fumigation of the goods was not fully compliant. On 28 May 2025, [we updated our requirements for pre-border khapra beetle treatments](#) to strengthen assurance and improve compliance.

Methodology and data sources

We established a baseline – using the total number of imported consignments where khapra beetle was detected – prior to the introduction of urgent actions in 2020–21. Using this baseline, we compare annual detection numbers to derive the result.

Data for this measure was sourced from biosecurity pest and disease notifications (BPDN) and our incidents database and management systems. BPDNs are published when khapra beetle is first detected in a consignment of imported goods (this includes post-biosecurity detections).

We curated the data to remove duplication and exclude detections of dead khapra beetle in treated goods. We prepared a summary for each detection including the khapra beetle risk status of the imported goods and the country of export. We used this summary to show whether the urgent actions resulted in a reduction in the number of khapra beetle detections in imported goods, when compared to the 2020–21 baseline.

Caveats and disclosures

The likelihood of a pest entering Australia is often influenced by its pathway – for example, high-risk goods from high-risk countries are more likely to enter with khapra beetle. Our import conditions vary according to the country of export, type of goods and their mode of arrival into Australia. The application of these import conditions reduces the overall risk across all pathways to the same level,

which is very low, to achieve Australia’s appropriate level of protection (ALOP). Therefore, weighting of detections by pathway(s) is not considered necessary.

We reported on the number of imported consignments where khapra beetle was intercepted, rather than beetle numbers intercepted over time. This is due to the difficulty quantifying infestation levels of khapra beetle because of their cryptic nature and small size.

Change from corporate plan

The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Key activity 3.2

Regulate to safeguard Australia’s animal, plant, human health, environmental and food safety status by inspecting, detecting and minimising biosecurity risks at the border.

In 2024–25, our regulation of biosecurity risks at Australia’s border saw mixed results. We improved our overall interception of animal products across the international mail and traveller pathways by 32% (BI-06) and observed a reduction of 0.20% in the non-compliance rate for high-value cargo entering Australia (BI-08). International traveller rates of non-compliance with biosecurity regulations remained stable at 3.51% (BI-09), while a greater focus on unannounced audits of approved arrangements contributed to a 3.13% increase in detections of non-compliance (BI-10). Our service delivery standards measure was partially achieved with 6 service standards met (BI-11).

For more detail refer to the individual performance results.

Measure BI-06

BI-06	Reduction in risk of significant disease threats because of biosecurity measures implemented by the department.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	50% or greater.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.2.	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – measure updated for 2024–25 reporting.	The traveller pathway achieved a 71% improvement in detecting illegally imported animal products, highlighting the success of enhanced screening measures. The mail pathway showed a slight decrease in interception rate of 7%, highlighting the ongoing need for intervention and intelligence-led targeting in the pathway. The overall result is 32% improvement across mail and traveller pathways.
Tolerances	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail: 50% or greater improvement in interception of non-letter class containing animal products compared to pre-risk mitigation measures. • Traveller: 50% or greater improvement in interception of travellers with animal products compared to pre-risk mitigation measures. <p>Partially achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail: 1–49% improvement in interception of non-letter class containing animal products compared to pre-risk mitigation measures. • Traveller: 1–49% improvement in interception of travellers with animal products compared to pre-risk mitigation measures. <p>Not achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mail: No improvement in interception of non-letter class containing animal products compared to pre-risk mitigation measures. • Traveller: No improvement in the interception of travellers with animal products compared to pre-risk mitigation measures. 	

Context

To protect Australia’s favourable animal health status, we enforce specific conditions for animals and animal-based products entering the country. For mail and travellers, we apply strict protocols and use several tools to intercept illegally imported meat and animal products that may carry diseases such as ASF, FMD and high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI).

This measure quantifies the interception rate of animal products through mail and traveller pathways.

In November 2018, we increased our risk-mitigation activities to reduce the likelihood of ASF entering Australia. These activities included education and awareness campaigns (signage at international airports), enforcement activities (infringement notices) and increased screening of incoming mail and travellers from ASF-affected countries (X-rays, detector dogs).

To assess the effectiveness of these measures, we compared interception rates of pork products between the pre-risk mitigation period (before November 2018) and the post-risk mitigation period (after November 2018).

In 2024–25 we collected data and reported on interception rates of an expanded range of animal products, including egg products and poultry, dairy products, feathers/hides/skins and animal specimens. These products can all be detected through the mail and traveller pathways using the ASF risk-mitigation activities, processes and analysis techniques currently in place.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We proactively engage in improving our data collection, management and analysis to gain insight into the effectiveness of the biosecurity controls keeping serious animal diseases out of Australia. In 2023–24 we implemented the Traveller and Mail System (TAMS) to improve our ability to identify and target high-risk travellers for biosecurity screening, with upgrades occurring in 2024–25 to assist in exporting data from the system.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – We direct risk mitigation measures to manage the risk of diseases entering Australia. We monitor our measures to ensure risk remains at a level consistent with Australia’s legislated ALOP. Our commodity-specific import conditions ensure that exotic diseases of concern are appropriately managed. For example, import conditions on commercial pork and pork products are based on the country of origin, and this directs the need for heat treatments, animal health certificates and processing at approved premises.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – We conduct extensive public awareness and education campaigns on the value of maintaining Australia’s freedom from significant animal diseases. We promote biosecurity awareness to international travellers and recipients of international mail by engaging with them through our website, signage at international airports, leaflets and brochures, social media campaigns, and ministerial and departmental media releases.

Analysis

The risk mitigation measures introduced by the department post-November 2018 (education, enforcement and screening) and sustainment of the Traveller and Mail Modernisation program were designed to reduce the likelihood of diseases of significance entering Australia via international traveller and mail pathways. As shown in Table 6, these actions had a mixed but generally positive impact. Notably:

- The interception rate of travellers carrying illegally imported animal products increased by 71%, from 2.322% to 3.967%, demonstrating the effectiveness of improved risk mitigation measures.
- The interception rate of non-letter class mail containing illegally imported animal products decreased from 0.036% to 0.033%. While this represents a slight reduction in interception rates, the proportion of total non-letter class mail screened averaged at 78% during the post-measure period compared to 21% during the pre-measure period. The stable detection rate suggests that existing controls are maintaining consistent performance and highlights the ongoing need for intervention and intelligence-led targeting in the pathway.

- The overall interception rate across non-letter class mail and travellers was an improvement of 32% compared to pre-risk mitigation measures.

Table 6 Effectiveness of pre-risk mitigation measures (2015–16 to 2017–18) and post-risk mitigation measures (2021–22 to 2024–25) by, pathway

Pathway	Category	Unit	Pre-risk mitigation measures average (2015–16 to 2017–18)	Post-risk mitigation measures average (2021–22 to 2024–25)
Non-letter-class mail articles	Screened mail articles containing animal products	%	0.036	0.033
	Animal products seized	number	6,476	5,535
	Weight of animal products seized	tonnes	9.60	7.54
Incoming travellers	Screened travellers detected with animal products	%	2.322	3.967
	Animal products seized	number	73,881	82,312
	Weight of animal products seized	tonnes	74.8	104.3

These results reinforce our proactive approach to biosecurity risk management and its commitment to continuous improvement across both the traveller and mail pathways.

Methodology and data sources

The primary data sources for this measure were TAMS and the Mail and Passenger System (MAPS). Airport and mail biosecurity officers entered data into these systems daily (noting that MAPS was superseded by TAMS during the performance measure period and is no longer used for data entry).

Three years of pre-measure data was analysed to establish an average benchmark (baseline) for mail and traveller pathways. These benchmarks were compared against average post-measure data to assess the effectiveness of our risk mitigation activities and whether interception of risk materials has improved.

As a composite measure, we applied equal weightings to the results for each pathway. We used the average of these results to determine the overall result for this measure.

Data were peer reviewed and where results varied from expected findings, we verified our reporting methodology and investigated reasons for variation.

Caveats and disclosures

This measure relies on the manual input of mail and traveller data which is subject to human error. While there are processes in place to identify and correct incorrect data, these processes take time and may slightly affect results at the time of extraction. Also, any delay in input may affect the accuracy of calculations, depending on the timing of data extraction.

We expect interception rates to increase before they reduce as education and awareness campaigns take effect and increase public focus.

Change from corporate plan

The target and tolerances were updated to improve the quality of the measure. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-08

BI-08	Reduced levels of non-compliance with biosecurity regulations that apply to high-value cargo.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Reduction in high-value cargo non-compliance rate.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Reduction in non-compliance rate of 0.08% (1.25% in 2023–24 compared with 1.33% in 2021–22).	Reduction in non-compliance rate of 0.20% (1.13% in 2024–25 compared with 1.33% in 2021–22).
Tolerances	Achieved: Reduction in high-value cargo non-compliance rate compared with 2021–22 rate of 1.33%. Partially achieved: No change in high-value cargo non-compliance rate compared with 2021–22 rate of 1.33%. Not achieved: Increase in cargo non-compliance rate compared with 2021–22 rate of 1.33%.	

Context

Arriving cargo – including the container, goods and packaging – can present various biosecurity risks. Import requirements and procedures are designed to minimise the risk of exotic pests and diseases establishing in Australia while facilitating the efficient clearance of cargo containers and goods. We adopt a risk-based approach to managing this and focus our efforts on the highest-risk items to achieve an appropriate level of protection.

We ensure that fit-for-purpose biosecurity safeguards are in place for high-value cargo through strategic policies, procedures, arrangements and regulatory processes. Safeguards are closely monitored for non-compliance and if detected we respond proportionately.

This measure relates specifically to high-value cargo, which is cargo imported on a full import declaration and includes goods being imported into Australia with a monetary value of over A\$1,000. Our activities aim to minimise biosecurity incursions that could compromise agricultural productivity and resilience by applying onshore and offshore biosecurity controls. This measure is important for both preparing for the management of biosecurity risk and for detecting biosecurity risk at the border.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – strengthening our national biosecurity system and enhancing regulatory uplift through developing fit-for-purpose legislation, policies and procedures and investing in workforce capability. Over the 2024–25 financial year, we increased our number of officers by 419 FTE. This contributed towards significantly improving service

delivery times, thereby reducing importers' and customs brokers' incentive to cut corners or avoid departmental intervention. We have also responded to industry feedback and developed the Approved Arrangement Management Product (AAMP), one of our Simplified Targeting and Enhanced Processing Systems (STEPS) Program initiatives. AAMP allows biosecurity industry participants who operate approved arrangements (AA) to view and update their AA details via self-service, providing more control to manage administrative tasks relating to their AAs.

- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – by making evidence- and risk-based decisions using data captured in departmental systems to provide an appropriate level of protection to Australia's people, our environment and economy. As part of STEPS, we have begun implementation of the Biosecurity Cargo Status Tracker. The Biosecurity Cargo Status Tracker gives class 19 biosecurity industry participants (BIPs) access to their lodgements with the department to view the status within departmental systems (i.e. awaiting documentation, inspection, post-inspection). The data also provides class 19 BIPs ability to see where their consignments could have been lodged via their class 19.2 AA. This allows industry participants to make more informed decisions about the biosecurity risks associated with their consignments.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – working collaboratively with external agencies and industry participants to increase awareness of biosecurity regulations and compliance requirements. Biosecurity Operations Division have been improving their stakeholder engagement through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Cargo Consultative Committee and more broadly with industry representatives such as the Freight & Trade Alliance, and International Forwarders and Customs Brokers Association of Australia attending and presenting on regulatory reform and compliance topics at their continuing professional development events.

Analysis

Table 7 shows the year-on-year reduction in non-compliance in high-value cargo since 2021–22. The 2024–25 high-value cargo non-compliance rate fell by 0.20% compared with the 2021–22 baseline of 1.33%.

Table 7 Non-compliance rate of high-value cargo imported into Australia, 2021–22 to 2024–25

Item	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Non-compliance rate of all high-value cargo imported into Australia	1.33%	1.29%	1.25%	1.13%
Number of non-compliant full import declarations	56,482	54,037	52,631	49,624
Total number of full import declarations	4,237,475	4,188,380	4,223,931	4,380,877

Methodology and data sources

We determine the non-compliance rate using data from:

- the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) Integrated Cargo System (ICS). This system provides the total volume of high-value cargo.
- our Agriculture Import Management System (AIMS). This system records the results of biosecurity directions. This is combined with reference data that categorises direction results into those that indicate compliance or non-compliance with import requirements.
- our Incidents system, which records detections of pests or diseases.

The result for this measure is calculated as number of non-compliant entries (determined from the AIMS and Incidents system) divided by the number of total high-value cargo entries (ICS).

Caveats and disclosures

Compliance is influenced by factors partly within our control. We offer advice, assurance and deterrence to help people understand their obligations and choose to comply with regulations.

Factors outside of our control include import types and volumes, changes in supply chains and environmental factors such as seasonal pests.

The quality of available data affects the extent to which we can assess the effectiveness of our regulatory arrangements. For example, we do not have access to full ICS cargo data.

There is substantial volatility in cargo data for around 2 weeks after a declaration is lodged. This means that the measure result changes when calculated on different dates. In quarter 2 in 2024–25, a daily ‘snapshot’ was added to the data model which allows us to monitor and analyse the data variability but also to replicate the results at a point in time. We estimate that final measure values change by less than 0.015% after a 16-day ‘settling period’.

Change from corporate plan

The measure wording and tolerances were updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-09

BI-09	Rates of non-compliance with regulations that apply to international travellers.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Post-intervention non-compliance rate for international travellers that is equal to or lower than the previous year.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Programs: 2.1	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Decrease in non-compliance rate of 0.49 percentage points (post-intervention non-compliance rate was 3.18% in 2023–24 compared with 3.67% in 2022–23).	A small increase in the non-compliance rate of 0.37 percentage points (post-intervention non-compliance rate was 3.55% in 2024–25 compared with 3.18% in 2023–24).
Tolerances	Achieved: Post-intervention non-compliance rate for international travellers is equal to or lower than the rate achieved the previous year. Partially achieved: The post-intervention non-compliance rate for international travellers, while not reduced, is within 1 percentage point of the rate achieved in the previous year. Not achieved: Increase in post-intervention non-compliance rate for international travellers by more than 1 percentage point compared with the previous year.	

Context

Our core purpose is to safeguard and grow sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry for all Australians. To protect our industries and environment we have strong border controls to regulate the movement of goods into the country which may harbour biosecurity pests and diseases.

This performance measure shows the effectiveness of biosecurity controls and policy settings applied at Australia’s international airports. It was designed by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Risk Analysis (ACERA) and measures the proportion of arriving international air travellers who enter Australia carrying products that may harbour a biosecurity risk (pest, disease or weed).

We aim to minimise non-compliance by identifying as many travellers as possible who may be carrying biosecurity risk goods, whether declared or undeclared, and managing any risks found. This is in line with Australia’s ALOP. We aim to minimise the level of biosecurity risk, while recognising that zero risk is unattainable. A low level of non-compliance directly supports our biosecurity objectives and helps maintain Australia’s favourable pest and disease status while facilitating traveller movement across the border.

Reducing non-compliance directly supports our biosecurity objectives and demonstrates that we apply and enforce fit-for-purpose regulations. This helps maintain Australia’s favourable pest and disease status while facilitating traveller movement across the border. Lower non-compliance means fewer risk products entering Australia, reducing the threat of pests and diseases.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We strengthened our capability and support tools for frontline officers through enhancements to TAMS, including access to additional information for real-time risk assessments and improved data capture. We reviewed our operating model and deployment of detection tools, and have introduced increased flexibility in detector dog deployments, including screening around baggage carousels for high-risk flights.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – Regulation of international traveller movement was undertaken according to the risk–return approach outlined in our Traveller Intervention Policy, to achieve the optimum biosecurity outcomes using the resources available. Intervention data was collected in real time and data analysis used to inform intervention decisions and use of detection tools.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – We educated and informed travellers of biosecurity requirements through multiple avenues including websites, onboard messaging, airport signage and communication campaigns. We worked together with industry and other border agencies to streamline traveller clearance and support compliant travellers with reduced touchpoints.

Analysis

The non-compliance rate was 3.55% in 2024–25, compared with 3.18% in 2023–24. The target non-compliance rate for 2024–25 was 3.18% (to match the previous year) or lower. While the result is slightly higher than in 2023–24, it is still within a low range and just 0.37 percentage points above the previous result (which gives us an overall result of partially achieved). Over recent years, the non-compliance rate has hovered between 3% and 4%, so the result is not unexpected. Ongoing business improvements have been implemented to address the growth in traveller volumes and risk approaching the border.

In 2024–25 we enhanced the tools used at airports, including through our new mobile workflow capability which enhances the information available to biosecurity officers to support real-time risk assessments and intervention decisions. We also began trials of the electronic Australia Travel

Declaration (ATD) together with Home Affairs, the Australian Border Force and Qantas for flights into Brisbane. The ATD provides biosecurity information up to 72 hours before travel and can help travellers make informed decisions about what they bring to Australia.

Air traveller arrivals year-on-year increased by 8.1%, from 21.0 million in 2023–24 to 22.7 million in 2024–25. During this financial year we intervened with significantly more air travellers compared with 2023–24 and detected 30,900 more biosecurity risk goods requiring treatment or destruction. We continue to maintain a low level of non-compliance in line with ALOP, despite an increase in risk approaching the border.

Methodology and data sources

International air travellers are processed through the border via a range of controls, including through detector dog or X-ray screening channels. Travellers may proceed directly to an exit if they are not referred for intervention. Despite the legal requirement for travellers to declare any biosecurity risk goods they are carrying, and controls in place to detect undeclared risk goods, some travellers reach airport exit points still carrying undetected goods which may potentially harbour biosecurity pests or diseases – these travellers are considered to be non-compliant.

To determine the non-compliance rate, biosecurity officers randomly select air travellers from each of the processing channels, including direct exit, and perform full manual baggage examinations to detect any unchecked biosecurity risk goods. These endpoint surveys were undertaken daily at all major international airports and included a sample of over 50,000 travellers. Outcomes of survey inspections, including where no biosecurity risk goods are found, are recorded in TAMS. The proportion of surveyed travellers detected with unchecked biosecurity risk goods was used to estimate the non-compliance rate for the entire traveller population.

Caveats and disclosures

Achieving our target measure may be influenced by traveller behaviour (including deliberate concealment of biosecurity risk goods to evade detection) as well as evolving global biosecurity risks, increased traveller numbers and increased risk approaching the border. Focusing on specific emerging risks may improve compliance in some areas but could impact the overall non-compliance rate measured across all biosecurity risks.

The post-intervention non-compliance rate is sensitive to sampling bias in the endpoint survey. To avoid sampling bias, biosecurity officers are trained to conduct surveys in accordance with the approved methodology. Additionally, a random generator is being developed and trialled to guide sample selection and remove selection bias.

Change from corporate plan

The measure wording, targets and tolerances were updated to improve the quality of the measure. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-10

BI-10	Rates of non-compliance with regulations that apply to approved arrangements.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Reduction in non-compliance rate for approved arrangements.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> <i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i> Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Not achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	0.29% reduction in the rate of failed audits (5.59% in 2023–24 compared with 5.88% in 2022–23). A reduction in the overall non-compliance rate (including audits that did not fail but where non-compliance was detected) of 8.31% over the same period (37.36% in 2023–24 compared with 45.67% in 2022–23).	3.13% increase in the rate of failed audits (8.72% in 2024–25 compared with 5.59% in 2023–24). An increase in the overall non-compliance rate (including audits that did not fail but where non-compliance was detected) of 4.7% over the same period (42.06% in 2024–25 compared with 37.36% in 2023–24).
Tolerances	Achieved: Reduction in approved arrangement non-compliance rate compared with 2023–24. Partially achieved: The result is the same as the non-compliance rate in 2023–24. Not achieved: The result is higher than the non-compliance rate in 2023–24.	

Context

This measure monitors the biosecurity non-compliance risk associated with approved arrangements. Under the Biosecurity Act, we establish and maintain these arrangements to manage the risks posed by imported goods, supporting Australia’s reputation as a trusted trade partner.

Approved arrangements enable industry operators handling imported goods to share responsibility for managing biosecurity risks. Approved entities conduct biosecurity activities at their own sites, using their facilities, equipment and personnel without requiring constant supervision from us.

We administer biosecurity approved arrangements through our approved arrangements program, ensuring compliance with legislative and regulatory responsibilities. We develop policy, systems and processes that support risk management and control measures. This enables biosecurity industry participants to manage risks effectively amid increasing trade volumes, evolving pest and disease threats and the need for streamlined border clearance.

The existing audit policy requires approved arrangements to be audited annually; however, the policy is being reviewed. In practice, we apply a risk-based approach, allocating resources to higher-risk areas through targeted compliance activities and unannounced audits. In 2024–25, 36.39% of approved arrangements were audited at least once. Non-compliance can be influenced by factors such as trends in import types and volumes, supply chain changes, environmental factors such as seasonal pests, and/or entity behaviour. A low level of non-compliance indicates that approved facilities continue to meet their biosecurity obligations.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – This measure supports continuous improvement and builds trust by engaging transparently with industry through periodic Industry Notices and regular forums. These include scheduled and ad hoc meetings with peak industry bodies to discuss proposed changes to approved arrangements, regulatory policy and legislation. This collaborative approach fosters trust and encourages shared responsibility for biosecurity compliance.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – The measure is underpinned by a risk-based auditing approach, where entities with a history of serious non-compliance are prioritised for additional audits. This ensures that our resources are focused on the highest biosecurity risks. The approach is informed by our non-compliance data, enabling targeted and evidence-based regulatory action.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – Our internal teams, including the Audit and Assurance Branch and other compliance-related areas, collaborate to consolidate non-compliance intelligence. This includes data from enforcement actions, intelligence reports, and fitness and propriety assessments, ensuring a holistic and coordinated regulatory response.

Analysis

In 2024–25 we recorded a non-compliance rate that is slightly higher than the previous year. The rate of failed audits was 8.72%, compared to 5.59% in 2023–24, and the overall non-compliance rate (including audits with detected non-conformities) was 42.06%, compared to 37.36% the year prior.

This result does not reflect a reduction in non-compliance; however, it coincides with a strategic shift in audit methodology – specifically, an increased focus on unannounced audits. These audits, by design, provide a more accurate picture of day-to-day compliance but often result in higher detection of non-conformities due to the absence of prior preparation by audited entities.

This proactive approach enhances the integrity of the compliance monitoring framework and supports our regulatory objective of safeguarding Australia’s biosecurity. The increased non-compliance rate should therefore be interpreted in the context of improved audit rigour rather than a decline in industry performance.

We will continue to refine audit strategy, balancing announced and unannounced audits, and will work with industry to address recurring issues identified through these audits. This includes targeted education, clearer guidance on arrangement conditions and enhanced support for high-risk entities.

The result is classified as not achieved, based on the defined tolerances.

Table 8 Approved arrangements audit results, 2022–23 to 2024–25

Item	Unit	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	Difference
Approved arrangements	Number	3,241	3,183	3,138	–45
Approved arrangements audited	Number	1,366	1,267	1,142	–125
Pass	%	53.88	62.57	57.64	–4.93
Pass with non-conformities	%	39.79	31.77	33.33	+1.56
Total pass	%	93.67	94.27	90.97	–3.30
Total fail	%	5.88	5.59	8.72	+3.15
Pending	%	0.45	0.07	0.01	–0.06

Methodology and data sources

To assess compliance, we audited our import approved arrangements. Our auditors recorded the outcomes in our Quarantine Premises Register (QPR) system. In accordance with our approved arrangements general policies, this system then attributed a pass or fail to an audit outcome based on the number and severity of the non-conformity.

To calculate our result, we ran a Power BI report, which extracts data from QPR on all compliance audits – probation audits, probation audits following failure, and scheduled audits – conducted for all active classes of approved arrangement during the reporting period. This report summarised the number of audits conducted that passed, passed with non-conformity, failed and those still pending an outcome. The non-compliance rate of approved arrangements is calculated as the number of failed audits out of the total audits conducted.

Quality assurance processes are applied to the data extracted to ensure the accuracy of our result.

Caveats and disclosures

Audit information is manually entered by auditors and subject to human error. Inadvertent typographical errors could occur on numbers, audit types and dates.

There is no option to manually refresh data updates in Power BI. Automatic data refresh occurs at midnight every 24 hours. This means that any data entered after that refresh will not be visible until after the next scheduled refresh. Parameters and/or filters can be saved and when the report is refreshed the data will automatically refresh using the same parameters.

Only compliance audits (regular audits) are in scope for this measure. Audits are conducted against all class requirements (conditions) held under arrangements. Approved arrangement class requirements specify the conditions that must be met before the relevant director will consider granting approval for biosecurity activities under section 406 of the Biosecurity Act. These arrangements, including the conditions they encompass, are subject to audits to assess ongoing compliance.

Change from corporate plan

The measure wording and tolerances were updated for greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Measure BI-11

BI-11	Biosecurity service standards conducted at the border are met.	
Measure type	Quantitative effectiveness and regulatory.	
Target	Service standards are partially achieved.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i>	
	<i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i>	
	Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Partially achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	4 out of 11 service standards met, compared with 5 out of 12 in 2022–23.	6 out of 11 service standard measures met.
Tolerances	Achieved: When 11 out of 11 service standard measures are met. Partially achieved: When 6 or more out of 11 service standard measures are met. Not achieved: When fewer than 6 out of 11 service standard measures are met.	

Context

We evaluate our performance against 11 service standard measures (comprising 10 individual service standards with composite targets) related to fulfilling our biosecurity regulatory responsibilities at the border. These are measured and monitored independently.

This measure focuses on biosecurity regulatory responsibilities for calls, general enquiries, import document lodgements, goods inspections, vessel inspections and treatments. Separate methodologies are applied where service differences exist.

Our measure demonstrates how effectively we minimise the biosecurity regulatory burden by delivering services in a timely manner. This helps reduce industry costs resulting from delays and supports compliance through responsive communication, strengthening industry confidence in our regulatory service delivery.

Our [client service standards](#) set targets for the timely delivery of our regulatory services to the importing community. They are not legislative requirements but rather provide guidance on our clients' obligations and detail how individuals and businesses can expect us to handle their requests for information or services.

This is a composite measure with several targets and tolerances that define how we achieve our overall result.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We hold ourselves to account and foster a culture of continuous improvement. For example, in 2024–25 we improved the process for archiving biosecurity and imported food notices, improving compliance with record-keeping obligations; providing accurate account of past actions; and strengthening our ability to track client communication, and manage compensation claims and enforcement activities.

- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – We use intelligence and data to inform a risk-based approach to our biosecurity functions so we can direct our resources to higher-risk activities. For example, in 2024–25 we continued to expand our Compliance-Based Intervention Scheme (CBIS). This enables reduced intervention for compliant entities, resulting in expedited clearance of compliant goods and reduced regulatory costs.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – We regularly engage with stakeholders, including regulated entities, other regulators and the community. For example, we regularly engage with industry representatives through our Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Cargo Consultative Committee. We present at industry events as part of continuing professional development conferences supporting customs brokers in maintaining their professional qualifications. Additionally, we regularly publish import industry advice notices that provide updates on import conditions, operational changes and information to help industry understand their responsibilities.

Analysis

Of the 11 service standard measures (comprising of 10 individual service standards with composite targets), we met or exceeded the target in 6. As a result, the overall performance measure was partially achieved. Key results for our client contact, imports and exports work streams are detailed in Table 9, Table 10 and Table 11 respectively.

Throughout 2024–25, the cargo operations pathway prioritised recruiting new biosecurity officers to support increasing demands and to build a sustainable pipeline of biosecurity skills for the future. Over the period, the onboarding of 480 staff translated into a net increase of 198 FTE across all APS levels, with a significant portion of these in operational roles and has resulted in an improvement in some service standard results.

Our Client Contact Group has demonstrated a significant commitment to several initiatives including recruiting, building officers' knowledge and capability and improving internal processes to boost service outcomes. This has had a positive impact on our ability to meet the service standard 'calls to our national contact number', which was 80% met in 2024–25, compared to 71% in the previous financial year.

Our import (assessment and inspections) sections have seen an increase in industry uptake of approved arrangements. This has followed our expansion of class 19 and highly-compliant importer scheme, and our promotion of these initiatives, encouraging industry to self-manage low complexity assessments. This has provided significant improvement in the service standard measure 'we will process non-urgent lodgements within 2 business days'. For 2024–25 the target was 88% met, compared to 44% in the previous financial year. This improvement also contributed to the overall service standard, 'import documents lodged via COLS', being met for 2024–25.

While improvements can be seen in some service standards, there have been challenges with others. For example, the service standard for 'goods inspections for airfreight exports' saw a decline to 68% in 2024–25, compared to 81% in the previous financial year. This can be attributed to the time required for training new officers and ongoing attrition. New officers require a minimum of 3 months' training, and most export inspections are conducted by industry authorised officers, so maintaining biosecurity officer competency is a challenge.

Table 9 Service standard results for client contact, 2024–25

Service standard	Service standard measure	Target (%)	2023–24 (%)	2024–25 (%)
Calls to our national contact number	We will answer calls received through the national contact number 1800 900 090 within 5 minutes.	80	71	81
Online general enquiries form	For enquiries made through our online contact form, we will immediately confirm we have received your enquiry and respond to your request within 10 business days.	80	57	73

Table 10 Service standard results for imports, 2024–25

Service standard	Service standard measure	Target (%)	2023–24 (%)	2024–25 (%)
Goods inspection at an approved premises	We will provide this service within 3 business days of confirmation of your scheduled appointment.	95	86	84
Non-commercial vessel inspection	If you are arriving at a port where we have a permanent staff presence, we will aim to provide an initial inspection within one business day from you advising us of your arrival.	95	97	99
Treatments	We will provide you or your representative with treatment direction within 2 business days following an inspection.	95	74	69
Import documents lodged via COLS	If we receive an urgent lodgement from you, we will process it within one business day.	80	97	99
	We will process non-urgent lodgements within 2 business days.	80	44	88
Import documents lodged by email	We will process your lodgement within 3 business days of receiving it.	80	98	99

Table 11 Service standard results for exports, 2024–25

Service standard	Service standard measure	Target (%)	2023–24 (%)	2024–25 (%)
Goods inspection at an export-registered establishment	An officer will inspect your goods within 3 business days of you requesting an appointment.	95	95	91
Goods inspection for airfreight exports	We will inspect your goods within 24 hours of you requesting an appointment.	95	81	68
Goods inspection for sea freight exports	We will inspect your goods within 3 business days of you requesting an appointment.	95	94	95

Methodology and data sources

We aggregate performance data against the defined service standards, providing reports at both the aggregate and individual service standard levels. Data is sourced from multiple departmental information systems and reporting undergoes peer review to ensure accuracy and reliability. When results vary from expected findings, we validate the reporting methodology and investigate potential causes for the variation.

Our information systems used to source data were the:

- Agriculture Import Management System (AIMS)
- Cargo Online Lodgement System (COLS)
- Cargo Workflow Management System (CWMS)
- Client Contact Management System (CCMS)
- Maritime and Aircraft Reporting System (MARS)
- Scheduling and Workforce Management System (SWMS)
- Unified Client Centre Express (UCCX).

Caveats and disclosures

Calls to our national contact number – The calls to our national contact number service standard measures the response timeframe for answering calls to the 1800 900 090 number.

Online general enquiries form – When online general enquiry forms were referred to second-level support for resolution, the original query was treated as not meeting the 10-business day service level target.

Goods inspection at an approved premises – Results do not include inspection of export goods, inspections undertaken through recurring appointments and imported food inspections.

Treatments – Entries with multiple inspection or treatment directions were deemed out-of-scope due to data and source system limitations. Entries where a treatment direction was applied within 5 minutes of the inspection direction were deemed out-of-scope, as they are applied at the time of document assessment, rather than as a result of an inspection outcome.

Import documents lodged via COLS – We use a service charter clock to monitor our processing times for import documents lodged via COLS. The clock is paused when assessments await client feedback before finalisation.

Non-commercial vessel inspection – The service level for non-commercial vessel inspection only applies to first point of entry locations where we have a permanent staff presence. Service standard calculations commence at the beginning of the business day following the vessel's arrival.

Change from corporate plan

The tolerances were updated. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Key activity 3.3

Protect the economy and environment from the impact of exotic pests and diseases in Australia through appropriate post-border measures, including regulation and emergency management capabilities.

In 2024–25, we achieved our target to strengthen post-border regulation and response capabilities. This was demonstrated by a 22% increase in our emergency management maturity rating (BI-05).

Guided by the Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework, this achievement supports the ongoing protection of Australia’s economy and environment from exotic pests and diseases.

For more detail refer to the performance result.

Measure BI-05

BI-05	Strengthened emergency management capabilities.	
Measure type	Quantitative and qualitative effectiveness.	
Target	An overall maturity increase of at least 15% from the 2023–24 baseline.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i>	
	<i>Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25</i>	
	Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved.	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – measure updated for 2024–25 reporting.	22% increase from the baseline result established in 2023–24.
Tolerances	Achieved: Maturity level has increased by at least 15% compared to the previous period. Partially achieved: Maturity level has remained steady or increased by less than 15% compared to the previous period. Not achieved: Maturity level has decreased compared to the previous period.	

Context

We have a range of emergency management responsibilities, including preparing for, responding to and recovering from pest and disease outbreaks. Under the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework, we are the Australian Government Coordinating Agency for domestic biosecurity crises. We work closely with a range of government agencies and industry organisations on emergency preparedness, response and recovery.

We enhance emergency management capabilities through training programs, exercises and continuous improvement processes guided by our emergency management capability development program. Our annual emergency management capability maturity assessment tracks progress against a baseline established in 2023–24, which measures the effectiveness of our emergency management capability development activities.

This performance measure reflects our commitment to continually improve our emergency management capabilities. Our policies and coordination arrangements aim to strengthen Australia’s ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from biosecurity emergencies and other hazards affecting the agricultural sector (agricultural, fisheries and forestry industries).

Analysis

The results of the 2024–25 emergency management capability maturity assessment show that we achieved an overall capability maturity rating of 2.54 (developing) out of 4 (self-sustaining). This represents an increase of 22% from the 2023–24 baseline result, which is 7 percentage points above the target of 15%.

This result demonstrates the activities undertaken in 2024–25 have strengthened our emergency management capabilities. These activities included delivering training, practicing our coordination

arrangements and updating our policies and plans using lessons identified through exercises and after-action reviews.

Our training program aimed to strengthen our staff’s understanding of emergency management principles and crisis arrangements as well as to build leadership skills during crisis events.

We practiced our coordination arrangements through participating in a series of exercises that escalated in scale and complexity, including our annual high risk weather season exercise (Exercise Kringle), a whole-of-government exercise focused on H5 bird flu preparedness (Exercise Volare) and a national-level exercise focused on complex crises (Exercise Convergence).

Methodology and data sources

Our emergency management capability maturity assessment process is based on the core capability elements of the Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework (ADPF) and the assessment process outlined in the *Capability Maturity Assessment Facilitators Guide* published by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC). This process provides a repeatable and comparative approach to assessing emergency management capability.

In 2023–24 we established a baseline capability maturity level by collecting semi-quantitative data through a series of workshops held with staff from across the department that had knowledge or experience of our emergency management arrangements. Through an expert elicitation process, workshop participants were asked to provide feedback on their experience of emergency management activities and to reach a consensus capability maturity rating for 5 core capability elements (people, resources, governance, systems and processes). The consensus capability maturity levels were circulated to participants for validation.

The capability maturity assessment process was repeated in 2024–25 with additional measures to reduce any perceived bias in reaching a consensus capability maturity level including:

- the introduction of an anonymous online survey to capture initial capability maturity ratings from workshop participants
- a follow-up anonymous survey using our Have Your Say platform to give participants the opportunity to confirm or contest the consensus maturity rating reached during the workshops.

Data for this measure is recorded on our emergency management capability assessment matrix. Information about the capability maturity assessment methodology, data sources and results is stored in line with our records management policy and procedures.

Caveats and disclosures

Qualitative and semi-quantitative data is gathered from participants during the assessment process to inform performance against the target. Input for individual capabilities is aggregated under the broader core capability elements (people, resources, governance, systems and processes).

We report a single figure that represents the overall capability maturity level. This figure is the average of the results for each of the 5 core capability elements.

The maturity rating for a specific capability element may increase or decrease compared with previous assessments; however, reporting an overall average result enables us to determine if we are continually improving our capability at a departmental level.

Bias may be introduced during the capability assessment process due to the opinion-based expert elicitation approach. The risk of bias is mitigated through using a best practice methodology endorsed by the BNHCRC, selection of a professional facilitator to elicit responses, selecting workshop participants based on role rather than the individual, conducting separate workshops for each group, communicating to workshop participants the purpose of the capability assessment process and importance of honest and impartial feedback, and seeking a consensus assessment for each individual capability.

An anonymous follow-up survey gives participants the opportunity to confirm or contest the consensus maturity level and provide additional observations to validate the results obtained during the workshops.

Our capacity to undertake emergency management capability development and assessment may be limited by the need to respond to actual emergencies. If this occurs, the resources and personnel allocated to such activities may be reallocated to engage in the actual response.

Change from corporate plan

The measure type, targets, tolerances, methodology and data sources were updated to improve the quality of the measure. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.

Key activity 3.4

Manage non-compliance with biosecurity and other relevant portfolio legislation.

In 2024–25, we identified 56 high-risk non-compliance incidents against our portfolio legislation that required further assessment. We took enforcement and compliance measures against each of these incidents. This outcome demonstrates our commitment to managing non-compliance through our regulatory levers.

For more detail refer to the performance result.

Measure BI-12

BI-12	Investigate and respond to incidents of high-risk non-compliance through compliance and enforcement measures.	
Measure type	Quantitative output and regulatory.	
Target	100% of instances of high-risk non-compliance identified against the <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i> , <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> and other relevant portfolio legislation are subject to compliance and enforcement measures.	
Sources	<i>Corporate Plan 2024–25</i> Portfolio Budget Statements 2024–25 Program: 2.1.	
2024–25 outcome	Achieved	
Result	2023–24 result	2024–25 result
	Not applicable – measure updated for 2024-25 reporting.	100% of identified high-risk non-compliance incidents were subject to compliance and enforcement measures.
Tolerances	Achieved: 100% of instances of high-risk non-compliance identified against the <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i> , <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> and other relevant portfolio legislation are subject to compliance and enforcement measures. Partially achieved: Not applicable. Not achieved: <100% of instances of instances of high-risk non-compliance identified against the <i>Biosecurity Act 2015</i> , <i>Export Control Act 2020</i> and other portfolio legislation are subjected to compliance and enforcement measures.	

Context

We undertake compliance and enforcement measures against instances of high-risk non-compliance contravening relevant portfolio legislation, including the Biosecurity Act. These actions strengthen our national biosecurity system, serve as a deterrent and enhance our reputation as a regulator.

By subjecting all non-compliance referrals to a risk assessment process, we can prioritise non-compliance that poses the highest risk to the Australian community, safeguarding Australia’s reputation as an exporter of premium produce.

We consider a range of factors when making an assessment for high-risk non-compliance, including the actual risk, the seriousness of the contravention, and the intent and frequency of the non-compliance. Some matters do not progress to assessment for valid reasons – for example, lack of sufficient evidence. Similarly, a reported incidence of non-compliance may not necessarily constitute a contravention of an offence provision and may be used for intelligence purposes only.

Compliance and enforcement measures are identified through established processes. These can result in a variety of outcomes – for example, civil sanctions (infringements, enforceable undertakings or civil litigation) and criminal prosecutions, intelligence assessments and written warnings.

Regulatory alignment

This measure aligned with the 3 regulator best practice principles:

- 1) Continuous improvement and building trust – We comply with regular internal and external reviews to verify our compliance with our regulatory requirements. We comply with the standards outlined in the Australian Government Investigations Standards.
- 2) Risk-based and data-driven – We focus on managing compliance and undertake enforcement activities where risks and impact of harm are potentially higher. We apply appropriate actions based on the potential risk resulting from non-compliance by reviewing all available evidence and data.
- 3) Collaboration and engagement – Our collaboration and engagement are centred around the processes and procedures of our Operations Coordination Committee (OCC). The OCC is part of our Operational Intelligence and Coordination Branch and collaborates with over 27 senior stakeholders from across the department who refer high-risk non-compliance matters to the OCC. We partner with other Australian Government agencies to achieve regulatory outcomes. Where non-compliance is detected and it is relevant to do so, we share information and conduct joint investigations with other law enforcement agencies and regulators.

Analysis

During 2024–25, 56 high-risk non-compliance incidents underwent compliance and enforcement measures. This represents 100% of instances of high-risk non-compliance, identified against the Biosecurity Act, Export Control Act and other relevant portfolio legislation, escalated to the OCC.

Of the 56 high-risk non-compliance incidents for 2024–25, the enforcement actions were:

- Investigation – 31
 - ongoing (23)
 - closed (7) – Letter of Warning issued (2), Letter of Advice issued (1), infringement issued (1), verbal education (1), no offence detected (2)
 - ongoing, Letter of Warning issued (1)
- Intelligence assessment – 6
- Intelligence assessment and Letter of Advice issued – 1
- Referred to program area to determine appropriate response – 5
- Referred to external agency – 1
- Matter referred to external agency to lead, our Investigations Branch conducting backwards trace – 1
- Further monitoring – 1
- Written warning – 3
- Referred to program area and further monitoring deployed – 1
- Referred to the Investigations Branch, undergoing assessment to determine the appropriate enforcement response – 6.

Methodology and data sources

To determine which high-risk non-compliance reports are escalated to the OCC for compliance and enforcement measures, our officers lodge non-compliance referrals into the Compliance Case Management System (CCMS) for assessment and triage. The assessment considers a range of factors including the actual risk, the seriousness of the contravention and the intent and frequency of the non-compliance.

Instances of high-risk non-compliance are then referred on to the OCC and each referral is reviewed and discussed on its merits for compliance and enforcement measures. The OCC endorses the most appropriate and proportionate response to be taken across all regulatory systems. The case is then assigned in CCMS to the appropriate program area(s) for actions as endorsed by the OCC. The status and progress of each CCMS case is tracked and recorded in CCMS. If a CCMS case is referred for investigation, the progress is tracked through the case management system, Jade.

Up until 31 December 2024, OCC outcomes were additionally recorded and tracked via an Excel sheet maintained by the OCC Outcome Tracker. Following system enhancements this information is now fully captured in CCMS.

The measure result is calculated as the proportion of all high-risk non-compliance incidents referred to OCC that are actioned. Compliance and enforcement measures were also included as part of the result.

Caveats and disclosures

The result did not consider instances of non-compliance that were not referred to our Compliance and Enforcement Division. These matters were subject to alternative risk mitigation options and did not require further sanctions.

As investigations can span multiple years, matters endorsed for investigation are generally not resolved during the reporting period. The period taken from commencement to closure of an investigation will depend on the nature of the issues under investigation.

Matters are unable to be progressed where there is a lack of evidence. Some reported incidents of non-compliance may not necessarily constitute a contravention of an offence provision and may instead be used solely for intelligence purposes.

With the exception of the CCMS, our data sources require manual extraction for reporting, and this is subject to human error and time lags.

Change from corporate plan

The target and tolerances have been updated for consistency and greater clarity. The performance measure has been realigned under the new key activity.