



Report **04.678**
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Committee **Rural Services and Wairarapa**
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Regional Pest Management Strategy - Operational Report 2003/04

1. Purpose

To report on the performance of the 2003/2004 Operational Plan for implementation of the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.

2. Background

Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act requires the Council, as the Management Agency, to prepare an operational plan for each Regional Pest Management Strategy (RPMS) which it has approved. Furthermore, the Agency must prepare a report on the plan and its implementation no later than five months after the end of the each financial year. The report is to be made available to the public and a copy forwarded to the relevant Minister(s).

A few Councils have determined to use the Annual Plan reporting process to provide details on performance against RPMS Operational Plan objectives. The Biosecurity Act does provide for this option. However, it is considered more transparent to utilise a separate reporting process where greater detail can be included on performance, trends, issues and expenditure. A separate report also provides a higher level of accountability and transparency for ratepayers.

3. Comment

Attachment 1 contains the Annual Report for the 2003/2004 Operational Plan. This is the second progress report detailing performance against the objectives in the twenty year Strategy. In the 2003/04 year, emphasis has been applied to identifying and controlling Eradication and Containment pest plant species, maintaining a high level focus on public education, and focusing our efforts on priority Key Native Ecosystem sites. A wholesale review of contracting services in Pest Plants was completed. This has resulted in a re-organisation of staff duties with a greater focus on teamwork to achieve annual work programmes. Educating the public on pest related issues continues to be a cornerstone activity. A well-informed public is paramount to ensuring we progress the Strategy objectives at a satisfactory rate.

The report includes a separate Pest Plant and Pest Animal section with an overview of major RPMS issues encountered during the year, details on the Key Native Ecosystem programmes, ecological monitoring activities, and finally, an outline of performance against key activity objectives.

4. Highlights for 2003/04

The new Strategy introduced some significant changes from the original 1996-2001 document. This followed an in-depth analysis of community aspirations via submissions, and a review of our ability to deliver on both short and long term objectives. The use of the pest infestation curve to focus our resource inputs was a major step forward in managing pests in the region. The eradication of regional significant pests at low densities and containment of others to specific areas is, and will continue to be, a high priority.

Key highlights included:

- Successful eradication of possums from the 616 hectare Miramar Peninsula;
- Implementation of a joint publicity programme involving Greater Wellington, Department of Conservation, MAF, and Wellington Fish & Game to raise awareness of invasive aquatic species (plants and fish) in the Region. This followed the identification of a significant number of illegal species in the Kapiti District;
- Successful implementation of a number of two year contracts for control of Eradication and Containment pest plants in the Wellington urban areas;
- Completion of intensive possum and predator control in 61 KNE Management Areas;
- Implementation of a joint campaign with DoC, and all the Territorial Local Authorities outlining the negatives of illegal dumping of garden green waste. Approximately 70,000 pamphlets were distributed throughout the Region;
- A significant reduction in the number of complaints and enquiries from landowners concerning pest infestations.

The attached Report contains details of other highlights concerning pest plants and animals.

5. Communications

Public notices will be utilised to inform the public that the Annual Report is available for inspection.

Copies will be forwarded to the appropriate Ministers for their review and comment.

Consideration will be given to using Elements to provide a summary of the key issues.

5. Recommendation

- (1) That the Committee, as the delegated Management Agency, approves the Annual Report on the implementation of the 2003/2004 Operational Plan for the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.*
- (2) That a copy of the Report be forwarded to the relevant Ministers.*
- (3) That the Report be made available for public inspection.*

Report prepared by:

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