

# Northern Biosecurity Group Inc.

## Operational Plan 2021-2022



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## CONSENT STATEMENT

By submitting this operation plan, the Northern Biosecurity Group (NBG) consents to the transfer of funds from the Declared Pest Account to the NBG for the control of declared pests on freehold and pastoral lease lands within its designated area in the local government district Shires of Northampton, Chapman Valley and the City of Greater Geraldton.

### Disbursement Financial Year 2021-2022

1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
1 July 2021	1 October 2021	1 January 2022	1 April 2022
\$180,450	\$0.00	\$153,382.50	\$27,067.50
WA Government match payment		Landholder DPR collected to date	Remaining landholder DPR collected for financial year.

## INTRODUCTION

The Northern Biosecurity Group objectives are to take a proactive collaborative approach to the facilitation of declared pest management within its community, utilising a coordinated effort across the region and by working with landholders, government departments, industry groups and neighbouring biosecurity groups to ensure efficient and effective pest management on a regional scale or where appropriate.

The group formed in 2018 after a push from the State Government to establish as a Recognised Biosecurity Group, being the preferred partnership arrangement for the control of widespread and established declared pests.

The formal recognition of the Northern Biosecurity Group provided a framework to foster efficiency through community arrangements to make the best use of the skills, funds, capacities, incentives and regulations available.

Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBGs) are the preferred model under the BAM Act (*Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007*). The BAM Act recognises that biosecurity is a shared responsibility and helps to enable landholders and land managers to develop a coordinated approach to control and manage declared pests in their prescribed area.

The NBG operates within the State Barrier Fence and covers the Shires of Northampton, Chapman Valley and the City of Greater Geraldton. The total area of the NBG is close to 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> with various land tenures identified. (See Appendix 1 – map).

The group has progressed significant community engagement processes to explain the concepts of community based declared pest management and the declared pest rate, and will continue to do so to show value-for-money by promoting sustainable and efficient biosecurity practices and combining local on-the-ground stakeholder knowledge and commitment.

Beside the collection of the declared pest rate, RBGs endeavour to seek and apply for external funds to support their pest control activities. To date, NBG has raised an additional \$187,450.00 from other financial sources to add significant value to the funding contributions provided by landholders and the WA State Government.

This Operational Plan provides details on the activities and the required budget needed to support declared pest management activities by the NBG during the 2021-2022 financial year.

*The Northern Biosecurity Group requests the Minister for Agriculture and Food to approve an ad valorem declared pest rate for 2021-2022 of \$192,000 on the unimproved value on freehold land in the local government Shire districts of Northampton, Chapman Valley and City of Greater Geraldton, that is;*

- *identified as freehold on the rural valuation roll maintained under the Valuation of Land Act 1978; and*
- *no less than 100 hectares in area; and*
- *a minimum of \$80.00 per VEN.*

## OBJECTIVES

The Northern Biosecurity Group's Strategic Plan identifies the goals and aspirations for the Group over the next three years. The plan acts of a guidance manual for the NBG Management Board to monitor activities and performance.

The NBG objectives include;

- Initiate, promote and foster the control of declared pests in the NBG region;
- Encourage landholders and community to adopt sound biosecurity practices in a strategic and effective manner;
- 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 control of declared species and research and development opportunities within the region;
- Build and enhance communication and cooperation between all stakeholders on the effective control of declared species within the region;
- Create and maintain clear communication between all stakeholders;
- Gather accurate data of production loss and environmental damage by using Feral Scan and other technologies to measure the effectiveness of control methods.

## BACKGROUND

The incorporation of the Northern Biosecurity Group (NBG) commenced from a workshop held in July 2016. It was formally established in May 2017 when six representatives from the Northern Agri Group, Yuna Farm Improvement Group, Mullewa Dryland Farming Initiative and the Northampton Feral Eradication Group, formed an interim committee to establish a biosecurity group for the northern half of the Northern Agricultural Region.

The NBG received Recognised Biosecurity Group (RBG) status by the Minister on the 30th of June 2018. This resulted in the entire length of the State Barrier Fence being serviced by RBGs both inside and outside the fence with LPMTs actively engaging in the control of wild dogs and other declared pests.

The NBG Constitution sets the requirements for the appointment of the Board of Management, which currently consists of six members. These members hold voluntary positions and are responsible for overseeing the affairs of the Association. The Board of Management consists of a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and no less than three members, but no more than eight other members.

During a Special Meeting in October 2019, the NBG members adopted a change in the Constitution to ensure all local government areas (LGA) have representation. The Board will have to include a minimum of two (2) representatives from each LGA.

The NBG held its 2020 Annual General Meeting on the 16th of September 2020.

The NBG Board of Management 2020-2021 includes:

Board Director	Term remaining	Role	Shire
Jason Batten	1 year AGM 2018 – 2021	Chair Person	Chapman Valley
Fiona Mann	3 years AGM 2020 – 2023	Deputy Chair	SCV/CGG
Scott Bridgeman	1 year AGM 2018 – 2021	Board Director	Northampton
Steve Rowe	1 year AGM 2018 – 2021	Board Director	City of Greater Geraldton
Jeremy Brooks	3 years AGM 2020 – 2023	Board Director	Chapman Valley
Lloyd Cripps	3 years AGM 2020 – 2023	Board Director	Northampton
Darren Cobley	3 years AGM 2020 – 2023	Board Director	City of Greater Geraldton
Penny Walker	As per contract	Finance Officer (part-time)	Non-voting position
Marieke Jansen	As per contract	Executive Officer (part-time)	Non-voting position

## STAKEHOLDERS

Key stakeholders and collaborators include;

- Landholders in the NBG region

- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)
- Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)
- Shire of Northampton
- Shire of Chapman Valley
- City of Greater Geraldton
- State Natural Resource Management Office
- Australian Wool Innovation Ltd (AWI)
- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Northern Agricultural Catchments Council
- Carnarvon Rangelands Biosecurity Association
- Meekatharra Rangelands Biosecurity Association
- Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association
- Midlands Biosecurity Group
- Northern Agri Group
- Yuna Farm Improvement Group
- Mullewa Dryland Farming Initiative
- Bush Heritage Committee
- WALGA
- West Australian Feral Pig Advisory Group
- National Feral Pig Coordination Team
- Midwest Development Commission

## FUNDING

In 2021/2022, the Declared Pest Rate (DPR) will be collected from landholders who own >100ha with a minimum payment of \$80.00 per VEN, in the NBG prescribed area. The total operating budget to manage declared pests in the NBG area is \$384,000. The declared pest activities will focus on wild dog, feral pig, fox, rabbit and cactus controls. Whilst the collection of the DPR will provide the main source of funds for these activities, other funding opportunities will continue to be pursued as they arise to further supplement activities.

## FORECAST BUDGET 2021-2022

### NBG BUDGET TEMPLATE (GST ex)

INCOME	DETAIL/NOTES	DPA 2021/22	Other Sources
Rate revenue	DPA 2021-22	180,450	-
Govt matching		180,450	-
Additional DPA		-	-
Reserve fund		-	-
Carryover	<i>Available June 30th</i>		-
Interest		-	-

	<b>Total DPA/DPR</b>	<b>360,900</b>	-
SNRMO	Confirmed	-	31,934
WDAP2	Confirmed	-	62,500
AWI	Confirmed	-	38,571
NACC	Unconfirmed	-	-
Carryover		-	-
Interest		-	-
	<b>Total- Other sources</b>		133,005
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>		<b>360,900</b>	
<b>plus Expected Carryover</b>		-	-

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>DETAIL/NOTES</b>	<b>DPA/DPR</b>	<b>Other Sources</b>
	<b>Program 1 - (Wild dogs)</b>		
	Aerial baiting		-
	Bait manufacture	15,000	-
	Wild Dog LPMT training	-	38,571
	Equipment	-	-
	LPMT contract	128,000	62,500
	<b>Total Program 1</b>	<b>143,000</b>	<b>101,071</b>
	<b>Program 2 - Feral Pigs</b>	-	
	Chemical / products	10,000	-
	Feral pigs aerial shoot	30,000	-
	Equipment	-	-
	LPMT contract	45,000	21,934
	<b>Total Program 2</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>21,934</b>
	<b>Program 3 - Other pest animals</b>	-	
	Community baiting (rabbits, foxes, wild dogs, feral pigs)	-	-
	LPMT contract	5,000	-
	Rabbits	15,000	-
	Foxes	2,100	-
	<b>Total Program 2</b>	<b>22,100</b>	-
	<b>Program 3 - Declared Plants</b>	-	
	Cactus	4,000	-
	Other	-	-
		-	-
	<b>Total Program 3</b>	<b>4,000</b>	-
	<b>Program 4 - Community Engagement</b>	-	
	Community activities	5,000	-
	Materials (signs)	2,400	-
	RCPs	2,000	-
	Consultation for operational plan (DPR)	2,900	-
		-	-

<b>Total Program 4</b>	<b>12,300</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Program 5 -Governance &amp; Administration</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Executive Officer	40,000	10,000
Finance Officer	10,000	-
Meeting costs	12,000	-
Professional finance & audit	4,500	-
Insurance	12,000	-
Sundry	-	-
<b>Total Program 5</b>	<b>78,500</b>	<b>10,000</b>
Overheads - 10% contingency	16,000	-
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>344,900</b>	<b>110,505</b>
<b>GRAND EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>360,900</b>	

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES 2021-2022

### Licensed Pest Management Technicians for Wild Dog control

The NBG has been working with local Licensed Pest Management Technicians to address the increase of wild dog attacks in the northern part of our region. Their main duties are baiting and trapping in wild dog hotspots and be available to land managers who have wild dog (suspected) sightings/tracks, report stock attacks or would like some on-ground advice on how to protect their property from wild dog attacks.

The employed LPMTs for Wild Dog Controls is budgeted for 230 days of activity, based on historical data. The LPMTs are funded by the declared pest rate. The Group is hopeful the DPR income could be supplemented with access to external funding sources.

### Pest Control Activities

The NBG organises community baiting days in Autumn and Spring for all landholders in the region who hold a current RCP. Wild dog, Feral Pig, Foxes and Rabbit baiting products will be available at different locations in the region. Other activities include research and monitoring of dog and feral pig activities. Costs include LPMT time, purchase of 1080 products and safety gear. Meat baits are manufactured on-site under LPMT instruction for community and scheduled baiting runs. An aerial shoot will be considered for inaccessible areas if DPR or external funding sources permit.



**Planned pest control activities between June 2021 – July 2022**

Who	Action	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
All landholders	Landholders to submit RCP applications												
All landholders with RCP	Coordinated community baiting for Wild Dogs, Foxes, Rabbits and Feral Pigs												
LPMT	Professional wild dog trapping and reporting as per contract												
Landholders, Feral Pig LPMT	Coordinated Trapping and Baiting (DPA & SNRMO)												
Feral Pig Monitoring	Monitor camera and drone deployment (DPIRD and NBG)												
Aerial Feral Pig Shoot	Aerial cull in feral pig hot spot areas												

**Project Management:**

The NBG contracts an Executive Officer for approx. 15 hours per week alongside a Finance Officer. The NBG Board meets at least four per year and committee members are reimbursed for expenses e.g. travel.

**Community Engagement**

The budget item includes all engagement activities that are being organised to inform the community about Declared Pest Species and activities carried out by the NBG.

A quarterly E-Newsletter is distributed to members and stakeholders and a website is being developed for easy access to resources. Key messages are circulated frequently via the NBG face-book page.

The NBG has been covering the cost for Restricted Chemical Product Permit (RCP) applications submitted to DPIRD for this financial year. The NBG receives a 50% discount on RCP permit fees from DPIRD. All RCP applications received before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 are free of charged if submitted to DPIRD by the Northern Biosecurity Group.

The NBG has received additional funding for 3 Community Engagement events but the majority of time and funding of the Community Engagement funding is used for consultation with landholders in regards to the priority pest information and on-ground activities as part of the Operational Plan.

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION TIMELINE**

As part of the Operational Plan, the NBG will undertake a range of engagement activities aimed at informing participation, collaboration with landholders and key stakeholders within its community.

We have identified key community engagement activities for 2021-22 as identified in the table below

Organisation/Stakeholder	Type of Engagement	Type of communication activity	Materials/Resources needed	When	By Who
General Community including Landholders	Inform & Consult	Use Social Media to inform all stakeholders NBG Website Attend Field Days Media Releases E-Newsletter	Facebook + Twitter Flyer + Poster + Banner Articles  Using articles and links	Ongoing  April/ Sept 2021/22  Quarterly	EO Marieke Jansen
NBG Members	Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower	Newsletters AGM NBG Community Info Sessions	NBG Member mailing list	Quarterly	EO Marieke Jansen EO and NBG Board
NBG Board	Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower	Board meetings Board reports Sign off on NBG Policies and Procedures New LPMT contracts BAM Act presentation	Provision of EO reports and finances	Quarterly + AGM	EO Marieke Jansen NBG Board

Organisation/Stakeholder	Type of Engagement	Type of communication activity	Materials/Resources needed	When	By Who
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)	Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate	Invite to attend/present at workshops/events SNRMO Feral Pig Monitoring project Collaboration with DPIRD Research and Regional Biosecurity Officers	E-Newsletter articles RCP permit information Report on baits distributed (in EO report) Reporting Template	Declared Pest Community Events  2x p/yr (and updates at Farming Group Field Days)	RBG Project Liaison Officer – Kim Haywood  Local Biosecurity Officers (e.g. Mike Jones)  Invasive Species Development Officers (e.g. Pete Adams, Jim Miller, Tracey Kreplins)  State Barrier Fence – Craig Robbins  Wild Dog Action Plan – Matt Stadler  Minister of Agriculture
Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA)	Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate	Collaborate and Coordinate baiting programs	Inform which landholders are participating in what program	Spring and Autumn each year  Attending Round Table session at board meetings	DBCA Pastoral Senior Operations Officer John Coetsee  DBCA Senior Operations Officer Michael Raykos  DBCA Biodiversity Officer Casper Human
Other RBGs in SW Land Division	Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate	Attend RBG Coordinators meeting	Collaborate on common issues and opportunities.	2x p/yr?	NBG Executive Officer  Other RBG EOs & Chairs

Organisation/Stakeholder	Type of Engagement	Type of communication activity	Materials/Resources needed	When	By Who
RBGs in Rangelands	Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate	Teleconference on pastoral properties within the NBG region (inside SBF)	Maps, FeralScan records and group reports  Collaborate on common issues and opportunities.	Ongoing	NBG Chair and EO CRBA EO, Dogger Coordinator and Chair MRBA EO, Dogger Coordinator and Chair
Northern Agricultural Catchment Council (NACC)	Inform, Consult, Involve and Collaborate	Collaborate on rabbit/fox/feral pig baiting for Malleefowl protection	Landholder details for fencing, revegetating or baiting in Malleefowl areas	As per contract (pending)	NACC Biodiversity Coordinator
Grower Groups Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Agri Group</li> <li>Mullewa Dryland Initiative</li> <li>Yuna Farm Improvement Group</li> </ul>	Inform	Attend meetings and field days	Flyers, Banners, Posters, Presentation, RCP Permits	September 2021	EO and Board members from Grower Group
Local Government Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shire of Northampton</li> <li>Shire of Chapman Valley</li> <li>City of Greater Geraldton</li> <li>WALGA</li> </ul>		Mail outs + Updates at Council meetings	Info for Shire Officers with NBG info and explanation of DPR		

Organisation/Stakeholder	Type of Engagement	Type of communication activity	Materials/Resources needed	When	By Who
Minister for Agriculture and Food	Inform	Media releases	Photos	As opportunity arises	Minister for Agriculture and Food Hon. Alannah MacTiernan
Industry Funding Schemes	Consult & Collaborate	Funding opportunities	Funding application to fill gaps inside of the fence of UCL/Reserves and Pastoral properties not included in NBG DPR.		Rebecca Heath
Stock agents- Suppliers	Inform	Flyer / handout	FeralScan + Flyer to encourage to report stock damage		
AWI + MLA	Inform, Consult & Collaborate	Additional funding for Wild Dog and Feral Pig Control  Sheep data to estimate wild dog impact on sheep production	FeralScan Reports + EO reports at NBG Meetings + Invite to NBG Meeting		FeralScan Reports NBG Newsletter
Midwest Development Commission	Inform & Consult & Collaborate	Discuss funding opportunities for Declared Pest Management for all Stakeholders in NBG		Ongoing	Mike Bowley (DPIRD)

Appendix 1: NBG Prescribed Area Map (December 2020).

