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Specialists in Biosecurity Risk Management

ACTIVITIES IN THE BIOSECURITY AND AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Broadleaf has undertaken numerous assignments in the biosecurity and agriculture sector. These have ranged from the development of organisation standards or guidelines, to detailed technical reviews and quantitative analyses.

The term 'biosecurity risk management' encompasses many different fields. The most topical and high-profile of these is import risk analysis, which underpins trade in animals, plants and products under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement).

General guidelines for import risk analysis have been provided by three key organisations:

- OIE, the World Organisation for Animal Health;
- IPPC, the International Plant Protection Convention; and
- Codex, the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

From these guidelines, Broadleaf developed and revised detailed 'Guidelines for Import Risk Analysis' for Biosecurity Australia, the quarantine policy organisation within the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). These guidelines incorporate both animal and plant import risk analysis. We have also developed numerous models and methodology papers for Biosecurity Australia, and provided methodology support for its successful landmark Australian Federal Court case on the importation of pig meat. On behalf of Australian Centre of Excellence for Risk Analysis (ACERA), we reviewed the methods for consequence assessment used across Australian Commonwealth Government Departments and agencies and identified tools and techniques that might benefit Biosecurity Australia.

Biosecurity risk analysis is not all about trade. Broadleaf recently provided oversight and support for the development of a detailed quarantine management plan for the Gorgon LNG project. This entailed engineering and logistics design specifications to support construction of an LNG plant on Barrow Island, a pristine Class A nature reserve off the coast of Western Australia. The project required some 300 people to work and live on the island during the period of construction, with stringent protocols regarding the quarantine of materials, consumables, personnel and equipment entering and leaving the construction footprint. The project won environmental approval from the Western Australian government.

Broadleaf also provides services in epidemiology, and pest and disease modelling. We are currently leading an ambitious collaborative project that will see the development of a spatial simulation model for pandemic influenza in an urban Australian population. Our partners in

this work, which is funded by the Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases, are DAFF, the University of Melbourne and Curtin University of Technology. We plan to use the model to investigate key elements of the epidemiology of pandemic influenza, and to test the effectiveness and efficiency of response strategies. We envisage that it will be sufficiently flexible to be used for modelling the spread of other infectious diseases.

Disease simulation modelling is an important and topical tool for epidemiologists worldwide. Details about our short courses in modelling can be found on the What We Do page of our website.

Our clients in the biosecurity and agriculture sector have included Australian Commonwealth Government Departments and agencies, as well as multinational corporations. We have also carried out work for ACERA. Dr Sam Beckett, our key specialist in this field, was employed on secondment to the United States Department of Agriculture's Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health in Fort Collins, Colorado.

The Broadleaf team are specialists in facilitation, including topics in the biosecurity and agriculture sector. We have provided input to Biosecurity Australia's multidisciplinary risk analysis teams, looking at pest and disease risks associated with a range of animals, plants and associated products. We have also facilitated a multi-agency workshop on the contentious forestry disease, Mundulla Yellows, for Environment Australia. Dr Sam Beckett continues to teach postgraduate biosecurity risk management through the University of Sydney's Master of Veterinary Public Health Management program.

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