



Minutes of General Meeting

Technical and Bio-Security Subcommittee

**Friday 08 August 2025 11:00
Elders Naracoorte**

1. Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we have gathered on today. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation.

2. Attendance and Apologies

Attendees included Darren Lovell, Pete Bissell, Brian Nitschinsk, Fil Farina, Hans Loder, Adrian, Angus, Gaby Rivera, Lachlan Travis, Catherine Kidman, Martin Wirper, Emma Phillips, and Edward Cavanagh.

Apologies were received from Ben Harris, James Freckleton, Thomas Lines, Joe Marks, Nick Baverstock, Catherine Wotton, Les Lodewyk, Jeff Flint, Bruce Redman, and Mardi Longbottom.

Automatic out-of-office replies were received from Jennifer Schilling, Bruce Gregory, and Edel Stoner.

A resignation from the committee was received from Sally Macleod.

The meeting commenced at 11:02, and was chaired by Hans Loder, and recorded by Edward Cavanagh.

3. Introductions of New Committee Members

The meeting opened with an expression of gratitude to Ulrich Grey-Smith for his work on the committee, before committee attendees were encouraged to introduce themselves.

4. Business Arising

1. Introduction to the Sub-Committee and Its Scope (Hans Loder)
 - 1.1. Committee responsibilities were explored. It was clarified that membership is open to any stakeholder. The more members at this table, the greater diversity, the more experiences we have, the better our input will be, it was emphasised.
 - 1.2. Meeting frequency was explored. Ideally, the committee should meet quarterly. A conversation ensued as to whether the committee might meet less frequently.
 - 1.3. The Wine Australia Regional Program was introduced and its tenets and timelines examined.
 - 1.4. The current five-year plan (and progress on it) was introduced to the room.
 - 1.5. Long term focus was set out, whereupon it was emphasised that there were real opportunities to shape the next five years.
2. Vinehealth Australia Update (Samantha Scarratt, read by Edward Cavanagh)
 - 2.1. The PIRSA – Vinehealth Australia Phylloxera Outbreak Management Plan is almost completed. This Plan is not a public document, and an Industry Manual is being prepared by Vinehealth Australia to support the industry on the outcomes of the plan.
 - 2.2. A Phylloxera Industry Preparedness Exercise is planned for industry organisations on Wed 24 Sep in Adelaide. Hans Loder is our delegate.
 - 2.3. A Phylloxera Preparedness Exercise is planned for Tue 28 Oct in the Barossa Valley. This will be the first regional exercise in 13 years, and other regions will be offered similar events in 2026. Regional Associations may be contacted by members and growers to gauge interest as this was mentioned in Vinehealth Australia's e news.
 - 2.4. The Vinehealth Australia Biosecurity Champion Award is on and closes 11th May – if you know anyone in your region doing good things from a biosecurity perspective, please ask them to nominate asap.
 - 2.5. The Vinehealth Australia Vineyard Owner Survey closes very soon – please encourage all vineyard owners to complete the survey as it will help shape the direction of VHA.
 - 2.6. Queensland Fruit Fly outbreaks are ongoing, and it is difficult to gauge eradication effectiveness over the winter months. The two metro Adelaide outbreaks are currently due to be released on 6 December and the Riverland on 23 December, unless further flies are found, in which case the dates will be extended. The Ceduna outbreak is not impacting the wine industry and approaching release on 11 November.

2.7. If the Limestone Coast committee wants updates to any planting records or statistics, or wishes to hold other Vinehealth Australia facilitated training, please reach out.

2.8. We want to hear from you! What does your region want from a biosecurity perspective? What can Vinehealth Australia do in your region to promote biosecurity. If you have priorities, happy to discuss.

2.9. A conversation followed on the flyover initiative, which was apparently a collaboration between the Landscape Board and Vinehealth Australia. There was a hope for vineyard aerial maps (satellite imagery and aerial maps) for the Limestone Coast. It was explained that funding had potentially become an issue. The appetite for Vinehealth surveys and diggings of suspect blocks was questioned.

2.10. The Contractor session was discussed as a 'good' initiative that had good impact. Its facilitation by Liz Riley was commended. A refresher on biosecurity would be helpful, it was proposed. It was emphasised that there should be more machinery contractors, and not just labour hire companies.

2.11. A conversation followed on the topic of Coonawarra's outbreak scenario, which took place in 2013. It was explained that the threat in the Limestone Coast is probably higher than Barossa owing to our geographical location. Warren Birchmore from Vinehealth is looking into this a bit, and has issued a survey, the Chair clarified. It was urged that we do it again. Phylloxera preparedness was further discussed, in the context of which it was emphasised again that it is important to look at machinery hire: forklifts, tractors, harvesters and the like from phylloxera areas. Farmgate biosecurity measures were discussed.

2.12. A question was raised about any feedback on, or news about, data on the use of the Naracoorte Heat Shed. Could this be requested?

2.13. Preparation of another education piece for cellar door staff was contemplated. The possibility of LCGWC-issued biosecurity warnings and statements was raised.

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2.15. A conversation about event organisation at council level was instigated on the back of a question about the Coonawarra Running Festival and the Wine and Woof Walk. **Action:** Executive Officer to volunteer to write to organisers of those events and see where they are up to.

2.16: In the context of this conversation about local councils, it was asked whether we might be able to encourage them to issue biosecurity warnings to any event that will involve people running through with muddy boots. **Action:** Executive Officer to volunteer to write to local councils to discover what kind of advice, if any, is being issued to events organisers.

2.17. The rootstock trial was revisited, and maximum value out of the site was contemplated. Whoever hosts it wears the cost of the ongoing management, it was lamented. In this context, the question of virus testing was raised. The value of a replicated trial site, in the conversation around vectors and harvesters, was emphasised.

2.18. A discussion of rootstock clones followed. The worry (and reality) is that this will become a perpetual rootstock trial, it was explained. The 20 year anniversary is probably significant for that site, and the potential to tie this into the cabernet symposium was flagged. **Action:** Chair and Executive Officer to return this question to Year 5 and/or Years 1-3 of the next five year plan.

3. Wine Australia Regional Program Update, FY2024-2025 (Hans Loder)

3.1. An update on the soils workshop was summarily provided.

3.2. An update on the 1,8 Cineole project was provided. Pete Bissell updated that the project is in collaboration with Adelaide University. Eucalyptus was the focus of interest, looking in particular at yeast XR. Unfortunately, they haven't been able to find any removal characteristics in their research. It just seems sensorily that it's masked. Resins for removing 1,8 cineole from wines have also been explored and some initial trials have been carried out. VAF Memstar who we are working with for filtration side of things. Commercial lens of this project is practical, it was agreed. **Action:** Executive Officer to send out links and fact sheet just before vintage. Clean your bins and check them for leaves. **Follow up query:** who will prepare this fact sheet and generate these links?

4. Wine Australia Regional Program Update, FY2025-2026 (Hans Loder)

- 4.1. The Naracoorte HS Proposal was explored (Emma Phillips). Emma Phillips and Hans Loder explained that the school was interested in creating a baseline for the site. EM38 survey to be done, vineyard mapping, in line with protocols. Following best practice in terms of benchmarking this site but also raising awareness to a new generation of managers and owners, and the technology available to do that these days. It remains a question as to just how far the funding can stretch, but the school has pitched it as a post-mothballing scenario. It's been 'left fallow' for a few years, and what are we seeing in the soils, etc. continuous sword? Plus or negative? These are the kinds of questions. Smoke sensor to go into HS vineyard, it was also announced. The value of the site as a stable site, not linked to any particular wine business, was emphasised by the Chair.
- 4.2. The formal agreement between Department of Education and Limestone Coast Grape and Wine Council was discussed.
- 4.3. Emma Phillips reiterated that the vineyard has just been sitting idle. As the new ag teacher, she has decided it's the new project that has to happen. Some outside interest has been shown. The school will fund the management of it, but the school and the department remain anxious to find a way to make it an opportunity for the school and across the whole curriculum, and finding a way to introduce that vineyard into other aspects of the learning. A formal contract was being drafted now by the lawyers. Some details to be fleshed out, but it's ready to go now. 3-5 year plan, solicitors involved. **Action:** Executive Officer to issue correspondence with Naracoorte HS around contract of the agreement to everyone on the committee meeting.
- 4.4. Demonstration & training vineyard (Hans Loder and Cath Kidman), Best practice soil assessment and recovery post – mothballing (Thomas Lines and Hans Loder), and Smoke taint monitors: pathways to adoption (Jock Ferguson and James Freckleton) were referenced but not discussed.
- 4.5. The question was raised as to which platforms, and in particular Farmlab, have been engaged for work on the farm. The Chair confirmed that targeted ringing-around was taking place, and a variety of options exist.
- 4.6. The need to move quickly with EM38 survey was emphasised in the context of late winter/early springtime.
- 4.7. The Goanna Ag smoke sensor has been pitched for October, it was confirmed.
- 4.8. ESG Information Session (Edward Cavanagh) was explained cursorily by the Chair.
- 4.9. Acquittal Obligations (Edward Cavanagh) were discussed. It was articulated to the committee that this is an administrative requirement that occasionally involves some highly technical and/or empirical knowledge in appropriately scientific language, and that anyone who

participates in any of these projects should be prepared to help with the acquittal process.

5. Wine Australia Regional Program Update, FY2026-2027 and beyond (Hans Loder)

5.1. Ideas in the pipeline were explored.

5.2. A new Consultation Exercise in 2026 for 2027-2032 was signalled.

6. Any Other Business

6.1. Mesonet – received backing for at least another 12 months while they're coming up with funding solutions. On the verge of shutting down. It now has a subscription model. A session that took place during vintage was discussed.

6.2. The rules around spraydrift: basically nothing can leave the property. The wine sector was being singled out in particular for chemicals leaving property boundary. Dangerous inversion conditions. Fil Farina was prompted by the chair to give an update on subscription uptake in and around the regions, explaining that it was a challenge. Others in the room concurred. Frost fans were also raised in this context, and personal weather stations were also discussed. Inversion conditions typically occur at twilight, it was explained. Trapped air is an issue, but if you know the signs, you should know what to expect. The majority of products that are applied will not be affected by this. **Action:** Fil Farina to clarify the specific of "Dangerous/Hazardous Inversion Conditions," and report back on whether this relates to any agrochemicals used in viticulture.

6.3. Spray warnings get issued each year, and in 4-6 weeks' time the LCGWC should do something, it was proposed. The suggestion was made that we approach 'broad acre groups' and make our tone educational rather than accusative. Emphasis was placed again on the importance of informing local merchandisers and local 'agros'. **Action:** Brian Nitschinsk in particular, but anyone else with experience in general, to provide Executive Officer with precedent and/or information and material(s) to draft a press release (get one from Brian) on the risk of spray drift and changes in labels, technical details, etc., and for this letter to be disseminated more widely than the press, but to regional ag companies, local merchandisers, and broad acre groups to include in newsletters etc.; Fil Farina to follow up on Elders (and other) newsletter(s); others to provide suggestions on broad acre groups.

5. **Correspondence**

1. Jeffrey Morrell (UNISA Forestry Centre of Excellence)

The tabling of this letter inspired conversation on the nature of the dilemma facing the wine industry when it comes specifically to the recycling or disposal of different kinds of posts, but predominately timber posts. It was clarified that the nature of the proposal seems to be directed towards the need for a non-commercial long-scale vineyard project that compares different kinds of posts in the same conditions to monitor degradation, etc., over time. The importance of the broader question, about the disposal of posts – with so many coming out and potentially widespread grubbing up around the corner – bore re-emphasis. After a consensus was reached on the importance of the issue of disposing posts, it was suggested that the project could tie into an existing rootstock trial. The question of surveillance was raised. The broad outline of a similar project by Southcorp on trial blocks of the Markaranka vineyard in the Riverland in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The challenges of long-term trials were discussed. It was suggested that Wine Australia could well have records of what they're funding or have already funded on these questions. **Action:** Executive Officer to write to Jeffrey Morrell about previous and ongoing investigations supported by Wine Australia on similar topics, to ask about the shareability of earlier findings from Southcorp work in Markaranka, and to enquire more broadly about crossovers.

The meeting closed at 12:32. The next meeting has been flagged to occur some time in November (date TBA).

Appendix: Actions

Action: Executive Officer to volunteer to write to organisers of certain events and see where they are up to.

Action: Executive Officer to volunteer to write to local councils to discover what kind of advice, if any, is being issued to events organisers.

Action: Chair and Executive Officer to return the question of rootstock clone trials to Year 5 and/or Years 1-3 of the next five year plan.

Action: Executive Officer to send out links and fact sheet re: 1,8 Cineole just before vintage. Clean your bins and check them for leaves. **Follow up query:** who will prepare this fact sheet and generate these links?

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