



Report 04.130
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Committee Rural Services and Wairarapa
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Proposed Bovine Tb Vector Control Programme 2004/05 - 2006/07

1. Purpose

To update the Committee on the proposed vector control programme for the years 2004/05 to 2006/07 inclusive, with emphasis on resource requirements needed to complete the enhanced programme.

2. Background

Report 04.27 to the February 2004 Committee meeting gave an indication of the significant increase in vector control expenditure proposed for the next three years. This increase is deemed necessary by the Animal Health Board for the Region to successfully achieve national Bovine Tb infected herd targets under their National Pest Management Strategy.

The February report predicted expenditure to increase by up to \$2.1M over the next few years before slowly declining as areas were removed from the vector control programme. The Council has subsequently included the enhanced programme within the proposed 2004/05 Annual Plan and updated LTCCP.

Over the past three weeks staff have completed a second, more intensive review of the proposed vector control programme. The review has been undertaken as part of the development of the Regional Bovine Tb Strategic Plan. There have been a number of changes made to the details of the programme since preparing Report 04.27 following the receipt of new vector control and disease monitoring information.

3. Proposed Vector Control Programme

Plans submitted to the AHB at the end of February included the following programmes (hectares) for vector control over the next three years -

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Possum control	401,989	361,938	408,421
Ferret control	35,461	35,461	30,030
Surveys	<u>165,357</u>	<u>189,865</u>	<u>276,197</u>
Totals	602,807	587,264	716,648

These totals can be compared to the approved 2003/04 programme which totals 403,681 hectares. The majority of the increase is associated with surveys, i.e. only 39,000ha of surveys in 2003/04.

4. Resource Requirements

A review of our Capacity Plan has been undertaken to identify whether there are sufficient contracting resources available to complete the proposed expanded programme.

Whilst there is a significant increase in the total programme size, it should be noted that the major increase is in surveys, where workloads are far less intensive than vector control contracts. Surveys will be organised as input type contracts with the Vector Manager prescribing the various criteria to be fulfilled.

Over the past two years we have experienced an increase in the number of contractors passing the registration of interest process and consistently tendering for contracts. In 2003/04, there have been eight contractors regularly tendering, with an average of over 5 tenders received for each contract. This is a healthy situation, particularly as the majority of contractors have indicated a willingness to expand their businesses should more work become available.

Interest in the Wellington region is also likely to increase as vector control programmes start to shrink in other regions in the North Island. Waikato and Manawatu / Wanganui are two areas where vector control is being reduced due to widespread improvements in infected herd status and wildlife infection.

The Contract Plans submitted to the AHB for approval are considered to depict worst case expenditure situations. Historically, the Council's trend monitoring data has led to large parts of approved programmes being deferred due to low RTC levels. We predict that this trend will continue. Secondly, we have asked the AHB to reconsider the current policy that requires High Risk strata to

receive annual vector control. In many cases, pre- control RTC values are already well below the 2% control target.

Our thoughts are that this money would be more beneficially utilised in areas of the region yet to receive any vector control.

In summary, staff of the Vector Management Group do not consider that there will be any major difficulties in obtaining sufficient contracting resources to complete the proposed expanded vector control programme. Our aim is to tender the annual work programme in four separate parcels prior to December each year. A various range of contractor notification methods will be used, including direct contact with all known contractors, inclusion in the Tenders Gazette and appropriate websites, and public notification if deemed necessary.

5. Communications

It is not considered appropriate to specifically communicate this matter until the Council has considered the proposal within the Council's budget consideration process.

6. Recommendation

That the report be received and the information noted.

Report prepared by:

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