



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

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Consultation for proposed 2023/24 Declared Pest Rates

14 April to 15 May 2023

Statistical summary



Consultation outcomes

Overview

Before determining a rate, the Minister for Agriculture and Food is required to consult with owners of the land to be rated, as described in the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Declared Pest Account) Regulations 2014* (the Regulations).

The annual process for consultation enables the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) to gauge landholder perception on the Declared Pest Rate (DPR). This information is used to inform decisions regarding the DPR and associated biosecurity objectives.

Invitation to comment

As per Section (4)(2) of the Declared Pest Account Regulations, consultation must commence a minimum of one month before the rate is determined. A notice of the proposed rates was advertised as a Statewide Public Notice in *The West Australian* on 15 April 2023. During the comment period DPIRD hosted an online survey, as well as a dedicated email inbox and phone number to capture landholder responses on the proposed 2023/24 DPR.

As per Section 4(2)(b)(ii) further consultation was required for three Rangelands Biosecurity Areas where it was proposed that the DPR increase by five per cent or more. This involved sending 224 individual letters to affected landholders.

Summary of submissions

Thirty-one submissions (survey (29) and email (2)) across nine of the 14 Biosecurity Areas were received, which resulted in 48 responses (by rateable properties) overall. Eleven submissions (28 responses) were from multi-property landholders and 20 single property landholders. This represents a submission (31) rate of 0.11% of 27,174 rateable properties, which is 0.14% of 22,178 landholders.

In addition to the 31 submissions mentioned in the statistics above, four submissions were also received from individuals who do not pay the DPR. These four responses were not included in statistical tables and figures below.

Response rate

The 2023 consultation response rate was too low to achieve a sample size large enough to mirror characteristics of the target population and support statistical generalisability, however some valuable insights have been obtained from the data.

The response rate was lower than the previous year which saw 150 responses received (a response rate of 0.68% from 22,187 landholders). Potential reasons for a decline in submissions for this annual consultation are hypothesised to relate to BAM Act Review activities occurring in parallel, as well as the current global setting with extreme events such as floods, Covid-19 and inflation impacting stakeholder interest and/or time to provide a submission.

Proposed 2023/24 Declared Pest Rate

The extent of an individual's support for the proposed rate/s as set out in the Public Notice was captured through a survey choice between 'supportive', 'not supportive', 'unsure' or 'mixed opinions' (in the case of a multi-property owner selecting different categories of support for the DPR depending on the Biosecurity Areas where their properties are located). Email submissions were manually converted into 'supportive' or 'not supportive'.

Table 1 includes total number of submission data (29) from survey question 'To what extent do you support the 2023/2024 Declared Pest Rates as set out in the Public Notice?' as well as the overall support level indicated by individual email submissions (2) converted into response type 'Supportive' or 'Not supportive' as a percentage of total **landholders** (not total rated properties).

Response	Number of submissions	As % of total landholders (22,178)
Supportive	7	0.0316%
Not supportive	21	0.0947%
Unsure	2	0.0090%
Mixed opinions	1	0.0045%
Total	31	0.14% (rounded up to two decimal places)

Table 1: 2023/24 Declared Pest Rate Support out of total number of submissions (survey and email).

Table 2 shows the extent of support for the rate/s, grouped by Biosecurity Area responses. Total number of responses is 48, with 46 responses via survey (29 individuals who own 46 rateable properties) plus two responses via email, as a percentage of **total rated properties** (not total landholders as in Table 1 above).

Responses that could not be categorised into a Biosecurity Area have been listed as unknown.

Biosecurity Area	Supportive	Not supportive	Unsure	Total	As % of total rated properties (27,174)
Carnarvon Rangelands				0	0.0000%
Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands	1	3		4	0.0147%
Kimberley Rangelands	1			1	0.0037%
Meekatharra Rangelands	4			4	0.0147%
Pilbara				0	0.0000%
Central Wheatbelt				0	0.0000%
Midlands				0	0.0000%
Northern	1			1	0.0037%

Biosecurity Area	Supportive	Not supportive	Unsure	Total	As % of total rated properties (27,174)
Blackwood	1	9		10	0.0368%
Esperance				0	0.0000%
Peel – Harvey	1	4		5	0.0184%
Southern		2		2	0.0074%
Leschenault	2	10	2	14	0.0515%
Eastern Wheatbelt		3		3	0.0110%
Unknown				4	0.0147%
Total	11	31	2	48	0.18%

Table 2: 2023/24 Declared Pest Rate Support (survey and email) by Biosecurity Area.

Effective ways to consult

Survey data was also collected on effective ways to consult on the DPR. Respondents were asked to select effective consultation types from a checkbox list with Newspapers; Survey; DPIRD website; Email; Individual letters to landholders; Online information; and Other.

Figure 1 visualises response data. Percentages represent the number of times each ‘type’ was selected out of the total number of selections (not out of the total number of respondents). Figure 1 includes the four survey responses from non-DPR paying landowners and does not include the two email respondents.

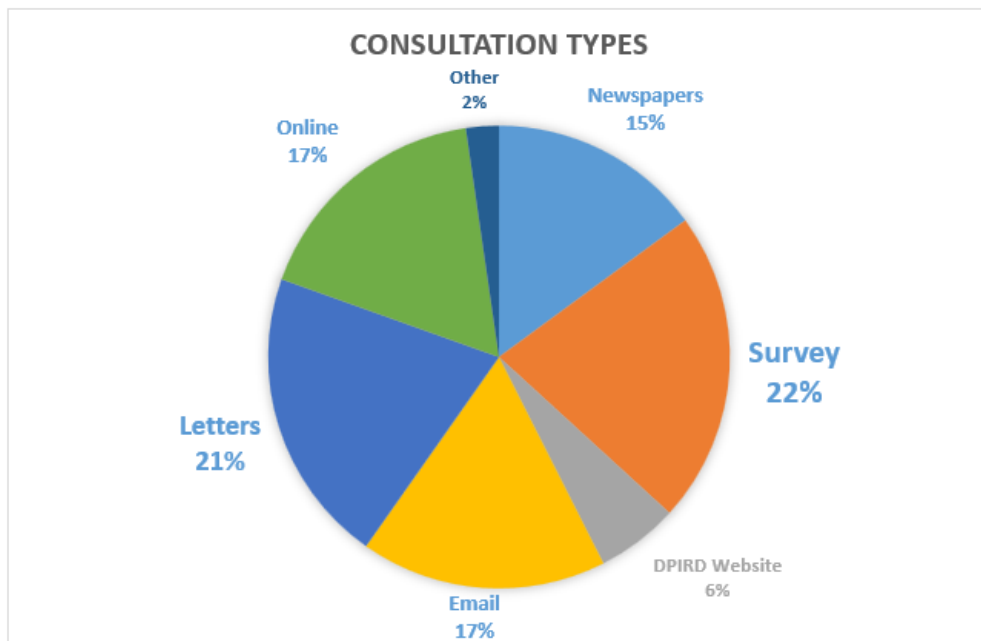


Figure 1: Response (Total = 33) to ‘What are effective ways to consult on the Declared Pest Rate?’.

‘Survey’ was the leading type selected by respondents, with 58% selecting it as an effective way to consult. This was followed closely by ‘Letters to landholders’ chosen by 55% of respondents. The DPIRD website was selected by 15% of respondents and Newspapers had the second lowest selection rate at 39%.

Key findings

Below are the key findings from the 2023/24 Consultation for proposed Declared Pest Rates:

Response

- The consultation round submission rate (total 31 survey (29) and email (2)) was 0.11% of 27,174 rateable properties, which is 0.14% of 22,178 landholders.
- The response rate was too low to achieve a sample size sufficiently large and unbiased to mirror characteristics of the target population and support statistical generalisability.

Demographics

- Men and women aged over 55 were the largest group of respondents.
- The leading property usage was 'Cattle production'.
- Most properties fell within the 2–20-hectare and 100+ hectare ranges.
- Most respondents were owners of a single property.

Extent of support

- Overall, most respondents (68%) were not supportive of the proposed 2023/24 rates.
- The Rangelands area generated 18% of the responses (48) from the 520 rateable properties. Of these 67% were 'supportive' of the proposed rate/s.
- The Agricultural area generated 12.5% of the responses (48) from the 9,253 rateable properties. Of these 83% were 'not supportive' of the proposed rate/s.
- The Southwest area generated 60% of the responses (48) from the 17,401 rateable properties. Of these 79% were 'not supportive' of the proposed rates.

Effective ways to consult

- The leading preferred consultation type selected was 'Survey', with 58% of respondents selecting it as an effective way to consult.
- The DPIRD website was only selected by 15% of respondents.
- Physical letters still appear to be well received as an effective way to consult.

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