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1 Policy Background

The Policy relates to incentive (bounty) payments made by Council for the destruction of wild dogs in the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

Wild dogs are restricted pest animals under the Biosecurity Act 2014 (the Act). Under sections 23 & 42 of the Act, landholders have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to keep land under their control free from restricted pests.

In order to meet these responsibilities, Council, with assistance from Biosecurity Queensland provides landholders with a 1080 baiting service and organises regionally coordinated baiting programs. 1080 may only be supplied by approved Council and Biosecurity Queensland officers under strict conditions. In recognition that not all areas can be baited due to regulatory restrictions and to encourage the use of all available control methods, as a further assistance Council provides an incentive payment, or bounty for wild dogs shot or trapped in the Southern Downs Regional Council area. There is no legal obligation for Council to provide this payment.

Besides baiting, trapping and shooting, other control options available to landholders include the use of wild dog proof fencing and livestock guardian animals.

Council further contributes to wild dog management through the maintenance of declared pest animal fences. Currently this includes funding maintenance of the Killarney and Stanthorpe wild dog check fences and extends to funding top netting on sections of the Darling Downs Moreton Rabbit Board for the purpose of wild dog control. Current expenditure on these fences is approximately $400 000 per annum which Council is obligated to continue paying.

Council also contributes funding to State based wild dog research through local government precept payments to Biosecurity Queensland.

Wild dogs disperse over large distances but tend to have restrictive home ranges. Home ranges may encompass large numbers of both small and large properties. The bounty reflects this by offering individuals undertaking control a cash contribution to the labour and resource intensive activity of trapping and shooting. Bounties also provide an incentive for opportunistic control.

As proof of an animal’s destruction, the whole animal must be sited and claim forms approved by a person authorised under this policy to do so. Bounty payments are only made for dingoes and their hybrids to prevent domestic dogs from being targeted or being misrepresented as wild dogs. As bounty payments are funded by and intended to benefit the Southern Downs Region community, payment is restricted to animals identified as being destroyed in the Council area. This information, in conjunction with baiting data is also used to monitor compliance with control obligations and enables better planning of control programs.

The Queensland Government does not support the use of bounties so does not provide any funding.

NSW Livestock Health and Pest Authorities do not pay wild dog bounties but do collect rates from rural landholders specifically for pest control.

Prior to amalgamation, Stanthorpe Shire Council did not pay bounties, whilst amalgamation partner Warwick Shire Council paid $30 per scalp. This was increased to $50 across Southern Downs Regional Council following its inception and more recently increased to $100. Individual landholders or baiting syndicates may also offer bounties of various levels at their own discretion and cost.
2 Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to assist Council to manage wild dog incentive payments in a consistent and effective manner.

3 Scope
This policy applies to the payment of a bounty by Council upon presentation of the whole wild dog shot or trapped in the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

4 Legislative Context
The Biosecurity Act 2014 sets out provisions for restricting pest animals and landholders’ obligations to control them. There is no legislative obligation for local governments to make bounty payments for the destruction of wild dogs.

5 Policy Details

5.1 Payment level
The bounty is $100 for each approved whole wild dog and $50 for each approved pup (as determined by the authorised person).

5.2 Approval
A number of persons are authorised to approve claim forms to enable efficiency of processing (see 5.3.1).

Authorised persons cannot approve their own claim forms.

Claim will not be authorised unless a whole dog is presented.

The claimant is responsible for destroying each wild dog after it has been marked by an authorised person.

The property from which the animal was taken must be identified on the claim form by property description (lot/plan number).

Claims will only be approved for animals identified as being destroyed within the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

Authorised persons will only sight the whole wild dog and sign claim forms at a pre-arranged time and place of their convenience.

Claim forms will be forwarded by the Authorising Signatory to the SDRC Office.

Dogs will not be accepted at Council offices.
5.3 Processing
Approved claim forms will be stamped with the date received by Council and forwarded internally to Council's Environmental Services section for processing.

Council staff will record details of the identified property and animals in a database.

Once a claim form has been checked the Manager Environmental Services (or authorised delegate) will send a signed memo to Council's Financial Services section to endorse payment.

Claimants may be asked to justify payments if excessive dogs are presented.

Claimants are encouraged to lodge electronic funds transfer details with Council. Claims will be made by electronic funds transfer in preference to cheques to reduce administrative costs.

EFT forms only need to be completed once or when details change.

5.3.1 Persons authorised to verify claims
As per the attached Appendix 2.

6 Related Documents
Appendix 1 - Wild Dog Bounty Claim Form
7 Appendix 1 – Wild Dog Bounty Claim Form

CLAIM FOR WILD DOG BOUNTY

Claimant’s Name: 
Postal Address: 
Phone: 

Details of Wild Dog/s destroyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Destruction</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Shot or Trapped</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Property Description</th>
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Please note: If you have not claimed a Wild Dog bounty from Council within the last 2 years, you must attach a completed SDRC Electronic Transfer Form to receive payment.

I understand that bounties can only be claimed for animals destroyed within Southern Downs Regional Council and that an Authorised Person must receive or have rendered unsuitable for future use whole wild dog in order to complete a valid claim.

Signature of Claimant: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Authorised Person

I received and destroyed/rendered unsuitable for future claim the whole wild dog that corresponds to the information provided.

Name of Authorised Person: ___________________________

Position: ___________________________

Signature of Authorised Person: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

POINTS TO NOTE:
- Bounties will only be paid on presentation of a whole dog (not scalps).
- Payment rates are: $50 per pup (up to 14 weeks of age); $100 per wild dog (over 14 weeks of age).
- Council provide bounty payments as an incentive to encourage integration of trapping/shooting with other controls including coordinated baiting, guardian animals and pest barrier fences.
- Claims are signed by authorised person at times convenient to them.
- Bounty payments are a privilege not a legal right.
- Under S23 & 42 of the Biosecurity Act 2014, Landholders have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to keep land under their control free from restricted pests.
8 Appendix 2 - Persons authorised to verify claims and payments

Councillors:

Cr Cameron Gow  
Cr Rod Kelly

Southern Downs Regional Council Environmental Services:

Warwick Local Laws Officers (Pest Management)  
Stanthorpe Local Laws Officers (Pest Management)  
Local Laws Coordinator  
Manager Environmental Services

Community Representatives:

Karara Dingo Destruction Group: Andrew Costello, Michael Welsh.  
Greymare Destruction Group: Ian Cullen.  
Risdon/Wildash Destruction Group: Ben Cory.  
Killarney Destruction Group: Laurence Dagg.  
West of Dog Fence Stanthorpe: Peter Reimers, Clive Smith.  
East of Dog Fence Stanthorpe: Stan Reid.  
Allora District: Glynn Rees.  
Toolburra Dingo Destruction Group: Jack Dwan.

Persons authorised to make payment:

Manager Environmental Services, Southern Downs Regional Council

Personal Assistant to Director of Planning, Environment and Corporate Services,  
Southern Downs Regional Council