

Communique

February 2018 | Contact: Ron Harris, Chairperson (0407948431)

Omeo meeting

- The Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee met in Omeo to discuss the use of aerial baiting as a control tool to manage the negative impacts of wild dogs
- Committee members visited a rural property to speak to wild dog affected land owners and obtain 'real life' perspectives

Since its inaugural meeting in August 2017, the Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee (WDMAC) has met four times to discuss matters of strategic importance to wild dog management in Victoria.

Omeo was the location of the most recent meeting. We focussed on discussing aerial baiting as a control tool to manage the negative impacts of wild dogs. The Committee was joined by representatives from the Wild Dog Program, Agriculture Victoria, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions to inform its deliberations and answer any questions by the members.

Agriculture Victoria presented on the history of aerial baiting in Victoria, whilst DELWP provided insights into current operations and related public land management policies.

The Committee also heard about aerial baiting practices in other jurisdictions.

The WDMAC also received information on the recent Parliamentary Inquiry into the Control of Invasive Animals on Crown land and Victoria's first ever Animal Welfare Action Plan (AWAP).

The Inquiry included two recommendations that relate directly to the wild dog program (recommendations 23 and 24) – an ongoing evaluation program of the current wild dog and fox bounty systems to see if the bounties are providing value for money and publicly release the results of any such evaluation.

The WDMAC learned that the AWAP commits to a public review of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and development of a new Act. Consultation with community and industry will be required and details will be made available via the Agriculture Victoria website.

For a copy of the Government Response to the recommendations by the parliamentary inquiry visit: <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/enrrdc/article/3489>

For more information on the AWAP visit: <https://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare>

Field visit

The location of the meeting provided the Committee with an ideal opportunity to test and discuss the use of aerial baiting and other control strategies with local land owners, who kindly agreed to meet with the Committee at the historic Bindi Station, a sheep and cattle station in the Tambo Valley.



Photo 1 Wild Dog Management Advisory Committee (from left to right - back row: Greg Mifsud, Penny Barry, Simon Lawlor, Vaughn Kingston, Fraser Barry, Paul Carroll, Ron Harris, Will de Milliano, Alan Brown, Ernest Healy. Front row: Stephen O'Brien and Simon Turner. Photo: DEDJTR)

The next meeting is scheduled for May 2018.