VNI West

FAST FACTS

Biosecurity refers to measures that protect a property from pests, weeds, diseases and contaminants when people enter or work on the land.

VicGrid will take reasonable steps whenever it accesses private properties for surveys, assessments or consultation to understand and manage biosecurity risks, developing and implementing appropriate measures to prevent impacts to property operations and the local environment.

VicGrid's biosecurity management is guided by the VNI West project's Biosecurity Policy. The Biosecurity Policy was developed in line with the Essential Services Commission Land Access Code of Practice (CoP), effective from 1 March 2024. The Land Access CoP was also developed in consultation with Agriculture Victoria.



Biosecurity

Responsible Biosecurity Management

VicGrid has a responsibility to minimise the risk of its activities introducing pests, weeds, animal/plant diseases and contaminants onto private or public land. This risk commonly occurs via the movement of vehicles and machinery.

Weed seeds and other animal/plant disease spores are small and can be easily and unknowingly 'tracked in' by vehicles and machinery when they contain soil or organic material on their tracks, tyres or outer frame. They can also be tracked in from material on boots with soil stuck to the sole.

VicGrid is taking the following steps to manage the risk of introducing pests, weeds or diseases into landholders' properties:

Training: VicGrid will ensure all project staff entering a private property are trained on Biosecurity management and have the necessary skills and tools to understand your Biosecurity risks and how they will be managed. Procedures that comply with relevant environmental legislation and regulations, the Land Access CoP, and the VNI West project's Biosecurity Policy must be followed by project staff.

Planning: Prior to entering property, we will identify potential risks through pre-existing information and in consultation with landholders, with relevant controls put in place to be followed.

Communication: An access agreement will be negotiated between the landholder and the project, setting out the detail of who, when and how the project team will access your property, including biosecurity requirements.

Washdown procedures: Prior to entering and leaving your property for survey (either via a public road or via a neighbouring private property) where required, vehicle tyres and mudguards, boots and any machinery will undergo a cleaning process. A checklist will be completed each time, and confirmation that the procedures have been followed can be provided to the landholder as required.

Recording of requirements: In addition to the standard or agreed biosecurity processes that will be followed, if any new biosecurity risks are identified they will be discussed with the landholder and any relevant documentation will be updated.

Reporting: At the completion of each property access VicGrid will report any environmental impact during works caused by VicGrid or its contractors to the landholder, along with any steps proposed for mitigation and/or restoration. This will also be recorded in VicGrid's incident management system and an investigation by VicGrid management will be completed. At the completion of each property access VicGrid will also provide you with a report within 15 business days, outlining the details of access, and the activities undertaken in relation to biosecurity management.

Ongoing assessment and review: VicGrid and its Landholder Liaison team will monitor the Federal Government's Outbreak page (outbreak.gov.au) for the latest news on new or known risks to Australia and Victoria. Any required updates to plans will be made based on any new requirements and will be communicated to applicable landholders.

Most importantly, we encourage you to discuss any biosecurity and property access requests or concerns with your dedicated Landholder Liaison.

Working with your Landholder Liason

VicGrid strongly encourages landholders to work closely with their Landholder Liaison to identify all biosecurity requirements for their property, and agree on appropriate management plans.

These can be detailed in an access agreement and VicGrid and its personnel must comply with their requirements in line with in line with our contractual obligations, and obligations under the Land Access CoP.

Feedback and complaints

Any feedback including complaints about the behaviour of VicGrid personnel or contractors regarding biosecurity can be made via your appointed Landholder Liaison or by contacting VicGrid via email or by phone:

enquiries@vniwproject.com.au

1800 824 221

If a landowner is not satisfied with the response to their complaint, they can contact the Energy & Water Ombudsman of Victoria, via the website: ewov.com.au or by phone: 1800 500 509

More information

You can access more information about agricultural biosecurity from the Victorian and Australian Governments, including relevant legislation and information about known and emerging risks, can be found at the following sites.

Agriculture Victoria:
agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity

Australian Government Biosecurity:
biosecurity.gov.au

World Organisation for Animal Health:
woah.org

Animal Health Australia:
animalhealthaustralia.com.au

Biosecurity policy:
The Project Biosecurity Policy can be found at:
vniwproject.com.au/fact-sheets-policies

If you need an interpreter, please call 13 12 50 and reference VNI West. If you are deaf and/or find hearing or speaking with people on the phone difficult, please contact the National Relay Service on voice relay number 1300 555 727, TTY number 133 677 or SMS relay number 0423 677 767.

VicGrid