



Limiting Crisis Through
Good Communication

Sydney 27th & 28th
November 2023

NATIONAL BIOSECURITY
RESPONSE TEAM

Acknowledgment of Country



We wish to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians.

I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of this land and pay my respects to the Elders both past and present

Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area Biosecurity Strategy



Biosecurity Controls

Strong north to south

Weak south to north



Session 1



Aims / Objectives

1. Explore key concepts and theory of effective communication across all functions.
2. Explore key concepts of external communications within a response.
3. Introduce for the broader cohort the key roles and responsibilities of Public Information.
4. Understand how you can contribute to the PI function.
5. Establish networks.

Facilitator overview: Day 1

10:00am – 10:30am Arrival and networking

10:30 – 10:45am Session 1 – Intros

10:45am – 12.30 pm Session 2 Overview of public info

12:30 pm – 1.30 pm Lunch

1:30pm – 3.00 pm Session 3 Stakeholder engagement

3:00pm – 3.30pm afternoon tea

3:30pm – 5:00pm Session 4 - Reputational risk

Facilitator overview: Day 2

8:30am-9:00 Coffee / Recap

9:00am-10:00am Session 5 - Messaging

10:00am-10:15am Morning tea

10:15am-11:30am Session 6 - Briefings and handovers

11:30am-12:30pm Session 7 - Social media guest speaker

12:30-1.15pm Lunch

1:15-2:15pm Media skills

2:15-2:45pm Reflections, wrap up and finish before 3pm

Biosecurity Quiz



Question 1.

How many Chief Veterinary Officers and Chief Plant Health Officers does Australia have?

ANSWER

CVOS - 9 -
COMMONWEALTH,
WA, SA, VIC, NT,
NSW, TAS, QLD, ACT –
ONE POINT

CPHOS – 8 -
COMMONWEALTH,
WA, SA, VIC, NT,
NSW, TAS, QLD, BUT
NONE IN ACT – ONE
POINT

Question 2
Australia also
has never had
an outbreak of
FMD.
True or False?

Answer

False

Foot-and-mouth disease was diagnosed at Victoria in 1872.
Also was diagnosed in cattle imported into NSW in 1871 and
1872.



Session 2

Overview of public information in biosecurity

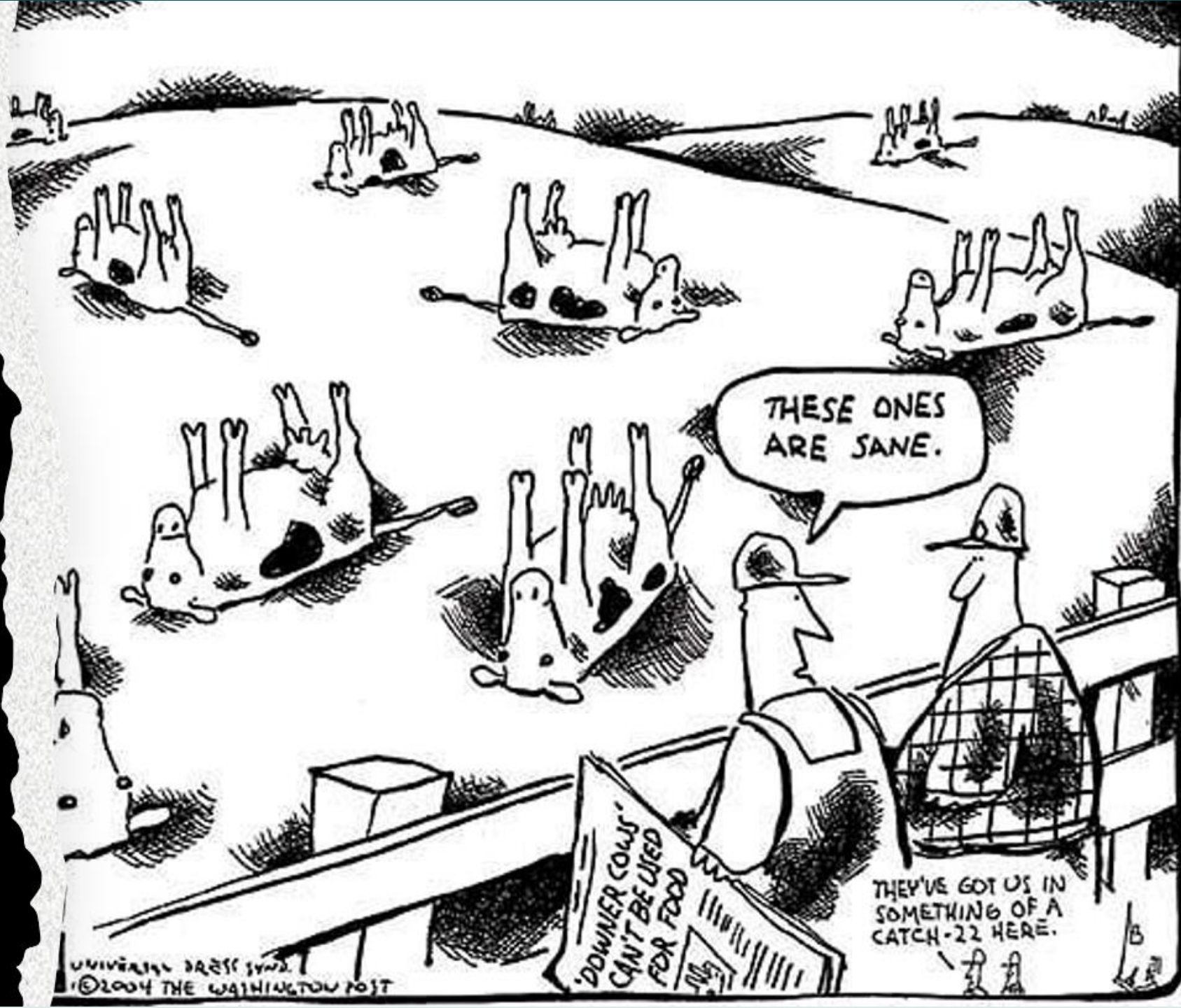
A firefighter in full orange protective gear and a white helmet is walking away from the camera through a forest. The ground is covered in fallen leaves. In the background, a large fire is burning, casting a bright orange and yellow glow over the scene. The trees are silhouetted against the fire.

“Communication is the critical thing and if you do not do it right you will be judged to have failed, regardless of what else you do with your fire trucks and your response.”

- Bruce Esplin, former Emergency Services Commissioner for Victoria, after the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009

“The only thing predictable about a biosecurity response is its unpredictability”

- Ron Glanville, Former
Queensland Government Chief
Biosecurity Officer





Racing industry 'hijacked' vaccine

A GLASS House Mountains vet claims the horse racing industry has hijacked the supply of Equine Influenza vaccines to such an extent that owners of pleasure horses would be "waiting

MONITORS
IVE INSIGHT



Region: Gatton QLD Circulation: 18,029
Type: Regional
Size: 136.09 sq.cms.
Published: --W----

DPI&F disorganised: Flanagan

GOD help us if foot and mouth disease came to Australia – this is the opinion Roz Flanagan of Gatton Laidley Mobile Vet has formed based on the

should have been declared as resolved.
"As for the application to move three horses to the practice for inoculation, our client applied over the phone and later emailed to find

"Can you imagine if something more serious than EI hit our shores... would our statutory bodies be able to deal with it?
"The EI response has been nothing short of highly disorganised.

- > Subject: DPI has 'lost horse flu battle'
- >
- > DPI has 'lost horse flu battle'
- > Tony Moore | September 19, 2007 - 10:56AM Queensland's thoroughbred breeders say Queensland Department of Primary Industries has lost the battle with equine influenza (EI) and wants compulsory vaccination of all thoroughbreds.
- > Thoroughbred Breeders Queensland Association (TBQA) president Bob Frappell said the by the Department of Primary Industries that individual properties were no longer "ind quarantined", and that it had instead reverted to the creation of "buffer zones", was admission it had lost control.
- > The number of infected properties had jumped from 22 on September 2 to a massive 186 yesterday.
- > Mr Frappell said breeders were frustrated because a decision to consider vaccination adopted at a meeting yesterday of the State Disaster Management Committee meeting.
- > That was in spite of the fact previously-inoculated imported horses at Lyndhurst Stud still had not contracted the virus, despite the same paddock as infected horses.
- > Mr Frappell said the new buffer zone policy was too late because it was too difficult

Hay Everyone,

**** Please read Debera Ebbett's email update from a DPI meeting yesterday

DEB IS CALLING FOR ACTION FROM US ALL – I TOTALLY AGREE WITH YOUR POWER BUT NOW IT'S TIME TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED AND P OF SUPPORT (PEACEFUL BUT VERY LOUD AND STRONG) – LET'S SHOW WHO AND WHAT THEY ARE DEALING WITH AND HOW MANY OF US ARE IN CONTEMPT.

I WILL BE THERE AND I IMPLORE YOU, YOUR FAMILY, AND YOUR FRIENDS TO SHOW UP AND BE COUNTED.

DEB'S DETAILS ARE AT THE BOTTOM OF HER EMAIL – PLEASE INCLUDE YOURS. DON'T GIVE UP TRYING.

(of course remember at such a huge gathering not to further spread the damn EI and follow a

Mark Freemantle

Pasture and Stable Services

Okay people, enough whinging, get dialling. Below is the number for ABC talkback radio (Queensland), and two suggested topics. If enough of us ring up they will have to take our calls. I have been ringing daily, and they promise to call back, but it's not enough for half a dozen people to ring. If you can, please sit on the phone and dial, dial, dial. Morning, lunchtime, or night, before you start work, after radio goes 24-seven, and they have lots of air time to fill. Please feel free to call the other stations as well, I will forward a complete list later. Let's bring an end to this, NSW has created a new purple zone to ease movement restrictions but in Qld they do nothing but blame us for lax biosecurity measures. Enough is enough! Squeaky wheels get the most oil!!!

ABC talkback radio 7is 1300 222 612 dial it, dial it, dial it!

Today's talkback radio topic is "unofficial EI list" and "foul play"

Just like the unofficial hospital waiting list. We have reason to believe there are two lists, as Ergon workers are being advised of EI cases in the green zone, when taking readings and callouts, but these properties have not been declared to the public.

The NSW govt have admitted it is out of control down there, and are organising mass vaccinations. Why can't the same be done in Queensland? There are two other vaccines, used worldwide, that could be used to treat the estimated 1 million non-racing horses in Australia.

(The Australian stud book has 700,000 recorded non-racing horses.)

No one is admitting the role of carrier animals, in particular, racing pigeons. Please see below. Please feel free to tell your personal story, as well as call for an EXIT strategy for this emergency.

Please forward this email to EVERYONE you know. Unless we get mobilised and vocal, we will be left behind and the DPI will continue to blame us for the outbreak. That's right people, we are being blamed for lax biosecurity. No one is mentioning the wind, the flies or even the pigeons.

Question 3

In 1981 there was an emergency response in Australia to eradicate wombles. True or False?



Answer

TRUE

“Wombles” was a marketing term for hamsters and gerbils.

They were being sold in pet shops when the quarantine authorities realised they had been illegally imported and a possible exotic disease risk, particularly rabies.



What are we
trying to
achieve?

Stage 1

Uncertainty (chaos)

- Suspected case through to confirmation
- Most likely to have information vacuum, myths and speculation
- Risky time in terms of managing information
- Prep and prep fast

Stage 2

Confirmation

- Prep for announcement
- Large volume of information needed
- Work closely with industry

Stage 3

The detail

- Detailed and technical information for stakeholders for specific activities
- Issues management high

1. Heroic Phase

- Occurs directly after the disaster
- Heroic actions are taken to help people recover from and/or survive a disaster.
- Media may be just arriving on the scene or not yet arrived at this phase.
- One week to six weeks

2. Honeymoon Phase

- People draw together to solve problems in an intense showing of community.
- Media interest is intense.
- Lasts from one week to six months

Four emotional phases of disaster



3. Disillusionment Phase

- A mentality of “everyone for themselves” when delays and other issues common with disaster set in.
- Media interest begins to fade and blame is assigned.
- This phase could extend from two months to one or more years.

4. Reconstruction Phase

- People start to pull together again to get things done
- Delays in the process continue to garner negative feelings and reactions.
- The media may revisit the disaster at this time
- i.e. one-year anniversaries

Four emotional phases of disaster





WHAT'S IT REALLY LIKE
TO BE A PI MANAGER?

Panel Session

Question 4

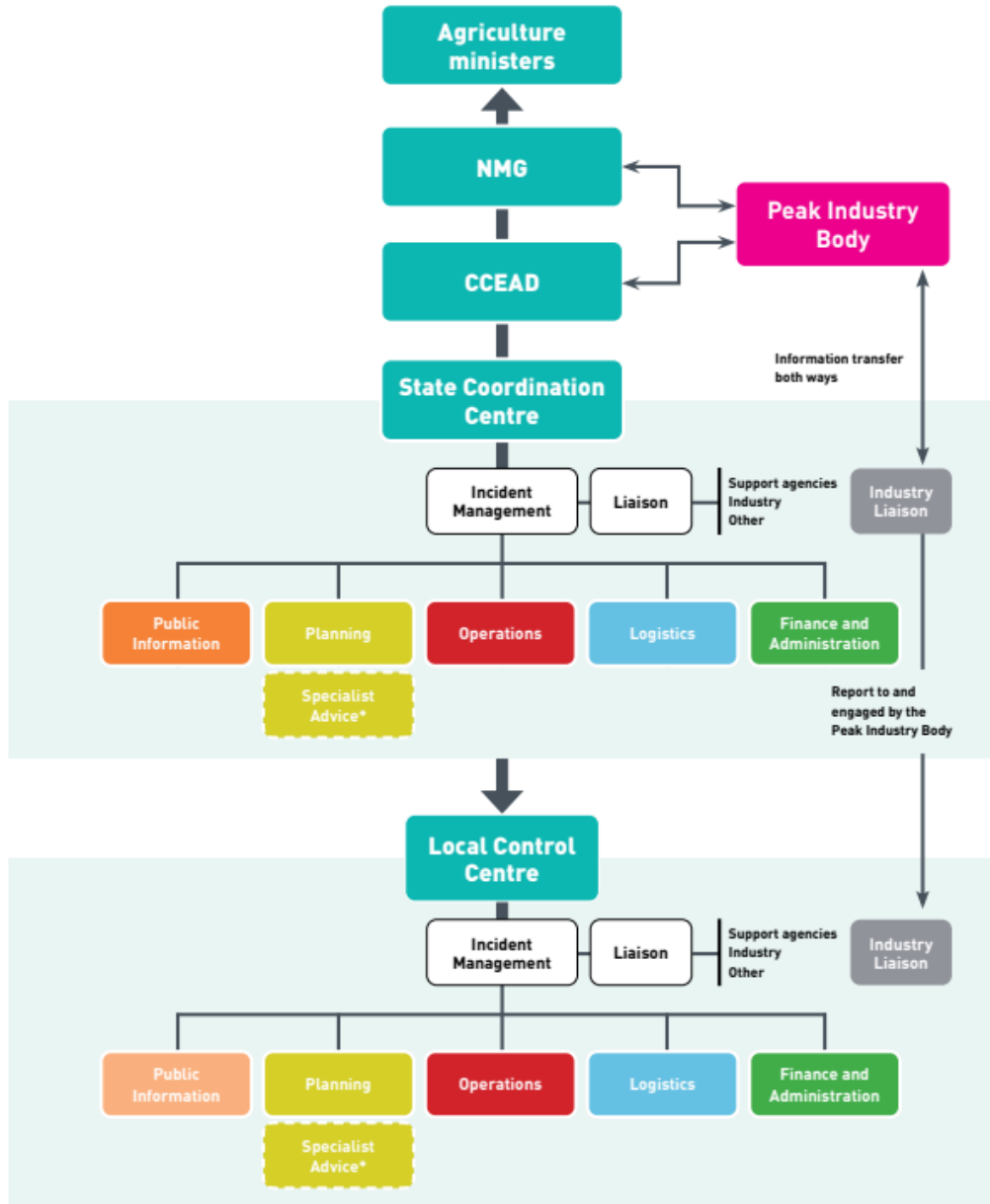
Bananas are Australia's single best selling grocery item.
True or False

Answer

False

The biggest sales category is berries by far, with the group selling 25 per cent more in sales than second place, which is bananas.

WHERE DOES INDUSTRY FIT INTO A RESPONSE?



Engagement in a response center

From the
mouths of
stakeholders:
Panel session



Insert Kirsty's slides here

Lessons





Wrap Up

Question 5
The Australian
Constitution
clearly outlines
the relative roles
of the
Commonwealth
and the States in
biosecurity.

.
True or False?

Answer

False

The Constitution is largely silent on the issue of biosecurity, apart from providing the Australian Parliament with the power to make legislation in relation to 'quarantine' (Section 51). However, the term is not defined. The default is that if the Constitution is silent on an issue, then it's a State responsibility.



Session 3

Stakeholder engagement

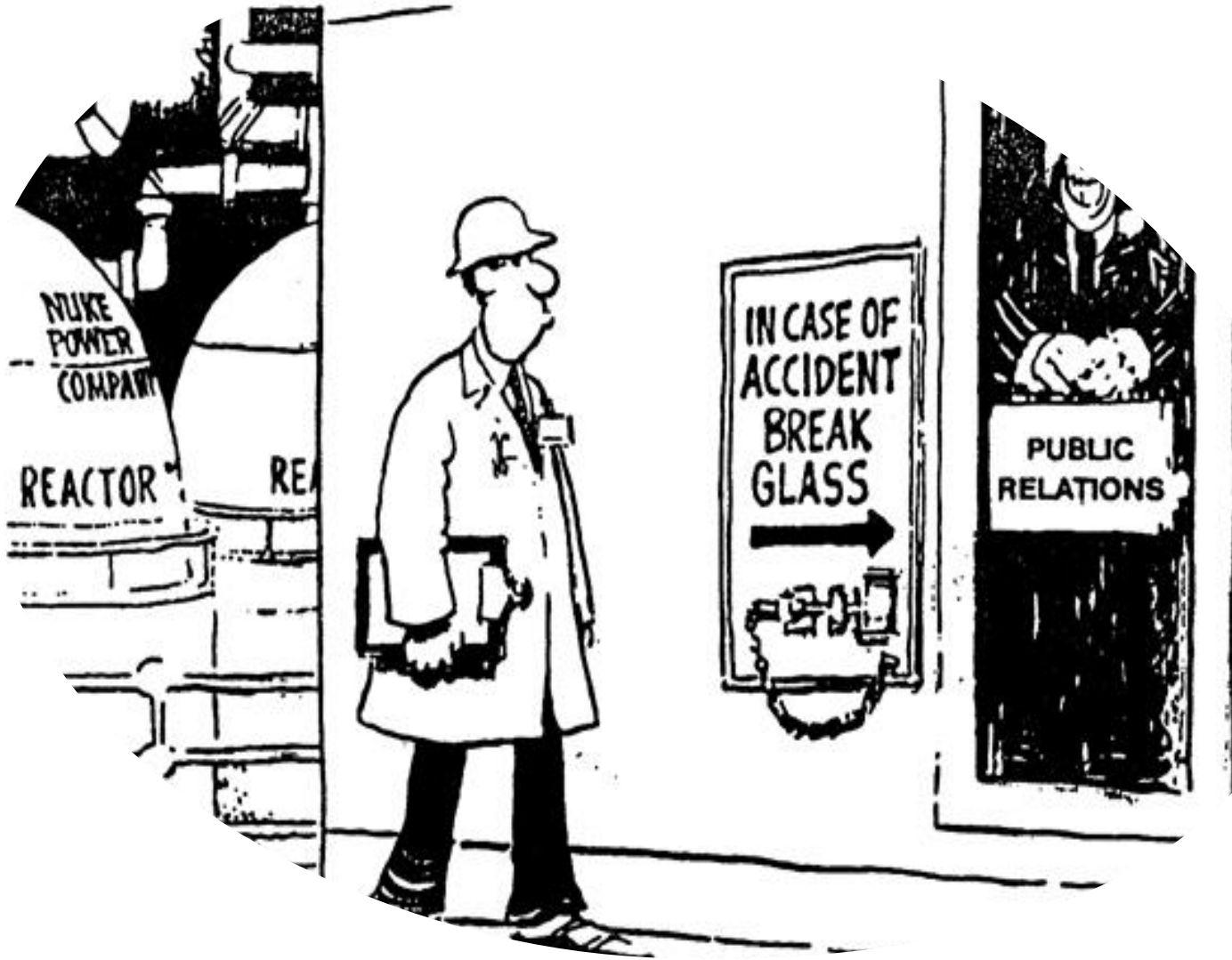


Question 6

What does NAQS stand for?

Answer

Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy



Importance of communication and engagement



Walk in
their
shoes.....



A KEY STEAK HOLDER

Stakeholder
mapping





Group Exercise: Stakeholder analysis: Panama TR4

WHO ARE THE STAKEHOLDERS IN THIS SCENARIO?

- Infects most banana plant varieties including Cavendish, Lady Finger and Ducasse.
- Spread by movement of infected plant material, infested soil and contaminated water.
- Can survive in the soil for as long as 30 to 40 years.
- Enters the plant roots via the soil and spreads throughout the plant blocking the vascular tissue and eventually killing the plant. Fruit is still edible, but the plant will stop producing.
- Cannot be cured or controlled by any known chemical, cultural or biological means.
- Has been found previously in NT-first time in Qld – NSW and WA have banana industries
- Queensland produces 90% of the country's bananas

Stakeholder analysis: Panama TR4

IP1

Neighbours to IP

Trace properties

Wider banana industry in region

Non-English speaking growers:

Indian and Chinese

Wider industry outside Queensland

Australian Banana Growers

Association

(ABGC)

Australian Banana Marketers

Banana farm workers

Nurseries

Backpackers (potential workers)

Schools

Feral pig hunters

Recreational fishers

Tourists

Transport companies

Council

Councillors

Council workers

Mayor

Utilities companies

Water and sewerage

Telstra

Electricity

MPs State and Federal

State Government: Premiers;

Environment; Communities

PHA

Australian Government

NT, NSW and WA Governments

NBCEN

**Emergency services: Fire; Police;
Ambulance**

District Disaster Management Group

DAF staff: Response and DAF staff

Local businesses - fresh produce

Local community

Consumers

Rural shows (banana competitions)

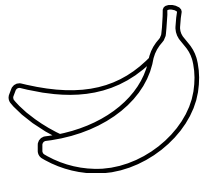
Local markets – fruit and veg

**Media – local, regional – print, TV
and radio**

Tourism outlets

Researchers/scientists

Banks/financial institutions



COMMUNICATION VS ENGAGEMENT

Media
Social media
Advertising
Website



Stakeholder engagement
Community engagement
Industry liaison
Internal communication
Customer service



It wasn't what was above the water that sank the Titanic.....

Risks,
considerations
and appropriate
strategies





Wrap Up

Question 7
If we had an outbreak of Screw Worm Fly in Australia our response would largely rely on distribution of sterile flies from production factories in Central America.
.True or False?

Answer

False

The old world SWF, *Chrysomya bezziana* is the one most likely to invade Australia. A totally different species, the new world SWF, *Cochliomyia hominivorax* is the subject of controls in the americas. So, we would need to establish our own facility for Australia, a process that would take 2-3 years.

Session 4



Communication and reputational risk.

Question 8

Red Imported
Fireant Infestation
has never been
eradicated in
Australia
True or False

Answer

False

Separate RIFA infestations have been eradicated at Gladstone (x2), Brisbane Port, Brisbane airport and Sydney.

The SEQ infestation was almost eradicated by 2003 (detected in 2001), but program funds were then prematurely reduced, which led to a subsequent rebound of RIFA infestations over subsequent years.

What are some things
that would make us look
like idiots?

Reverse engineering

With a focus on your given biosecurity emergency scenario, consider all of the elements of messaging that will be **LEAST EFFECTIVE**.

- * How would you tailor messages to be the **WORST** possible?
- * What should you include or omit to make your messaging the **WORST**?
- * What is the **LEAST EFFECTIVE** use of communication channels?
- * What is the **LEAST EFFECTIVE** approach to stakeholder engagement?

Note: If there are information gaps, this is the one and only time you can make it up.

Report back
from groups



Question 9
Seventy five percent of the world's food production is made from 12 plant and five animal species.
True or false?

Answer

True

Reputational management

- Direct and indirect impacts
- Forward scan: What could happen? What are your strategies?
- Maintain a public information risk register
- Daily agenda item
- Re-visit regularly as the response changes over time
- Reputation, loss of social licence is a real impact





REPUTATION RISK

Group 1 –
Exercise: consequence
management

Discuss the following scenario in your group including the impacts and how you could address these?

Scenario 1: Following the outbreak of a disease in citrus plants (it doesn't impact the fruit), a major retail chain has started putting up signs in their stores telling customers the product is still 'safe to eat'.



REPUTATION RISK

Group 2 –
Exercise: consequence
management

Discuss the following scenario in your group including the impacts and how you would address these?

Scenario 2: In killing prawns affected by white spot, birds start to flock to the aquaculture farms. Gas guns are then used repetitively from dawn until dusk to control the birds. The local community are up in arms at the noise and the local police are being called about potential fire arms incidents.



REPUTATION RISK

Group 3 –
Exercise: consequence
management

Discuss the following scenario in your group including the impacts and how you would address these?

Scenario 3: Three days after announcing through the media a new case of a plant disease on an additional two properties, it turns out the test results were false positives.



REPUTATION RISK

Group 4 –
Exercise: consequence
management

Discuss the following scenario in your group including the impacts and how you would address these?

Scenario 4: Staff members going to work on a disease affected property are photographed by media not wearing PPE and not following decontamination requirements when leaving the property.

The background features a torn piece of light brown paper with the words 'REPUTATION RISK' printed in large, bold, black, distressed font. The paper is surrounded by various black line-art icons including puzzle pieces, an envelope, a document with a pen, a calendar page showing '01', a coffee cup, a globe, and a target symbol.

REPUTATION RISK

Group 5 – Exercise:

Consequence
management

Discuss the following scenario in your group including the impacts and how you would address these?

Scenario 5: You have reports of significant community sentiment in relation to an animal disease outbreak. A number of incidents have occurred within the community including children from an affected property not being allowed onto their local school bus and affected property owners being asked to leave a local cafe.

Report back
from groups



Question 10

Black Sigatoka of bananas was eradicated from the Tully Valley, Queensland by 2001 following a successful government led eradication program.

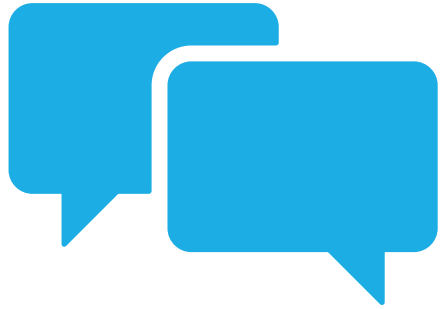
True or False?

Answer

False

The program was industry led and managed.

Session 5



The importance of messaging

Question 11

What does the Specificity of a test measure?

Answer

The percentage of non-infected plants or animals that return a negative test result.

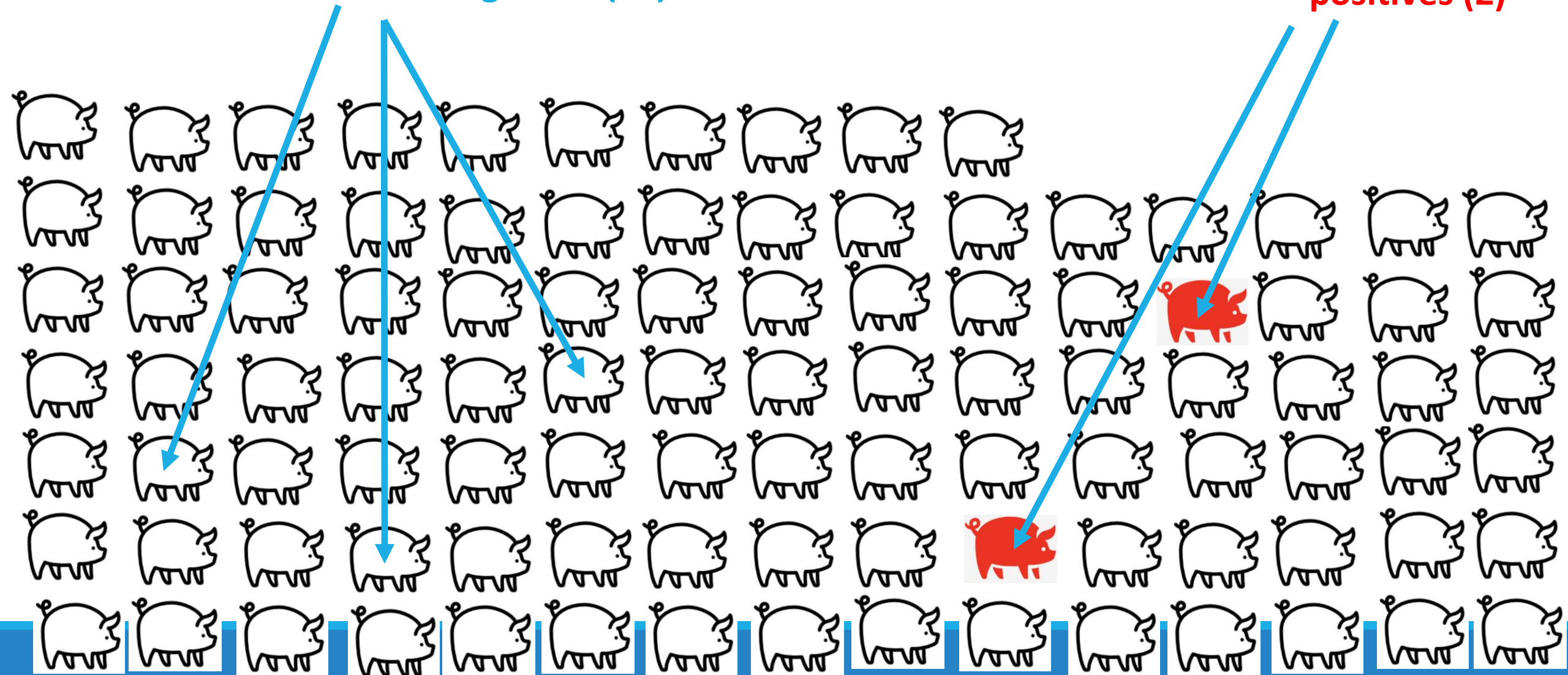
.

Specificity = 98%

100 non-infected pigs
98 = test negative
2 = test positive

True negatives (98)

False positives (2)

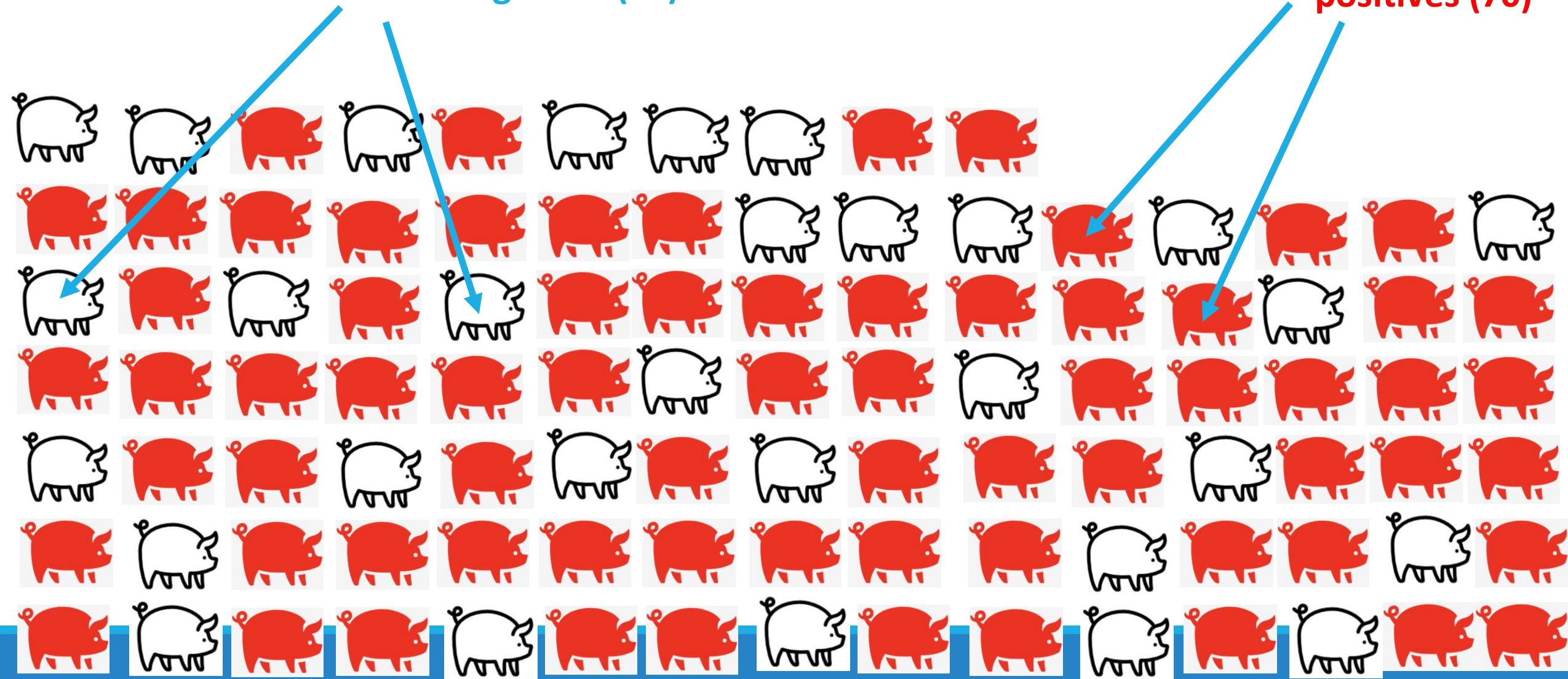


Sensitivity = 70%

100 Infected pigs
70 = test positive
30 = test negative

False negatives (30)

True positives (70)





Principles of crisis communication messaging

- *Tell them what you know*
- *Tell them what you don't know*
- *Tell them what you are doing*
- *Tell them what you want them to do*
- *Tell them where they can get more information*

Crisis communication: Guiding principles

Empathy

Consistency and accuracy

Collaboration

Integrity

Fairness, access and equity

Effectiveness



National talking points: Why?

Exotic pests
and diseases
are a national
problem

Potential for
more than one
state or
territory to be
infected

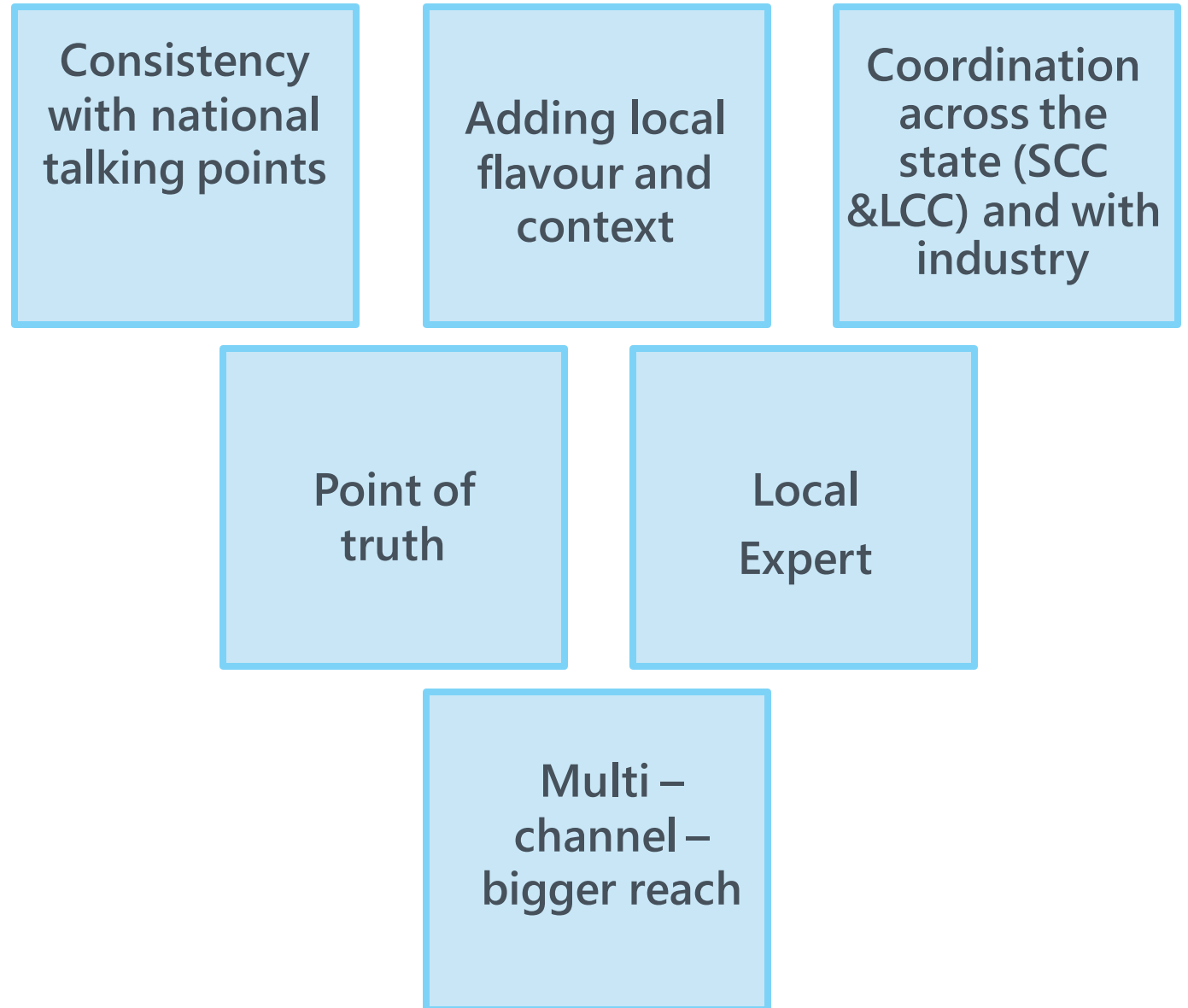
Coordinated
messages for
industry and
Government

Point of
truth

Expert
input

Trade
impacts both
domestic and
international

Jurisdictional Announcements and Talking Points



Question 12
Until 1995 the
Quarantine
function at
airports and
seaports was
conducted by
State agencies.
True or False?

Answer

True

The first Quarantine Act was introduced in 1908 to manage risks associated with the inward movement of goods across the Australian border. Given that the Commonwealth had minimal resources at the time, and the States employed animal and plant health professionals, the quarantine operations function was 'contracted' by the Commonwealth to the States under a 'gentlemen's agreement'. This arrangement continued until 1995 when the Commonwealth took over all the planning, policy and operational functions associated with border quarantine.

Factors that can impact announcements

- Testing
- Availability of information
- Severity/ risk
- Notifying impacted parties
- Liaison with industry
- Complicating factors
- Trade implications
- How it is to be announced – media release, press conference, joint approach with industry
- Privacy of impacted parties
- National playbook





A lie gets halfway
around the world
before the truth has
a chance to get its
pants on.

Winston Churchill

The information vacuum

Biosecurity challenges: Panama TR4

- Infects most banana plant varieties including Cavendish, Lady Finger and Ducasse.
- Spread by movement of infected plant material, infested soil and contaminated water.
- Can survive in the soil for as long as 30 to 40 years.
- Enters the plant roots via the soil and spreads throughout the plant blocking the vascular tissue and eventually killing the plant. Fruit is still edible, but the plant will stop producing.
- Cannot be cured or controlled by any known chemical, cultural or biological means.
- Has been found previously in NT-first time in Qld
- Queensland produces 90% of the country's bananas



Exercise: Biosecurity messaging challenge



Complicated issues



Behaviour of the
disease/pest significantly
impacts the response



Presents significant
challenges for
communication and
engagement



Be well informed about the
disease or pest to provide
the best support



Exercise: Biosecurity challenges

Each group has been given a scenario featuring a pest or disease.

What can you find out about it?

What are the behaviours / impacts of the pest and disease that need to be considered for good public information?



Question 13
What was the
location of the first
known Hendra
virus case?
(Town or Suburb).

Answer

Mackay. This case occurred a month before Hendra, but was only diagnosed a year later after a person attending the PM died from encephalitis.

(Also, the first horse infected in the Hendra incident actually picked it up in a paddock at Cannon Hill).



Session 6

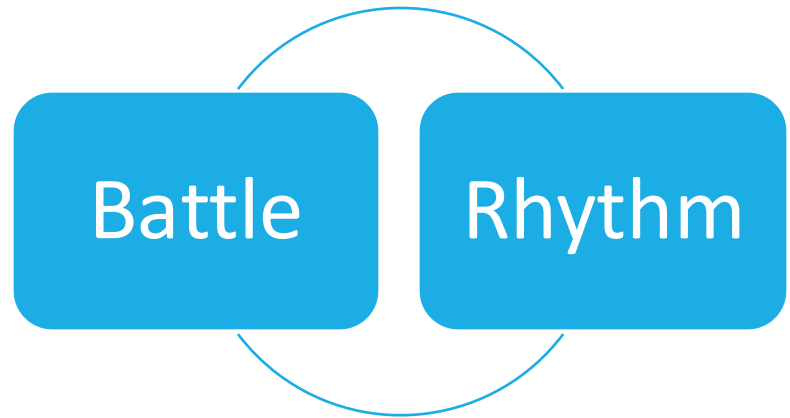
Briefings and handovers
(Communicating within the response).

Question 14

Where should you purchase rapid antigen kits for ASF or FMD?

Answer

Nowhere – its currently illegal under exotic disease legislation. Currently subject to policy consideration by AHC.



How does PI function fit in?

Exercise - Handovers



What are the challenges with this handover in the video?

What makes a good handover?

Group discussion


For discussion:

Here is a clip from Deepwater Horizon.

What are the challenges with this handover?





 Bristow

REPORT BACK FROM GROUP EXERCISE



Question 15

There are about 5 times the number of bacterial cells in your body as there are human cells.

True or False?

Answer

FALSE

It is about 10 times.

S	Situation	What has happened to date, especially what has changed since the last briefing
M	Mission	What we need to achieve
E	Execution	How we are going to do it
A	Administration and logistics	What we need to do the job (e.g. equipment, transport, supplies, etc.)
C	Command and communication	Who to take orders from and who to report to
S	Safety	WH&S issues (e.g. biosecurity requirements, personal protective equipment, etc.)

BRIEFING PRACTICAL
EXERCISE – how to
take in and transfer a
briefing

Plenary



Session 7

Social Media and Online Media

Question 16

The dung beetle is the strongest organism by weight on earth.

True – False?



Answer

False

Dung beetles are the strongest animals and can pull 1,141 times their own body weight, whereas the Gonorrhea bacteria is the strongest organism, having the ability to pull 100,000 times their own body weight.

Community Sentiment - Three little pigs...

With most issues in this day and age, incidents can take on a life of their own, and quickly. A personal perspective can fast become the mantra of the masses. Situational awareness within communities is critical.

As Public Information practitioners, we need to anticipate where possible, adapt wherever we can, and maintain integrity and transparency throughout.

Guest speaker



Exercise

Question 17
During the often
contentious
Brucellosis and
Tuberculosis
Eradication
Campaign, the
only stock
inspector known
to have been shot
on the job was
shot by another
stock inspector.

True or False?

Answer

True

Despite numerous threats, the first and only stock inspector known to have been shot on the job happened at Diamantina Lakes. Longreach inspector Dick Law was hit on the leg by a .303 bullet rebounding from the head of a TB reactor bull shot by Winton stock inspector Ray Svensson. Reportedly no real harm done apart from pride.

Session 8

Media skills and training



Question 18
Modern PCR
(Polymerase chain
reaction) testing
was made possible
because of a
chemical isolated
from a bacterium
from Yellowstone
park in the USA.
True-False?

Answer

True

Thermus aquaticus ("Taq"), thrives at high temperatures in hot pools. Therefore, its polymerase works optimally at high temperatures. Previous versions of polymerase from bugs like E coli were too inefficient.



Reflections of a media spokesperson



Exercise



What is the
definition of
urgent?

Guest speaker:
Media
management



Insert Mark Hodder slides here

“People learn in
different ways but
experience is the best
teacher”

- *Dwight,
The Office*

Question 19

The fledgling Pasteur institute in France sent representatives to Australia to develop a biological control for rabbits because there was a 25,000 pound prize offered, but they ended up developing an anthrax vaccine instead.

True-False?

Answer

True

Question 20 (final)

Final question -
What is the name
of the father dog
in the cartoon,
Bluey?





Answer

Bandit

Bandit was the dog owned by Stock Inspector, John Kelly, a good friend of Stocky, Bob Brumm whose son Joe grew up and created Bluey.

Close and Evaluation

NBRT Comms Awareness
Workshop - EXIT SURVEY

