

Follow up questions for Senator Ciccone on changes to the Animal Health in Australia publication

Key points

- Since the 1990s, Animal Health in Australia (AHiA) has been an annual publication produced in collaboration between Animal Health Australia (AHA), the department, jurisdictional agencies and industry organisations. It was originally developed for an audience of international trading partners, to tell the story of Australia's national animal health system and provide a summary of Australia's animal health status.
- A revised AHiA format is being implemented after discussions involving the department, AHA and the States and Territories (the latter at the Annual meeting of the National Animal Health Information Program Advisory Committee at AHA on 10 September 2019).
 - Points raised included that much of the information on Australia's animal health system did not change from year to year, and that information should be expressed as concisely as possible (for example, greater use of infographics to replace text).
 - Consultation was conducted with the Exports Division, Trade and Market Access Division and the Office of the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer, which determined that more evidence should be included in the publication to support Australia's animal disease freedom claims and strengthen Australia's position in trade and market access negotiations.

- AHIA will be changed to a two-report format to address these issues and ensure that it meets the needs of our international and national stakeholders. The AHIA 'System Report' will describe the over-arching roles, responsibilities and functions of the Australia's national animal health system, while the AHIA 'Annual Report' will report annually on Australia's animal health status (including evidence of disease absence to support this) and key national animal health achievements/goals.
- The first AHIA System Report is on track for publication in early 2021 and will only be re-published on an as-needs basis. The first AHIA annual report is scheduled for publication in April 2021 and will cover 2019 and 2020, with later editions to be published annually.

Has there been any official feedback from trading partners?

- No, as the 1st edition of Animal Health in Australia in the new format will not be published until 2021.