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

Regional Pest Management Strategy: Operational Plan 2003/04

1. Purpose

To seek Committee approval, as the delegated regional Management Agency, to adopt the 2003/04 Operational Plan.

2. Background

The Council approved the new Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022 on 17 September 2002. An Operational Plan for the 2002/03 year was approved and implemented. A report on performance against objectives in the Plan will be presented to the 11 November 2003 Committee meeting.

The enclosed Operational Plan seeks to continue the progress made in year one 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.

A number of excellent publicity and community awareness campaigns that were initiated in 2002/03 will continue to be supported and strengthened under the new Plan. There has already been positive spin off from the awareness campaigns with public reportings of new pest plant and animal infestations increasing dramatically.

The site led Key Native Ecosystem programme continues to be well supported by landowners and Territorial Local Authorities. The Authorities have recently signed off a number of Memorandums of Understanding agreements, which detail annual resource commitments. Community interest and participation in site led pest control programmes continues to grow.

3. Comment

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 Committee, as the formally approved Management Agency, 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 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. Recommendation

That the Committee approve the proposed Operational Plan 2003/04 (Attachment 1) for the Regional Pest Management Strategy 2002-2022.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:



Wayne O'Donnell
Manager, Biosecurity

Colin Wright
Divisional Manager, Wairarapa