

# Dog aware fact



## Coordinated wild dog control

Controlling wild dogs requires coordination, cooperation and planning. Studies have proved that small-scale or isolated control programs can make the problem worse, and taking a community approach has proved to be the only way to provide a long-term solution to wild dog problems.

### If you are dog aware:

**You know that effective wild dog control means working cooperatively with your neighbours and others in your community.**

## Planning a local wild dog control program

### *Step 1—Who needs to be involved*

Everyone needs to be involved in reducing wild dog problems in a local area—even those not directly affected will need to be part of the solution.

When starting a local area coordination group, remember to involve the local council, which can help with overall coordination and producing flyers for letterbox drops, provide a meeting room, or give you maps of the area. They also have staff with knowledge and expertise in animal management issues.

Groups such as Landcare, wildlife protection agencies, or local primary producers can also help with publicity and expertise.

### *Step 2—Organise the group*

If an effective wild dog control program is to be developed, the local area coordination group needs to meet and discuss:

- the scale of the problem
- impacts that need to be prevented
- what factors may be contributing to the problem.

These issues need to be analysed rationally, without personal bias. Analysis must be based on actual information, not speculations and assumptions.

The group will need a coordinator—someone who is concerned with solving problems cooperatively, not with apportioning blame for what may or may not be happening.

The coordinator's role is to:

- act as the central point of contact
- unite the group
- assign jobs to group members
- make sure that appropriate records are kept.

### *Step 3—Plan of action*

All wild dog control programs should involve:

- making a coordinated effort across properties, including council and state lands
- asking for relevant information via letterbox drops, door knocking, telephoning, etc.—information thus obtained can be used to plan coordinated control activities

- delivering information notices and leaflets
- removing factors that may be attracting wild dogs (e.g. uncovered compost heaps or livestock carcasses).

Wild dog control programs for local area coordinating groups should be based on:

- what control actions are feasible in the area
- what expertise is available within the group
- assistance from additional people or organisations who can help
- a schedule.

Selecting the appropriate control method—whether it is baiting, shooting, trapping or a combination of these—will depend on the landscape, what skills people have to offer, the scale of the problem (smaller problems require smaller responses), and what the local community is comfortable with.

#### ***Step 4—Monitoring success and maintaining momentum***

Monitoring the success of a wild dog control program indicates how effective the control actions employed by the group have been, and is vital to ensuring that the group remains active.

Carrying out body counts of wild dogs on individual properties is not a good measure of success. It is better to monitor wild dog activity and animal losses in the local area, as records collated from a group of landholders are more meaningful than those from isolated properties.

To be effective, a control plan must also address ways of preventing future problems as there is no use controlling wild dogs only to have them return at a later date. For example, it may be necessary for a local group to implement, change or improve land or stock management practices.

As wild dog control can be an ongoing process it is important to maintain the momentum of the group. This can be achieved by regularly monitoring the success of the program and continuing to collect and disseminate information on wild dog activity and problems in the local area.

#### ***Step 5—Refine your action plan***

Once a group has gathered and analysed monitoring information, it will be in a good position to refine and improve its action plan. The group should therefore return to Step 1 to see if it needs to make any improvements.

### **If you are dog aware:**

**You know to contact your local council and ask for their help in organizing a local area coordinating group in your community.**