



Terms of reference—RIFA Eradication Program Steering Committee

Authority

The National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program – South East Queensland Steering Committee (the Steering Committee) was established by the Agriculture Ministers' Forum in July 2017 to provide strategic oversight to the ten year National Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA) Eradication Program in South East Queensland (the program).

The Steering Committee will provide guidance and support to the program's operational team on all aspects of the program's delivery to ensure that it has the best chance of achieving its objectives.

The Steering Committee is ultimately accountable to the Agriculture Senior Officials Committee (AGSOC).

Responsibilities

The Steering Committee will have responsibility for:

- providing leadership and guidance to the program's operational team
- approving the RIFA Ten Year Eradication Plan 2017-18 to 2026-27 and detailed annual work plans
- overseeing the implementation of the RIFA Ten Year Eradication Plan, and providing direction on issues arising as deemed necessary
- making decisions in relation to program budget matters (within the agreed program budget)
- monitoring and evaluating program performance and progress
- monitoring program risks and mitigation strategies and determining risk appetites and tolerances
- approving national communication activities e.g. national talking points
- guiding the investigation of additional sources of program funding and/or delivery
- commissioning scientific work and seeking advice
- receiving and approving reports on program progress
- reporting on the progress of the program



In fulfilling its responsibilities, the Steering Committee will seek expert advice from third parties as required. The Steering Committee has established a National Exotic Invasive Ant Scientific Advisory Group to provide specialist scientific advice and a Risk Management Sub-Committee to provide advice on the program risks and mitigation strategies.

Reporting

The Steering Committee will:

- receive weekly snapshot progress reports provided by the program
- receive and approve quarterly performance reports provided by the program
- provide updates on program progress and performance to each meeting of the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC)
- approve annual progress and performance reports and provide to AGSOC and AGMIN.

Sunset

The Steering Committee has been established for a period of ten years until 30 June 2027. Any decision to extend the committee beyond this time will be the responsibility of the Agricultural Ministers' Forum (AGMIN).

Review

The terms of reference will be reviewed every 12 months.

The Steering Committee will also conduct an evaluation of its own operations annually to consider its effectiveness in supporting delivery of the RIFA eradication program.

Members

The Steering Committee will be chaired by an Independent Chair. The membership comprises senior officials from the Australian, state and territory governments. The NBC will nominate the Independent Chair.

Jurisdictions may have up to two representatives.

The Steering Committee will have expertise in the following subject areas:

- scientific and technical matters as they relate to the implementation of the eradication plan
- financial management
- project management



- risk management
- compliance
- research and development
- communications
- technology
- governance.

The skills composition will be reviewed every 12 months as part of the annual review of the Steering Committee operations. If it is necessary to replace a member of the Steering Committee, the need to retain any specific required skills brought to the Steering Committee by the member being replaced should be considered in choosing the new member. Where the replacement of a member results in a jurisdiction no longer having a representative on the Steering Committee, that jurisdiction should be given an opportunity to nominate a new member, if it so chooses.

Proxies

Members may appoint a person as the member's proxy to attend and vote for the member at meetings. The chair may deputise the chairing of a meeting.

Other attendees

Other officers may be invited to attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair to provide information and advice to the committee.

Officers participating as presenters or observers are to ensure that discussions remain confidential.

Changes to steering committee membership

The Steering Committee may approve changes to membership.

An existing Steering Committee member must formally advise the Chair of their intention to withdraw from the Committee's membership. The jurisdiction of the departing Steering Committee member may nominate a replacement for consideration by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will consider the credentials of the nominated replacement and determine whether to accept the nomination.

The Steering Committee must advise the National Biosecurity Committee of any changes to the Steering Committee membership.



Meetings

The Steering Committee will meet quarterly. However, the Steering Committee can be reconvened for additional meetings if required.

The Steering Committee will convene a forum with critical stakeholders on an annual basis. This forum will give the Steering Committee opportunity to provide updates, answer questions and receive advice and feedback from industry, environmental and community groups.

Decision-making

Decisions will be made by consensus.

Quorum

A quorum for a steering committee meeting will include the:

- the Chair, and
- more than half the number of members.

Administration

Secretariat support is provided by the program through the Queensland Government.

Each member is responsible for meeting their own costs of participation in the Steering Committee.

The costs of participation for the Independent Chair will be met by the program.

A draft agenda for each scheduled meeting will be prepared by the secretariat. The agenda will be approved by the chair.

The final agenda and papers will be circulated to all members by the secretariat at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

The secretariat will prepare a summary record of each meeting, including action items. The draft record will be circulated to the Chair within one week and to members for comment and approval within two weeks following the meeting. A communique will also be prepared by the secretariat for publication on the program website. The draft communique will be circulated to members for comment and approval following the meeting.

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