



2024- 2025



# OPERATIONAL PLAN

1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

V2.0\_January 2024

# Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>HISTORY</b> .....	2
<b>AIMS AND OBJECTIVES</b> .....	3
<b>STAKEHOLDERS</b> .....	4
<b>PROGRAM FUNDING AND FORECAST EXPENDITURE 2023-2024</b> .....	5
<b>PROGRAM DETAILS AND OUTCOME STATEMENTS</b> .....	9
<b>OPERATIONAL PLAN TIMELINE</b> .....	12
<b>TARGET SPECIES BAITING CALENDER</b> .....	12
<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b> .....	13

## INTRODUCTION

The CWBA is a Recognised Biosecurity Group and has a key role in assisting landholders to control declared pests in the area of management. This area is currently defined as the Shires of Dalwallinu, Koorda, Morawa and Perenjori which encompasses a full area of 21,901 square kilometres.

The CWBA encourages landholder and Shire involvement in a broad scale, coordinated approach for effective pest control, targeting wild dogs, red foxes, European rabbits and Feral Pigs as well as other declared pests seen as a priority for the community.

The CWBA successfully implemented its first Declared Pest Rate in 2018-2019. The funds raised through the DPR are matched dollar for dollar by the WA State Government. DPA funds can only be spent within the area they are collected and on declared pests prioritised by the community.

The CWBA request the Minister for Agriculture and Food to approve a Declared Pest Rate (DPR) in the Shires of Dalwallinu, Koorda, Morawa and Perenjori for 2024-2025 of:

*The CWBA requested the Minister for Agriculture and Food to approve an ad valorem rate Declared Pest Rate for 2024-2025 of 0.0457 cents in the dollar on the unimproved value of freehold land in the local government districts of Dalwallinu, Koorda, Morawa and Perenjori, that is no less than 100 hectares in area with a minimum rates payable amount of \$87.*

The 2024-25 rate will see a 4.8% increase and a \$4 raise in the minimum payable rate. This adjustment is crucial for CWBA to address rising costs attributed to continuous Consumer Price Index hikes (noting that 4.8% is not in line with CPI inflation), ensuring effective program delivery that meets stakeholder expectations.

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 pests using current best practice management techniques.

This Operational Plan details the organisations activities including the budget considerations. This plan will link to the CWBA pest management plans or state or national pest management plans which further detail best practice management of these declared pests.

The CWBA will continue to assist landholders in the control of these declared pests using funding by the Declared Pest Rate in 2024-2025 to the best of its abilities with the resources available to our organisation.

## HISTORY

The CWBA is a Recognised Biosecurity Group (RBG) and has a key role in assisting landholders to control declared pests in the area of management. It was formed in 2017 from the previous Central Wheatbelt Declared Species Group (CWDSG) servicing the Shires of Koorda, Dalwallinu and Perenjori. The CWDSG was formed by local landholders in 2012 in response to escalating Wild Dog attacks on livestock in the area. Bait racks were formed to target the worst affected areas. The Shire of Morawa joined the CWBA in 2017.

The group managed to obtain funding and since then has worked hard with this funding to contract Licenced Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) to work on affected farms, pastoral land and crown land night and day to reduce stock attacks and losses. CWBA also runs bait 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 encourages landholder, government and industry involvement in a broadscale, coordinated approach for effective pest control targeting Wild Dogs, Foxes, European Rabbits and Feral Pigs as well as other declared pests seen as a priority for the group as advocated for by the community.

A Declared Pest Rate was first considered by the Association in 2016 as a mechanism to provide guaranteed annual funds and sustainability to address priority pests using proven and up to date management techniques. The Board undertook a process of consultation, deliberation, modelling and a rationale between considering implementing a flat rate versus an ad valorem rate and as they saw it chose ad valorem as the most fair and equitable rating model for implementing a DPR in the Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association at this point in time. This is reviewed, members consulted and modelled annually by the Board of Management.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

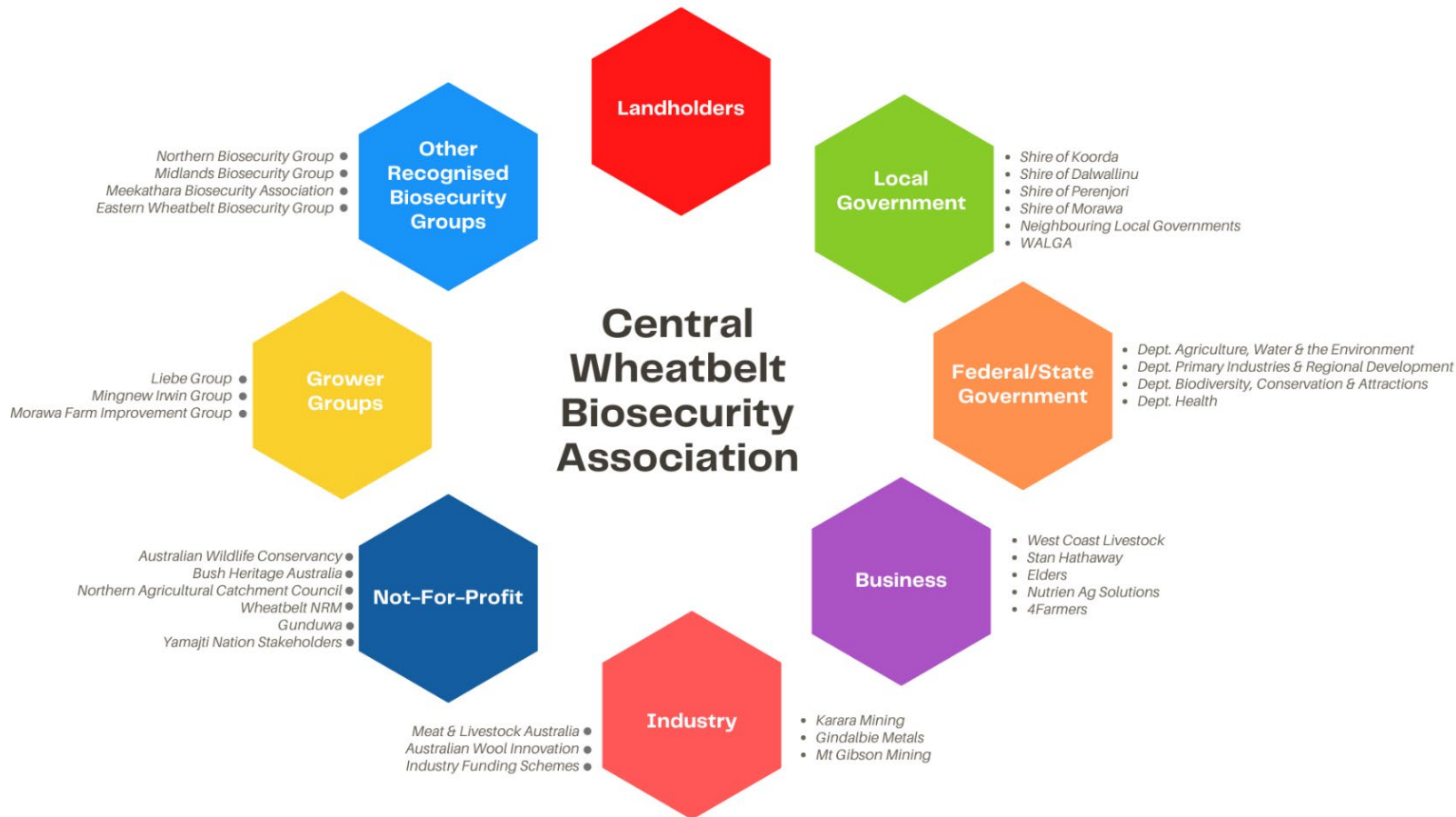
The [Strategic Plan](#) (the Plan) for the Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association Inc (CWBA) identifies the strategic directions of the CWBA over the coming three years to direct the management of declared pests in the Shires of Dalwallinu, Koorda, Morawa and Perenjori. It's based on identified needs 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 aims and objectives of the CWBA cover three core themes of Management, Engagement and Collaboration and Measurement; they are:

1. Develop, implement proactive strategies and report on the progress of reducing the effects of declared pests including but not limited to wild dogs, feral pigs, rabbits and foxes.
2. To increase stakeholder participation and encourage landholders and the wider community to adopt sound biosecurity practices and provide members with a forum to exchange information, advice and assistance where appropriate.
3. To implement best practice declared pest management on private and public lands in the area of management
4. The CWBA would welcome the opportunity to support declared pest management in adjacent shires and consider for inclusion in the CWBA specified area of control (or management) with other shires in the future allowing CWBA coordinated pest control over a broader area.
5. Grow and engage management strategies to minimise future impacts on landholder properties.
6. Apply best practice management on private and public lands.
7. Boost landholder participation, both private and public.
8. Observe, assess, and report on the progress concerning the reduction of impacts.
9. Deliver practical and encouraging community consultation to broaden stakeholder awareness.

## STAKEHOLDERS

Engaged stakeholders are crucial to the successful implementation of the CWBA Strategic and Operational Plans. The CWBA recognise that stakeholders may not all have the same objectives for Declared Pest management, but landholder/land manager obligations must be met as stated under the BAM Act and the CWBA are keen to work with individual stakeholders to manage expectations and meet its objectives. Identified stakeholders of the CWBA include, but are not limited to:



## PROGRAM FUNDING AND FORECAST EXPENDITURE 2024-2025

The table/s below outlines the anticipated income and proposed program expenditure that the CWBA will implement, and the funds required as of 2024-2025 financial year in line with DPIRD reporting requirements.

INCOME	DETAIL / NOTES	DPAD/DPR	Other Sources
Rate revenue		186,839.30	
Govt matching		233,549.07	
Additional DPA		TBC	
Reserve fund			
Interest		120.00	60.00
Allocated Unspent Funds	Unspent 23-24 DPA Funds - allocated	19,672.44	
Unallocated Unspent Funds	Unspent 23-24 DPA Funds - unallocated	-	
<b>Total DPAD/DPR</b>		<b>\$ 440,180.81</b>	
DPIRD			
Royalties for Regions	R4R Wild Dog Grant		62,500.00
	R4R Research Grant		34,800.00
Carryover	CWBA Inc. funds carry over from past Local Government contributions.		130,583.98
	Grants		39,188.02
<b>Total Other sources</b>			<b>\$ 267,132.00</b>
<b>Total Funds Available</b>			<b>\$ 707,312.81</b>

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>DPADPR</b>	<b>Other Sources</b>
<b>Program 1: Wild Dogs &amp; Foxes</b>		
LPMT Contractors	199,850.04	109,599.96
LPMT Coordinator	6,000.00	
Aerial Baiting	40,000.00	
Bait Manufacture	26,600.00	
Poisons & Traps	5,250.00	
Monitoring	3,000.00	
RCP Permits	375.00	
<b>Total Program 1</b>	<b>\$ 281,075.04</b>	<b>\$ 109,599.96</b>
<b>Program 2: Feral Pigs</b>		
LPMT Contractors	40,000.00	
Aerial Shooting	30,000.00	
Other control activities	20,000.00	
RCP Permits	750.00	
<b>Total Program 2</b>	<b>\$ 90,750.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Program 3: European Rabbit</b>		
LPMT Contractors	4,950.00	
Bait Manufacture	10,000.00	
RCP Permits	375.00	
<b>Total Program 3</b>	<b>\$ 15,325.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>



<b>Program 4: Community Engagement</b>			
Communication & Community Engagement Activities	Workshops, Field days, Surveys, Partnership, Letters to Ratepayers	6,300.00	
Training			13,200.00
Materials	Website	1,470.00	
Equipment	Signage	2,000.00	
Consultation for operational plan (DPR)		1,600.00	
<b>Total Program 4</b>		<b>\$ 11,370.00</b>	<b>\$ 13,200.00</b>
<b>Program 5: Governance &amp; Administration</b>			
Executive Officer		46,080.00	
Travel & Accommodation		10,920.00	
Superannuation		3,840.00	
Meeting costs			3,000.00
Professional		6,894.00	1,000.00
Insurance		26,000.00	
Board Development, Training & Sitting Fees			
Overheads			3,528.00
<b>Total Program 5</b>		<b>\$ 93,734.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,528.00</b>
<b>Total Cost of Programs</b>		<b>\$ 492,254.04</b>	<b>\$ 130,327.96</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>			<b>\$ 622,582.00</b>
<b>OUTCOME</b>			<b>\$ 84,730.81</b>

**Notes to Funding Program and Forecast Expenditure:**

1. The Income Govt matching only allows for the maximum 4.8% increase from 2023-24 cents in the dollar rate, with out going to community and Minister's consultation under the BAM Act 2007 (requirement under the regulations for any rate increase over 5%). At January 2024, DPIRD has provided modelling for a 0.0457 cents in the dollar rate and predicate a rate revenue of \$233,549.07. This rate increase is crucial for CWBA to address rising costs attributed to continuous Consumer Price Index hikes, ensuring effective program delivery that meets stakeholder expectations.
2. The income Rate revenue only allows for an 80% payment the predicted rate revenue of the DPR by landholders in the CWBA region. This is a DPIRD policy, but the CWBA anticipate a much higher payment rate by its landholders based on past data.
3. The additional DPA figure is currently unknown as the funds available in the CWBA Declared Pest Account (DPA) held by DPIRD is currently unknown. The CWBA had identified an error in the DPA financial statements over 18 months ago and advised DPIRD, this has led to the DPIRD identifying an error in their financial system which is currently being resolved through a whole of system reconciliation process. They have advised that until the reconciliation process is completed, they will not have accurate financial information for the DPA.

Whilst the CWBA does have sufficient own funds to cover the planned expenditure for the 2024-25 Operational Plan, it is not the intention of these organisations' own funds to be used to fund the 2024-25 Operational Plan, and it is expected that a drawdown of DPA funds will be needed of approximately \$52,000.00 to successfully implement the 2024-25 program activities. It is intended that once correct DPA statements are issued by DPIRD, that the CWBA will submit a variation request to DPIRD to request additional DPA funds for the 2024-25 Operational Plan.

## PROGRAM DETAILS AND OUTCOME STATEMENTS

The tables below outline the program details and outcomes for each of the Declared Pest species.

<b>Program 1 – Wild Dogs &amp; Foxes</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce Wild Dog and Fox numbers to reduce stock loss.</li> </ul>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input</b>	<b>Success/Measurement</b>
1. Aerial Baiting Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 days helicopter &amp; LPMT services</li> <li>5,000 Dried Meat Baits.</li> </ul>	5,000 baits laid in identified hard to access areas.
2. Community Wild Dog Bait Rack Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LPMT time</li> <li>50,000 Dried Meat Baits</li> </ul>	2 Bait Rack Activities (March/April & September) 50,000 Dried Meat Baits made and laid. Increase in productivity in livestock stakeholder's business.
3. Poisons & Traps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50 Traps</li> <li>1080 Poison</li> <li>Strychnine</li> </ul>	Traps and Poisons purchased
4. LPMT Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinator</li> </ul>	LPMT Coordinator engaged.
5. LPMTs Contracted for on-ground works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx. 330 LPMT days.</li> </ul>	LPMTs contracted and days worked.
6. RCP Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx. 10 RCP Permits/Amendments</li> </ul>	No. of successful valid RCP Permits

<b>Program 2 – Feral Pigs</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce livestock, pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by Feral Pigs.</li> </ul>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input</b>	<b>Success/Measurement</b>
1. Coordinated Feral Pig Control Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Coordinator</li> </ul>	No. landholders participate Landholder feedback from affected areas.
2. Coordinated Control Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LPMT Time</li> <li>Grain</li> <li>Poison (1080 One Shot Bait)</li> <li>Traps</li> <li>Cameras</li> </ul>	No. Feral Pigs poisoned. No. Feral Pigs trapped. No. landholders participate Landholder feedback from affected areas.
3. Coordinated Aerial Cull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire of accredited helicopter, pilot and shooter.</li> </ul>	No. Feral Pigs shot.
4. RCP Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx. 6 RCP Permits/Amendments</li> </ul>	No. of successful valid RCP Permits

<b>Program 3 – European Rabbit</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce livestock, pasture, crop and remnant vegetation damage caused by European Rabbits.</li> </ul>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input (Money/HR Required)</b>	<b>Success/Measurement</b>
Community Rabbit Baiting Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LPMT Time</li> <li>Grain</li> <li>Poison (1080 One Shot Bait)</li> </ul>	No. landholders participate Km Bait laid Reduction in damage caused by rabbits.
RCP Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx. 6 RCP Permits/Amendments</li> </ul>	No. of successful valid RCP Permits

<b>Program 4 – Community Engagement</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake targeted stakeholder consultation re: DPR</li> <li>Encourage a “best practice” approach to management and control of Declared Pests.</li> </ul>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input (Money/HR Required)</b>	<b>Success/Measurement</b>
Consult and communicate with community about the DPR.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brochure/Flyer/Letter</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Social Media</li> <li>Information</li> <li>Address Stakeholder Meetings</li> <li>Local Paper adverts/articles</li> <li>Survey</li> </ul>	DPR is supported across the four shires.
Provide members with information and a mechanism to exchange information, advice and assistance where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly Newsletter</li> <li>Workshops/Training</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Social Media</li> </ul>	Target species are controlled humanely. Landholders control pests on own land. Increase in participation

**Program 5 – Governance & Administration****Outcome:**

- Good organisational reporting and financial governance are achieved.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input (Money/HR Required)</b>	<b>Success/Measurement</b>
Administration and leadership are provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive Officer</li><li>• Directors</li><li>• 3 Board of Management meetings.</li></ul>	Good organisational governance.
Collect usable data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feral Scan</li></ul>	Consistent and accurate data is gathered and used for decision making
Meet all reporting requirements and financial obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual Report produced.</li><li>• Bookkeeper</li><li>• Financial Reporting and Audit completed.</li></ul>	Transparent and accountable reporting documentation.

## OPERATIONAL PLAN TIMELINE

MONTH	PLANNED ACTIVITY	SUCCESS/MEASUREMENT
July 2024	Financial Audit	Audit successfully completed.
July 2024	CWBA Board of Management Meeting.	
August 2024	Coordinated Feral Pig Control Cull	No. Feral Pigs Shot
September 2024	Community Wild Dog Bait Rack Program	No. Baits Made and No. landholders participated.
September 2024	Wild Dog Aerial Baiting Program	No. Baits laid
October 2024	CWBA Annual General Meeting and Board of Management Meeting	Annual Report tabled. No. attendees, feedback received.
February 2025	CWBA LPMT Meeting	LPMTs attend.
February 2025	CWBA Board of Management Meeting	
February 2025	Community Rabbit Baiting Program	No. landholders participate. Kms Bait laid
February - March 2025	Community Feral Pig Control Program	No. landholders participate. Kms/No. Bait laid
March – April 2025	Community Wild Dog Bait Rack Program	No. Baits made No. landholders participate
April 2025	CWBA Board of Management Meeting	
June 2025	CWBA LPMT Meeting	LPMTs attend.

## TARGET SPECIES BAITING CALENDER

June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May
Winter			Spring			Summer			Autumn		
<b>Community Control Program</b>											
		Feral Pig	Wild Dog					Rabbit	Feral Pig	Wild Dog	

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The CWBA will undertake community engagement as both a process and an outcome to guide decision making, relationship development and capacity building.

As a part of the operational plan we will undertake a range of consultation, information, participation, collaboration and empowerment of its stakeholders. To answer the following questions:

*Has the community had an opportunity to provide input into the plan?*

*Are we providing the services the community needs?*

*Is the community well connected and involved with the organisation?*

*How does the community feel about us?*

*Has the community changed its behaviour?*

We have identified some key community engagement opportunities for 2024-2025 as well as a range of annual and on-going community engagement strategy products that are available to the organisation to assist us to continually answer the above questions.

## Summary of 2024-2025 Key Community Engagement Opportunities

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>PLANNED ACTIVITY</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>SUCCESS/MEASUREMENT</b>
All Year Round	CWBA Facebook Group (all year round)	Social Media	No. Members Engagement
August 2024 – September 2024	Attend identified Spring Field Day events within the region.	Presence/Stand	Inform
		Presence/Stand	Inform
September 2024	Community Wild Dog Bait Rack Program, CWBA Wild Dog Plan	Liebe Newsletter, Local Papers, Email, Social Media	Participation & Empowerment– No. landholders.
	Liebe Spring Field Day - min. Brochure available.	Presence/Stand	Inform
October 2024	CWBA Annual General Meeting	Meeting	Inform -
	CWBA Newsletter.	Members, Social Media, Local Papers	Inform – distribution, % open rate.
February 2025	Community Rabbit Baiting Program	Liebe Newsletter, Local Papers, Email, Social Media	Participation & Empowerment – No. landholders.
	CWBA Newsletter.	Members, Social Media, Local Papers	Inform – distribution, % open rate.
March 2025	Community Feral Pig Control Program	Mingenew-Irwin Group, Local Papers, Email, Social Media	Participation & Empowerment – No. landholders.
	CWBA Newsletter.	Members, Social Media, Local Papers	Inform – distribution, % open rate.
	Letters to Ratepayers – DPR, Operational Plan and CWBA Wild Dog Plan.	Mail Out	Consult – No. responses/feedback.
April 2025	Community Wild Dog Bait Rack Program, CWBA Wild Dog Plan	Liebe Newsletter, Local Papers, Email, Social Media	Participation & Empowerment– No. landholders.
	DPR Notices in local papers	Local Papers, Email, Social Media	Inform & consult - No. responses/feedback.
June 2025	CWBA Newsletter	Members, Social Media, Local Papers	Inform – distribution, % open rate.



## CWBA Communications and Engagement Strategy Products 2024-2025

#	Goal	Type*	Stakeholder/Target	Resources Needed	Timeline	Responsibility
1	<b>Website</b> Current and up to date website <a href="http://www.cwba.org.au">www.cwba.org.au</a>	Inform	General Public/ Wider Community	Website	6 months	Executive Officer
2	<b>Facebook Page</b> Engage with and inform the community through Social Media	Inform	General Public/ Wider Community	Facebook	As identified appropriate	Executive Officer
3	<b>Facebook Group</b> Involve and inform the community through Social Media using a private group.	Involve	CWBA Stakeholders	Facebook	As identified appropriate	Executive Officer with support from DPIRD
4	<b>Presentations</b> Presentation to Local Governments and Community Groups as requested.	Inform	CWBA Stakeholders	Executive Officer	Annually	Executive Officer with support from DPIRD
5	<b>Information Flyer</b> Current flyer and/or a poster to be used for field days and advertised at local shops for group key messages and contact details	Inform	Advertising for Events for anyone in the community/ area of management	Executive Officer, printing supplies	6 months	Executive Officer

#	Goal	Type*	Stakeholder/Target	Resources Needed	Timeline	Responsibility
6	<b>Pull Up Banner</b> Pull Up CWBA banner made available for use in all communities.	Inform	Advertising for Events for anyone in the community/ area of management	One banner per each Shire	6 months	Executive Officer
7	<b>Bait Rack Days</b> Use Bait Rack Activities/Days as a way of receiving feedback from the community and to consult with the community and encourage group cohesion	Consult	Landholders who attend the bait rack days	Executive Officer to liaise with most appropriate personnel to attend - Rack Coordinators send information to those they have as attendees	On going - Twice Yearly	Executive Officer, Dogger Coordinator, Bait Rack Coordinator and Directors
8	<b>Local Papers &amp; E-News</b> Quarterly E-news to stakeholders with current information and updates.	Inform	CWBA Stakeholders	Executive Officer	Quarterly	Executive Officer
9	<b>Word of Mouth</b> Word of mouth opportunity to consult with the community	Consult	Area of Management community	General conversation	On going	BoM Directors
10	<b>Landholder Training</b> Landholder training and workshops on pest management and control activities as requested by landholders.	Empower	Landholders	Facilitation and technical expertise as identified.	As identified	Executive Officer
11	<b>Word of Mouth</b> Board Directors are key messengers from each Shire/area as a key contact/messenger to distribute and receive information	Consult	Area of Management community	Board Directors	On going	BoM Directors
12	<b>Survey</b> Distribute a community survey for the group to establish a base line for future follow up	Consult	Wider Community and Area of Management Community	Executive Officer, email network, Survey Monkey	1 year	Executive Officer

#	Goal	Type*	Stakeholder/Target	Resources Needed	Timeline	Responsibility
13	<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b> Identify key stakeholders and identify opportunities to work within those groups	Consult	Wider Community and Area of Management Community, NACC, Liebe Group, NEFF, EWBG, MRBA	Executive Officer	On Going	Executive Officer
14	<b>Species Management Plan</b> Develop a strategic species management plan for the region with the community, review annually.	Involve/Participate	Area of Management community, DAFWA	Workshop in conjunction with DPIRD & community in key locations	1 year	Executive Officer
15	<b>Partnership Opportunities</b> Identify where partnerships could be made targeting key groups to leverage funds and good pest management outcomes	Collaborate	NACC, Liebe Group, Mingenew-Irwin Group, Meekatharra, Eastern Wheatbelt	Australia wide	1 year	Executive Officer

## **Communications and Engagement Strategy Type explanation**

### Inform – “provide information” – only a one-way conversation

At its core, ‘informing’ is the most elementary and simplest engagement goal. Informing goal communicates that you will provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them with understanding the problem or issue you are focusing on, alternatives to addressing the problem or issue and/or solutions. Informing is generally one-way and primarily involves communicating information about an issue, decision, or process to citizens (DSE & DPI, 2013). A key to informing citizens is to provide them with the most balanced, impartial information as possible (DSE et al, 2013). The limiting characteristic of informing is that it generally does not allow for an exchange of ideas, discussion, dialogue or deliberation.

### Consult – “seek feedback”

The second level of engagement is stakeholder consultation – in essence providing some mechanism to gather input on the issue, problem, or process you are concerned about.

Depending on the issue at hand, your objective(s) for this goal may be to elicit citizens’ or specific stakeholders’ opinions, perspectives, ideas, underlying values, solutions, or priorities. Regardless of your approach you should strive to gain as much feedback from local citizens and stakeholders as possible (DSE, 2013). Keys to obtaining strong community feedback consist of engaged listening, purposeful design, ensuring widely shared information and an understanding of the engagement process, it’s goals and limitations, and a clear demonstration of concern for what stakeholders have to say (DSE, 2013).

### Involve “utilise feedback”

The third engagement goal in the public participation spectrum is involve. The goal to involve the public should reflect that you will work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public issues and concerns are consistently understood and considered. If you include involve as one or your engagement goals it will serve you well to demonstrate that the information gleaned through involving the public is understood and considered.

### Collaborate “work with stakeholders” – everyone has input

The fourth level of engagement is to collaborate. Your goal for collaboration is to partner with the public in each aspect of the decision being considered including the development of alternatives and the identification of a preferred solution. If the decision making authority does not rest with the public it is important to ensure the public understands that the preferred solution identified through the engagement process may not be chosen.

At its core, collaboration refers to the engagement of stakeholders in order to create an environment conducive for solving complex issues with plausible solutions – and catalysing the contributions and assets of stakeholders into action. Collaboration involves purposeful dialogue and deliberation designed to stimulate ideas and implementation of agreed-upon community action and priorities.

### Empower – “it’s in the community’s hands”

Empowerment is frequently seen as penultimate goal of an engagement effort. Empowerment refers to placing either the decision making authority or the responsibility for implementing a particular solution in the hands of stakeholders participating in the engagement process.