

CHAPTER 3

Next financial year will be an important period in which the APVMA will consolidate recent reform, including the governance changes following the transfer from a *Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act (CAC Act)* agency to one prescribed under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act (FMA Act)*. It will also be an important year for implementing the recommendations from the ANAO audit report. Embedding these reforms will make a significant contribution to the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the APVMA's operations.

In 2008–09, the APVMA will continue to conduct a review of its cost-recovery framework begun in 2007–08 as part of the scheduled review of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry portfolio. The APVMA's costs are recovered via a range of fees and charges, including levies on agricultural and veterinary (agvet) chemical sales, annual fees and application fees. All fees and charges that the APVMA collects will be reviewed.

Another area of strategic focus will be the strengthening of the authority's interaction with stakeholders, particularly the rural sector, through a review of existing stakeholder forums and through better relationship management.

Within the framework of the 2008–09 Operational Plan, a number of key priorities are identified. The authority will focus on the following areas by:

Stakeholder engagement

- implementing our stakeholder engagement frameworks to provide responsive and relevant engagement with each stakeholder group
- building capacity and generating awareness of the importance of meaningfully engaging stakeholders and actively managing relationships
- developing tools and processes to enhance understanding of the work of the APVMA, its risk management approach and the benefits of regulation

Maintaining capabilities

- undertaking a review of our cost recovery arrangements to ensure they remain cost effective and in accordance within government guidelines
- implementing a new Collective Agreement with terms and conditions of employment that seek to attract and retain our staff
- incorporating the Integrated Leadership Scheme (ILS) framework into performance management
- implementing a new Strategic Learning and Development Framework
- identifying innovative ways to recruit and retain our staff

Regulatory science quality

- continuing to improve science quality through a range of initiatives such as applying a measurement of science quality to assessments provided by external agencies and in the creation of new or strengthened risk assessment methods
- addressing new and emerging science issues such as nanotechnology
- exposing existing science-based decision making methodologies to public scrutiny through greater transparency of risk assessment approaches

Registration reform

- expanding the functionality of the EARS system by designing new software to better manage applications once the APVMA receives them
- continuing to implement process improvements to the registration system that aim to improve registration timeframes such as trialling a project management approach in the management of major registration applications
- undertaking a review of the chemistry risk assessment framework and processes
- completing major components of labelling reform

Compliance reform

- initial review of approach to compliance and structure of compliance programs
- strengthening and improving compliance enforcement tools
- completing the review of the Ag-QA scheme
- strengthening feedback mechanism
- International cooperation
- building on existing participation at international forums including information exchange with regulator and scientific bodies of other countries
- continuing to advance work share arrangements and broadening the engagement with international agencies to improve efficiency, including Minor Use

Informing policy

- identifying and monitoring national issues that may impact on the APVMA's regulatory operations
- by informing government policy makers about the role of the APVMA in Australian chemicals regulation
- by providing high-level input to major policy reforms and reviews.