

MBG

Midlands Biosecurity Group

OPERATIONAL

PLAN

2020/21

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INTRODUCTION

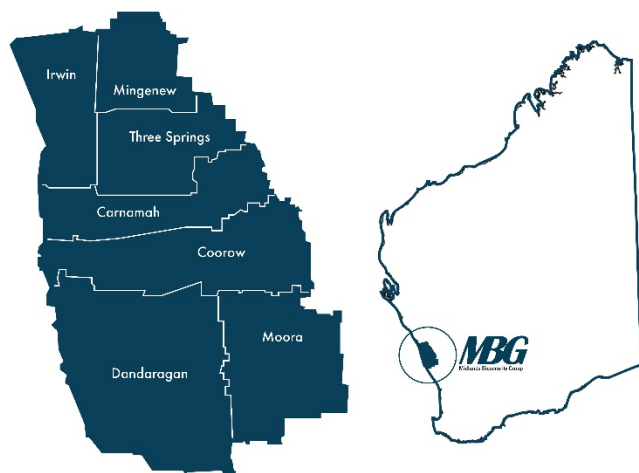
The Midlands Biosecurity Group (MBG) will initiate, promote and foster the control of Declared Pests in the Midlands region.

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 has been engaging with the community over the last 6 months to raise awareness of the group building on the initial work through the West Midlands Group 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 Midlands Biosecurity Group covers seven shires in the Midlands region being the Shires of Moora, Dandaragan, Coorow, Carnamah, Three Springs, Mingenew and Irwin.



The Midlands Biosecurity Group has been 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. This partnership between the two groups will allow for continued effective financial and project management. The Midlands Biosecurity Group has an ABN and has its own bank account that is currently hosted by the West Midlands Group.

The West Midlands Group has obtained funding from DPIRD to help establish the group to begin the effective management of feral pigs, wild dogs, foxes and rabbits. In collaboration, the groups have successfully applied for funding through the sheep and goat Industry Funding Scheme to boost wild dog operations that has been complemented by Federal Drought funding channelled through the Wild Dog action plan and support from Australian Wool Innovation.

The group is exploring all options for future funding of the group's operational plan and plans to implement its first Declared Pest Rate (DPR) in 2020/21 financial year. 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 inaugural Annual General Meeting, the MBG members endorsed the groups 2020/21 Operational plan, including a total budget of \$390,000, which includes \$56,000 funding from the Sheep & Goat Industry Funding Scheme.

The MBG Board of Management have then moved to request the implementation of a Declare Pest Rate as follows:

The Midlands Biosecurity Group request the Minister of Agriculture to approve an Ad Valorem declared pest rate for 2020/21 of \$167,000, 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*

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 organisations activities including the budget considerations.

Consent Statement

By submitting this operational plan, the Midlands Biosecurity Group consents to the transfer of funds from the Declared Pest Account to the Group for the control of declared pests on freehold rural land in the local government districts of Irwin, Mingenew, Three Springs, Carnamah, Coorow, Moora and Dandaragan.

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

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 have been 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. The following local farmers were elected to the Board.

Board Director	Term	Role	Shires Farming
1. Callum Scott	1 year AGM 2019 – AGM 2020	Board Director	Carnamah
2. Peter Summers	1 year AGM 2019 – AGM 2020	Board Director	Irwin
3. Charles Wass	1 year AGM 2019 – AGM 2020	Chairperson	Coorow
4. Christine Brown	2 years AGM 2019 – AGM 2021	Board Director	Moora, Dandaragan
5. Carl Forward	2 years AGM 2019 – AGM 2021	Deputy Chairperson	Irwin, Mingenew
6. Chris Patmore	2 years AGM 2019 – AGM 2021	Board Director	Irwin, Three Springs
7. Will Browne	3 years AGM 2019 – AGM 2022	Board Director	Coorow
8. Maria Griffiths	3 years AGM 2019 – AGM 2022	Board Director	Mingenew, Dandaragan
9. Geoff Hortin	3 years AGM 2019 – AGM 2022	Board Director	Three Springs, Carnamah, Coorow
10. Chris O'Callaghan	Permanent	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
- Shire of Dandaragan
- Shire of Coorow
- Shire of Carnamah
- Shire of Three Springs
- Shire of Mingenew
- Shire of Irwin
- 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)

FUNDING

In its establishment year, the Midlands Biosecurity Group, through the West Midlands Group, has attracted funding from a number of different sources, these are:

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.

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.

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.

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

PLANNED PROGRAMS 2020-21

Program 1 Wild Dogs & Foxes		
<i>Actions</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Bait Rack Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPMT Time - Dried Meat Baits - RCP's - 1080 - Strychnine - Signage - Traps 	2 Bait Rack activities per year in 6 Hotspot areas of the Midlands.
LPMT Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Licensed Pest Management Technician Contract 	200 Contract days worked (total including 80 Days funded through the Sheep & Goat Industry Funding Scheme).
TOTAL		\$149,000

Program 2 Feral Pigs		
<i>Action</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Co-ordinated Integrated Feral Pig Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Licensed Pest Management Technician Time - Grain - Poison - Cameras - Signs - RCPs - Aerial Shoot 	No of participating landholders. No of pigs poisoned Landholder Feedback
Co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-ordination costs for feral pig control. 	
TOTAL		\$117,000

Program 3 Rabbits		
<i>Action</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Community Rabbit Baiting Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LPMT Time - Grain - Poison - Baiting Trailer - RCP's - LPMT time 	No. of landholder participating. No of KM baited.
TOTAL		\$13,000

Program 4 Community Engagement		
<i>Action</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Community Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting and Field Day attendance - Surveying - Brochure - Workshops - Social Media - Print Media - Website - Newspapers - Mail Out 	DPR is supported across all shires. No. of people engaged in workshops Feedback received.
TOTAL		\$6000

Program 5 Governance & Administration		
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Input</i>	<i>Measurement</i>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Executive Officer Contract 	Part Time Executive Officer employed.
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 	
Contingency	Contingency for Non-Payment of DPR. ~\$20,000	
TOTAL		105,000

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION TIMELINE

Month	Planned Activity	Medium	Purpose
June 2020	Wild Dog/Fox Control Information DPR Information	Social Media, Local Papers, MBG Enews, Podcast.	Inform
July 2020	Wild Dog/Fox Control Information MBG Update	MBG Enews, Local Paper Press Release, Local News	Inform Inform
August 2020	Mingenew Expo Dowerin Field Day DPR Information	Presence, Brochures Presence, Brochures Local Papers	Consultation & Inform Consultation & Inform Inform
September 2020	Community Wild Dog/Fox Bait Rack Days Grower Group Spring Field Day's MBG Annual General Meeting	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media Presence, Brochure, Demonstration Email to Members, Local Papers	Participation Inform Inform
October 2020	MBG Annual General Meeting Rabbit Control Information	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media Local Papers	Consultation & Inform Inform
December 2020	Rabbit Control Information Feral Pig Control Information DPR Information	Local Papers Local Papers Local Papers	Inform Inform Inform
November 2020	Rabbit Control Information MBG Activities Update	Local Papers Local Papers	Inform Inform
February 2021	Community Rabbit Baiting Program	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media	Participation
March 2021	Community Feral Pig Control Program MBG Update	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media, Enews	Participation Inform

	Local Paper Update	Local Papers	Inform
	Letter to Midlands Region Ratepayers (Operational Plan)	Mail Out	Inform
April 2021	Community Wild Dog Bait Rack program	Local Papers, MBG Enews, Social Media	Participation Consultation & Inform
	DPR Information	Local Papers	
June 2021	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	Papers: <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	Local paper content to include: <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.	

