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National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program (SEQ) Steering Committee
Tuesday 1 November 2022
Teleconference
(AEST) 1.00pm – 2.00pm

ATTENDANCE

Attendees	Wendy Craik, Chair Jo Laduzko, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Commonwealth) Scott Charlton, Department of Primary Industries (NSW) Nigel Ainsworth, Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (VIC) Marcelle O'Brien, Department of Natural Resources and Environment (TAS) Ryan Wilkinson, Department of Natural Resources and Environment (TAS) Claire Morton, Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade (NT) Nathan Rhodes, Department of Primary Industries and Regions (SA) Mike Richards, External Financial Consultant Miles Dixon, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (ACT)
Observers	Allison Crook, a/Deputy Director-General / Chief Biosecurity Officer, Biosecurity Queensland, (DAF) Lance Perry, Program Executive Eddie Jebreen, Director, FAST
Secretariat	Heather Jablonski, Policy Officer, Biosecurity Queensland
Apologies	Malcolm Letts, Deputy Director-General/Chief Biosecurity Officer, Biosecurity Queensland, (DAF) John van Schagen, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (WA) Rae Burrows, Department of Natural Resources and Environment (TAS) Jasmyn Lynch, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate (ACT)

The meeting opened at 1.00pm (AEST).



MAIN DISCUSSION

The Chair welcomed members to the extraordinary Steering Committee meeting, noting the apologies of Rae Burrows, John van Schagen, Jasmyn Lynch and Malcolm Letts. Claire Morton the new member for the Northern Territory and Allison Crook, proxy for Queensland were welcomed to the meeting.

Lance Perry, the new Program Executive for the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program (NRIFAEP) was introduced to Steering Committee members. Lance provided members with a summary of his background.

The Chair advised members that the extraordinary meeting was arranged to provide feedback on the proposed Eradication Strategy 2023-27 (Eradication Strategy) and the Compliance Strategy for submission to AgSOC. These documents have been drafted in response to the Strategic Review and were provided to members prior to the meeting.

Lance Perry provided members with a presentation of key points within the Eradication Strategy detailing the three-pillar strategy of surveillance, treatment and compliance. Lance explained the modelling undertaken to assess the costs and risk associated with the proposed strategy. The Chair requested a copy of the presentation be circulated to members.

Members discussed and sought further information on the number of compliance officers currently with the Program and who was responsible for issuing infringements for breaches of the general biosecurity obligation with relation to fire ants. Discussions were also held around the risk of human assisted movement in new developments and the obligation under current legislation of developers to ensure compliance.

Each jurisdiction was invited to make comments on the proposed Eradication Strategy. Members welcomed the focus on compliance. Comments were raised about the decision to allocate responsive treatment and compliance roles to the National Program, contrary to the Review recommendations, possible duplication of roles between FAST and the Program, the decision to fully treat fire ants to 10 kilometres, the basis for estimation of costs mentioned in the review as opposed to the estimated costs in the Eradication Strategy, and what is different about this proposal compared with the current program which would provide confidence of success. The Chair requested a document detailing the recommendations proposed in the Strategic Review that the Program are departing from and the basis for those departures to provide justification for the decision.

The Chair thanked members for their comments and requested members send their detailed feedback on the Eradication Strategy and Compliance Strategy via email to all members.

The Steering Committee:

- **NOTED** the Program Executive's key highlights of the proposed Eradication Strategy 2023-27
- **DISCUSSED** and provided comments on the proposed Eradication Strategy 2023-27 with further comments to be provided Out-of-Session.



Action items		Responsibility	Target	Status
1.	Request for Program Executive's presentation to be circulated to members via email.	Secretariat	Immediately	Completed.
2.	Document detailing recommendations from the Strategic Review and Program alignment to these recommendations.	Program	Nov-22	In Progress
3.	Provide detailed comments on the proposed Eradication Strategy 2023-27 and Compliance Strategy via email to all members.	Members	7-Nov-2022	Completed.

The Chair noted the next meeting is planned for 23 November 2022.

Meeting closed 2.04pm (AEST).