

**GOLDFIELDS NULLARBOR RANGELANDS  
BIOSECURITY ASSOCIATION INC.  
ANNUAL REPORT**

**2014 – 2015 FINANCIAL YEAR**

**Prepared by**

Ross Wood



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# Recognised Biosecurity Groups Western Australia

Local Government Area

Regions:

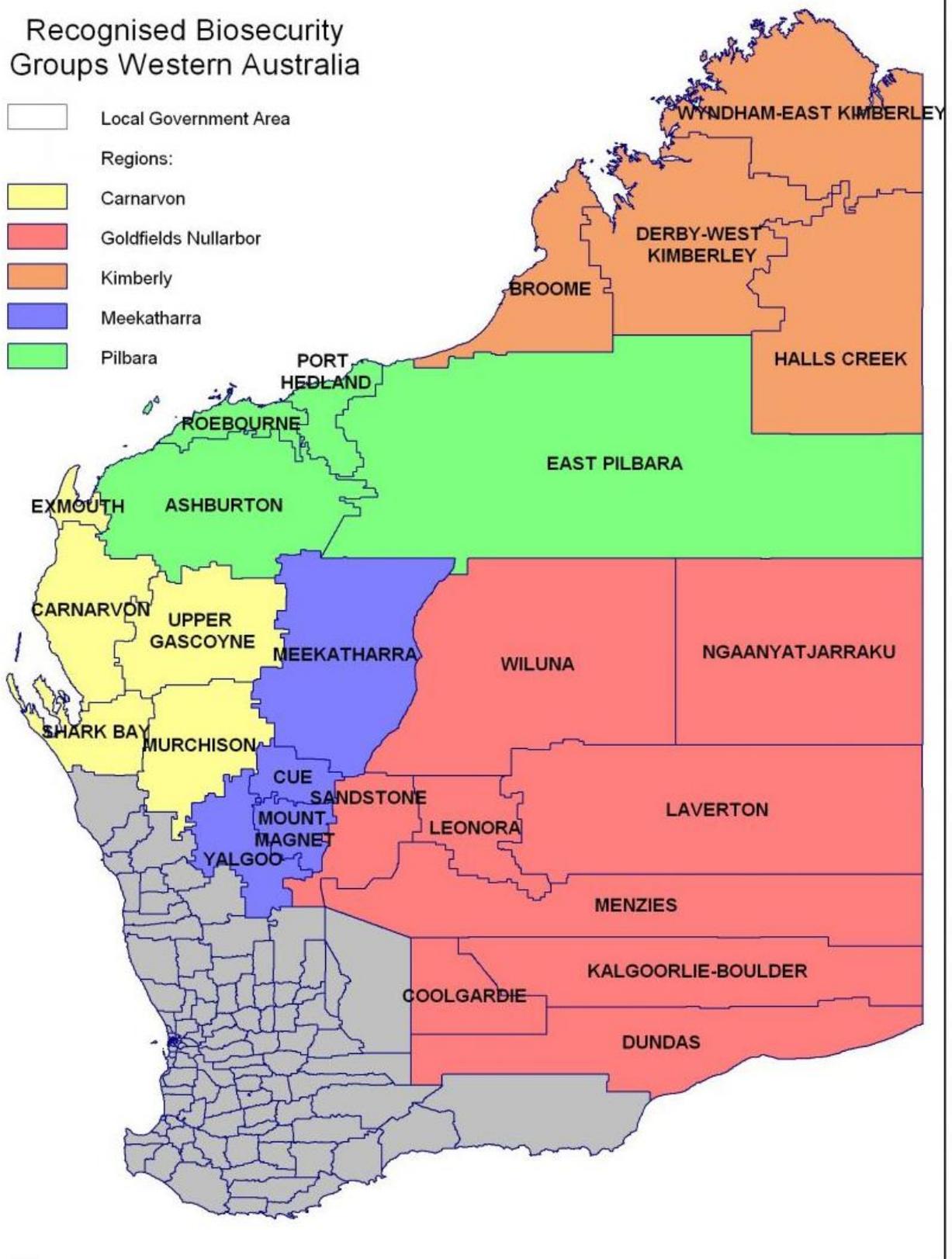
Carnarvon

Goldfields Nullarbor

Kimberly

Meekatharra

Pilbara



## 1. INTRODUCTION

**The Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association Inc.(GNRBA)** is unique in rangeland management across Western Australia. It has a huge area to service and is working hard to provide a top class service to ratepayers. It is now well recognised as being a leader in the RBG's in WA.

The GNRBA Inc formally became operational on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011. At this time it took over the APB Zone 9 operations.

### **GNRBA Management Committee**

The GNRBA is managed day to day by Ross M Wood as Executive Officer.

Committee of Management (CoM) Meetings are held face to face or phone hook- up as required.

The Management committee for 2014/15 was comprised thus:

<b>Trevor Hodshon</b>	3 year Term	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>John Oxley</b>	3 year term	
<b>Ian Kealley</b>	3 year Term	<b>Associate Member DPaW</b>
<b>Julian Jones</b>	2 year Term	
<b>Justin Stevens</b>	2 year Term	<b>Hon. Treasurer/Secretary</b>
<b>Brett Day</b>	2 year Term	
<b>Ross Wood</b>	1 year Term	<b>Executive Officer</b>
<b>Brendan Jones</b>	1year Term	
<b>Doug Brownlie</b>	1 year Term	<b>Vice Chairman</b>

Trevor Hodshon was elected as Chairman of GNRBA Inc by Committee of Management for 2014/15.

The GNRBA Inc. is the formally recognised Biosecurity Group and as such is authorised to set Pest rate applicable to pastoral leases.

This rate is matched by State Government. This allows the GNRBA to effectively double pastoralist's rates to assist with pest control.

Importantly the GNRBA partners with Shires and others like Rangelands NRM WA, to leverage funds and further increase its ability to provide services.

The GNRBA Inc. role is to assist pastoralists to control pests and weeds. It is unable to eliminate pastoralists control efforts.

The Department of Parks and Wildlife DPaW (formally DEC) is an Associated Member. It is the responsible state government department for managing wild dogs and pests on Unallocated Crown Land (UCL) and Department Of

Parks And Wildlife estate. To achieve this DPaW employs a dogging contractor to undertake wild dog control in the region and also assists in funding aerial baiting programs in the region.

To compliment Department of Parks and Wildlife work the GNRBA Inc. allocated funds for two part time doggers to carry out wild dog control alongside private properties. The majority of wild dog control work by GNRBA is required on UCL with the Department of Parks and Wildlife dogger working in coordinated effort. Department of Parks and Wildlife has also contracted to GNRBA to undertake some wild dog control programs on the Nullarbor.

During the 2014/15 financial year, approx \$100,000 funding through the Royalties for Regions program was again available to the group. The GNRBA Inc needed to contract to supply before it could access these funds. This funding has been used to support aerial work hitherto not funded. The change in contract has enabled the association to better access up to \$200,000 in additional funding for Wild Dog control over the next 2 years.

R4R funding is a very useful external funding source and is very much appreciated. It is for use in UCL alongside small stock properties and has been used well in aerial activities on the Nullarbor and increasingly in Kalgoorlie and Sandstone areas.

This document reports on the GNRBA Inc. activities and will not detail the extent of Department of Parks and Wildlife wild dog control activities.

Currently Associate members of the GNRBA are Dundas Shire, Leonora Shire, Wiluna Shire, Menzies Shire and Laverton Shire. It is hoped that the other Shires in the area can be encouraged to participate more fully.

Work to encourage such participation by engagement with the Goldfields Voluntary Organisation of Councils (GVROC) and individual shires by the Executive Officer has been ongoing.

The Executive Officer has been active in working with Menzies, Leonora, Coolgardie ,Dundas, Laverton, City of Kalgoorlie/Boulder and Wiluna Shires particularly in relation to Invasive Cactus control.

In particular the GNRBA actively managed the Menzies and Mertondale projects which were funded by GNRBA, Menzies and Leonora Shires and Rangelands NRM WA.

Importantly the GNRBA engaged with Windidda, Pinjin and Adelong Stations to achieve more integrated pest programs this year. The GNRBA has also established a good working relationship with Aboriginal native title holders including Spinifex, Birriliburu and Ngadju.

The GNRBA also works with and supports Kalgoorlie Boulder Urban Landcare Group (KBULG) to encourage caltrop spraying in City Kalgoorlie Boulder. These relationships are really assisting GNRBA achieve more credibility and recognition.

A solid partnership with Rangelands NRM WA to secure funding has been an important addition to the GNRBA influence in the region.

The GNRBA works closely with and alongside the DAFWA Invasive Species team and acknowledges the considerable help and advice provided by Mac Jensen and Jim Miller in all facets of our operation. This has been of great mutual benefit to both organisations.

## **2. GNRBA Inc AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- Initiate, promote and foster the control of declared animal and plant pests
- Encourage all persons to adopt sound biosecurity practices
- Prevent land and biodiversity degradation to protect our resources

- Foster sustainable development & production
- Act as the “Voice” for landholders (pastoralists and others) in the region

### 3. ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS 2014 – 2015

GNRBA Inc purchased about 68,000kg fresh meat baits from a number of suppliers at a cost of \$315,000. This was delivered to our Kalgoorlie Freezer and direct to properties. The GNRBA organised four sponsored ground baitings and several aerial baiting. A further aerial baiting was organised for eastern Nullarbor on Unmanaged Crown Land using R4R funding.

The GNRBA has also this last year trialled the use of helicopter for Breakaways in Leonora area with great success. This is obviously expensive and the GNRBA will continue to seek an economical way to use this system.

Good Financial accountability systems continue to be implemented. Mike Hutson is our accountant based in Kalgoorlie and is overseeing the Association finances which are now complicated with so many grant funding sources.

K Mader and Teen Ryan are the Association’s LPMT’s (doggers) operating in the Sandstone, Kalgoorlie, Laverton and Nullarbor areas primarily.

This year we continued to upgrade our S7 facilities. Teen Ryan is our S7 distributor. The GNRBA independence from DAFWA in this area is now complete.

The GNRBA also undertook to train LPMT Teen Ryan in weed control. This will better utilize her abilities whilst travelling around properties.

The GNRBA also been partnering with the Shires where possible to achieve cactus, Large Feral Herbivore and wild dog control.

The GNRBA is an incorporated body. Rules of Association are followed. The Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association Inc Inc (GNRBA) trading as the GNRBA operates using the Pest Rate, matching Government Funds and allocated R4R funds.

It also attracts and acquits special purpose grants such as the Rangelands NRM WA “Corralling the Cactus” project.

#### 2014/15 Grants and Projects

- **Menzies/ Mertondale** A \$40,000 State NRM grant matched by Shires of Menzies and Leonora to map and spray Hudson Pear cactus at Menzies Tip and Coral cactus at Mertondale. This GNRBA managed project is complete, audited and signed off. The GNRBA has continued to work with Menzies Shire which has just remitted a further \$20,000 to GNRBA to continue work at Menzies Tip and Kookynie. The Leonora Shire has also committed some \$40,000 to continue cactus work at Gwalia, Leonora and Mertondale. The GNRBA acknowledges the support by DPaW staff on burning and mapping for this project
- **Tarmoola** This \$100,000 Rangelands NRM WA grant has been acquitted and report submitted. More work on this site is yet to be done. However the immediate threat is diminished.
- **DAFF** This \$50,000 Federal Grant for Emerging Pests has been acquitted and spent mostly on Aerial shooting at Wiluna and developing Management Plans for Large Feral Herbivores and Wild dogs through seminars at Kalgoorlie, Leonora and Laverton.

- **Wild Dog Remote Sensing Trial** This \$20,000 Rangelands NRM WA grant relating to mapping of probable wild dog habitats for each station based on landforms such as breakaways is underway and due for completion end of year.
- **R4R Research Cacti Grant** This is a \$158,000 R4R Grant over 3 years is to establish potential to utilize drones to identify and map known cacti infestations to assist control. This work has just commenced.
- **Railroading the Cactus** This \$30,000 State NRM grant is to start dealing with Legacy Cactus from Transline settlements. This work has just commenced in Sept 2015.

#### **Grant projects in application phase for 2015/16**

- **Bromus Burr Buster** Fencing for Noogoora burr at Bromus Dam near Norseman
- **Signage to Save dogs** Signage for 1080 for all GNRBA Shires
- **Secure bait making facility racks.** To allow more efficient preparation of baits close to Kalgoorlie to assist pastoralists struggling with bait preparation.

In addition to above the GNRBA has recently engaged with GWW and Ngadju Rangers based at Norseman. Initially we have worked together with Bromus Dam. More recently at Rawlinna "Railroading the Cactus" spraying cactus. This will be reported on next report along with Report of EO mentoring of other RBG groups.

#### **Wild Dog Control on Yilgarn Pastoral leases:**

The EWDSG doggers and Department of Parks and Wildlife Dogger carry out control operations on the 6 pastoral leases within the Yilgarn shire, Declared Pest and Animal Control Fund rates are used to help pay for the groups operations on these leases. In the future these funds will be provided to the EWDSG by the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Group Inc (GNRBA). These funds were not accessed this year.

#### **Baiting Operations:**

Aerial baiting was conducted within the GNRBA area of operations this financial year and wide spread ground baiting was carried out by pastoralists, DPaW, and GNRBA Doggers.

Once procured, fresh meat baits are stored in a large freezer. The GNRBA also hires a freezer based at Weebo station to assist in baiting programs.

The GNRBA purchased two large chest freezer units for use by Teen Ryan to produce an economical supply of fresh meat baits for use on UCL .

There are 14 established bait racks in the area and procured meat sourced by the GNRBA is distributed four times a year. Trained pastoralists inject this meat.

The GNRBA has purchased some shelf ready 1080 baits to use this summer where bungarra activity seems to diminish the effectiveness of fresh meat baiting.

DAFWA is coordinating an on-line training program to allow all pastoralists to be able to lay 1080. This will allow more flexibility but Pastoralists should ensure good 1080 protocols are maintained. A training course was conducted last year by an approved contractor in Kalgoorlie and paid for by the GNRBA. It is anticipated that this program be a yearly operation.

The GNRBA is concerned that any failure to adhere to protocols may lead to the loss of 1080 as a management tool. As such the GNRBA is maintaining a public awareness campaign by media and public notices and encourages

pastoralists to be vigilant toward advising neighbours of baiting activities and sticking to the rules of using 1080, including appropriate signage.

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#### **Aerial Baiting:**

The GNRBA coordinated aerial baitings in December 2014 on Nullarbor, Kalgoorlie and Northern Goldfields and June 2015 on the Eastern Nullarbor, Laverton, Leonora and Sandstone areas.

The December baiting was incorporated with November Ground baiting and the June baiting was paid for by GNRBA and R4R funding to distribute baits.

A GNRBA sponsored pastoral aerial baiting for November 2015 has been budgeted for and will be coordinated by GNRBA.

If suitable contractors can be sourced and baits can be delivered cost effectively then aerial baiting is an important tool that can be used to target areas that are inaccessible to ground based staff. In conjunction with DPaW the GNRBA will continue to plan and budget for aerial baiting operations through out the effected landscape.

#### **Large Feral Herbivore Control**

Last year with assistance of a "Caring for Country" Federal DAFF grant the GNRBA conducted three successful Wild Dog Management forums at Kalgoorlie and Leonora and Laverton. As a result we have been able to produce both a GNRBA Wild Dog Management Plan and Large Herbivore Plan which when ratified by Committee of Management will form the basis of future operations.

This Grant also partially funded the October 2014 Large Herbivore Cull in Wiluna Shire. This grant has now been acquitted.

The GNRBA again conducted successful and economical aerial Large Herbivore shoot jointly funded and in partnership with the Wiluna Shire and GNRBA using the DAFWA Shoot team.

1246 LFH Oct 2014

1858 LFH April 2015

Planning well underway for the next aerial shoot in October 2015.

An Ammunition Allowance of up to \$500/per property for those properties on UCL interface facing extreme hardship from Large Feral Herbivores is available by discussing with Executive Officer.

#### **Mining Company Support:**

It is hoped that GNRBA Inc will garner support from Mining companies in the area. Their involvement will greatly assist the GNRBA provide a more comprehensive service. Wild dog, Weed control and quarantine issues for earthmoving plant are issues the GNRBA Inc. considers very important.

Last year the EO addressed the Laverton Mining Liaison meeting at Laverton Shire. This was a good forum to get our messages across. It is hoped that this can be repeated.

#### **4. WILD DOG ACTIVITY and REPORTED STOCK LOSSES**

Wild dogs continued to impact on pastoral activities across the Goldfields Nullarbor region during 2014/2015. During this period reported stock deaths from Wild Dog attacks have continued to affect confidence in the GNRBA effort and pastoralist enterprises.

Reported wild dog activity in 2014/15 occurred across the entire GNRBA area.

Except for the Nullarbor, Edjudina, Kalgoorlie and Sandstone area small stock activity has ceased largely as a result of an inability to consistently control wild dogs.

**5. NON TARGET DEATHS** Several Non-target deaths have been reported this year. These are investigated by DAFWA to ensure protocols have been adhered to. It is essential that 1080 is used carefully. These investigations are a waste of very limited resources and the GNRBA wishes to ensure that 1080 Signage is obvious. It is a requirement that all public entrances to properties must be adequately signed. The GNRBA have had stencils made up to assist in the process.

## **6. WEED CONTROL**

The GNRBA has continued to manage many cactus projects in the region and brought on board many partners in the process. This has assisted us to gain credibility in the community.

This year the GNRBA has assisted with Chemical and equipment to almost eliminate along standing Parkinsonia infestation on Granite Peak Station.

This year we have collaborated with GWW and Ngadju Rangers at Norseman to assist in eliminating a Noogoora Burr outbreak at Bromus Dam. GNRBA has assisted with quality signage. We have also engaged them to assist in Railroading the Cactus project on Transline.

The GNRBA manages a weed chemical subsidy process that reimburses pastoralists up to \$500/property for dealing with declared weeds such as Bathurst Burr.

To apply for this assistance please contact Executive Officer.

**7. FINANCES** The GNRBA has managed funding and expenditure of \$920,000 this financial year using its traditional rate base and matched funding to leverage R4R funding, grants and Shire contributions.

These arrangements are managed day to day by the Executive Officer, overseen by the Treasurer. The GNRBA uses accountant Mike Hutson to manage accounting, cross check banking and Pat Leighton FCA for Audits.

The 2014/2015 Financial statements have been Audited and found to be correct and in order.

The GNRBA continues to press for a Biosecurity Levy on all Shire rates to better fund its work into the future. This way Pastoralists are not the only ones paying for everyone's usage of the rangelands. Grants have been a tool for assisting the GNRBA to achieve credibility and runs on the board.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The 2014 -2015 year has seen the group continue to complete its financial and operational independence process and has positioned itself to secure some extra funding through the R4R project, Rangelands NRM WA and other Federal Government Grants.

The Association has contracted a private contractor to assist in funding and development of better business plans.

The GNRBA Committee of Management is adopting a more proactive approach to securing funding to assist pastoralists and land managers in the region.

There are still processes regarding provision of Operational Plans that the GNRBA has to comply with to access the matched government funding.

Wild Dog activity over the area continues to have a serious impact and more resources need to be made available to help in bring the impacts of wild dogs to a manageable level in the Associations' area of operations.

The Association's Committee of Management is mindful that it does not become complacent and that the level of involvement from all parties is maintained across the whole landscape.

Resource levels need to be increased; relationships built on and clear management and business plans developed.

The GNRBA continues to deliver quality results to the livestock industry within the Goldfields Nullarbor. These include;

- Continual development of a 3 year management plan.
- Encouragement of members to participate on Management committee and to use their abilities to build the GNRBA Inc. effectiveness.

The GNRBA Inc. has had a positive effect upon wild dog predation during the 2014 -2015 financial year. The GNRBA Inc has worked hard to reduce the impact of wild dogs, camels and weeds on pastoral enterprises; it has secured substantial funding until 2016.

Increasingly the GNRBA needs to find ways to address the issue of large herbivores (camels and horses).It has been endeavouring to affect control programs in the interface between UCL and pastoral properties by working together with the Wiluna Shire and pastoralists.

The GNRBA continues to expand its operations into the control of Invasive cactus in GNRBA area and has applied for several grants to assist in this work.

Ross Wood

EO GNRBA Inc.

17<sup>th</sup> Oct 2015

