



[Home](#)

[Status](#)

[Profiles](#)

[Participants](#)

[Contacts](#)

## CRC for National Plant Biosecurity - 2004 Bid

**Success!** It is my great pleasure to announce that the Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity is now a reality. We received the news today that we were successful in our bid for \$65 million in government and industry funding under the Commonwealth's Cooperative Research Centres Programme.

The Centre will effectively serve as the scientific foundation for Australia's national biosecurity effort and will augment the existing coordinating network delivered through Plant Health Australia, the CRC's proposing organisation. In total, there are 19 CRC participants who make up the CRC for National Plant Biosecurity (see the [Participants](#) page of this newsletter for the full list) and we thank them all for their support. The national research approach afforded by the CRC will deliver significant economic returns to Australia's plant industries. In fact, a key point in our selection interview, was that only a small improvement to Australia's plant biosecurity would pay for the investment in the CRC many times over.

Special thanks are due to Plant Health Australia Ltd as the proposing organization. Neil Fisher and his team – especially Kerry Collins – played a major role in tending to the needs of the Steering Committee; 'doing the books' (a constant challenge); maintaining communication with participants and, not least, providing the venue for several key meetings - including our interview. For the better part of a week, PHA's people bore the invasion of their premises stoically; provided refreshments and organized 'Staging Connections' so that we had good sound and vision for the presentation. Many thanks to everyone. Sincere appreciation also to CSIRO, who provided the venue and catering for a number of vital meetings. We also benefited (actually, I had a sleepless night afterwards) from John Curran's 'curly questions' while we were rehearsing. These were MUCH worse than anything the Interview Panel threw at us. Thanks a lot.

The application process has been a long one, with over 1 year passing between the initial announcement of the selection process and today's announcement, and another 6 months before funding will commence. We are very pleased to have heard about the bid's success before Christmas as it allows us to start thinking in more concrete terms about the year ahead. We aim to have our research and education programs finalised over the next few months so that our projects will be able to commence as soon as possible from 1 July 2005. You can read more about our programs in the [Profiles](#) section of this newsletter. We will be housed alongside Plant Health Australia in Canberra from July next year - these and other management issues are addressed in the [Status](#) section of this newsletter.

As I'm sure you can imagine, bringing an idea to reality on this scale is no mean feat, and it is not a task that can be achieved without a great deal of help. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the people involved in bringing this bid to success. Rather than name each of you individually, I congratulate the team as a whole, and hope to catch up with all of you personally over the next few weeks. The hard work has only just begun!



**John Lovett**  
Chair, CRCNPB  
Steering Committee



[Home](#)

[Status](#)

[Profiles](#)

[Participants](#)

[Contacts](#)

## Status of the Bid

First and foremost, congratulations to everyone involved with the CRCNPB bid on your success. The road has been a long one thus far but, suffice to say, the journey has only just begun.

The next 6 months will be largely centred around finalising agreements between CRC Participants and the Commonwealth, as well as ensuring that the Centre is ready to operate on 1 July 2005. Some decisions regarding the CRC's administrative structure have been made at different stages in the application process, including that the Centre will be:

- an incorporated joint venture;
- financed by \$65 million in industry and government funding over 7 years;
- governed by an independent skills-based Board; and
- located in Canberra, alongside Plant Health Australia.

Other decisions regarding formalising positions and processes between the bid and operational phase are yet to be made, including:

- defining the role of the Steering Committee until start up;
- finalising key management positions, including CEO, Governing Board Chair and Science Coordinator
- staff recruitment, including business and finance positions.

The CRC's Governing Board will meet for the first time in March next year to formalise these arrangements.



**Bill Roberts**  
Interim CEO



[Home](#)[Status](#)[Profiles](#)[Participants](#)[Contacts](#)

**James Ridsdill-Smith**  
Science Coordinator

## Research and Education Programs

Let me begin by congratulating the CRCNPB team and thanking everyone involved with the bid for their generous support. The research program for the CRC has undergone a lot of fine-tuning in preparation for the final interview stage of the application process. This has meant focusing our sights on a list of key pests (including diseases) according to their economic urgency, and constructing programs that will address the greatest scientific gaps. Thankyou to the research

leaders and participants for all your hard work during the last few months - I believe we have a world-class research program to show for it, and have a solid base from which to address Australia's urgent biosecurity needs.

The framework of the four programs is developed, but there are likely to be further negotiations with organisations about their long-term commitments to individuals in the specific projects. We have aimed at multi-organisational collaboration for all projects. Some projects will be ready to go on July 1, but many will ramp up in the year after this. The programs represent a mix of short-term and long-term projects, and some money will be kept for competitive bids during the life of the CRC. Core partners will obviously make up the bulk of the input, but a number of other organisations have expressed an interest in being involved on a project by project basis, including those from the USA and New Zealand.

The CRC's research programs cover the full life cycle of biosecurity - prevention, diagnostics, surveillance and impact management, while the education program will centre around biosecurity training in each of the four research programs.

A brief overview of the CRC's programs, subject to the Board's approval, is given below.

### Research Program 1: Preparedness and Prevention

- National approach to risk analysis
- Invasion biology

### Research Program 2: Diagnostics

- Diagnostic tests
- Distance diagnostics/identification

### Research Program 3: Surveillance

- Surveillance traps and systems
- Surveillance intelligence

### Research Program 4: Impact Management

- Incursion management for emergency plant pests
- Strategies for eradication

### Program 5: Education and Training

- Building national biosecurity capacity, including PhD students
- Technology transfer





[Home](#)

[Status](#)

[Profiles](#)

[Participants](#)

[Contacts](#)

## CRC for National Plant Biosecurity - Participants

### National

- [Plant Health Australia Ltd](#)
- [Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries](#)
- [CSIRO Entomology](#)
- [Grains Research and Development Corporation](#)
- [Horticulture Australia Ltd](#)
- [Rural Industry Research and Development Corporation](#)

### Northern Territory

- [Northern Territory Dept of Business, Industry and Resource Development](#)
- [Charles Darwin University](#)

### Western Australia

- [Department of Agriculture Western Australia](#)
- [Murdoch University](#)
- [Saturn Biotech Limited](#)



### Queensland

- [Queensland Department of Primary Industries & Fisheries](#)

### New South Wales

- [New South Wales Department of Primary Industries](#)
- [Southern Cross University](#)
- [Australian Plant DNA Bank](#)

### Victoria

- [Victoria Department of Primary Industries](#)

### Tasmania

- [Tasmania Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment](#)

### South Australia

- [South Australian Research and Development Institute](#)
- [University of Adelaide](#)



| [Home](#) |

[Status](#) |

[Profiles](#) |

[Participants](#) |

[Contacts](#) |

### Chairman of the Steering Committee

Professor John Lovett

Phone (02) 6227 5050

Email [lovettassociates@bigpond.com](mailto:lovettassociates@bigpond.com)

### Interim CEO

Dr Bill Roberts

Phone (07) 6272 4047

Email [bill.roberts@affa.gov.au](mailto:bill.roberts@affa.gov.au)

### Science Coordinator

Dr James Ridsdill-Smith

Phone (08) 9333 6640

Email [james.ridsdill-smith@csiro.au](mailto:james.ridsdill-smith@csiro.au)

### Proposing Organisation

Mr Neil Fisher

CEO, [Plant Health Australia](#)

5/4 Phipps Close, Deakin ACT 2600

Phone (02) 6260 4322

Fax (02) 6260 4321

Email [admin@phau.com.au](mailto:admin@phau.com.au)

### PROGRAM LEADERS

#### P1: Preparedness & Prevention

Dr Paul DeBarro

Phone (07) 3214 2811

Email [paul.debarro@csiro.au](mailto:paul.debarro@csiro.au)

#### P2: Diagnostics

Dr Caroline Hauxwell

Phone (07) 3896 9362

Email [caroline.hauxwell@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:caroline.hauxwell@dpi.qld.gov.au)

#### P3: Surveillance

Dr Darryl Hardie

Phone (08) 9368 3799

Email [dhardie@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:dhardie@agric.wa.gov.au)

#### P4: Impact Management

Dr Simon McKirdy

Phone (02) 6260 4322

Email [simon@phau.com.au](mailto:simon@phau.com.au)

#### P5: Education & Training

Prof Peter Baverstock

Phone (02) 6620 3719

Email [pbaverst@scu.edu.au](mailto:pbaverst@scu.edu.au)

