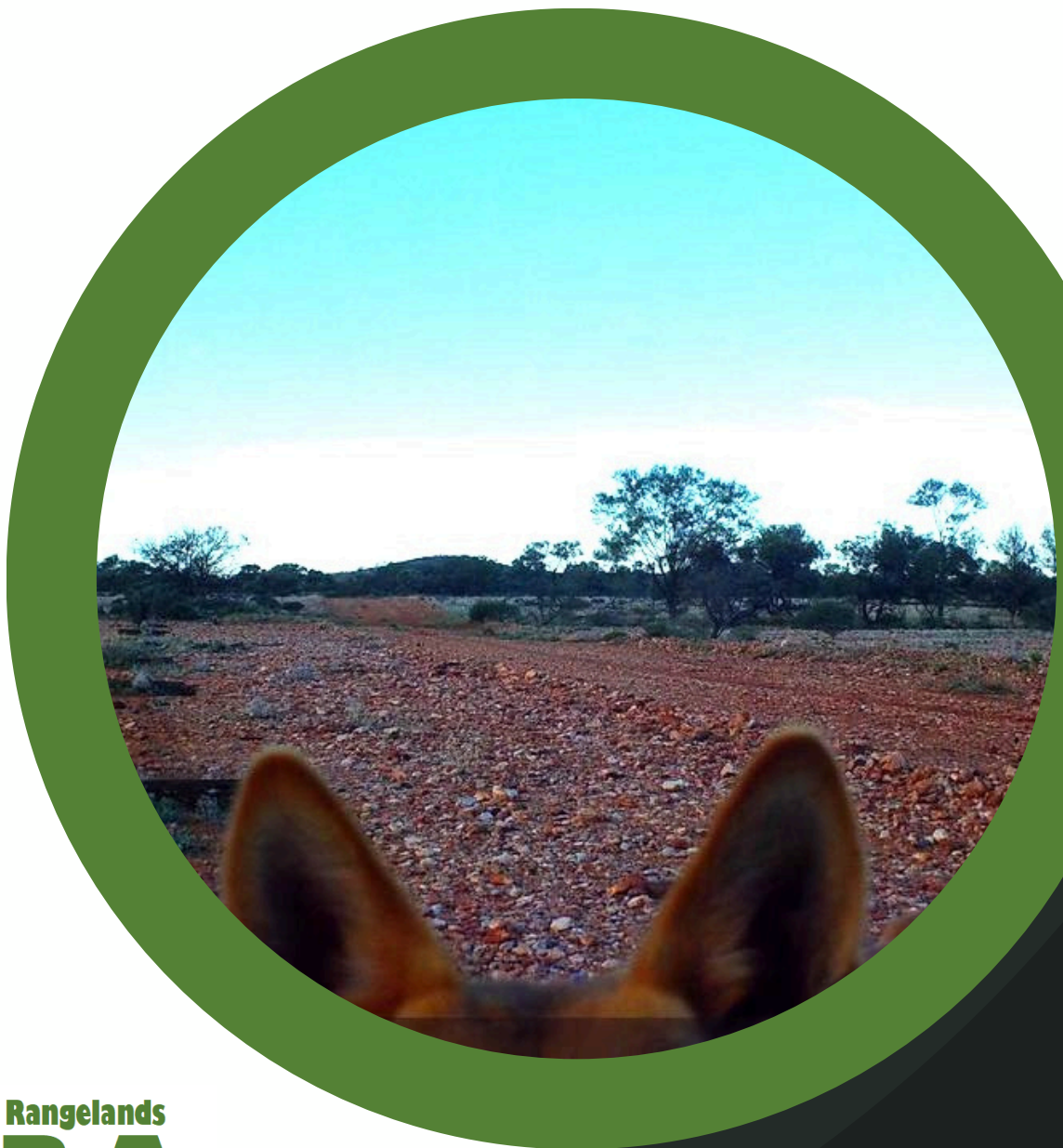


ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024



Carnarvon Rangelands
CRBA
Biosecurity Association Inc.

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1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The year 2023/24, saw challenging climate conditions across the region, impacting a large number of CRBA members and declared pest movements alike. Our Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) have remained dedicated to tackling declared pest issues in their respective territories, working closely with land managers and CRBA Executive Officer to meet ever-changing requirements in pest management. They have undertaken this task alongside monitoring other pests and promptly reporting any new pest animal and weed findings encountered during their travels.

The Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (BAM) Act review panel finalised the review, with their final report submitted to the Minister in December 2023. Unfortunately, continued follow-up with DPIRD there has been no update on what was included in the final paper, and now which recommendations the government will look to adopt. I would again like to thank those who provided valuable input into the review process, including those who provided letters as part of the final consultation phase.

The path ahead remains uncertain until the review is made public by the Minister. The CRBA Executive and Executive Officer are resolute in their commitment to collaborate with DPIRD to safeguard the group's operational stability throughout this extended process.

In October 2023, we saw the departure of Andrew Walker, the North Murchison LPMT. The region's LPMT coordinator, in collaboration with Krystie Bremer, worked diligently to secure a short-term replacement for the remainder of the year, while the full contract position was then advertised in May 2023. Additionally, Allan Smith, the long-serving LPMT from the North Upper Gascoyne, notified us that he would not be renewing his contract for the upcoming funding year, with this position also advertised.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to both Andrew and Allan for their valuable contributions. Allan's dedication, in particular, has been instrumental in mitigating the impact and movement of declared pests from the northern region further south.

I am pleased to report, through significant efforts that the CRBA was granted between 6 months & 3 years of access to some lands under DBCA and Joint management. In particular, the CRBA committee welcomed the 12-month agreement through March 2025 for the Kennedy Ranges, allowing not only ground access but continued support from DBCA in undertaking an aerial baiting program. DBCA Gascoyne Office worked hard, alongside CRBA Executive Officer Krystie Bremer to ensure this access could be continued.

The CRBA continues to work with DPIRD on the next iteration of the State's Wild Dog Action Plan (WDAP) with the current plan ending in 2024/2025. It is known that continued funding forms part of State Treasury plans for the future, but how this funding will be allocated and to what extent it will reach on-ground activities is unknown. Krystie Bremer continues to lobby with DPIRD in this space, working behind the scenes to at least gain a better understanding of what is happening in 2025/2026.

1. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Over the past year, the group maintained administrative and overhead expenses at a commendable 9.39% of total operation expenses, channelling 90% of resources into program delivery and on-ground activities. All administrative expenses associated with the CRBA are consistently met by the DPR, with supplementary funds dedicated exclusively to program delivery. A DPR payment rate of 86.97% for 2032/24, along with payments made against historical debt is also positive.

Addressing the region's pest management objectives, the CRBA committee spearheaded various key initiatives, including a region-wide community baiting program, aerial baiting efforts across Kennedy Range National Park funded by DBCA, coordinated aerial baiting across a pastoral estate in key locations to maximise efforts and reduce pest movements for landscape-scale management, LFH control initiatives spanning the northern region by LPMTs and local bait meat suppliers, collaboration with DBCA to enhance access for on-ground projects in the Kennedy Ranges vicinity, research work with DPIRDs Tracy Kreplins, and sustained financial backing from the Shires of Upper Gascoyne and Murchison.

Amid the persistent challenges faced in the declared pest space and the broader pastoral sector, the committee is steadfast in its pursuit of optimal outcomes in managing declared pests across the region. With a proactive approach, the committee remains well-placed to navigate the evolving requirements of operating an RBG while upholding the delivery of key programs into the future.

As this will be my last Chair report for the CRBA, I would like to extend my thanks to the CRBA committee for their support, thanks are also extended to outgoing Vice Chair Alister Gordon. My gratitude is also extended to the dedicated group of volunteers who work behind the scenes, alongside Executive Officer Krystie Bremer, for which I would extend a special thanks for always going the extra mile to ensure the seamless functioning of the group.



Ross (Jox) Collins
CRBA Chair

2. BACKGROUND

Declared Pest management has been a longstanding practice in the pastoral regions of Western Australia since the inception of the industry. Initially, this management fell to the individual pastoralists before falling under the purview of the Agricultural Protection Board (APB), with the subsequent establishment of Zone Control Authorities (ZCA) in the 1950s, each focusing on specific geographical areas. These ZCAs collaborated with pastoral land managers to specifically mitigate the impacts of wild dogs # on livestock.

In 2007, with the enactment of the Biosecurity Agriculture Management (BAM) Act, efforts to establish Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBGs) commenced. RBGs replaced the ZCAs in 2010, with the Carnarvon Rangelands Biosecurity Association (CRBA) being one of five pastoral RBGs established during this time. The RBG model offers a more adaptable framework capable of addressing declared pest issues at a landscape scale. The work undertaken by the CRBA adds value to pest control efforts undertaken by individual landholders, striving to provide a coordinated, landscape-scale approach to declared pest management. Utilising local insights and knowledge.

The CRBA serves as a crucial partner in aiding landholders in managing declared pests on their respective properties. The CRBA operates primarily within the Shires of Carnarvon, Exmouth, Murchison, Shark Bay, and Upper Gascoyne, with additional pastoral leases in the Shire of Northampton and the City of Greater Geraldton (locality of Mullewa). Our association collects Declared Pest Rates from all Pastoral Leases within this jurisdiction to facilitate and coordinate control measures targeting vertebrate pests, including feral pigs, foxes, and wild dogs, as well as large feral herbivores and declared weed species. We collaborate across both public and private lands to implement these control activities, with the overarching goal of achieving comprehensive landscape management of these invasive species to mitigate total predation pressure and assist in total grazing pressure management.

*# The term wild dog is used to describe pure-bred dingoes, feral/escaped domestic dogs, and their hybrids. Both dingoes and wild domestic dogs are the same species, *Canis familiaris*. Wild dogs are a major pest species impacting on grazing industries across mainland Australia.*

3. AIMS

The Carnarvon Rangelands Biosecurity Association (CRBA) aligned its aims directly to its objectives in the group's constitution.

- Foster the *management and control of declared pests* throughout the Area, via the formulation, implementation, and review of appropriate management plans and programs;
- Focus on improving further *integration, coordination, and general collaboration* of all Area stakeholders in pest management matters;
- Promote the adoption of *sound biosecurity practices* throughout the Area; and
- Work with non-pastoral landholders to manage land and biosecurity issues that impact heavily on business and non-business entities operating within the landscape

The CRBA will achieve these aims by:

- Continuing to try and attract additional resources;
- Establishing systems and processes to enable the CRBA to continue operating effectively;
- Actively encouraging and working with all land managers (not just pastoral properties) to be engaged and participate in biosecurity matters; and
- Openly communicating with ratepayers and key stakeholders in the business of the CRBA.

This will lead to:

- Resources being provided by non-rate paying land users;
- Increased ownership & active participation by all landholders; and
- Continued assistance with control of declared pests in the region to encourage livestock production increases (due to effective actions of CRBA).

Achieving success in this role will help CRBA pastoral businesses become robust and viable through improved production, reduced variable costs, and reduced labour costs.

The CRBA remains focused on mitigating the impacts of declared pests species across the region to minimise the impacts on agriculture, community, and the environment.

Through our annual operations, the CRBA undertakes our activities each year focused on Collaboration, On-ground assistance, Training, Education & Awareness to meet the group's aims. The group remains focused on high-priority declared pests as directed by CRBA members through the committee of management.

Vertebrate Pests continue to cause the greatest concerns across the region for land managers. The greatest impact on pastoral production comes from foxes and wild dogs[#], attacking sheep, goats, and young cattle. Not only do these vertebrate pests cause direct stock losses, but they also cause income losses through injury and attack with damage to livestock (sheep and cattle) devaluing livestock when taken to market, along with excluding them from others. The greatest asset in the management of these vertebrate pests continues to be the community-wide baiting programs both ground and aerial, and LPMTs working across the landscape. The CRBA is mindful that the effort undertaken on these pests within our region assists surrounding RBGs by significantly decreasing the move south to the agricultural region of the state of these vertebrate pests. Feral Pigs are destructive pests causing remnant vegetation and water course damage within a high-value water catchment for the Gascoyne. Feral Pigs are also a concern in a small pocket in the eastern part of the CRBA region. These vertebrate pests are also known for their ability to spread disease across the landscape, an ongoing concern for all industries in Western Australia with costs of control given in isolated spread of these pests.

Large feral herbivores continue to be present across the CRBA region, with population movements seeing them appear in areas previously reporting minimal to no numbers. Notable donkey and camel numbers continue to be reported, along with an increasing number of horses seen as far south as the bottom of the Kennedy Ranges, north of the Gascoyne River, along with other concentrations in the Shires of Carnarvon, across the Shire of Murchison and the Shire of Upper Gascoyne. Control of LFH continues to be part of the day-to-day activities undertaken by the LPMT contractors work across the CRBA region, alongside the land managers who work on these pests throughout the year.

Weeds in the CRBA catchment, include Mesquite, Parkinsonia, and Coral Coast Cactus. The CRBA remains focused on controlling these invasive weeds, specifically Mesquite as a declared Weed of National Significance (WONS). It out-competes native vegetation and reduces the productive grazing capacity of pastoral lands. It also exposes topsoil along riverbanks to water and wind erosion, damages infrastructure, and greatly increases the operating costs of pastoral holdings throughout the region.

Coral Cactus continues to be a focus of day to day operations due to the ability and easy access to the cochineal bug. This is beneficial due to the easy spread of this cactus by native fauna and livestock.

4. AREA OF OPERATION

The CRBA area of operation takes in the Shires of Carnarvon, Exmouth, Murchison, Shark Bay, and Upper Gascoyne. Along with additional pastoral properties below the state barrier fence within the Shire of Northampton and the City of Greater Geraldton (locality of Mullewa) also forming part of the CRBA area of operation. There are over 100 pastoral leases covering some 14.5 million hectares, with approximately 20% small stock carrying properties; multiple Exclusive Native Title properties covering approximately 1.3 million hectares and approximately 2.1 million hectares of land under the control of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation, and Attractions (DBCA).

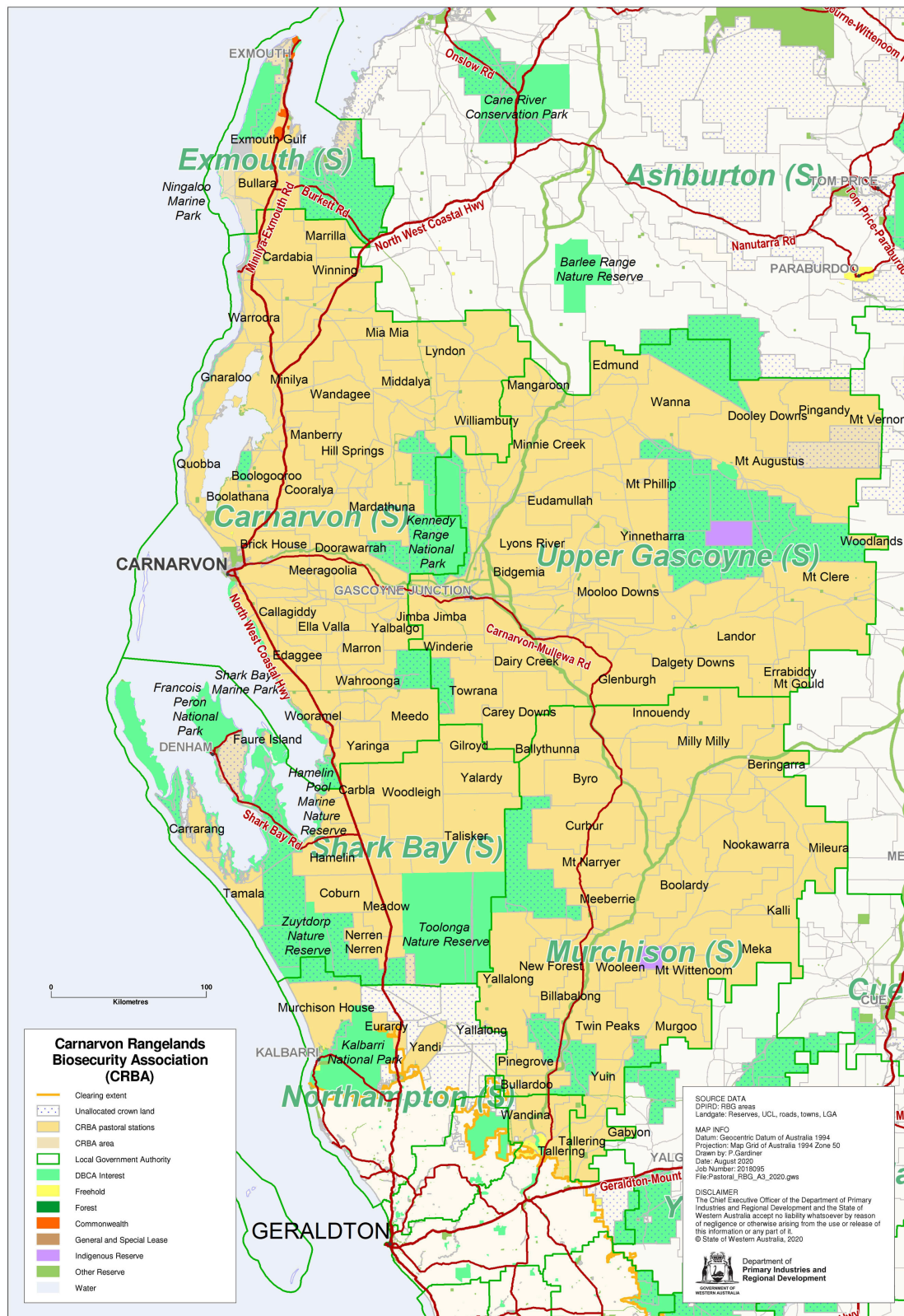
The population of the CRBA area is approximately 9,600, with this number and numbers across the CRBA region increasing exponentially during the tourism season, more notably in the past few years. Our largest town is Carnarvon, with a population of approximately 5,500 residents. Carnarvon is the regional service centre for the whole Gascoyne-Murchison area.

The CRBA region includes the Shark Bay & Ningaloo World Heritage Areas; Cape Range, Kennedy Range, Mount Augustus, Nyinggulara (Ningaloo), and Pimbee National Parks; multiple nature reserves, exclusive native title, and former pastoral leasehold properties.

The types of land tenures and access to them continue to change annually, with the CRBA working closely with the three DBCA regional offices that are responsible for the management of these and other such properties within our region to ensure, where possible access is granted and pest control activities are undertaken. This assistance ensures minimal impact on neighbouring pastoral properties and assists all land users in meeting their obligations under the BAM Act.

There continue to be ongoing and region-wide changes regarding land access due to different identified responsible parties, along with different priorities across the different land tenures in the CRBA region.

The CRBA shares its northern boundary with the Pilbara Regional Biosecurity Group (PRBG), the eastern boundary with the Meekatharra Rangelands Biosecurity Association (MRBA), and the southern boundary with the Northern Biosecurity Group (NBG) which includes Kalbarri National Park and a significant amount of unallocated Crown Land (UCL).



NOTE: There have been considerable land tenure changes since this map was developed. Including the change of ex-pastoral around Kennedy Ranges and Mt Augustus now being under Exclusive Native Title possession.

5. COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

The CRBA is a not-for-profit association formed under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2015*. The committee of management consists of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary/Treasurer and no less than four and no more than eight other members. The positions of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary/Treasurer must all be held by a full member of the Association.

POSITION	NAME	MEMBER STATION/ORGANISATION	TERM EXPIRY
Chairperson	Ross Collins	Glenburgh & Innouendy Stations (Upper Gascoyne & Murchison)	30 October 2024
Vice Chairperson	Alister Gordan	Cooralya & Booloogoroo Stations (Carnarvon)	30 October 2024
Secretary / Treasurer	Andrew Whitmarsh	Byro & Ballythuna Stations (Murchison)	30 October 2024
Full Member	Harry McKeogh	Carey Downs Station (Upper Gascoyne)	29 October 2025
Full Member	Roger Davies	Eudamullah Station (Upper Gascoyne)	28 October 2026
Full Member	Greydon Mead	Bullardoo Station (Murchison)	30 October 2024
Full Member	Simon Thomas	Marron Station (Carnarvon)	28 October 2026
Full Member	Ray Hoseason-Smith	Dairy Creek Station (Upper Gascoyne)	28 October 2026
Full Member	Gina McGee	Minilya Station (Carnarvon)	28 October 2026
Associate Member	Gavan Mullan	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions	30 October 2024

The CRBA also contracts the services of a part-time Executive Officer, Krystie Bremer.

The CRBA works with local people who hold local knowledge of the region's problem pests. Utilising this local landscape understanding to form the basis of our annual operations each year.

6. 2023/2024 OPERATIONS

6.1 DECLARED PEST RATE

The CRBA has a Declared Pest Account into which the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is responsible, via the Office of State Revenue (OSR) to issue rates notices annually to all pastoral leases within the CRBA region. DPIRD then provides the CRBA with the Government's matching dollar-for-dollar contribution. One of the biggest benefits of the RBG model is that it is funded 50% by leaseholders and 50% by the State, recognising their obligation as majority landowners within the CRBA region.

The 2023/2024 Declared Pest Rate (DPR) for the CRBA was gazetted as 6.4724 cents in the dollar on the unimproved value of pastoral land leases in the local government districts that make up our prescribed areas.

RBGs play a crucial role in declared pest management and deliver valuable services to local communities in our regions. In December 2023 the BAM Act Review Panel submitted the final review paper to the Minister, which after the Stage 3 discussion paper continues to cause concern for the CRBA committee and members. We believe that the current RBG system under the current Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act overall is sufficient. We acknowledge the need for some improvement to better meet the evolving needs of our community, while recognising the imperfections, we feel it is crucial to explore ways to enhance the existing system rather than resorting to the creation of a new levy/rating system or establishing new bodies or removing control of declared pest management to other groups or to a competitive funding model. By focusing on improving coordination, increasing resources, refining, and improving government processes, and enhancing stakeholder engagement, we can address the gaps and inefficiencies within the current framework.

The DPR approach allows for a more cost-effective and streamlined solution that aligns with the community's needs and priorities without introducing unnecessary new complexity or burden. RBGs offer efficient administration and outcomes, ensuring ownership of declared pest control for widespread and established pests. They fill knowledge gaps, promote shared responsibility under the BAM Act, and provide vital services to communities. This service could be lost through the adoption of some of the opportunities being explored in the BAM Act review.

The CRBA continues to seek clarity on the release of the final report, along with the response from government and strongly believes continuing to delay this process puts undue pressure on RBGs and their volunteers who are unable to plan operations past 2026/27.

6.2 OTHER FUNDING & GRANTS

Royalties for Regions - Wild Dog Action Plan 2

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) advised during 2022/23 that funding for the WA Wild Dog Action Plan (WDAP) would be secure through 2024/25. This announcement recognised the State's obligation to manage pests on vast lands they are responsible for within our region, aiding in a landscape-scale approach to declared pests management. Further allowing the CRBA to aid pastoral land managers in the management of total predation pressure and providing a beneficial buffer zone to known regional hotspots which often occur on state-managed lands.

The CRBA again received \$200,000 which continued towards contracting 2 Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) for a total of 285 days (1.4 FTE), with the CRBA covering all other associated costs with these two contractors.

The CRBA continues to work with DPIRD, providing valuable insight into the impacts of predators across our landscape, to continue financial support received through this plan into its next iteration.

Wild Dog Action Plan - Exploring Thermal Technology in the Rangelands

The CRBA was awarded \$50,000 (50% of requested funding) for Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) who work across the Rangelands to explore the different thermal technologies available to aid in the control of wild dogs. Thermal technology will allow LPMTs to operate at various times of the day, including at night and it is hoped the technology will easily allow LPMTs to identify wild dogs in real-time.

The project runs from 1st July 2023 till 31st December 2024.

Shire of Upper Gascoyne

The CRBA continues to welcome the yearly contribution by the Shire of Upper Gascoyne towards our operations. This support involves a direct financial continued of \$50,000 towards extending operations within the shire-wide and an in-kind continued of approximately \$15,000 for the costs associated with the CRBA bait meat freezer at the shire depot in Gascoyne Junction.

Shire of Carnarvon

In late 2023 the Shire of Carnarvon confirmed a financial contribution of \$15,000 towards the control of declared weeds. This contribution, along with their in-kind contribution associated with the CRBA bait meat freezer continued to assist the CRBA.

Shire of Murchison

The CRBA continues to welcome the contributions made by the Shire of Murchison to pest control. A direct financial contribution of \$10,000 was out towards operations in the shire, along with their continued in-kind contribution related to the bait meat freezer and their own programs.

6.3 PARTNERSHIPS

Department of Biodiversity, Conservations & Attractions

The CRBA continues to work with the two DBCA regions - three District Offices to gain support, assistance, and access for LPMTs to undertake control of declared pests on land under their management. Through the Native Title determination process, along with the establishment of Joint Management Bodies (JMB) access to some of this estate continues to be challenging. Throughout 2023/24 access was returned for between 3 months and 3 years to some estate, taking considerable effort on both sides of this partnership.

Midwest Regional Office - Gascoyne District (Shark Bay)

After a considerable time with limited access to lands through the Gascoyne District Office, the announcement in August 2023 of the expansion of Kennedy Range National Park to encompass the ex-pastoral estate surrounding it and the gazetting of Pimbee National Park the CRBA welcomed the opportunity to provide a presentation to the JMB in October 2023. This provided the CRBA with a two-month access permit to these two locations, with work within the Kennedy Range National Park, particularly the west side being critical to landscape scale management within the CRBA region, aiding in movements from known hotspots to small stock properties in the south.

Further discussions and presentation by Executive Officer Krystie Bremer at the Yinggarda Joint Management Body meeting in March 2024 allowed the CRBA to provide a history of the CRBA, and the work previously undertaken before the Native Title determination in 2018. Subsequently, access was granted to the Kennedy Range and Pimbee National Parks until March 2025 for groundwork and aerial baiting.

Mid-West Regional Office (Geraldton)

The CRBA welcomed returned access to some lands in the Murchison over the course of 2023/2024 year, allowing LPMTs in this area to assess movement across the entire landscape and undertake control activities when needed.

Pilbara Regional Office - Exmouth District (Exmouth)

The CRBA continues to work with the district office to maintain and improve access for LPMTs within this region. Access to the eastern side of Cape Range National Park, ex-Exmouth Gulf was returned for 2023/2024, along with ex-Gnaraloo Coastline (now a reserve). There continue to be concerns over limited access to the estate that surrounds Coral Bay with reports of wild dogs received through early 2024 of wild dogs in the townsite, something that has not occurred in more than five years.

The CRBA recognises the unique challenges of each of the DBCA offices that we work with and the need to consider all viewpoints on the management of declared pests at a landscape scale. We look forward to continuing to work with DBCA and JMBs to find common ground and mitigate the impacts of declared pests on livestock and native fauna, along with overall management of total grazing pressure.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Work with the Office of RBG continues to ensure the CRBA meets all our funding obligations during the year. This partnership continues to evolve with a shared understanding of not only the obligations of RBGs through our funding but also the need for DPIRD to ensure a seamless process, with funding being released quicker than in previous years and the undertaking of a DPIRD audit of the Declared Pest Account to ensure the accuracy of our group's finances. The Office of RBG also organised the Annual RBG Forum on the 14th and 15th of February 2024 in Perth is a key opportunity for key stakeholders and RBGs to connect and come together.

CRBA Executive Officer, Krystie Bremer also works with DPIRD, sitting on the State DPIRD-RBG Advisory Group. This group meets bi-monthly online to allow for two-way communication and understanding between RBGs and the department. A key platform amidst the reviews of the BAM Act, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act, Firearms Reform, and S7 Chemicals code of practice review.

The CRBA also continues to work with Tracey Kreplins, a Research Scientist on several projects across the region, including 1080 bait research, wild dog/cow movement relationships, camera monitoring and wild dog# diet.

Rangelands NRM

Whilst 2023/2024 did not see any direct delivery of Rangelands NRM projects, the CRBA continues to work with them to assist in the conservation of the key natural assets within our region including the two World Heritage Areas of Ningaloo & Shark Bay.

Local Government

Our long-standing relationships with three shires in our prescribed area sees the CRBA able to provide key services to those landholders within those areas to ensure that the impacts of declared pests are managed within our limited capacities.

Grower Group Alliance

The CRBA is an associate member of the Grower Group Alliance (GGA). GGA provides opportunities for capacity building, along with providing visibility of the CRBA.

RBG Monthly Meetings

RBGs gather monthly online to provide a regular platform for the 14 groups to share timely information, updates, and insights related to the challenges associated with declared pest management. This collaboration and coordination amongst RBGs allows for opportunities to explore joint initiatives across the state.

S7 Retailers

The CRBA appreciates the ongoing roles of Elders Carnarvon in storage of our S7 Chemicals.

6.4 VOLUNTEER SUMMARY

The CRBA counts on the local knowledge of our volunteers and members to manage declared pests across our vast landscape. The CRBA committee estimates that our volunteers contribute upwards of 3,000 hours each year to the group and its operations, a value of more than \$200,000 in-kind. The CRBA depends on volunteers within the community to assist with various roles/activities that are required to ensure the smooth running of our operation.

These roles include:

- Participation on the Management Committee;
- Attendance and participation in meetings with outside stakeholders;
- Review of vast correspondence received by the CRBA;
- Time and fuel commitments by members to attend training days, workshops, industry and government meetings, and liaisons. Given the vast area the CRBA covers this is a big commitment by our committee with often more than 600km round trips required to attend face-to-face meetings.;
- Local Rack Coordinators – who coordinate local pastoralists to attend bait preparations racks to inject, dry, and bag meat baits ready for baiting programs;
- LPMT Coordinators – local pastoralists who are responsible for supervising and guiding local LPMTs who operate across a defined network of pastoral properties. Coordinators are also involved in contract reviews and reviews of monthly reports and invoices before payment;
- Assistance with wild dog baiting programs, including helping with loading baits and providing fuel into the contracted charter plane ;
- Negotiating and developing partnerships with DBCA, local Shires, and other key stakeholders; and
- Pastoral stations that make airstrips available for the aerial programs to use, along with providing meals and overnight accommodation for the pilots, and ground staff during various declared pest programs including aerial baiting, LFH, and weed control.

Over and above the volunteer contribution made by CRBA leaseholders is the additional the financial cost of managing the state's pests with land managers undertaking their control the programs (including operation of aircraft such as helicopters and planes), providing meat for baiting programs and even fuel for contractors.

6.5 VERTEBRATE PEST PROGRAM

Vertebrate Pests, particularly wild dogs remain a high priority for the CRBA due to their impacts to agriculture, particularly in poor seasonal conditions as experienced during 2023/2024. To mitigate the impacts of these pests the CRBA contracts 7 Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) focused on total predation pressure across the region.

LPMTs work with CRBA land managers to provide assistance in the management of vertebrates across the region. These LPMTs with land managers to cover seven regions:

LPMT 1	Greg Hobson	South Murchison
LPMT 2	James Ferrier	Shark Bay / South Carnarvon
LPMT 3	Andrew Walker / Ian Sinclair	North Murchison
LPMT 4	Mat Cole	North East Carnarvon
LPMT 5	Adam Robinson	North West Carnarvon
LPMT 7	James Rounsevell	South Upper Gascoyne
LPMT 8	Allan Smith	North Upper Gascoyne

Wild Dogs

During 2023/2024 the CRBA undertook the following wild dog-specific programs across the region:

- One community-wide baiting program;
- One aerial baiting program, focused on providing landscape-scale assistance in managing movements for region-wide benefits;
- One aerial baiting program coordinated with DBCA in the Kennedy Range National Park;
- Supporting land managers in individual control programs;
- Monitoring of wild dog movements; and
- Contracting LPMTs who undertook baiting, trapping, and shooting (day & night) of wild dogs.

The operations undertaken across our region play a key role in minimising the risk to the State's agricultural industry. The CRBA believes a key to our success in the management of wild dogs comes from region-wide engagement of LPMTs, alongside land manager control, and stakeholders engagement.

A summary of LPMT operations, specific to wild dog control is below and includes total number of contracted days worked during 2023/2024.

	2023/24	2022/23	
Total days worked	1,234.0	1,367.5	↓
Number of baits laid	29,372.0	37,061.0	↓
Number of baits made	83,518.0	19,417.0	↑
Number of traps set	1,849.0	2,340.0	↓
Average Traps in ground EOM	878.2	678.2	↑
Number of dogs destroyed - Shot	130.0	80.0	↑
Number of dogs destroyed - Trapped	946.0	812.0	↑
Number of dogs destroyed - Other	5.0	7.0	↓
Number of reported stock kills by wild dogs #	179.0	45.0	↑
Number of reported wild dog complaints by landowners #	62.0	32.0	↑

Points of note:

- Whilst the number of baits laid by LPMT has reduced, the number distributed has increased significantly. These baits were made by LPMTs and put out via the aerial baiting program (73,200).
- Based on research, number estimated number of wild dogs controlled by baiting programs is 835.18.
- 13 foxes were removed from the landscape, with an unknown number potentially attributed to the baiting programs.
- There was an increase in wild dog complaints and attacks reported by large stock-carrying properties due to the seasonal conditions, in particular, the relentless hot summer with limited to no groundwater. This saw an increase in wild dogs# and other animals, including livestock coming into stock watering points.
- Wild dogs# control through shooting also increased due to the investment in thermal equipment by both the CRBA and LPMTs, allowing them to work at night on water points.

The CRBA over the last few years has seen an increase in wild dog-related complaints and stock losses/damage relative to all livestock. Since 2021/2022 a large number of these can be attributed to the commencement of the Carnarvon Barrier Fence in the south of our region, which remains incomplete and continues to cause issues for small stock properties in our region.

Quote from CRBA Landholder, 2024 AGM

As a pastoralist who has expanded by stock watering points, I can attest to the impact this has on not only wild dog movements but also on wild dog numbers, observed and controlled on my pastoral lease particularly over the 2023/2024 Summer.

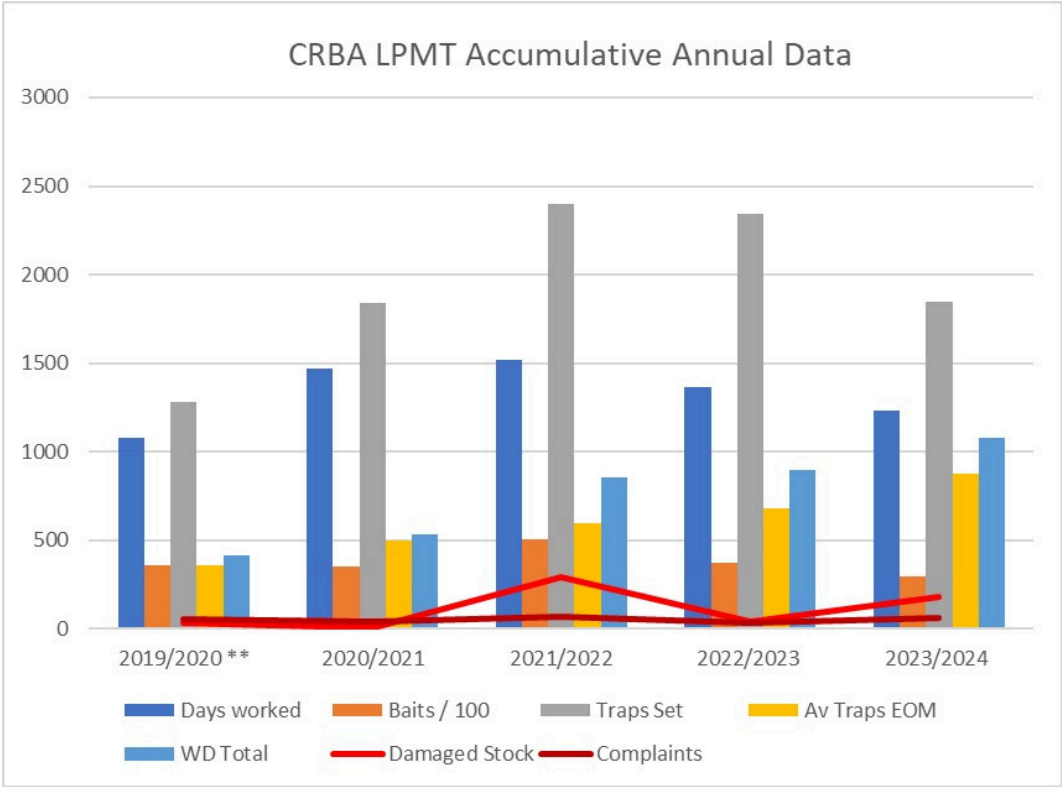
The CBRA relies heavily on pastoral leaseholders playing active roles in the management of declared pests and planning for their properties. The group continues to rely on its members and key stakeholders to participate in preparing wild dog baits at community baiting events, and distributing dried prepared baits across their properties, along with other individual control methods.

Through the community baiting program and reported landholder activity a total of 11,700 baits were made and laid, contributing to approximately 117 wild dogs being controlled. Landholders also reported controlling 58 wild dogs through other methods.

The CBRA would also like to recognise the Shire of Murchison which continues to actively encourage the management of wild dogs# via internal initiatives. From their records, 52 wild dogs have been controlled throughout 2023/2024.

LPMTs have and continue to increase their monitoring activities, working with the CRBA Executive Officer to install 35 field cameras across the region. These have been used to assist in better understanding the impacts of wild dogs across the landscape, understand movements, and assist in target control in problem areas.

The CRBA also has installed in key locations such as the end of fence lines and at road grids, squawker boxes as additional deterrents for vertebrate pests.





Squawker at end of fence



Field camera, with solar

Feral Pigs

CRBA LPMTs actively undertook monitoring in known feral pig locations to monitor movements and numbers, and have identified the need to increase our management activities. The CBRA is aware of a small increase in the number of properties, along with renewed access to a property that has known pig populations. Monitoring of feral pig populations increased in the later part of the year to see which known locations they are frequenting which will allow us to undertake further monitoring and a targeted trapping program in 2024/2025.

Through active control programs by LPMTs have removed 16 and landholders 25 over the course of the year.

Feral Cats

Whilst feral cats are not a declared pest under the Biosecurity Agriculture Management Act, they are environmental pests which are of concern for land managers across our region. There was a significant increase in the number of cats being observed by both land managers and LPMTs during 2023/2024, particularly from July - October 2023.

Land managers within our region actively controlled 217 feral cats, a huge increase on previous years.

6.6 LARGE FERAL HERBIVORE PROGRAM

Movements of large feral herbivores into our region continue to be of concern, with the cost of running large coordinated control of these pests so high the CRBA relies on additional outside funding to make such programs happen. During 2023/2024 the CRBA was only able to assist landholders in the management of LFH through our LPMTs.

LPMTs worked to actively manage 76 LFH during the year, 58 LFH were also controlled by landholders, and an additional 14 were managed within the Shire of Murchison LFH program. Additional LFH management and removal also occurred as part of our local bait meat production program, with the contractor removing an estimated 50 additional LFH.

Through the removal of these LFH and future control plans the CRBA is able to assist land managers in their overall management of total grazing pressure, which is imperative during dry seasons.



An increase in observations observed particularly in the north east of our region which shares a direct boundary with vacant crown land. Increases were also seen in areas neighbouring properties who do not maintain or allow control of LFH.

6.7 WEED PROGRAM

Mesquite & Parkinsonia

These woody weeds continue to be an invasive weed of concern for the CRBA and land managers across the region. Due to funding constraints no individual control programs were undertaken during 2023/2024, however, mid-year the Shire of Carnarvon provided funding to undertake work on these weeds within their shire boundaries.

Unfortunately for the Shire of Carnarvon program, the properties received much-needed rainfall when work was due to commence each time meaning that it has been pushed until later in 2024.

LPMTs continue to monitor known infestations and the CRBA continues to encourage land managers with known infestations to undertake control programs, providing the chemicals and loan spray equipment to do so.

During 2023/2024 the CRBA purchased a handheld spray unit and buggy-mounted unit for use by LPMTs and land managers who need to undertake control.

Coral Coast Cactus

Continued monitoring and reporting of this weed has seen known infestations managed and no new locations reported during 2023/2024. LPMTs actively worked together to move cochineal bugs to a new location to improve control in that area (unmanaged pastoral estate).



2021

Before bugs moved to new site



2022

Monitoring of 2021 site



2023

Monitoring of long-term control site from 2020



2024

moving bugs

6.8 GOVERNANCE

Executive Officer

The CRBA continues to contract a part-time Executive Officer (EO), Krystie Bremer as an integral part of ensuring the CRBA meets all of its obligations, to both funders and land managers. Our Executive Officer continues to spend considerable time dealing with the increasing pressure put on the volunteer committee by outside stakeholders. Ensuring the day-to-day operations of the group, working with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions on pest management issues faced by the region, Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development, and other regional stakeholders.

During 2023/24 Krystie continued to provide executive support to the CRBA committee, ensuring the smooth implementation of the group's operational plan, and worked hard to engage with land managers and stakeholders alike. Krystie attended the RBG forum in February, gaining insights into the state's future direction for pest control and updates on research and legislation relative to the group. Krystie, along with Andrew Whitmarsh also attended the Wild Dog Action Plan meeting held in May to provide input into the future direction of the state-wide plan which sees the CRBA receive funding towards LPMTs.

The work undertaken by our Executive Officer ensures that the good work undertaken by the CRBA isn't missed and we are actively included in discussions relevant to our region.

Restricted Chemical Permits

During 2023/2024 the CRBA actively assisted 25 landholders in accessing or renewing their chemical permits, this included permits for state-managed lands which require considerable time and effort to send for processing. This assistance involves providing landholders with their obligations under the code of practice, encouraging training, providing maps, and assistance in completing the application form.

The CBRA is committed to continuing this assistance, along with funding of the processing costs incurred to ensure the region is fostering good management practices and a whole of landscape approach to pest management.

These permits are vital in providing the CRBA access to the tools required to manage pests across our vast landscape.

6.9 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The CRBA continues to proactively engagement with our community on declared pest management and the operations undertaken across our region.

Month	Activity
July 2023	Bi-Annual Newsletter including Landholder Feedback Survey
August 2023	Landholder Data
September 2023	Notice of Annual General Meeting
	Public Notice: Community Baiting Notice
October 2023	Reminder/Change Annual General Meeting
	Public Notice: Community Baiting Notice
November 2023	Annual General Meeting Reminder
	Annual General Meeting
	2022/23 Annual Report & Audited Financials
December 2023	
January 2024	
February 2024	1080 Landholder Training Notice
March 2024	1080 Landholder Training Course
	Management Committee Meeting
	LPMT Training
April 2024	
May 2024	
June 2024	LPMT Access & Landholder Feedback
	Reminder LPMT Access & Landholder Feedback
All year	CRBA Website

7. PROJECT SPECIFIC OPERATIONS

7.1 WILD DOG ACTION PLAN 2 - LPMTS

Through Royalties for Regions, the state's Wild Dog Action Plan provides funding to the CRBA for Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) to assist in the management of wild dogs on government-managed lands and neighbouring pastoral properties to protect agricultural assets. This funding provided a total of **285** LPMT days with the CRBA extending the work of these contractors to a total of 320 days across two regions. All other costs associated with these LPMTs, including insurance, traps, chemicals, and other overheads are covered by the CRBA.

The two contractors work to protect mainly small stock properties in the south of the CRBA region, focusing on mitigating the risk to these highly susceptible animals before they hit their backyards where possible. These LPMT regions are also the last line of defence before the state barrier fence in the south of the CRBA region. For various reasons, including the incomplete dog-proof cell fence and the season, there was an increase in the number of wild dog complaints and stock attacks.

Funding through the Wild Dog Action Plan has been confirmed through until 2024/25 with the CRBA working closing with DPIRD to ensure security of funding into the next iteration of the plan, providing evidence of the good work achieved through this funding.



Incomplete cell fence



Monitoring camera small stock boundary



Dogs stalking cattle

7.2 WILD DOG ACTION PLAN 2 - THERMAL PROJECT

Through a competitive grant process, the CRBA was awarded funding to purchase thermal scopes for Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) who have worked across the Rangelands. The CRBA purchased 4 scopes which were issued to LPMTs working in South Murchison, North West Carnarvon, North East Carnarvon, and South Upper Gascoyne. These scopes were purchased and deployed in the field during October & November 2023, with an LPMT knowledge-sharing session held in March 2024.

With an extremely hot summer and no groundwater available across the region, LPMTs waited at waters overnight and observed a significant increase in wild dog numbers and activities between November 2023 and February 2024.

One LPMT reported seeing 4 wild dogs on one water overnight and was able to control them all over a two-night period, with another LPMT controlling 3 young dogs on one night.

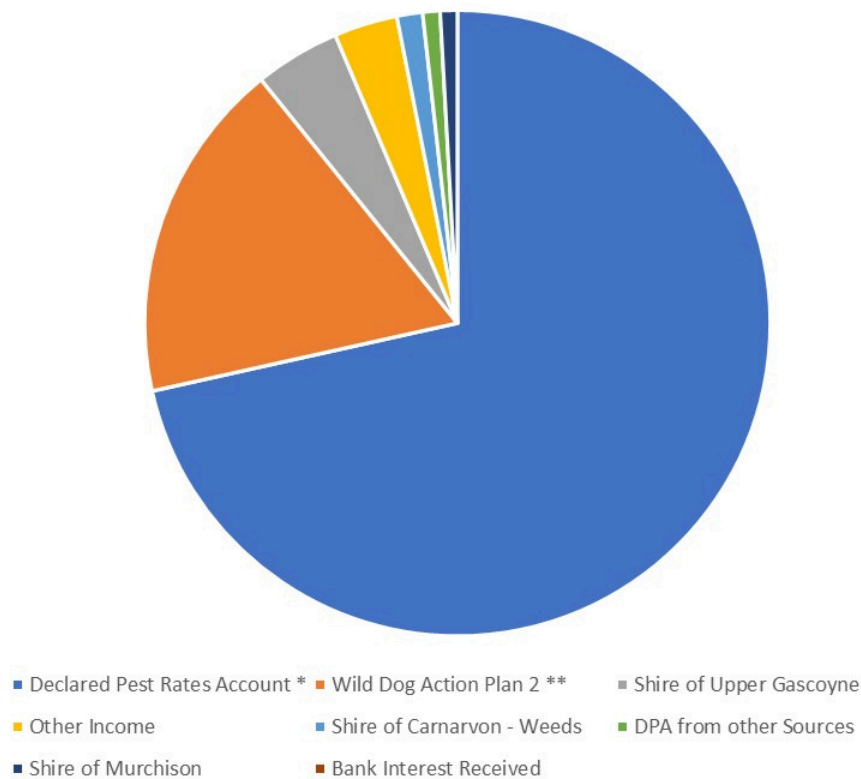
This project has allowed LPMTs to add another beneficial management tool to their operations, which during 2023/2024 extremely useful due to the long hot summer period, and saw a significant increase in wild dogs shot.



8. 2023/2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

8.1 OPERATIONAL INCOME

2023/2024 Operational Income

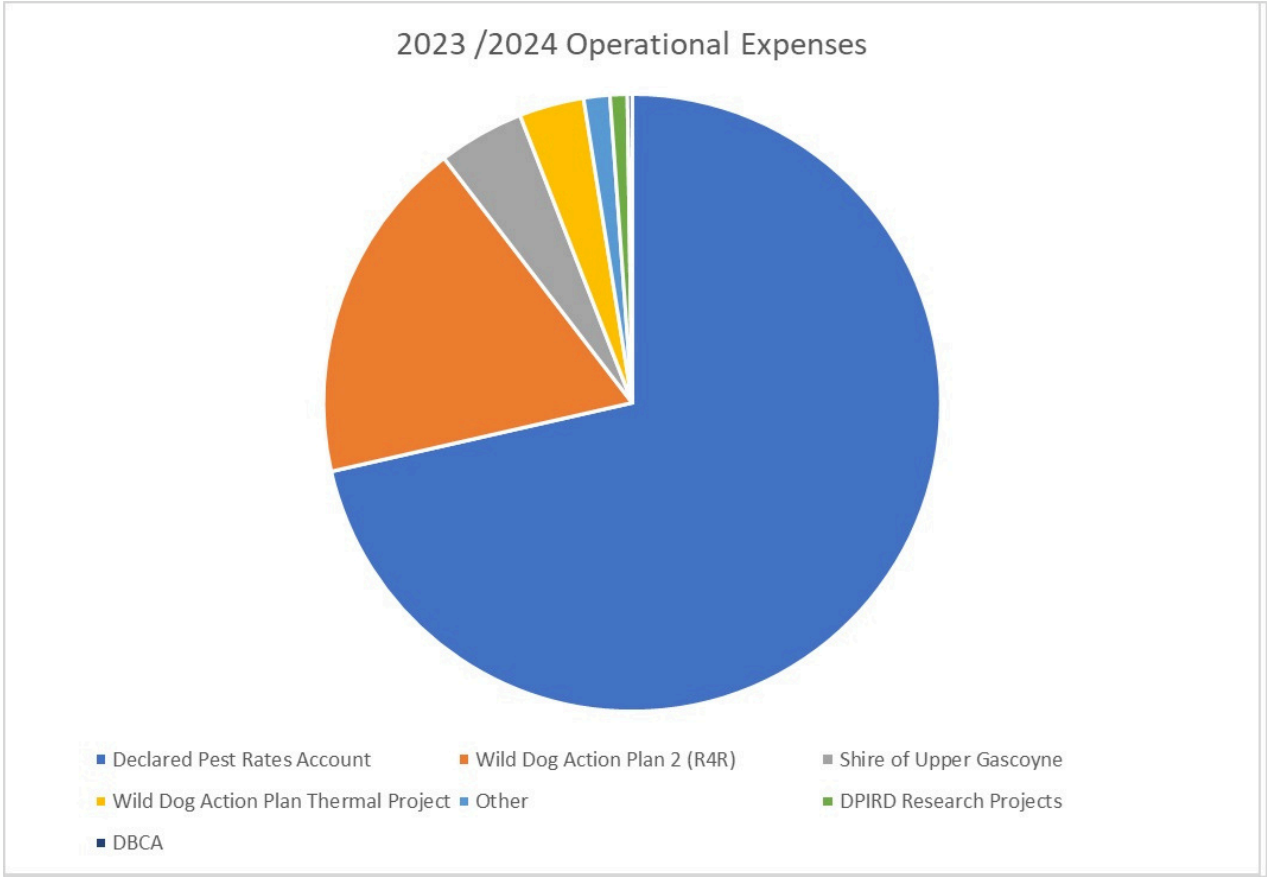


2023/2024 Operational Income (excluding GST):	
Declared Pest Rates Account *	\$ 808,846.00
Wild Dog Action Plan 2 **	\$ 200,000.00
Shire of Upper Gascoyne	\$ 50,000.00
WDAP Thermal Project	\$ 45,000.00
Other Income	\$ 37,028.63
Shire of Carnarvon - Weeds	\$ 15,000.00
DPA from other Sources	\$ 10,147.44
Shire of Murchison	\$ 10,000.00
DBCA	\$ 472.27
Bank Interest Received	
Total Operating Income	\$ 1,176,494.34

<i>* DPA income breakdown is as follows:</i>	
DPIRD matching CF appropriation	\$ 416,086.00
DPIRD DPA & Matching Federal Entity	\$ 14,757.00
Declared Pest Rate paid by Pastoralists	\$ 318,003.00
CRBA drawdown of reserve funds held by DPIRD	\$ 60,000.00
	\$ 808,846.00

**** R4R Funding covers 1.4 FTE at current LPMT contractor rates, all other cost (equipment, chemicals, insurances, baits, traps, administration & management) are funding by the CRBA.**

8.2 OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

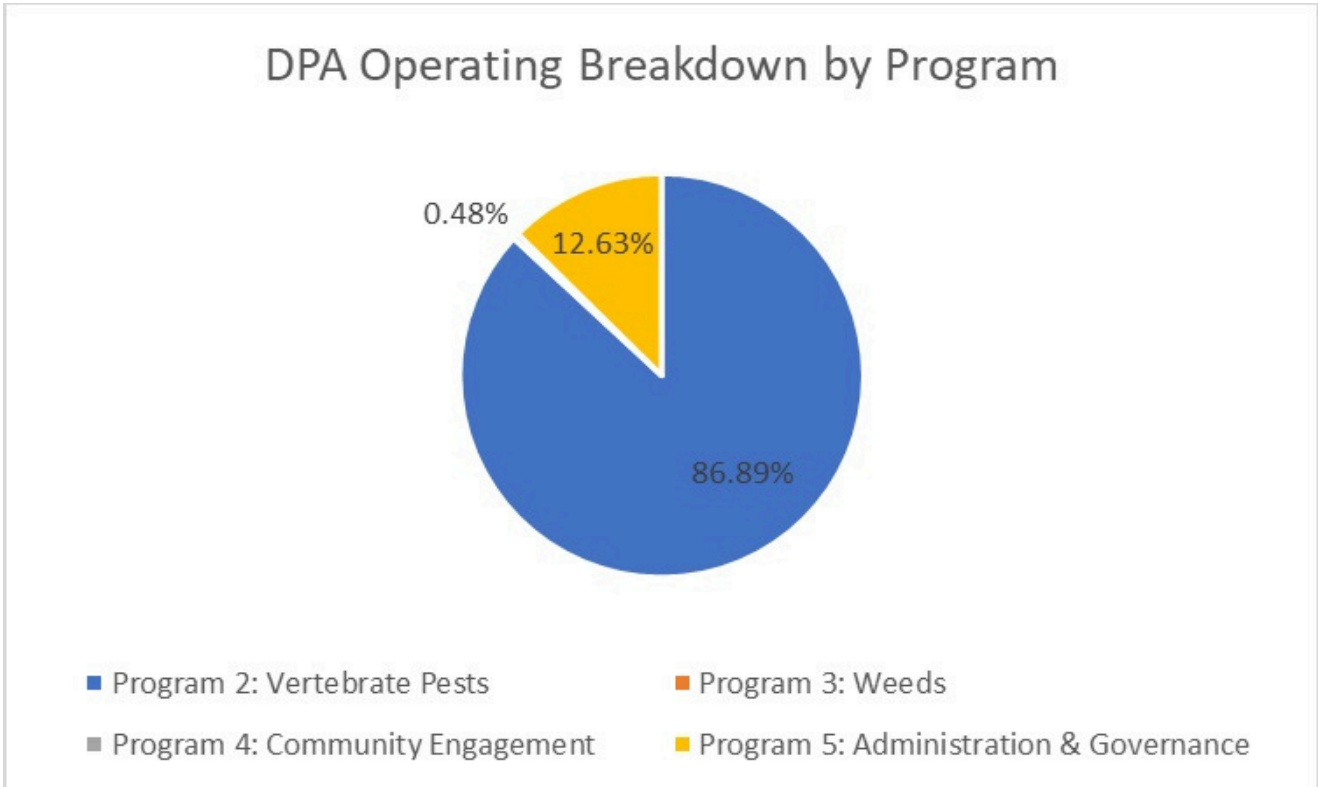


2023/2024 Operating Expenses (excluding GST):	
Declared Pest Rates Account	\$ 790,557.64
Wild Dog Action Plan 2 (R4R)	\$ 200,693.34
Shire of Upper Gascoyne	\$ 50,000.00
Wild Dog Action Plan Thermal Project	\$ 37,587.40
Other	\$ 15,190.01
DPIRD Research Projects	\$ 10,031.97
DBCA	\$ 2,700.40
Shire of Carnarvon Weeds	\$ 2,568.18
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 1,109,328.94
PROFIT 2023/24	\$ 67,165.40

The CRBA Declared Pest Rate payment for 2023/2024 was **86.97%**, with payments also received against historical debt.

All CRBA surpluses are committed to ongoing projects & operations.

8.3 DECLARED PEST ACCOUNT BREAKDOWNS



DPA Operating Expenses (excluding GST):		%
Program 1: LFH		
Program 2: Vertebrate Pests	\$ 686,921.74	86.89%
Program 3: Weeds		
Program 4: Community Engagement	\$ 3,806.56	0.48%
Program 5: Administration & Governance	\$ 99,829.34	12.63%
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 790,557.64	100.00%

The CRBA committee continues to work within the budget to ensure that the impact of increased governance/administration pressures has a limited impacted on the group’s ground operations. A task that gets more difficult each year, however this year across all funding channels Program 5 took up only 9.39% of total operational expenses.

The CRBA Executive Officer continues to monitor the DPIRD Declared Pest Account to ensure the funds available to the group remain correct, rate payments remain consistent and the debt from unpaid rates remains at a manageable level.

The total balance of unpaid rates for 2023/2024 is \$166,480, an increase of 19.56% on last year. \$112,254 relating to accumulative or historical debt.

APPENDIX 1 - AUDITED FINANCIALS

Commencing next page

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

**Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2024**

**WESTWOOD
ACCOUNTANTS**

ABN 74 420 909 329
128 Chapman Road
GERALDTON WA 6530

Phone: 08 9964 1941
Email: admin@westwood.com.au

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC
ABN 98 325 203 509

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CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Committees' Declaration

The chairman of the committee declares that:

1. the financial statements and notes are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and:
 - (a) comply with Accounting Standards and the Corporations Regulations; and
 - (b) give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the year ended on that date;
2. in the committee's opinion, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the organistaion will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the chairman.

Dated: 10 October, 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized 'R' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Independent Auditor's Report

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC (the association), which comprises the Statement by Members of the Committee, the Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024, a summary of significant accounting policies and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the association as at 30 June 2024 and [of] its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of Associations Incorporation Act 2015. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Independent Auditor's Report

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Signed on 10 October, 2024:



Kevin Cassidy, Institute of Public Accountants IPA
Westwood Accountants
Geraldton

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Detailed Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$
Current Assets		
Cash Assets		
CRBA - DPA/R4R (6577)		169,632
CRBA One off funding/grants (6486)		11,169
CRBA - Contingency/reserved (4964)		206,665
		<u>387,466</u>
Current Tax Assets		
GST clearing		23,829
		<u>23,829</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>411,295</u>
Total Assets		<u>411,295</u>
Net Assets		<u>411,295</u>
Members' Funds		
Reserves		
Accumulated funds		411,295
Total Members' Funds		<u>411,295</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Detailed Income & Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$
Income	
DPIRD Declared Pest Rate	
- DPIRD DPA Matching \$	423,846
- DPIRD DPA Rates	325,000
- DPIRD DPA CRBA held funds	60,000
- DPIRD DPA Other	4,600
- DPIRD DPA Rates from other RBG	5,547
	<u>818,993</u>
Other Income	
- DCBA Other	472
- DPIRD Wild Dog Action Plan R4R	200,000
- DPIRD Wild Dog Action Plan Thermal Proj	45,000
- Shire Contributions	25,000
- Shire of Upper Gascoyne	50,000
- Other income	37,029
	<u>357,501</u>
Total income	<u>1,176,494</u>
Expenses	
Program 2 Vertebrate Pests	
- DPA 1080 Baiting Programs	37
- DPA 1080 Landholders	210
- DPA Air Charter	20,943
- DPA Avgas	3,768
- DPA Bait Ground	59,515
- DPA Baiting Advertising	812
- DPA LPMT #1 South Murchison	10,700
- DPA LPMT #2 Shark Bay/South Carnarvon	25,857
- DPA LPMT #3 North Murchison	29,570
- DPA LPMT #4 North East Carnarvon	140,000
- DPA LPMT #5 North West Carnarvon	133,700
- DPA LPMT #6 North Murchison	44,200
- DPA LPMT #7 South Upper Gascoyne	66,375
- DPA LPMT #8 North Upper Gascoyne	118,300

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Detailed Income & Expenditure Statement**For the year ended 30 June 2024**

	2024 \$
- DPA LPMT Days (previous financial year)	18,196
- DPA LPMT Safety & Misc	5,909
- DPA Meekatharra RBA (Mt Clere)	8,828
	<u>686,922</u>
Program 4 Community Engagement	
- DPA Community Engagement	585
- DPA Meetings	636
- DPA RCP	778
- DPA Website / Communications	1,807
	<u>3,807</u>
Program 5 Governance & Administration	
- DPA Accountancy XERO	693
- DPA Accounting Fees Audit	4,000
- DPA Executive Officer	64,836
- DPA Executive Officer Travel & Office	6,529
- DPA Insurance	23,772
	<u>99,829</u>
Other Funding Sources	
- Other Sources	700
- Other Sources DBCA	2,700
- Other Sources Executive Officer	4,305
- Other Sources Feral Cats	1,409
- Other Sources LPMT	15,190
- Other Sources LPMT Research	3,618
- Other Sources SUG LPMT	50,000
- Other Sources Weed Control	2,568
	<u>80,491</u>
WDAP LPMT	
- WDAP2 LPMT #1 South Murchison	111,800
- WDAP2 LPMT #2 Shark Bay / Carnarvon	88,893
	<u>200,693</u>
WDAP Thermal Project	
- DPIRD WDAP Thermal Project	685
- DPIRD WDAP Thermal Project Contractors	10,520
- DPIRD WDAP Thermal Project Scopes	26,382
	<u>37,587</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Detailed Income & Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$
Total expenses	1,109,329
Surplus for the year	67,165
Opening surplus	344,130
Surplus for the year	67,165
Closing surplus	411,295

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

CARNARVON RANGELANDS BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC

ABN 98 325 203 509

Declared Pest Account Funding

For the year ended 30 June 2024

DPA Opening Funds 1 July 2023	\$106,414.85
DPA Income	\$808,846.00
DPA Income (Other)	\$ 10,147.44
Total Available DPA	\$925,408.29
Less DPA expenses 2023/2024	\$790,557.64
Remaining DPA 30 June 2024	\$134,850.65
Q1 2024/2025 Allocated Funds	\$ 60,000.00
Carryover Committed Funds	\$ 73,000.00
Carryover Uncommitted Funds	\$ 1,850.65
	\$134,850.65