



Adelaide Office
PO Box 2520, Unley SA 5061
Phone: 08 8272 7100 Fax: 08 8272 2945
www.ssaa.org.au

Established Pests and Diseases Discussion Paper
National Biosecurity Committee Secretariat
Department of Agriculture
GPO Box 858
Canberra ACT 2601

31 July 2015

Dear Committee Secretariat,

The Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA National) thanks the National Biosecurity Committee for the opportunity to provide comment on the discussion paper *Modernising Australia's approach to managing established pests and diseases of national significance*.

As our submission shows, SSAA National has extensive experience with pest management activities across Australia, including through our Conservation & Wildlife Management (CWM) branches and SSAA Farmer Assist program, and our commitment to the research and development of other pest management tools.

SSAA National provides a valuable resource that the government should consider as part of this discussion paper. With access to more than 170,000 experienced volunteers willing and capable of assisting, we can mobilise a ready and enthusiastic section of the community to help modernise Australia's approach to managing established pests of national significance.

We trust this submission is received with the goodwill in which it is intended.

Geoff Jones
SSAA National President

Matthew Godson
Pest & Wildlife Officer
SSAA Farmer Assist Coordinator



SSAA National Submission Paper

**Modernising Australia's approach to managing
established pests and diseases of national significance**

July 2015

Consultation questions: Proposed policy principles

1. Are the proposed policy principles appropriate and practical?

SSAA comments

From SSAA National's perspective, the proposed policy principles are appropriate and practical because they recognise that the government should give priority to supporting community leadership and actions to achieve asset-based protections.

For many years, the SSAA has displayed community leadership and action with the development of programs such as the SSAA Conservation & Wildlife Management (CWM) groups and most recently, the SSAA Farmer Assist program. Both of these programs have been designed for asset-based protection. Indeed, one program focuses mainly on assets with higher public benefit, such as ecosystem and endangered species protection; while the other focuses on privately owned assets, such as livestock and crops (with some overlap depending on pest species targeted).

The SSAA welcomes any further move by governments at all levels to recognise our Association as a valuable stakeholder and support our cost-effective (free) volunteer programs to increase on-ground pest management activities using readily available resources from within our community.

2. Are the proposed policy principles sufficient?

SSAA comments

On the surface, the proposed principles appear to be sufficient to deliver more cost-effective and sustainable outcomes, if policy decisions stay true to these principles and include all stakeholders.

Consultation questions: Proposed national significance/national interest test

3. Should listing of established pests and diseases of national significance be for a defined period or open ended?

SSAA comments

SSAA National proposes that listings should be open-ended with a provision to allow the listing to be removed if the threat of the pest or disease diminishes. This would allow resources to be focused on active threats. A monitoring system should be put in place to ensure that if a threat reappears, it will be acknowledged and action will be taken. This could include relisting the pest or disease.

4. What form of review should be required to maintain the listing of a pest or disease as an established pest or disease of national significance?

SSAA comments

SSAA National proposes that any review must be conducted through thorough scientific investigation of the current status of the listed pest or disease. This will provide the clearest picture of its potential impact at the national level. We trust that the actual methodology of such an investigation will feature in submissions provided by organisations better placed to provide the required expert advice and direction.

5. What is an appropriate time for such a review?

SSAA comments

Depending on the methodology implemented on advice of others, SSAA National would anticipate that the earliest possible timeframe would be around 12 months to collect relevant data and undertake public consultation.

Consultation questions: Proposed roles and responsibilities of government and other stakeholders

6. Are the proposed roles and responsibilities clear, particularly in relation to your role?

SSAA comments

SSAA National sees our role as being an important and significant community resource to help achieve asset-based protection of economic and environmental assets for both landholders and government. As a large community group with representation in all states and territories, we certainly believe we have a stronger role to play. The proposed roles and responsibilities do provide a platform which will foster relationships, partnerships, coordinated policy, support and promotion to industry and community groups.

It is quite clear that our role will be defined by fostering new relationships and partnerships with stakeholders. Our role will rely on the development of policies that enable the utilisation of our community groups' skill-sets in the management of established pests and asset protection. We have programs established that are already industry-driven and supported by a number of key state farming groups, and which can become more successful if we are able to extend third-party support and promotion to a higher level.

7. Are the proposed roles and responsibilities appropriate and practical?

SSAA comments

On face value, SSAA National believes that the roles and responsibilities as described are both appropriate and practical.

Consultation questions: Benefits of coordinated approach

8. What are the issues with establishing and maintaining effective collective action?

SSAA comments

SSAA National believes that it is very important that project and stakeholder goals be set prior to establishing collective actions. Actions must be monitored and assessed periodically in view of actively working towards achieving the set goals. This will help ensure that collective actions are undertaken and maintained effectively.

One issue that would need to be addressed is the provision of adequate resources. Resources need to be available to ensure collective actions are managed properly to achieve the best outcome from any coordinated approach.

9. How can the coordinated approach be best implemented across the various stakeholder groups?

SSAA comments

SSAA National believes that all relevant stakeholder groups need to be identified to ensure the best coordinated approach. This not only means that those directly impacted by the established pest or disease, but also those that can be available or provide services to assist. Community groups from within and outside areas directly impacted by pests may be a resource base to provide additional cost-effective management options.

10. How do you see yourself (or your interest/industry/organisation) contributing?

SSAA comments

SSAA National sees our organisation as a valuable stakeholder with significant resources to contribute to managing established pests. We can provide landholders a cost-effective volunteer-based option in regards to asset protection and damage mitigation.

As a community group, the SSAA currently operates a number of programs that can be utilised in coordination with other pest management options and stakeholder activities. Our two current programs cover activities across public land (CWM) and private land (Farmer Assist). Due to the nature of these programs and the resource base available, we can mobilise a ready and willing section of the community that can help modernise Australia's approach to managing established pests.