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## National Pest Control Agencies (NPCA) Chairman's Report for the 2015 Year

### 1. Introduction and Overview

The 2015 year saw us progress options for constitutional change, launch the pest detective website, review best practice publications in our resource library.

At the same time we were able to complete a wide range of other project work and make significant contributions to the transfer of new pest industry technology. This was accomplished through NETS, our website and newsletters.

NPCA's role in providing a communicating forum within and across the pest control industry has never been more important and should be highlighted as key input for the future of the industry as the scope continues to widen to include pest plants and aquatic pests as well as pest animals.

### 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 2015 year was:

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

The committee had four meetings during the year and dealt with the policy and operational matters associated with our annual work programme.

### 3. Operations and Project Programme

It is pleasing to report that the key milestones for the 2015 projects were completed as follows:

- The **Pest Detective** project involving the development of an interactive website to identify animal pests was launched. It has been one of NPCA's largest and more challenging projects and has been fine tuned since its launch to improve functionality with further species to be added.

- The **Review of Best Practice Publications** - A total of 44 best practice publications have been reviewed and are currently in the final stages of posting to the website
- The **Monitoring Best Practice Guidelines** have been reviewed and a new monitoring best practice publication has been produced incorporating the leghold trap catch, waxtag and chew card monitoring methods. It has taken over a year and has involved a significant and also voluntary input of an expert working group.
- The **Machinery Hygiene** project saw the publication and distribution of a log book and best practice guideline completed and the start of negotiations and handover to agricultural and roading industry contractor groups to set up an accreditation scheme. This initiative is awaiting confirmation from industry organisations.

In addition preliminary work has been carried out on a number of other projects and these include:

- Animal welfare guidelines to incorporate an animal ethics section into NAWAC's trapping guidelines.
- The development of simplified formats as options for best practice publications
- Review and integration of NPCA's various websites (pest busters, rabbits, pest detective)
- Rabbit website
- Approved operator accreditation scheme for rabbit control.

#### **4. Constitution and Future Directions**

Discussions have been held and advice has been sought on the constitutional aspects for a future NPCA role around the proposed toolbox initiative.

This has resulted in a resolution for consideration today to change the NPCA into a trust with charitable status.

In my view, this change is required to ensure that the NPCA can continue to provide the pest control industry with quality resources while further developing best practice guidance to the increasing number of community led biodiversity projects.

#### **5. NETS Conference**

The 2015 NETS in Dunedin was the fourth run as a joint venture between NPCA and NZBI. It was a successful seminar in terms of the number of participants the standard of the presentations and the associated networking opportunities.

The addition of a hands on training day made a useful contribution and will be a feature of future NETS. This year the training day provided the opportunity for participants to renew or gain CSL licences.

The idea of a one stop conference to pick up on research and technology transfer is the strength of NETS. While it is generally working well, issues for the future lie around the need to review the MOU between NPCA and NZBI as well as to consider options to attract and reach greater numbers of practitioners and provide more hands on training opportunities.

## 6. Monitoring Accreditation and Training

**Monitoring accreditation** sets the benchmark standard for contract monitoring work. It is a well used section of NPCA website and we continue to receive a significant number of enquiries from monitors and control agencies to verify accreditation currency.

In summary the records show a total of 268 accredited monitors while overall this is a decrease over the 2014 total, the core of monitors actively engaged in monitoring work has remained constant.

Additional monitors were trained and added to the accreditation database from the monitoring courses run during the year.

**Table Showing Monitoring Accreditations for the years 2011 to 2015.**

Qualification	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Field Operative - trap catch only	152	122	164	91	69
Field Op - trap catch & wax tag	181	190	169	165	164
Designer -trap catch only	23	17	18	15	13
Designer – trap catch and wax tag	21	18	16	21	21
Planner	3	4	3	3	3
Total	380	351	370	294	268

## 7. National Certificate in Pest Management

Important contributions have been made in assisting the Primary Industry Training Organisation (PITO) to complete the revised prescription for the National Certificate. While the review process has taken a long time to complete it is now on the home straight. It has been a complex task and has ended up with prescription requirements that provide a more straight forward training pathway from the student's perspective. The Animal strand of the qualification is going to NZQA this month with the Plant strand due to go in December.

## 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 and in particular to Shona McCahon our newsletter editor.

## 9. In Conclusion

2015 has been a year in which the NPCA took a more active role in constitutional matters and has made progress towards aligning its role and constitution to meet the requirements of a changing pest control industry.

It has also been able to complete the pest detective, monitoring best practice and publications review projects that will make significant contributions to the industry.

At the same time we have carried out a range of other project work and undertook a number of communications and technology transfer initiatives.

Finally I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to our management committee members who give their time on a voluntary basis to steer the NPCA operation in the right direction and for their support for me as chair. In particular thanks to Bruce Warburton who steps down today as a member of the management committee after 5 years of service.

I would also like to thank the people and organisations contributing to the work of the NPCA during 2015. These include amongst others the many technical and specialist people and contractors who contributed to our best practice resource library, Shona McCahon our newsletter editor and Eurotafts our service provision contractor.

**Steve Ellis**

NPCA Chair

24 November 2015