



CONFIDENTIAL FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

eDOCS: 18155019

National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program (SEQ) Steering Committee
Risk Management Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee)
Thursday 4 May 2023
Brisbane, Queensland
(Held by videoconference)

MINUTES – MEETING 10

ATTENDANCE

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Attendees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alan Millis, Chair• Shalan Scholfield, Principal Director, Environment Biosecurity Office, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australian Government (Proxy)• Enrico Perotti, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, QLD• Scott Charlton, Department of Primary Industries, NSW |
| Apologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bertie Hennecke, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australian Government• Mick Jeffery, Director, FAST |
| Presenters/Observers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lance Perry, Program Executive• Graeme Dudgeon, Head of Operations• Tom Roberts, a/Director Strategy and Science• Anna Herwig, Director Business Services• Tanya Grigg, Manager, Executive Support• Alana Kirchhoff, Senior Project Officer FAST |
| Secretariat | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heather Jablonski (NRIFAEP) |

Agenda Item 1 – Introduction

The tenth meeting of the Risk Management Sub-Committee (RMSC) was opened by the Chair at 1.04pm (AEST). The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting, noting apologies from Mick Jeffery and Bertie Hennecke.

The minutes from Meeting 9 held on 26 September 2022 were endorsed to progress to the Steering Committee with no changes.

Members discussed outstanding items on the action register and noted that with one exception, all had either been addressed or were on this meeting’s agenda. The exception was that Risk Register updates have not been provided to the RMSC on a quarterly basis.

From the minutes of RMSC9, Alan Millis sought updates on:

- the General Manager’s Update, in relation to the dot points regarding the Program’s schedule to scale up, the delay with increasing the workforce and the uncertainty of funding
- recruitment of a project management expert to assist with the scale-up
- IT capability
- decisions on responsibilities and funding between FAST and the Program.

Lance Perry advised that there have been significant discussions regarding the division of functions between FAST and the Program and this has been included in the Program’s draft Response Plan. All other items would be covered in the Program Executive update.

The agenda for the meeting was confirmed.

The Sub-Committee:

- **CONFIRMED** the agenda as previously circulated.
- **APPROVED** the minutes of Meeting 9.
- **NOTED** that all actions but one had been completed or would be covered in this agenda.

| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--------------|---|----------------|--------|--------|
| 1-1 | RMSC Minutes from September 2022 meeting to be provided to the Steering Committee for approval to publish | Secretariat | Aug-23 | Open |

Agenda Item 2 – Program Executive Update

Lance Perry advised that logistics, availability and supply of bait, increasing the workforce, information and uncertainty around funding detailed in the General Manager’s update at the last meeting were all issues and risks that remain for the Program. This is driven largely by timing and funding given that contracts can not be released to market without confirmation of funding availability. The Program is working on extensions to current contracts to address these issues in the short term.

The KPMG Review of the Program’s operations has been completed. The Program will distribute the report to RMSC members.

Lance advised that there are now clear functional separations between FAST and the Program, with FAST driving self-treatment, management and surveillance and the Program focusing on eradication and compliance.

Recently the Program has been working through feedback on the draft Response Plan, changes to the Regulation and guidelines and industry codes of practice. The Program has been working with NSW to amend the wording regarding obligations under the general biosecurity obligation (GBO). Separate

| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--|--|----------------|--------|--------|
| <p>guidelines will be developed, with one for the community and the other for industry. The messaging will be clearer, advising that treatment should occur to discharge obligations under the GBO.</p> <p>The Program is managing the risk of restricted funding and is seeking approval to bring forward remaining funding under the original 10-year plan to be combined with the current underspend to secure funding for the 23/24 financial year.</p> <p>Scott Charlton sought advice regarding Victoria’s reservations in the NBC and whether the Program has considered a second budget allocation request to supplement the full Response Plan if approval isn’t received in time. Lance advised that this has been considered and subject to approval there is the possibility that funds can be sourced from Queensland’s proposed contribution for the first year of the draft Response Plan.</p> <p>A risk remains for Program staff, with less than seven weeks left until the end of their current contracts.</p> <p>Alan Millis queried the 2022/23 underspend and how this reflects on the ground, in terms of the planned treatment for this year. Alan was advised that there was a six week cessation of aerial treatment due to contract delays. The underspends are associated with aerial treatment, associated bait, contractor staff and wet weather days.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED the Program Executive’s update. | | | | |
| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
| 2-2 | KPMG report to be provided to RMSC Members | Secretariat | Jun-23 | Open |

| Agenda Item 3 – Terms of Reference | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|--------|--------|
| <p>The Chair opened the floor for questions on the updated Terms of Reference (ToR). Lance Perry advised that the ToR had remained the same where possible noting the updates to the governance section to include the establishment of the Extended Leadership Team and the Senior Leadership Board. The Program is aiming to set up a dedicated Risk Manager within the Directorate.</p> <p>Shalan Scholfield noted that once AgSOC and Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting (AMM) had confirmed the decision-making process for the Program, further updates to the RMSC ToR would be required.</p> <p>Alan Milis requested updates to various sections within the ToR. These have been forwarded to the Program for actioning.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DISCUSSED and ENDORSED the Terms of Reference, subject to requested changes, for submission to the NRIFAEP Steering Committee. | | | | |
| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
| 3-3 | Update sections to the Terms of Reference as discussed in the meeting. | Tanya Grigg | Aug-23 | Open |
| 3-4 | RMSC Terms of Reference to be provided to the Steering Committee for approval. | Secretariat | Aug-23 | Open |

Agenda Item 4 – Risk Management Policy and Plan & RMSC Governance

Alan Millis advised that the paper sets out the process well and asked if Program Management would like to make any further comments.

Lance Perry sought advice on whether inclusion of the new internal governance structures within the Program, with the establishment of the Extended Leadership Team (ELT) and Senior Leadership Board (SLB) would be appropriate, for transparency.

Shalan Scholfield queried the issue of funding and trying to retain staff capabilities and where this was covered in the document. Alan advised that this would be covered in the risk register.

The Sub-Committee:

- **ENDORSED** the updated Policy and Plan document for progression to the Steering Committee.
- **NOTED** the Program will need to review the Policy and Plan once AgSOC and AMM have approved the Response Plan.

| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--------------|---|----------------|--------|--------|
| 4-5 | RMSC Policy and Plan to be submitted to the Steering Committee. | Secretariat | Aug-23 | Open |

Agenda Item 5 – Risk and Issues Status

Alan Millis noted that the risk register is a work in progress restart focussing on the operational risks of the Program. The intention with the register is to align the operational risks under strategic risks once decisions have been made regarding the Program’s future.

Tanya Grigg advised that the risk register will transition to a state where it can be a live document, tracked on a monthly basis through the combined ELT/SLB meetings within the Program. Tanya detailed the process undertaken in meeting with managers to gain a holistic view of risks and allocated treatments. The updated register has been compared against the old register to ensure significant risks haven’t been missed.

Alan opened the floor for members to provide questions and comments on the updated register. Members provided general comments and updates that will be provided to the Program for inclusion. Alan requested members provide any additional comments on the risk register out-of-session. Tanya and Alan will meet once comments have been provided to discuss the updates to the risk register.

The Sub-Committee:

- **NOTED** the current version on the risk register.

| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--------------|--|---------------------|--------|--------|
| 5-6 | Comments on the current Risk Register to be provided to the Program. | Members | May-23 | Open |
| 5-7 | Out-of-Session discussion regarding Risk Register updates. | Chair / Tanya Grigg | Jun-23 | Open |

Agenda Item 6 – Future of the Program – Funded / Unfunded

Lance Perry provided advice on the current process seeking funding approval for the Program. Lance has met with ministers from the ACT, Western Australia and South Australia, noting that jurisdictions are still supportive of the Program and are working through the process.

Alan Millis queried the level of funding required for the 23/24 financial year. The Program is expecting a decision on the bring forward of funding by the end of the month, with approval of the draft Response Plan expected in July / August 2023. Lance advised that funding approval was the Program’s number one strategic risk at the moment. Alan noted that the map provided on page 2 of the agenda paper provided a telling argument that eradication of fire ants is still worth doing.

The Sub-Committee:

- **NOTED** the information provided on the funding requirements for the 23/24 financial year.

| Action items | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| Nil. | | | |

Agenda Item 7 – Program Scale-Up

Lance Perry advised that most of this agenda item has been covered through discussions of the earlier agenda items.

The Steering Committee has endorsed the draft Response Plan to progress to NBC. The NBC has considered the Response Plan and requested supplementary documents on some key points.

Lance advised that under the Program scale up, suitable depots would be required in the northern and southern treatment areas to avoid wasted time travelling. Moreover, Business Services is conducting a risk assessment and workplace health and safety review on the current depot sites to establish their suitability.

The Program is currently seeking to extend current contracts as it is unable to complete a full market process until the confirmation of funding is received.

Graeme Dudgeon advised there is a risk of the loss of community support with the delay in funding and the flow on effects on the treatment program, which may be perceived as the failure of the Program. Messaging will need to be clear to retain community confidence and gain support.

KPMG have conducted a review of the Program’s systems.

The Sub-Committee:

- **NOTED** the update on scale up of Program.

| Action items | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| Nil. | | | |

Agenda Item 8 – Queensland’s Fire Ant Suppression Taskforce

Alana Kirchhoff provided an update on FAST detailing current projects under way.

The Logan City Council community suppression project is under way with over 6 500 registrations received to date. Applications have now been extended to 30 May 2023. Alana advised that feedback from government stakeholders at a local and state level regarding funding and fiscal constraints has been received.

Conversations are continuing with Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Rail and the Department of Resources as key owners of land impacted by fire ants. FAST currently has a collaborative agreement with the City of Gold Coast Council who have treated approximately 200 hectares of their agreed 800 hectare target for this financial year. FAST are meeting with private and high-risk industries noting that they’re keen to start self-responsive work.

FAST have a broader risk management plan with a similar approach to the Program’s RMSC Policy and Plan. Strategic risks are mapped out in the FAST plan and drilled down at the operational level that roll up to the strategic level. Alan asked if a summary or short version of the FAST Plan could be shared with the sub-committee members for their information.

Alan Millis questioned if the Department of Defence, as a large landholder in southeast Queensland, had been contacted and was advised that they are on the FAST list to contact this financial year.

Lance Perry advised that the Program has a representative at the FAST Taskforce meetings, and that FAST is represented at the Program’s ELT and SLB.

The Sub-Committee:

- **NOTED** the FAST’s progress in implementing the FAST Plan 2022-26.
- **NOTED** current constraints limiting the full scope and tempo of FAST’s activities.

| Action items | | Responsibility | Target | Status |
|--------------|---|----------------|--------|--------|
| 8-8 | FAST Plan to be provided to RMSC Members. | FAST | May-23 | Open |

Agenda Item 9 – Other Business

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution to the RMSC.

An additional external member is required for the RMSC. This will be included in the update to the Steering Committee for consideration at their next meeting.

The Chair summarised the meeting, including the actions and decisions made.

The next meeting is to be held in September 2023.

The meeting closed at 2:36pm.

The National Fire Ant Eradication Program is a nationally cost-shared program funded by all Australian territories and governments, and the federal government, delivered by Biosecurity Queensland.

