

FOR INFORMATION

SWFSPP Annual Meeting 2024

Agenda Item 3.1

[last updated: 5 September 2024]

Prepared by [C Wittwer]

NAQS COORDINATOR REPORT 2023-24 year**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the SWFSPP Steering Committee:
 - a. NOTE the report on SWFSPP activities undertaken by NAQS during the 2023-24 financial year.

BACKGROUND

1. This report provides a summary of screwworm fly surveillance conducted by the Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy (NAQS) for the period July 2023 – June 2024. NAQS operates across northern Australia within the Australian Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, as a plant and animal health surveillance program for exotic pests and diseases potentially entering northern Australia via unregulated pathways. NAQS Animal Health has a specific target list of 17 pests and diseases, considered for their risk of incursion and establishment, but maintains vigilance for any unusual clinical signs of exotic and endemic notifiable diseases, or emerging diseases. Old World screwworm fly is on the NAQS target list for its proximity to Australia in all northern neighboring countries, and as such the program has a range of surveillance activities to ensure early detection and contribute to proof of freedom negative data.

DISCUSSION**2. ADULT FLY TRAPPING**

NAQS has had an unfortunate run of serious operational and resourcing challenges during the 2023-24 year, and particularly in the Northern Peninsula Area where adult fly traps are set. As such only the September round of traps were set and collected during the 2023-24 financial year. From the 13 traps set, approximately 93 757 flies were collected, none of which were identified to be *Chrysomia bezziana*, nor *Cochliomyia homnivorax*. NAQS aims to rectify those challenges in the current financial year.

3. TARGETED MYIASIS INSPECTIONS

NAQS oversees or directly samples four sentinel cattle herds – one in northern WA, two in Arnhem Land, NT, and one on Cape York Peninsula. These herds are primarily monitored for bluetongue virus, but also inspected for other exotic diseases whilst being sampled. During the 2023-24 year approximately 557 cattle examinations were done by NAQS vets or trained stockman to check for wounds and myiasis. No evidence of myiasis was reported.

NAQS conducts widespread feral animal surveys in remote locations across northern Australia. In the 2023-24 year 22 surveys were conducted, with 539 feral pigs, 97 feral cattle and 2 feral donkeys examined and none were found to have had myiasis.

In April 2024 a domestic animal survey was conducted in the Torres Strait. During the survey 6 pigs, and 3 chickens were examined of which none had evidence of myiasis.

4. DESCRIBE AND ASSESS PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE

NAQS collaborates with Animal Health Australia to distribute maggot kits to a wide range of stakeholders likely to come across maggots in live animal or human wounds. Vet clinics, wildlife carers, indigenous ranger groups, pastoralists, community medical clinics, and district/regional hospitals are all visited as regularly as possible (generally annually) and given information on how and when to use the kits.

The AHA Kits are rebranded with NAQS' labels and instructions, as an attempt to get some feedback on kits submitted (as a measure of success of stakeholder interest and buy-in), and also to enable replenishment when used. Unfortunately, as is the nature of sending kits to busy people, NAQS only intermittently receives feedback on kits used & requiring replenishment. State labs might have data on number of NAQS' kits submitted.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

NAQS has ongoing funding through Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and conducts SWF surveillance as an in-kind contribution to SWFSPP.

6. CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Nil relevant

7. NEXT STEPS/ACTIONS

Continue public awareness campaign to all relevant stakeholders, reinstate adult fly trapping in NPA when possible.

FEEDBACK

Q1 My organisations needs and expectations of the SWFSPP are being met.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Comments:

Q2 The outputs of the SWFSPP such as the brochure, poster and annual report in the Animal Health in Australia report are credible and robust.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Comments:

Q3 The SWFSPP satisfies the surveillance data and reporting needs of my organisation (e.g. contributes to and/or supports policy development and decision making).

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Comments: NAQS doesn't specifically use data from broader SWFSPP, but does share general messaging information

Q4 Animal Health Australia is managing the Screw Worm Fly Surveillance and Preparedness Program effectively/satisfactorily.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Comments: