

APVMA PERFORMANCE: IMPROVEMENT, BUT STILL A LONG WAY TO GO

20 October 2017 (Canberra) – The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) performance statistics for the 2017 September quarter, released yesterday, highlights the continued poor timeframe performance for registration of crop protection products, reaffirming the need for urgent operational reforms.

Matthew Cossey, Chief Executive Officer of CropLife Australia, said the APVMA's performance improvement in crop protection product registrations from last quarter's all-time low of just 24 percent finalised within the statutory timeframe for the June quarter, to 36 percent for last quarter is welcomed simply because the numbers are at least finally heading in the right direction.

"The latest performance statistics indicate that practical efforts by APVMA management and staff have helped start the recovery process for timeliness of crop protection product registrations, however there is still a long way to go to reach what could be considered acceptable performance".

"While the small improvement in completing applications for crop protection products within statutory timeframes and improvement of the total number of applications finalised is welcomed, significant improvement is required to at least achieve similar performance to that reported this time last year," said Mr Cossey.

"The APVMA's continuous failure to meet its statutory obligated timeframes is unacceptable and comes at a massive cost to the plant science industry and the nation's farming sector."

"These performance statistics reinforce the importance of the Government developing a comprehensive package of regulatory reforms to support the internal improvements being undertaken by the APVMA and enable the efficient and effective regulation of the critical crop protection products Australian farmers need to produce the nation's food, feed and fibre while the APVMA transitions to Armidale," said Mr Cossey.

"It is imperative that Australian farmers gain access to important agricultural chemical products in a timely manner. Until the APVMA can consistently finalise applications for crop protection products within obligated timeframes, Australian farmers will continue to be at a disadvantage to their international competitors. Australian farmers are already losing hundreds of millions of dollars of possible improved productivity due to the delayed registration of critical tools."

"CropLife Australia looks forward to working with the APVMA and the Government to deliver the reforms necessary for genuine regulatory efficiency," concluded Mr Cossey.

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About CropLife Australia

CropLife Australia (CropLife) is the peak industry organisation representing the agricultural chemical and biotechnology (plant science) sector in Australia. CropLife represents the innovators, developers, manufacturers and formulators of crop protection and agricultural biotechnology products. The plant science industry provides products to protect crops against pests, weeds and diseases, as well as developing crop biotechnologies that are key to the nation's agricultural productivity, sustainability and food security. The plant science industry is worth more than \$18 billion a year to the Australian economy and directly employs thousands of people across the country. CropLife and its members are committed to the stewardship of their products throughout their lifecycle and to ensuring that human health, environment and trade issues associated with agricultural chemical use in Australia are responsibly and sustainably managed. CropLife ensures the responsible use of these products through its mandatory industry code of conduct and has set a benchmark for industry stewardship through programs such as **drumMUSTER**, ChemClear® and Agsafe Accreditation and Training. Our stewardship activities demonstrate our commitment to managing the impacts associated with container waste and unwanted chemicals.

