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MEDIA RELEASE

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New Bio-security Centre

Australia will be even better prepared for the potential incursion of an exotic pest or disease with the opening today of a new research centre committed to leading-edge risk analysis.

The Centre of Excellence for Risk Analysis, based at the University of Melbourne, will further strengthen Australia's safeguards against bio-security risks.

The Centre will undertake research, and develop state-of-the-art risk analysis and interpretation tools.

Professor Mark Burgman, one of Australia's leading environmental risk experts, will head a team of specialists from a range of fields, including statistics, biophysical sciences and socio-economics.

The Centre's work programme for the next 12 months will initially focus on researching ways of analysing the bio-security risks associated with imports.

The programme will then look at developing risk analysis methods for use more broadly by the Australian Government.

The Centre would keep Australia at the forefront of practical risk assessment, and in a strong position to shape international standards in risk analysis.

The establishment of the centre was an election commitment to strengthen Australia's quarantine and border protection.

The Bureau of Rural Sciences helped establish the Centre and, following a competitive selection process, chose the University of Melbourne as the host organisation.

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