

LORD HOWE ISLAND BOARD

Business Paper

OPEN SESSION

ITEM

Dog, Avian and Stock Importation Policies- Moratorium

APPLICANT

Lord Howe Island Board

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve a moratorium on the importation of livestock (including poultry) and dogs effective immediately pending a decision on commencement of the Rodent Eradication Program (REP) and communication of this decision by way of "householder" to the community.

ISSUE

The *Lord Howe Island Regulation 2014* (the Regulation) provides no person shall import a number of identified pest animals to the Island. The regulation also provides that no person shall import any other animal to the Island without the approval of the Board.

The Board has adopted the following policies to guide the assessment of applications to import animals (and animal feed) to the Island:

- Avian Importation Policy (2015),
- Dog Importation and Management Policy (2015),
- Stock Importation Policy (July 2015),
- Plant Importation Policy (2015).

During planning for the REP it has been identified that the chances of eradication success would be greatly increased if the number of livestock (including poultry) and dogs could be reduced as much as possible during the operational and post-operational phase of the program. Hand broadcast of poison would be more effective than distribution through bait stations and the presence of livestock and dogs would restrict hand broadcast, thus reducing effectiveness. The presence of livestock and dogs could also provide alternative food sources for rodents and rodents would be more likely to consume rodenticide if alternative food sources are reduced as much as possible. Livestock and dogs are also potentially at risk of consuming rodenticide or poisoned rodents if access is not prevented.

Should the REP proceed, the chance of success will be increased, risk of harm to additional imported animals eliminated and costs reduced if there is a moratorium on new imports until rodenticide breakdown in the environment was confirmed after the REP.

The Board has received one recent application for a dairy calf and has advised the applicant that the application will not be assessed until after the September 2017 meeting when it is

anticipated the future of the REP will be determined. In order to clarify and provide short-term certainty to residents it is requested that a moratorium be placed on the importation of livestock and dogs pending a decision on commencement of the REP.

Should the Board wish, special consideration could be afforded the importation of dogs prior to the decision regarding the REP. However this should be only under extenuating circumstances and on the undertaking of the applicant that they would be responsible for all costs involved in transport and kennelling on the mainland and/or muzzling of any dog imported during REP operations and for such time afterward as is required.

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Prepared: Hank Bower Manager Environment/World Heritage

Endorsed: Penny Holloway Chief Executive Officer