





# CHAPTER 1

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Summary and outlook

In 2018–19, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has been heavily focused on improving our scientific regulatory capability by streamlining our regulatory services and improving our on-time performance. This has strengthened the position of the APVMA as a world-class regulator of agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemicals.

Finalising the implementation of the Government Policy Order for the APVMA to relocate our operations to Armidale was also a focus for this year. This important milestone is the culmination of three years of sustained effort, providing opportunities to transform the organisation and embed foundational improvements that will support effective and efficient operation for years to come.

We have progressed the delivery of the digital strategy through our Enabling Technologies Program, improving internal systems and processes, and modernising our technology platform.

## Armidale relocation and Enabling Technologies

The building at 102 Taylor Street Armidale was completed ahead of schedule, with staff taking up residence in early June 2019. This modern office is capable of accommodating up to 150 staff and will serve as the headquarters of the APVMA. More than 130 staff now work from this office, with more staff expected to come on board before the end of 2019. In addition, the APVMA's operations are supported by around 40 regulatory scientists and specialist decision makers in our Canberra office.

We have continued to implement our Enabling Technologies Program as part of the digital strategy, stabilising and transforming our information and communications technology (ICT) operating environment. In March 2019, we transferred our ICT service desk functions to DXC Technologies as part of a wider initiative to modernise our service platforms and improve support arrangements for the APVMA. Significant progress was made preparing our systems to move to cloud-based infrastructure, with migrations to be completed in the early part of 2019–20. We upgraded our Human Resources and Financial Management systems with cloud-based software. Our records management software, Objective, was also upgraded, with long-term support arrangements put in place to ensure the effective operation of the platform into the future.

## Stabilised operational performance

On-time assessment of agricultural and veterinary chemical products, permits and active ingredients increased from 73 per cent in 2017–18 to 85 per cent in 2018–19. The APVMA continued to promote the use of international assessments to reduce burden and assessment timeframes for applicants. This year, international assessments contributed to the assessment of 16 products, and supported the residues assessment on a further 24 applications for minor use or emergency permit. In June 2019, we issued a Proposed Regulatory Decision on the insecticide chlorpyrifos to suspend and cancel uses in domestic and home garden settings, and in certain public spaces.

We established the Office of the Chief Regulatory Scientist, combining our post-registration activities (including Compliance, Adverse Experience Reporting, Manufacturing Quality and Licensing, and Chemical Review), knowledge management and learning and development functions under a single branch. This initiative better aligns the APVMA's operating model, and supports our capacity to continuously improve our science quality through coordinated end-to-end analysis of our regulatory activities, identify opportunities for process improvement across the agency, and position us to learn of emerging issues and trends in the agvet industry.

## Looking forward

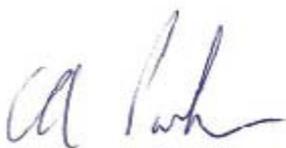
In the year ahead, we will deliver the Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS), improving our budget position, and ensuring our important work of regulating agricultural and veterinary chemicals is resourced in an appropriate, sustainable and transparent way.

We will continue to enhance our collaboration and information sharing with international and domestic partners, and improve our risk assessment processes and data guidelines to support high-quality and timely decision making.

We will continue to embed our operating model, deliver the Enabling Technologies Program, modernise our ICT operating environment, and support our staff through improved competency-based training.

Our commitment to scientific excellence and ongoing drive for business process improvement and efficiency will continue to support our long-term goals of reducing the regulatory burden for industry, improving access to safe chemicals, and increasing productivity of the Australian agvet sector.

I am pleased to highlight the APVMA's achievements for 2018–19 in this annual report, and I look forward to seeing our long-term investment in the APVMA's infrastructure, people and processes yield positive results in 2019–20.



**Dr Chris Parker**

Chief Executive Officer  
October 2019