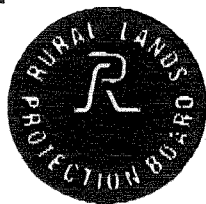


Tamworth Rural Lands Protection Board

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24* May 2004

MRS KAY ELSON MP

STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FORESTRY
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Secretary: 

RECEIVED

24 JUN 2004

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES
AND FORESTRY

The Committee,

Re: INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE OF PEST ANIMALS

On behalf of the Tamworth Rural Lands Protection Board we would like to submit this submission to your **inquiry**.

Introduction.

The Tamworth Rural **Lands** Protection Board is one of forty-eight Boards set up across NSW. The Rural Lands Protection Boards work under the Rural Lands Protection Act 1998, The Tamworth RLPB services 4827 ratepayers and covers an area of **1,715,000** ha of rateable land in Northern NSW. One of our core functions is the control of pest animals and pest insects across this area. We have six Rangers trained in pest animal and pest insect control techniques to assist landholders to carry out their pest control obligations, The **Rural** Lands Protection Board system is well **placed** with trained staff with local area knowledge to be at the forefront of any pest animal control programs proposed.

Response.

2. A) Prevention of new pest animals becoming established;

NSW is well placed with the **RLP Board** system for the detection of new pest animals and to aid in their destruction. We suggest that all potential pest animals be reported to a central body. When this is done the pest would be evaluated to determine its potential cost to industry and the environment, the cost to control the pest animal at its present levels, the possibility of controlling or eradicating the pest animal and finally what control methods would be used.

When this evaluation had been **carried** out then funding would be given to the appropriate body to carry out the control program.

B) Detection and reporting systems for new and established pest animals.

The Rural Lands Protection Boards are already using an effective reporting system **called** the **Dekkers** System see attachment 1. This could be adapted to suit any pest animal.

C) Eradication of infestations (particularly newly established species or **'sleeper'** populations of species which are considered to be a high risk) where feasible and appropriate,

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NSW is again **well** placed to carry out such programs due to **the RLPB system**. There is already a number of trained staff spread across the State. These people also know the areas they work in and the people that they will have to **work** with to make **sure** that any program has the best chance of success.

3. Funding **sources** from State Government are limited however if they was more money made available for targeted programs, which was the case with the drought funding for the eradication of pest animals during the latest drought. This type of funding gives good results and value for money, With outside funding it would also enable programs with environmental outcomes to be completed, as the cost would not just be carried by the landholders. There is work carried out around some National Parks in our area that benefits both the National Park and their **neighbours** using National **Park** resources with landholder input.
4. Research and Development will only be sponsored by industry groups if there is the possibility of a monetary return for their investment, or if it will save the industry they are involved with money through prevention of loss **of** production. Therefore to get some **research** going for the benefit of a **community**, State, or Australia as a whole some research will have to be initiated and funded by Government. The Rural Lands Protection Boards are well placed to assist in any programs involving pest animals due to their knowledge of pest control and on ground experience. **If** this support were needed outside funding would be necessary so the burden of this extra work would not be carried by our small **ratepayer** base.
5. Promotion of pest animals and their management is already carried out in certain areas. When doing this promotion we must be aware of the target audience so as not to waste resources, Pests in some areas may not be seen in the same light somewhere else, in this case promotion in the wrong areas especially of proposed management techniques could be counter productive.

GREG LUMBER
MANAGING RANGER
TAMWORTH RLPB.



2. Administration

attachment .1.

Vertebrate pest control manual

RLPB). These indicators have been modified slightly and put in a format which could be adopted by the Noxious Animal Inspectors and RLPBs as a means of recording vertebrate pest abundance and their potential to cause agricultural damage. (Refer to Sections 2.5.1 to 2.5.3.) For examples of a Properly Inspection Report and Monthly Report see Figures 2,2 and 2,3.

It is hoped this format will be used in property inspection reports. The advantages of this system are:

- It requires a minimum of effort in the field,
 - » Information will be consistent.
- It is easy to read and comprehend.
 - « Monthly and annual reports can include these tables with the totals of each category. This can be related to the previous year and the Boards' objectives,
- If all RLPBs adopt this system, information can be collected statewide and the 'big picture' can be more accurately assessed.

2.5.1 Rabbits

Potential	Abundance			
	0 nil	1 low	2 med	3 high
A nil				
B low				
C med				
D high				

Code definition—Rabbits

Code no.	Density	Definition
3	High	Rabbits seen at any time and much sign of activity (active warrens, dung hills, scratchings).
2	Medium	Some rabbits seen at any time and/or much active sign.
1	Low	Few or no sightings and/or little active sign.
0	Nil	No rabbits.

Potential. Potential is indicated by the factors which contribute to the quick build-up of rabbits, i.e. warrens, logs, blackberries, boxthorn, etc. and pressure from nearby heavily infested areas.

Code Definition

A	No factors present.
B	Little harbour, single holes, easily destroyed.
C	Significant harbour, warrens, burrows, logs, bushes, etc. which with concentrated effort could be eliminated.
D	Intractable harbour, i.e. areas where it is impossible to eliminate all harbour, e.g. rocky hills, steep gullies, etc.

The aim is to reach '0A' grading.

2.5.2 Feral pigs

Abundance	0 nil	1 low	2 med	3 high

Code definition

Code no.	Density	Definition
3	High	Regular sightings day/night, abundant fresh sign.
2	Medium	Some sightings day/night, obvious fresh sign.
1	Low	No/few sightings day/night, very few fresh sign.
0	Nil	No pigs or sign.

2.5.3 Wild dogs

Abundance	0 nil	1 low	2 med	3 high

Code Density Definition

3	High	Abundant tracks and sign, howlings at night, regular sightings and/or some predation.
2	Medium	Obvious track and sign, some howling, occasional sightings and/or some predation.
1	Low	Few tracks and sign, very few sightings, very little predation.
0	Nil	No dogs or sign.