



Government Industry Agreement for Biosecurity Readiness and Response

March 2026 Bulletin

This semi-regular update from the GIA Secretariat is intended to provide a general overview of the key matters considered by GIA governance bodies in the preceding month. It is not intended to communicate formal decisions by any of the parties, nor everything that happens within GIA. If there are any questions, or further information is required please contact steve.rich@gia.org.nz

Foot and Mouth Disease Council (FMDC): 2 March

The FMD Council met on Monday 2 March 2026, with the following matters discussed:

- The role of a Livestock Sector Biosecurity Council, with the decision that no new formal body will be established, however the group may convene on an ad hoc basis when useful.
- An overview of the work programme, budget, and project updates was provided, including current spend and budget headroom.
- Six-monthly system reporting under the FMDOA.
- Industry valuations and Market Access Protocols, with revised valuations and cost shares to be circulated and confirmed for implementation from 1 July 2026.
- Planning for the 2026/27 work programme and budget got underway, with Council agreeing to develop a strategy to guide its deliberations.
- Updates on Electronic Animal Status Declarations (EASDs), and public consultation on options to improve pig and sheep traceability were provided.

Lepidoptera Working Group: 3 March

The Lepidoptera Working Group met on 3 March 2026 with the following matters discussed:

- The first agenda item for the day was to welcome Anne Rose of MPI as the new chair.
- Brendan Gould, the group's chair since inception, was thanked for his dedication and application to the task at hand.
- Current projects are largely running to plan and budget:
 - Project 15 – Explore Multi-lure Surveillance Trapping Options
 - Project 16 – Develop Adaptable Lepidoptera Operational Specifications
 - Project 17 - Develop an Industry Guide for a Lepidoptera Response
 - Project 18 – Develop a Lepidoptera Response Communications Plan template
- The project for the development of a Btk Readiness Plan has been reformatted and a new potential provider will be approached.
- Project briefs for several new pieces of work in 26/27 were considered and will be refined for consideration at the group's June meeting.
 - Lepidoptera Response strategies and triggers for moving to long term management.
 - eDNA - opportunities for application, developing a detection policy, plus communications.

- UV light traps - scoping a pilot implementation.
- The group next meets 17 June 2026.

Xylella OA Development (Industry Only): 4 March

Industry parties to an emerging combined Xylella Readiness and Response Operational Agreement met on 4 March 2026 to discuss key issues though costs shares and fiscal caps.

- The Secretariat was asked to model several scenarios including how response costs would be shared among parties impacted by subspecies of the Xylella bacteria when host plant susceptibility varies by subspecies.

GIA Operations Limited (GOL) Board: 5 March

The GIA Operations Limited Board met on Thursday 5 March 2026, with the following matters discussed:

- Response governance training,
- The provisional agenda for the 24 March 2026 Deed Governance Group meeting, including the Minister's attendance.
- Options for indexation of the Secretariat Club share, with CPI identified as the preferred approach to recommend to DGG.
- The GIA Deed review process.
- The financial report to 31 January 2026.
- The next GOL Board meeting is scheduled for 14 April 2026.

Xylella Action Group (XAG): 5 March

The Xylella Action Group (XAG) met on 5 March 2026, and the following key matters were discussed:

- An update from the Group's Technical Lead noted a new European database of hosts and that testing of woody material is a useful option when leafy material is not available.
- The meeting agreed that the model for its 3 February "Scenarios Workshop" provided useful "rapid fire" insights into several scenarios within a short time frame drawing out key issues without getting bogged down in too much detail.
- Work on the new Readiness and Response OA currently focuses on industry party positions in advance of BNZ obtaining mandate to enter formal negotiations.
- Progress through several current projects was noted:
 - Awareness of Xylella – a media awareness campaign targeting growers is underway
 - A project to provide guidance on Readiness Measures for New Zealand Nurseries and Growers is about to get underway
 - A final draft of Surveillance Delimiting Protocols is undergoing peer review within BNZ and will shortly be available for XAG review.
- The group agreed that its work programme provided good alignment with the Biosecurity System Action Plan.
- BNZ demonstrated the prototype tool for collecting data in the field through a response. It was well-received and will be field tested in winter.

- Project scopes and thinking for new projects through the 26/27 year were advanced ahead of formal work plan and budget consideration at the XAG June meeting.
 - Phase 3 of the Xylella Awareness campaign
 - Phase 3 of Readiness and Response Measures for growers and nurseries
 - A review/refinement of *Xylella* response options and decision-making tools
 - A stakeholder engagement plan and/or public information plan/package
 - Australian collaboration.
- A subgroup was formed to provide B3 with feedback on the B3 26/27 Investment Programme.
- The BNZ review of the Xylella Operational Specifications has produced a draft update that will soon be with other BNZ teams for review after which it will be available for XAG review.
- The group next meets 23 June 2026.

Pan-GIA Engagement with Māori Panel Hui: 10 March

The pan-GIA Māori Advisory Panel met on 10 March to consider how current and recent responses have engaged with Māori and extract learning from these.

Poultry Council: 18 March

The Poultry Council met on 18 March 2026, to discuss progress across the poultry sector's HPAI readiness programme and overall priorities for the coming year. Discussion included the following:

- The development of an information repository to support sector-wide disease response, including how materials would be maintained and shared between MPI and industry.
- The new online tool providing guidance and resources for poultry producers is now live, with final enhancements nearing completion (<https://birdflu.pianz.org.nz/>).
- Readiness for using containerised gassing units during an HPAI response, including operational protocols, regulatory considerations, and access arrangements for producers.
- Ongoing work to clarify roles and responsibilities between MPI and industry during an H5N1 response, informed by recent workshops and scenario planning.
- Recent trials of heating-based disinfection methods and the development of guidance material for MPI review.
- Work relating to supply chain resilience and next steps to refine the project scope.
- Assessment of whole-house gassing as a potential depopulation method, including feasibility, cost considerations, and opportunities to observe overseas systems.
- Potential financial relief mechanisms for poultry farmers.
- Progress on the H5N1 Industry Communications Plan.
- The revised 2025/26 budget and early planning for the 2026/27 financial year.

Deed Governance Group (DGG): 24 March

The following key matters were discussed:

- Recent biosecurity activities, including updates on the Yellow-Legged Hornet and fruit fly responses, and the brown marmorated stink bug investigation.
- The Bioeconomy Science Institute interim CEO provided an update on its establishment, scope, funding environment, and upcoming stakeholder consultation.

- The new avian influenza advisory website for poultry and egg producers, <https://birdflu.pianz.org.nz/>.
- The GIA Deed Review (covering scope, potential areas of change, and the planned engagement process).
- Methods for assessing the impact of unwanted organisms, including the counterfactual and beneficiary identification.
- Approaches to Māori engagement within the GIA system and the practicality of different engagement models.
- Options for annual indexation of the Secretariat club share.
- The next DGG away day in early 2027 with a focus on dairy sector biosecurity.
- The Minister for Biosecurity met with the group to discuss GIA and the Biosecurity Act review.
- DGG next meets on 24 June 2026.

BMSB Council Work Project Decisions: 30 March

The BMSB Council met on 30 March 2026 to discuss two proposed projects and the budgetary impact to the 2026/27 workplan.

Key points discussed were:

- Interest in proceeding with a BMSB host finding studies & competition trials project, with members and co-founders needing to confirm their position out of session.
- A proposed project for testing the Yellow Spotted Stink Bug (YSSB) parasitoid location studies, was not pursued.
- The revised overall 2026/27 workplan will need to be confirmed by council members out of session.
- The next Council meeting is due to be held on 26 May 2026.