

Operational Plan

2020 - 2021

Southern Biosecurity Group

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Consent Statement

Southern Biosecurity Group by submitting the Group's 2020/21 operational plan consents to the transfer of \$171,620 (ex GST) from the Declared Pest Account to the Southern Biosecurity Group for the control of declared pests on land in the Local Government areas of Ravensthorpe.

Disbursement Financial Year 20/21

Suggested payment schedule as follows:

1 st quarter	2 nd quarter	3 rd quarter	4 th quarter
1 July \$85,810		1 January \$50,000	1 April Remainder of DPR received

Introduction

This plan sets out the activities for Southern Biosecurity Group (SBG) for the 2020 – 2021 financial year. Activities identified in this plan are aimed at achieving strategic priorities set out in SBG's strategic plan (2019-2022).

About us

Southern Biosecurity Group is a subgroup of the Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network (RAIN) with the mandate to coordinate control of declared pest species in the Shire of Ravensthorpe. We first began operating in 2002 as the Ravensthorpe Declared Species Group. At that time, our role involved coordinating wild dog control in the shire. We achieved good control of wild dog numbers through a range of activities including dispersing of 1080 baits, trapping and shooting.

We believe declared pests can be better managed by a coordinated approach between community, industry and government.

This belief has led us to become a Recognised Biosecurity Group through the Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007 (BAM Act). This means community funds raised through the Declared Pest Rate are matched dollar for dollar by government, enabling us to provide coordinated and targeted control of declared pests within the shire.

Committee

Southern Biosecurity Committee members are:

Karyn Tuckett (chair)

Bevan Tuckett

Gemma Walker

Jennifer Chambers

Reece Laycock

2020/21 budget

The operational budget for 2020/21 will be \$171,620. This includes the landholder rate of \$85,810 and the matching funds from the WA State Government. There is no change in the rate from 2019/20. A detailed budget is attached.

Key programs

Southern Biosecurity Group will focus on the following key areas that address strategic objectives set out in the 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan.

- Wild dogs
- Rabbit, fox and cat control
- Strategic weeds (bridal creeper, prickly pear and apple of Sodom)
- Governance and administration
- Community engagement

A more detailed description of the strategies and actions are provided in the attached table.

Declared pest rate for the SBG area

Funds raised by the DPR and the government co-contribution will support the commercial, environmental and social values of the Ravensthorpe shire through:

- Improved animal welfare by preventing wild dog attacks on livestock and native animals
- Add to land values by improving the viability of current and new livestock enterprises
- Strengthen economic return when selling or leasing land suitable for the running of livestock
- Safety of locals and tourists walking, sightseeing and horse riding in bushland areas
- Reduce fox numbers by uptake of baits via wild dog baiting programs
- Impact on fox and rabbit numbers from coordination of annual shoot and release of RHDV1K5 rabbit virus
- Provision of equipment to trap pests impacting on urban areas
- Support endangered species conservation, e.g. numbats and malleefowl
- Prevent the establishment of a wild dog populations within national parks, reserves and urban residential areas

The rate for the 2020/21 financial year will remain unchanged, with the following rates to be applied to all properties.

Hectare range	Flat rate (\$)
50ha or less	\$24
>50 – 200	\$39
>200 – 500	\$75
>500 – 1000	\$141
>1000 – 2000	\$200
>2000 – 3500	\$377
>3500 – 5000	\$528
>5000 – 7500	\$698
>7500 – 9000	\$848
>9000	\$1107

Communications and engagement

A draft calendar of communications and engagement activities has been provided in the attached communications and community engagement calendar. It is important to note that this is not a full list as it does not incorporate community activities to increase awareness. Dates for these activities will be set in collaboration with presenters and the community. Other activities will be delivered throughout the year however dates have not yet been established (e.g. community fox shoot). Information will be shared through the SBG website (southernbiosecuritygroup.org.au), the RAIN e-newsletter and the Community Spirit. Other channels, such as social media, will be used as needed.

Community survey

As part of developing the operational plan a priority survey was developed to gain community input. This was made available over July/September 2019. The survey was mailed to all landholders along with the annual landholder letter. Survey Monkey was also used to create a digital version of the survey and the link made available through the Community Spirit and the SBG website. This was promoted through the SBG newsletter, RAIN e-news and SBG website (homepage).

A total of 51 responses were received, representing a 1000% increase in responses on the previous survey.

Key priority species identified were:

Species	% of respondents	Number of respondents
Foxes	68.63%	35
Wild dogs	52.94%	27
Rabbits	52.94%	27
Other (please specify)	41.18%	21
Starlings	31.37%	16
Emu	27.45%	14
Bridal creeper	27.45%	14
Galah	23.53%	12
Saffron thistle	17.65%	9
Prickly pear	15.69%	8
Stemless thistle	13.73%	7
Australian plague locust	11.76%	6
Skeleton weed	11.76%	6
Apple of Sodom	9.80%	5
Cotton bush	9.80%	5
House mouse	9.80%	5
Phytophthora dieback	9.80%	5
Horehound	7.84%	4
Lantana	7.84%	4
Briar	7.84%	4
Feral camels	5.88%	3
Tambookie grass	5.88%	3
Deer	3.92%	2
Star of Bethlehem	3.92%	2

Other species identified were:

Feral cats	14
Boxthorn	3
Clover	1
Snails	1
Kangaroos	3
Mosman River Grass	1

Budget for the 2020/21 financial year

INCOME	
Declared pest rate	85,810
DPIRD matching funds	85,810
TOTAL INCOME	171,620
EXPENSES	
Program 1 – Wild Dogs	
LPMT Contract ¹	60,000
Baits and signage	6,000
Insurance-workers compensation	2,868
Insurance SBF public liability dogging activity	889
GIS map development	250
Program 2 - Complimentary control-rabbit RHDV K5 virus & foxes	
vials, freight, oats, dispersal, fox baits, equipment, promotion, community fox shoots	13,500
Program 3 - Governance	
Executive Officer (part) ²	5,000
Teleconference costs	624
Honorarium committee	200
Program 4 – Administration	
Executive Officer (part) ²	25,000
Contingency	17,600
Subscriptions	770
Audit	1000
RAIN finance admin	2772
RAIN 1/3rd share of insurances	900
RAIN share of office expenses	500
Stationary	200
Training-event attendance	
Training allowance travel	5,000
Equipment replacement account	2,000
Program 5 – Community Engagement/Operations	
Executive Officer (part) ²	16,080
Biosecurity event	5,375
Market days	80
Group activities - advertising	3,000
Annual letter to landholders	2,512
Maintain electronic presence (website etc.)	500
TOTAL EXPENSES	171,620

¹ LPMT contract is for 100 days of control works

² Executive officer total for 2020/21 is \$46,080, which equates to 3 days per week over 48 weeks.

Key action areas for SBG for 2020/21

Wild dogs

OUTCOME: Reduce the impact of wild dogs in the Ravensthorpe Shire.

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Implement actions outlined in the wild dog section of the Biosecurity Management Strategy for the Ravensthorpe Shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBG Committee • Local landholders • Broader community • Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development • Licensed Pest Management Technician • Other groups involved in wild dog control in Western Australia (particularly adjoining RBGs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to coordinate wild dog management activities (e.g. baiting, shooting and trapping) • Contract a licensed pest management technician to carry out control works (July 2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum of 100 days of wild dog control activities delivered in the region
Record impacts of wild dogs in the Ravensthorpe Shire through the use of FeralScan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pestsmart • LPMT • SBG Committee • Local landholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All data for the financial year recorded in FeralScan by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All wild dog data collected by Southern Biosecurity Group in FeralScan
Liaise with other groups that have interest in wild dog control for joint maintenance, reporting and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with other EOs through regular teleconferences and face to face meetings • Promote wild dogs as a state issue in collaboration with other RBGs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in regular meetings with other RBGs and groups involved in wild dog control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meetings participated in
Provide support for the maintenance of the State Barrier Fence and access roads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBG Committee • Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report fence conditions to DPIRD and SBF manager and encourage strategic maintenance (as required) • Continue minor fence maintenance activities by LPMT (as required) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of fence condition reports provided to DPIRD • Number of minor repairs conducted
Encourage UCL track maintenance to access the State Barrier Fence, buffer zone and rock holes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to liaise with relevant departments about the need to maintain strategic track in the UCL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not applicable
Continue to raise awareness of the impacts of wild dogs, the need for reporting and how to go about it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local landholders • Broader community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication plan developed by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 plan completed

Rabbits

OUTCOME: Reduced impact of rabbits

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Continue to release the RDHV1 K5 virus at key sites across the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expression of interest process for release sites • Liaise with Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network regarding the release and options for collaboration. • Promote the need for the cylap vaccine and biosecurity principles for protecting pet rabbits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOI process (August 2020 and February 2021) • Two releases of the virus (October 2020 and April 2021) • Continue to provide information on protecting pet rabbits from the virus (ongoing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of EOIs received • Number of releases • Number of articles
Maintain information on local effective and preferred control methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote rabbit control methods through key community engagement events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control information updated (June 2021) • Promote control options (August 2020 and February 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates completed. • Website hits
Promote the need for rabbit control in the Ravensthorpe shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the Southern Biosecurity Group website with information on the impacts of rabbits in the Ravensthorpe Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website updated quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of updates
Investigate feasibility of developing a local monitoring program to determine the abundance of rabbits and the effectiveness of the virus release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with relevant research groups with expertise in this area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility assessment completed by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of feasibility assessments

Foxes

OUTCOME: Reduced number of foxes

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Community fox shoot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 1 community fox shoot • Liaise with the Hopetoun Clay Target Club regarding the fox shoot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save the date for the fox shoot (Dec 2020) • Fox shoot (Feb/March 2021) • Event wrap up article in the Community Spirit (March 2021), SBG Website and RAIN e-nes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 event held • Number of people participating • Number of foxes, rabbits and feral cats humanely destroyed • Number of articles

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Continue to trap and bait for foxes as a component of the wild dog control program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local landholders LPMT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All fox control data entered into FeralScan by 30 June 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data entry completed
Encourage the use of fox traps in areas that are unable to be baited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop up a process for the safe and humane use of the traps Liaise with Rangers at the Shire of Ravensthorpe about the possibility of humanely destroying any trapped foxes' Promote the process and options for humane disposal of trapped foxes. Liaise with Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network about the process for managing the traps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process for safe and humane use of traps developed by 1 February 2021 Monitoring sheet developed to go with the traps so people can report their efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 process for safe and humane use of fox traps developed Number of requests for traps 1 monitoring sheet developed
Promote the impacts of foxes in the Ravensthorpe Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the Southern Biosecurity Group website with information on the impacts of foxes in the Ravensthorpe Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website updated quarterly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of updates

Starlings

OUTCOME: More landholders aware of the process and need for reporting suspected starling sightings

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Raise awareness of starlings in the Ravensthorpe community and ensure that people can identify starlings and report sightings to DPIRD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at community days to promote the impact of starlings and the process of reporting infestations Maintain a section on the website relating to starlings, their impact and how to report suspected sightings. Include information on their possible economic and environmental impact in the Shire of Ravensthorpe. Promote impact of starlings and the need to report sightings through Community Spirit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddy's Market Day presence (Jan 2021) Country Carnival presence (Sept/Oct 2020) Web page update (ongoing) Spring Field Days (Sept 2020) RAIN Crop Updates (Mar 2021) 2 Community Spirit articles (Sep 2020 and April 2021) – pre and post trapping period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence at community events Number of community inquiries Number of website hits Number of articles
Collaborate with and support DPIRD in the reporting and eradication of local infestations of starlings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with DPIRD on support required at a local level. Additional actions to be identified as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before the beginning of trapping program (Sept 2020) 	

Feral cats

OUTCOME: Reduced number of feral cats

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Community trapping of feral cats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the availability of cat traps for loan Develop up a process for the safe and humane use of the traps Liaise with Rangers at the Shire of Ravensthorpe about the possibility of humanely destroying any trapped cats Promote the process and options for humane disposal of trapped cats. Liaise with Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network about the process for managing the traps Maintain a section on the Southern Biosecurity Group website on the impacts of feral cats and the distinction between feral and domestic cats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase a microchip reader (if required) Process for safe and humane use of traps developed by 1 February 2021 Monitoring sheet developed to go with the traps so people can report their efforts Website updates (quarterly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of cats trapped Number of traps loaned Number of cats destroyed Number of website updates
Investigate options for broader landscape scale control of feral cats in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with research scientists and Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions on options for landscape scale cat control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a budget and project brief for delivering broad scale cat control (March 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project brief developed

Bridal creeper

OUTCOME: More landholders aware of the control options to limit the spread of bridal creeper

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Promote options for control of bridal creeper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at community day to promote control options Maintain a section on the website relating to bridal creeper control Promote control options through the Community Spirit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paddy's Market Day presence (Jan 2021) Country Carnival presence (Sept/Oct 2020) Pre control window article in the Community Spirit (Jun 2021) Webpage update (ongoing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence at community events Number of community inquiries Number of website hits

Prickly pear

OUTCOME: Reduce the area of infestation of prickly pear in the Ravensthorpe Shire

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Continue to deliver control activities in the Oldfield River corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with landholders along the Oldfield River to increase awareness of prickly pear and to promote sightings • Continue to promote prickly pear as a species to report through community events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek funding to continue control activities in the Oldfield River corridor (ongoing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % success rate of funding applications • Number of funding applications submitted
Raise awareness within the community of Opuntia and eradication successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with broader community to promote the awareness of the impacts of cactus, the need for reporting and how to go about it. • Maintain the Southern Biosecurity Group website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media articles promoting cactus month in November 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 media articles about cactus and the need for reporting
Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of management actions to eradicate local populations of Opuntia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the outcomes of cactus control work in the Ravensthorpe Shire through a range of channels, including the Southern Biosecurity Group website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website updates (quarterly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of website updates

Apple of Sodom

OUTCOME: Reduce the area of infestation of apple of Sodom

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Deliver economically feasible control actions to reduce the area of infestation of apple of Sodom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network to determine the extent of apple of Sodom infestations and the economic feasibility of eradication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 feasibility assessment completed (30 September 2020) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility assessment completed
Continue to promote control options for apple of Sodom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the need for control and control options through a range of channels including the Southern Biosecurity Group website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website updates (quarterly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of website updates

Community engagement

OUTCOME: Landholders are providing input into declared species priorities and are getting tangible value

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Annual landholder letter and priorities survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter and survey sent to all landholders in the Shire of Ravensthorpe updating on group's activities and providing the opportunity to input into the annual survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letter and survey sent (30 June 2021) Letter and survey made available through the website (30 June 2021) Survey promoted through the Community Spirit and RAIN e-news (30 June 2021) Community Spirit article on the survey results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response rate of survey (increase over time) Number of articles produced
Promote awareness of current relevant pest issues through displays, e-news newspaper, and meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the communications and engagement calendar (see attached) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications and engagement calendar implemented (30 June 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of articles produced Number of website hits
Promote group achievements and outcomes from group activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the communications and engagement calendar (see attached) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications and engagement calendar implemented (30 June 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report produced and made available
Encourage community pest surveillance and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of the methods for reporting pest plant and animal sightings Investigate the option of establishing an SBG What's App group to allow for easy reporting of declared species. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include information on DPIRD's My Pest Guide Reporter at any displays and events If feasible, establish a what's app group by September 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times the guide is promoted Number of members of the Whats App Group.
Develop practical tools to assist in the control of declared species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">

Governance and administration

OUTCOME: A vibrant and well supported committee

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Successfully access a diverse range of funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBG Committee Broader community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access additional funding to deliver activities (June 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of successful funding applications
Maintain the SBG Funding Handbook/Filing System of necessary information to assist with effectively writing funding applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBG Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Handbook updated (June 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of updates
Develop investment partnerships to implement declared species actions in the Ravensthorpe Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships developed (June 2021) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of partnerships.
Identify possible new members for the SBG Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New committee members identified by 31 December 2020 	

Activities	Stakeholder engagement	Milestones (timeframe)	Performance
Develop an Operational Plan and associated budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an opportunity for all landholders to provide into priorities through the annual priority survey (see Community Engagement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan developed for the 2021/22 financial year and submitted to DPIRD by December 2020 Budget developed for the 2021/22 financial year and submitted to DPIRD by 30 October 2020 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan submitted on time Budget submitted on time
Maintain a Risk Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with SBG Committee for input into the plan and assessment of the risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan updated by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and updated Risk Management Plan
Maintain job descriptions for committee members, executive officer and LPMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBG Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job descriptions updated by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of updates
Maintain a procedures guide to capture key business processes and best practice pest management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with SBG Committee to review business processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes reviewed by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of review.
Update and maintain the Biosecurity Management Strategy for the Ravensthorpe Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBG Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biosecurity Management Strategy updated by 30 June 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of update

Communications and engagement calendar

Month	Activities
January	
February	Annual letter to landholders commenced Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news – article
March	SBG newsletter Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
April	Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
May	Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
June	Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
July	Annual landholder letter sent Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
August	Annual report released Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
September	Community priorities survey SBG newsletter Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
October	Draft Operational Plan approved at AGM Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
November	Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article
December	Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article