

Annual Report

July 2024 – June 2025

“Looking forward, the Allergen Bureau will continue **supporting the industry** as we move towards a **globally harmonised approach for risk assessment and risk communication**. Through a renewed focus on **education for the industry** and increasing **consumer awareness** on industry practices, we can improve choices for those **living with food allergy.**”

Jasmine Lacis-Lee

Allergen Bureau President



A message from the Board

Reflecting on the changing landscape

As we reflect on the past few years, we are proud to see how the Allergen Bureau has continued to build its global reputation as a trusted voice for allergen management in the food industry. Our sharp focus on evidence-based science, along with the guidance of our VITAL Scientific Expert Panel (VSEP) is the basis on which we work to promote and influence approaches that help standardise allergen management and labelling.

Building for the Future

We have maintained our financial stability while enabling strategic investment in the capabilities that our Members told us matter most.

VITAL 4.0 now serves an increasingly global community with expanded international reach demonstrating the growing recognition and value of the VITAL Program. We continually review the program infrastructure and invest in the underlying platform to ensure it meets the demands of a modern online environment.

Strengthening Industry Partnerships

Our relationships with key stakeholders remain strong and were highlighted at the successful delivery of the 5th FAMS Conference in May 2025. Attendees from ANZ, UK, Europe, Japan, China, South Africa and North America saw firsthand how collaboration is supporting businesses and, ultimately, people living with food allergy. These types of collaborations and conferences validate the ANZ approach and open new pathways for global industry adoption of best practices.

Innovation and Excellence

We remain committed to bringing you the innovations and resources you requested. Our VITAL Online Roadmap continues to evolve, and we are currently working to design and deliver the first of several enhancements you requested.

Our latest resource, The Technical Guide to Assessing the Allergen Status of Fermentation Substrates and Feedstocks, continues to generate questions and help parties to tackle this challenge in a consistent manner.

Looking Ahead with Confidence

As we celebrate our 20th Birthday, The Allergen Bureau is well positioned to continue to drive towards our vision and fulfil our mission and purpose. The global conversations are opportunities for us to demonstrate the adaptability and expertise that have made us a trusted partner for industry. We believe our evolution over 20 years is a testament to the enduring value we provide, and we are focused on being ready to help our members prepare for what is yet to come.

Thank you to you, our members for your continued support.

Allergen Bureau Board

Allergen Bureau

OUR VISION

A world where individuals with food allergies can **trust the safety** of the food supply chain and the **transparency of food labelling**.

OUR PURPOSE

Empower the food industry to help people living with food allergies make **informed food choices**.

OUR MISSION

To **navigate the complexities** of the food supply chain by advocating for **best-practice allergen management** and labelling.

We achieve this through collaboration, resource development and education, all grounded in robust science, to help food businesses produce food products that clearly communicate allergen information, ensuring individuals with food allergies can make informed choices.



Our Strategic Pillars

Our strategic plan outlines the following strategic pillars to support our vision, purpose and mission.

Setting the Gold Standard in Food Allergen Risk Management and Labelling

Our aim is to lead the Australian/NZ - and indeed the world's - food industry in best-practice allergen management, sharing information that builds trust and transparency to support individuals with food allergies in making informed choices.

We engage with food industry stakeholders from over 20 countries, making us a globally recognised authority.

Uniting the Food Allergen Management Community Through Collaboration

As a not-for-profit organisation, the Allergen Bureau relies on membership and service revenue to fund its work and achieve this goal. Established as a collaborative and impartial platform, the Allergen Bureau unites researchers, regulatory authorities, industry stakeholders, and consumer groups to achieve the best outcomes in food allergen management.

Leading Globally with the VITAL® Program

Recognised and respected globally, our flagship program, VITAL® (Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling), is a standardised allergen risk management tool. VITAL helps manufacturers identify and mitigate risks to the lowest possible level and determine precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) outcomes to support individuals with food allergies in making informed choices. As we strive for harmonisation, consistent use of the VITAL program promotes transparency throughout the supply chain.

Empowering the Industry Through Education & Training

We aspire to improve food labelling, risk assessment, and safe food production techniques worldwide by facilitating the exchange of information, technology, and expertise. Our international conferences, webinars, and publications serve as a repository of knowledge that drives discussion and change in food allergen management. Education and training within the industry provide opportunities to build knowledge globally.

Advocating for Greater Awareness to Promote Informed Consumer Choices.

The Allergen Bureau is committed to improving food allergen management practices within the food industry to enhance the quality of life for individuals with food allergy. It is essential for consumers and healthcare professionals to recognise how the food industry manages and labels to build understanding, foster trust and enable informed decision making, ultimately supporting better food choices for individuals with food allergies.

Supported by world's best science minds + VSEP

Allergen Bureau Membership

Member Snapshot

- 140 Members
- 7% Increase in Revenue
- 24 New Members
- 7 Membership upgrades
- 1 New Regional Membership
- 76% ANZ
- 24% Global Businesses



Financial security through strong membership

Your investment showcases your commitment to this important aspect of food safety, helps build a trusted food supply, and empowers informed consumer choices.

Enjoying Membership Benefits

VITAL Online:
110 Organisations

Training:
59 Individuals from Member Organisations

FAMS:
9 Member businesses

In 2024/25 our membership structure changed to better reflect our membership base and to encourage organisations to showcase their business as leaders in allergen management.

We saw growth in all categories except in the modified individual category /associate supporter category, with a net result of lower total membership numbers and higher revenue.

We are grateful to all our members for their continued support, contributions, and encouragement. Your involvement inspires and drives us to meet objectives and assist you and the broader industry to solve your challenges and improve consumer confidence.

The most current list of Full Member organisations, committed to best practice allergen management practices and tools, can be found on the [website](#).

Allergen Bureau

**Activities Supporting
our Strategy**

Allergen
Bureau

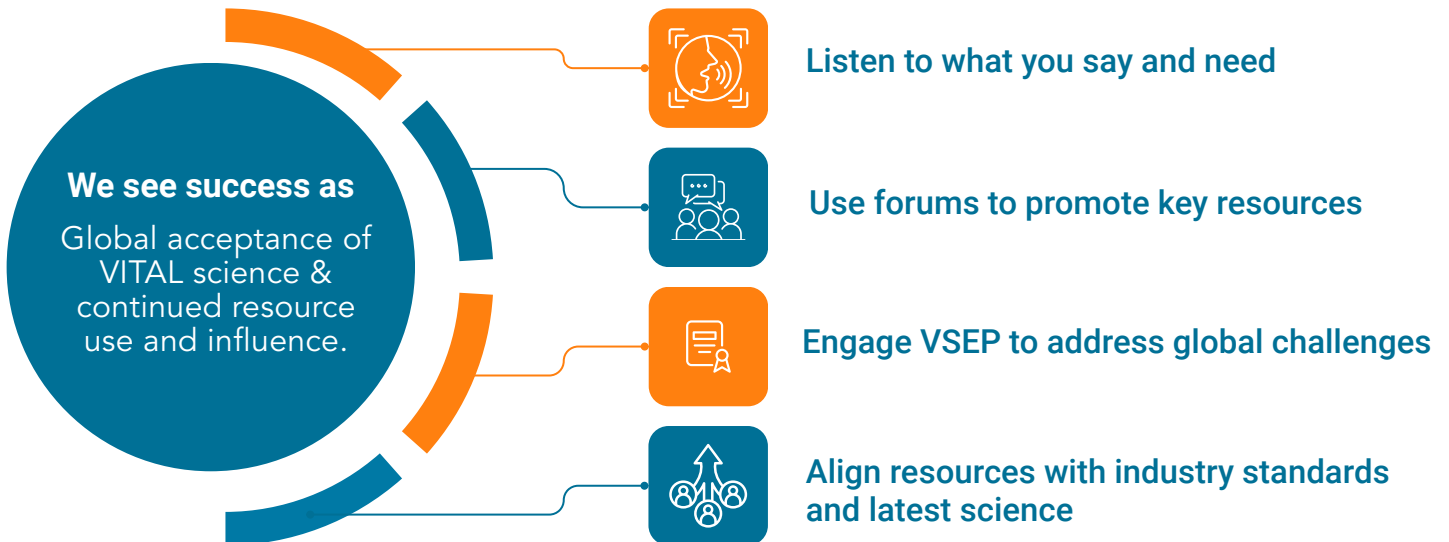
Setting the Gold
Standard in Food
Allergen Risk
Management and
Labelling

20
Year
Anniversary

Strategy 1

Setting the Gold Standard in Food Allergen Risk Management and Labelling

The actions we are taking to achieve success are :



Achievements

Our resources are reaching more people than ever

Our websites have seen strong sustained growth, reflecting the growing awareness and strong engagement with the resources we provide.

Our monthly eNews continues to be a focus of our efforts to provide stakeholders with timely updates of the latest science, and developments from around the world.

Our Online Resources

- allergenbureau.net
- vital.allergen.net
- info.allergen.net



Websites

76,000+ people accessed allergenbureau.net
↑ 14%
↑ 11% sessions
↑ 7% in page views
↑ 30% unique visitors
~100,000 returning visitors



Industry Newsletter

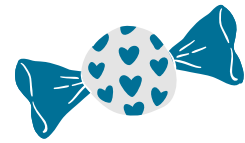
7949 subscribers
26 science based articles
33 how to guides & articles
12 editions per year



Labelling consideration for vegan foods, based on consumer confusion of what this claim indicates.



How to label fermentation products using allergen substrates/feedstock.



Education of the milk cross contact risk in Dark / Vegan chocolate.

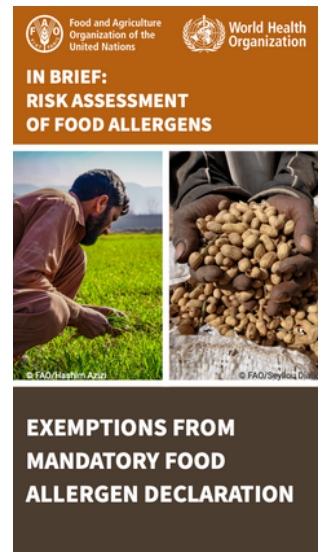


Challenges in establishing cereal cross contact levels and calculating if particulates contain the reference dose.

Advocating and Informing

We continued to influence and advocate for global harmonisation in Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) through the Codex submission process. Several current and former VITAL Scientific Expert Panel (VSEP) members, along with our own Jasmine Laci-Lee, contributed to the latest FAO/WHO Ad Hoc Expert Consultation on Food Allergens, as well as other international working groups and forums.

We also presented, sponsored or attended several international events including GFSI, ASCIA, and the Food Allergy Asia Conference where we continued to promote the approach of the VITAL program (Avoid, Eliminate, Reduce, Control and Label if required).



Launched	Updated
1	4
New Guide	Allergen Bureau Resources

Launched	Updated
1	1
New VITAL Resource	VITAL Resource

Work continues on our QSR Best Practice guide, which is complete but awaiting market research to ensure the presentation of information meets consumer needs.

Featured Resource

In February 2025, our long-awaited **Technical guide for assessing the allergen status of fermentation substrates and feedstock** was released.



Developed through extensive discussions, consideration of diverse views and approaches, and engagement with enforcement agencies in Australia and New Zealand, the guide provides a framework to help readers gather the information needed to determine labelling requirements.

Its purpose is not to assess the risk posed by allergens, but to guide labelling decisions where no regulatory exemptions exist. The guide reflects the Allergen Bureau's commitment to addressing industry challenges through pre-competitive, collaborative effort.

Download at allergenbureau.net/resources



Uniting the Food
Allergen Management
Community Through
Collaboration

20
Year
Anniversary

Strategy 2

Uniting the Food Allergen Management Community Through Collaboration

The actions we are taking to achieve success are :

We see success as

Unified action,
shared responsibility,
lower risk to all



Creating better outcomes for individuals with food allergies



Building strong local and global partnerships to drive positive change



Connecting with Health Care Professionals to close gaps between industry, clinical practice and consumer needs



Promoting consistency in Enforcement across ANZ



Bringing the Food Allergy Community Together

Food Allergen Management Symposium (FAMS), May 2025, Sydney

This flagship event brought together local and international experts in research, diagnosis, treatment, regulation, and allergen risk management and food preparation.

Symposium delegates shared the latest science and regional practices, exchanging ideas, debating practices, and collaborating to build knowledge and understanding to foster global harmonisation in approaches, creating a better outcome for individuals with food allergy.

“Loved the vibe”

“Very well-organized and informative”

“A highlight was the wealth of knowledge of the presenters and the diversity.”



The updated Australia and New Zealand Allergen Consensus Statement was launched at the event, affirming the shared responsibility to protect consumers with food allergies. Led by the National Allergy Council (NAC), the benefits of a broader statement were considered at the VITAL 4.0 consultation held in New Zealand in 2023. This is an excellent vehicle to showcase the power of collaboration between stakeholders and setting an example for other regions to follow.



**145 Registrations
from 12 countries**

32 Speakers

25 Sponsors

6th
FAMS 2025

Collaborate, Educate, Communicate

PLATINUM SPONSOR

r-biopharm®



GOLD SPONSORS



SYMPOSIUM DINNER SPONSOR

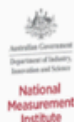
WELCOME RECEPTION SPONSOR



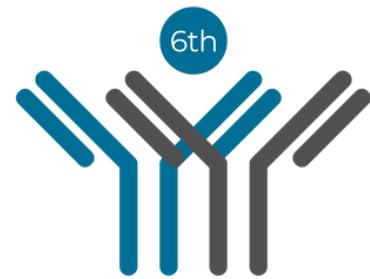
EXHIBITORS & SUPPORTERS



Proudly hosted by



Thank you to the



FAMS 2025

FOOD ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

Sponsors & Supporters

Back in 2027

**Join us at
FAMS 2027
Melbourne**

Leading Globally with the VITAL[®] Program

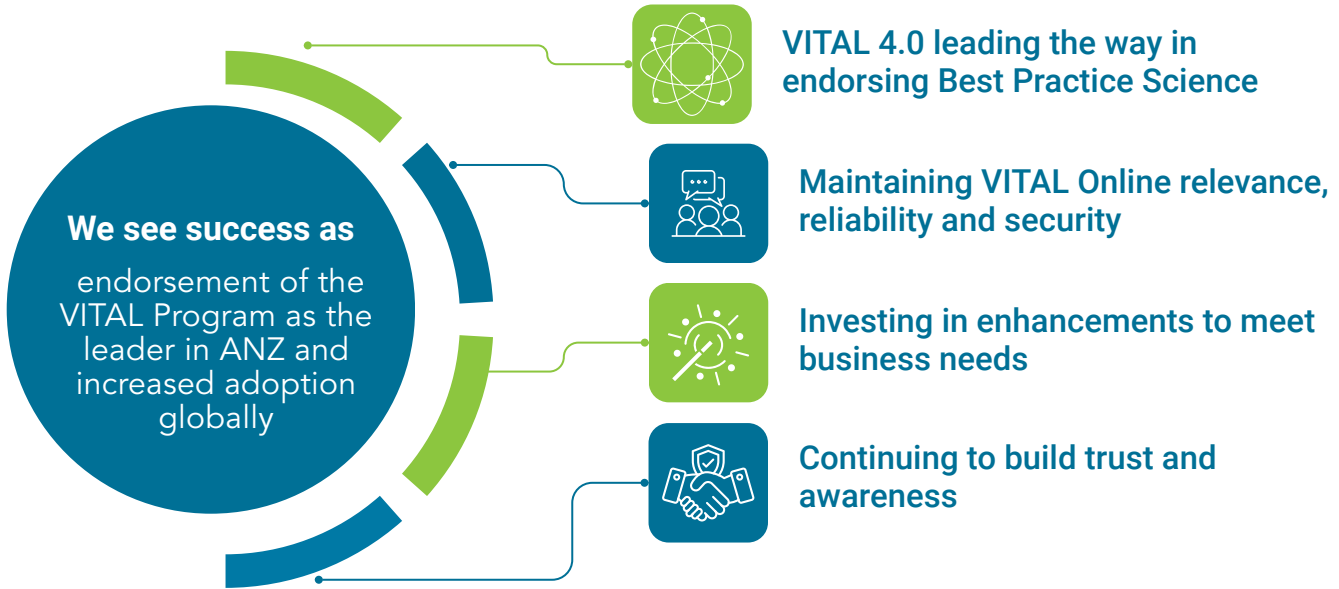


20
Year
Anniversary

Strategy 3

Leading Globally with the VITAL Program

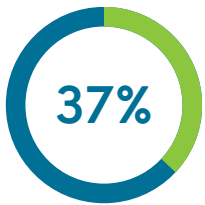
The actions we are taking to achieve success are :



Achievements

Launch of VITAL[®] 4.0

The launch of VITAL 4.0 together with updated supporting materials was a major milestone. We worked carefully to ensure that regulators, enforcement agencies and consumer groups understood the impact of this change, and we have seen a smooth transition by our subscribers.



Revenue Growth

VITAL Online Tool Revenue Growth YoY and increased subscriptions in Europe and Asia



Super User Group

VITAL super user group has formed to shape future features



VITAL Certification

VITAL Certification trademark registered in NZ and in progress in AUS



Monitoring

Watching FDA changes, gluten thresholds and Codex work on risk assessment to ensure you are ready for the future

Security and functionality investment in

- Automatic testing to ensure outcome accuracy
- Vulnerability scan software
- Updated T&C's noting IP protection





Can you Help?

Shaping the future of VITAL Online

Feedback from users guide the next evolution

We listened and are currently developing our tool to consider particulates and multi-region labels. Interested in contributing to design, functionality and features?

Join the wonderful team of Superusers

Have you embedded the VITAL Program into your Food Safety Quality Management System?

ANZ businesses have over 15 years experience with Reference Doses - a unique advantage to lead globally in allergen management.

With the shifting global landscape is it time to change from Customer Driven to Future Ready?

Your consistency and commitment helps our efforts to advocate for the VALUE of PAL to a consumer with food allergy.



A person wearing a red and white plaid shirt is holding a tablet computer. They are standing in a field of tall, golden-brown grain, likely wheat or barley, under a clear blue sky. The image has a blue overlay.

Empowering the
Industry Through
Education & Training

20
Year
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Strategy 4

Empowering the Industry Through Education & Training

The actions we are taking to achieve success are :

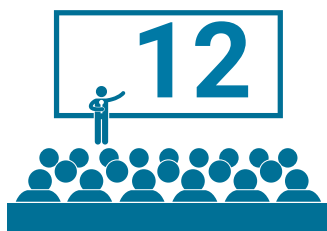


Achievements

Global and Local Education & Training

Our focus this year has been to consolidate on key messages for businesses transitioning labels to a VITAL 4.0 framework.

We are expanding our network of VITAL trainers and welcomed new trainers in Portugal this year. We have trainers able to train in most European and Latin American Languages enabling Portuguese and Spanish speakers to have options for training in their native tongue.



Presentations

Presented at 12 organisation or association meetings or conferences



Industry Helpline

Answered 88 technical enquiries across 28 members and 60 non members



Industry Training

Our Endorsed trainers have delivered 223 units of training

Presenting at FAMS 2025

We held three workshops at our FAMS conference, designed to assist Industry and Health Care Professionals to understand the key concepts in Allergen Risk Review, Allergen Management and Allergen Risk Assessment as they related to each specific audience.



Pre-Conference Workshops

- Allergen Analysis Workshop
- Small Business Workshop
- Health Care Professional workshop

All the presentations are available at allergenbureau.net/resources

Moving forward, we are excited to be working with the National Allergy Council to develop content for All About Allergens for SMEs, which will be freely accessible via the [All About Allergens](#) website.

Free Industry Helpline

Our free Helpline continued to support both members and non-members, with members receiving priority responses.

Of all enquiries, 31% related to VITAL 4.0 or cross-contact risk assessments, while 45% focused on labelling issues, including sulphites, gluten, "free from" claims, and PEAL requirements.

We also addressed complex questions on fermentation substrates and the labelling status of ingredients such as dextrose. These varied topics highlight the ongoing challenges businesses face in interpreting requirements and providing accurate consumer information.



Allergen Bureau Helpline

0437 918 959

Advocating for greater awareness to promote informed consumer choices



20
Year
Anniversary

Strategy 5

Advocating for greater awareness to promote informed consumer choices

The actions we are taking to achieve success are :

We see success as ensuring the community affected by food allergy understands the relationship between food allergen management practices and food availability



Promoting greater awareness to support informed consumer choices



Educating healthcare professionals on allergen in the food supply



Collaborating to create clear unified messages

Consumers are at the heart of everything we do!

Our current strategic plan, shaped by industry and consumer feedback, tasks us to build trust in industry allergen management and labelling for people with food allergies.

With increased understanding and trust, consumers will have a better understanding of how industry works to address the complexities of allergen management and labelling in a global supply chain, empowering informed food choices.

This strategy aligns closely with our work to unite food allergen management initiatives, through collaboration with national and international organisations representing consumer interests.

While this remains a complex area, we took positive steps forward this year together with our partners.

Consumer Focused Outputs



- Presented at the 2024 ASCIA conference to Clinicians and Health Care Professionals on Industry Management of Allergens
- Participated in an Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia webinar with FSANZ to explain food allergen labelling
- Assisted the National Allergy Council to deliver a new animation explaining the concepts of particulate and homogeneous cross contact.
- Offered a FAMS workshop for Health Care Professionals leveraging leading international experts to explain the relationship between clinical threshold studies and PAL's derived via the VITAL program.
- Surveyed products in supermarkets to gather facts surrounding the accuracy of allergen information.

This is a complex and emerging space, and we are committed to working with our colleagues to develop clear, aligned messages that help people with food allergies, and those advising them, to understand and place greater trust in packaged food labelling.



PAL under the spotlight:

Regulation, Codes, or Food Safety Standards?

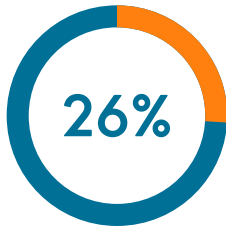
The VITAL Standard, an auditable GFSI Addendum would seem more relevant than ever.

Join our working group and influence the direction of precautionary allergen labelling worldwide.

Allergen Bureau

Other Business

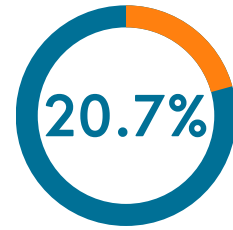
Marketing and Communication



LinkedIn Growth

Growth in Followers
with over 3000 in total

In the first
6 months of
2025 we saw



Instagram Growth

Growth in Followers

The Allergen Bureau's key marketing activities were centred around creating brand awareness via promotion of its underwriting of the FAMS conference.

FAMS was a wonderful success attracting sponsors and global awareness of the work of the Allergen Bureau and has strengthened brand recognition.

LinkedIn remains our major channel for connecting with industry professionals, sharing resources, and building our global network.

Marketing activities centred around the development of business KPIs to support our strategy which will dictate our marketing projects and plans in F25/26.

Governance

Throughout the year, the Board and its Audit & Risk Committee oversaw a range of governance-related activities to ensure the Allergen Bureau remains well positioned to meet its legal and compliance obligations.

These included confirming the Bureau's taxation classification, reviewing service agreements, terms and conditions, our privacy policy, and ensuring that our intellectual property is appropriately protected and represented. For further information on these activities, please contact us.

We are also investing in a CRM system to optimise our operations and drive efficiency for our business. This will impact the way your membership is managed and we will be working with you over the coming months to set your business up in our new platform.

12th Annual General Meeting and Member Meeting

The 12th Annual General Meeting of the Allergen Bureau was held on 24 October 2024, the AGM was attended in person and online by representatives of 21 Full Members.



The member meeting featured three guest speakers



A number of the Allergen Bureau Board at the 2024 AGM and Member Meeting
Left to right: Jasmine Laci-Lee, Debbie Hawkes, Paul Kelly, Kirsten Grinter, Caroline Gray (Absent Dean Stockwell)

Allergen Bureau Board

The Allergen Bureau Board up to the 13th AGM was:

Elected Directors

- Jasmine Laci-Lee (Re-elected 2024), President
- Caroline Gray (Re-elected 2024), Vice President
- Debbie Hawkes (Continuing), Treasurer
- Paul Kelly (Continuing), Company Secretary

Invited Directors

- Dean Stockwell (reappointed 24/10/2024)
- Kirsten Grinter (reappointed 24/10/2024)

Our directors provide voluntary, unpaid services to the Allergen Bureau and we gratefully acknowledge the generous support they and the Allergen Bureau receive from their employer companies in this capacity.

The Allergen Bureau Board held five Board meetings during 2024-25.

Allergen Bureau Management Committee

The Allergen Bureau Management Committee was:

- Kirsten Grinter
- Caroline Gray
- Debbie Hawkes
- Jasmine Lacis-Lee
- Jess Feather

With assistance from

- Lisa Clark, Allergen Bureau Manager
- Tom Lewis, Allergen Bureau Advisor
- Nicole Koek, VITAL co-ordinator

The Management Committee are responsible for the planning and management of Allergen Bureau activities in line with the annual operating plan, budget and strategy.

The Allergen Bureau Management Committee held 17 meetings during 2024-25.

Fortnightly Management Committee virtual meetings remain the mainstay of how the Allergen Bureau manages its day-to-day operations. Out-of-session discussion, generally by e-mail, constitutes a large proportion of Allergen Bureau management and operational communication.

Secretariat and Support

The Board would like to thank

- Lisa Clark
- Alice Doyle
- Tom Lewis

for their ongoing support in the provision of secretariat, financial and management services.

The Board also thank our support service providers:

- Dr Simon Brooke-Taylor (Scientific & Technical Support and VSEP representation)
- Nicole Koek (VITAL Coordinator)
- Dr Lyn Davies (eNews)
- Natalie Hayllar (Marketing and Communication)
- Progressive Content (website content and EDMs)
- Ionata Digital (website development and service); and
- Graeme Clark (IT Consultant)

who all made significant contributions to the success of the Allergen Bureau.

Financial Sustainability

Allergen Bureau accounts were reviewed (audited) as per the ACNC and found to be a true and fair view of the financial position at 30 June 2025 and of the performance for the year of the Company in accordance with the accounting policy described in the financial statements. These are prepared and presented to members separately.

For more information contact us:

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