



caring about you & your environment

Report 02.190

8 April 2002

File: Y/19/0/4

Report to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee
from Wayne O'Donnell, Manager, Biosecurity

Regional Pest Management Strategy: Operational Plan 2001/02

1. Purpose

To seek Committee approval, as the delegated Regional Management Agency, to adopt the 2001/02 Operational Plan.

2. Background

The Committee is aware that a review of the 1996 Regional Pest Management Strategies was finalised midway through 2000 with the production of the draft Proposed Regional Pest Management Strategy 2001-2021 (RPMS 2001-2021). The Proposed RPMS 2001-2021 was approved by Council in November 2001 but subsequently appealed to the Environment Court by Safari Club International (SCI).

Discussions with SCI revealed that they were unwilling to change their position. Consequently, Council agreed to remove references to feral deer from the RPMS 2001-2021 in order to permit implementation of the new strategy. Unfortunately, the formal process of sign-off through the Environment Court has not been concluded, but should occur in the near future.

In the interim, Council is required to approve an annual Operational Plan under Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act. As the new strategy has not been formally 'made' by the Council, the proposed Operational Plan (attached) remains a continuation of the 1996-2001 RPMS.

Despite these technical glitches, the proposed Plan effectively seeks to implement the objectives of the new strategy. Work that has been completed or is in progress since July 2001 has been focussed on achieving the objectives of the new strategy. At the time it was considered that appeals would only likely disrupt progress for a short period. Unfortunately, this has not been the case.

3. Comment

There is no specific statutory requirement for an Operational Plan to be formally approved by the Council. However, it is considered appropriate to do so, as it recognises Council's ongoing support for the Plans and reinforces the desire to be transparent regarding expenditure and means of achievement.

The Biosecurity Act 1993 specifies a number of requirements for Operational Plans.

The Committee, as the formally approved Management Agency, must:-

- review the Plans annually and, if deemed appropriate, amend them;
- provide a copy of each Plan to the responsible Minister;
- prepare an annual report on the Plans, including the effectiveness of their implementation, not later than five months after the end of each financial year; and
- make copies of each 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 that approved the original Regional Strategy.

4. The Operational Plans

The proposed Operational Plan 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 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.

5. Communications

A copy of the approved Operational Plan for 2001/02 will be forwarded to the Minister of Biosecurity.

Public notification will be arranged in the regions major newspapers to advise the public that the Plan has been approved and to ensure that they have an opportunity to view the Plan at one of the Council offices.

6. Recommendation

That the Committee approve the proposed Operational Plan 2001/02 (Attachment 1) for the Regional Pest Management Strategy.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:

Wayne O'Donnell
Manager, Biosecurity

Colin Wright
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa