

Dr Michael Graeme Garner AM

Dr Garner has made a significant contribution to the biosecurity of the Australian livestock industries and has defined how we prepare and respond to the numerous biosecurity threats to our livestock industries nationally. His contributions are driven by an authentic desire to support primary producers in Australia and by his scientific curiosity.

*Honorary Doctor of Veterinary Science
Conferring ceremony: 12 December 2014 (Veterinary Science).*

Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Michael Graeme Garner AM to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Science (honoris causa).

During his career, Dr. Garner has demonstrated great professional competence and made a significant contribution to the biosecurity of the Australian livestock industries.

He has made an outstanding contribution well beyond the expectations of a government veterinary scientist, defining how we prepare and respond to the numerous biosecurity threats to our livestock industries and thus our national economy and way-of-life. His contributions have been selfless, driven by an authentic desire to support our primary producers, and by scientific curiosity.

Dr. Garner is a veterinary science graduate from our Veterinary School, Class of 1979. In 1986 he completed his PhD studies and joined the Australian Department of Agriculture, where he is currently Director of the Epidemiology and One Health Program. During his career he has contributed to national disease surveillance and reporting programs, veterinary public health and wildlife disease management, undertaken studies on endemic and foreign animal diseases, and provided technical support to address regional, national and international animal health issues.

An example of Dr. Garner's contribution to animal biosecurity in Australia is in the area of disease simulation modelling. His computer model of foot-and-mouth disease – "AusSpread" – is a particular example. FMD would be an 'Armageddon' for the Australian livestock industries and would also have severe impacts on the Australian economy – a recent study estimated the present value of total direct economic losses over 10 years for a large multistate outbreak at \$A52 billion. Dr. Garner has developed this model over more than a decade, often in his own spare time. This model is a critical tool for the livestock and agricultural sector for planning for an FMD outbreak: it has supported development of strategies that could save the livestock industry hundreds of millions of dollars in the event of an outbreak, and improve animal welfare outcomes.

A second example of the contribution to veterinary science is Dr. Garner's role as the manager of epidemiology at the National Disease Control Centre during the 2007 equine influenza epidemic. He led several key strategy groups that helped to eradicate equine influenza – something that has been rarely achieved anywhere in the world. He worked tirelessly, applying his skills and experience for the good of the equine industry and the Australian public.

Dr. Garner has mentored many young veterinary scientists. This cohort now contribute to the protection of Australia from biosecurity threats in their various positions at Australian veterinary schools, federal and state departments, and consultancy groups.

Chancellor, I present Michael Graeme Garner for admission to the degree of Doctor of Veterinary Science (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.