Final Report

The Australian Banana Industry Communications Program

Project leader:

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Delivery partner:

Australian Banana Growers' Council

Project code:

BA15005

Project:

The Australian Banana Industry Communications Program BA15005

Content

Summary

The main aim of the Australian Banana Industry Communications Program (BA15005) was to assist the Australian banana industry to achieve the objectives and aspirations of the Banana Industry Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). The specific goal of the SIP is to ensure industry remains sustainable, supported by profitable production and supply chain businesses that consistently deliver a valued and quality product to the consumer.

BA15005 achieved this by facilitating and promoting increased awareness and adoption of new and existing R&D, and communicating other industry development activities to Australian banana growers, through a variety of mediums.

The three-year program began on 1 July 2016 and was completed on 30 June 2019.

BA15005 assisted Hort Innovation and the Australian Banana Industry to deliver against key objectives of the SIP, specifically;

- Provide information and knowledge on industry updates, events and articulate the return on investment from banana industry levies.
- Promote Hort Innovation membership and engagement with national R&D programs to all banana growing businesses.
- Improve stakeholder engagement to increase industry understanding and adoption of best practice and emerging production and supply chain information in relation to R&D project outcomes and outputs.
- Inform growers and others in the supply chain about relevant issues, including latest research findings, Best Management Practice (BMP) and emerging risks and opportunities.
- Create and shape positive perceptions about the banana industry and its economic and social contributions, ensuring the industry retains its "social licence" to operate, supported by stakeholder groups, the general community and community members in banana-growing regions.

Project activities were targeted to; levy payers, industry stakeholders, value chain members and the broader community.

Outputs delivered under the Program's Logic Framework, Communication's Strategy and Annual Operating Plans included; publication of the Australian Bananas Magazine, e-bulletins, SMS alerts, media relations and media releases, social media bursts, video content, mail-outs, ABGC website and industry focused events.

Key outcomes of BA15005 included the continuous delivery of effective and timely communications activities that assisted banana levy payers and other stakeholders when making decisions about adoption of R&D and the supply of quality fruit. Again, this is in direct alignment with the aspirations of the Banana SIP, to ensure the national banana industry remains sustainable and profitable.

These outcomes assisted in fostering an environment which;

- Promoted continued innovation and improvement.
- Assisted in increased farm productivity and improved banana quality across banana businesses of all sizes.
- Encouraged increased adoption of the industry's Best Management Practice (BMP) plan that improves industry sustainability, biosecurity protocol uptake and environmental stewardship.
- Increased adoption of automation technology that improves industry productivity and profitability.

BA15005 was delivered by ABGC on behalf of Hort Innovation, providing useful, accurate, timely information across a variety of mediums to ensure growers and other stakeholders were continuously up-to-date and informed, especially on critical industry issues and other industry development activities.

It would be recommended that the new Communications Program (BA18001) continue to build on the strong communications framework built by the ABGC team which delivered BA15005. This team have worked effectively with Hort Innovation, as well as other organisations with similar complexity, to deliver strong outcomes which have continuously met or exceeded the project's AOP.

(See **Appendix 2 –** Anticipated outputs versus actual outputs)

ABGC proposes that moving forward with its effective industry Communication Project, together with the national extension project (BA16007), it has the ability to continue to build knowledge and understanding, and equip growers with the necessary skills to help them better manage production, supply chain and market development and build more productive, profitable and resilient businesses.

Keywords

Communication; research; development; adoption; banana; growers; media; stakeholders; collaboration; information; engagement

Introduction

As with previous Australian Banana Communications' Projects, BA15005 was delivered by the Australian Banana Growers' Council on behalf of Hort Innovation. Its aim was to assist the industry to achieve the vision, mission and objectives identified in the National Banana Industry Strategic Plan.

Through media releases, e-bulletins, online content, social media, magazines, mail outs, SMS and responsive media collaboration, the role of the project was to communicate the latest research and development, to update growers and stakeholders on industry issues, and to engage with the broader community on those issues impacting banana growers.

 As previously stated, the aim of this program was to continue to improve industry awareness and adoption of appropriate R&D, best management practices and communicate other industry developments to banana growers nationally.

 By ensuring that growers are informed in this manner, the program will contribute to maintaining a profitable and sustainable Australian banana industry.

The program was a continuation of BA13003, the previous Australian Banana Industry Communications project as well as other preceding Communication programs, which the ABGC has been successfully delivering to the Australian banana industry since 2012.

A mid-term review of BA13003, conducted by independent consultant GHD (November 2015) recommended that most outputs being delivered by the program were either in line with or beyond the project brief and all respondents held the project in high regard. GHD also reported that growers believed that they had "gained enormous access to R&D information through the Communications project, especially on critical issues for the industry."

The ABGC is the industry development organisation for the Australian Banana Industry. It takes its obligations to all banana growers seriously and all growers expect it to deliver relevant services and outcomes for them. This is particularly the case in regard to industry communications.

ABGC prides itself on good corporate governance and it has a solid history in delivering key HIA-invested projects. At the conclusion of BA15005, existing projects included;

- Banana Industry Communications Project (BA15005)
- Banana Strategic Industry Development Manager (BA16008)
- Coordination of Banana Industry R&D (BA17002)
- Management of Banana Pests and Diseases in North Queensland (BA17005)

ABGC provides all of its industry development services to all banana levy payers, including non-members. That is, the project is delivered for the benefit of all banana growers.

The ABGC communication's team consists of; Communications Manager Sonia Campbell and Senior Communications Officer Amy Spear.

Since BA15005 commenced in July 2016, all outputs delivered have either met or greatly exceeded the project brief. During the lifetime of the project, the Communications Team has gone to great lengths to deliver a range of

communication tools under an overarching Communication Strategy to guide the project. This strategy has driven specific and measurable indicators of success (KPIs) against which the team have been able to track and evaluate success, including the projects ability to achieve its set objectives.

Methodology

BA15005 delivered "General Services" detailed in Appendix 3 as well as "Industry Communication Services".

The Industry Communication Services were delivered through the following methodology;

1. Planning
2. Develop, Produce and Distribute the Content
3. Measure, Monitor, Evaluate and Refine

Planning

Planning is required to develop, co-ordinate and implement a holistic, professional and responsive communications strategy that addresses the above stated aim and objectives of the project and supports the levy-funded R&D and marketing programs.

An overarching 'Communications Strategy' was developed with clear links to specific and measurable communication objectives (indicators of success). This enunciated the purpose and interconnection of each communication tool (output) and how success would be evaluated. This enabled effective tracking and measurement of the project against articulated communication objectives.

This planning was undertaken by the Project Team and was assessed twice-yearly by a Project Reference Committee (PRC).

The Communications Strategy was developed after the commissioning of an independent review by consultants, GHD, who conducted a mid-term review of BA13003 in 2016.

The overarching strategy guided the implementation of the project, stipulating specific and measurable indicators of success (KPIs) against which to track and evaluate success, ie the projects ability to achieve its set of objectives. The KPIs encapsulated the whole of project performance which included within it, the performance of the communications team.

The PRC were required to ground truth key issues, desired outcomes and outputs for the project and also for identification and prioritisation of current and emerging issues. The PRC comprised four members; an ABGC director, another industry member and ABGC management (the CEO and the Communications Manager).

The strategic framework ensured that content was delivered across all mediums and that levy payers had immediate and easy access to accurate, up-to-date information on all relevant activity and in a format that was user-friendly.

It demonstrated cost effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency of project activities and outputs by the project remaining at the centre of the latest news and developments in industry; continued to provide avenues for all levy payers (not just ABGC members) to access information; and extended the reach of outputs through cross-promotion (particularly for digital channels).

Annual Operating Plans were developed under the strategic framework (Communications Strategy) and provided detail of planned communication activities, including a calendar of events. Importantly these annual plans identified tools, resources, tactics and timings, as well as tasks to be completed in set time frames.

Develop, Produce and Distribute the Content

BA15005 developed content identified broadly in the strategic plan. This process also involved the PRC – guiding content for future features and sections of various platforms, eg magazine, website, e-bulletins, mainstream media, social media and videos.

The PRC assisted in building on the progress and outcomes of the levy-funded R&D program and critical industry matters, such as, biosecurity.

Multi-platformed communications focussed on assisting levy payers to make informed decisions. Distribution was via an integrated portfolio of communications platforms, based on target market segmentation.

This was the main function of the project and contained three key elements;

i)   The writing (ie researching, consulting, interviewing, writing, photographing and editing) by the

Communications Manager and Senior Communications officer of news and features for the various platforms; magazine, website, Facebook, twitter, media releases/media correspondence, e-bulletin, SMS and videos.

ii)   The co-ordination by the Communications Manager of written (and other) material which she and the Communications Officer sourced from external parities in various formats for inclusion in the designated platforms.

iii)   The production of various outputs; eg in the case of the magazine, the Communications Manager Sub-edited all articles, produced layouts, checked proofs from the graphic designer, signed-off on final copy and distributed accordingly.

Resourcing

To deliver the "General Services" – the Project Manager was assisted by the Administration Officer and guided by the Project Leader. Also, the Office Manager oversaw the financial component of the project. The Project Leader was responsible for the project and had involvement in each output; via leadership, content guidance, attendance at planning meetings, input and feedback into output development and editorial.

The key resources that delivered the outputs of the "Industry Communication Services" were the Communications Manager (Project Manager) and the Senior Communications Officer.

The Communications Manager and Senior Communications Officer constantly strived to bring about improvements to the effectiveness of outputs of the Communications Project. These efforts included;

- Improving the reach and effectiveness of existing project outputs, including the Australian Bananas Magazine, the Banana Growers' e-bulletin, the ABGC website, Facebook, Twitter and on-line videos.
- Striving towards even greater strategic and proactive media relations on industry issues.
- Building on the Project's social media presence (particularly engagement), including greater 'grower focussed' and 'grower-generated' content. This was done by working with growers and the National Extension project BA16007 to generate and share content.
- Enhancing the success of the banana industry's national extension project, based in North Queensland, including events, SMS alerts, BMP, posters and factsheets.
- Ensuring alignment between the KPIs of the extension and communications projects.
- Continuing to ensure all communications activities were embedded with the ABGC to maintain contact with growers.
- Leveraging outputs to improve integration, reach and maximising the return on investment.
- The Communications Manager took a lead role in the organisation of the biennial Australian Banana Industry Congress with the assistance of an events company employed by ABGC. A Project Management Committee and Planning Committee also assisted in formulating a program for the industry's largest national event.

Measure, Monitor, Evaluate and Refine

('See below in Monitoring and Evaluation)

Outputs

The following communication tools or outputs were delivered under the project's Program Logic framework, Communications Strategy (including a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – M&E) and Annual Operating Plans.

The project utilized diverse methods of communication in its focus to continue broad and inclusive engagement to all relevant stakeholders. During its three-year life span it adapted its outputs to provide multi-pronged information tools to best reach banana growers and industry stakeholders in the most effective means.

Australian Bananas Magazine

Full colour, 40-44 page national 'Australian Bananas' industry magazine was produced three times per year. Professionally edited, designed and printed, content was planned in advance (in line with the 3-year Communications Strategy and AOP). As well as being produced in hard copy (mailed nationally to all 600 banana growers and 150 other industry participants) the magazine was digitised on the ABGC website and indexed to allow easy access to past content. These can be found online at: https://abgc.org.au/news/australian-bananas-magazine/

E-bulletins:

Regular e-bulletins produced by the ABGC Communication team utilised existing links to industry, government, media etc and were underpinned by an up-to-date email distribution list (developed and maintained by ABGC). Grower e-bulletins were generally circulated fortnightly. They kept industry up-to-date with general issues/news affecting industry, as well as critically important news, such as the changing situation with Panama Tropical Race 4. These were sent to approximately 950 subscribed recipients and were uploaded to the ABGC website in a downloadable format. These can be found on the ABGC website at: https://abgc.org.au/news/grower-e-bulletins/

Website:

The industry website (www.abgc.org.au) was updated regularly with content, including project updates,

media releases, videos and general industry information. During the time of this project "Sessions" on the website

increased from 27069 for the 2016/17 financial year, to 38551 in 2018/19.

The amount of 'Users' of the site during this period increased from 18755 to 27621, respectively.

See **Appendix 2** – Analytics Data July 2016-June 2019 BA15005 – for a more indepth look an increased website engagement. The website (http:/abgc.org.au) is maintained as a source of all current and past research results

and industry news, to improve industry profitability. For this reason it is continually updated with latest information,

by the Commmunications Manager and the Senior Communications officer, working in collaboration with the

ABGC's Industry Strategy Manager and Research and Development Manager to ensure all content relating to

Best Management Practice, biosecurity and latest R&D is correct and up-to-date. Technical consultant (Morgan

Rural Tech) is commissioned when required to improve website useability and functionality and to enhance the

existing features of the site.

Media relations:

The project released regular media releases over the life of the project. These were distributed to an up-to-date

list of journalists and editors across the country via email.

In the responsive nature of media relations, ABGC Communication's staff liaised with journalists covering

issues in the industry in an ongoing 'as needs' basis.

The project also released pro-active announcements and other commentary to support and promote industry initiatives, results and other news. These media releases were researched and written by the Communications Manager and Communications officer, with advice on content from the Project Leader (ABGC CEO).

The project developed a proactive bank of newsworthy stories to further improve the reputation and positioning of the Australian banana industry. Media targets included media outlets in banana-growing locations as well as metropolitan and national media.

Social media – Facebook and Twitter

The project put more emphasis on social media as a platform to connect growers with other growers and to share information. "Likes" of the ABGC's Facebook page increased from 690 to 1820 over the three-year project.

The team produced Facebook material that promoted industry events and industry updates, grower-focused video content, media coverage achieved by media releases and grower-generated content.
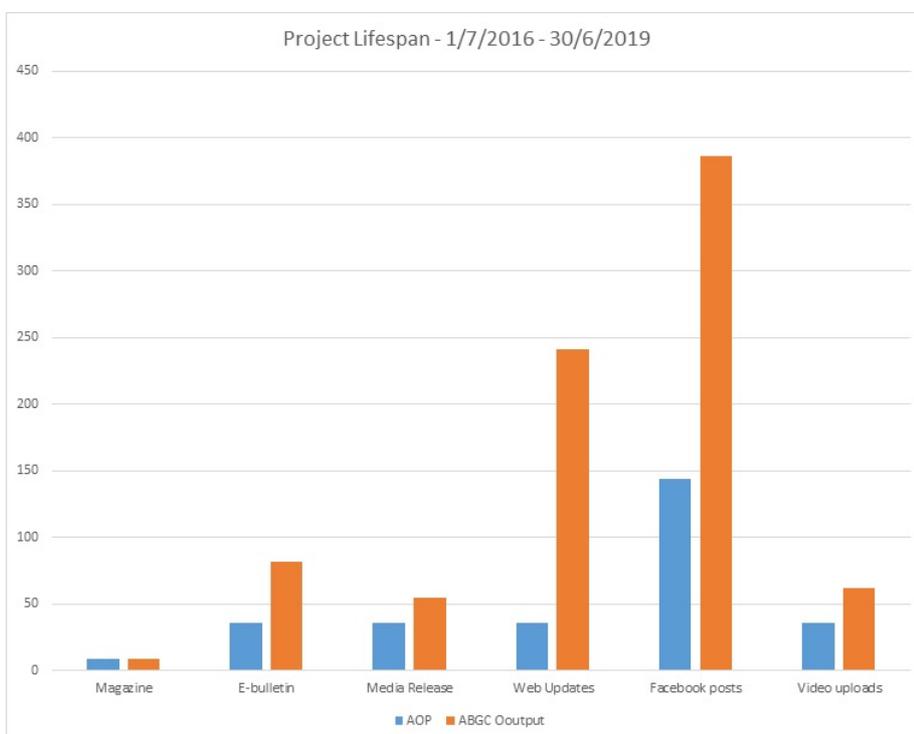
For annual Financial Year breakdowns of AOP verses Outputs – **See Appendix 1.**

SMS/Phone calls to growers:

The project continued to use the 'Your Connection' SMS notification system, which is an effective tool in communicating urgent and timely information directly to growers. Direct phone calls were also used to contact growers about extension events and grower-focussed meetings and workshops.

Events

The Communications Manager and Communications officer promoted and participated in a number of industry events.

These included Congress in 2019, the biennial industry RD&E Roadshows in mid-2018, Panama TR4-focussed grower workshops, as well as other key events for banana levy payers.

In addition, the Communications Manager assisted the ABGC-employed professional conference organiser – MCI - to ensure the biennial Banana Industry Congress was a success.

Mail-outs

The project used mail to send event invitations and other information produced and distributed to levy payers. This was undertaken to promote the grower roadshows, Congress, levy updates and when there was a serious biosecurity issue. This material was also loaded onto the industry website. Mail was sent to the current 950 registered subscribers, including growers, supply chain and other industry stakeholders. These were sent on a "as needs" basis.

Posters and Factsheets

The Communications team assisted in designing, editing and publishing posters and factsheets for the national extension project. It also ensured existing posters and factsheets were kept up-to-date.

Video

The project developed videos for social media, the ABGC website and YouTube as an effective means of raising awareness of ABGC events, industry issues and projects - including the national extension project – as well as other industry service providers and Hort Innovation Banana Marketing. In doing so the project ensured that useful content was viewed and shared on the ABGC website, with links to other platforms such as e-bulletins and Facebook.

These videos included;

Videos published on YouTube

- **1 August 2016** – Australian Banana Packing Championships 2016 – highlights from the event (supported by Australian Bananas and the ABGC) held at the Innisfail Show https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiDwIBHtxi0

- **21 November 2016** – ABGC BetterBunch Video – a video describing the benefits and how-to of the ABGC's BetterBunch system https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yj4YctUi-o

- **2 July 2017** – Nuffield Scholar Matthew Abbott - far northern banana grower Matthew Abbott of Rabbit Organics talks about his Nuffield Scholarship experience https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGlTykw0u2g

- **2 July 2017** – ABGC Opening Video Congress 2017 – a video celebrating the Australian banana industry to launch the 2017 event https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLXEAJ0gN84

- **2 July 2017** – Australian Banana Industry Congress 2017 – highlights package from Day 1 of the event https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i35Zk0upEF4

- **2 July 2017** – Australian Banana Industry Congress 2017 – highlights package from Day 2 of the event https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRqMgGpsKjs

- **2 July 2017** – Australian Banana Industry Congress 2017 – highlights package from Day 3 of the event https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPKgaRUU10g

- **27 February 2019** – Congress 2019 – The Venue – a video showcasing some of the reasons Congress 2019

  would be held at RACV Royal Pines Resort on the Gold Coast https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lor3CL6h2Xw

- **June 18, 2019** – Congress 2019 – Site Tours and Welcome Drinks (Day 1) – highlights from the pre-Congress tours and events https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOFwwMsjSWw

- **June 19, 2019** – Banana Congress 2019 – Day 2 – highlights from Day 2 of Congress 2019 – the first day of the plenary program https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceCYXnuZpLA

- **June 19, 2019** – Congress 2019 – Highlights from Day 3 – a wrap of the final day of the 2019 event
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbBFbjb1YPk

- **June 19, 2019** – Bananas in their Blood – a feature on the Next Generation of the banana industry (played at Congress 2019)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aS4CJiRR1P0

- **June 19, 2019** – Australian Banana Industry Congress 2019 - Opening Video – a feature on the

  Australian banana industry, played to officially launch the plenary sessions
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-B70ta4ndw

Industry Levy Information

An update promoting industry levy information was included in every edition of the Australian Bananas magazine since 2017. This information was supplied by the ABGC, CEO or AGBC's Research and Development Manager.

Outcomes

The main outcome from the Project was to ensure banana levy payers and other stakeholders received timely and effective communications, to allow for use in decision making for adoption of R&D and the supply of quality fruit. Again, this aligns with the vision of the Banana SIP to ensure the Australian banana industry is sustainable and profitable.

The project produced, managed and distributed electronic and printed publications and other materials and provided services to communicate industry work and achievements. The project also assisted with public comment required on industry issues and assisted with convening major industry events, such as the Australian Banana Industry Congress.

The project's major printed publication was the Australian banana industry's flagship publication, Australian Bananas magazine. It also produced other news-focused publications, such as the Banana Growers' e-Bulletin, electronic alerts and information materials such as industry videos, and fact sheets. The project also provided content and management for the industry website and facilitated the posting and management of online content for extension-focused industry projects.

A comprehensive Communications Strategy including an M&E Plan, stakeholder engagement plan and project risk management ensured immediate and end-of-year outcomes brought about significant objectives of the Banana SIP; including improved on farm behavioural changes; increased adoption of R&D and uptake of BMP; access to new and emerging information and technology; and improved product quality stimulated through R&D.

Under this over-arching Communications Plan, other significant outcomes included;

- Increased awareness of Hort Innovation's R&D investments and related programs by the Australian Banana Industry.
- Knowledge transfer to the banana industry value chain on research findings, best practice, emerging risks and opportunities
- Increased adoption of R&D program outcomes to build a strong, more resilient Australian banana industry
- Enhanced communication and sharing of knowledge and information of technical developments in the banana industry
- Increased understanding of the levy system and the role of Hort Innovation

Through this project banana growers and other key industry stakeholders received up-to-date information about industry issues, events and research via various mediums.

During an independent review of the effectiveness of the Banana Communications Project BA13003 in 2015, stakeholder surveys found that the program achieved strong levels of satisfaction.

In general, when asked about each of the key featues of the communications project (publications, website, SMS, Facebook page, videos etc) stakeholders were mostly positive regarding the usefulness, relevance, efficiency, variety, quality and frequency of information which is further evidence of grower and industry stakeholder satisfaction. We believe BA15005 has delivered even greater industry competency in the Communications Project, including its effectiveness at a project investment level.

Industry adoption of the Communications Program has been measured by a growth of engagement on the ABGC website and in social media updates; through media update, ie the number of media who maintain engagement/sign up for media releases; and through building the distribution numbers of the magazine, e-bulletins and SMS databases.

By reviewing google analytics, which is compiled for each Milestone report for the Program, uptake of the program outputs are measured through engagement levels on the website, Facebook and Twitter.

Similarly, activity reports can also be analysed to establish engagement rates with e-bulletins - including 'open' and 'click through' rates. Facebook 'engagement' and 'reach' is easily reviewed.

Targeted Program deliverables and strategies for adoption will have varied outcomes. Some applied outcomes from

R&D deliverables - including Best Management Practice adoption - will be immediate, while other outcomes will take between 5-10 years for maximum adoption. A stakeholder engagement plan has assisted the Communication Program to target messaging to growers' needs. Industry adoption hinges on a well-respected source of information, which ABGC has established over a long history of supplying reliable information to growers and industry more broadly.

Project Milestone reports were carried out and submitted to Hort Innovation every six months of the 3-year Project.

Each milestone report detailed deliverables and evidence of outputs meeting or exceeding those set out in the Annual Operating Plan.
Similarly, this Final Report submitted at the conclusion of the project includes progress reported against the Annual Operating Plan and the Project evaluated against the M&E plan.
By constantly reviewing the Program's deliverables versus outcomes, it has enabled the Communications Team to tailor communications activities to maximise KPIs.

Some of these changes have included;

- Updating all ABGC databases to ensure maximum reach for e-bulletins, mailouts, magazines and SMS.
- Extensive and continual updating of the ABGC website.
- Widespread consultation with growers and industry stakeholders on content delivery in the magazine.
- Greater focus on social media outputs to take advantage of this ever-evolving medium.
- Greater use of SMS as a direct communications tool to convey urgent or timely information to levy payers and industry at large.

Monitoring and evaluation

BA15005 has been, and will continue to be, measured, monitored and evaluated in regard to a number of parameters detailed in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan for the Program, contained in the Communications Strategy.

The M&E for the project covers a three-phase cycle of preparation, implementation and review.

- Firstly, in the preparation phase, the project's Program Logic was developed clarifying the project impact pathway, and how the project was expected to contribute to Hort Innovation goals and the relevant industry SIP outcomes.
- Scope of the project, including purpose and audience for the M&E, outlined who would use the M&E results and what they would be used for, with key evaluation questions (KEQs) guiding data collection.
- The implementation phase of the M&E plan provides for continual monitoring of progress, evaluation of impact and achievements and reporting to Hort Innovation.
- Review is done annually and at the end of the Program. This will allow an assessment of progress in delivering the targets identified in the Program outline; a review of management and delivery processes, refinements and improvements, and assessment of the effectiveness of the Program in delivering against outcomes specified in the project.

Some examples of parameters to monitor and evaluate are:

- Whether growers have made positive changes to their practices as a result of information provided, including those with economic, environmental and/or social impacts as articulated in the SIP.
- Stakeholder engagement with the Program, quality of the Program, stakeholder sentiment, opinion and feedback.

Monitoring and evaluation are critical components of project management enabling accountability, demonstrated performance, facilitating continuous improvement and supporting advocacy of R&D and marketing project outcomes.

As previously noted, targeted Program deliverables and strategies for adoption from the Communications

Project will have varied outcomes. Some applied outcomes from R&D deliverables, including Best Management Practice adoption will be immediate, while other outcomes will take between 5-10 years for maximum adoption.

End of project outcomes achieved through BA15005 include improved on-farm practice and behavioural changes; adoption of incremental improvements stimulated through R&D; increased knowledge and recognition of innovation and technology; and improved product quality through increasing levels of growers meeting minimum quality standards.

In the shorter term, project outcomes have included increased grower knowledge; greater marketing campaign reach and influence; on-farm training accessed by growers and implementation of quality standards within banana businesses.

Activities within the Communications Project which brought about desired – or tangible deliverables/outputs (products or services) included the design and delivery of Australian bananas publications, which promote and inform growers and other industry stakeholders of R&D results, new farm management protocols and standards, new technologies; and field trials and scientific variety results.

Strong levels of satisfaction regarding the effectiveness of the Banana Communications Project was recorded during an independent review of Project BA13003 in 2015.

In general, stakeholders surveyed during the mid-project review gave positive responses when asked about each of the key featues of the communications project (publications, website, SMS, Facebook page, videos etc). They were positive overall regarding the usefulness, relevance, efficiency, variety, quality and frequency of information provided inder the overarching communications strategy.

The ABGC believes BA15005 has delivered even greater industry faith in the effectiveness of the program, particularly at a levy-funded investment level.

Project Milestone reports were carried out and submitted to Hort Innovation every six months during the duration of the three year project.

Each milestone report detailed deliverables and output data showing that the Program either met or exceeded those targets set in the Annual Operating Plan.

While the ABGC Communications Team consistently exceeds its key deliverables outlined in the existing Banana Industry Communications Program AOP, it constantly strives to improve its effectiveness in protecting and promoting the national banana industry.

Efforts to build on the success of BA15005 deliverables will continue in the next Communications Project BA18001. As with BA15005, a key component of how this Communications Program will be managed is by consistently re-evaluating the programs' effectiveness, so that it consistently meets or exceeds milestone targets and delivers key program objectives effectively and efficiently.

Recommendations

Minor tweaks and changes to the existing blend of outputs should be made to continue to meet the needs of growers and improve their return on investment.

These include, but are not limited to;

Australian Banana Magazine

Continue to produce the magazine as a highly valued output, with the same frequency, quality of production and

mix of content.

E-bulletins:

Continue to distribute e-bulletins as a feature of any future communications project, given the strong return on investment (ie low cost per output), and positive feedback received from stakeholders on its timeliness and relevance of content.

Expand the reach of the e-bulletins by continually updating the existing email database and promoting e-bull content

on other printed and digital platforms.

Website:

Amend the ABGC website to ensure the best use of the homepage real-estate, including promoting ABGC's

social media platforms, videos and e-bulletins on the homepage..

SMS/Phone calls to growers:

Continue to use the SMS notification system to contact growers for urgent and timely matters. And continue to make direct phone contact to growers, should immediate action be required.

Facebook page:

Further leverage the Facebook page to build a platform to connect growers-with-growers and growers-with-industry partners to share information that can occur without the need for ABGC to facilitate the communication.

Establish a private 'grower-only' Facebook group that is an open forum for growers to openly discuss industry issues in a relaxed, non-public format.

Leverage access to latest R&D knowledge:

Seek greater synergies between other agencies that provide fundamental sources of R&D information such as DAF and Hort Innovation to access final report outcomes and other projects and initiatives. If provided to ABGC this information could be included in various communication outputs.

Intellectual property, commercialisation and confidentiality

ABGC holds existing intellectual property by way of grower and other stakeholder databases.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – AOP v Output Charts – BA15005

Appendix 2 – Analytics Data – BA15005

Appendix 3 – General Services

ABGC will deliver on the General Services required of Hort Innovation in this project.

ABGC will:

- Be accountable to the Hort Innovation contract manager and research manager for the provision of the services and deliverables in accordance with the services plan and agreement for services.

- Ensure the methodology processes, procedures and documentation used are robust, transparent and capable of withstanding independent scrutiny.

- Provide a single point of contact, the project leader as responsible for delivering the services.

- Bring issues that require consideration and/or decision by Hort Innovation to the Hort Innovation contract manager's attention as they arise, including options for their resolution which include the impact on the project, and recommend a course of action.

- Take all necessary action for and assist in effective and timely resolution of issues.

- Undertake project measurement and evaluation activities.

- Provide feedback and other information to Hort Innovation on issues and opportunities facing industry.

- Support Hort Innovation in achieving its Objectives and Strategies as required.

- Support Hort Innovation in achieving the industry's R&D and Marketing Objectives and Strategies.

- Provide information necessary for Hort Innovation's HALO project management system.

- Prepare six monthly milestone reports and a final report.

Breakdown

Chart 1: Reporting periods covering from 1/10/16 – 1/08/17
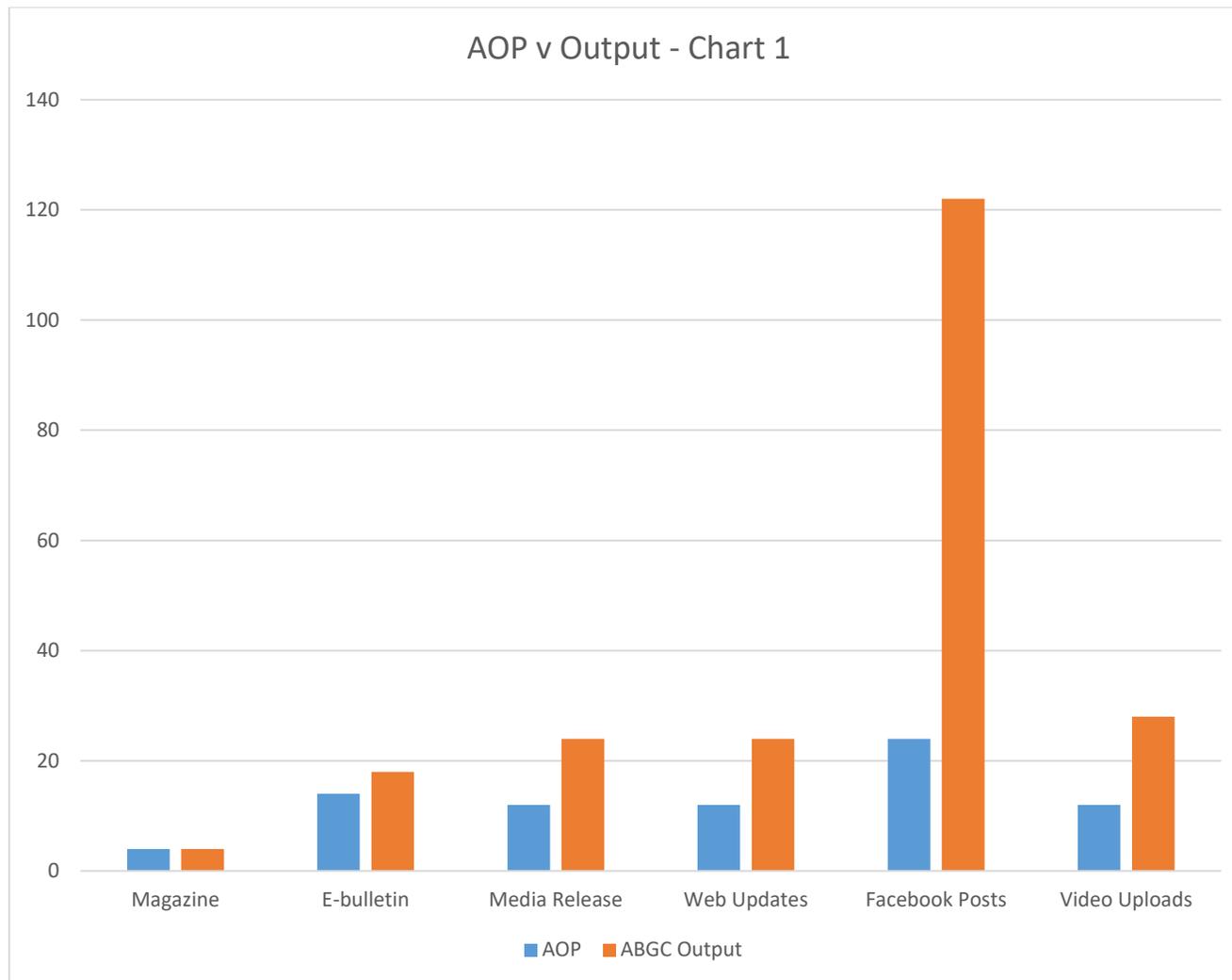
Chart 2: Reporting periods covering 1/08/17 – 1/07/18

AOP v Output - Chart 2

	Magazine	E-Bulletin	Media Release	Web Updates	Facebook posts	Video Uploads
AOP	3	14	15	12	36	12
ABGC Output	3	28	18	54	91	16

■ AOP   ■ ABGC Output
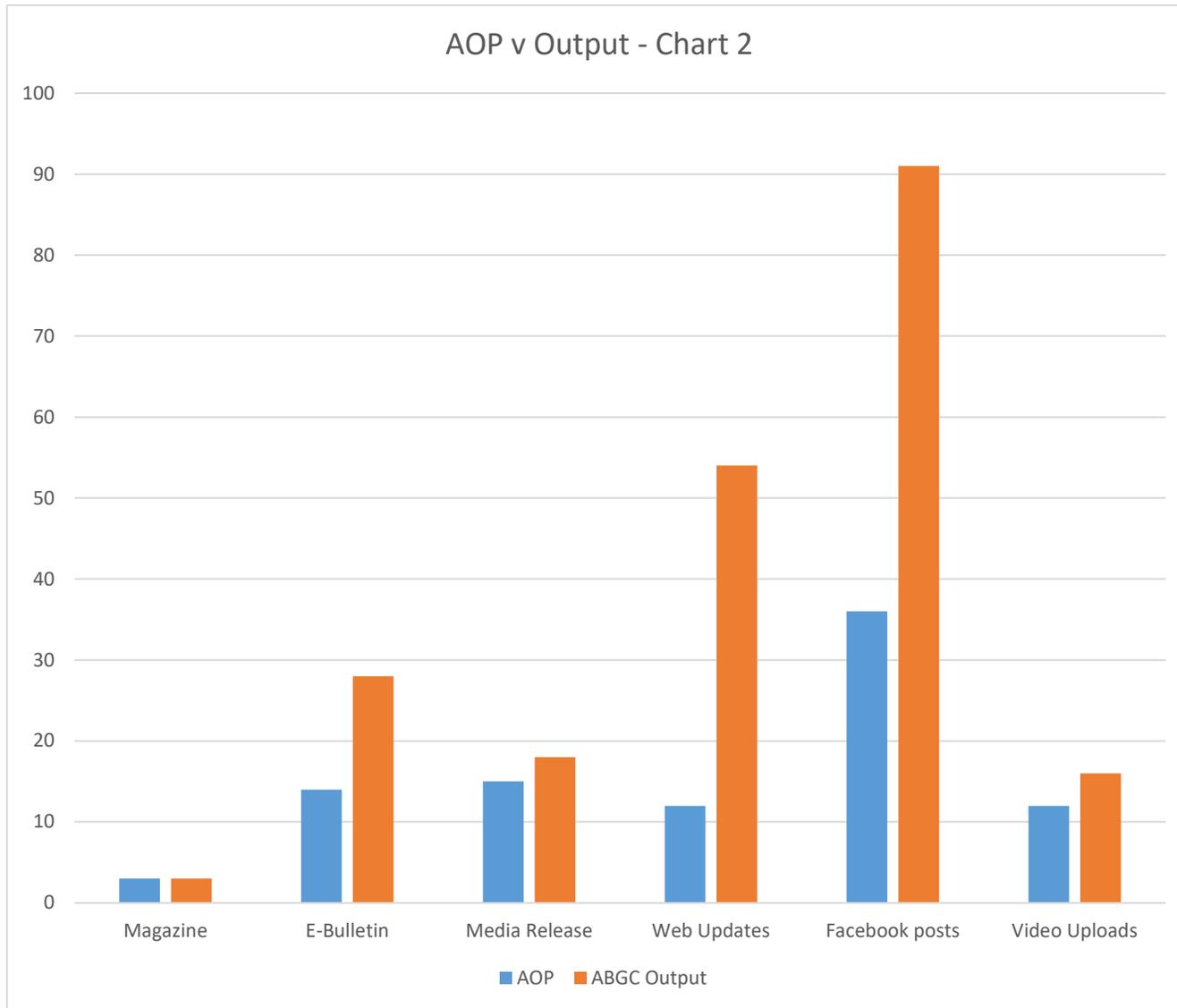
Note: Some website upload data was unavailable for this reporting period

Chart 3: Reporting periods covering 1/07/18 – 1/7/2019

AOP v Output - Chart 3

Magazine | E-bulletin | Media Release | Web Updates | Facebook posts | Video Uploads

■ AOP ■ ABGC Output
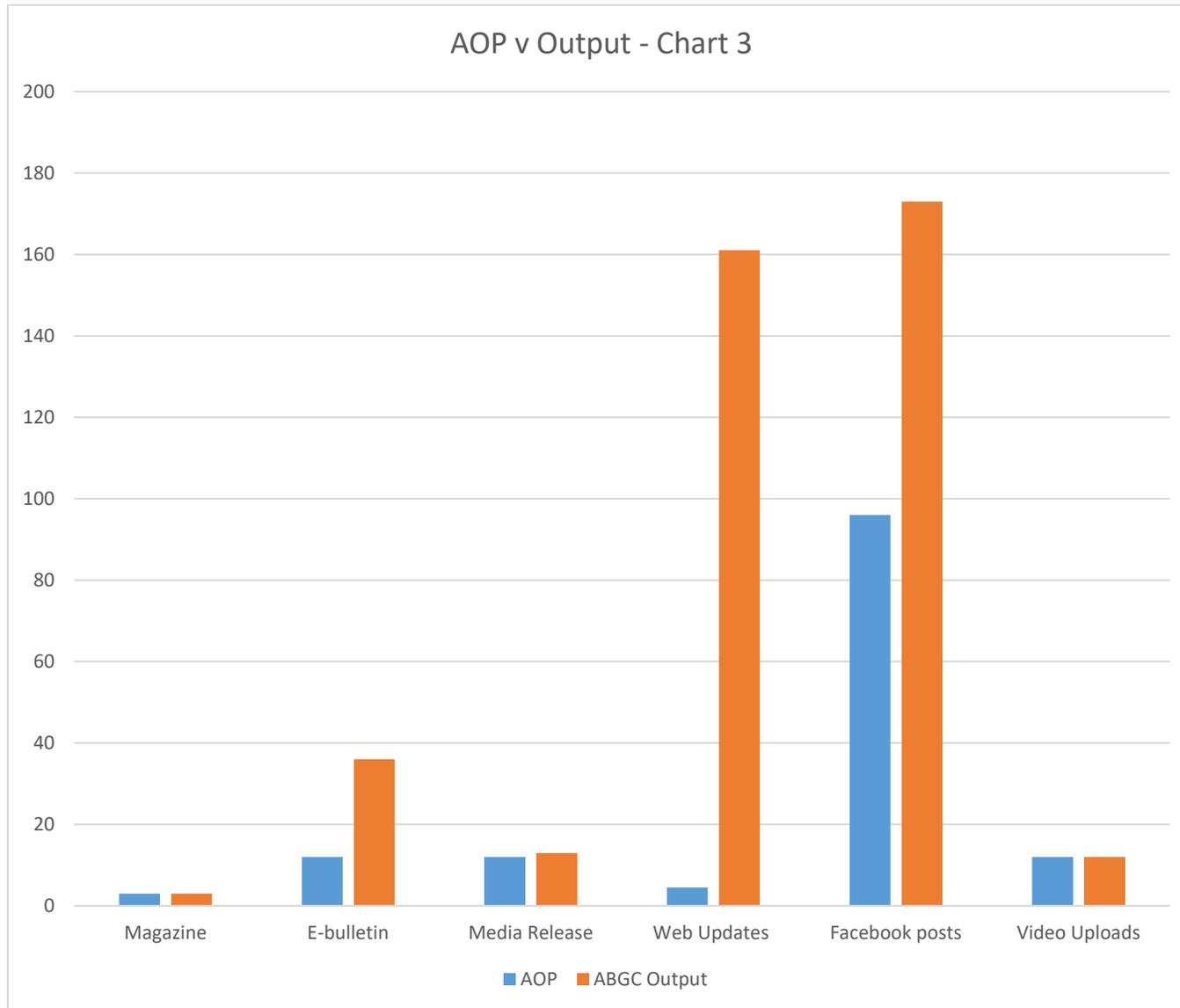
E-newsletters

- **Open Rate:** emails opened ÷ (emails sent – bounces).
- **Click-through Rate :** clicks ÷ (emails sent – bounces), essentially the percentage of people who clicked at least one time
- **Click to Open Rate:** clicks ÷ emails opened
- **Hard Bounce Rate:** Email that could not be delivered for permanent reasons.
- **Unsubscribe Rate:** the amount of readers that choose to unsubscribe from future engagement

Examples are based on specific EDM events in each year of the project, to provide an overarching view.

- The ABGC's e-bulletin has achieved a consistently excellent open rate.
- Subscriber numbers have consistently sat between 900-1000 people and, despite some minor fluctuations, have been increasing over the past six months.

Date	Average open rate (%)	Average click-through rate (%)	Average click-to-open rate (%)	Average hard bounce rate (%)	Average unsubscribe rate (%)
Jul 16 – 19 July 2016	38.79	22.16	0.22	26.71	0.51 (5 people)
Jul 17 – 26 July 2017	39.98	5.21	0.05	0.33	0
Jul 18 – 17 July 2018	42.71	15.59	0.16	0.21	0.32 (3 people)
Jun 19 **Last month of project**	43.01	9.22	0.09	0.83	0.21 (2 people)

Websites

- **Sessions:** number of visits to the website
- **Users:** number of people who visited the website
- **Unique visitors:** number of unique visits to the website
- **Returning Visitors:** People who return to the page
- **Bounce rate:** % of people who left the website after viewing one page
- **Pages/Session:** average number of pages viewed in a session
- **Top pages:** the best performing page on the website

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- **Key words:** top search words on the website
- **Average visit duration:** average amount of time views remain on the website
- **Top 3 referrals:** top places that traffic is being directed from
- **Traffic sources:** 4 broad categories that list where traffic is coming from: Direct, Organic search, Referral and Social.

Project lifespan:

Website	Time Period	Sessions	Users	Unique visitors (%)	Returning visitors (%)	Bounce rate (%)	Pages /Session	Top pages	Key words	Average visit duration (minutes)	Top 3 referrals	Traffic sources (%)
www.abgc.org.au	Jul 16 – Jul 19	95889	66330		14.3%	67.35%	2.04	www.abgc.org.au www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/history-of-bananas www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/key-facts		2.11	m.facebook.com facebook.com business.qld.gov.au	Google/organic (69.69%) Direct/none (19.2%) Bing/organic (3.23%)

Year by year breakdown:

Website	Time Period	Sessions	Users	Unique visitors (%)	Returning visitors (%)	Bounce rate (%)	Pages /Session	Top pages	Key words	Average visit duration (mins)	Top 3 referrals	Traffic sources (%)
www.abgc.org.au	Jul 16 – Jul 17	270069	18755		18.3	61.09	2.33	www.abgc.org.au www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/key-facts www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/history-of-bananas		2.21	m.facebook.com com.google.android.googlequicksearchbox promusa.org *	Google/organic (70.57) Direct/none (17.68) Bing/organic (3.16) *
www.abgc.org.au	Jul 17 – Jul 18	30396	20360		15.6	67.26	2.03	www.abgc.org.au www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/key-facts www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/history-of-bananas		2.21	m.facebook.com business.qld.gov.au facebook.com	Google/organic (68.76) Direct/none (17.24) m.facebook.com (4.33)
www.abgc.org.au	Jul 18 – Jul 19	38551	27621		14	71.82	1.86	www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/history-of-bananas www.abgc.org.au www.abgc.org.au/our-industry/key-facts		1.56	m.facebook.com business.qld.gov.au theconversation.com	Google/organic (68.63) Direct/none (20.95) Bing/organic (3.23)

Based on new users as user data was not available for this period

Facebook

- **Fan reach:** number of fans of the 'page'
- **Organic reach:** number of people, who have seen a given post
- **Paid reach:** reach gained through promotional boosting of material

- **Engagement:** Number of people who clicked anywhere in the post = Engaged users/Reached Users x 100
- **Negative feedback:** includes unlike and hiding a post/all posts

Month on Month examples:

- In July 2016, fan reach (Page 'likes') was 691. In July 2019, fan reach was 1828 – **an increase of 1137.**
- The Facebook page's engagement rates have steadily increased, but do vary based on subject content and format.

Month	Posts (total per month)	Fan reach (total)	Organic reach	Paid reach	Engagement (%)	Negative feedback
September 2016** **NOTE: metrics calculated differently during this milestone report	8	738	3,088	-	3442	-
September 2017	6	1007	10,490		8.45 %	-
September 2018	7	1467	3584	1335	14.64 %	-
June 2019 (final month of project)	4	1794	5279	-	15.7 %	-

Post examples:

Month	Content	Organic reach	Paid reach	Engagement (%)	Negative feedback
May 2019	Australian Banana Industry Congress Opening Video	13,555	-	5.19% (704 engaged)	1 Hide Post

				This video post was most viewed in one of our key target areas – Queensland.	
May 2019	National Banana Day photo from MacKays farming	4532	-	17.08%	Nil
February 2019	ABGC board visit to Coffs Harbour – photo	2155	-	3.9%	Nil
September 2018	Congrats to Lakeland grower for a farming award	139	-	40.29%	Nil
August 2018	Innisfail Race Day photos (Aus Bananas supported)	2014	-	40%	Nil
July 2018	Tully Show Weigh-In	2172	-	21.18%	Nil
June 2018	Mackays taking on the frozen fruit market	2434	-	31.02%	Nil
November 2017	Launch of the Banana Women's Network	6564	-	3.09%	Nil
September 2017	Video of grassed inter-rows in action	2477	-	32.54%	Nil
June 2017	Opening video for Congress 2017	21654	-	17.24%	3 Hide Post 2 Hide All Post
December 2016	Speaker announcement for Congress 2017	361	-	12.47%	Nil
November 2016	ABGC video supporting use of	2670	-	25.4%	Nil

	clean planting material				
July 2016	ABGC video of the Australian Banana Packing Championship	20679	-	17.61%	1 Hide Post 1 Hide All Posts

Twitter

- **Followers:** subscribers to your account
- **Impressions:** Number of times your tweet was viewed
- **Engagement:** Total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet
- **Engagement rate:** Engagement/Impressions

- Twitter has only featured in one prior milestone report and is relatively new to the ABGC fold.
- Currently, the ABGC account has 291 followers and is steadily increasing.

These analytics are based per tweet and are given as examples.

Industry	Tweet theme	Content	Impressions	Engagement	Engagement rate
Bananas (May 24, 2019)	Industry/R&D	Grower innovation at Congress	993	9	0.01
Bananas (May 23, 2019)	Industry	First official day of Banana Congress 2019	1041	50	0.05
Bananas (May 1, 2019)	Marketing	ABC Brisbane celebrating National Banana Day	6739	129	0.02
Bananas (Dec 17, 2018)	Industry	Latest edition of Australian Bananas magazine	710	25	0.04
Bananas (Aug 24, 2018)	R&D	New R&D website 'Better Bananas'	758	27	0.04

YouTube

- ABGC currently has 146 YouTube subscribers, and plans to expand this in the near future.

Analytics are based on individual videos as examples from the duration of the project, during which period, 12 videos (produced by ABGC) were uploaded to the ABGC YouTube Channel. Analytic detail **is based on the period from Jul 1, 2018 – Jul 1, 2019** (even where videos were published in previous years). This is due to the constraints of YouTube data.

Industry	Video title	Total Video Time	Views	Watch Time (mins)	Average View Duration	Impressions	Impression CTR	Sources
Bananas	ABGC Opening Video 2017 (originally published 3/7/2017)	7.08	97	309	3.11	1793	1%	External Youtube search Channel pages
Bananas	Nuffield Scholar Matt Abbott (originally published 3/7/2017)	3.50	74	166	2.14	404	3%	External Youtube search Channel pages
Bananas	Australian Banana Packing Championships (originally published 2/8/2016)	4.45	212	376	1.46	2092	4%	External Youtube search Browse feature
Bananas	Australian Banana Industry Congress 2019 – Opening Video (originally published 20/6/2019)	7.50	9	36	3.59	62	6%	External Direct or unknown Browse features