



Government Industry Agreement Baseline Commitments

July 2011



Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Te Manatū Ahuwhenua, Ngāherehere



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Baseline commitments

Purpose

This paper outlines what will constitute ‘baseline commitments’ for the Government Industry Agreement initiative.

WHAT ARE BASELINE COMMITMENTS?

Baseline commitments:

- are obligations that come into effect after the Deed of Agreement has been signed;
- are not subject to cost sharing or joint decision making; and
- are monitored and reported on by the GIA secretariat to enable all signatories to understand the level of provision of baseline commitments by others.

Baseline commitments reflect:

- the minimum capability and capacity that is required to be an effective GIA partner. E.g. all signatories involved in a response must provide a Response Strategic Leadership team member/s;
- an agreed list of things that are intrinsic to our organisations that we guarantee to keep in place. E.g. MAF maintains the Unwanted Organisms register;
- all costs incurred by signatories prior to a key cost sharing point. E.g. prioritisation of readiness programmes and preparation of information for cost categorisation; and
- where an activity is generic such that all signatories and also non-signatories benefit, MAF will undertake and fund that activity as a baseline commitment. E.g. maintaining the exotic pest and disease hotline.

Objectives

Baseline commitments should:

- enable signatories to understand what other signatories will contribute;
- be feasible;
- be equitable across industries; and
- encourage efficient use of resources.

Baseline commitments		
All Signatories	MAF	Industry Signatories
1. Participate in meetings to review, support or amend the Deed.	7. Develop, test and improve generic Readiness and Response policies, procedures, registers and systems.	16. Make available people competent to engage in Readiness and Response.
2. Determine Cost Shares for Priority Risks.	8. Meet international obligations for the reporting of plant and animal health status for New Zealand.	17. Communicate within the industry.
3. Debrief Readiness and Response Activities.	9. Maintain the exotic pest and disease hotline.	18. Preparation of industry biosecurity plan.
4. Provide decision maker for Readiness and Response.	10. Investigate suspected Unwanted Organisms including identification and validation of samples and urgent measures.	19. Contribute to the development and review of generic Readiness and Response policies and procedures.
5. Prioritise Unwanted Organisms and Readiness needs for those Unwanted Organisms.	11. Maintain competent staff to manage, plan and support high priority Readiness and Response Activities.	20. Contribute to MAF investigations of suspect new to New Zealand Unwanted Organisms.
6. Horizon scanning for new and emerging risks.	12. Maintain capability and capacity for field Response operations.	21. Early reporting of Unwanted Organisms.
	13. Liaise with non-Signatory stakeholders.	
	14. Maintain laboratory capability and capacity for the diagnosis of large numbers of samples during a Response.	
	15. Manage compliance with the Biosecurity Act.	

DESCRIPTIONS OF BASELINE COMMITMENTS

ALL SIGNATORY COMMITMENTS

- 1. Participate in meetings to review, support or amend the Deed*
As collaborators in the GIA, it is vital that all signatories are involved in any discussions and decisions about the Deed. The Deed should be reviewed regularly by signatories in order to identify improvements that could be made. This function will be undertaken by the Governance Group.
- 2. Determining Cost Shares for Unwanted Organisms*
Each signatory prepares their own information on the impacts of unwanted organisms and attempts to reach agreement with other relevant signatories on the final cost shares.
Where agreement can not be reached, an independent adviser may be brought in to advise parties on a preferred cost share. If the advice does not result in agreement, then an adjudicator will make the final decision on the cost shares. The costs of the adviser and adjudicator are split between the negotiating parties.
- 3. Debrief Readiness and Response Activities*
As part of good practice, debriefing of readiness and response activities will be undertaken to capture what did and did not go well and enable relevant improvements to be made. Debriefs may take various forms, including meetings or written feedback.
- 4. Provide decision maker for Readiness and Response*
Signatories will need to ensure that nominated contacts are available to provide input into readiness and response decision making. In particular:

 - a. the nominated person must have the delegated authority and competencies required to make ‘big decisions’ (including committing resources) that may be required during a response; and
 - b. decision makers must be available to provide input at very short notice.

This person will be trained as required to maintain or improve required competencies.
- 5. Prioritise Unwanted Organisms and Readiness needs for those Unwanted Organisms*
Industry and MAF will work together to prioritise priority risks for their industry, identify potential readiness projects for those priority risks, and develop business cases for those projects. Industry will then prioritise those readiness projects against competing demands for their industry.

MAF will prioritise those business cases against business cases generated for readiness projects for other unwanted organisms (those that affect other industries, or the environmental, human health, and socio-cultural values). During the prioritisation process MAF will take into account benefits to cost-sharing industries and benefits to MAF's four core values (economic, environmental, human health, and socio-cultural). Benefits to non-signatory primary industries will not be taken into account.

6. *Horizon scanning for new and emerging risks*

Industry and MAF will monitor emerging risks, both overseas and within New Zealand, and share that information with each other to enable discussions around prioritisation and potential readiness activities.

4. MAF COMMITMENTS

7. *Develop, test and improve generic Readiness and Response policies, procedures, registers and systems*

Generic readiness and response policies, procedures, registers and systems are those that can be applied to any readiness or response programme, whether it is for the plants, animals, environment, human health or aquatic sectors. This includes maintaining a biosecurity response system and the Unwanted Organisms register.

8. *Meet international obligations for the reporting of plant and animal health status for New Zealand*

MAF will report on New Zealand's pest/disease freedom status and on incursions of unwanted organisms to trading partners as required by international agreements or as required to preserve New Zealand's reputation with trading partners.

For example, New Zealand is a member of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), and as New Zealand's competent authority, MAF must report the detection of OIE listed notifiable diseases, emerging animal diseases and any significant epidemiological changes.

9. *Maintain the exotic pest and disease hotline*

MAF runs a passive surveillance programme which is delivered via notifications to the exotic pest and disease hotline (0800 80 99 66). The hotline allows a direct route into the biosecurity system, is manned 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and has a secondary screening system for low risk notifications. It also has a robust page out system to incursion investigators who are rostered on duty with a back-up system in place to ensure notifiers are responded to in a timely manner.

Communications activities to advertise the 0800 hotline to a broad and general audience are MAF baseline. However, if communications activities are undertaken with the primary objective of advertising the 0800 hotline as part of agreed readiness activities for a particular unwanted organism or industry, those expenses are subject to cost sharing by the cost sharing signatories.

10. *Investigate suspected risks including identification and validation of samples and urgent measures*

As part of MAF's biosecurity response system, notifications received of new and emerging biosecurity risks will be investigated by MAF and scientifically assessed based on risk. Initial assessment will continue to be based on:

- (a) screening out reports of well established unwanted organisms that pose no new threat;
- (b) diagnostics and investigation into the current state or likelihood of establishment or spread, and the likely pathway of entry;
- (c) the consequences an unwanted organism may have on our values (environment, economic, human health and cultural); and
- (d) opportunities for management.

Where there is an opportunity to manage the risk immediately during an investigation this is undertaken under urgent measures. Urgent measures can include arranging containment of the risk, treatment of the risk goods or unwanted organism and placement of directions or restricted places under the Biosecurity Act (Powers under Part 6). Where a risk remains following any urgent measures a Rapid Assessment Report is developed to recommend that a response be initiated.

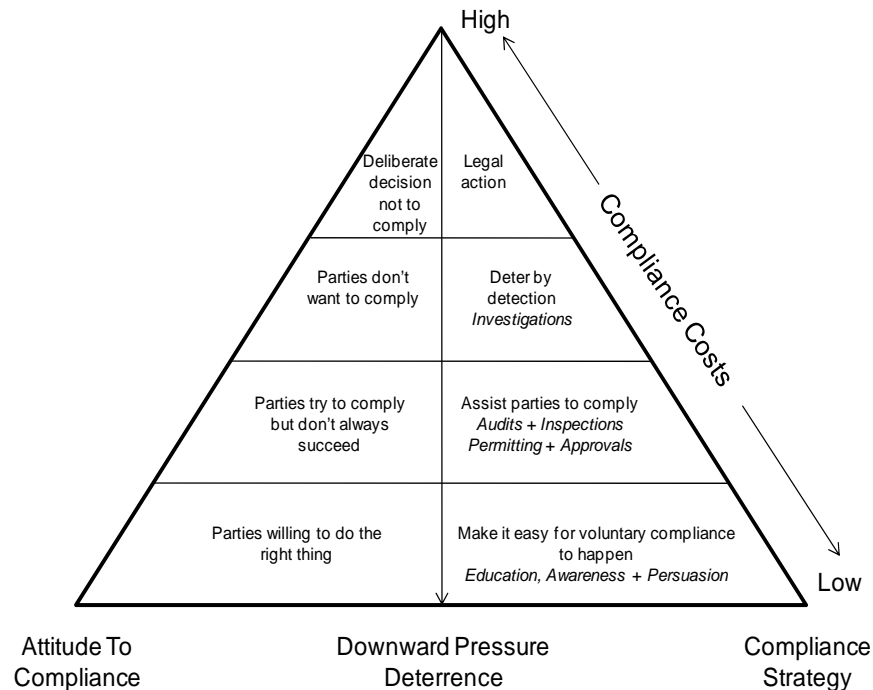
Diagnostics conducted as part of the investigation is included in MAF's baseline commitment, but diagnostics of samples from surveillance as part of readiness or response activities are cost shared.

11. *Maintain competent staff to manage, plan and support high priority Readiness and Response Activities*

MAF will continue to maintain a pool of staff who demonstrate competence in managing, planning and supporting readiness activities and response activities. MAF's requirement to prioritise work undertaken within and outside the GIA framework means that specific commitments cannot be given regarding exact staffing numbers. Nonetheless, the pool of staff will include:

- (a) Response managers;
- (b) Response work stream managers;
- (c) a large number of technical and other specialists including, but not limited to: entomologists, pathologists and other laboratory specialists, veterinary epidemiologists and plant disease specialists, communications professionals, policy analysts, economists, market access specialists; and
- (d) administrative and other staff able to support the management of readiness activities and response activities.

- 12.** *Maintain capability and capacity for field response operations*
MAF will use all reasonable endeavours to provide a National Biosecurity Capability Network (NBCN) – a network and supporting system that contains the widest possible inventory of organisations and individuals (within New Zealand and, where appropriate, overseas) who are capable and willing to deliver skills, equipment, materials or services for biosecurity responses. This includes maintenance, where appropriate, of the International Animal Health Emergency Reserves agreement. Simulations for specific unwanted organisms as part of joint readiness activities and the deployment of operational or field staff as part of readiness or response activities will be cost shared.
- 13.** *Liaise with non-signatory stakeholders*
MAF is responsible for representing the interests of non-signatories and other non-industry stakeholders, e.g. government agencies, public, environmental groups, Maori, for the purposes of decision making under the GIA, and for seeking their views where relevant to decision making processes under the GIA.
- 14.** *Maintain laboratory capability and capacity to diagnose large numbers of samples during a Response*
MAF will maintain appropriate laboratory capability and capacity to confirm identification of exotic organisms and develop networks with private laboratories to improve the ability to use those labs during Responses. A network will be developed for veterinary labs and a separate network for plant health labs.
In the event of an incursion, where MAF’s laboratory capability and capacity is insufficient, MAF will work with willing and competent private laboratories to assist them meet the required standards in order to process samples.
MAF’s indicative laboratory capacity is outlined in Appendices 1 and 2.
- 15.** *Manage compliance with the Biosecurity Act*
MAF’s compliance framework (below) guides decisions on how to enforce the Biosecurity Act by identifying the cause of the non-compliance and then taking action to mitigate the underlying problem. It recognises that there are a number of reasons why a person or company has erred and that there are a number of tools available for compliance officers to use. It seeks to best match the tool with the offence by addressing the underlying reason for the breach. For example, where the offender is fully aware that they are breaching the regulations, then legal action may be the best approach, whereas if an offender is genuinely trying to comply and makes a breach by mistake, then education and monitoring may be sufficient.



5. INDUSTRY SIGNATORY COMMITMENTS

16. *Make available people competent to engage in Readiness and Response*
 This is a separate role from that of decision maker (see Baseline Commitment 4). Industry signatories will make one or more people available to contribute to the technical or operational elements of planning and analysis. They will have industry specific technical/biological and operational knowledge and be available at short notice in the event of an incursion response. Technical activities will support the implementation of readiness or response activities and may include:

- (a) contributing to planning and intelligence work stream activities during responses;
- (b) participating in collaborative horizon scanning activities to identify threats;
- (c) identifying readiness activities that may address those threats;
- (d) writing, contributing to or reviewing written material for readiness or response;
- (e) assisting with the development and improvement of generic biosecurity systems, policies and procedures;
- (f) training, e.g. participating in response simulations to develop generic response capability; and
- (g) helping develop the plan for transitioning out of a response.

- 17.** *Communicate within the industry*
This includes informing members about GIA, and also the development and maintenance of an industry contact list and efficient method of communicating with industry members and growers (i.e. levy payers). Industry signatories are responsible for representing the interests of their levy payers (organisation members and levy-paying non-members where applicable) for the purposes of readiness and response decision making, and for seeking their input into the decision making process.
- 18.** *Preparation of Industry biosecurity plan*
Within two years of becoming a signatory, each industry signatory must complete a biosecurity plan for its sector of producers and update it at least each three years. The biosecurity plan outlines how biosecurity fits within the overall strategic plan for the sector of producers. It provides an easy to read summary of the key biosecurity risks the sector of producers faces and the programme of activities that are in place to manage them. These activities may include surveillance (active or passive), symptoms to watch out for on a day to day basis, best practice guidelines to manage potentially infected crops/stock, who to notify of potential infections, and plans to be followed in the event that a positive detection is made. The development and delivery of the programme of activities is conducted jointly and cost shared.
- 19.** *Contribute to the development and review of generic Readiness and Response policies and procedures*
Industry signatories contribute to the development or review of generic readiness and response policies or systems, through formal and informal processes as appropriate.
- 20.** *Contribute to MAF investigations of suspect new to New Zealand Unwanted Organisms*
Industry signatories will work with MAF during investigations of reports of suspect exotic unwanted organisms, e.g. providing information to the investigators as requested or providing information to industry.
- 21.** *Early reporting of Unwanted Organisms*
Industry signatories will notify MAF of unusual disease symptoms or unwanted organisms as soon as possible.

Appendix 1: MAF's laboratory capability and indicative capacity by test type

Type of Test	Laboratory	Indicative number of tests/week with current resources	Indicative maximum number of tests/week (redeploying IDC resources, and/or contracting out) **
PCR	AHL	300	750-1500
PCR	PHEL	500	750-1500
ELISA	AHL	5000	15000
ELISA	PHEL	1000	2000
Morphological identification of arthropods - sample screening, simple identification (e.g. trap sample fruit flies, varroa mite, psyllid sticky trap) - complex identifications, curation & preparation required before identification (e.g. exotic scale, cryptic ants)	PHEL	300-600	900-1800
	PHEL	30-60	60-120
Fungal culturing & morphological identification	PHEL	400-600	600-800
Morphological identification of nematodes	PHEL (contracted out)	20-30	50-100
Virus isolation	AHL	50	75
Bacterial culture and identification	AHL	50	75
Viral serology (cell based)	AHL	80	120

AHL (Animal Health Laboratory) and PHEL (Plant Health and Environment Laboratory) are part of MAF's Investigation and Diagnostic Centres (IDC)

*The above numbers are based on expected weekly throughput that is sustainable for a period of four weeks. It is assumed that the required reagents can be sourced on a continuing basis from suppliers. Numbers are total numbers per test type that can be processed by the laboratory, not numbers per test.

**Includes cessation or deferment of existing on demand work associated with import/export testing and surveillance work so that staff, laboratory space and equipment can be redeployed, hiring temporary laboratory staff and purchase of required incidental equipment.

Appendix 2: Laboratory capability and indicative capacity³ of MAF's contracted supplier for MITS¹, to identify marine organisms.

Type of Test ²	Lab	Indicative # tests per week with current resources	Indicative max # tests per week with contracting out/redeploying resources
Morphological I.D of Porifera (dissection, sectioning and slide smears)	MITS	50-75	60-85
Morphological I.D of Polychaetes (dissection and morphology)	MITS	100-150	100-150
Morphological I.D of Ascidiacea (dissection and sectioning)	MITS	50-75	70-100
Morphological I.D of Crustacea (dissection and morphology)	MITS	75-100	100-150
Morphological I.D of Mollusca (dissection and morphology)	MITS	50-75	60-80
Morphological I.D of Echinodermata (dissection and morphology)	MITS	50-75	60-80
Morphological I.D of Algae (dissection, pressing, slide sections)	MITS	50-75	70-100
Morphological I.D of Bryozoa/Hydrozoa (dissection and morphology)	MITS	50-75	70-80
Morphological I.D of Fish (dissection, morphology)	MITS	50-75	70-100
Morphological I.D of other taxa	MITS	50-75	50-75

¹MITS (Marine Invasives' Taxonomic Service) is delivered by the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) under contract to MAF, and is a facilitation and information management service that makes use of existing marine taxonomic networks to facilitate identifications and information flow.

²Diagnosis of diseases in marine animals is conducted by MAF's Animal Health Laboratory and is covered by the figures in Appendix 1.

³Capability and capacity for the various taxa cannot be controlled by MAF and will be dependent on the extent that this is available within New Zealand and internationally.