

Development of Ord Biosecurity Group

Background

A regional bio-security plan for the Ord River Irrigation Area (ORIA), OrdGuard, was initiated by the agricultural sector in the Ord River region and the Department of Agriculture WA.

A draft plan was released in 2005.

The OrdGuard plan currently requires revision to determine:

- (1) how the scheme can be funded,
- (2) updated to include forestry and other crops in the Ord and the expanded area
- (3) consideration given to how it will be managed given that there are shared borders with the Northern Territory.

The Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley have expressed interest in the establishment of a biosecurity group to assist with allocation of funds from the established Biosecurity fund (currently approx. \$256,000). Local industry is required to develop protocols for the expenditure of these funds.

There are four mechanisms that could be applied to establish a biosecurity fund:

OrdGuard Funding Options

Fund	Legal Mechanism	Recommendation
Declared pest rate	BAM Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible option but would mean an additional rate on land holders.
Industry funding scheme (IFS)	BAM Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IFS are for specified declared pests that threaten a particular sector of industry• not suitable for the Ord - range of pests and industries involved
Agricultural Produce Commission (APC)	APC Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• APC used previously• industry has stated that it would not be in favor of using this mechanism again
Specified area rate	Local Government Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible option with the use of current fund to update plan and a small percentage of rural ag 1 and rural ag 2 rates for ongoing funding.

OrdGuard

The OrdGuard Plan recognises community support for bio-security, and outlines set procedures to be followed in the event of a bio-security incursion.

The OrdGuard Plan has been well received by industry, agencies and local government.

The plan was developed in two parts:

Plan Development:

This plan was in the concept / development phase from 2002 to 2005. At this time the Kununurra Pest Control Committee (KPCC) had taken up the responsibility to deal with all the biosecurity issues in the area, including raising funds for eradication programs, and developing and implementing the OrdGuard Biosecurity Plan

Plan Implementation:

The plan was signed by all representatives on July 1st 2005 and the KPCC was replaced by a representative Board of Management drawn from the broader community to oversee the OrdGuard biosecurity plan.

In October 2005, priority setting was undertaken by the Board of Management which included assigning responsibility for completing actions and determining the time frame required to implement the change.

Ord Land and Water

Ord Land and Water was formed in March of 1998 by the local community as a means to ensure, especially through community participation, sustainable natural resource management in the Ord River Irrigation Area and environs of Kununurra.

Traditional Owners, farmers and non-farmers work together with government and non-government organizations to maximize the use of local knowledge, experience and academic research, to ensure that local natural resource management practices, policy and planning promote a healthy environment, economy and community.

Ord Land and Water would be interested in undertaking the role of the coordinator of a Biosecurity group for the Ord Irrigation area to increase community support for bio-security, and develop and implement procedures to be followed in the event of a bio-security incursion

Request:

- Ord Land and Water to access funds from the current shire biosecurity fund to update the biosecurity plan for the Ord Irrigation Area. Approximately \$15,000 required to update the plan.
- Ord Land and Water to be established as the coordinator for a biosecurity group for the Ord River Irrigation Area and a small percentage of the rates raised from Rural Ag 1 and Rural Ag 2 used for the ongoing management and delivering on the operational plan developed for the Ord.

Currently approx. \$1,000,000 is raised from rural rates. The use of 7.5% of the rates raised could be used for increased awareness in biosecurity in the Ord and the implementation of the Biosecurity plan for the Ord River Irrigation Area.

- The original Biosecurity response fund to remain and to be used for any emergency plant pest or disease response required. Protocols for the use of the response fund to be developed by the Ord Biosecurity group in conjunction with Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley staff.