

# RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY PLANT PEST UNDER THE EPPRD

In this article, you will learn how we respond to a [Emergency Plant Pests](#) (EPP) under the [Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed](#) (EPPRD) including:

- who the decision makers are in a response
- how are decisions made
- the role of Melons Australia in a response.

## Key points

- The EPPRD provides a consistent and agreed national approach for the eradication of EPPs.
- An EPP is an unwanted plant pest or disease that has a significant national impact on our crops, bees or edible fungi. A full definition of an EPP can be found in the EPPRD available on Plant Health Australia's [website](#).
- During a response, decisions are made by national committees including the [Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests](#) (CCEPP) and the [National Management Group](#) (NMG).
- The Australian government, all state and territory governments and peak plant industries including Melons Australia are members of these national committees and work to develop, implement and review a response plan that supports eradication of an EPP.

## Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed

The EPPRD provides a consistent and nationally agreed approach to the management and funding of a response to an EPP incursion. The EPPRD:

- is a legally binding agreement between the Australian government, all state and territory governments, peak plant industry bodies and Plant Health Australia
- enables industries who are signatories to have a key role in the decision-making process
- provides accountability and transparency to all parties affected by the EPP
- covers the potential for Owner Reimbursement Costs (ORC) for growers
- commits all signatories to implement risk mitigation strategies and maintain trained personnel and technical expertise.

Melons Australia became a signatory to the EPPRD in 2015 in recognition of the significant benefits to our industry in preparing for and responding to an EPP.

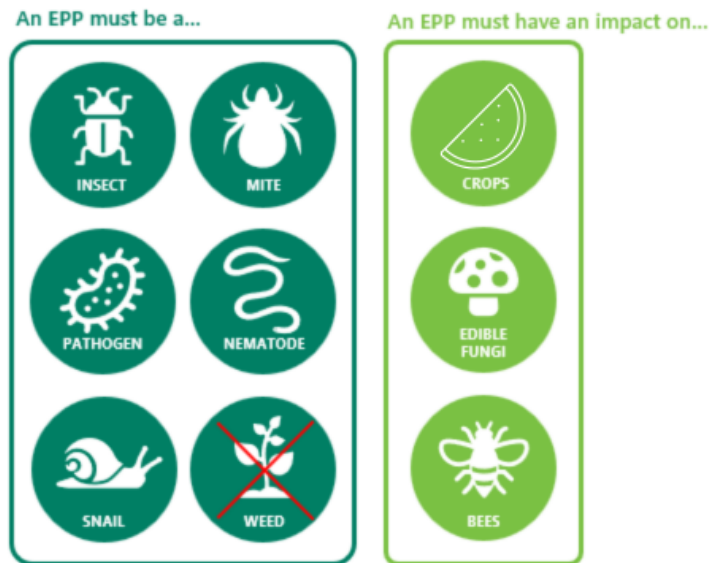
Simply put, an EPP is a plant pest that would likely have a nationally significant impact, either economic or environmental, and must fulfill one of the following criteria:

- a) a known plant pest not previously detected (or previously eradicated) in Australia
- b) a variant form of an established plant pest that can be distinguished by appropriate investigative and diagnostic methods
- c) a newly identified plant pest of unknown or uncertain origin
- d) a plant pest already found in Australia that:
  - is restricted to a defined area through regulatory measures to prevent further spread of the pest; and
  - has been detected outside the defined area; and
  - is not a native of Australia; and
  - is not the subject of any instrument for management which is agreed to be effective risk mitigation and management at a national level.

The full definition of an EPP can be found on Plant Health Australia's [website](#).

## What is an EPP?

*The EPPRD is only applied where the pest or disease has been identified as an Emergency Plant Pest.*



## Melons Australia decision making role during a response

As a signatory to the EPPRD, Melons Australia has representation in the decision making that supports the development and delivery of a response to eradicate an EPP. If melons are directly impacted by an EPP Melons Australia will be a member of the CCEPP and the NMG which are formed to manage the response. The melon industry may also provide support via industry liaison roles (Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) or Coordinator (ILC)).

## Who makes the decisions during a response?

### The Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests

The CCEPP is a technical committee that is responsible for the effective and efficient coordination of the response. Members of the CCEPP include representatives from affected industries that are signatories of the EPPRD, the Australian government, state and territory governments and Plant Health Australia. During the investigation stage, the CCEPP determines if the incident relates to an EPP and whether it is technically and economically feasible to eradicate. Throughout the response, the CCEPP monitors response progress and makes recommendations to the NMG for their approval.

Melons Australia will consult with our board and executive management team when making decisions on behalf of our industry.

### The National Management Group

The NMG is the key decision-making group that among other things, approves a response plan and its associated budget, which is then funded through the cost sharing arrangements under the EPPRD by the governments and affected industries. Members of the NMG include senior delegates from the Australian, state and territory governments and the appropriately authorised person from affected industry organisations

Decisions made by the NMG are by consensus except for those that relate to financial (cost sharing) matters which must be unanimous.

### Industry Liaison Officers

[Industry Liaison](#) Officers (ILO) are a key conduit of information between the lead agency implementing the response plan, and the national peak industry body. Throughout the response an ILO will:

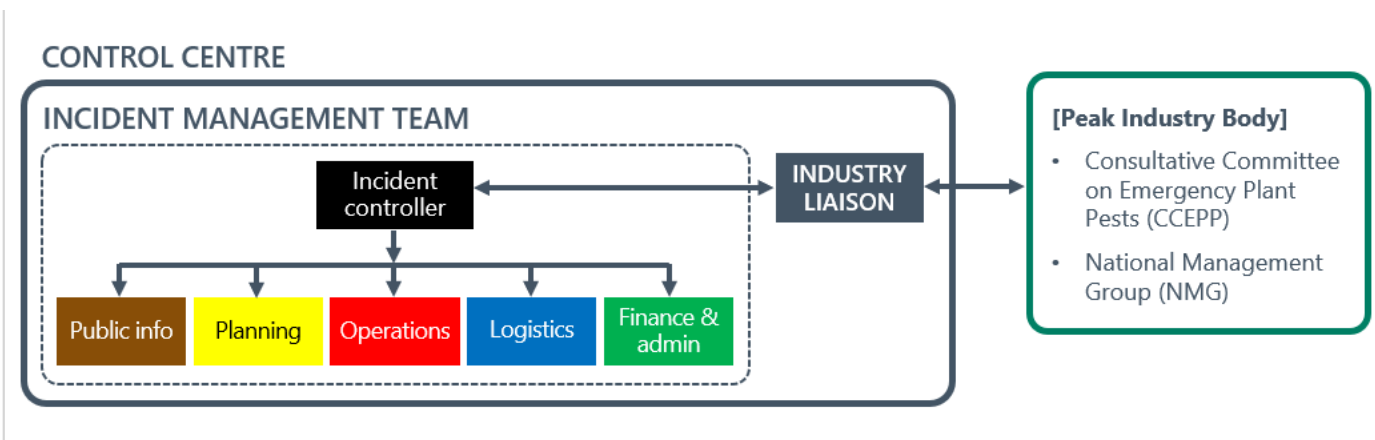
- assist the lead agency in understanding their industry and minimise impacts on business continuity
- provide their industry perspective on aspects of response activities
- provide an industry perspective to support communication and engagement activities.

## How are decisions made during a response?

The Australian government and all state and territory governments are represented at the CCEPP and NMG for every response as the impact of the pest has national consequences. The industry membership of the CCEPP and NMG varies based on which industries are impacted by the EPP that is being responded to. Only industries that are directly impacted will have

representation on the CCEPP and NMG and therefore have a say on how a response is managed.

To support Melons Australia decision making during a response our representatives on the CCEPP and NMG engage with our board and our members. Melons Australia also undertakes preparedness planning to ensure we can make decisions quickly by engaging with our members in peacetime.

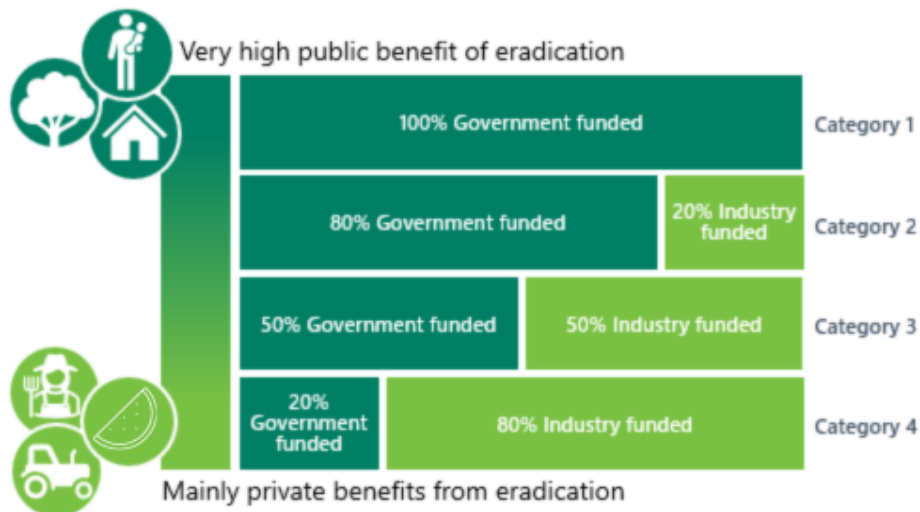


Caption: An Incident Management Team is established to respond to a plant pest or disease incursion.

### How are responses under the EPPRD funded?

The EPPRD outlines how the cost of a response is equitably shared between governments and industries based on the relative public and private benefit of eradicating the EPP. Industry will pay a higher proportion of costs to eradicate an EPP that will mainly impact production compared to an EPP that impacts households, the environment and regional and national economies. Based on the relative public and private benefits of eradication each EPP is assigned one of four Categories that identifies the government/industry funding ratio.

Industry’s funding ratio may be paid through statutory levy arrangements or other voluntary means and in consultation with their members. How a response is funded will be covered in more detail in a future article.



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### PLANT PLAN

The Australian Emergency Plant Pest Response Plan, commonly known as [PLANTPLAN](#) is a companion document to the EPPRD that outlines the key roles and responsibilities of industry and government parties throughout the life of the response and provides nationally consistent guidelines for managing a response to an EPP.

Job cards within PLANTPLAN list the roles and responsibilities of [CCEPP representatives](#), [NMG representatives](#) and [ILO](#). Find out for more information on [PLANTPLAN](#).

## How Melons Australia keeps you updated during a response

Throughout a response Melons Australia will provide accurate up to date information on response activities, keeping you well-informed of the situation. This will include through email alerts, direct communications, social media, webinars.

## What you can do now

If you would like more information about responses the melon industry has been involved in to date or you would like a copy of the Melon Industry Biosecurity Plan so that you can be better informed about the exotic pests that we could be impacted by please contact us at [biosecurity@melonsaustralia.org.au](mailto:biosecurity@melonsaustralia.org.au)

This content has been developed in collaboration with Plant Health Australia to increase awareness of national response arrangements under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD).

## Resources

### Read: Want to learn more?

- [Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed](#)
- [PLANTPLAN](#)
- [Emergency Plant Pests](#)
- [National priority plant pests \(DAFF\)](#)

### Watch: View videos online to find out more

- [Biosecurity Bite: Exotic Plant Pests](#)

### Learn: Free training available on BOLT

Free training is available on [Biosecurity Online Training platform \(BOLT\)](#). Register your free account to get started.

- [National EPP response management course](#)
- [Plant Surveillance](#)
- [Plant Biosecurity in Australia course](#)