

NSW Independent Biosecurity Commissioner

Consultation Paper: Background on land
manager participation in feral pig and
deer management in NSW

www.nsw.gov.au/independent-biosecurity-commissioner



Acknowledgement of Country

The Commissioner acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live and pays respect to Ancestors and Elders past and present. The Commissioner recognises and learns from the strengths of the Aboriginal peoples of New South Wales and their continuing connection to, and unique cultural and spiritual relationship with, Country. The Commissioner is dedicated to building and sustaining relationships with Aboriginal people and communities across New South Wales.



On Country by Mumbulla Creative, 2022

Context

The NSW Independent Biosecurity Commissioner is undertaking a review of feral pig and deer management in NSW.

The first part of this work examined effective and appropriate control measures and approaches available to manage feral pigs and deer at a regional scale.

The next stage of the review is focused on understanding:

- barriers and incentives to land manager participation
- opportunities to strengthen coordinated action
- the role of compliance and enforcement in supporting regional outcomes.

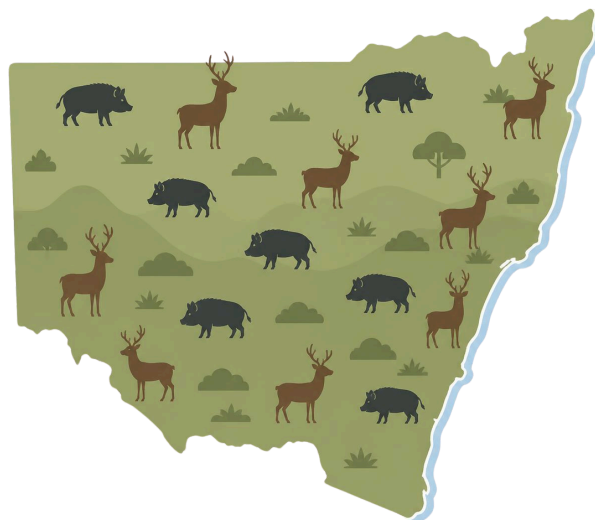
The Commissioner is seeking feedback from land managers, industry, community groups, recreational and volunteer hunters, pest management contractors and others involved in or impacted by feral pigs and deer.

Feral pigs and deer in NSW

Feral pigs and deer are among the most significant and growing established invasive species challenges facing NSW. Both are established across large parts of the State and cause substantial impacts.

While the nature and severity of impacts varies across regions, feral pigs and deer can reduce agricultural productivity, damage native vegetation and biodiversity, spread weeds and diseases, damage infrastructure and increase public safety risks (for example by vehicle collisions).

Feral deer populations continue to expand into new areas of NSW, while favorable seasonal conditions have contributed to increased feral pig populations in many parts of the State.



Feral pigs and deer are considered to be established pests across large parts of NSW

Shared responsibility for management

The NSW *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act) establishes a shared responsibility framework for biosecurity management in NSW. Land managers have a general biosecurity duty and are responsible for managing pest animals on land under their control, including established pest animals like feral pigs and deer. All land managers have a responsibility to comply with the general biosecurity duty, including private and public land managers, local government, and Local Aboriginal Land Councils or native title holders.

Non-land managers can also be potential biosecurity risk creators and must also comply with the general biosecurity duty as well as the mandatory measure in the *Biosecurity Regulation 2017* (section 17B) regulating dealings with feral pigs and deer, including contractors, hunters, recreational groups and the community.

Because feral pigs and deer move across property boundaries and land tenures, effective management requires coordinated action by land managers, industry, communities and government.

The role of government

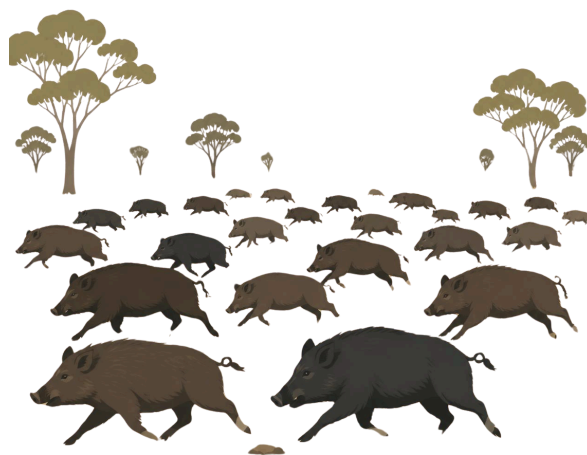
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD, Agriculture & Biosecurity) is the lead NSW government agency responsible for statewide biosecurity policy, governance, planning and enforcement of non-compliance for feral pig and deer management. It also leads state-significant biosecurity responses and supports research, training and nationally consistent approaches.

Local Land Services (LLS) is responsible for best practice pest animal control program delivery and undertakes regional planning consistent with statewide plans; coordination across public and private land tenures including maintaining relationships with land managers; advice, education, training and extension to support engagement, capability building and proactive compliance as it relates to the General Biosecurity Duty; and regional monitoring and reporting.

Service delivery by LLS is generally coordinated across the state and delivered within and across each of the 11 regions. In recent years LLS has delivered specific short-term coordinated pest animal programs, including the Feral Pig and Pest Program and the Good Neighbours Program, as well as programs funded as part of specific drought, flood or bushfire response and recovery programs.

LLS also currently provides substantial operational support to coordinated control programs, including delivery of aerial shooting, baiting and trapping activities and provision of free or subsidised grain, baits and loan of traps or other equipment.

Regional coordinated control programs can include a range of tenures across private and public land that is managed for a range of uses and values.



Public land in NSW includes land reserved for biodiversity, historic, scenic and cultural values, or managed for commercial resources, infrastructure and transport corridors. Key public land managers include DPIRD and LLS, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Crown Lands, Forestry Corporation, Transport for NSW, WaterNSW, Sydney Water and local councils.

Like private land managers, public land managers are responsible for managing feral pigs and deer on land under their control and undertake a range of activities including surveillance, coordinated control programs, operational pest management, monitoring and collaboration with neighbouring land managers to support regional and statewide management outcomes.

Why participation matters

While individual control by land managers is important, effective feral pig and deer control depends on coordinated, integrated and sustained action across landscapes.

When some land managers do not participate in coordinated programs, untreated areas can become refuges for pest animals, reducing the effectiveness of management efforts undertaken elsewhere. This can result in ongoing impacts, reinvasion of managed areas and inefficient use of resources.

Participation may be influenced by many factors, including awareness, capability and capacity, access to control methods, time and cost pressures, animal welfare or environmental considerations, privacy concerns and variable perceptions of responsibility. Understanding the reasons for variable land manager participation is important to improving the effectiveness of coordinated control programs and achieving better regional outcomes.

Compliance and enforcement

Most feral pig and deer management in NSW relies on education, extension, coordination and voluntary participation by land managers.

However, the Act provides compliance and enforcement powers where biosecurity responsibilities are not met. The Commissioner is seeking views on whether current feral pig and deer management arrangements seek the right balance between support, coordination, compliance and enforcement and whether there are opportunities to improve regional outcomes through changes to these approaches.



Have Your Say

There are two ways to submit your feedback.

- Online survey
- Submissions

Have your say on the [consultation website](#) by 5pm Monday 27 July 2026.