

**Meekatharra Rangelands Biosecurity Association Inc  
Minutes of Committee of Management Meeting  
Meekatharra Sports Complex  
16 February 2021**

**1. WELCOME AND OPENING**

The Chairman welcomed all in attendance and opened the meeting at 10.05am.

**2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

**Attendance**

**MRBA Committee Members**

Ashley Dowden	Challa
Jorgen Jensen	Yoweragabbie
Liam Johns	Killara
Greg Watters	Mt Clere
Angus Nichols	Edah
Greg Payne	Badja
Eric Moses	Wydgee
Murray Pens	Mt Gould
John Mahony	Moorarie

**Observers**

John Coetsee	DBCA Senior Operations Officer Rangelands
Narelle Dybing	Murdoch University
Peta Fissioli	DPIRD – Project Officer Rangelands
Debbie Dowden	Challa
Jack Cox	Marymia, Kumarina and Weelarrana
Wayne Glasson	MRBA Dogger
Harvey Nichols	Sherwood
Les Price	Coodardy
Phil Price	Coodardy
Toby Nichols	Edah
Mayne Jenour	Jingemarra
Geoff Brooks	MRBA Executive Officer

**Apologies**

John Darling	MRBA Dogger
Reg Seaman	MRBA Dogger
Jarrad Blair	Milgun
Bruce and Suzanne Maguire	Turee Creek
Kevin and Kath Mahony	Judal
Tracey Kreplins	DPIRD
Jim Miller	DPIRD
Chandra Ridley	Bulloo Downs
Justin and Ruth Rowe	Carlaminda
Rob Lefroy	Nalbarra

**3. DISCLOSURE OF FINANCIAL AND NON-FINANCIAL MATERIAL PERSONAL INTERESTS**

Nil

**4. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING 13 OCTOBER 2020 AND BUSINESS ARISING**

**MOVED L Johns**

**SECONDED A Nichols**

That the Minutes of the Committee of Management Meeting held on 13 October 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

**CARRIED 9/0**

**Business Arising**

**Item 14 – Cactus on the Mount Magnet Town Common**

It was noted that there was also cactus on Hy-Brazil.

**Item 14 – BAM Act Declaration Status of Wild Dogs within Vermin Fenced Areas.**

The letter to Victoria Aitken, Director Invasive Species and Environmental Biodiversity, dated 20 January 2021 was noted. It was agreed that a similar letter should be sent to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development.

**5. CORRESPONDANCE**

Letter to Victoria Aitken, Director Invasive Species and Environmental Biodiversity, dated 20 January 2021 was tabled.

**6. DECLARED PEST ACCOUNT BUDGET REVIEW AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020 AND 2021/2022 BUDGET**

The Executive Officer highlighted the changes to the 2021/2022 Declared Pest Account Budget as requested at the Committee Meeting last October.

**MOVED J Mahony**

**SECONDED G Watters**

That the Committee of Management approves the updated 2021/2022 Declared Pest Account Budget as tabled.

**CARRIED 9/0**

## 7. MRBA FINANCIAL POSITION AND JOB COST REPORT AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

The Executive Officer briefed the Committee on the Job Cost Report as of 31 December 2020. It was noted that the MRBA cash position at this time was:

DPIRD LFH Dry Conditions Grant	\$ 25,000
Declared Pest Account	\$ 137,163
Royalties For Regions LPMT Program 2020/2021	\$ 140,255
Paroo Cactus State NRM Project	\$ 12,000
DPIRD R & D Grant	\$ 2,000
MRBA Declared Pest Contingency Funds	<u>\$ 172,722</u>
TOTAL Cash Position as at 31 December 2020	\$ 489,140

**MOVED G Watters**

**SECONDED A Nichols**

That the Committee notes the status of MRBA Financial Position and Job Costs Report as at 31 December 2020.

**CARRIED 9/0**

## 8. COMPLETION OF THE MURCHISON REGION VERMIN CELL AND THE FUTURE STRUCTURE OF THE MRBA AND THE MURCHISON REGIONAL VERMIN COUNCIL

The Committee considered the discussion paper entitled "Possible Merger of the MRBA and Murchison Regional Vermin Council" prepared by the Executive Officer.

**MOVED E Moses**

**SECONDED A Nichols**

That the Committee agrees in principle to a merger of the MRBA and Murchison Regional Vermin Council (MRVC) and authorises the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Executive Officer to enter into discussions with the MRVC.

**CARRIED 9/0**

## 9. EMPLOYMENT AND SUPERVISION OF DOGGERS

The Committee considered a discussion paper prepared by the Executive Officer that addressed this issue. It was agreed that additional support for dogger coordinators was required particularly in the areas of recruitment, appointment and performance.

**MOVED L Johns**

**SECONDED J Mahony**

That a Dogger Coordinator Committee is established with a membership of all Dogger Coordinators and the Chairman to oversee the supervision and employment of MRBA Licenced Pest Management Technicians.

**CARRIED 9/0**

It was noted that the Dogger Coordinator Committee will be specifically referenced in future Dogger contracts.

## **10. FENCING OUT GOVERNMENT MANAGED LANDS**

With the completion of the Murchison Region Vermin Cell less than 12 months away it was agreed that a long-term solution for controlling the movement of wild dogs from government managed lands to pastoral leases was required.

**MOVED J Jensen**

**SECONDED A Nichols**

That a letter be written to the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development and the Minister for Environment advising that, now that the Murchison Region Vermin Cell is nearing completion, the MRBA seeks a commitment from the State to enclose government managed lands with vermin proof fencing.

**CARRIED 9/0**

It was agreed in the next State NRM grant round that an application for funding to construct vermin proof fencing enclosing government managed lands would be prepared.

## **11. MRBA EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

### August Community Bait Rack Program

Meat quantities at the Challa Racks have been increased from 2,000 kgs to 4,000 kgs to accommodate a bait density research project being conducted by Tracey Kreplins – DPIRD Research Officer Invasive Species. DPIRD will fund the additional meat, along with cost of arranging for the full 4,000 kgs to be supplied cut into bait sized pieces.

### AWI Invasive Species Training Program

The MRBA has received a grant of \$38,500 to run a wild dog control training program. The training will involve Carnarvon TAFE and MRBA doggers. The first such training activity is being planned to take place at Marymia prior to the August/September bait rack days.

### 2021/2022 Royalties for Regions LPMT Program

A continuation next financial year of the current Royalties for Regions funded program has been approved by the Minister. Funding for 2021/2022 is expected to be \$250,000, an increase of \$16,000.

### Australian Pipeline Authority (APA) Community Support Project

The APA are in the process of planning the construction of a gas pipeline that will link Geraldton to Kalgoorlie and pass through the middle of the Murchison Region Vermin Cell. An opportunity may exist to obtain funding from APA to support pastoral and regional communities. It was agreed that an approach should be made to APA seeking sponsorship for a full time dogger, to be employed within the area of the Vermin Cell, over a five-year period.

### Large Feral Herbivore Cull - December 2020

Utilising a Dry Conditions Grant from DPIRD of \$25,000 and some \$6,000 from the MRBA LFH reserve, a three-day operation was conducted in the north east of the MRBA area in December last year. Some 684 animals were culled on pastoral leases and the operation was cut short by some very welcome rain. A report on cull is expected from DPIRD in the next few weeks.

## **12. PETA FISSIOLI – DPIRD - UPDATE ON RBG SUPPORT**

Peta advised the Committee of the following:

An online RBG Forum being arranged by DPIRD for 26 March.

Possible future RBG governance training.

DPIRD recognises the importance of the RBG & DPIRD MOU/Heads of agreement and discussions regarding the MOU have recently taken place with the DPIRD Principal Policy Officer to progress this issue.

The requirement by DPIRD for RBGs and the MRBA to have a web site. It was agreed that the Executive Officer would report on the cost of such an initiative at the next Committee Meeting and that Peta would explore the possibility of DPIRD funding.

## **13. JOHN COETSEE – DBCA UPDATE**

### DBCA – John Coetsee

The Department is still working on a generic MOU.

RCP's have been renewed for all DBCA managed lands within the MRBA area until 2024. Pending finalisation of an agreed MOU R4R wild dog control activities will continue to operate as set out in the 2019/2020 MOU.

The idea of fencing out government managed lands has great potential, particularly if R4R funds can be sourced.

## **14. DOGGER COORDINATOR REPORTS**

Year to date figures as at 31 January are as follows:

John Darling – report tabled. 37 dogs trapped. 1 dog shot. 94.5 days worked.

Reg Seaman – 49 dogs trapped. 92 days worked.

Greg Scott – report tabled. 39 dogs trapped. 58.25 days worked.

Jon Hehir – 60 dogs trapped. 103 days worked.

Wayne Glasson – 45 dogs trapped. 111.8 days worked.

Kevin Mahony – report tabled. 28 dogs trapped. 6 dogs shot. 32 days worked.

Kris Pascoe – 24 dogs trapped. 58.3 days worked.

## **15. MURDOCH UNIVERSITY – UPDATE WILD DOG CONTROL RESEARCH PROJECTS – NARELLE DYBING**

Narelle presented to the Committee details of her research into the impact of

parasites in wild dogs on conservation and livestock. Narelle thanked MRBA doggers for assisting with the collection of wild dog carcasses and offered to show individual doggers how to process the carcasses whilst in the field.

## **16. 2021 INDICATIVE BAIT RACK PROGRAM**

### 2021 - Spring Dates

Pullagaroo Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August.

Challa Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August.

Melangata Friday 27<sup>th</sup> August.

Killara Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September.

Yarraquin Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September.

Yarlarweelor Saturday/Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Illgararie Thursday/Friday 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September.

These are indicative dates subject to change by Rack Coordinators.

## **17. OTHER BUSINESS**

### Yarlarweelor Bait Rack Maintenance

Prior to the next bait rack day in September the Yarlarweelor racks will be upgraded. This is expected to involve the purchase of star pickets and pipe which will be funded from the Declared Pest Account rack maintenance allocation.

### DPIRD Wild Dog Action Plan – R & D Grant

Mayne Jenour advised that the drone and bait delivery system had been successfully tested. The facial recognition component of the grant had however been delayed due to COVID restrictions. These restrictions were preventing travel to the University of New England in NSW where appropriate software was being developed for the drone camera.

### Cattle Production Field Day at Munarra Station

Liam Johns advised that Nutrien were organising a cattle production field day at Munarra on 11<sup>th</sup> March and issued an invitation to producers to attend.

## **18. CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING DATE.**

The Chairman thanked all present for their attendance and wished everyone a safe trip home.

The next Committee of Management Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 in Meekatharra. This meeting will follow the 2020/2021 AGM which will commence at 9.30 am.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 2.28 pm.