

HOW WE WORK

Strategic alignment

MLA's *Annual Investment Plan 2017–18* has guided the company's investment over the past year, outlining the company's programs, budgets and key performance measures.

The strategic direction of this Plan was informed by the Australian Government's Science and Research Priorities and Rural Research, Development and Extension Priorities, the *Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020* and the *MLA Strategic Plan 2016–2020*.

MLA's *Strategic Plan 2016–2020* is aligned closely with the *Meat Industry Strategic Plan 2020*, giving focus and direction to MLA's work to build demand,

productivity and trust for the Australian red meat and livestock industry.

The figure below provides an overview of MLA's strategic and operational planning process.

Stakeholders

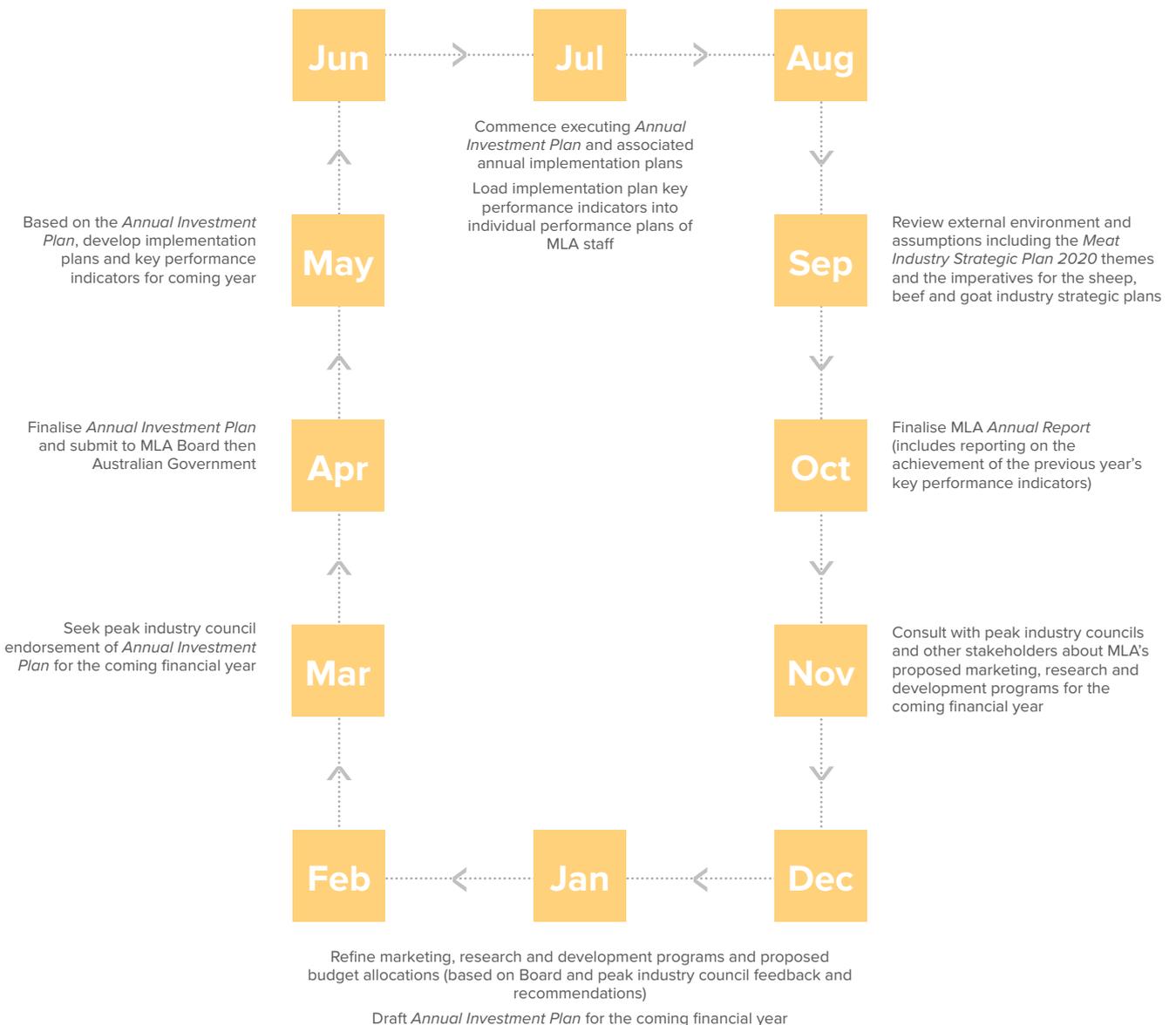
MLA operates in partnership with the Australian Government and value chain partners to deliver research, development and marketing to benefit red meat and livestock producers, value chain partners and the Australian community.

The Australian Government sets high priority research and development objectives covering community, industry and environmental concerns.

Peak industry councils provide policy direction, review budgets and monitor MLA's performance on behalf of the red meat industry. These are the Australian Lot Feeders' Association, the Cattle Council of Australia, the Goat Industry Council of Australia and Sheep Producers Australia.

MLA also works closely with the Red Meat Advisory Council, the Australian Meat Processor Corporation, the Australian Meat Industry Council, LiveCorp and the Australian Livestock Exporters' Council to develop programs that address key industry issues and opportunities through the supply chain, manage projects and communicate outcomes.

MLA's strategic and operational planning process



Industry consultation arrangements

Livestock producers influence the investment of their levies through a number of industry consultation mechanisms.

The Red Meat Advisory Council (RMAC) is the peak body that represents the collective interests of the Australian red meat industry. RMAC is responsible for the development of the Meat Industry Strategic Plan which provides the overarching strategic framework that enables the direction, measurement and reporting of overall industry progress to government and industry stakeholders. Levy payers are consulted by RMAC during the development of the five-year Meat Industry Strategic Plan.

Examples of areas where consultation occurs include:

On planning and whole of red meat industry priority areas:

- Meat Industry Strategic Plan
- Beef Industry Strategic Plan
- Sheepmeat Industry Strategic Plan
- Goat Industry Strategic Plan
- MLA Strategic Plan
- MLA Annual Investment Plan
- Beef Industry Sustainability Framework.

Each year, MLA also consults with the peak industry councils regarding research, development and marketing investments.

Examples of where consultation occurs include:

On research and development:

- Research, development and adoption investment priorities
- Red Meat Co-investment Committee
- Regional consultation model (see page 36) and the Southern Australia Meat Research Council, the Western Australian Livestock Research Council and the North Australia Beef Research Council
- Sheep and beef forecasting committees
- Sheep Genetics Advisory Committee
- MSA Taskforce and R&D Pathways Committee
- Resource Flock Steering Committee
- Genetics Steering Committee
- Integrity Systems Taskforce

On marketing:

- Region-specific global marketing and market access strategies for beef, sheepmeat and goatmeat (Australia, Japan, Korea, North America, Middle East, Europe/Russia, Indonesia, China and South Asia)
- MSA Taskforce.

The global marketing and market access consultation process underpins the overarching market strategy specific to each region. This process involves peak industry councils and industry representatives consulting with MLA to help set strategic priorities for growing demand and improving market access for the Australian red meat industry across global markets.

The consultation process involves a number of steps for industry to guide MLA's global market investment strategy. This encompasses reviewing the output/outcomes from the previous year's activities and investments, evaluating MLA's performance, setting strategic priorities, advising budget allocations for the upcoming financial year and importantly, confirming key performance indicators.

MLA strives to ensure all members have the opportunity to participate in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by rotating its location around the nation. The 2017 AGM was held in Alice Springs, NT and was preceded by Hahndorf, SA (2016), Brisbane, Queensland (2015), Sydney, NSW (2014), Wodonga, Victoria (2013), Fremantle, WA (2012), Longreach, Queensland (2011), Launceston, Tasmania (2010), Darwin, NT (2009) and Orange, NSW (2008).

Collaboration

MLA has a long history of collaborating with the Australian Government, research organisations, value chain partners, Cooperative Research Centres and other Research and Development Corporations by co-investing in projects and consortiums with mutual benefits.

Composition of MLA's members

Members	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18
Grassfed cattle	41,828	42,295	42,275	42,087	42,266
Grainfed cattle	5,391	5,430	5,430	5,453	5,478
Sheep/prime lambs	19,262	18,523	18,583	18,634	18,963
Sheep only	9,625	9,568	9,483	9,415	9,363
Goats	2,386	2,414	2,415	2,403	2,426
Total members*	49,260	49,845	49,892	49,726	50,128

* Includes members of mixed enterprises.

In 2017–18, MLA was successful in having three projects approved in the third round of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources Rural R&D for Profit program. MLA is the lead for eight projects and is a partner organisation in a further six projects. Refer to Appendix C for an overview of all Rural R&D for Profit projects involving MLA.

During 2017–18 MLA also partnered with seven consortiums:

- National Livestock Genetics Consortium
- Managing Climate Variability Program – phase V
- Reef Alliance
- National Sheep Health Monitoring project
- Australian Livestock Spatial Innovation Program
- Animal Welfare Strategic Partnership
- Livestock Productivity Partnership.

MLA continued its collaboration with the Sheep CRC and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions in 2017–18. Co-investment in projects through MLA Donor Company also accelerated in 2017–18. Collaborators included both local and global research organisations, value chain partners and commercial participants.

Membership

Membership of MLA is voluntary and free to all levy-paying grassfed cattle, grainfed cattle, sheep, lamb and goat producers. MLA had 50,128 members at 30 June 2018, an increase of 402 members on the previous year.

The table below shows the composition of MLA's members.