



# LHPA STRATEGY 2011-2014

Including Organisational State objectives and Authority function management plan 2011-2012

Name: Central North Livestock Health and Pest Authority  
Date: 30/06/2011

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## 1. Who we are

Livestock Health and Pest Authorities have a 150-year tradition of district-based delivery of livestock health and pest management programs that help safeguard agricultural production valued at over \$8 billion a year. The LHPA delivers expertise and effective service at a local level while forming an integral part of our national biosecurity system.

Every day we work with landholders to deliver a world class disease investigation and advisory service that helps preserve the favourable disease status that secures international market access for Australian producers.

Funded largely by landholders and covering an area of more than 80 million hectares, LHPAs have over 360 local staff in more than 60 locations across NSW and local producers as Directors.

The 14 Livestock Health and Pest Authorities were formed in 2009, following the restructure of the former Rural Lands Protection Boards. Their formation continues a tradition of district-based service that began with *The Scab in Sheep Act of 1863* and has seen us evolve into a modern, responsive and progressive organisation committed to improving service delivery and performance.

As a statutory organisation, we independently set and implement local priorities while remaining accountable to the NSW Minister for Primary Industries for our operations. We have strong partnerships with industry and government, and work in close collaboration with NSW Department of Primary Industries.

While not all landholders may see us on their properties, our work in emergency disease prevention, preparedness and response, advisory and diagnostic services, disease surveillance, residue management, certification, traceability systems such as NLIS, regulation and extension ensures continued market access.

The pest management programs our rangers strategically coordinate with thousands of landholders across NSW reduce the impact of predation on agricultural production. During the spring and summer of 2010–11, the on-ground efforts of the LHPA in locust control helped avoid potential losses to crops of almost half a billion dollars.

The skills, knowledge and experience of 150 years of successful operation underpin our connection to the rural community in which we live and work. The personal contact our customer service staff have with local landholders in areas such as drought assistance, travelling stock reserve access or advice on stock movement has helped build our reputation as the local, 'go to' organisation for producers.

## 2. Our mission

To be acknowledged by our stakeholders as a dynamic local service organisation that has Safeguarding Agriculture in NSW as its goal. We will focus on protecting and enhancing livestock industries and minimising the risks to agriculture and the environment by pest animals and insects. In partnership with our stakeholders, we will achieve this with the knowledge and skills of our people who deliver local, regional and state initiatives.

### **3. Our values**

- Service delivery: We focus on being in the field. We concentrate our resources on providing advice, information, education, coordination and assistance to our stakeholders. We recognise our role as a regulator and we will utilise these powers in line with our internal policies and procedures.
- Delivering outcomes in our core functions: We take a program focus while maintaining the flexibility to respond to particular issues or events. We recognise the need to address local, regional, state and national priorities.
- Accountability: We review our actions with a view of continual improvement and report to stakeholders on our performance.
- Common purpose: We recognise that our organisation has a common purpose and we respect the role our structure and our people play in achieving that purpose.
- Teamwork: We constructively work and learn together and we value open communication.
- Integrity: We act with integrity at all times and we are honest and truthful in our dealings. We treat people with respect.
- Strong relationships: We have strong meaningful relationships within our organisation and with key stakeholders.

### **4. Our stakeholders**

The people who occupy rural land 10 hectares or more in NSW are our key stakeholders. The rates these landholders pay to their local LHPA are the main source of funding for LHPAs.

Managers of public land, including government departments, catchment authorities and local government bodies are stakeholders. The LHPA works in partnership with NSW DPI and has a responsibility to NSW Government in accordance with the *Rural Lands Protection Act 1998*.

### **5. Our planning**

The LHPA is committed to a plan that delivers a three-year direction for the organisation, resulting in the best possible services to ratepayers, stakeholders and the broader community through a process that:

- identifies the stakeholders and requires their input
- identifies expected achievements and dates
- defines roles and responsibilities providing accountability
- engages the whole organisation in order to achieve commitment to implementation
- is reviewed and updated annually

## SECTION A Organisational State objectives

### Objective 1:

The LHPA is acknowledged by ratepayers as a dynamic service organisation for livestock health and pest management with productive relationships with the Minister, agencies and stakeholders.

#### **Strategies**

1. Build trust and confidence with external stakeholders including the establishment of a functional and effective relationship with DPI through an MOU and other partnership instruments
2. Community engagement and communication planning is an organisational priority

#### **Performance Indicators**

- Memorandum of understanding and/or alternate agreements have been renewed between State Management Council and the Department of Primary Industries.
- Community engagement and communication plans exist within Authorities.
- Market research and sample surveys measure progress.

### Objective 2:

The LHPA has established clear and agreed objectives for each functional area and has met key performance expectations.

#### **Strategies**

1. The Senior Executive Team in partnership with senior staff in the organisation will develop clear functional objectives for consideration and adoption through the State Management Council Board and State Policy Council.
2. State wide reporting is consistent and allows for analysis of the performance of the organisation against objectives and Authority by Authority

#### **Performance Indicators**

- Objectives are set by 31 December 2011 for
  - Livestock health
  - Pest Animal and insect management
  - TSRs
  - Emergency response.
- Key performance expectations for the above are defined and reporting against them is in place by 30 June 2012.

### Objective 3:

The LHPA has a whole of organisation culture with standardised operating frameworks and practices aimed at enhancing Authority performance

#### **Strategies**

1. The State Management Council Board of Directors works in collaboration with the Senior Executive Team
2. The State Policy Council works in collaboration with Authority Board of Directors

#### **Performance Indicators**

- SET established with key functional groups and performance measures developed and monitored by June 2011
- LHPA policy framework adopted and communicated

**Objective 4:**

The LHPA recognises and respects the expertise and resources within the organisation in decision making.

**Strategies**

1. Roles and responsibilities clarified
2. An organisational skills analysis identifies our strengths.
3. Investment continues in improving existing assets and intellectual property

**Performance Indicators**

- Leadership teams established and utilised
- Skills analysis undertaken through 2012
- Projects contribute to meeting local service delivery objectives

**Objective 5:**

The LHPA has an effective governance framework enabling the organisation to meet opportunities and challenges to ensure sustainability.

**Strategies**

1. The Boards of Directors of Authorities and the State Management Council develop a governance framework that provides clarity to roles and responsibilities for oversight of LHPA NSW.
2. The State Policy Council will develop a governance framework providing effective leadership of LHPA NSW.

**Performance Indicators**

- Governance framework is in place and fully implemented by 31 December 2012.
- State Policy Council governance charter

**SECTION B Environmental Scan** - Determined by the Board of Directors and management this section describes the key challenges that each authority faces in both their external and internal environments. Reviewed regularly, the environmental scan ensures that the strategies being implemented by the authority are appropriate.

**External** – what factors outside the authority’s operating environment impact on the authority achieving long term goals or affect success of its programs

#### Livestock Health

- Introduction of emerging diseases eg; Theileria from coastal districts
- Expectations and knowledge about livestock health programmes varies across ratepayer base
- Lice- expectations of the effect of potential regulatory programs and what is achievable varies
- Lice control – chemical resistance and changes to/withdrawal of product registration
- Ovine Johne’s Disease (OJD) – prevalence data from abattoir surveillance is several years behind the spread of disease
- Market access implications of the failure of various programs eg; OJD, residue management and TSE surveillance
- Ovine brucellosis – voluntary and informal nature of the program leaves vulnerability for re-infection from outside of the district
- Major stock movements during drought may have long term disease effects
- Vagaries of policy allowing Bovine Johne’s Disease (BJD) status to move between “Dairy and Beef”
- Push in some circles for Industry Self Regulation poses a risk that “smaller landholders” will fall outside of the net

#### Pest Animals

- Emergency responses to “outbreaks” may overtake/obstruct structured pest animal control programs
- Extraordinary seasonal conditions may render control programs ineffective for some pests
- Lack of landholder understanding of responsibility for control of pest animals
- Lack of landholders participation in structured pest animal control programs may render them ineffective
- Good seasonal conditions may lead to rapid increase in some pest animal populations
- Mice plagues – shortage of supply in registered poisons reflects poorly on LHPA’s ability to react to outbreaks and may cause landholders to use unregistered chemicals for control
- Lack of biological control alternatives for Rabbits such as myxomatosis
- Inconsistency in pricing and service delivery by LHPA’s across the State and District boundaries

#### TSRs

- Managing community expectation about the authority having a continued role in TSRs
- Reliance on grant funding to supplement grazing income is a risk as grant funding beyond current contracts is unknown
- Seasonality of use poses a risk that they will not be financially sustainable and may run down Authority’s financial reserves
- Increase in fire risk because of non use during periods of improved seasonal conditions

## Corporate

- Changing rate payer demographics, changes to rating system impacting on rate payer confidence
- Loss of rateable lands through expansion of National Parks, increased acquisitions by mining companies for “carbon offsets” and not running stock
- Legislation that dictates that we must assess carrying capacity as is if the land is reverting to it’s natural state – thus resulting in a loss of rate income
- Public expectation of LHPA as a service provider may surpass our responsibilities
- Community knowledge of LHPA role is not consistent or well understood
- Downsizing of government departments, particularly DPI will place extra burden on LHPA resources
- Staff training through DPI no longer available to LHPA’s will increase training costs

## Internal – what factors within the organisation that can impact on outcomes and should be considered in development of strategies

### Livestock Health

- Concentration of resources on TSR and Pest Animals may impact on Livestock Health programs
- Training and use of Livestock Health Management System (LHMS) by staff
- Staff knowledge and expertise varies
- Resignation/retirement, inexperience of staff or an existing “training gap” may lead to reduced internal knowledge of complex and important diseases
- Hands on training for footrot infection is limited, leading to loss of knowledge
- OH & S – livestock health poses particular risk of zoonotic infection of staff
- Risk of staff being drawn into problems “over and above” the Authority’s role
- Staff performance and assessment review may impact on activities

### Pest Animals

- Succession planning - retention of knowledge and skills of staff in an ageing local workforce
- Lack of commercial pest controllers in district places extra burden on staff and reduces participation of landholders in large scale control programs
- Use of Farms Pest module
- Office locations and staff travelling long distances to service some parts of district
- Staff performance and assessment review may impact on activities

## TSRs

- Long term maintenance program for reserves into the future
- Financial sustainability of TSR's as they currently exist
- TSR Review and delay in decision on retention
- Aging or inadequate infrastructure

## Corporate

- OHS management system implementation requires resourcing to ensure authority is compliant
- Breakdown in standard procedures or disregard for policy across locations presents risk to income and increases risk of fraud
- Effectiveness of the Board is diminished if individual Directors are not engaged in meaningful strategic decision making
- Administrative staff workload increased in support of new systems eg; Pest Module in FARMS and LHMS
- Distance between locations increases the risk that staff are not operating as a cohesive unit
- Unforeseen increase in SMC charges to Authority's poses a financial risk

## SECTION C Central North LHPA Local Function Plans Focused on Achieving the State Objectives

### Livestock Health Objectives:

1. Central North LHPA will comply with the requirements of the NSW Animal Health Plan
2. Central North LHPA will aim to minimize adverse affects of livestock disease and chemical residues on production and market access for livestock and their products within our Authority
3. Maintain a functional and effective relationship with DPI NSW
4. Reinforce LHPA's reputation as an effective and capable public livestock health system
5. Central North LHPA will respond to any EAD incursion at it's earliest possible stage

| <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Link to State Objective</b> | <b>Resources</b>     | <b>Performance Indicators</b>   |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Agreed areas of the State NSW DPI plan are outlined in the operational plan   | (1), (2), (3)                  | SDV, DVs, LH Rangers | Areas addressed in operational plan<br>KPI project results activated into planning process  |
| To develop a process of stakeholder and ratepayer engagement be initiated   | (1), (4)                       | SDV, DVs, LH Rangers | Develop a number of activities involving stakeholder groups<br>Develop a number of activities to inform stakeholder and ratepayer groups<br>Develop a system to identify and analyse positive and negative feedback |
| Build capacity to deal with any endemic and exotic disease emergency  | (1), (2), (3), (4), (5)        | SDV, DVs, LH Rangers | Undertake another skills audit<br>Determine training required<br>Deliver appropriate resources  |
| Maintain a passive surveillance program to ensure timely assessment and management of livestock health risks by maintaining contact with stock owners, monitoring changes of diseases patterns which increases the probability of detecting emerging diseases | 1,2                            | SDV, DVs, LH Rangers | 2 articles in quarterly newsletter regarding diagnostic services available<br>100% significant syndromes of herd and flock problems notified by ratepayers investigated within 48 hours                             |

|                                      |     |                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----------------------|---|
| Work within administrative framework | (3) | SDV, DVs, LH Rangers | Work within organizations OH&S guidelines<br>Work within Organisations code of conduct, reporting and IT guidelines |
|--------------------------------------|-----|----------------------|---|

**Pest Animal and Insect Objectives:**

1. Central North LHPA will provide strategic and reactive Pest Programs to all Stakeholders
2. Establish and operate Farms Pest Module

| <b>Strategies</b>                                | <b>Link to State Objective</b> | <b>Resources</b> | <b>Performance Indicators</b>   |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Provide frontline Pest Animal and insect Service | (1) (2)(3)                     | SR and Rangers   | Develop Ranger Performance assessment KPI's for property inspections  |
| Implement Pest Animal compliance program         | (2)                            | SR               | Develop Ranger Performance assessment KPI's for programs carried out  |
| Communication                                    | (1)                            | SR and Rangers   | Quarterly newsletter with pest animal articles included<br>Attend Mudgee Small Farm Field Days<br>Conduct 3 on farm or community field days<br>Respond to ratepayer enquiry within 24 hours |
| Safe Work place                                  | (3)                            | All Staff        | Comply with OH&S policies and procedures<br>Ensure Ranger participation on the OH&S committee<br>Ensure staff induction is completed and recorded   |

**Traveling Stock Reserves Objectives :**

1. Complete TSR review of all Travelling Stock reserves in the Central North LHPA
2. Miantain major driftways and linkages for travelling stock within and through the Central North LHPA

| <b>Strategies</b>  | <b>Link to State Objective</b> | <b>Resources</b>           | <b>Performance Indicators</b>  |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Identify viable reserves and develop business case to present to State Management Council          | (5)                            | Directors and Management,  | Viable reserves identified and business case developed for these Reserves November 2011  |
| Prepare submission to relinquish reserves not identified as viable                                 | (2)                            | Management,                | Submission of reserves to be ceded back to the crown December 2011<br><br>TSR review completed by December 2011  |
| Maintain major drift ways within the Authority to ensure linkages throughout NSW are not inhibited | (1)(2)                         | Senior Ranger and Rangers, | Major driftways are available for stock to walk through the Authority<br>Ensure linkages are mainataned for travelling stock throughout NSW<br>Reserves are mainatained for the movement of stoch throughout the Authority |

**Corporate Objectives :**

1. To ensure that service provision by the Authority reflects “best practice” and provides value to ratepayers and other stakeholders alike whilst not compromising the ongoing viability of the organisation
2. To provide a safe workplace for employees, contractors and visitors
3. To minimize risk to the ongoing viability of the organisation

| <b>Strategies</b>  | <b>Link to State Objective</b> | <b>Resources</b>                   | <b>Performance Indicators</b>  |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Viability – Finance committee to undertake a complete review of financial position, identify risk factors and operation of the Authority and recommend strategies to the Board | 5                              | Finance Committee, GM, SDV, SR, OC | Draft review completed with recommendations made to the Board of Directors by 31 December 2011<br>Board considers and adopts recommendations, as amended, by 31 March 2012   |
| Board to review Audit management letter and GM to address issues raised  | 3 & 5                          | Board, GM , OC                     | Board has considered management letter within one month of receipt and provided reply to Auditor<br>All items identified as requiring action have been addressed within one month of Board consideration of management letter. |
| Engage stakeholders through quarterly newsletter, attendance at field days, production and distribution of Landholder information booklet                                      | 1                              | Board, Staff                       | 100% of articles and press releases taken up by media.<br>Newsletters issued quarterly.<br>Information Booklet distributed to all new landholders  |
| Staff training provided to ensure improved service delivery  | 1, 4                           | Staff                              | Staff have completed their planned progression training courses annually and progress through grades in a timely manner.<br>Service delivery is maintained during staff absences.  |
| Board of Directors to self review performance, improvements and effectiveness  | 1, 5                           | Board of Directors                 | Review completed and improvements implemented.   |

## SECTION D Authority Localised Objectives

### Objective 1

NSW DPI Biosecurity Plan activities are initiated at a local level

| <b>Strategies</b>  | <b>Resources</b>      | <b>Performance Indicators</b>  |
|--|-----------------------|--|
| NSW Biosecurity Plan activities as they relate to LHPA's are incorporated into operational plans | Senior Staff, Rangers | Activities of operational plan completed and reviewed on a quarterly basis |

### Objective 2

Reduce reliance on Rate and TSR Income by pursuing external sources of funding

| <b>Strategies</b>                       | <b>Resources</b> | <b>Performance Indicators</b>  |
|---|------------------|--|
| Investigate external sources of funding | GM, SDV, SR & OC | Funding sources explored, applications lodged, increase in funding compared to previous year |

### Objective 3

Improving stakeholder relations through increased extension activities

| <b>Strategies</b>  | <b>Resources</b>                          | <b>Performance Indicators</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Investigate research funding opportunities for Livestock Health projects | SDV, DV's & LH Staff                      | Funding sources explored, applications lodged, increase in funding compared to previous year |
| Development of a email newsletter for Vet practioners                    | SDV, DV's & LH Staff, RVO and Practioners | Production of newsletter on regular basis with contributions from all parties                |
| Maintenance of current advisory and intellectual property                | GM, SDV, SR, OC                           | Review/update of current CN Landholder Information Booklet                                   |

|   |                          |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| Increase number of advisory activities for stakeholders | GM, SDV, SR, OC<br>Staff | Development of Sheep and Cattle Booklets<br><br>Coordinate field days/meetings/trial using resellers/NSW DPI etc<br>Develop targeted mailing and email lists |
|---|--------------------------|--|

**Objective 4**  
Improving staff productivity and performance

| <b>Strategies</b>   | <b>Resources</b> | <b>Performance Indicators</b>                                     |
|---|------------------|---|
| Implementation of group based appraisal, expand upon existing structures of regular meetings and work plans | Management Team  | Monthly/bi monthly meetings with skill building sessions included |

**Objective 5**  
Improving Board and Director productivity and performance

| <b>Strategies</b>  | <b>Resources</b> | <b>Performance Indicators</b>  |
|--|------------------|--|
| Identify and access any regional efficiencies available for Board and Director development | Directors, GM    | Regional approach to opportunities that will advance Board and Director Professional Development |

## SECTION E Authority Operating Budgets

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The Central North Livestock health and Pest Authority will commit \$3,586,504 of rate revenue and \$769,410 of other income totaling \$4,355,914 toward achieving the objectives of the function plan 2011/12. In summary the approved budget is as follows:

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| Director       | \$ 105,050  |
| Employee       | \$2,049,396 |
| General        | \$ 433,400  |
| Motor vehicle  | \$ 385,000  |
| Office         | \$ 349,600  |
| Property       | \$ 310,000  |
| Service        | \$ 820,100  |
| Total Expenses | \$4,452,546 |

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**The budget deficit of \$96,632 can be directly attributed to improved seasonal conditions which have prevailed in the past 12 months and the resultant reduction in revenue from TSR's. A comprehensive review of TSR's within the Central North District will be conducted and recommendations made to substantially reduce the financial impact TSR's have on our resources.**