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Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme

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Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



Sheep and Goat
Industry Funding Scheme

Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme

Annual Report



2021/2022

Contact details

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October 2022

Important disclaimer

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List of acronyms

BAM Act	<i>Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007</i>
CWBA	Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association
DPIRD	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
IFS	Industry Funding Scheme
LPMT	Licenced pest management technician
WA	Western Australia



Image 1 – Sheep on pasture

From the Chair

I am pleased to present the 2021/22 Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme (IFS) annual report to the Scheme participants, stakeholders involved in the Western Australian (WA) sheep and goat industry and to the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

My first year as Chair of the Sheep and Goat IFS Management Committee has focused on the strategic direction of the IFS and its programs. The Committee is keen to make sure the IFS is providing the best value to producers whilst continuing to support the biosecurity of our industry. We have spent time on our strategic plan as well as reviewing the direction of the IFS-funded Wild Dog Eradication Program.

There is more work to do in this space, and our next steps will involve greater communications to and engagement with producers. Being an industry-driven scheme, it is important to check-in with the industry to make sure the principles underpinning the Sheep and Goat IFS and the use of industry funds continue to make sense in the ever-changing biosecurity landscape.

The success of the IFS-funded programs continued into the 2021/22 financial year. The prevalence of virulent footrot in the WA flock remains low and, because of our border controls, we are still not encountering some of the more virulent strains of the disease that can be found elsewhere in Australia. The funding from WA sheep and goat producers for the Footrot Control Program has been vital to this achievement.

Of the eight grants offered through the Sheep and Goat IFS for projects addressing wild dogs, seven have now been completed. These grants were used for a range of activities – from on-ground monitoring and control, through to training and research. The next phase of the IFS's 'wild dog eradication program' is looking to better integrate and align with the WA Wild Dog Action Plan. This will help provide confidence that industry funds are being used in the best possible way to augment the state-wide action on wild dogs and, therefore, deliver measurable benefits to the WA sheep and goat industry.

The work undertaken through the Sheep and Goat IFS, and the outcomes achieved, would not be possible without the support of WA sheep and goat producers. The scheme is here to tackle our priority pest, weed and disease issues at a whole of WA industry level. By working together, we can shape our biosecurity future.



Karen Smith

Chair, Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme Management Committee

1. Overview of the Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme

The Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme (IFS) has been operating since 2010 to address biosecurity threats relevant to the Western Australian (WA) sheep and goat industry. The Scheme is established by regulation under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) to enable sheep and goat producers to identify pest and disease priorities at a whole-of-industry level and raise funds for activities to address these priorities.

There are currently three Industry Funding Schemes in operation. In addition to the Sheep and Goat IFS, there is a Cattle IFS and a Grains, Seeds and Hay IFS. The three IFSs operate in a similar manner.

For the Sheep and Goat IFS, funds are raised through a producer contribution on each chargeable sale. A 'chargeable sale' is the sale of sheep and goats (live or carcasses) that are located on a property within the Scheme's area of operation or moved from the property for the purpose of offering them for sale/slaughter.

The industry's pest and disease priorities are identified, and funds are raised through producer contributions for activities to address these priorities

Producers do not have to participate in the Scheme – there is a mechanism that allows them to opt out. Opting out does not remove the legal requirement for landholders to deal with the pests and diseases being targeted by the Scheme but it does disqualify the producer from receiving any benefits provided by the Scheme, such as on-ground assistance and compensation.

A seven-member Industry Management Committee oversees the Sheep and Goat IFS. The Minister for Agriculture and Food appointed the committee members after inviting nominations and receiving advice from an industry-based Appointments Committee. As required by regulation, the majority of the Industry Management Committee are full participants of the Sheep and Goat IFS.

The Industry Management Committee is responsible for approving payments made from the IFS Account and approving the biosecurity-related programs funded through the Scheme. It also provides advice to the Minister on the Scheme's area of operation and the contribution rate.

The State Government, through its Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), provides the necessary support to ensure proper governance and the effective operation of the Scheme and Management Committee. This includes secretariat, communications, policy and technical advice, as well as financial accounting and reporting. Furthermore, the normal regulatory inspection and compliance activities undertaken by DPIRD closely complement the priorities of the Management Committee.

2021/22 Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme at a glance

During 2021/22:

- Contributions of 17 cents per head/carcass applied to the sale of all sheep and goats produced in WA
- IFS contributions totalling \$1,033,979 were received
- Producer contributions were used to fund a control program for virulent footrot and for activities targeting wild dogs
- The cost of the footrot control program was \$817,870
- The cost of the wild dog eradication program was \$209,362
- Committee costs and other approved activities were \$23,149
- Eight producers opted out of the Scheme, with \$5120 being refunded to four of these producers during the 2022/23 financial year.

Key achievements:

- Five projects funded with grants from the IFS were completed
- More than 250,000 animals from 842 unique property identification codes were inspected for signs of virulent footrot
- More than 260 potentially infected properties were traced from new footrot detections, and work undertaken to resolve their disease status
- Developed a cross-IFS communications strategy in partnership with the Cattle and the Grains, Seeds and Hay IFS Management Committees
- Met with industry stakeholders to raise awareness of the IFS and its role in the biosecurity of the WA sheep and goat industry.



Image 2 – Fleece

2. Industry Management Committee

The Sheep and Goat IFS is overseen by a seven-member Industry Management Committee. The Committee's terms of reference are at Appendix 1.

The Committee supports a strong biosecurity ethos amongst the industry; administers funding to address key industry biosecurity issues; and ensures the biosecurity priorities are addressed to industry expectations

Karen Smith (Chair) has more than 20 years' experience farming in the WA wheatbelt and currently manages a sheep enterprise at Cunderdin. In 2018, Karen completed a course in WA Sheep Meat Value Chain and Sheep Industry Leadership. Karen is on the Farm Advisory Board for the Cunderdin Agricultural College and is the WA Regional Coordinator for the Australasian Pacific Extension Network. Karen has a variety of networks within the farming community and has taken on many leadership roles, making her a valuable contributor to the Committee.

Kelly Pearce (Deputy Chair) is a grain and prime lamb producer from Yealering in WA along with her young family. Kelly is a Director of the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority, Director of the Grower Group Alliance, Member of the Biosecurity Council of WA and Executive Officer of the Facey Group. She is also heavily involved in gene technology, sitting on the Ethics and Community Consultative Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee.

Peter Boyle has been involved in the prime lamb industry for more than 50 years, based in York. His experience extends to running a large lamb feedlot in partnership and trading sheep to fatten for live export. Peter is a current executive member of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association of WA.

Michelle Donaldson was, until recently, the Chief Executive Officer of the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association, with strong connections to the pastoral sheep and goat industry. Michelle is also a member of the Bullseye Steering Committee. Michelle has a degree in Applied Science (Agriculture) and more than 14 years working within the wheat, sheep and cattle industries as a producer.

Maria Griffiths has been involved in the sheep and goat industry for many years as an owner and a contractor, and currently farms sheep and a small number of goats in the Mingenew and Dandaragan shires. Maria sees biosecurity as one of the most important aspects of any farming operation, and is committed to supporting the biosecurity of the WA sheep and goat industry. She is currently the Vice Chair of the Midlands Biosecurity Group.

Scott Pickering has worked in the sheep industry all his life, owning and managing commercial and pedigree Merino sheep flocks. He currently runs a 5000 head sheep flock that includes 1400 stud Merino ewes, and a 2000 hectare cropping enterprise. Scott is a past President of the Stud Merino Breeders Association of WA and current Chair of the Esperance Biosecurity Association, which focuses on reducing the impact of wild dogs on livestock production in the Esperance region.

Jim Sullivan has been involved in the agricultural industry for more than 50 years, and currently runs a successful livestock enterprise in the Varley-Holt Rock area of WA. He has been involved in the Eastern Wheatbelt Declared Species group for 13 years, including as the Chair, and is a past Chairman of the Board of Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management Inc. Jim is a former President of the Central Country Zone with the Western Australian Local Government Association.

Membership terms

Name	Position	Expiry of term
Karen Smith	Chair	30 June 2024
Kelly Pearce	Deputy Chair	30 June 2024
Peter Boyle	Member	30 June 2022
Michelle Donaldson	Member	30 June 2022
Maria Griffiths	Member	30 June 2024
Scott Pickering	Member	30 June 2024
Jim Sullivan	Member	30 June 2022

The membership of the Committee from 1 July 2022 is at Appendix 2.



Image 3 – Sheep at saleyards

3. Operation of the Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme

Since the introduction of the Sheep and Goat IFS in 2010, the Industry Management Committee (the Committee) has governed the collection, management and use of industry funds to deliver a biosecurity funding scheme that benefits the WA sheep and goat industry.

During the 2021/22 financial year, the Committee held four ordinary meetings, one extraordinary meeting and worked on several activities.

Industry priorities for funding

In 2021/22, the IFS was used to fund programs targeting two priority pests/diseases – virulent footrot and wild dogs.

The IFS-funded Footrot Control Program began in 2010. It continues to contain the disease to a relatively small proportion of the WA sheep/goat flock, minimising the impacts (and risk) of this disease on the WA industry. Having a formal program targeting the disease means the State can put restrictions on the movement of animals coming into WA. This has protected the WA flock from the more virulent strains of the disease found elsewhere in Australia.

The Committee formally approved the 2021/22 Footrot Control Program at its meeting in April 2021. The program continues to provide benefits to WA's sheep and goat industry. Detailed information on the 2021/22 program to address virulent footrot is at Section 5 of this report.



Image 4 – Inspecting for signs of footrot



Image 5 – A wild dog

Wild dogs were added to the Sheep and Goat IFS schedule of pests and diseases in 2017, following extensive consultation with the WA sheep and goat industry and producers. Although there were mixed views on using industry funds to address wild dogs, there was unanimous agreement that wild dogs were one of the biggest threats to the WA industry.

Through the IFS's Wild Dog Eradication Program, the industry has provided funding for eight projects to fill funding gaps and safeguard the industry from the impacts of wild dogs.

2021/22 saw the completion of five of the projects (see Section 5 of this report), with one project to be completed in 2023 (two projects were completed in previous years). The Committee is now undertaking a comprehensive review and reset of the program. The aim of the review, which will continue into 2022/23, is to align the Wild Dog Eradication Program with the WA Wild Dog Action Plan and the activities being undertaken by various biosecurity groups across the state. This will make certain that industry funds are augmenting the collective, state-wide action on wild dogs to best protect the industry.

The Committee rely on industry direction and advice from DPIRD to ensure the IFS is addressing the key pest and disease risks

In 2021/22, the Committee was represented on the Cattle, Sheep and Goat Biosecurity Consultative Group. The group was established as a forum to provide advice on, discuss and communicate biosecurity issues for the WA cattle, sheep and goat industries. Importantly, the Consultative Group can support the Industry Management Committee's determinations on industry priorities for investment.

Governance

Scheme governance

Program monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement: Over the course of the year, the Committee actively monitored the implementation and progress of the IFS-funded programs. Written and verbal progress reports for the Footrot Control Program were provided to the Committee at each ordinary meeting, including detailed information on the issues, successes and expenditure. Projects funded through IFS grants reported to the Committee via formal annual reports. Detailed information on the 2021/22 programs is at Section 5 of this report.

IFS finances: The Committee monitored the income and expenditure of the IFS funds throughout the year. This included quarterly financial reports from DPIRD on the financial position of the Scheme, as well as expense reports relating to the IFS-funded programs. This oversight helped the Committee ensure funds were being expended appropriately and enabled it to forward-plan.

Remittance of IFS contributions: The Committee monitored the remittance of IFS contributions from livestock agents and processors to ensure compliance with the regulations. Where discrepancies occurred, or were suspected, the Committee requested these be followed-up by DPIRD. An area of concern for the Committee is the inability to monitor contributions payable to the IFS when sheep/goats are sold to persons other than processors or via stock agents. This issue is also of concern to the Cattle IFS Management Committee and has been raised with DPIRD via the statutory review of the IFS regulations.

Opt out refunds: During 2021/22, DPIRD advised the Committee that it received three applications for refunds of IFS contributions paid during the 2020/21 financial year. After considering the applications, including their validity, the Committee directed the Director General to repay the amounts – in accordance with the requirements of the IFS regulations.

IFS area of operation and contribution rate: As required by the IFS regulations, in May 2022 the Committee made its recommendations to the Minister for Agriculture and Food on the 2022/23 Sheep and Goat IFS contribution rate and area of operation. The Committee recommended that the contribution rate remain at 17 cents per head/carcass, to be applied to the sale of all sheep and goats produced in WA. Maintaining the contribution rate ensures there will be appropriate levels of funding to cover the costs of the 2022/23 IFS-funded programs. The rate will be reviewed in 2023, particularly in light of the outcomes of the Wild Dog Eradication Program review and reset.

The Minister endorsed the Committee's recommendations, as published in the *Western Australian Government Gazette*.

A core role of the IFS Management Committee is to provide effective governance over the Scheme

Review of the IFS regulations: The IFS regulation review report, which was released in September 2021, made several recommendations. These included recommending that the Committee:

- Investigate developing and implementing a collaborative communications campaign with the other IFS committees; and
- Review its internal procedures for approving payments from the IFS Account to determine if there is scope for a simplified approvals process for small expenditure amounts.

The Committee agreed with these recommendations, and the other recommendations made in the report. Significant progress was made during the year to address the recommendations requiring action from the Committee.

Attracting Committee members: The ability of the Committee to provide effective governance and fairly and impartially represent the best interests of sheep and goat producers relies on the appointment of suitably qualified and diverse candidates. It can be challenging to attract candidates to industry roles, as these positions are in addition to on-farm and family commitments. To assist, the Chair (with the Chairs of the other IFS Committees) requested the Minister ask the Public Sector Commissioner to review the remuneration of Committee members. It is important that the level of remuneration is commensurate with the work that is undertaken and recognises the commitment made by the members.

IFS Management Committee members are, in general, farmers and pastoralists with a strong interest in and commitment to the continued biosecurity of their industry



Image 6 – The end of the day

Committee governance

Strategic plan: The Committee was guided by its [Strategic Plan](#), which is available on the DPIRD Agriculture and Food website. The Plan documents the purpose, role, goals and strategies of the Committee, as well as criteria for making investment decisions.

A comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan began in June 2022, with the Committee participating in a facilitated workshop. The Plan will be finalised in partnership with the industry during the next reporting period.

The strategic plan review ensures the strategy is focused and addresses industry's needs and expectations of the IFS

Governance procedures: Good governance is an essential part of the operation of the Committee. The governance framework that shaped this during 2021/22 included various critical documents, processes and procedures:

- BAM Act
- Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Industry Funding Scheme (Sheep and Goats) Regulations 2010
- Committee terms of reference
- codes of conduct and ethics
- duty statements
- disclosure of interest procedures
- decision-making processes
- annual reporting; and
- monitoring and evaluation.

The Committee's internal governance procedures and frameworks were reviewed in March 2021. The next review will be March 2023.

Performance review: The annual self-evaluation of the Committee's collective performance of its duties was undertaken in October/November 2021. The results suggest that the Committee is operating effectively; however, there were two areas where improvements could be made:

- Committee member appointment terms. Short appointment terms were viewed as contributing to the loss of corporate knowledge within the Committee. With the other IFS Chairs, the Committee Chair wrote to the Minister for Agriculture and Food advising of these concerns and requesting that this be kept in mind when making future appointments.
- Strategic monitoring and evaluation. This is being addressed via the strategic planning, whereby a clear framework for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Sheep and Goat IFS against its strategic plan is being developed.

Communication and consultation

Cross-IFS communications strategy: Following the decision made by the three IFS Committees at the joint meeting held in March 2021, and in response to the recommendation from the review of the IFS regulations, the Committee agreed to develop a cross-IFS communications strategy with the other IFS committees.

The Sheep and Goat IFS Management Committee was represented on a cross-IFS communications working group to work with a communications consultant to develop a robust strategy. The objectives of the strategy, when implemented, are to improve understanding of the role that the IFSs play, increase producer engagement with the IFS and Committee, and contribute to the sustainability of the Committees.

A significant increase in IFS-related communications is anticipated in the next reporting period, as the strategy gets put into action.

Communication activities: The Committee participated in various forums and activities to increase producer awareness and understanding of the Scheme, develop networks and encourage industry feedback. Some forums were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions/uncertainties – indeed, the Committee had to postpone its inaugural regional visit. Nevertheless, several communications activities were undertaken:

- Participated on the Cattle, Sheep and Goat Industry Biosecurity Consultative Group
- Participated on the Government and Industry Preparedness (FMD and LSD) Task Group
- Met with the WAFarmers Livestock Council
- Provided an overview of the role of the IFS to the Cattle, Sheep and Goat Industry Biosecurity Consultative Group
- Information displayed at the Dowerin and Newdegate Machinery Field Days
- Media releases resulting in articles in the rural press
- Advertisements in rural newspapers.

IFS webpages: During 2021/22 the Sheep and Goat IFS provided up-to-date information through the [IFS webpages](#) on the DPIRD Agriculture and Food website.



Image 7 – Banner used to promote the three IFSs at field days and other events

Other

Review of the BAM Act: In June 2022, the Committee were invited to make a submission to the BAM Act review. As the IFSs are enabled by the BAM Act, it was appropriate for the Committee to make a submission. This was done in partnership with the other IFS Committees. The joint IFS Committee submission focused on the aspects of the BAM Act relevant to the operation and functioning of the IFSs. The submission was based on the Committee's experiences working within the bounds of the legislation and feedback it had received from industry. The key points raised by the Committees in the submission were:

- the value of the IFS provisions and benefits delivered
- improvements to the appointment process
- tensions between program delivery and State Government recruitment policies; and
- confusion between IFSs and declared pest rates.



Image 8 – Sheep in yards

4. Effectiveness of the Scheme

Opt outs and refunds

The number of producers opting out of the Scheme remains extremely low, with eight producers opting out in 2021/22 (Figure 1). Of these eight producers, four applied for refunds of their contributions. These refunds amounted to \$5120 and were paid during the 2022/23 financial year.

More than 99% of WA sheep and goat producers participate in the Scheme, which indicates the perceived value of the Scheme to the industry

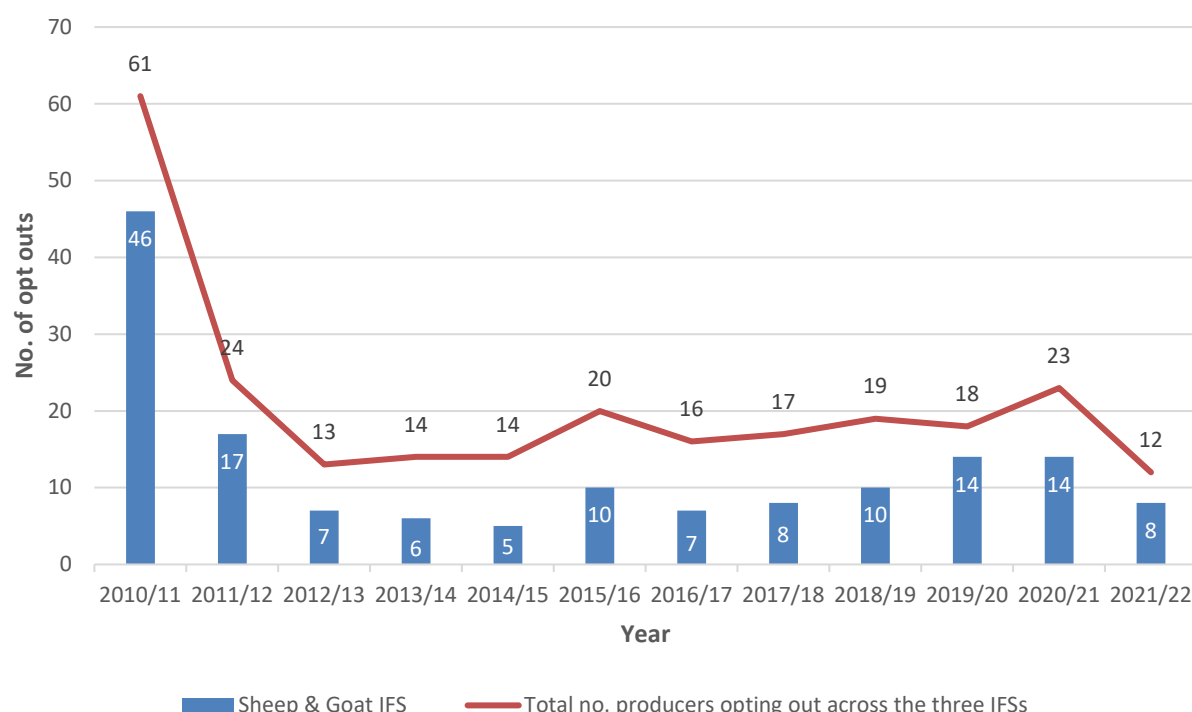


Figure 1 – Number of producers opting out of the Industry Funding Schemes since 2010

Collection rates

A total of \$1,033,979 in contributions to the Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme was received during 2021/22. This represents 6,082,229 chargeable sales for which IFS contributions were paid.

At the time of writing, data were not available to enable a comparison to be made between the number of chargeable sales for which IFS contributions were paid and the estimated number of chargeable sales that occurred during the year.

5. 2021/2022 approved biosecurity programs

Footrot Control Program

Virulent footrot (*Dichelobacter nodosus*) is a serious infection of the feet of sheep and goats. In the late 1940s more than 15% of WA flocks were infected. The concerted efforts of industry and government have seen a remarkable reduction in the level of infection. Today, about 1% of Western Australian sheep flocks are known to be infected with virulent footrot.

The aim of the program is to detect and control the spread of virulent footrot into and between WA sheep flocks

The program undertakes several activities, including:

- Surveillance (field and abattoir surveillance)
- Activities to raise awareness
- Applying regulatory mechanisms and monitoring compliance
- Helping affected producers develop Property Disease Management Plans
- Providing expert advice and support to affected producers and neighbouring properties; and
- Training and accrediting contractors/landholders to undertake footrot inspections.

To supplement the program, DPIRD enforces border controls to stop footrot from being brought into WA from imported animals, including the more virulent strains found in the eastern states.

In the 2021/22 financial year, DPIRD issued 46 Pest Control Notices for virulent footrot to 17 businesses (46 properties). Twenty properties were released from quarantine during the year. This resulted in a total of 61 businesses, comprising 133 properties, in quarantine for virulent footrot at 30 June 2022 (Figure 2). The distribution of the quarantined properties across the state is shown in Figure 3.

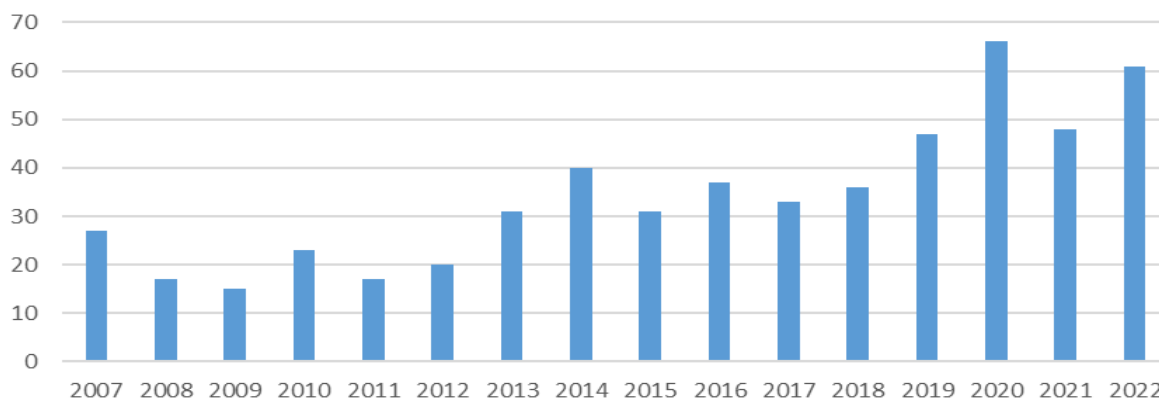


Figure 2 – Annual figures for the number of businesses in quarantine for virulent footrot since the inception of the control program in 2007

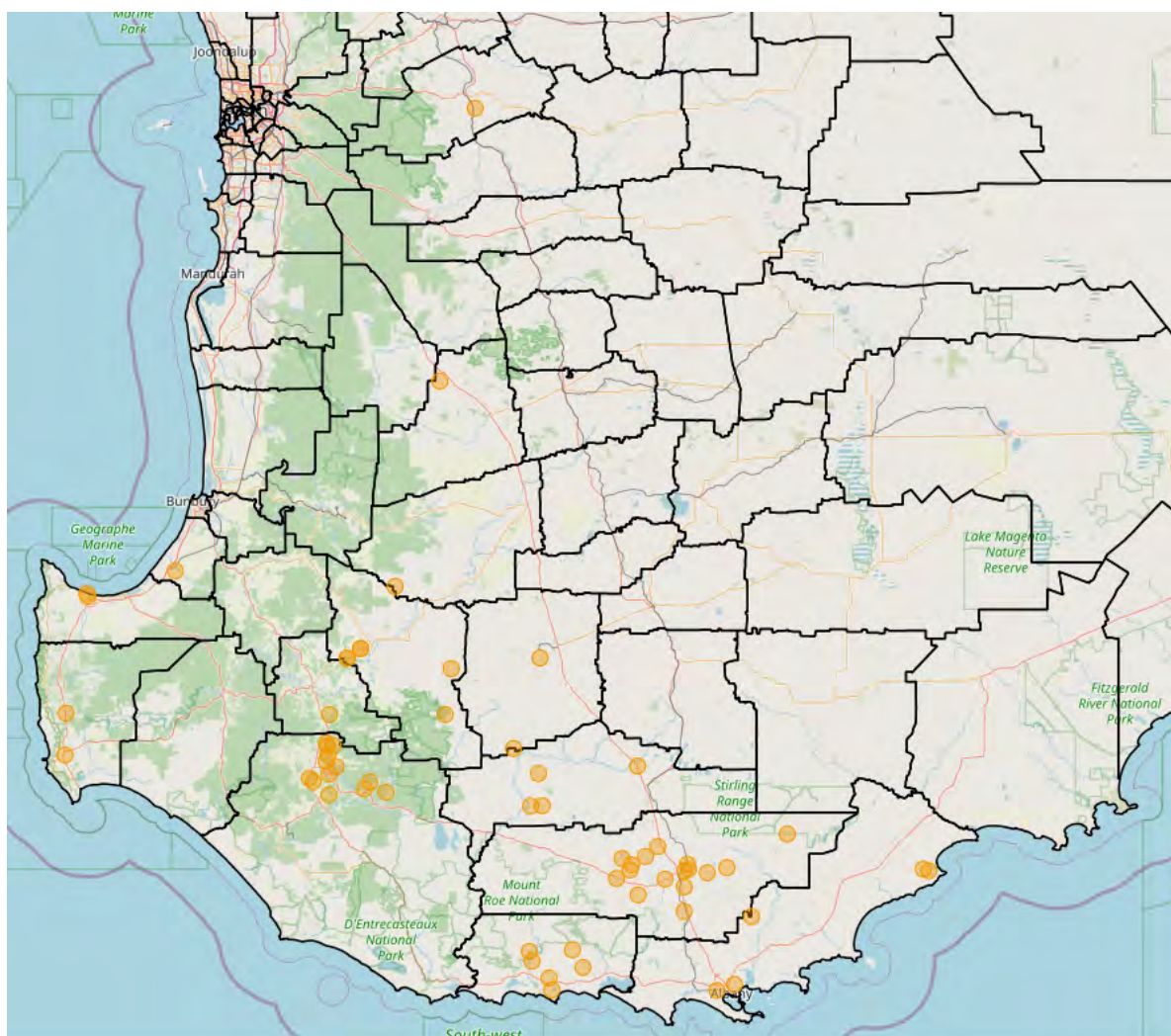


Figure 3 – Distribution of properties under a pest control notice for virulent footrot, at 30 June 2022

Case management of all virulent footrot quarantines focused on mentoring property owners toward quarantine release, with a large body of work performed throughout the year. The program achieved 18 full quarantine releases in 2021/22. The program no longer allows partial releases as this can represent an ongoing biosecurity risk.

On 30 June 2022, 61% of quarantined businesses had been in quarantine for four years or less and 52% had been in quarantine for three years or less. These properties make up 60% of the sheep that are quarantined for virulent footrot. Fifty-one percent of quarantined businesses are undertaking an eradication or destock program.

One hundred and sixty-seven field inspections were undertaken during the year. Surveillance was carried out at abattoirs from October 2021 to the March 2022, with 1329 lines inspected (252,281 animals from 842 unique property identification codes) and 286 lines sampled (Figure 4).

Newly detected infected properties generated 263 trace properties over the season. Ninety percent of these traces were generated by just four detections. Staff were able to use the abattoir inspection system to resolve some of these, but there was a significant additional workload to resolve these.

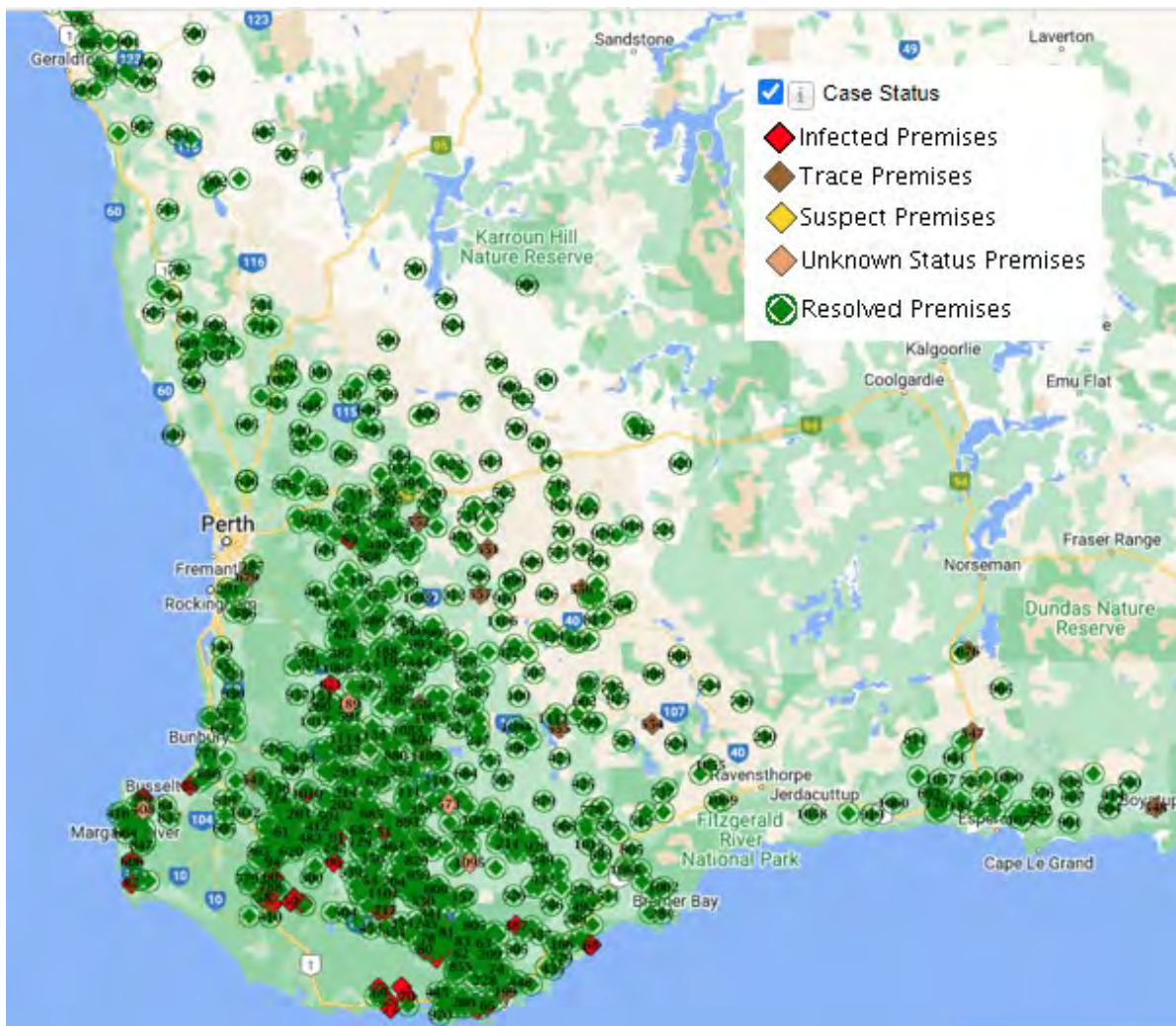


Figure 4 – Geographic distribution of potential virulent footrot cases identified through abattoir inspections (October 2021 to March 2022)

In 2021/22, DPIRD staff also inspected 4450 sheep and 87 goats imported into WA. Imported sheep and goats are inspected at the border and followed up with two post-entry inspections.

The IFS funded diagnostic testing of 374 samples. These included 286 samples collected through the abattoir surveillance and 88 samples that were sent in privately (e.g. via a veterinarian) or taken as part of the field surveillance. Of the 374 samples tested, 46 were positive for virulent footrot.

Communications material continued to be developed and disseminated to ensure livestock producers are aware of the risks posed by virulent footrot and know how to protect their flocks – although COVID-19 restrictions/uncertainties reduced the number of opportunities to communicate with producers and promote the program during the year.

Table 1 presents the costs of the 2021/22 Footrot Control Program.

Table 1 – Costs of the 2021/22 Footrot Control Program

Expenses	\$
Employee expenses	565,364
Vehicles	118,789
Laboratory costs	95,281
Travel	23,962
General consumables	9,611
Repairs and maintenance	1,885
Communications	1,514
Freight and mail	1,464
Total cost of program	\$817,870



Image 9 – Testing for footrot in the laboratory

Wild dog eradication program

The aim of the Wild Dog Eradication Program is to reduce the impact of wild dogs on sheep and goat production in WA. The program focuses on eradicating wild dogs from within dog-fenced areas. To date, the program has offered grants to groups and organisations to:

- deliver on-ground wild dog control measures (including monitoring/surveillance, excluding fencing)
- support research and development (including training) to improve wild dog management and control; and
- complement and augment the wild dog control activities currently underway in WA.

Wild dogs have contributed to the significant decline in pastoral sheep and goat enterprises, and the risk is increasing in the agricultural area

During 2021/22, six IFS-funded projects were underway (Table 2). Five of these concluded during the 2021/22 reporting period. Table 3 identifies the costs of the Sheep and Goat Wild Dog Eradication Program in the 2021/22 financial year. This reflects the grant instalments paid during the period.

Progress of the Wild Dog Eradication Program grant projects

Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association: Wild dog management – controlling the gaps

The IFS grant funding has allowed the Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association (CWBA) to implement wild dog control activities in areas identified as priority gaps. This included:

- an additional 159 workdays for Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) to undertake surveillance, baiting and trapping activities on almost 900,000 hectares of 'gap' areas; and
- a large-scale aerial baiting program over three years, laying 5000 baits in areas of land that are hard to access by vehicle.

The project has seen great results in the region. The IFS-funded activities were an integral part of a wider, landscape-scale control program to manage wild dogs in the CWBA region. Over the course of the project, there has been a 60% decrease in attacks on livestock and, anecdotally, the project has increased landholder confidence in the viability of livestock enterprises in the region.

(Information supplied by CWBA)

Table 2 – Projects funded with grants from the Sheep and Goat IFS Wild Dog Eradication Program during 2021/22

Organisation	Project title	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association	CWBA wild dog management - controlling the gaps	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	N/A	\$180,000
Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group	Aerial and ground baiting program	N/A	\$20,760	\$20,760	N/A	\$41,520
Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group	Staffing succession	N/A	\$33,000	\$33,000	N/A	\$66,000
Midlands Biosecurity Group	Initiating much needed on-ground control activities of wild dogs in the Midlands region	\$56,000	\$56,000	\$56,000	N/A	\$168,000
Shire of Kent	Identifying and reducing the potential for wild dog attack on farm sheep within and adjacent to the Magenta Hub and Fitzgerald Hub	\$22 922	\$22 131	\$21 591	N/A	\$66 644
Southern Biosecurity Group	Monitoring species movements through three strategic gaps in the Esperance extension of the State Barrier Fence to inform management interventions	N/A	\$40,581	\$18,011	\$18 711	\$77,303

Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group: Aerial and ground baiting program

This project augmented the wild dog baiting program that is undertaken each year in the eastern Wheatbelt by providing funding to bait in the extensive hard-to-access areas of the region. Aerial and ground baiting was carried out east of the State Barrier Fence in during October 2020 and September 2021, in partnership with the Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association, to help reduce the wild dog pressure on the Fence. If young wild dogs can be controlled through a comprehensive baiting program before entering the agricultural areas, there is a reduced likelihood of stock losses.

(Information supplied by Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group)

Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group: Staffing succession

The project supported the development of an entry-level junior LPMT, providing opportunities to develop critical skills and capabilities and increase the effectiveness of their work. This was important in helping make sure best practice declared pest management is applied on private and public lands. It also helped with LPMT succession, as it can be challenging to attract suitable people to work in remote locations.

(Information supplied by Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group)

West Midlands Group/Midlands Biosecurity Group: Initiating much needed on-ground control activities of wild dogs in the Midlands region

This project developed and delivered a strategic and integrated wild dog management program in the Midlands region where no co-ordinated programs existed previously. The IFS funding was vital to initiating on-ground control activities whilst the community investigated and established a long-term funding and support structure – the Midlands Biosecurity Group.

There were three key components to the project:

- Contracting an LPMT to provide on-ground support to help farmers monitor, bait and trap wild dogs and increase awareness of the risk of wild dogs and their impacts in the region
- Annual workshops with producers in several locations across the region; and
- Setting and monitoring a network of cameras to survey for wild dog activity.

Producer participation in the co-ordinated, best practice wild dog control program increased during the life of the project, and there is now a greater awareness around the importance of co-ordinated canid control and the different tools available to landholders to achieve this. Landholders who attended the workshops have greater capacity to identify the signs and symptoms of wild dogs and distinguish between wild dog activity and fox activity. Importantly, the funding has helped establish the Midlands Biosecurity Group in the community, which will provide continuity of funding towards wild dog management in the region into the future.

(Information supplied by Midlands Biosecurity Group)



Image 10 – Wild dog

Shire of Kent: Identifying and reducing the potential for wild dog attack on farm sheep within and adjacent to the Magenta Hub and Fitzgerald Hub

This project undertook wild dog monitoring and control interventions to reduce wild dog-related stock losses on sheep enterprises within and adjacent to the Magenta and Fitzgerald Hubs.

The project engaged an LPMT who undertook monitoring and control interventions between January and July 2020, and December 2020 to December 2021. The second phase of surveillance and control was targeted to high-risk areas, based on work carried out during the first phase. The project was augmented through baiting programs undertaken by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions as well as several sheep farming properties.

There were no stock losses, or reported stock injuries, from wild dogs in or near the project area over the life of the project. In addition to the on-ground monitoring and control activities, the project coordinated the development of a Wild Dog Management Plan for the area, with input from landholders, and established a farmer network.

(Information supplied by Kent Shire Landcare)

Southern Biosecurity Group: Monitoring species movements through three strategic gaps in the Esperance extension of the State Barrier Fence to inform management interventions

This project addresses concerns from the farming community that gaps in the Esperance extension of the State Barrier Fence will result in concentrated wild dog activity and negatively impact livestock production.

Camera monitoring sites have been established at the three gap areas (the Oldfield, Lort and Young Rivers) to identify what animal species are using these corridors prior to fence construction. Data are downloaded from the cameras each month and will be compared to data collected after the Esperance extension is constructed.

The project will begin its third and final year of data collection from 1 July 2022; however, delays in constructing the Esperance extension means that the project is unlikely to include monitoring and data collection post-construction. Funding will be pursued to ensure this important work is completed.

(Information provided by Southern Biosecurity Group)

Expenditure

Table 3 identifies the costs of the Wild Dog Eradication Program during 2021/22. These costs reflect that grants that were paid during the year.

Table 3 – Costs of the Wild Dog Eradication Program in 2021/22

Item	\$
Central Wheatbelt Biosecurity Association	60,000
Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group (baiting program)	20,760
Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group (staffing succession)	33,000
Midlands Biosecurity Group	56,000
Shire of Kent	21,591
Southern Biosecurity Group	18,011
Total cost of program	\$209,362

6. 2021/2022 financial details

The Director General of DPIRD administers the IFS finances through an agency special purpose account called the Sheep and Goat Industry Declared Pest Control and Compensation Account (the IFS Account). DPIRD manages these funds on behalf of the Committee and prepares financial reports, including the end of financial year statement.

- The balance of the IFS Account was \$2,099,506 at 30 June 2022.
- The total cost of the 2021/22 Footrot Control Program was \$817,870¹.
- \$209,362 was provided in grants to address wild dogs.
- Industry contributions to the IFS totalling \$1,033,979 were received by DPIRD in 2021/22; however, \$4227 of this was reimbursed to producers that had opted out of the Scheme in the previous financial year.
- Interest applied to the IFS funds during 2021/22 amounted to \$11,544.
- The implementation of the scheme, including Committee costs, resulted in expenditure of \$23,149.

Figure 5 identifies how the funds held in the IFS Account were used during the year. Tables 4 and 5 contains the financial details for the 2021/22 Sheep and Goat IFS.

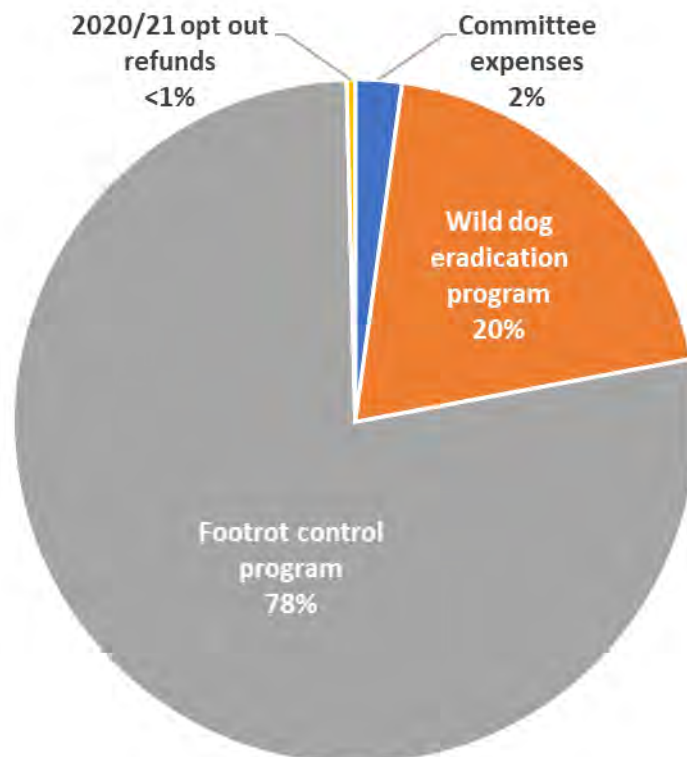


Figure 5 – Use of funds held in the Sheep and Goat IFS Account during 2021/22

¹ Some of the costs of the 2021/22 Footrot Control Program were deducted from the Account during the 2022/23 financial year

Table 4 – Sheep and Goat IFS income and expenditure for 2021/22

Expenses	\$
Programs:	
Footrot control program	817,870
Wild dog eradication program	209,362
Other expenses:	
Board member fees	9,967
Travel expenses	7,476
Advertising/media	4,728
Meeting expenses	879
Printing and stationary	69
Communication services	30
2020/21 opt out refunds	4,227
Total expenses*	\$1,054,608
Income	\$
Contributions	1,033,979
Interest revenue	11,544
Total income	1,045,523
NET COST OF SERVICE*	\$9,085

* Excludes costs of DPIRD support and financial accounting.

Table 5 – Balance sheet for the Sheep and Goat IFS at 30 June 2022

Balance sheet	Total (\$)
EQUITY at 30 June 2022	\$2,099,506

Note: the amount shown in Table 4 for the Footrot Control Program is the total cost of the 2021/22 program. Some of these costs were debited from the Account during the 2022/23 financial year. As the projects funded through the wild dog eradication program are not annual projects, the amount shown in Table 4 is the actual expenditure from the Account for this item. The balance sheet (Table 5) identifies the actual equity at 30 June 2022.

The net cost of service for the 2021/22 Sheep and Goat Industry Funding Scheme was \$9085

7. Direction for 2022/2023

2022/2023 will be a busy year for the Sheep and Goat IFS Management Committee, with a focus on reviewing and resetting the strategic direction of the Committee and scheme in conjunction with the WA sheep and goat industry.

The strategic plan review will continue into 2022/23 to define the Committee's vision, mission, goals and strategies. Importantly, the Committee will work closely with the industry to review and redefine the criteria used to help make decisions on how IFS funds are used. The other key area being reviewed is the IFS-funded Wild Dog Eradication Program. This review will identify potential improvements to help make sure the program delivers industry outcomes whilst also providing value for industry investment.

Concurrently, the cross-IFS communications strategy will be put into action. It is anticipated that the level of IFS communications to producers will improve significantly to support greater awareness, understanding and engagement with the IFS and the Committee. This is an important aspect of the work of the Committee – without the support of producers, the scheme would not be able to operate to support the industry's biosecurity.



Image 11 – Angora goats

To further improve awareness, understanding and engagement, the Committee will hold one of its meetings in a regional location. The Committee resolved to travel to Esperance during 2022/23 to meet with stakeholders and discuss the IFS and its role in the biosecurity of the industry. The objectives are to:

- Raise producer/industry awareness and understanding of the IFS and its purpose and, therefore, facilitate increased industry/producer input to the direction and operation of the IFS
- Build producer/industry awareness and understanding of the role of the Management Committee and encourage participation; and
- Increase the Management Committee's understanding of the pest and disease issues facing the WA sheep and goat industry.

The outcomes and learnings from the regional engagement will likely be an important point of discussion with the other IFS Committees at the joint meeting, which is anticipated to be held during 2023. The joint meeting will provide a forum for the Committee to:

- share successes and insights
- discuss emerging IFS issues; and
- agree on future focus areas to be tackled collaboratively across the Committees.

The Committee will also action the recommendations from the review of the IFS regulations that are relevant to the Committee, and monitor how DPIRD addresses the recommendations relevant to it. Addressing these recommendations will be important to help ensure the Scheme is operating as effectively as it can be and that the IFS regulations remain relevant and appropriate in an ever-changing operating environment.

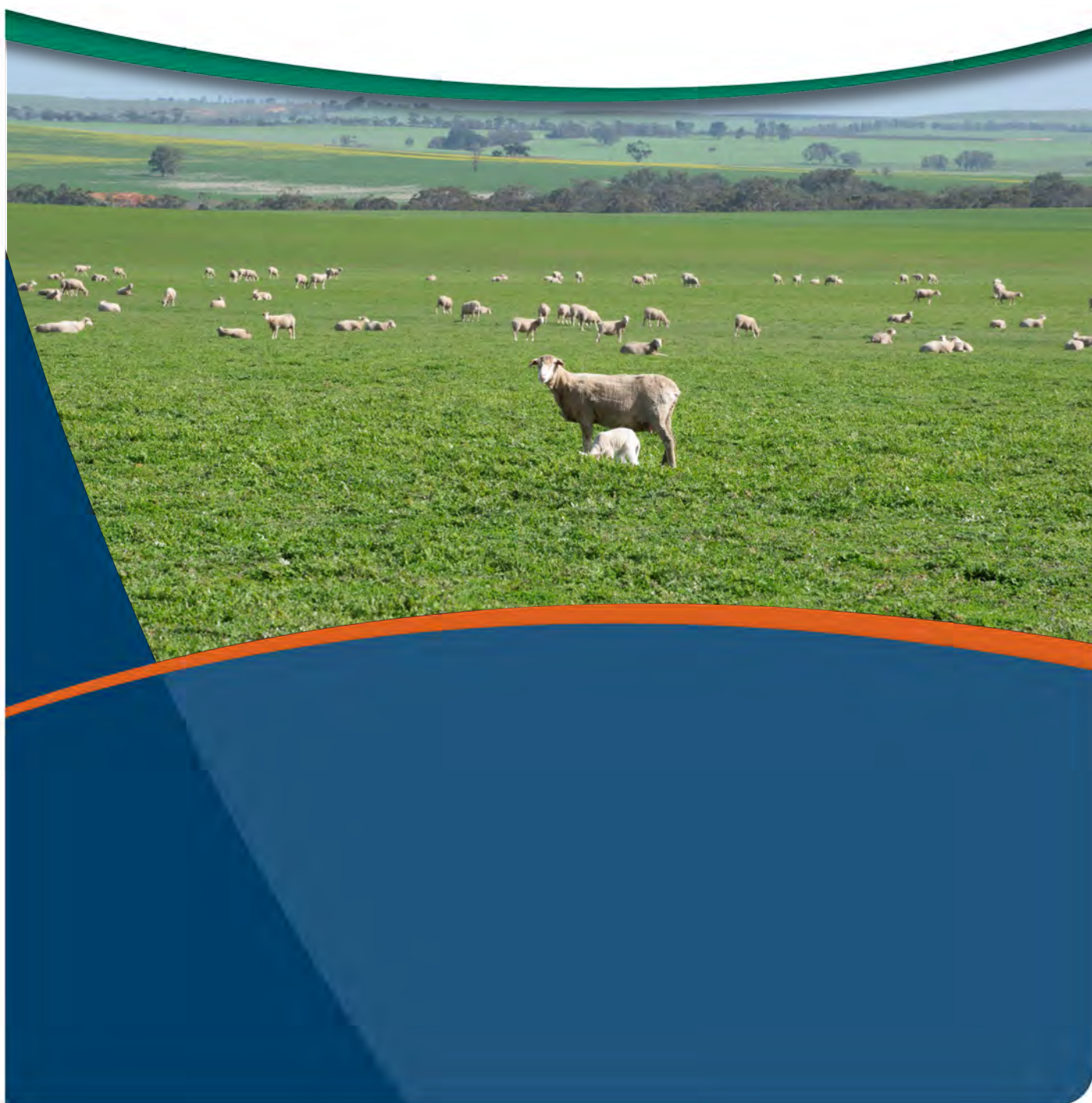
If regulatory amendments are required, the Committee anticipate providing input to these to make certain the changes will meet the needs of the WA sheep and goat industry and IFS contributors.

Industry feedback is critical to the success of the Scheme. The Committee welcomes feedback and input to the Scheme, its programs and sheep/goat industry issues in general

The Sheep and Goat IFS is industry-driven, with industry itself deciding if, when and to what extent the Scheme is used.

The Committee can be contacted at any time through its Executive Officer. The Committee is particularly keen to hear the industry's views on the biosecurity risks and opportunities.

Committee members are available to participate in industry forums, meetings and field days to discuss the Scheme and answer any questions from industry.



Appendix 1

Committee terms of reference

1. Act in good faith at all times, and without conflict of interest, to fairly and impartially represent the best interests of the industry concerned and the contributors to the Scheme.
2. Provide effective governance over the Scheme.
3. Discharge the functions conferred on the Management Committee by the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* (BAM Act) and the enabling Regulations, including but not necessarily limited to:
 - advising the Director General of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development on the administration of the prescribed account
 - recommending annually to the Minister for Agriculture and Food the area(s) of the State in which the Scheme should operate
 - recommending annually to the Minister for Agriculture and Food the rate or rates at which contributions are to be paid
 - approving programs and other measures to be implemented under the Scheme
 - approving payments from the prescribed account for compensation in respect of losses (as described in the regulations)
 - consulting annually with the industry for the purpose of ascertaining industry views on the operation of the Scheme and the performance by the committee of its functions
 - reporting at least annually to the Minister for Agriculture and Food on the operation and effectiveness of the Scheme, and any matters relating to the operation of the relevant regulations as the Minister specifies.
4. Undertake such other functions related to the operation of the Scheme as required.

Appendix 2

Management Committee membership from 1 July 2022

Name	Position	Expiry of term
Karen Smith	Chair	30 June 2024
Kelly Pearce	Member	30 June 2024
Amanda Day	Member	30 June 2025
Maria Griffiths	Member	30 June 2024
Scott Pickering	Member	30 June 2024
Jim Sullivan	Member	30 June 2025