
2022/23 OPERATIONAL PLAN

Midlands Biosecurity Group



MARCH 30, 2022

MIDLANDS BIOSECURITY GROUP
Dandaragan Road, Dandaragan.

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INTRODUCTION

The Midlands Biosecurity Group (MBG) will initiate, promote and foster the control of Declared Pests in the Midlands region.

MBG will assist land owners and managers to adopt sound biosecurity practices and provide members with a forum to exchange information, advice and assistance. The group has been established in response to the growing concerns of local farmers about the impact of wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs and rabbits on their farming operations and the need for a co-ordinated response to the issue.

The Midlands Biosecurity Group was incorporated on the 19th of June, 2019 and continues to liaise with the community to raise awareness of the group, building on initial work conducted by the West Midlands Group that commenced in 2018.

By ensuring clear communication between all relevant stakeholders, the MBG will raise awareness of issues and ensure a multi-faceted approach to pest control. This will include Landholders, Local Government Authorities, State and Federal agencies, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions and relevant industry bodies.

The area supported by the MBG is seven local government areas and includes Dandaragan, Moora, Mingenew, Carnamah, Coorow, Three Springs and Irwin. This area covers 24,523 km² of which over 4003km² is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.



The Midlands Biosecurity Group was formed with the administrative support of the West Midlands Group. The West Midlands Group is a well-established grower group with a track record of managing project funding and reporting to funding bodies appropriately. An ongoing partnership between the two groups will allow for continued effective administration and communications.

The group is exploring all options for future funding of the group's operational plan and is currently implementing its second operational plan in 2021/22, funded through a declared pest rate. The Declared Pest Rate allows for locally collected funds to be matched 1:1 with state government funding. These funds can only be spent in the group's specified and prescribed area of operation.

At the Group's Annual General Meeting held on the 5th of October 2021, MBG members endorsed the groups 2022/23 Operational plan, including a total DPR budget of \$334,000. Additional funding sources from the Commonwealth Camera Monitoring project (\$46,200) and the joint Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association feral pig management project (\$37,500) have been included in this plan. The WA Wild Dog action plan funding is unconfirmed at this stage, and as such has not been included.

The MBG Board of Management has moved to request the implementation of a Declared Pest Rate as follows:

The Midlands Biosecurity Group recommends that the Minister of Agriculture and Food (as per legislation) determines an Ad Valorem rate for the financial year commencing 1 July 2022, on the unimproved land value, on land in the local government areas of Irwin, Three Springs, Mingenew, Carnamah, Coorow, Moora and Dandaragan that is:

- a) *freehold land,*
- b) *a minimum 100 hectares,*
- c) *with a minimum \$100 per VEN*
- d) *to a budget of \$167,000*

This operational plan identifies how the funds will be spent. This system will provide our communities with guaranteed annual funds and sustainability to address priority declared pests using current best practice management techniques.

This operational plan details the organisation's activities including the budget considerations. The plan promotes integrated vertebrate pest control by promoting and providing support for control of foxes, wild dogs, feral pigs and rabbits. The plan also links to the MBG Wild Dog management plan and Midwest Feral Pig Management strategies. These management plans aim to reduce to risks to agricultural production from the impacts of wild dog and feral pig activity through education, co-ordination and on-ground best practice control.

OBJECTIVES

The objects and purposes of the Midlands Biosecurity Group as described in the group's constitution are to:

- initiate, promote and foster the control of Declared Pests under section 165 of the BAM act in the Designated Area;
- encourage landholders and other persons to adopt sound biosecurity practices throughout the Designated Area;
- foster the sustainable development of the Designated Area;
- encourage the control of pests other than Declared Pests in the Designated Area;
- identify direct or indirect funding sources that can be made available for the development of the objects and purposes of the Association;
- provide Members with a forum to exchange information, advice and assistance where appropriate; and
- undertake any activity that the Board of Management shall from time to time determine to be in furtherance of the objects of the Association

HISTORY & BOARD MEMBERS

The decision to form a Biosecurity Group was made in December 2018 by local farmers and industry due to concerns around increasing numbers of Wild Dogs and Feral Pigs. The Interim Board had farmer representatives from throughout the region and regular meetings were held to start the RBG process and define the future objectives of the MBG. On the 6th of December 2019, the MBG members elected its first official Board of Management at its inaugural Annual General Meeting.

Board member terms are 3 three years, with retirement dates staggered at the first AGM to ensure continuity of board members. The current MBG board members are listed below.

Board Director	Role	Shires Farming
1. Callum Scott	Board Director	Carnamah
2. Peter Summers	Board Director	Irwin
3. Charles Wass	Chairperson	Coorow
4. Christine Brown	Board Director	Moora, Dandaragan
5. Carl Forward	Board Director	Irwin, Mingenew
6. Chris Patmore	Board Director	Irwin, Three Springs
7. Will Browne	Board Director	Coorow
8. Maria Griffiths	Deputy Chairperson	Mingenew, Dandaragan
9. Geoff Hortin	Board Director	Three Springs, Carnamah, Coorow
10. Chris O'Callaghan	Board Director (Non-voting)	MBG Co-ordinator

STAKEHOLDERS

Identified stakeholders of the MBG include, but are not limited to:

- Local Landholders in the Shires of Moora, Dandaragan Coorow, Carnamah, Three Springs, Mingenew and Irwin.
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (formerly DAFWA)
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (formerly DPAW)
- Shire of Moora, Dandaragan, Coorow, Carnamah, Three Springs, Mingenew, Irwin.
- State Natural Resource Management Program
- Northern Agricultural Catchment Council
- Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management
- Adjacent Shires (Gingin, Chittering, Victoria Plains)
- Australian Wool Innovation Limited
- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Livestock firms (Elders, Landmark, Primaries)
- Adjacent Recognised Biosecurity Groups (Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association, Northern Biosecurity Group)
- Iluka Resources
- Tronox Ltd.

FUNDING

The Midlands Biosecurity Group has attracted funding from a number of different sources, these are:

Past Funding:

Australian Wool Innovation: 2019 Wild Dog Funding. \$34,000 over 6 months. This funding provided a contribution to the West Midlands Group Wild Dog control program. Finished June 2019.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development: Development of Midlands Biosecurity Group for Recognition. \$100,000 over 18 months. The purpose of this grant is to contribute to a large-scale, multi-tenure response to declared pests and includes, Biosecurity Group support, communications, capacity building, research and monitoring and evaluation. Finished June 2020.

Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme: Wild dog eradication Grant. \$168,000 over three years. The purpose of this grant is to ensure landholders are well-supported in their wild dog control

efforts, through co-ordination with neighbouring landholders, and other stakeholders such as local government and the state departments of Biodiversity, Conservations and Attractions and Primary Industries and Regional Development. Finishes June 2022.

National Drought Funding: Wild dog action plan. \$250,000 over 1 year. The purpose of this funding is to provide enhanced wild dog operations in the shires of Gingin, Victoria Plains, Lower Chittering, Moora, Dandaragan, Coorow and Carnamah, preventing further establishment in areas to the south. Finished Oct 2020.

WA Wild Dog Action Plan Funding: Wild Dog Funding. \$25,000 over 12 months. Funding is a state government contribution to Wild Dog management in the Midlands Region. Funds LPMT time. Finished June 2021.

Australian Wool Innovation: In December 2020, AWI committed \$38000 to the group to complete landholder training activities for vertebrate pests. This is due to be complete in June 2022.

WA Wild Dog Action Plan Funding: Wild Dog Funding. \$25,000 over 12 months. Funding is a state government contribution to Wild Dog management in the Midlands Region. Funds LPMT time. Finishes June 2022

CWBA Feral Pig Project:

Funding for a collaborative feral pig project covering the shires of Mingenew and Morawa. \$30,000 for 2021/21.

Financial Year 2023 Funding

Commonwealth Pest Funding: 2 year project supporting an array of cameras with supporting facial recognition technology to monitor declared pest activity in the region. \$77,000 over two years. Finishes 2023.

CWBA Feral Pig Project:

Funding for a collaborative feral pig project covering the shires of Mingenew and Morawa. \$37,500 for 2022/23.

FORECAST BUDGET 2022-23

RBG BUDGET TEMPLATE (GST ex)

INCOME	DETAIL/NOTES	DPADPR	Other Sources
Rate revenue		167,000	
Govt matching		167,000	
Additional DPA		-	
Reserve fund	Allocated carryover	-	
Carryover		-	
Interest		-	
Total DPADPR		334,000	
Commonwealth	DPIRD Camera monitoring project		46,200
WA WDAP	DPIRD Wild Dog Action Plan - Unconfirmed		
CWBA	CWBA Morawa Pig Project		37,500
			-
			-
Total- Other sources			83,700
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE			417,700
plus Expected Carryover			

EXPENDITURE	DETAIL/NOTES	DPADPR	Other Sources
Program 1 - Wild Dogs & Foxes			
	Co-ordinated Baiting Programs including:	29,000	-
	Poison & Traps		
	Signage		
	RCP		-
	LPMT Contract	72,000	46,200
	Total Program 1	101,000	46,200
Program 2 - Feral Pigs			
	Co-ordinated Feral Pig Control Program including:	74,500	-
	Poison		
	RCP		-
	LPMT Contract		
	Signage		
	Aerial Shoot		-
	Co-ordination - Morawa - Mingenew Feral Pig Program	37,500	37,500
	Total Program 2	112,000	37,500
Program 3 - Rabbits			
	Community Rabbit Baiting Program including:	10,000	-
	Poison		-
	RCP		
	LPMT Contract	3,000	-
	Total Program 3	13,000	-
Program 4 - Community Engagement			
	Community consultation activities/workshops including:	15,000	-
	Materials/Stationary		-
	Communications contractor	-	-
	Equipment		
	Workshop/meeting costs		
	Total	15,000	-
Program 5 -Governance & Administration			
	Executive Officer Contract	51,000	
	Administration Costs including:	12,000	-
	Meeting costs,		-
	Communications		
	Software subscriptions		
	Insurance		-
	Travel		
	Professional Development for staff.		-
	Contingency	30,000	-
	Total	93,000	-
TOTAL COST		334,000	83,700
GRAND EXPENDITURE			417,700
OUTCOME			-

PLANNED PROGRAMS 2022-23

Program 1 Wild Dogs & Foxes				
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Bait Rack & Monitoring Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPMT Time - Dried Meat Baits - RCP's - 1080 - Strychnine - Signage - Traps - Cameras 	<p>At least 10,000 wild dog strength baiting products deployed (baits, CPEs, Traps)</p> <p>At least 10 cameras deployed to monitor the region for declared pests.</p>	\$29,000	<p>March-April</p> <p>September-October</p>
LPMT Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPMT Contract 	LPMT/s Contracted. (Total includes Camera monitoring project)	\$118,200	July-June
TOTAL			\$147,200	

Program 2 Feral Pigs				
<i>Action</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Co-ordinated Integrated Feral Pig Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grain - Poison - LPMT - Cameras - Signs - RCPs - Aerial Shoot - Traps 	<p>At least 40 baiting sites implemented in hotspot areas.</p> <p>Camera Monitoring implemented across MBG area.</p>	\$74,500	<p>Baiting: Jan-April</p> <p>Oct-Dec</p> <p>Aerial Shoot: February and/or July</p>
Morawa-Mingenew Pig Program Co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPMT Time 	100 day LPMT Contracted (includes CWBA Morawa Pig Project Contribution)	\$75,000	July-June (Ongoing monitoring)
TOTAL			\$149,500	

Program 3 Rabbits				
<i>Action</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Community Rabbit Baiting Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPMT Time - Grain - Poison - RHDV - Baiting Trailer - RCP's - LPMT time 	<p>At least 20 landholders engaged in co-ordinated baiting program.</p> <p>At least 8 RHDV release sites.</p>	\$13,000	February - March
TOTAL			\$13,000	

Program 4 Community Engagement				
<i>Action</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Budget</i>	

Community Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting and Field Day attendance - Brochure - Workshops - Social Media - Print Media - Website - Newspapers - Mail Out - E-newsletter - Communications contractor 	<p>DPR is supported across all shires.</p> <p>Annual General Meeting held annually.</p> <p>At least 6 E-newsletters produced.</p> <p>Website maintained</p>	\$15,000	<p>Field days and workshops: August-September</p> <p>AGM: October</p> <p>Letter to landholders: March</p> <p>See consultation timeline for more detail.</p>
TOTAL			\$15,000	

Program 5 Governance & Administration				
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Executive Officer 	Executive Officer services contracted	\$51,000	July-June
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IT - Insurance - Travel - Office Space - Bookkeeper - Data Management - Reporting & Auditing Costs - Admin/Comms - Meeting costs - Staff Professional Development 		\$12,000	
Contingency			\$30,000	
TOTAL			\$93,000	

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION TIMELINE

Month	Planned Activity	Medium	Purpose
February 2022	RCP & Pest Control Workshops	Workshop	Consultation & Inform
	Feral Pig Control Information	Social Media, Local Papers	Inform
	Rabbit Control Information	Social Media, Local Papers	Inform
	Information for Domestic Dog Owners	Local Papers	Inform
March 2022	Wild Dog/Fox Bait Rack Days	Bait Rack workshops	Participation
	Letter to Midlands Region Ratepayers (Operational Plan)	Mail Out	Inform
	Local Farmer Q&A	Local Papers, Enews	Inform
	MBG Update	Local Papers	
April 2022	Wild Dog/Fox Control Information	Social Media, Local Paper	Inform
May 2022	MBG Update	Local Papers	Inform
	DPR Information	Local Papers	Inform
June 2022	Wild Dog/Fox Control Information	Social Media, Local Papers, MBG Enews	Inform
July 2022	Wild Dog/Fox Control Information	MBG Enews, Local Paper	Inform
	MBG Update	Press Release, Local News	Inform
August 2022	Mingenew Expo	Presence, Brochures	Consultation & Inform
	Dowerin Field Day	Presence, Brochures	Consultation & Inform
	DPR Information	Local Papers	Inform
September 2022	Community Wild Dog/Fox Bait Rack Days	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media	Participation

	Grower Group Spring Field Day's	Presence, Brochure, Demonstration	Inform
	MBG Annual General Meeting	Email to Members, Local Papers	Inform
October 2022	MBG Annual General Meeting	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media	Consultation & Inform
	Rabbit Control Information	Local Papers	Inform
December 2022	Rabbit Control Information	Local Papers	Inform
	Feral Pig Control Information	Local Papers	Inform
	DPR Information	Local Papers	Inform
November 2022	Rabbit Control Information	Local Papers	Inform
	MBG Activities Update	Local Papers	Inform
February 2023	Community Rabbit Baiting Program	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media	Participation
March 2023	Community Feral Pig Control Program	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media,	Participation
	MBG Update	Enews	Inform
	Local Paper Update	Local Papers	Inform
	Letter to Midlands Region Ratepayers (Operational Plan)	Mail Out	Inform
April 2023	Community Wild Dog Bait Rack program	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media	Participation Consultation & Inform
	DPR Information	Local Papers	
June 2023	MBG Enews Update	MBG Enews	Inform
	Local Paper Update	Local Papers	Inform

BAITING CALENDAR

JAN	FEB	MARCH	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	Rabbit	Feral Pig	Wild Dog/Fox					Wild Dog/Fox			

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Goal	Timing	Detail	Who
Regular column in local papers/e-news	July, September, October, February, March, June	<p>Papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badgingarra Sandpaper • Dandaragan Redgum • Coorow Squawk • Northern Valleys News • On the Mat Carnamah and Eneabba • Craytales Jurien Bay • Leeman/Greenhead Snag Island News • Three Springs Yakabout • Moora Herald • Mingenew Matters • Dongara-Denison Local Rag • Watheroo Wag Tails 	Comms + EO
Regular E-News Update	July, September, October, February, March, June	<p>Local paper content to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Baiting Day information • Activities updates • Restricted Chemical Permits • Latest Information/Research • Declared Pest Rate 	Comms + EO
Mail Out	March	Operational Plan & Group update.	Comms + EO
MBG card (digital + printed)		What and where to report sightings. For WMG staff and MBG Board to distribute as needed.	Comms + EO
Twitter Handle	Regular Posts with latest information & activities	See @midlands_group	Comms
Facebook Page	Regular Posts with latest information & activities	Search Midlands Biosecurity Group	Comms

Presentations to Local Government as required/requested	Ongoing	Provision of updates and progress of the group.	EO + DPIRD support
Community Baiting Day(s)	February, March, April September	Conducted at known feral pest hotspots.	EO, Dogger co-ordinator, LPMT's, Board
MBG Website/Webpage update	July	Content added as received. DPR information, operational plans, contact details etc.	Comms
Board Members Communication	Ongoing	Board member are key communicators in the designated area. Inform the community of group activities	Board
Landholder Training	As requested	Training to complete RCPs, improve control strategies, governance, provide feedback to researchers.	EO
Brochure	August	Update MBG brochure annually to ensure information stays relevant and catchy	EO + Comms.
Flyer	September	Flyer developed for community notice boards.	Comms
Identification of Key Stakeholders	On going	Identify and inform key stakeholders of group activities. Collaborate where appropriate with other groups including Mingenew-Irwin group, Liebe Group, NACC, DBCA, WA Police.	

