



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

From 1 July 2013 the Australian Centre of Excellence for Risk Analysis (ACERA) will cease operations and the new Centre of Excellence for Biosecurity Risk Analysis (CEBRA) will begin.

This is an exciting new chapter in Australia's response to biosecurity risks.

As we embark on this new agenda, my team and I have the benefit of the fantastic work of ACERA since it was established in 2006.

ACERA built a solid foundation for the future of biosecurity research and analysis. Over 7 years ACERA directly contributed to substantial innovations across government, research agencies and on the ground. Importantly ACERA contributed to creating the next generation of biosecurity risk analysts.

This legacy will serve CEBRA well into the future.

Biosecurity is a critical issue for Australia. With our expansive borders and proximity to Asia, implementing effective biosecurity policies and management tools is essential to protecting the health of the population and our unique ecosystems, and the viability of essential segments of the Australian economy.

For the first time, our biosecurity colleagues in the New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries have joined the research program. Over the next four years, I look forward to CEBRA looking at biosecurity from a national perspective and building an international research community in partnership with government and other stakeholders.

Mark Burgman,
Director



PROJECT UPDATE

On 24 June 2013 the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) Biosecurity Research Steering Committee endorsed the following projects as CEBRA's initial research agenda:

- Data mining to improve biosecurity risk profiling
- Analytical assessment of leakage surveys
- Improving ballast water risk tables
- Evaluation of arrival pathways and species distribution models
- Intelligence gathering and analysis
- Cost-effective surveillance for foot-and-mouth disease
- Handling uncertainty in the Risk-Return Resource Allocation (RRRA) model
- Market-based incentives for biosecurity compliance
- Ornamental fish import surveillance systems
- Plant-product pathways and the Continuous Sampling Plan

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THE ROLE OF CEBRA

CEBRA is a key initiative in the Australian Government's response to biosecurity risks.

Over the next four years CEBRA will be hosted by The University of Melbourne's School of Botany.

It will ensure that biosecurity procedures and tools are underpinned by world-class research and understanding of the issues, risks and response mechanisms.

CEBRA will play a vital role in assisting government to remain at the forefront of practical risk assessment through the provision of collaborative, relevant and practical research outcomes

The core objective of CEBRA will be to deliver practical solutions and advice for assessing and managing biosecurity risks by delivering a research program that aimed at achieving the following key outcomes:

- Fewer pests and diseases entering the continent
- Reduced costs of intervention, treatment and enhanced export prospects for Australian agriculture
- Effective quarantine and intervention and more reliable procedures that are better understood
- Assisting DAFF to make sound strategic decisions to invest in ways that anticipate emerging threats
- Enhanced environmental quality and economic advantage
- Provision of well-trained professional scientists with direct experience in solving biosecurity problems
- Training the next generation of agricultural, environmental and biosecurity practitioners



LEFT TO RIGHT: Robert Saint (University of Melbourne), Mark Burgman, Glyn Davis, Andrew Metcalfe, Colin Grant (DAFF), Greg Williamson (DAFF).

CEBRA LAUNCH

On 20 May the Vice Chancellor of Melbourne University, Glyn Davis, welcomed the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO, to Melbourne University for the official opening of CEBRA.

Mr Metcalfe was joined by other Commonwealth officials and Managing Director of CEBRA, Mark Burgman for the opening of CEBRA which will be operational from 1 July 2013.

"Through biosecurity reform, we are focusing on building a sustainable system that manages risk and better supports consistent service delivery. We are improving biosecurity operations in Australia and offshore and strengthening stakeholder relationships."

Mr Andrew Metcalfe AO

In opening CEBRA Mr Metcalfe said that managing Australia's biosecurity system is a big job and that the research of CEBRA research will inform robust policy and operational decisions that help concentrate our efforts on the areas of greatest risk.

Mr Metcalfe told attendees at the opening that the centre will build upon current reform initiatives as the department continues to focus on delivering a modern system that is responsive and targeted.