

**MEEKATHARRA RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**(MRBA)**  
**Committee of Management Meeting**  
**Tuesday 17th October 2023**

**1. Opening & welcome**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 11.15am

**2. Attendances/Apologies/Proxies**

2.1 Attendees:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Liam Johns, Chair      Killara
- Ashley Dowden      Challa
- Murray Pens      Mt Gould
- Greg Watters      Mt Clere
- Jorgen Jensen      Yoweragabbie
- Jarrad Blair      Milgun Woodlands

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- Margi Weir

OBSERVERS

- John Mahony      LPMT
- Jim Miller      LPMT
- Adi Spindler      Karbar
- Shane Heriot      DBCA

2.2 Apologies:

- Mayne Jenour, Secretary/Treasurer, Jingemarra
- Angus Nichols, Edah
- Rob Lefroy, Nalbarra
- Clyde Hall, Ned's Creek
- Corey Folezzani, Windsor

2.3 Proxies – None received

**3. Disclosure of Financial and Non-Financial Material Personal Interests in AGM Matters**  
(record on Register of Conflict of Interest)

3.1 Ashley Dowden declared he is the S7 retailer and provides poison for the group.

3.2 Rack Coordinators – coordinate the bait rack days and distribution of baits in their area:

- Ashley Dowden
- Liam Johns

3.3 Dogger Coordinators – coordinate the activity of doggers in their area and approve reports and invoices prior to payment:

- Ashley Dowden
- Liam Johns
- Jorgen Jensen
- Murray Pens

#### 3.4 LPMTs (contract to MRBA)

- John Mahony
- Jim Miller

#### 4. Election of Office Holders

**Chair: Liam Johns** was Nominated by: Ashley Dowden, Seconded: Jorgen Jensen

**Vice Chair: Murray Pens** was Nominated by: Liam Johns, Seconded: Greg Watters

**Sec/Treasurer: Mayne Jenour** was Nominated by: Murray Pens, Seconded: Ashley Dowden

CARRIED

#### 5. Confirmation of Minutes of Committee of Management Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023

MOVED Ashley Dowden                      SECONDED Greg Watters

That the Minutes of the Committee of Management meeting held on 14 February 2023 be accepted as a true and correct record, and that the committee notes the business arising from this meeting.

CARRIED

#### 6. Business arising from these Minutes

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DBCA was signed on May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
- LPMT training – Jon Hehir has now completed his accreditation to be a Trainer for doggers (through the REPM course). But we require a Registered Training Organisation to “auspice” the course and use Jon Hehir as the trainer.
  - Ashley Dowden explained that the MRBA requested Jon undertake this training, which Jon did at his own expense. Therefore, it would seem appropriate that the MRBA provide some reimbursement to Jon for this.
  - Ashley Dowden to ask Jon Hehir to give us a total costing of expenses incurred to date.
  - MRBA to reimburse some of this cost to Jon from the funds from AWI that were allocated for pastoralist and dogger training. Total amount to be negotiated and discussed with Committee via phone / email.

MOVED: Ashley Dowden

SECONDED: Jorgen Jensen

That Jon Hehir be paid for the expenses he has incurred undertaking this training to become an accredited trainer, up to a maximum not exceeding the amount left in the AWI funds project budget (which is \$22,914.00).

CARRIED

- Jorgen raised the issue of pastoral lessees who choose NOT to control declared pests.  
Ashley suggested that MRBA write to those leaseholders (that MRBA is aware of) who do not participate in declared pest control. The letter should point out the obligations of all leaseholders in managing declared pests, and also that in return for their annual Declared Pest Rate which they pay to the Office of State Revenue, the MRBA provides assistance to leaseholders in the form of information, fee-free Restricted Chemical Products permits, dogger services, coordinated bait rack days, provision of baits, etc.
- Shane Heriot, DBCA, reported that there has been no change with joint management groups. This means that the Traditional Owners who are Joint Managers with DBCA on some DBCA lands are still undecided as to their stance on the management of wild dogs on those lands. DBCA is still working with the Badimia group (which cover the area our Paynes Find North and South doggers cover).
- Shane reported that DBCA has \$5000 budgeted for bait meat in the 2023/2024 financial year.
  - EO pointed out the letter that Mike Raykos, DBCA, wrote to MRBA on March 1st, 2023, in which he stated DBCA would be able to contribute up to \$9000 (excluding GST) towards bait meat in the 2023 calendar year.
  - Shane said that he would clarify this, and advise the EO of the amount that DBCA should be invoiced for bait meat.

## **7. Report from the Executive Officer**

### **7.1 Declared Pest Rate Funding Scheme**

This is what the former Declared Pest Account is now called. MRBA can expect to continue to receive a 4.9% increase in the DPRFS with rates matched by the state government in the next financial year.

### **7.2 Wild Dog Action Plan / Royalties for Regions funding**

The EO confirmed that DPIRD have pledged to continue to provide \$250,000 per year to the MRBA under the R4R program until June 30, 2025.

### **7.3 Review of Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007**

The EO explained that the review of the BAM Act 2007 may result in a very different arrangement for funding and management of declared pests in WA. Date for finalisation of this is not known at this point.

### **7.4 Transfer of financial records from MYOB to XERO**

EO has adopted the XERO financial records platform (commenced on July 1, 2023) which is a more commonly used platform now, and one which is very popular with

accountants, tax agents and auditors.

The MYOB account was maintained until September 30, 2023, as a back-up. All records for the past 3 years have been extracted from MYOB and filed, and the MYOB account for MRBA has now been closed.

#### 8. MRBA Financial Position as of 30 June 2023

EO acknowledged the work of former EO Geoff Brooks in finalising the MYOB records and arranging the audit to be undertaken by Cartehil Public Accountants.

The MRBA Financial Position as it stood at the end of the financial year is shown in the following table:

<b>MRBA Financial Position as at 30 June 2023</b>	
Bendigo Account Balance	\$445,140
Debit Card Balance	\$220
Minus GST Payable to ATO	-\$1,781
Plus Outstanding Deposits	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$443,579</b>
<b><u>Which is made up of:</u></b>	
AWI Funded Wild Dog Control Training	\$22,914
Declared Pest Account	\$0
LFH Reserve	\$46,026
DPIRD R&D Grant	\$2,000
DPIRD Bait Trial	\$13,692
Royalties for Regions LPMT 2021/2022	\$29,943
API Community Support	\$150,000
Contingency Funds	\$179,004
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$443,579</b>

#### 9. Adoption of 2024/2025 DPA Draft Budget and Operational Activity Management Plan

EO to draft the 2024/2025 budget and send to CoM members for consideration, review and approval.

EO to draft the Operational Activity Management Plan and circulate to CoM members prior to uploading to DPIRD system.

#### 10. Current status of LPMT contracts

Currently we have 8 doggers covering 10 contracts.

Tim Mahony's Yagahorn contract was reduced to 25 days due to him taking on position of caretaker at Paroo Station. Tim still holds the Doolgunna contract which is 82 days.

To offset this, we have engaged LPMT Greg Hobson to cover what is now referred to as Yagahorn West. Liam is the dogger coordinator for both Tim and Greg Hobson.

Jim Miller, who has taken over the Paynes Find South contract from Kris Pascoe, has offered to bring to meetings any issues raised by other doggers.

Jim suggested the use of cellular cameras (\$330 each plus \$10/month subscription). Committee agreed this be considered, but would be pending budget.

Tracey Kreplins has asked Jim for assistance with PAPP trials. Tracey to supply all equipment, MRBA cost for Jim's time or part thereof. Jim to ask Tracey to provide formal request with an outline of this proposal so that MRBA understands clearly what is planned, who is paying for what, how results will be published, etc.

## **11. Dogger Co-ordinator Reports**

- Ashley Dowden: has taken on coordination of Paynes Find South in addition to the Mt Magnet and Cue doggers.  
Dog activity seems pretty quiet at the moment, generally speaking. Probably quietest they have been for 20 years. Closing of the cell fence south of Meekatharra appears to have possibly made a big difference.
- Murray Pens: All going well.  
Asked if anyone is using Canid Pest Ejectors (CPEs). General agreement that there were too many problems with these, and they are not useful in MRBA region.

## **12. Bait Rack Program – 2024**

- Dates and Quantities Discussed and noted.
- EO to circulate to Committee Members
- Quantities will be used to inform budget.

## **13. General Business**

- Ammunition subsidy (who is eligible, maximum amount)
  - Mainly for area north of Meekatharra
  - Maximum \$200 per property per year
  - Pastoralists claiming this need to invoice MRBA with proof of purchase of their ammunition
- Large Feral Herbivore control
  - DPIRD conducted the LFH control program from October 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> 2023. Over the five days of this program, there were 1,920 large feral herbivores culled. The majority of these were donkeys, with a number of wild horses also culled. General feeling from DPIRD and local landholders was that the extra year delay (due to DPIRD shooters being unavailable in 2022) allowed continued

expansion of populations, with the usual exponential (or compounding) effect. Exact details will be available when DPIRD can complete their report on the operation.

- MRBA will need to budget for contribution of at least \$20K (or \$25K) per year to the LFH Reserve Fund to finance future LFH control programs.
  - Possibly consider control programs on two consecutive years – but this would be dependent on sourcing additional funds.
  - EO to speak with EO of Pilbara RBG to investigate potential shared resources across boundaries for future LFH culls.
  - EO to speak with EO of CRBA to find out more about how they use private contractors to conduct LFH culls.
- Cactus
    - Murray reported that there is a cactus population on Mt Seabrook mine site.
    - Suggested best management option would be deep burial.
    - EO to email Opuntoid management documents to Murray.

#### **14. Next Meeting Date / Close**

- Next Meeting: Tuesday 13th February
- Meeting Closed: 2.52pm