



**Report** 05.462  
**Date** 31 August 2005  
**File** WB/01/11/01

**Committee** Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee  
**Author** Wayne O'Donnell, Manager, Biosecurity

## **Regional Pest Management Strategy: Operational Plan 2005/06**

### **1. Purpose**

To seek adoption of the 2005/06 Operational Plan for the Regional Pest Management Strategy.

### **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 new Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 on the 17 September 2002. An Operational Plan for the 2004/05 year was approved and implemented. A report on performance against objectives in that Plan will be presented to the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee on 15 November 2005.

The Council is required to prepare an annual Operational Plan under Section 85 of the Biosecurity Act. 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 recognises Council's ongoing support for the Plan and reinforces the 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 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 2005/06 Operational Plan seeks to continue the progress made in the first three years of the Strategy. Division of the target pests in to Eradication, Containment, Suppression and Site Led categories has been very beneficial in terms of prioritising and focusing resources to maximise benefits for the Region.

One of the cornerstones of implementing the RPMS is improved public awareness. The Department has a strong focus on education, ensuring our communications material is regularly reviewed and updated where required. A total of 23 pest plants brochures and 11 pest animals' brochures are available for public use. We have also had involvement in the production of the six biodiversity enhancement publications (wetland restoration, restoration planting, mind the stream, controlling problem weeds in riparian zones, managing your bush block, and restoring our natural heritage). Public interest in these publications remains strong. There is also a high demand amongst secondary school students.

Urban surveys to identify new infestations of Eradication and Containment pest plants will continue in 2005/06. Information from these surveys will be of significant benefit when we commence the five year review of the RPMS. The information will also assist prioritisation of resource allocation.

We anticipate reduced expenditure on rabbits in 2005/06. It is clear that the rabbit calicivirus is still active in the region. Only a few isolated pockets of high infestations were recorded over the last financial year. Greater Wellington will also

have access to RCV as part of the consortium that gained ERMA approval to import the material from Australia for biocide releases. Application will be strictly controlled by a national protocol.

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 during 2004/05 as the biodiversity values are becoming more recognised and appreciated by the Authorities and the public.

The private land assistance campaign developed by the Council during 2004/05 is expected to gain momentum in 2005/06. Resource allocation will need to be closely monitored.

## **5. Communications**

The Biosecurity Act requires that copies of the Plan be made available to the public at cost price. Historically, public notices have been placed in the major regional papers drawing the public's attention to the availability of the Plan. This process will be repeated for the 2005/06 Plan. A summary of the Plan contents will also be included in the next available Rural Services Newsletter.

## **6. Recommendation**

*That the Committee recommend to Council that it*

*Approve the proposed Operational Plan 2005/06 (Attachment 1) for the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by:

**Wayne O'Donnell**  
Manager, Biosecurity

**Colin Wright**  
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa