

Operational Plan

2025 - 2026

Southern Biosecurity Group

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Pests and Weeds

Your environment • Your responsibility • Your legacy

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Introduction

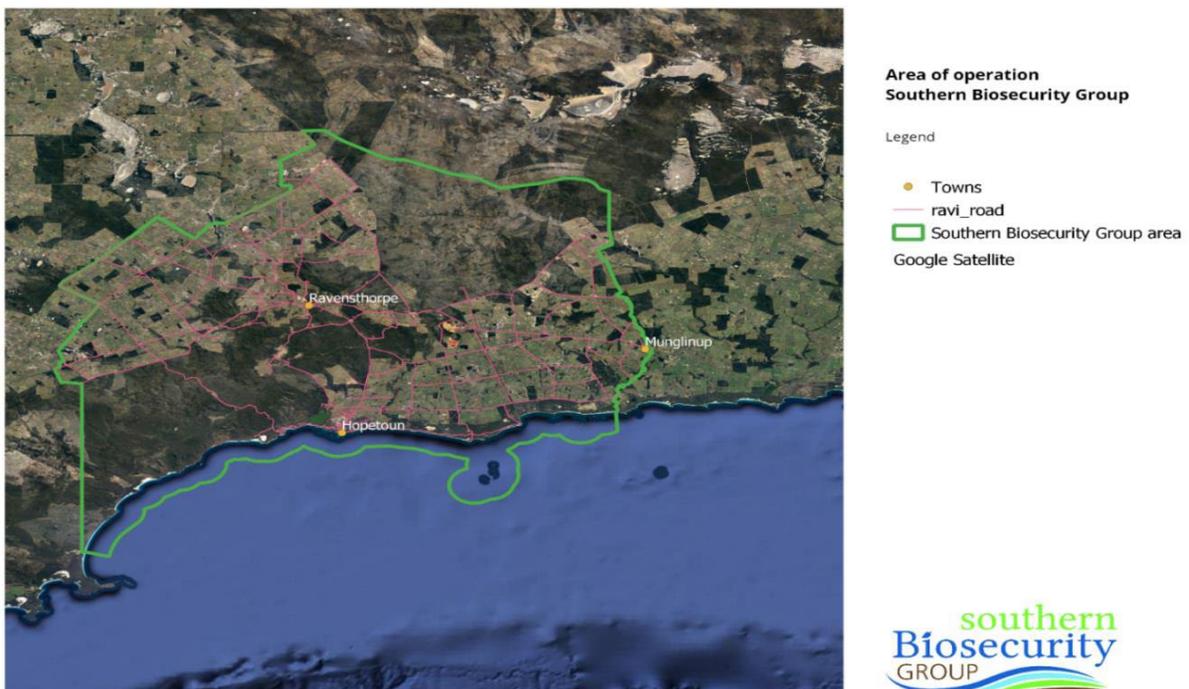
This plan sets out the program of activities for Southern Biosecurity Group (SBG) for the 2025–2026 financial year.

Activities identified in this plan are aimed at achieving strategic priorities set out in SBG’s Strategic Plan (2022-2025), the Biosecurity Management Strategy for the Ravensthorpe Shire with responses to the annual survey forwarded to landholders factored into the plan.

About us

Southern Biosecurity Group is a subcommittee of the Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network (RAIN). SBG mandate is 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 achieve 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 to us becoming a Recognized Biosecurity Group through the *Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) which is currently in a review stage. This means that landholder funds raised through the Declared Pest Rate are matched dollar for dollar by the State Government enabling us to provide coordinated and targeted control of declared pests and plants within the shire. The area of operation is shown below.



Southern Biosecurity Group Management Committee Members:

As at the 2024 Annual General Meeting of RAIN

- Gemma Walker
- Reece Laycock
- Ross Gibson

The committee meets at least quarterly and its key responsibilities are setting the strategic direction of the group, ensuring the group meets good governance standings, and guiding the Executive Officer.

SBG will continue to collaborate with key stakeholders:

- Australian Wool Innovation Limited
- Biosecurity Council of WA
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Industry Funding Scheme (Sheep and Goat) Committee
- Local communities within the Shire of Ravensthorpe
- Main Roads Western Australia
- Other Recognized Biosecurity Groups
- Ravensthorpe Agricultural Initiative Network
- Shire of Ravensthorpe
- South Coast NRM
- State Natural Resource Management
- Water Corporation Western Australia

Our Vision and purpose:

That the Southern Biosecurity Group is proactive in encouraging all stakeholders to adopt sound biosecurity practices.

Minimize the environmental, economic, and social impacts of animal pests and weeds on agricultural industry, landscapes, and biodiversity values within the Ravensthorpe Shire.

We will achieve this through coordinating a community-based approach to the management of animal pests and weeds.

Declared Pest Rate (DPR) for the Southern Biosecurity Group area of operation:

Funds raised by the DPR, and the State Government co-contribution will support the commercial, environmental, and social values of the Shire of Ravensthorpe community 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 as part of a collaborative control program, including coordination of an annual shoot and release of RHDV rabbit virus and warren destruction.

- Provision of equipment to trap pests impacting on urban areas.
- Support endangered species conservation, (e.g., numbats and mallee fowl); and
- Prevent the establishment of wild dog populations within national parks, reserves, and urban residential areas.

The rate for the 2025/26 financial year will remain unchanged from the previous year, with the following rates to be applied to urban farming or urban residential or urban vacant or urban miscellaneous, on the non-rural valuation roll and rural freehold on the rural valuation roll maintained under the Valuation of Land Act 1978.

Hectare range	Flat rate (\$)
50ha or less	\$25
>50 – 200	\$41
>200 – 500	\$78
>500 – 1000	\$146
>1000 – 2000	\$207
>2000 – 3500	\$390
>3500 – 5000	\$546
>5000 – 7500	\$722
>7500 – 9000	\$878
>9000	\$1146

Disbursement Financial Year 25/26:

We are basing this amount on the previous year. For 2024/25, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development have advised us it is estimated that \$97,591 (excluding GST) will be raised through the determination of rates in the Southern Biosecurity Group’s prescribed area. The total amount raised is matched by State Government funding. This means it is forecasted that an amount of \$198,964.26 will be available to SBG for the 2025/26 year. The Declared Pest Rate current hectare range and rate will be maintained in 2025/26.

Please note, the figure raised through the determination may be lower than the estimated figure and may vary due to several factors, including but not limited to, property subdivisions, changes in unimproved land values, pensioner postponements under the BAM Act or any other applicable exemptions, as determined on a case-by-case basis by the Commissioner of Revenue WA.

Suggested payment schedule as follows:

1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	4th quarter
July – Sept 2025 \$97,591 WA Government matching funds	Oct – Dec 2025 \$Nil	Jan – March 2026 Value of Funds Collected	April – June 20256 \$Nil

Proposed budget for 2025 – 2026 financial year:

Southern Biosecurity Group Proposed BUDGET 2025/2026 (GST ex)

REVENUE		2023/24		2024/25		% change
		DPA	Other			
Opening Cash Balance (Q4 Statement 1Jul23 to 30Jun24)		223,252		234,636		
DP Rate Revenue (80% collected)		91,810		95,023		3.50%
State matched funds (100%)		94,291		97,591		3.50%
Other sources			27,883		49,537	
Interest		15,634				
DPA unspent funds Previous Fin Year		19,202		7,452		
Existing DPA funds to be used						
TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE		220,937	27,883	200,067		
Funds Released to Group		-190,351				
Estimated Unspent		7,452				
EXPENDITURE						% of exp
Administration						
Contract Executive Officer		69,000.00		71,415.00		35.89
Office, phone, internet		600.00		621.00		0.31
RAIN Admin + Bookkeeping		5,000.00		5,175.00		2.60
RP application fee		800.00		828.00		0.42
Stationary-postage (excl annual letter)		100.00		103.50		0.05
Subscriptions-memberships		300.00		310.50		0.16
Professional Development		1,000.00		1,035.00		0.52
Travel-accommodation allowance		4,350.00		4,502.25		2.26
Total Administration		81,150.00		83,990.25		42.21
Communication						
Advertising		1,000.00		1,035.00		0.52
Annual newsletter landholders (incl post, print)		3,885.00		4,020.98		2.02
Biosecurity event/awareness incl market display		3,120.00		3,229.20		1.62
Promotional (brochures, booklets, stands, banners)		800.00		828.00		0.42
Website		1,500.00		1,552.50		0.78
Total Communications		10,305.00		10,665.68		5.36
Governance						
Accountant-audit-Legal fees		3,500.00		3,622.50		1.82
Committee honorarium-expenses		1,300.00		1,345.50		0.68
Insurance (SBG pub liab (dogging), trailer)		1,600.00		1,656.00		0.83
Insurance workers compensation EO etc		3,500.00		3,622.50		1.82
Insurance RAIN 1/3rd share various		1,100.00		1,138.50		0.57
Teleconference/zoom meeting costs		300.00		310.50		0.16
Total Governance		11,300.00		11,695.50		5.88
Declared animal species						
Wild Dogs		31,000.00		32,085.00		16.13
IFS - WDAP 22-24			6,346.37			
foxes		15,861.00		16,416.14		8.25
rabbits		9,200.00		9,522.00		4.79
feral cats		1,920.00		1,987.20		1.00
baits, poison, biocontrol etc		8,000.00		8,280.00		4.16
signage		1,000.00		1,035.00		0.52
Total Declared animal species		66,981.00		69,325.34		34.84
Declared plant species						
Cactus		11,000.00		11,385.00		5.72
Apple of Sodom		4,500.00		4,657.50		2.34
Bridal Creeper		5,000.00		5,175.00		2.60
Cactus SNRM Funding Project			21,537.00		49,537.00	
materials-herbicide, biological control		0.00		0.00		0.00
Total Declared plant species		20,500.00		21,217.50		10.66
Operations						
Equipment purchase-replacement		2,000.00		2,070.00		1.04
Total Operations		2,000.00		2,070.00		1.04
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		192,236.00	27,883.37	198,964.26	49,537.00	100.00
Funds Received		-190,351.00	-27,883.37			
TOTAL BUDGET UNDER / OVER		1,885.00	0.00			

Key action areas for SBG for 2025-2026:

Actively manage impacts of declared animal species in the Shire of Ravensthorpe. Management to benefit landholders, general public, natural environment, threatened species.

Goal	Target	Actions	Measures	Date Activity
Implement actions outlined in the Biosecurity Management Strategy for the Ravensthorpe Shire and the Southern Biosecurity Group Strategic Plan for:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wild dogs 	Continue to coordinate wild dog management activities (e.g., baiting, shooting, trapping, camera monitoring (when required))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Licensed Pest Management Technician for minimum of 50 days. Comply with State and National Wild Dog Action Plans Use of Feral Scan Continue to promote wild dogs as a state-wide issue. Encourage reporting species sightings, tracks, stock losses and other complimentary activities 	20km buffer zone to east of SBF maintained. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil or reduced stock attacks Increase in sightings of native species on all land tenures. Increased landholder confidence to run stock. 2 media of 1080 use for wild dog control ongoing in the Shire 	Ongoing February & July
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foxes 	Continue to coordinate an integrated program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Licensed Pest Management Technician - bait on UCL, reserves, parks etc. where no DBCA control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 media notices of 1080 use ongoing in the Shire. Collaborative control in areas adjacent to DBCA activity 1 fox shoot 	Winter: June -August Spring: September – November March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rabbits 	Continue to coordinate integrated activities. e.g. warren ripping/destruction, RHDV release, baiting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage landholders to undertake complimentary control activities and removal of debris that may harbor rabbits. Engage authorized personnel to distribute RHDV when required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in RHDV releases 2 releases of RHDV Minimum 2 media prior to RHDV release 	March March-April August - September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feral cats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cat owner education including devastating impact on biodiversity. Reduce threat to native species from feral cat predation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cat Act 2011 requirement of identification, registration and sterilization of domestic cats, to ensure responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement by SBG with community Control activity noted by LPMT as part of their wild dog report. 	Ongoing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate options for broader landscape scale control of feral cats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pet ownership, reduce the number of unwanted feral cats in the community. Promote availability of cat traps for loan from the Shire of Ravensthorpe 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Barrier Fence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with DPIRD, EBA and other stakeholders to ensure completion of the Esperance Extension to SBF SBF integrity maintained to prevent entry by declared species into agricultural land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue updates on Esperance extension Report to DPIRD SBF maintenance issues. Encourage UCL track maintenance to SBF, buffer zone, rock holes. Communicate with DPIRD and SBF Manager on areas requiring attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of SBF extension by 2025. Maintenance completed and communicated 	Ongoing

Manage declared plant species in Shire of Ravensthorpe. Management to landholders, general public, natural environment, threatened species. Management to benefit landholders, general public, natural environment, threatened species.

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Target</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Measures</i>	<i>Date Activity</i>
Implement actions outlined in the Biosecurity Management Strategy for the Ravensthorpe Shire and the Southern Biosecurity Group Strategic Plan for:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apple of Sodom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Hopetoun area plus new areas identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate control in areas from previous activity including treating newly emerged or missed plants. Collaboration with Water Corp for removal/treatment of plant on their land tenure Promote the need for control and control options through a range of channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in newly emerged plants due to previous control and seed viability being reduced. Newly identified sites Media article on species control options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jan - March and Sept - Dec treatment times when actively growing. Ongoing manual removal and education

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridal Creeper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hopetoun foreshore and free camping area to reduce risk of spread to Fitzgerald River National Park • Krystal Park Estate • Land identified as a habitat, where feasible to implement measures that mitigate their impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote options for control of bridal creeper. • Use of herbicide and rust fungus (<i>Puccinia myrsiphylli</i>) • Consult with government agencies to advise of species on their land tenure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media article on species control options • Reduction in germination • Collaboration identified. 	March - Sept
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cactus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control working towards eradicating plant from the Shire. • Specialized control efforts in the Oldfield River Corridor Via SNRM grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Secured via a State Natural Resource Management (SNRM) Grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful funding application Milestones as per contracting. 	Ongoing

Maintain defined and flexible governance structure and processes.

Goal	Target	Actions	Measures	Date Activity
Develop additional governance policies as required to meet new legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate as an RBG subgroup/Management Committee under RAIN constitution. • Develop annual documentation for RAIN AGM and DPIRD 	<p>Review policies on an annual basis – continue to implement and update OHS policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare Annual Report, Operational Plan and budget prioritized from Strategic Plan, Biosecurity Strategy for Shire of Ravensthorpe and annual survey • Promote SBG to wider community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting obligations of the constitution • Support RAIN • One SBG report submitted to each RAIN meeting. • Each policy reviewed annually to ensure meeting legislative requirements – update OHS policy to comply new legislation. • To RAIN Management Committee prior to AGM to facilitate endorsement. • Support DPIRD- provide relevant documents by due dates. • Nominations for management committee 	<p>Operational Plan and previous year Annual Report including audited statement accepted by SBG Management Committee September.</p> <p>All documents along with Conflict-of-Interest Register presented October RAIN AGM.</p> <p>Annual report Oct 2021 lodged DPIRD Dec each year. Operational Report to be submitted December each year.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining healthy membership and composition of Sub-Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current members actively seek new members. Succession plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New members identified 	Ongoing
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Meet all administration requirements.

Goal	Target	Actions	Measures	Date Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a diversified funding base sufficient to cover SBG operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain the Declared Pest Rate Plan, monitor, report of funding grants at appropriate times. Secure other funding sources as required. Maintain funding register and templates to assist with efficiency for writing applications. Review and update of Biosecurity Strategy for Shire of Ravensthorpe in collaboration with the Shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DPR supported across Shire – DPIRD feedback. SBG contact register. Project reports and financial content to each committee meeting Success across diverse range funding sources Update content as required – present changes to Shire annually. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing update shire endorsement and notification of updates</p>

Effective communication for well engaged community and stakeholders

Goal	Target	Actions	Measures	Date Activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOU developed with government agencies. Provide value to DPR payers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOU Shire Ravensthorpe, DPIRD, DBCA, Main Roads WA, Water Corp WA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with agencies to develop MOU. Encourage annual compliance regime DPIRD (weed inspection etc.) Articulate need to manage pests and weeds on government and private land tenure. Identify areas for collaboration and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of MOUs achieved. Record control activities by relevant agency. Record Stakeholder engagement in activities. Communication milestones met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 8 communication activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Newsletter 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

		seek funding to match SBG in-kind contributions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote achievements, awareness relevant pest issues, via displays, eNews, newspaper, meetings, website, guides DPR spend, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual survey Regular annual updates in local media and RAIN eNews Minimum 1 Biosecurity event annually Website 	
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DPIRD Strategic Intent 2022-26:

Southern Biosecurity Group through its Operational Plan and budget align with DPIRD Strategic Intent. Specifically, reference to the purpose “enable enduring prosperity for all Western Australians through our work with regions and primary industries.” “Grow our primary industries and regions through balancing social, economic and environmental drivers.”

Item 3, “Dynamic regions and primary industries” – “Deliver systems and support to industry in animal welfare, biosecurity, and ethical and sustainable production to meet community expectations and enhance the reputation of our primary industries”.

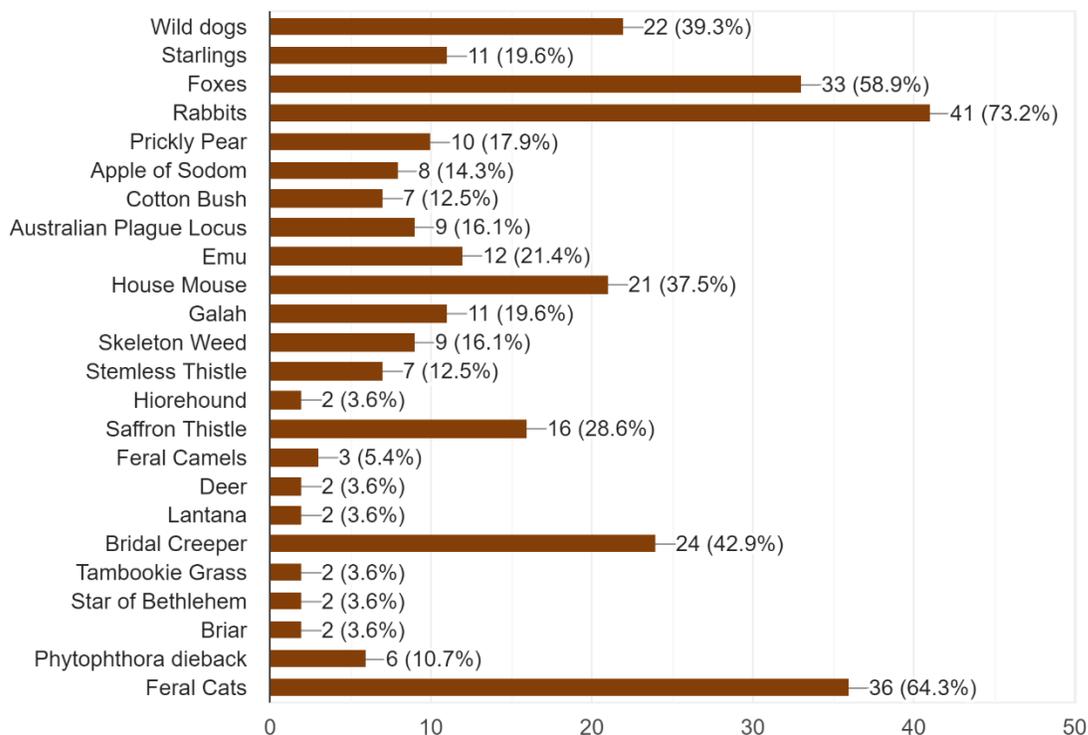
Community Survey:

As part of developing the Operational Plan the annual priority survey was distributed in August 2023 with our annual newsletter to landowners to gain community input for planning of the 2025/26 Operational Plan and budget.

To date responses have identified the following Priority Species:

What declared species should be a priority for Southern Biosecurity Group?

56 responses



Declared Species: Wild Dogs, Foxes, Rabbits, Prickly Pear, Apple of Sodom, Skeleton Weed, Stemless Thistle, Horehound, Saffron Thistle, Feral Camels, Deer, Bridal Creeper, Tambookie Grass, Star of Bethlehem, Feral Cats

Communication and engagement calendar:

Month	Activities
January	Seasonal hiatus
February	Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news, Community Spirit – article species specific plus general information if required. Promote Annual Community Fox Shoot in conjunction with Red Card for Red Fox 1080 Wild dog and fox media via Community Spirit article/advertisement RBG zoom meeting
March	SBG quarterly newsletter, RAIN news, Community Spirit, and website RAIN hosted Research Updates – SBG update presentation. RBG zoom meeting
April	Community Spirit, RAIN eNews, website – article fox shoot information RBG zoom meeting

May	Community Spirit, RAIN eNews – article species specific plus general information if required. RAIN e-news, Community Spirit -article species specific plus general information if required. RBG zoom meeting
June	SBG quarterly newsletter, RAIN news, Community Spirit, and website RBG zoom meeting
July	1080 Wild dog and fox media via Community Spirit article/advertisement RBG zoom meeting
August	Community Spirit, RAIN eNews – species specific plus general information if required. RAIN e-news -article RBG zoom meeting
September	Community priorities survey and Annual Newsletter RAIN Spring Field Walk -community consultation Display at Ravensthorpe Wildflower Festival Quarterly newsletter for RAIN eNews, Community Spirit, website (include summary Wildflower Show display RBG zoom meeting
October	Draft Operational Plan approved at RAIN AGM Annual report including audited financial report provided to DPIRD. Community Spirit – article RAIN e-news -article RBG zoom meeting
November	Cactus Month – promote sightings, SBG achievements, control methods, highlight need for control. For Community Spirit, RAIN news RBG zoom meeting
December	Seasonal hiatus RBG zoom meeting. Quarterly newsletter, Community Spirit, and RAIN eNews, a summary of years activity and achievements, Prepare for final edition of paper for year (early December)