

# Feral Deer Aerial Shooting Control Program

## 2022 Information for participating landholders

### Limestone Coast Landscape Board

Aerial shooting of feral animals from a helicopter is an effective and efficient control option that can be used across a variety of habitat and land types.

Aerial shooting can remove pest animals missed by other control programs (e.g. mustering or trapping), helping to achieve landscape scale control in a short timeframe.

Since 2009 the Limestone Coast Landscape Board's feral deer aerial control program has removed 12,841 feral deer from the landscape. In addition, a number of secondary targets have been removed including; 350 goats and 161 foxes. The program has evolved substantially over the years; the first operation involved a five day program with a single helicopter in nine Department for Environment and Water (DEW) reserves and no private lands.

Since 2014 the program has expanded to utilise two helicopters throughout autumn and spring. The September 2021 program involved 57 private landholders (59,228 ha) and 22 DEW reserves (68,875 ha), covering approximately 4.2% of the Limestone Coast Landscape Region.

### Qualifications and experience

Aerial shooting operations are undertaken by a small team of experienced and competent government personnel. All personnel involved in these operations have undergone a selection process prior to completing the required training and accreditation for aerial shooting operations.

Operations are undertaken in accordance with DEW policies and apply best practice procedures to the humane shooting of feral animals. All marksmen hold the applicable firearms licence category and Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) approvals to carry and discharge firearms on an aircraft.

Likewise, helicopter operators must hold the applicable approvals from CASA to undertake aerial shooting operations. Helicopter pilots must hold the required licences and permits, and have the appropriate skills and experience to undertake aerial shooting operations.

### Recording

Recording of the location, number and species of deer shot is conducted by the pilot and marksman using a GPS (global positioning system) enabled data logger. Flight tracking data (track logs) are also recorded using GPS.

GPS enabled computer mapping software is used in flight to provide maps to the marksmen and pilots to identify the operational area, any buffer or no-flight zones, and flight hazards. Property information provided by landholders in their Landholder Agreements is used to create accurate operational maps which clearly identify property boundaries and operational areas, and these are updated for each aerial shooting operation.

### Landholder Agreements

Participating landholders are required by the Limestone Coast Landscape Board to sign an annual Landholder Agreement. This document captures the relevant property information including; the Hundred and section numbers, area of property approved for access, areas not approved for access, livestock to be moved and other requirements.

Landholder Agreements also require landholders to conduct follow up feral deer control work with ground shooting in order to maximise the effectiveness of the aerial shooting program.

Information on who is participating in the aerial shooting program is considered to be confidential, and participant or property details are not made publicly available.

### Insurance

DEW supply confirmation of insurance in respect of Public Liability and Professional Indemnity for all Landscape Boards of SA.

All approved aerial shooting programs are covered by DEW under the Insurance and Risk Management arrangements with the South Australian Government Financing Authority (SAFA). Under this agreement between SAFA and DEW, SAFA will meet the cost of any Civil Liability claim made against DEW. The cover amount is without limit, subject to DEW's selected deductible. A letter of confirmation of insurance protection can be provided to landholders upon request.

The background of helicopter companies involved in aerial shooting operations is also thoroughly explored to ensure the areas of insurance, air safety, maintenance and reliability are thoroughly covered.

### Important information for aerial control activities

- Aerial control activities will occur during these closure periods, and will be focussed within the boundaries of the listed conservation parks unless otherwise approved.
- Private landowners will be participating where written agreements are in place.
- It will be assumed that inclusion of private land in the aerial control activities will be as per written agreements unless otherwise advised.
- If you wish to have your property included in the aerial control activities, you MUST complete and return a Landholder Agreement Form to provide written permission for this activity.
- Private landholders must supply a map of all participating properties, showing areas to be included in the program.
- The details of the activities on private land can be discussed with project staff to ensure your specific requirements are met.
- Due to the very tight schedule of aerial activities, it will not be possible to notify landholders of the specific days that aerial activities will be occurring on or near their properties.
- In the interests of public safety and avoiding unnecessary concern, we strongly advise all landholders ensure that any tenants on or visitors to their properties are advised of the project activities.

- 12-16 September- Hybrid Aerial Operation
- 17-21 October- Hybrid Aerial Operation
- 30 September- 8 October- Thermal Assisted Aerial Cull

Please visit the South Australian Parks and Wildlife website for the most up to date area and campground closures at [www.parks.sa.gov.au](http://www.parks.sa.gov.au).

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## Disclaimer

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## More information

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