



Strategic Plan

2018 - 2021

CENTRAL WHEATBELT BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

1	Introduction.....	2
1.1	Our aim.....	2
1.2	Objectives.....	2
1.3	Background to the CWBA.....	3
2	Why the strategic plan is required	3
3	Relevant Legislation and Agreements	3
4	Roles and Responsibilities	4
5	Principles of Invasive Species Management.....	4
6	Species to be targeted	5
6.1	Wild dogs.....	5
6.2	Foxes.....	5
6.3	Feral pigs	5
6.4	Rabbits.....	5
7	Summary of CWBA objectives and strategies	6
8	Objectives, strategies and actions.....	7
9	Reference material	10
	Appendix 1. Key stakeholders.....	11

1 Introduction

The Strategic Plan (the Plan) for the Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association Inc (CWBA) identifies the strategic directions of the CWBA over the coming three years to direct the management of declared pests in the Shires of Morowa, Perenjori, Dalwallinu and Koorda. It's based on identified needs of stakeholders and payers of the Declared Pest Rate (DPR) and aligns with a range of industry and strategic plans. The plan provides guidance for the on-ground operations of the group, as contained in its annual Operational Plan.

The plan incorporates local knowledge obtained through stakeholder consultation, along with data and management principles developed by Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), through key documents such as the 'Invasive Species Plan for Western Australia' and the 'Invasive Species Position Statement'.

It's designed to most effectively use the group's resources to manage priority declared pests and to assist the group to meet its responsibilities under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 (BAMA).

This collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach to invasive species management will enhance the coordination of:

- On-ground activities to manage priority biosecurity threats;
- Training, education and awareness raising opportunities; and
- Collaborative arrangements with government and non-government stakeholders to identify, manage and mitigate high priority feral pest threats.

1.1 Our aim

Effective management of feral pests in the Central Wheatbelt

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the CWBA cover three core themes:

- Management
- Engagement and Collaboration
- Measurement.

Management

- a. Develop and implement proactive, best practice strategies to reduce the effects of declared pests (wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs and rabbits) on private and public lands

Engagement and collaboration

- b. Increase stakeholder participation and encourage landholders and the broader community to adopt sound biosecurity practices
- c. Provide members with a mechanism to exchange information, advice and assistance where appropriate
- d. Encourage and support collaboration for declared pest management in adjacent shires and regions

Measurement

- e. Observe, assess, and report on the progress concerning the reduction of negative impacts of declared pests.

1.3 Background to the CWBA

The CWBA is a recognised biosecurity group that has a key role in assisting landholders to manage declared pests across its operational area. Bait racks have been established to target the worst affected areas. The group has contracted Licenced Pest Management Technicians (LPMT's) to work on affected farms, pastoral land and crown land to reduce stock attacks and losses. CWBA also runs bait rack days to produce free 1080 meat baits for landholders, as well as funding free rabbit bait mixing days to combat the feral pests which affect our land and livelihood

The CWBA is supported by a part-time Executive Officer. It receives financial backing from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (PIRD), Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), the State Governments' Royalties for Regions program and the Shires of, Dalwallinu, Koorda, Morowa and Perenjori.

It is an incorporated organisation formed from the previous Central Wheatbelt Declared Species Group, which was initiated by local landholders in 2012 in response to escalating dog attacks on livestock in the area. To date, the CWBA has played a key role in ensuring farmers can continue to stock sheep in the Central Wheatbelt region.



2 Why the strategic plan is required

Data from a range of sources shows that the area that the CWBA operates across has significant populations of declared animal pests that pose substantial environmental and economic risks to privately held farmland, unallocated Crown land and river systems.

The plan covers declared pests occurring on land within the four shires area and is consistent with the principles of pest management and reflective of National and State pest management strategies and the guidelines for pest management.

Implementation of this plan will help agricultural businesses within the four shires to become robust and viable through improved productivity and increased income associated with reduced stock losses and effective declared pest management practices.

3 Relevant Legislation and Agreements

On state and national levels, the primary legislation relevant to this plan are:

- Local Government Act (1995)
- Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (BAM) Act 2007
- Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity (2012)

The *Local Government Act* provides for a system of local government within Western Australia. The *BAM Act* provides the legislative framework to provide effective biosecurity and agriculture management for the State. The main purposes of the BAM Act and its regulations are to:

- Prevent new animal and plant pests (vermin and weeds) and diseases from entering Western Australia.
- Manage the impact and spread of those pests already present in the state.

- Safely manage the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals.
- Increase control over the sale of agricultural products that contain violative chemical residues.

The *Intergovernmental Agreement on Biosecurity*, is an agreement between the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, with the exception of Tasmania. The Agreement was developed to improve the national biosecurity system by identifying the roles and responsibilities of governments and outlines the priority areas for collaboration to minimise the impact of pests and disease on Australia’s economy, environment and the community. (Refer to Section 6 for the species targeted by the CWBA).

4 Roles and Responsibilities

In line with the above Acts and Agreements, the roles and responsibilities of key project stakeholders are outlined below.

Entity	Roles and responsibilities
CWBA	Provide leadership in management of declared species in the region.
	Collaborate with landholders and government agencies to develop and implement strategic, landscape-wide management programs for invasive species.
	Participate in coordinated, targeted invasive species control activities with relevant agencies.
Private land occupiers, owners and managers (also termed as landholders)	Control invasive species on their own landholdings.
	Participate in biosecurity group and RBG programs and initiatives.
Community groups including regional NRM groups, grower groups and biosecurity groups	Provide services in invasive species management in line with funded programs.
Utilities and government authorities	Manage invasive species on land held by utilities (e.g. Water Corporation) and government authorities.

5 Principles of Invasive Species Management

The principles of invasive species management for land within the project area are:

1. **Integration** - Invasive species management is an integral part of managing natural resources and agricultural systems.
2. **Public awareness** - Public awareness and knowledge of pests should be raised to increase the capacity and willingness of individuals to manage pests and report new infestations.
3. **Commitment** - Effective management requires a long-term commitment by the community, industry groups and government entities.
4. **Consultation and partnership** - Consultation and partnership arrangements between local communities, industry groups, State government agencies and

local governments should be explored in order to achieve a collaborative approach to invasive species management.

5. **Planning** - Invasive species management planning must be consistent at local, regional, State and national levels to ensure resources address priorities for pest management as identified at each level.
6. **Best Practice** - Management must be based on ecologically and socially responsible practices that protect the environment and the productive capacity of natural resources.
7. **Improvement** – Understanding research about invasive species pests, along with regular monitoring and evaluation of control activities, is necessary to improve pest management practices.

6 Species to be targeted

Declared animal pests being targeted by the CWBA are wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs and rabbits.

6.1 Wild dogs

Wild dogs continue to cause livestock losses across the Central Wheatbelt. Whilst reductions in wild dog populations has occurred through the activities of the CWBA, ongoing work is essential to keep populations at a level that will enable ongoing, profitable livestock operations across the region.

Management of wild dogs is in alignment with the *Western Australian Wild Dog Action Plan 2016-2021*. This is an 'industry led and driven plan that considers the economic, environmental and social impacts of wild dogs and identifies the key issues for managing them across Western Australia. The plan is designed to protect the livestock and tourism industries and public safety, and recognises the ecological and cultural values of the dingo.'

6.2 Foxes

Foxes are an ongoing problem causing livestock losses in certain areas of the Central Wheatbelt. A flow-on benefit of wild dog management is in foxes eating and being killed by dog baits. The CWBA is looking at a range of options, based the community coordinated biosecurity group model, which places private landholders at the centre of controlling declared pests on their land. This means practical management requires landholders working together to coordinate their control efforts.

6.3 Feral pigs

Feral pigs are an emerging problem within the boundary of the Shire of Morowa. They're causing substantial damage to farmland and native vegetation as well as attacking new-born lambs.

6.4 Rabbits

Rabbits compete with livestock and native animals for pasture and food, damage crops and native vegetation, and cause erosion.

7 Summary of CWBA objectives and strategies

OBJECTIVES				
Develop and implement proactive, best practice strategies to reduce the effects of declared pests (wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs and rabbits) on private and public lands.	Increase stakeholder participation and encourage landholders and the broader community to adopt sound biosecurity practices.	Provide members with a mechanism to exchange information, advice and assistance where appropriate.	Encourage and support collaboration for declared pest management in adjacent shires and regions.	Observe, assess, and report on the progress concerning the reduction of negative impacts of declared pests.
STRATEGIES				
Reduce wild dog and fox numbers to reduce stock losses.	Undertake targeted stakeholder consultation re the DPR.	Tailor information to different needs of stakeholders.	Target key groups to leverage good pest management outcomes.	Dogs and foxes - collect usable data.
Reduce pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by rabbits.	Encourage a 'best practice' approach to management and control.	Use rack days and workshops to promote value of involvement in feral pest management.	Maintain strong working relationship with DPIRD.	Rabbits – establish baseline of control impacts.
Reduce livestock, pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by feral pigs.				

8 Objectives, strategies and actions

OBJECTIVE A: Develop and implement proactive, best practice strategies to reduce the effects of declared pests (wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs and rabbits) on private and public lands.

Strategy 1: Reduce wild dog and fox numbers to reduce stock losses.	Strategy 2: Reduce pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by rabbits.	Strategy 3: Reduce livestock, pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by feral pigs.
Actions		
A1 Ongoing engagement and resourcing of LPMTs and Coordinators.	A1 Resource and coordinate annual community baiting programs.	A1 Assist identification of high density areas and resource control on a pilot basis.
A2 Community bait days in autumn and spring.	A2 Community bait days in autumn and spring.	A2 Support community baiting for affected landholder group.
Measures of Success		
Increased productivity within member's businesses (e.g. increased lambing percentages; decreased stock losses; reduced dog numbers) attributed to wild dog and fox management.	Pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by rabbits is reduced.	Grower feedback from affected areas; Baseline of numbers and dispersion.

OBJECTIVE B: Increase stakeholder participation and encourage landholders and the broader community to adopt sound biosecurity practices.

Strategy 1: Undertake targeted stakeholder consultation re the DPR.	Strategy 2: Encourage a 'best practice' approach to management and control.
Actions	
A1. Produce and directly distribute a flier outlining the DPR process and benefits to all key stakeholders across the four shires.	A1. Promote a consistent approach to the planning process for the management of wild dogs, foxes, feral pigs and rabbits.
A2. Develop a more detailed information kit, including online video and FAQs to be available via email and download from the CWBA website. Promote via the CWBA Facebook page and Twitter.	A2. Promote the development of plans that minimise control impacts on non-target species.
A3. Address stakeholder meetings (e.g. Shires, NRM and grower groups) and workshops re the DPR.	A3. Develop a strategic species management plan for the region with the community.

A4. Promote the DPR through advertising and articles in all local newsletters and newspapers. Offer radio interviews.	
Measures of Success	
DPR is supported across the four shires.	Target species are controlled humanely.

OBJECTIVE C: Provide members with a mechanism to exchange information, advice and assistance where appropriate.

Strategy 1: Tailor information to different needs of stakeholders.	Strategy 2: Use rack days and workshops to promote value of involvement in feral pest management.
Actions	
A1 Identify key stakeholders that CWBA needs to keep informed and level of engagement needed.	A1 Use multi-media promotion of permit days and rack days.
A2 Tailor information provided to the needs/concerns identified.	A2 Use neighbours and EO to enlist non-active growers.
A3 Produce quarterly newsletter includes summary of data re dog activities and impacts from LPMTs and Coordinator.	
A4 Map showing LPMT activity updated each year.	
Measures of Success	
Information pack produced and utilised.	Increased participation in rack days. Landholders control pests on own land.

OBJECTIVE D: Encourage and support collaboration for declared pest management in adjacent shires and regions.

Strategy 1: Target key groups to leverage good pest management outcomes.	Strategy 2: Maintain strong working relationship with DPIRD.
Actions	
A1 Work with biosecurity groups such as NBG, Meekatharra and EWBG re boundary issues, contributions and management plans.	A1 Utilise DPIRD resources (e.g. biosecurity officers, financial planning and mapping).
A2 Work with DBCA to verify MOU.	A2 Maintain reporting and meet DPR requirements.

A3 Work with NRM and Grower groups and agencies to leverage resources.	A3 Provide an avenue for feedback to community and DPIRD on key feral management issues.
	A4 Identify the resources (e.g. data base) that would be of benefit to DPIRD.
Measures of Success	
Agreement on responsibilities for feral pest control across group boundaries.	Support from DPIRD maintained.

OBJECTIVE E: Observe, assess, and report on the progress concerning the reduction of negative impacts of declared pests.

Strategy 1: Dogs and foxes - collect usable data.	Strategy 2: Rabbits – establish baseline of control impacts.
Actions	
A1 Data collection from LPMTs is consistent and current across areas they cover.	A1 Use data from growers participating in baiting programs.
A2 Landholder data collection occurs through LPMT coordinator.	A2 Focus on growers that are permit-holders via surveys and calls.
A3 Sheep losses via quarterly data collection from core group of growers across four shires.	
A4 Use data in reporting impact to stakeholders.	
A5 Information reporting used in proof of value.	
A6 Data gathered used in future planning and resource allocation.	
A7 Identify what other groups (e.g. NACC, Wheatbelt NRM, Bush Heritage, Mt Gibson) are doing re data collection and how CWBA can access or utilise it.	
A8 Encourage growers to utilise Feralscan.	
Measures of success	
Consistent and accurate data is gathered and used for decision making.	Better understanding of rabbit numbers and impacts.

9 Reference material

Draft Threat Abatement Plan for Competition and Land Degradation by Rabbits. Australian Government. Department of Environment, 2015.

Invasive Species Plan for Western Australia 2015-2019. DAFWA, 2015.

Invasive Species Position Statement. Priority Declared Species – Agricultural Impact. DAFWA, 2015.

National Wild Dog Action Plan. WoolProducers Australia, 2014.

Northern Agricultural Region NRM Strategy, 2015 – 2020. Aspirations, Goals and Strategic Actions. NACC, 2013.

Western Australian Biosecurity Strategy 2016. DAFWA, 2016.

Western Australian Wild Dog Action Plan 2016-2021. DAFWA, 2016.

Appendix 1. Key stakeholders

Stakeholders of the CWBA include, but not limited to:

- Local Landholders in the Shires of Dalwallinu, Koorda, Perenjori and Morawa
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (Formally DPAW)
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Formally DAFWA)
- Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
- Alterra Ltd (Formally Carbon Conscious)
- Shire of Dalwallinu
- Shire of Koorda
- Shire of Perenjori
- Shire of Morawa
- Adjacent Shires (Wongan Ballidu, Moora, Coorow, Yalgoo, Mount Marshall, Trayning, Wyalkatchem, Carnamah, Three Springs)
- Australian Wool Innovation Limited
- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Livestock firms (e.g. West Coast Livestock, Paul Gatti, Stan Hathway, Elders, Landmark, wool agencies)
- Australian Wildlife Conservancy - Mt Gibson Sanctuary
- Bush Heritage Australia - Charles Darwin Reserve
- Gindalbie Metals Badja Station.