

<b>Board Meeting:</b> March 2018	<b>Agenda Number:</b> 5	<b>Record Number:</b> ED18/1697
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# LORD HOWE ISLAND BOARD

## Business Paper

### OPEN SESSION

#### Chief Executive Officer's Report to March 2018 Meeting of the Board

The following briefing provides an overview of key issues managed by the Board during the reporting period, and their status. It is intended that this document be available to the public as part of the minutes of the meeting. Matters which are subject to confidentiality, business in confidence or legal action are shaded and are not included in the public copy of the report.

Number of items excluded from this public edition:  
 Business & Corporate Service Report  
 Reason: Business in Confidence

<b>MATTER</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>ACTION REQUIRED BY BOARD AT THIS MEETING</b>
Air Services	In December 2017, the Minister for Transport announced signing of a contract with QantasLink for provision of air services to the Island for four years from March 2018 to March 2022.	For noting
Handley Review	The final government response to the LHI Land Allocation (Handley) Review was released in November 2017. Action is being taken to implement the review recommendations.	See agenda item 9 (i)
Runway Feasibility Study	The project has been underway since late November 2017. In the first stage, consultants AECOM will investigate future aircraft requirements for the island, plane characteristics, existing runway/site limitations and CASA requirements.	See agenda item 13 (iv)
Rodent Eradication Program	Considerable work has been undertaken in preparation for the implementation of the rodent eradication project. The new permit from the APVMA has not yet been received.	See agenda item 12 (i)
Renewable Energy Project	The exploration of four options to replace the wind turbine component of the renewable energy project has been completed and submitted to ARENA for decision about whether the funding agreement will be varied to enable funding of a revised project.	See agenda item 12 (ii)
Airport Terminal Upgrade	Construction of the Airport Terminal Upgrade was completed at the end of February 2012. The new building is now operational. Landscaping works are still to be completed. The airport terminal will be officially opened on 25 March 2018.	See agenda item 12 (iii)
Grant funding	Assessment of round one of the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities fund has been completed, with successful projects in the second tranche (including Lord Howe Island) still to be announced. Round two opens on 12 March 2018, with funding applications due by 4 May 2018.	For noting

**Prepared:** Penny Holloway, Chief Executive Officer

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Chief Executive Officer Report – BCS Unit - **Closed**

Attachment B: Chief Executive Officer Report – ECS Unit - Open

Attachment C: Chief Executive Officer Report – IES Unit - Open

**ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SERVICES UNIT****November 2017 to March 2018****Biodiversity Management**

- Biosecurity detection dogs and dog handlers continue to undertake on-Island training and have made a successful rodent detection on Island Trader.
- Saving Our Species grant implementation – this project includes weed search and control, targeted threatened plant monitoring and development and implementation of translocation plans for Sand Spurge *Chamaesyce psammogeton* and Phillip Island Wheat Grass *Elymus multiflorus*. Seedlings of both species have been successfully germinated in a nursery, which subsequently suffered significant browsing of seedlings by rodents indicating the ongoing, negative impact that rodents pose for these endangered plants.
- Commenced installation of rock anchors on Balls Pyramid to enable height access trained staff to undertake weed control of Five-leaved Morning Glory *Ipomoea cairica* from Phasmid food trees and to gain access up to Gannet Green to undertake surveys.
- 2017 Woodhen Survey is complete – the observed population is a little down on previous years but considered stable.

**Research & Volunteers**

The following persons were approved to stay in/use the Research Station during the reporting period.

<b>Name</b>	<b>No. People</b>	<b>No. Nights</b>	<b>Project</b>
Tim Wright	1	5	Dental Service – Lab use only
Andrew Denham	3	7	REP – Biodiversity Benefits (plants)
Leanne Elliot	1	7	REP/Taronga Zoo – Captive Mgmt
Terry O'Dwyer	1	12	Woodhen Surveys
Nicholas Carlile	1	3	Woodhen Surveys
Alpine	2	14	REP
Richard Segal	1	69	Diet & breeding performance of LHI Currawong
Di Browne	2	5	SOS Save Our Species
Terry O'Dwyer	2	8	REP – Biodiversity Benefits Black-winged Petrel
Marine Parks	3	43	Galapagos Sharks
Peter McLelland	3	14	REP
Reef Life Survey	6	16	Reef Life Survey
Mark Derwent	1	6	Food Inspections
Andrew Baird	6	11	Coral Biodiversity
TOTAL	33	220	

**Rodent Eradication**

- See Agenda Item - Rodent Eradication progress report.

## Quarantine

- MEWH delivered presentation at National Myrtle Rust workshop in Canberra on the LHI rapid response to a Myrtle Rust incursion. The response treated all infected plants with registered fungicide and the Board obtained permission from each leaseholder with infected or highly susceptible plants to have them removed.
- Biosecurity detection dogs and dog handlers continue to undertake on-Island training and have made successful rodent detection on Island Trader.
- Training with Steve Austin dog trainer at Port Macquarie 16 – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018. This will provide first-hand experience and training in pre-border inspection procedures for loading freight and to gain familiarity with wharf facilities and stevedores and to work with other target scents not readily available on the Island (Cane Toad, Green Tree Frog, Asian House Gecko & snakes).
- Liaison with LHI Seafreight on biosecurity measures embedded in new shipping contract.
- Dogs and handlers training nearing completion to gain accreditation.
- Applications to import plant, mulch/potting medium have been assessed as required and inspections carried out of imports upon arrival.
- Maintenance of boot cleaning stations.
- DPI seeking to place draft Discussion Paper concerning Biosecurity Risk management for LHI on public exhibition. This paper proposes to amend the Biosecurity Act 2015 (the Act) and Biosecurity Regulation 2017 (the Regulation) to enhance biosecurity risk management arrangements for Lord Howe Island (and at same time incorporate changes statewide). It is proposed to manage the biosecurity risks to LHI using a range of management tools, including:
  1. List as prohibited matter on LHI, plant and animal pests and diseases, and weeds that are not present on LHI but are likely to have significant impact on the economic, environmental or community if they were introduced or became established.
  2. Implement a control order to support the eradication of plant and animal pests and diseases, and weeds that are present on LHI and identified for eradication in the Weed Management Strategy 2016 or deemed new emerging threats.
  3. Introduce a mandatory measure for managing certain species of non-indigenous animals that can be dealt with, i.e. kept, on mainland NSW but pose a biosecurity risk to LHI.

This proposal complements current legislative arrangements for preventing, eradicating, and minimising biosecurity risks from plant and animal pest and diseases, and weeds.

## African Big-headed Ant Eradication

- Monitoring undertaken of previously infested areas (from 2015) in December 2017 and March 2018 did not detect any ABhA, which enables the Board to declare ABhA eradicated from LHI. The project outcomes will be reported to the Island Eradication Advisory Group (IEAG) and IUCN for external review.
- This is the first eradication of ABhA from an oceanic island, the largest ant eradication to have been achieved on an island, and is among the most significant for conservation having been conducted within a World Heritage listed area.
- Two other eradications of equivalent significance are the little fire ant, *Wasmannia auropunctata*, eradication on Marchena Island in the Galapagos (*Causton et al.* 2005) and for tropical fire ant, *Solenopsis geminata*, and *P. megacephala* within Kakadu National Park, Australia (Hoffmann & O'Connor 2004).

### **Weed Management**

- The Board is currently running four externally funded weed eradication grant programs (including the NSW Environmental Trust, North Coast Local Land Services, Saving Our Species, NSW Weeds Action Plan). Over 310 hectares of weed search has been achieved this financial year, keeping on track with the yearly target of 500 hectares.
- **North Coast Local Land Services 'Progressing the treatment and eradication of invasive weeds and African Big Headed Ants (ABHA)'**. This program is due for reporting in May 2018. This grant has provided funds for weed search labour, ABHA and the removal of tree weeds from the Settlement.
- **NSW Environmental Trust 'The Tide is Turning'**. The remainder of this grant is focused on technical programs. Methods to detect target weeds using spectral signatures, plant geometry or high definition imagery applied with Unmanned Automated Vehicles ('Drones') and the application of aerial treatment methods using UAV (lance spray) and Herbicide Ballistic Technology. EOI's are currently being reviewed for the weed detection project work.
- **Saving our Species LHI Threatened Species Recovery Program – Project 2 (2017 - 2021)**. This four-year grant has reporting requirements to release funds yearly. This project is focused on the survey, translocation and management of 10 threatened flora species and their habitats. The majority of threatened species occur in the southern mountains requiring target search in remote terrain.

### **Revegetation**

- Maintenance of revegetation sites has been undertaken in accordance with the Revegetation Work Schedule.
- Restoration of Sallywood Swamp Forest EEC at the Golf Club and establishment of new plantings continues with funding provided by North Coast Local Land Services.
- Revegetation at Calystegia site at the start of Max Nicholls track continues funded by the Saving Our Species program.
- Translocation plans developed for Sand Spurge and Phillip Island Wheat Grass with seed collected and germinated on Island and sent to Mt Annan herbarium for Seed banking. Significant amount of rodent browsing of germinated seedlings in the nursery indicates the impact that rodents pose to these species in the wild.

### **Incident Management**

- Nil

### **Community Programs & Education**

- Contribute to Signal and Community Information Bulletin.

### **Visitor Infrastructure**

- General maintenance of walking tracks;
- Mt Gower ropes replaced and rock anchor system testing commenced.
- Replacement interpretation signs ordered where degradation is observed.
- Sallywood Swamp Forest interpretation sign ordered for erection at Cobbys Corner.

### **Marine Management / Moorings**

- LHIB monthly mooring inspections were completed for the reporting period;
- Approximately 40 yachts visited the Island and attached to LHIB public moorings during the reporting period.

### **Human Resource Management**

- Dan Kennedy awarded full time temporary Field Officer during Damian Ball's absence on LWOP.
- Field Supervisor, Bush Regeneration and Weed Eradication position has been advertised for recruitment.

### **Training**

- Biosecurity detection dog handling training ongoing.
- Rope access refresher and training is using Rock Exotica testing unit for rock anchors.
- Work Health Safety.

### **Work Health & Safety**

- Nil time-lost incidents during the period.

### **Environmental Assessment**

- Ecological assessments for all OC / DAs referred completed
- Two Conservation Risk Assessments completed for installation of industry certified rock anchors to enable safe working at heights (access to Gannet Green on Balls Pyramid to undertake weed control and survey for LHI Phasmid and install rock anchors to enable emergency exit from the Pimple if helicopter can retrieve staff winched to the site).
- Tree risk assessments completed.

### **Land Administration**

- Respond to applications for suspension of residency, lease transfers, minor land transactions, subleasing and tenure related project work.

### **Development Assessment**

- Continue assessments for Owner Consent, Development Applications and s96 modification applications

### **Community Health & Wellbeing**

- First meeting of Lord Howe Island Bush Fire Management Committee held in December. Items considered included the draft Lord Howe Island Bush Fire Risk Management Plan.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

15 November 2017 to 07 March 2018

### Airport

- On Friday 2 March 2018 the new Airport Terminal opened for business. While teething problems have been experienced, and were expected, the terminal is functioning well and is providing the enhanced visitor experience the upgrade sought to do. At the time of writing (Wednesday 7 March 2018) the official opening of the Terminal is planned for Sunday 25 March 2018 (see separate report).
- On 12 November 2017 AECOM Australia Pty Ltd was awarded the contract to undertake a feasibility study into extending the runway. The study will consider the technical, economic and environmental aspects of the extension.

The first stage of the study will determine the extent of the extension that could be built in line with safety regulations, physical obstacles that could affect landing and take-off, and the width of the airfield. It will also identify aircraft able to land with, and without, an extension and airlines interested in providing this service. The AECOM team will report on the first stage of the study after meetings with CASA, Qantas and Virgin during the week of 19 March 2018 (see separate report).

- From November 2017 Board staff have been undertaking additional bird harassment at the aerodrome. This is due to increased activity of the Migratory Wader species and the elevated risk of bird strike. At the time of writing (Wednesday 7 March 2018) the need for additional harassment is under assessment as the bird activity has significantly reduced.
- At the time of writing (Wednesday 7 March 2018) there has been one (1) bird strike recorded for 2018 at the aerodrome. A C-130 Hercules struck a Pacific Golden Plover during night training operations on Monday 5 February 2018. This is first bird strike recorded since 25 February 2017. For the intervening 12 months (March 2017 to February 2018), 1818 aircraft movements were logged for the Lord Howe Island Aerodrome. This equates to 0.55 strikes per 1000 movements. A QantasLink DHC8 struck a white tern over the lagoon on Sunday 18 February 2018 but as this is outside the field of influence of aerodrome staff, the strike is not included in the statistics.

Year to date there have been 348 aircraft movements, which equates to 2.87 strikes per 1000 movements. For the corresponding period in 2017 there was one (1) strike recorded (Pacific Golden Plover) with 344 aircraft movements. This equates to 2.90 bird strikes per 1,000 aircraft movements.

For the 2017 calendar year there was one (1) bird strike recorded with 1814 aircraft movements. This equates to 0.55 strikes per 1,000 aircraft movements. For the 2016 calendar year there were nine (9) birds struck with 1734 aircraft movements. This equates to 5.19 strikes per 1,000 movements.

- Clean up of access area.
- Removal of large green 'Qantas lounge' tent.

- Deconstruct temporary terminal.
- Removal of ablution blocks and associated plumbing.
- Re-establish air terminal gardens and lawns.

### **Building Construction Maintenance and Management**

- From 14 to 28 February 2018 Essential Safety Protection conducted the annual Fire Safety Inspections for all Lord Howe Island Board premises and Island businesses.
- Continued sand bag wall maintenance at Pinetrees boatshed.
- Install new window eastern wall of the Marine Parks office.
- Repair decking in front of Islander Cruises boatshed.
- Repairs to nurses' flats at Hospital.
- Mid-February inspection of commercial and residential assets and subsequent maintenance program updated.
- 15 February inspection of all street furniture and subsequent maintenance program updated.

### **Emergency Management**

- The Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) is to meet on Thursday 8 March 2018. Amongst matters to be discussed are the continued development of Consequence Management Guides for the LHI Emergency Management Plan, conducting the Annual Aerodrome Emergency Exercise and the development of Emergency/Evacuation Plans for Island Lodges and Businesses.
- On Friday 24 November 2017 Simon Lewis, Manager Severe Weather NSW/ACT, Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) in conjunction with the LEMC, presented the 2017/2018 Tropical Cyclone Briefing at the Public Hall. The briefing was attended by LHI Sea Freight Management, LHIB Management and interested members of the community.
- The Lord Howe Island Bush Fire Management Committee met on Thursday 14 December 2017. The committee discussed the final details for the draft Bush Fire Risk Management Plan. The draft plan will go on public display Monday 26 March 2018 for comment.
- Members of the LEMC and BOM staff closely followed the paths of Tropical Cyclones Fehi and Gita during February 2018 in preparation for any potential impacts to the Island. The North Coast Regional Emergency Management Committee were on standby to send assistance if required.
- After direction by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) investigations have commenced into possible ground and groundwater contamination from the use of Fire Fighting Foam (FFF) containing per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). In recent

years, it has been discovered that PFAS does not readily breakdown in the environment. The persistent, bio-accumulation and toxic nature of PFAS in the environment can lead to issues when it enters groundwater systems and/or aquatic ecosystems.

- Air Ambulance patient retrievals year to date (Wednesday 7 March 2018) total three (3) all of which were residents. Two (2) residents required treatment for illness and one (1) for an injury.

Patient retrievals for the same period in 2017 totalled one (1) which was a resident requiring treatment for illness.

The total number of Air Ambulance patient retrievals for 2017 was thirteen (13) of which eight (8) were residents and five (5) visitors. Five (5) residents required treatment for illness with three (3) requiring treatment for injury. Three (3) of the visitors required treatment for illness with two (2) requiring treatment for injury.

The total for 2016 was nineteen (19) with thirteen (13) residents – nine (9) illness and four (4) illness and six (6) visitors – five (5) illness and one (1) injury.

- 9 January 2018 – respond to asbestos contamination of timber burn pile at WMF. Mainland contractor being finalised week ending 16 March 2018. Contamination has been bonded and capped to Worksafe NSW satisfaction.
- 14 January SES call out re tree down during severe weather outside Pinetrees.
- Continued successful testing of emergency siren 1000 hrs first Wednesday of each month.

## General items

- LHIB staff have been assisting Norfolk Island Regional Council with their transition to State legislation, particularly in the areas of Airport Management and Development Application and Assessment processes.
- LHIB staff undertook sampling and testing of the Island's groundwater wells & bores during February 2018.
- LHIB staff continue to monitor the Board's drinking water quality for NSW Health compliance.
- LHIB staff continue to monitor mosquito larvae as per the Lord Howe Island Mosquito Surveillance and Vector Monitoring Program. This program is part of a National scheme run by the Federal Government.
- LHIB staff continue to monitor wastewater discharge at the WMF with reporting for EPA licence compliance.
- LHIB staff continue to assist residents and businesses with their onsite wastewater management system installations and/or upgrades.
- LHIB staff continue to conduct building inspections and provide certification for Construction Certificates as part of the Development Application process.

- Purchased 3 x 10ft shipping containers to move possessions of contract LHIB staff. The use of timber packing crates has been extremely problematic with the 'flimsy' type construction failing during loading and unloading. The first of three containers were utilised to move the Logan family with great success. The containers are vermin and waterproof eliminating the time consuming tarping of crates.
- A new purpose built 6 metre aluminium punt vessel has been purchased under Capital purchases. The vessel has a drop down bow gantry door allowing less strenuous loading and unloading of materials such as timber at North Bay. The vessel will also allow effective seaside maintenance/construction at the jetty. The vessel will also be ideal for emergency response eg: oil spill containment.

### **Maritime Facilities and Coastal Activities**

- The new purpose built 6 metre aluminium punt vessel 'Silver Eye' now commercially registered and in operation. First launch date 16 February, utilised to convey staff and timber to North Bay picnic area. Vessel performed beyond expectation allowing safe and easy access from the vessel via a lowering bow gantry door. Coxswain Class 1 minimum licence requirement to master vessel. Apart from many other uses such as jetty construction and maintenance the vessel is ideal and considerably more effective for emergency response operations such as oil spill containment.
- The jetty stairs and boat ramp were high temperate (140 deg.) /pressure cleaned in mid-February.
- The swimming pontoon was removed from the water post-Christmas for cleaning and maintenance. Several components of the anchoring tackle were replaced and a new ladder installed. The pontoon was out of service for one day only.

### **Roads, Parks and Visitor Facilities**

- Extensive pothole repairs were carried out during January and February 2018.
- Potholing repairs continue utilising Bio blend cold mix product. A new product has successfully been trialled which is Canola oil based and friendlier to the environment.
- Six dangerous trees were identified and removed from locations on the island within the road reserve, commercial areas and several on cemetery road. The trees were removed without incident.
- Works Staff continue with significant road verge trimming of vegetation. A considerable amount of road trimming was completed at the south end of the island's road network.
- Spraying for clover and bindi commenced early January 2018. Extensive spraying for broadleaf and weeds will commence in late March 2018.

### **Waste Management Facility**

- General maintenance and service on all equipment has been undertaken.

- Hotrot food composting is working well with a high quality product being produced.
- The first 2018 waste audit was conducted late February concluding 5 March 2018.
- Further concrete pouring operations were conducted on the compost storage area at the rear of the WMF facility with the installation of the trommel screen to be undertaken over the month.

## **ELECTRICAL SERVICES**

Operation of the Powerhouse and Reticulation System for the reporting period 1st November 2017 to 6th March 2018

### **Overview of Activities**

- Routine maintenance on Generating Units 1, 2 and 3 was completed
- Routine maintenance on Generator no.1, 2 and 3 battery banks was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Generator no.1 Air Circuit Breaker was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Generator no.1 day fuel tank and pumping system was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Ventilation fans no. 1 and 2 was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Generator no. 2, 3 and control board battery chargers was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Substation no. 2 Neds Beach Road and associated distribution pillars was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Substation no.11 Mountainview and associated distribution pillars was completed.
- Routine maintenance on Substation no.14 CBD and associated distribution pillars was completed.
- Supply load surveys were carried out on Substations no.2 Neds Beach Road, no.11 Mountainview and no.14 CBD along with their associated distribution pillars. Distribution pillars were monitored for their voltage levels. Substations were monitored for maximum demand and voltage levels. All maximum demand and voltage levels in the surveyed areas were within acceptable limits.

### **Information for Board Members**

- Energy demand for the reporting period was 823 000 kWh.
- Fuel consumption for the reporting period was 204850 litres.

- Fuel energy efficiency for the reporting period was 4.01 kWh/L
- Presently there are 109 kW of privately owned solar panels connected to the electrical distribution system.
- Maximum demand for the period was 450 kW on the 6th November.
- There were no powerhouse supply interruptions during the reporting period.
- There was 1 distribution system supply interruption during the reporting period.
  - The supply interruption was the result of an individual customer overload on a sub-circuit circuit breaker.
- 4 new customers was connected to the supply system. There are currently 288 customers connected to the system.
- Electrical Compliance inspections were carried out on the new Airport Terminal and the new Maxwell Residence. Both services have now been connected to the system.

