
National Pest Control Agencies (NPCA) Chairman's Report for the 2014 Year

1. Introduction

I am pleased to report on the work undertaken by the NPCA during the 2014 year.

The NPCA's 2014 year can be summed up as one of consolidation in our main roles of technology transfer, developing best practice guidelines, and communicating across the pest control industry.

The year has also seen the continuation of the trend to widen the scope of work beyond animal pest to include weed pests and a small development with aquatic pests.

Perhaps the outstanding achievement has been the project programme. The pest detective project in particular has been a significant development.

2. Management Committee

The Management committee is the engine room of the NPCA operation. With its membership drawn from industry agencies and stakeholder groups it brings a wide range of pest industry experience to its role of administering the affairs of the NPCA on behalf of its members.

The Management Committee membership for the 2014 year was:

Brent Rohloff	OSPRI (Chair)
Steve Ellis	Local Government (Taranaki Regional Council)
Nick Poutu	Department of Conservation
Martin Brenstrum	Contractor representative
Bruce Warburton	Landcare Research
Sherman Smith	Ministry of Primary Industries

The committee met five times during the year including one conference call meeting and dealt with the governance matters associated with NPCA's operation.

The key management committee inputs have been to provide financial oversight in what has been a challenging year financially and provide the direction for what arguably has been one of our largest project programmes undertaken to date.

Reports from management committee members and contributions to meetings from a number of stakeholder organisations is an invaluable means for management committee members and the NPCA to keep up to date with pest industry developments overall.

3. Operations and Project Programme

It is pleasing to report that the key milestones for the 2014 projects were completed as follows:

Pest Detective Project

The **pest detective** project has been the largest and most complex project we have undertaken for some time. Expenditure to date is over \$50,000 with more than half being

received from sponsorship and or philanthropic funding sources. The project has involved the development of an interactive web based resource to identify animal pests.

It has required high order project management skills to ensure the contributions from writers, illustrators, graphic designers and website designers are delivered to specifications, are on time and within budget.

It is my pleasure to report that this has been achieved as you will notice from the meeting agenda that the official launch for the pest detective website takes place after this meeting today.

The Machinery Hygiene Project

The **machinery hygiene** project saw the development of best practice guidelines and completion of the associated logbook. An official launch at a Federated Farmers national council meeting took place in June. Negotiations with Rural contractors to take the lead role in the development of an associated accreditation system were not successful and other options to do this are currently being investigated.

Review of Best Practice Publications

The first stage of the **review of the best practice publications** has been completed. This has involved for both legislative and technical changes and currently is in the final consultation stage prior to formatting, laying-out and posting to the website.

Simplified Best Practice Formats

A start has been made on **simplifying formats for best practice publications** as easy to read guidelines for pest control aimed at the growing numbers of community groups and land owners and getting involved with pest control. Work has begun on the pest rabbit guidelines which at 48 pages is one of the largest in NPCA's resource library.

The simplified guides will use a fact sheet or similar approach and will be a complementary resource to the current best practice publications and will be suitable for field use.

Websites

Websites - The domain name (www.pestbusters.net.nz) has been registered to ensure that it remains potentially available for future NPCA use. The domain name of (www.rabbitcontrol.net.nz) has also been registered for the rabbit website. The structure of this website has been finalised and negotiations with a website developer have begun. The current position is to liaise with MPI and the rabbit coordination group to divide the development steps into stages and seek quotations from one or more website developers.

Monitoring Best Practice Guidelines

A start has been made on this project to review the trap catch and wax monitoring guidelines and develop a new guideline for the chew card method. A project specification and scoping document has been developed, the membership of the expert working group has been confirmed and the first meeting of this group has taken place.

4. Constitution and Future Directions

Discussions on a future NPCA role as part of the Tool Box initiative continued during the year. While final detail is still work in progress the implementation committee has confirmed the toolbox focus will be on best practice. The scope of many NPCA services are outside the best practice area and as such provides options for future NPCA roles both inside and outside the toolbox.

5. NETS Conference

The 2014 NETS was the third run as a joint venture between NPCA and the New Zealand Bio-security Institute. The New Plymouth venue and the animal pest presentations that made up the bigger part of the presentations, together with good support from 269 participants meant that it was arguably the best joint NETS run yet.

This in itself is a good indication that the original vision between NPCA and the Biosecurity Institute of a one stop technology transfer shop for animal, weed and aquatic pests is working well. As part of its role NPCA has two members on the planning committee and takes a lead role in the development of the animal pest component of the seminar.

While no major changes are envisaged with the MOU that sets out the basis of the joint approach, it is timely that it be reviewed before the fourth joint NETS planned for Dunedin in 2015.

That said there are some improvements that can be made for the organisation and content of the 2015 NETS and NPCA will be progressing some suggestions to that end. Foremost among these will be the inclusion of hands-on training opportunities for animal pest practitioners and a programme that attracts more pest control contractors.

6. Monitoring Accreditation and Training

With the increasing emphasis on skill levels and qualifications the monitoring accreditation scheme makes an important contribution to the high standards expected from monitors. We receive an ongoing level of enquiries around 30 per month from control agencies and monitors to verify accreditation currency. In passing the training course accredited monitors qualify for 24 unit standard credits towards the national certificate in pest management. An initiative to ensure these credits are awarded to monitors is described later in the report. In summary the records show a total of 294 accredited monitors which is a 20% decrease over the 2012 total. It reflects changing monitoring contract work patterns and it is worth noting that the number main decrease was in trap catch only accreditations. The number of monitors with accreditations in both the trap catch and the wax tag methods remained relatively constant.

An additional 61 monitors were trained and added to the accreditation database from the monitoring courses run during the year. Of these 56 were accredited at Field Operatives and 5 as Designers.

Table Showing Monitoring Accreditations for the years 2011 to 2014.

Qualification	2011	2012	2013	2014
Field Operative - trap catch only	152	122	164	91
Field Op - trap catch & wax tag	181	190	169	165
Designer -trap catch only	23	17	18	15
Designer – trap catch and wax tag	21	18	16	21
Planner	3	4	3	3
Total	380	351	370	294

7. Recognition of Current Competency (RCC)

We are working with the primary ITO for monitors to get their unit standard credits formally recognised in the NZQA system. Due to an oversight 170 monitors have done the training course and have the required on job work experience but have not been given formal recognition for the 24 credits that they are eligible for.

NPCA has been contracted by the Primary ITO to contact these monitors to confirm they wish to have their credits recognised. It's pleasing to note that at the halfway point in this process, most monitors are opting to have their credits recognised for the National Certificate in Pest Management and many already have other pest management unit standards.

8. Communications

Newsletters

Three newsletters were produced during the year and are a very effective means of keeping the wider pest control industry up to date with developments. They set a high standard in terms of content, visual appeal and readability and are a credit to all those involved; in particular to Shona McCahon our newsletter editor.

Website

Is the centre piece of our communications the user statistics continue to show that it continues to be well used as a source of pest control information.

9. In Conclusion

The 2014 year has been a year of consolidation for NPCA.

Our work in the development of best practice guidelines for the pest control industry is continuing. We have been proactive in advocating for an NPCA role as part of the toolbox initiative. While this is still work in progress the use of NPCA's framework makes a compelling case in both financial and operational aspects.

Finally I would like to pay my thanks to members of the Management Committee for their contribution and for their assistance to me in my role as NPCA Chair. Thanks also to Eurotafts, NPCA's service provision provider and Shona McCahon for her excellent work as newsletter editor and this year in particular for her pest detective project management work. In conclusion my thanks to the many people and contractors contributing to the range of services that has made the 2014 year a very good one for the NPCA.

Brent Rohloff
NPCA Chair
25 November 2014