Allergen Bureau

VITAL®



INFORMING THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Annual Report 2025 – 2026

July 2025 – June 2026

allergenbureau.net

A YEAR IN REVIEW

A message from the Chair



On behalf of the Board, we are pleased to present the Allergen Bureau Annual Members' Report for 2025–26.

Reflecting on our First 20 Years

This year marked an important milestone as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Allergen Bureau.

Over two decades, the organisation has evolved from a small industry initiative into a globally recognised authority in allergen risk management, supporting industry, regulators, health professionals and consumers through science-based guidance and practical tools.

One of the highlights of this year was seeing the science that underpins the VITAL® Program recognised through the adoption of a new Codex guidance on precautionary allergen labelling within the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (GSLPF).

This achievement reflects decades of collaboration, research and advocacy, and is a testament to the contributions of our members, volunteers, researchers and industry leaders whose collective vision, expertise and commitment have helped advance allergen risk management and communication globally.

Strengthening our Foundations

As interest in allergen management and quantitative risk assessment continues to grow globally, the importance of the Allergen Bureau's work has never been greater.

THIS YEAR

One of the highlights of this year was seeing the science that underpins the VITAL® Program recognised through the adoption of a new Codex guidance on Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) within the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (GSLPF).



FROM THE BOARD

A message from the Chair

Extending our Global Influence

Through our partnerships, stakeholder engagement activities and the work of the VITAL Scientific Expert Panel, we remain connected to emerging issues, scientific developments and regulatory discussions. Our focus remains on promoting greater consistency in allergen risk management, strengthening supply chain understanding and supporting practical application of the principles that underpin effective allergen control monitoring and communication.

We recognise that a pathway based on collaboration and the willingness of many organisations to work together toward common goals remains essential and we are committed to working side by side with our peers and industry colleagues, as we have always done.

Investing in Future Capability

Throughout the year, we continued to invest in initiatives that will deliver long-term value for members and stakeholders.

This included strengthening member and customer systems through the implementation of our new CRM platform, progressing enhancements to VITAL® Online, developing new educational resources for small and medium food businesses in partnership with the National Allergy Council, and commencing work on a new website that will improve accessibility to trusted allergen management information.

These initiatives are designed to ensure the Allergen Bureau remains relevant, responsive and well positioned to meet the needs of members in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing environment.

Looking forward

As we look ahead, our focus remains on delivering value to members, strengthening education and capability across the food industry, supporting the next generation of allergen management leaders, and contributing to greater understanding of food allergy among consumers and healthcare professionals.

Most importantly, we remain committed to our vision of a world where individuals with food allergies can trust the safety of the food supply and the transparency of food labelling.

None of this would be possible without the ongoing support of our members, volunteers, committees, working groups, endorsed trainers, researchers and partner organisations. Thank you for your continued trust, contribution and commitment to the work of the Allergen Bureau.

Thank you for your continued support.

Jasmine Lacis-Lee & the 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.

OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Five pillars, one purpose

01 Setting the Gold Standard in Food Allergen Risk Management and Labelling

02 Uniting the Food Allergen Management Community Through Collaboration

03 Leading with the VITAL® Program

04 Empowering the Industry Through Education & Training

05 Advocating for Greater Awareness to Promote Informed Consumer Choices

FY2025-26

Highlights at a glance

PILLAR 1

Science and Standing

- Global recognition of the science underpinning the VITAL® Program through new Codex guidance on precautionary allergen labelling
- VSEP discussions on emerging allergens and strengthening the science
- Gluten Reference dose: aligned scientific understanding



PILLAR 2

Community and Influence

- Continued collaboration with domestic and international stakeholders
- Submissions and engagement with policy makers and enforcement authorities
- Forums to deliver key messages of best practice allergen management



FY2025-26 - CONTINUED

Highlights at a glance

PILLAR 3

Leading with the VITAL Program

- Surveys and meetings – Voice of user designs (Sulphites, Particulates, the future of QRA)
- Training network support and partnership discussions
- Continued focus on security, IP and privacy frameworks



PILLAR 4 /5

Education and Reach

- Funded by National Allergy Council to provide online content for SME's on the All about Allergens platform
- Website redevelopment; Using AI to improve information accessibility
- PAL Matters campaign: greater consumer awareness
- Partnerships for the future



MEMBERS

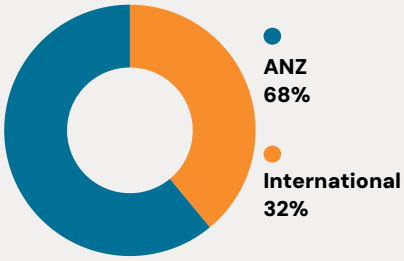
Allergen Bureau membership

38

+ New members

12%

+ Revenue



Worldwide members

1 Global Member

2 Regional Members

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

VITAL ONLINE DISCOUNTS

107

Organisations

TRAINING DISCOUNTS

28

Member Organisations

ENABLING GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES

155

Members

Our member community remains central to the work of the Allergen Bureau.

We are grateful to all our members for their continued support, contributions, and engagement. Your involvement inspires and drives us to meet our objectives and assist to solve your challenges and improve customer confidence.

- Members demonstrate their culture and commitment to consumer food safety.
- New members joined from Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Japan and India.
- We are particularly grateful to those who support us at a Global and Regional Level, for recognising that through the Allergen Bureau, their influence extends beyond their own business to the wider food community.

DID YOU KNOW

Every membership helps fund industry-wide improvements in allergen management, education and advocacy, creating benefits for the broader food industry and the businesses that operate within it.

STRATEGIC PILLAR 1

Setting the gold standard in food allergen risk management and labelling



WE FOCUS ON

- Influence
- Credibility
- Adoption

SUCCESS MEANS

Global adoption of best practice principles and continued resource usage

THIS CREATES

- Trust
- Alignment
- Consistency

68,000 +
People accessed the website

↓ 7.5%
Website Active Users

↑ 9.3%
Website sessions

↓14%
Page views

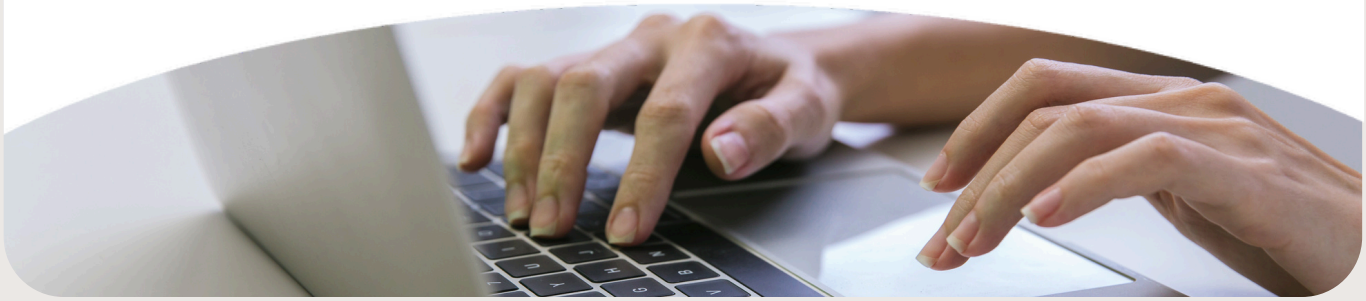
~66,000
New visitors

↓ 11%
Returning users

Our resources are reaching more people than ever. Our monthly eNews continues to be a focus of our efforts to inform stakeholders of the latest science, and developments from around the world. Our website statistics showed a slight decline. An upcoming major refresh is designed to increase the site's usability and value.

A NEW WEBSITE

Recognising the evolving ways in which consumers seek information, including the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled search tools, the Allergen Bureau commenced the design and development of a new website.



Setting the gold standard

A NEW WEBSITE

This initiative aims to enhance the discoverability of credible allergen management information, ensuring that authoritative resources are readily accessible and easy to understand for those seeking guidance.

In addition to improving searchability, the website redesign seeks to strengthen stakeholder understanding of the Allergen Bureau's role and activities, increase the visibility of member organisations, and enhance access to the Services Directory, all important areas of our member value strategy.

NEW RESOURCE - COMING SOON

In our work to ensure the Allergen Bureau continues to anticipate and meet stakeholder needs we have made significant progress in the development of some new resources.



Quick Serve Restaurant Guide to Best Practice Allergen Management & Communication

The Allergen Bureau is grateful to the National Allergy Council who assisted us to complete research to gain valuable insights into consumer expectations and preferences regarding communication of allergen information.

This guide will be launched alongside the National Allergy Council's Best Practice. Guide to Food Allergy in Food Service, ensuring businesses in the service industry have access to consistent, practical guidance on allergen management best practices.

BUILDING AWARENESS

The Allergen Bureau continued to build awareness and understanding of best-practice allergen risk management through participation, sponsorship and presentations at a range of national and international forums, including the Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology Convention, Food Allergy Asia Conference, Industry Association meetings and member supplier forums.

These engagements provided important opportunities to reinforce the principles underpinning the VITAL Program and promote a proactive approach to allergen risk management: Avoid, Eliminate, Reduce and Control allergens to the lowest possible level.

AVOID ELIMINATE REDUCE CONTROL

STRATEGIC PILLAR 2

Uniting the food allergen management community through collaboration



WE FOCUS ON

- Connecting
- Listening
- Shared solutions

SUCCESS MEANS

A unified community, accepting shared responsibility to improve outcomes for people with food allergy

THIS CREATES

- Knowledge
- Capability
- Alignment

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED

- Meetings with Assistant Minister White to advocate for funding and awareness of industry activity.
- Continued collaboration with the National Allergy Council and co development of parallel resources and or training materials.
- Ongoing engagement with Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia, Allergy New Zealand, Coeliac Australia and Coeliac New Zealand.
- International collaboration with Food Drink Federation, Food Drink Europe, Food Allergen Research & Resource Program (FARRP), ILSI Europe and other international stakeholders.
- Contributions to discussions on Codex Committee on Food Labelling and Food Hygiene.
- Allergen Collaboration meetings and meetings with enforcement agencies.

ADVANCING GLOBAL HARMONISATION

A significant milestone was the ratification of the Codex guidelines for evidence-based risk assessment in precautionary allergen labelling at CCFL49 in May.

Pictured: Australian Codex Delegation; Jasmine Lacis-Lee (MNAQ / Allergen Bureau), Emily Dawson(FSANZ), Stephanie Betts (FSANZ), with Codex Committee Food Labelling Chair Parthi Muthukumarasamy (Canadian Food Inspection Agency)



STRATEGIC PILLAR 2 · CONTINUED

Uniting the community

ADVANCING GLOBAL HARMONISATION

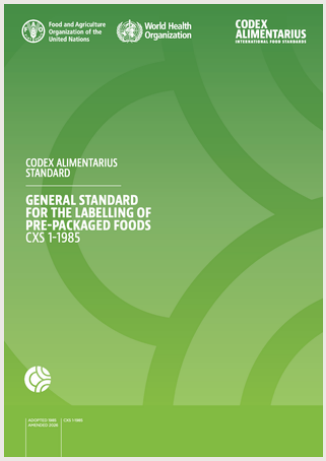
The Allergen Bureau continued to advocate for globally harmonised precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) through submissions to the Codex process and engagement with key stakeholders.

SUPPORTING INDUSTRY EVENTS

We thank AIFST for providing a dedicated forum at the 2025 AIFST Convention to explore the practical application of the VITAL® Program across the food supply chain. We are equally grateful to the members who partnered with us to share their experiences, insights and real-world challenges, helping to deliver meaningful, practical learning and build capability across the industry.

Pictured:
Amy Birrell (Kerry), Jack Hill (Simplot), Nicole Koek (Allergen Bureau), Richard Newton (Elisa System), Jasmine Lacis-Lee (MNAQ / Allergen Bureau)





A significant milestone was the ratification of the Codex guidelines for evidence-based risk assessment in precautionary allergen labelling at CCFL49 in May.

Given the Allergen Bureau's longstanding commitment to science-based risk assessment, Jasmine Lacis-Lee's presence as an advisor to the Australian delegation, provided a valuable opportunity to assist and observe as this important step forward for international harmonisation took place.

GLUTEN REFERENCE DOSE

As we transition to include the new gluten reference dose for cereal cross contact risk assessment into the VITAL Program and online tool, it draws our focus to ensuring those impacted understand the science behind the Reference Dose, and what it may mean to those who manufacture food products. We were delighted to host the Gluten webinar for members and present the concept again in NZ at our industry forum in May.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 3

Leading globally with the VITAL® program



WE FOCUS ON

- Best practice science
- Correct Application
- Ease of use

SUCCESS MEANS

Adoption of the VITAL program and utilisation of the VITAL Framework globally

THIS CREATES

- Awareness
- Consistency
- Confidence

326

VITAL Online accounts accessed in FY25/26

28

New organisations using VITAL Online as a part of their FSQMS

142+

Organisations trained in Quantitative Risk assessment principles and the use of VITAL Online

International interest in the VITAL Program continued to expand throughout the year. Growth was particularly notable in Europe, with increasing subscriptions, training sessions and utilisation of the VITAL Program and Framework.

VITAL ONLINE SUPER USER GROUP

VITAL super user group has assisted in the design of a particulate calculator and the new intentionally-present sulphite calculation.

A big thank you to Simplot, Bulla, Carolina Motto, Mérieux NutriSciences Expert Partners Netherlands, Reckitt Benckiser, Steric Trading for their input.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 3 · CONTINUED

Leading globally with VITAL

SECURITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

Quarterly vulnerability scans are completed as a proactive measure to support system security.

SECURITY AND FUNCTIONALITY

We are considering the future role of technology in Risk Assessment and have invested in understanding user needs and barriers to adoption

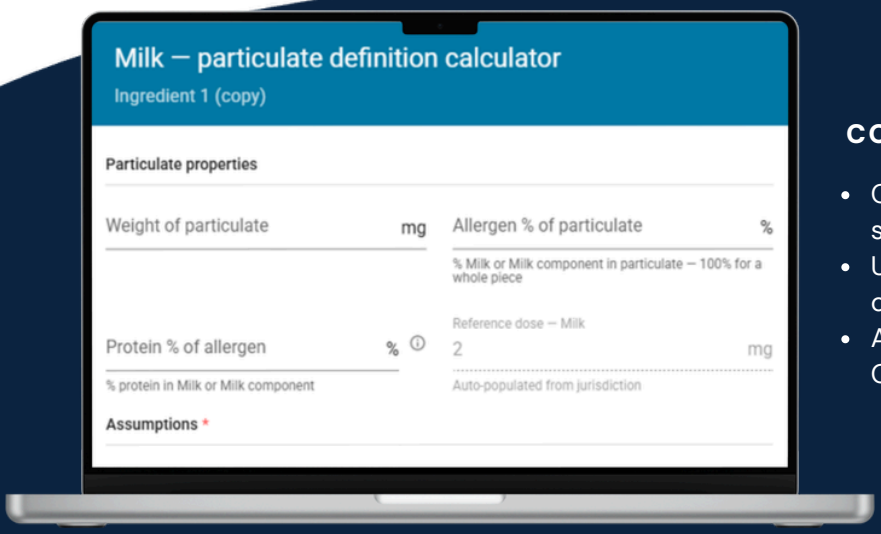
Productive discussions were held with several organisations regarding appropriate use of VITAL methodologies and branding, reinforcing the importance of protecting the integrity of the program while supporting broader adoption of science-based allergen risk management.

DID YOU KNOW?

Particulate labelling is a commonly misunderstood aspect of allergen risk assessment. Some businesses assume that the presence of a particulate automatically necessitates Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL). Our soon-to-be-released particulate calculator will help users determine whether a particulate contains protein at a level exceeding the applicable Reference Dose.

WE LISTENED TO YOUR FEEDBACK

Many businesses have told us it would be valuable to have all allergens represented within a single system. In response, we will be introducing a new feature in VITAL Online to help users calculate levels of intentionally present sulphites. This enhancement will enable all allergen assessments to be completed within one platform with outcomes represented in a single report.



COMING SOON

- Calculate intentionally present sulphites
- Use the new particulate calculator to verify protein levels
- Assess cereals against the Gluten Reference Dose

VITAL®

STRATEGIC PILLAR 4

Empowering industry through education and training



WE FOCUS ON

- Learning
- Accessibility
- Partnerships

SUCCESS MEANS

All businesses use best practice principles for allergen management and labelling

THIS CREATES

- Knowledge
- Ability
- Trust

OUR EDUCATION AND TRAINING RESULTS

7

Organisation or association events presented at

140

Students were educated across universities in the financial year

142

Organisations trained by our endorsed trainers

450

~ People trained

Our main education and training focus this year has been the collaboration with the National Allergy Council on a training course for small to medium enterprises.

ALL ABOUT ALLERGENS FOR SMES

"All about Allergens for SME's" will be on the National Allergy Council's All about Allergens platform and available by link from the Allergen Bureau website and will be launched together with the "All About Allergens for Environmental Health Officers" course that the National Allergy Council has been developing.



Empowering Industry

ALL ABOUT ALLERGENS FOR SME'S

Allergen management and labelling can be daunting for organisations with limited resources. Nevertheless, their responsibility remains to produce safe and suitable food for those with food allergy.

The "***All about Allergens for SME's***" course tackles the breadth of information from basic understanding, regulatory requirements, allergen management controls and raw material reviews over 5 units.

Distilling such complex topics can be a challenge, but we feel we've struck a good balance and cannot wait to see the end result of our toils as the course goes live.

national allergy council

FOOD ALLERGY AWARE®

All about Allergens
Training for Food Service

Nicole Koek, VITAL co-ordinator, took on the challenge of educating the next generation in VITAL principles and delivered a series of guest lectures at participating Universities. Ensuring the emerging talent of food technologists are aware of the science underpinning an allergen risk assessment and its correct application is an area of passion for us, and we thank Nicole for her services and dedication to the cause.

Strategic work to consider what future opportunities may lie in the Education field have also been undertaken and the first draft of a comprehensive education blueprint for allergen management has been received. It is still early days, and it is exciting to see the strategy evolving from conceptual ideas to future potential investment decisions.

ENDORSED VITAL PROGRAM TRAINING PROVIDERS

The Allergen Bureau is especially grateful to our network of endorsed training providers who trained over 142 organisations and ~450 people in best practice allergen management and the use of the VITAL Program to support risk based precautionary allergen management.

An endorsed training provider understands the scientific principles, is committed to best practice incorporation at organisations and is armed with practical know how to answer questions specific to your organisation and demonstrate the functionality and power of VITAL Online.



STRATEGIC PILLAR 5

Advocating for greater awareness to promote informed consumer choices



WE FOCUS ON

- Awareness
- Understanding
- Availability

SUCCESS MEANS

Individuals affected by food allergy understand the relationship between food allergen management and food availability

THIS CREATES

- Better information
- Greater confidence
- Informed Choices

PROGRESS INCLUDED

01 **Approval of an execution strategy**

02 **Engagement of a communications consultant**

03 **Commencement of Phase I the 'PAL Matters' project**

Consumers are at the heart of everything we do!

Our newest strategy, shaped by industry and consumer feedback, asks: "*how do we build trust in industry allergen management and labelling for people with food allergies?*"

Beyond trust, can we also increase consumer understanding of how the food industry addresses the complexities of allergen management and labelling in a global supply chain, empowering informed food choices?

'PAL MATTERS'

Designed to help consumers understand that there is a scientific approach to Precautionary Allergen Labelling, the *PAL Matters* campaign being developed will concentrate on the message that if a product has a PAL present it indicates a risk that should not be ignored.



BUILDING AWARENESS

Marketing and Communications



As the global conversation around food allergen management continues to evolve, it has become increasingly important not only to develop trusted science and practical tools, but also to ensure that this knowledge remains visible, accessible and relevant to current and future generations of food industry professionals. The Board therefore endorsed a new strategic approach to marketing and communications designed to strengthen member value, build future industry capability and expand the reach of the Allergen Bureau's expertise.

THIS STRATEGY PLACES INCREASING FOCUS ON:

01 **Strengthening member value and engagement**

02 **Building stronger connections with emerging food safety leaders**

03 **Modernising our digital presence**

04 **Supporting consumer confidence in allergen management and labelling**

BUILDING LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

These initiatives are designed to support the long-term sustainability of the allergen management community by ensuring that our combined expertise, resources and scientific guidance remain accessible, relevant and influential in a rapidly changing communications environment.



Marketing and communications

NEW WEBSITE **NEXT GENERATION WORKING GROUP** **ACTIVATION SPECIALIST**

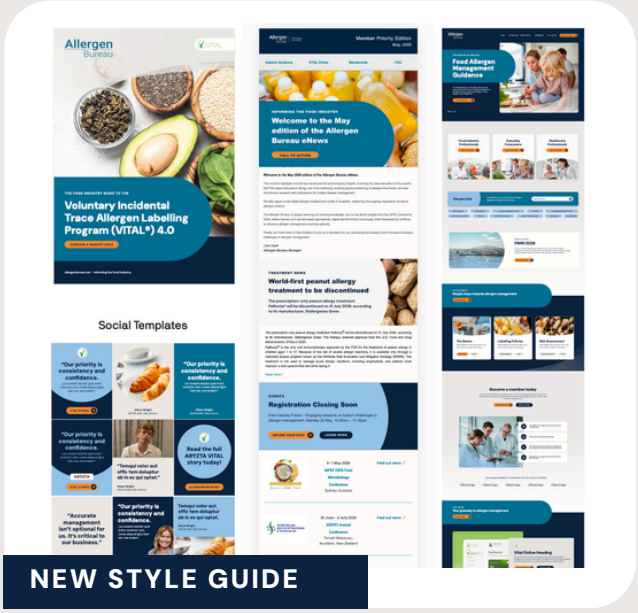
We are excited about the investment in a **new website** to improve access to information and resources; about our **Next Generation Working Group** convened to strengthen engagement with future industry leaders, and about the decision to recruit an **Activation Specialist** to help translate and amplify our scientific expertise for a broader audience.

Such investments are just some of the tangible signs of our commitment to ensuring the Allergen Bureau remains a trusted, relevant and influential source of allergen management expertise for current and future generations of food industry professionals.

NEW BRANDING DEVELOPED

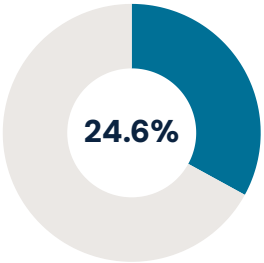
This year the Allergen Bureau refreshed it's brand style guide to give us a more contemporary, engaging and cohesive identity, one that speaks to the next generation of our audiences.

The new look will begin rolling out across our social media and digital channels from October 2026, with other materials to follow. This annual report introduces the new style.



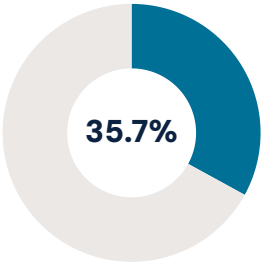
NEW STYLE GUIDE

SOCIAL AND NEWSLETTER GROWTH



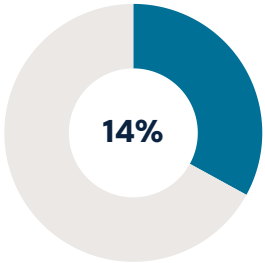
4,094

LinkedIn followers, YoY



2,538

LinkedIn newsletter subscribers, YoY



364

Instagram followers, YoY

Figures at 30 Sept 2026. Instagram: opportunity to build more engaging video content is priority in 26/27.

GOVERNANCE

Governance, risk and compliance

The Board continued to focus on ensuring robust governance, risk management and protection of organisational assets.

01 **Protection of the VITAL trademark and intellectual property**

02 **Cybersecurity and vulnerability assessments**

03 **Financial security**

04 **Legal framework reviews**

05 **Succession planning and governance development activities**

13th Annual General Meeting and Member Meeting

16
Full Members

The 13th Annual General Meeting of the Allergen Bureau was held in Sydney on 23 October 2025, the AGM was attended in person and online by representatives of 16 Full Members.



GOVERNANCE

Allergen Bureau Board and Management Committee

The Allergen Bureau Board leading into the 14th AGM was:

ELECTED DIRECTORS

Jasmine Lacis-Lee
(Continuing), President

Caroline Gray
(Continuing), Vice President – Resigned 11 June

Paul Kelly
(Re-elected 2025), Company Secretary

Jeanelle Boyce
(Elected 2025)

INVITED DIRECTORS

Dean Stockwell
(Treasurer)

Kirsten Grinter

5 Board meetings held during 2025-26

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 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WAS

Kirsten Grinter (Nestlé)

Caroline Gray (IFF)

Jeanelle Boyce (McDonald's)

Jasmine Lacis-Lee (MNAQ)

Jess Feather (Woolworths)

WITH ASSISTANCE FROM

Lisa Clark
Allergen Bureau Manager

Tom Lewis
Allergen Bureau Advisor

Nicole Koek
VITAL co-ordinator

le

17 Management Committee meetings held during 2025-26

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

GOVERNANCE

Secretariat and support

The Board would like to thank Lisa Clark, Alice Doyle and Tom Lewis for their ongoing support in the provision of secretariat, financial and management services.

LISA CLARK | ALICE DOYLE | TOM LEWIS

OUR SUPPORT SERVICE PROVIDERS

The Board also thanks 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

Graeme Clark
IT Consultant

Jan Davis
Board Governance Advisor

all of whom made significant contributions to this full and productive year of the Allergen Bureau operations.

Financial sustainability

Reviewed financial statements and notes, prepared in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, give a true and fair view of the financial position at 30 June 2026 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.

Allergen Bureau

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US

info@allergenbureau.net

allergenbureau.net

@allergenbureau

Call + 61 0437 918 959