

Operational Plan

2026 - 2027

Southern Biosecurity Group

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Pests and Weeds

Your environment • Your responsibility • Your legacy

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Introduction

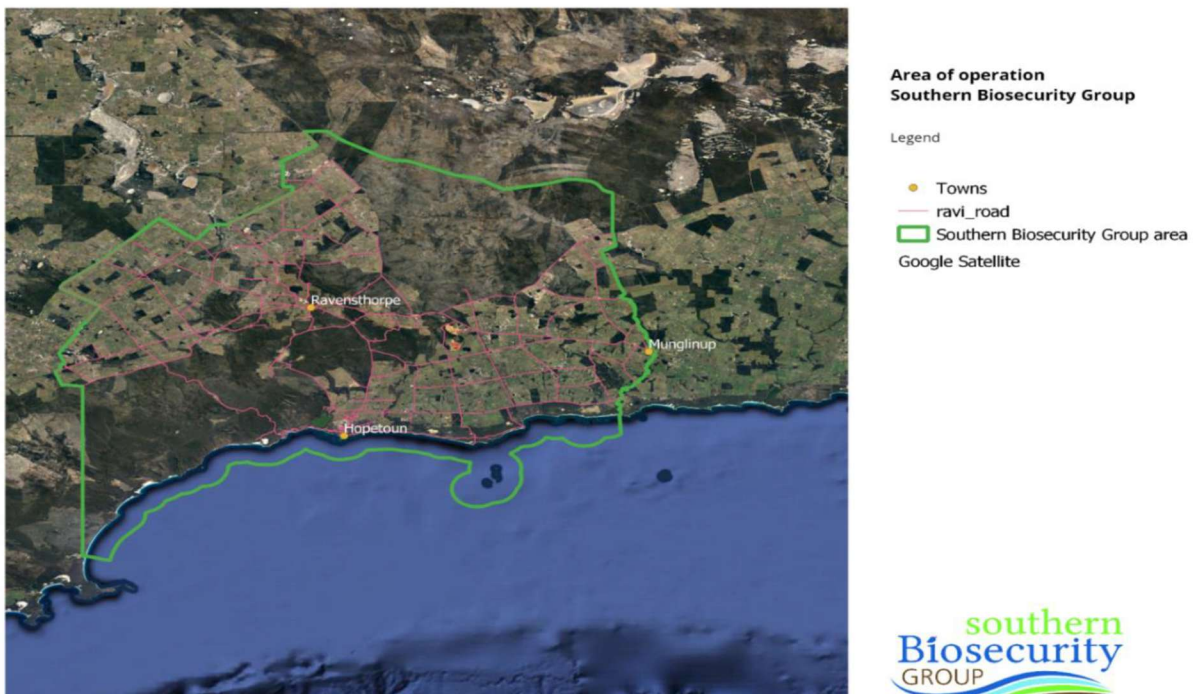
This plan sets out the program of activities for Southern Biosecurity Group (SBG) for the 2026–2027 financial year.

Activities identified in this plan are aimed at achieving strategic priorities set out in SBG’s Strategic Plan (2025-2030), 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 Recognised 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 2025 Annual General Meeting of RAIN

- Gemma Walker
- Reece Laycock
- Ross Gibson
- Khiara Daw (RAIN Representative)

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 2026/27 financial year will increase with 4.9% and merging of 4 ha ranges into 2 ranges, 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.

HA Range	Fixed Sum	Rate revenue
0- 200	35	\$ 44,240
>200 - 1000	113.25	\$ 14,723
>1000 - 2000	209.8	\$ 30,211
>2000 - 3500	395.45	\$ 10,282
>3500 - 5000	553.85	\$ 4,431
>5000 - 7500	732.2	\$ 1,464
>7500 - 9000	889.55	\$ 890
>9000	1161.2	\$ 2,322
Total		\$ 108,563

Disbursement Financial Year 26/27:

We are basing this amount on the forecasted rate revenue modeling. For 2026/27, we have been advised by Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development it is estimated that \$108,563 (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 \$217,126 will be available to SBG for the 2026/27 year. The Declared Pest Rate current hectare range will combine ha ranges 0-50 and 50-200 to create range 0-200 ha as well as combining 200-500 and 500-1000 to create 200-1000 and the rate will increase by 4.9% in 2026/27.

These changes have been proposed to align with increasing operational costs and to ensure that the rate collected is sufficient to cover the amount required for revenue collection by Revenue WA.

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 \$108,563 WA Government matching funds	Oct – Dec 2025 \$Nil	Jan – March 2026 \$108,563 (forecasted) Value of Funds Collected	April – June 20256 \$Nil

Proposed budget for 2026 – 2027 financial year:

Southern Biosecurity Group Proposed BUDGET 2026/2027 (GST ex)

REVENUE		2025/26 DPA	Other	2026/27		% change
	Opening Cash Balance (Q4 Statement 1Jul23 to 30Jun24)	223,252		237,530		6.4
	DP Rate Revenue (80-95% collected)	91,810		103,135		
	State matched funds (100%)	94,291		108,563		
	Other sources		53,500		15,000	
	Interest	15,634				
	DPA unspent funds Previous Fin Year	19,202		0		
	Existing DPA funds to be used					
	TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE	220,937	53,500	211,698		
	Funds Released to Group	-190,351				
	Estimated Unspent					
EXPENDITURE						% of exp
Administration						
	Contract Executive Officer	71,415.00		73,914.53		34.92
	Office, phone, internet	621.00		642.74		0.30
	RAIN Admin + Bookkeeping	5,175.00		5,356.13		2.53
	RP application fee	825.00		853.88		0.40
	Stationary-postage (excl annual letter)	103.50		107.12		0.05
	Subscriptions-memberships	310.50		321.37		0.15
	Professional Development	1,035.00		1,071.23		0.51
	Travel-accommodation allowance	4,502.25		4,659.83		2.20
	Total Administration	83,987.25		86,926.80		41.06
Communication						
	Advertising	1,035.00		1,071.23		0.51
	Annual newsletter landholders (incl post)	4,020.92		4,800.00		2.27
	Biosecurity event/awareness incl market	3,229.20		3,342.22		1.58
	Promotional (brochures, booklets, stand)	828.00		856.98		0.40
	Website	1,552.50		1,606.84		0.76
	Total Communications	10,665.62		11,677.26		5.52
Governance						
	Accountant-audit-Legal fees	3,622.50		4,000.00		1.89
	Committee honorarium-expenses	1,345.50		1,400.00		0.66
	Insurance (SBG pub liab (dogging), trailer)	1,656.00		2,200.00		1.04
	Insurance workers compensation EO et	3,622.50		4,000.00		1.89
	Insurance RAIN 1/3rd share various	1,138.50		1,300.00		0.61
	Teleconference/zoom meeting costs	310.50		321.37		0.15
	Total Governance	11,695.50		13,221.37		6.25
Declared animal species						
	Wild Dogs	32,085.00		33,207.98		15.69
	IFS - WDAP 22-24		4,500.00			
	foxes	16,416.14		16,990.70		8.03
	rabbits	9,522.00		13,946.00		6.59
	feral cats	1,987.20		2,056.75		0.97
	bait, poison, biocontrol etc	8,280.00		8,569.80		4.05
	signage	1,035.00		1,071.23		0.51
	Total Declared animal species	69,325.34		75,842.46		35.83
Declared plant species						
	Cactus	11,385.00		11,783.48		5.57
	Apple of Sodom	4,657.50		4,820.51		2.28
	Bridal Creeper	5,175.00		5,356.13		2.53
	Cactus SNRM Funding Project		49,000.00		15,000.00	
	materials-herbicide, biological control	0.00		0.00		0.00
	Total Declared plant species	21,217.50		21,960.11		10.37
Operations						
	Equipment purchase-replacement	2,000.00		2,070.00		0.98
	Total Operations	2,000.00		2,070.00		0.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		198,891.21	53,500.00	211,698.01	15,000.00	100.00
Funds Received		-190,351.00	-27,883.37			

Key action areas for SBG for 2026-2027:

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:				
• Wild dogs	Continue to coordinate wild dog management activities (e.g. baiting, shooting, trapping, camera monitoring (when required))	- 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 - 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
• Foxes	Continue to coordinate an integrated program	Engage Licensed Pest Management Technician - bait on UCL, reserves, parks etc. where no DBCA control	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
• Rabbits	Continue to coordinate integrated activities e.g. warren ripping/destruction, RHDV release, baiting	- Encourage landholders to undertake complimentary control activities and removal of debris that may harbor rabbits - Engage authorised personnel to distribute RHDV when required	- Participation in RHDV releases 2 releases of RHDV - Minimum 2 media prior to RHDV release	March March-April August - September
• Feral cats	- Cat owner education including devastating impact on biodiversity - Reduce threat to native species from feral cat predation	The Cat Act 2011 requirement of identification, registration and sterilisation of domestic cats, to ensure responsible pet ownership.	- Engagement by SBG with community - Anecdotal reports of reduction of feral cats that are living and	Ongoing

	Investigate options for broader landscape scale control of feral cats	reduce the number of unwanted feral cats in the community - Any control to be humane and undertaken under Animal Welfare Act 2002 - Promote availability of cat traps for loan - Liaise with Rangers at Shire of Ravensthorpe	reproducing in the wild Control activity noted by LPMT as part of their wild dog report	
State Barrier Fence	- 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	- 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	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:				
Apple of Sodom	Greater Hopetoun area plus new areas identified	- 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	- A reduction in newly emerged plants due to previous control and seed viability being reduced - Newly identified sites - Media article on species control options	Jan - March and Sept - Dec treatment times when actively growing Ongoing manual removal and education

• Bridal Creeper	• 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.	• Promote options for control of bridal creeper • Use of herbicide and rust fungus (<i>Puccinia myrsiphylli</i>) • Liaise with government agencies to advise of species on their land tenure	• Media article on species control options • Reduction in germination • Collaboration identified.	March - Sept
• Cactus	• Control working towards eradicating plant from the Shire	• Secure another funding source to continue Oldfield River control	• Successful funding application	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	• Operate as an RBG subgroup/Management Committee under RAIN constitution • Develop annual documentation for RAIN AGM and DPIRD • Maintaining healthy membership and composition of Sub-Committee	Review policies on an annual basis – continue to implement and update OHS policy • 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 • Current members actively seek new members • Succession plan	• 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 • New members identified	Operational Plan and previous year Annual Report including audited statement accepted by SBG Management Committee September. All documents along with Conflict-of-Interest Register presented October RAIN AGM. Annual report Oct 2021 lodged DPIRD Dec each year. Operational Report to be submitted December each year. Ongoing

Meet all administration requirements

Goal	Target	Actions	Measures	Date Activity
Administration	Secure a diversified funding base sufficient to cover SBG operations	- 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	- 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	Ongoing Quarterly Ongoing Ongoing update shire endorsement and notification of updates

Effective communication for well engaged community and stakeholders

Goal	Target	Actions	Measures	Date Activity
- MOU developed with government agencies - Provide value to DPR payers	MOU Shire Ravensthorpe, DPIRD, DBCA, Main Roads WA, Water Corp WA	- 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 seek funding to match SBG in-kind contributions - Promote achievements, awareness relevant pest issues, via displays, eNews, newspaper, meetings, website, guides DPR spend, etc.	- Number of MOU's achieved - Record control activities by relevant agency - Record Stakeholder engagement in activities - Communication milestones met: - Minimum 8 communication activities: - Annual Newsletter - Annual survey - Regular annual updates in local media and RAIN eNews - Minimum 1 Biosecurity event annually - Website	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing

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 that was distributed in September 2024 with our annual newsletter to landowners to gain community input for planning of the 2026/27 Operational Plan and budget.

To date responses have identified the following Priority Species:

Declared Species:

Some species will require permissions prior to any control being considered.

- Wild dogs
- Rabbits
- Foxes
- Feral cats
- Bridal Creeper
- Prickly Pear
- Phytophthora Dieback
- Apple of Sodom
- Skeleton Weed
- Galah
- Western Grey Kangaroo – (*approved Wildlife Management Plan 2019-2023, commercial harvest, private agricultural land control*)
- Locust
- Fruit fly (*in some local government areas*)

Non declared species: (outside of Declared Pest Rate permitted expenditure)

- Lovegrass
- Boxthorn

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 eNews* RBG zoom meeting
December	Seasonal hiatus RBG zoom meeting Quarterly newsletter, Community Spirit and RAIN eNews*, a brief summary of years activity and achievements, Prepare for final edition of paper for year (early December)

- RAIN eNews articles to be published at least 4 per year depending on the publication schedule of the RAIN eNews