Efficiency and Effectiveness Review

Steering Committee Response to Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The Steering Committee and Program consider commissioning Monash University to repeat its delimitation analysis.

AGREE
Underway

Recommendation 2: The Steering Committee and Program examine the design of suppression zones where they are meant to provide protection to areas treated for eradication against re-infestation.

AGREE
The 2020–21 Treatment Plan will take this into account.

Recommendation 3 Priority: A new set of 'outcome focused' Program performance indicators for use by the Steering Committee, funding partners and community stakeholders be finalised as soon as possible with a view to deployment this financial year.

AGREE
Outcome focussed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be approved out-of-session before the Steering Committee meeting in May 2020.

Recommendation 4 Priority: The Steering Committee, in consultation with the Program, sets out business improvement measures to overcome barriers and impediments to treatment and surveillance identified in this Review.

AGREE
The Program is implementing a range of improvements, progress on which will be reported monthly.

Recommendation 5: The Program accord a very high priority to necessary treatment and surveillance to deal with significant detections outside the Operating Area boundary.

AGREE
The Program has recently finalised a comprehensive protocol for the 'Management of Detections of Importance'. A report will be made public within seven days of finding a significant detection.

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Recommendation 6 Priority: The Steering Committee and the Program clarify the nature of the shared public-private responsibility for eradication and suppression of RIFA at the earliest opportunity.

AGREE

Determine how people and organisations understand the General Biosecurity Obligation (GBO) and develop targeted awareness; report infringements in monthly report and seek advice from the National Exotic Invasive Ant Scientific Advisory Group (SAG).

Recommendation 7 Priority: The Steering Committee guide the Program towards the development of appropriate regulation aimed at internalising the cost to those responsible for the creation of habitat suitable for RIFA infestation.

Further investigation to be undertaken with response provided by the Steering Committee meeting in August 2020.

Recommendation 8: That compliance officers employed by the Program make effective use of penalty infringement notices and, where appropriate, prosecution provisions, to improve compliance with movement controls.

AGREE

Consider publicising any Penalty Infringement Notices (PINS) that are issued to raise awareness and promote behavioural change.

Recommendation 9: The Program make every effort to meet compliance check targets by keeping compliance staffing at funded staffing levels.

AGREE

Alert Steering Committee to budgetary or staffing issues.

Recommendation 10: The Program seeks advice from appropriate sources with the necessary expertise on appropriate sampling numbers for the range of movements of RIFA carrier materials.

AGREE

Start with high risk carriers. Determining the risk of high risk carriers is the first step in answering this question, this will be done through the independent risk assessment.

Recommendation 11 Priority: The Program, with guidance from the Steering Committee, examine the feasibility of introducing regulation requiring inspection of loads destined to cross the Operating Area boundary and cost recovery of the additional compliance effort.

AGREE

The Program will investigate (by the end of the 2020 calendar year) the practicality, feasibility, costs and potential benefits associated with developing and implementing a regulatory framework that requires the inspection of fire ant carriers, being moved to areas outside the defined biosecurity zones. Update to be provided at the Steering Committee meeting in August 2020. In the interim, focus on high risk carriers.

Recommendation 12 Priority: The Steering Committee and the Program determine a strategy to urgently bring outstanding reviews concerning human-assisted movement of RIFA to fruition.

AGREE

The Program will shortly be engaging an independent party to examine the appropriateness and efficacy of the current suite of movement controls via a thorough risk assessment. The fire ant biosecurity zones will be updated this financial year to reflect the current size of the red imported fire ant incursion and provide protection for the first eradication area.

Recommendation 13 Priority: The Steering Committee and the Program initiate more detailed analysis of the efficiency options identified in this report for possible uptake as soon as possible.

AGREE

Quarterly reporting.

Recommendation 14: That the Steering Committee and Program closely examine the potential for future savings from the use of tenders to procure aerial services and bait.

AGREE

The Program will go out to market for a range of services and products in 2020, including aerial services and bait, with a view to delivering savings.

Recommendation 15: That the Steering Committee and Program examine more closely the labour productivity of field teams with a view to raising labour productivity.

AGREE

The Program will examine options for potential productivity improvement of the Program's field capability, including contracting work to third parties.

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Recommendation 16: That the Steering Committee and Program examine the introduction of revised remuneration arrangements for field staff based on an output rather than input measure of performance and/or invite tenders for specified areas of treatment or surveillance from labour hire firms.

AGREE

The Program will examine options for output-based remuneration, and assignment to alternative tasks within constraints that may exist in employment agreements for field staff.

Recommendation 17 Priority: The Steering Committee work with the Program to set a planning cycle to be made available to all staff and detailing required timing of work plans, treatment, surveillance and budget plans for approval by the relevant delegate.

AGREE

Planning cycle (including audits) to the Steering Committee meeting in May 2020.

Recommendation 18: The Program, with guidance from the Steering Committee, should work to revise the set of Standard Operating Procedures as soon as possible.

AGREE

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be reviewed and report provided to the Steering Committee on their existence and adequacy.

Recommendation 19: The Steering Committee consider the benefits and costs of appointing a Deputy General Manager.

AGREE

Additional senior staff appointed.

Recommendation 20: The Steering Committee and the Program consider the potential cost savings along with the risks for RIFA eradication before deciding whether to proceed with fewer treatments.

AGREE

Will be considered at the end of the current treatment season, including seeking SAG advice.

Recommendation 21 Priority: The Steering Committee consider the underlying themes of its communication strategy, particularly in the light of the Program launching the self-management component.

AGREE

The Program's communication strategy will be reworked as part of the Three Year Strategy being developed.

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Recommendation 22: The Steering Committee review the content of the Program's website and the Program develop a timetable to implement the Steering Committee's findings.

> **AGREE**
>
> The Program will facilitate the review by the Steering Committee of the various websites that reflect fire ant information. National Biosecurity Communication and Engagement Network (NBC) advice will be sought and Queensland and /national communication guidelines will be developed.

Recommendation 23: The Steering Committee design and adopt new badging recognising the national character of the Program and its funding by the Commonwealth and the States and Territories.

> **AGREE**
>
> Under discussion.

Recommendation 24: The Program accord high priority to putting in place as soon as possible a real-time two way mobile data solution.

> **AGREE**
>
> The Program completed a successful mobility digital field system Proof of Concept (PoC) in October 2019. A multi-stage project to implement an operational mobility solution with full two-way integration with core business systems has commenced. Stage One is scheduled to go live in June 2020.

Recommendation 25: The Steering Committee monitor the adequacy of key Program intelligence systems, particularly the Fire Ant Management System (FAMS).

> A report on prospects for FAMS will be provided within six months.

Recommendation 26: The Program bring forward a Three Year Strategic Plan addressing the implications of decisions on key issues identified in this Review for consideration by the Steering Committee as soon as possible.

> **AGREE**
>
> The Program to provide the Three Year Strategic Plan to the Steering Committee as soon as practicable.

Recommendation 27 Priority: The Program bring forward for Steering Committee consideration their proposed approach to management information to assist decision making.

> **AGREE**
>
> Report to be provided to the Steering Committee at its May 2020 meeting.

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Recommendation 28 Priority: The Steering Committee request out of session monthly updates on progress with actions included in the Business Improvement Plan as well as a quarterly report to the Steering Committee.

AGREE

Monthly reports to be provided.

Recommendation 29: The Steering Committee request a follow up audit of operational planning, governance and procurement to be conducted in April 2020.

AGREE

Steering Committee agreed to delay the audits until July 2020 to enable the results to be better used in planning. Monthly updates to be provided starting February 2020.

Recommendation 30 Priority: The Steering Committee consider the findings and recommendations of this Review and determine a strategy for how to best address the issues requiring resolution over the next 12–-18 months.

AGREE

The Steering Committee established a Sub-Committee to oversee the recommendations of the Efficiency and Effectiveness Review. The Sub-Committee will review progress monthly, including a business improvement plan and other audit recommendations.

Recommendation 31 Priority: The Steering Committee review the expertise it needs to progress the issues at hand and seek nominations from the jurisdictions to address any identified gaps.

AGREE

Revised skills matrix for Steering Committee compiled. To be reviewed in May 2020.

Recommendation 32: The Steering Committee consider the appointment of a Project Officer to support their work.

AGREE

Development of a Position Description underway.

Recommendation 33: The Steering Committee schedule additional and/or longer meetings to address the issues requiring attention over the next 12-18 months.

AGREE

Established a Steering Committee Sub-Committee to oversee implementation of recommendations with monthly teleconference meetings.

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Recommendation 34: The Steering Committee form additional sub-committees to help progress its work.

> **CONSIDERED** and agreed to seek support from National Biosecurity Communication and Engagement Network for campaign expertise for the self-management program.

Recommendation 35 Priority: The Steering Committee establish its own communication strategy complementing the work of the Program, including as soon as possible its own website.

> **AGREE**
>
> The Steering Committee is assessing a business case for the Commonwealth to host the website.

Recommendation 36: The Scientific Advisory Group develop a work program responding to science related issues the Steering Committee and Program face and adjust as necessary its working arrangements to address the needs of the Program.

> **AGREE**
>
> To be provided to the Steering Committee for approval.

Recommendation 37: The Risk Management Group's Terms of Reference be amended to accommodate the initiation of Program related audits and monitoring of progress in management responses for advice to the Steering Committee.

> **AGREE**
>
> Discuss with Chair of the Risk Management Sub–Committee (RSMC), possibility of another member with independent expertise in major campaigns and/or programs. Also discuss RSMC flagging issues for Steering Committee and whether independent audit required to deal with issues.

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