



Report 08.605
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Committee Catchment Management Committee
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Regional Pest Management Strategy: Operational Plan 2008/09

1. Purpose

To seek adoption of the 2008/09 Operational Plan for implementation of the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The Council approved the current Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 on the 17 September 2002. Operational Plans are prepared annually for Committee approval. Annual reports on performance against objectives are also presented to the Committee. A report on performance against objectives in the 2007/08 Plan will be presented to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee on 20 November 2008.

The Council is required to prepare an annual Operational Plan under Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act 1993. However, there is no specific statutory requirement for an Operational Plan to be formally approved by the Council. It is considered appropriate to do so, however, as it reinforces the Council's ongoing support for biosecurity functions and indicates our desire to be transparent regarding expenditure and means of achievement.

The Biosecurity Act 1993 specifies a number of requirements for an Operational Plan-

The Council must:-

- review the Plan annually and, if deemed appropriate, amend it;
- provide a copy of the Plan to the responsible Minister;
- prepare an annual report on the Plan, including the effectiveness of implementation, not later than five months after the end of each financial year; and
- make copies of the Plan and annual report available to the public.

The power to disallow a Plan, if it is deemed to be inconsistent with the Strategy, lies solely with the Council, as the agency that approved the Strategy.

4. The Operational Plan

The proposed Operational Plan 2008/98 is enclosed separately as Attachment 1.

Whilst the Act requires Plans to be developed, there is no advice on their purpose, form or content. It is presumed that their purpose is to assist the Management Agency to implement the Regional Strategy. Through the process of annual review and reporting, the Council, as Management Agency, details how the Strategies are to be implemented and the achievement, or otherwise, of stated performance targets. Secondly, the process enables stakeholders the opportunity to annually examine a Strategy's cost effectiveness for its duration.

The 2008/09 Operational Plan seeks to continue the progress made in the first six years of the Strategy. However, this Plan is unusual as it must reflect the legal requirement to continue implementation of the existing RPMS, despite a number of changes being proposed following progression of the five year review. It is anticipated that the Proposed RPMS will be presented for approval by the Council at the 3 November meeting. In the interim period, staff will focus on key species and sites where no or minimal changes to the RPMS objectives have been recommended.

During 2008/09, resources will continue to be focused on regional surveillance and eradication (total control) species. These species are either not known to be in the region or are present but limited in distribution. These pests are all capable of becoming significant regional pests if left unmanaged.

Other focus areas will include:

- ensuring that Containment pests are maintained within their current infestation zones;
- undertaking control trials to determine appropriate methodologies for some of the hardy pest plants that to date have proven difficult to manage.

One of the cornerstones of implementing the RPMS is improved public awareness through educational material and discussion. The Department has a strong focus on education, ensuring our communications material is regularly reviewed and updated where required. Public interest in these publications remains strong. Staff

are regularly providing presentations to schools, community and interest groups on RPMS related topics.

The site led Key Native Ecosystem programme continues to be well supported by landowners and Territorial Local Authorities. The majority of Authorities are financial partners in site-led programmes on their land. These partnerships are formalised by Memorandums of Understanding agreements, which detail annual resource commitments of both parties. Commitments have increased in recent years as biodiversity values and benefits are becoming more recognised and appreciated by the Authorities and the wider public.

5. **Communications**

The Biosecurity Act requires that copies of the Plan be made available to the public at cost price. However, the GW policy is that all publications should be provided free of charge. Historically, public notices have been placed in the major regional papers drawing the publics' attention to the availability of the Plan. This process will be repeated for the 2008/09 Plan.

6. **Recommendation**

That the Committee:

- (1) ***Receives the report.***
- (2) ***Notes the contents of the report.***
- (3) ***Approves the proposed Operational Plan 2008/09 (Attachment 1) for the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.***

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: RPMS Operational Plan (enclosed separately)