

# Declared Animal Policy

*This policy relates to natural resources management, as per section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of animals/plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, in accordance with section 7(1)(f) of the Act.*

## Feral pig (*Sus scrofa*)

This policy summarises the requirements to manage feral pigs under the following legislative instruments: *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* (the LSA Act), *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020* (the General Regulations), the *Livestock Regulations 2013* and the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*. This policy also provides interpretation and recommended best practice on how legislative requirements can be met.

### Preamble

Feral pigs impact on agriculture, the environment and cultural sites across Australia. The number of feral pigs in South Australia is small but they can breed and spread rapidly.

Pigs are declared for control under the LSA Act and the associated General Regulations apply.

The prevention and early response to incursions is a cost-effective alternative to long term control of established feral pig populations. Once feral pig populations become established, they are prohibitively expensive to eradicate.

This policy outlines measures to prevent isolated incursions from becoming established populations. The policy also recommends control measures to reduce the number of feral pigs in existing populations and prevent them spreading.

### Definitions

Feral pigs are pigs that are that are not kept in captivity.

- This policy summarises the legislative requirements for feral pigs to be destroyed, and not moved, sold, kept or released.

Domestic pigs are pigs that are that are kept in captivity in an enclosure with security measures designed to ensure that the pigs cannot escape (other than in circumstances that cannot be reasonably foreseen and guarded against).

Pig keepers must be registered to keep domestic pigs under the *Livestock Regulations 2013* and they must comply with instructions of an Authorised Officer under the LSA Act, to keep domestic pigs confined. A pig keeper's property where domestic pigs are kept must have a valid Property Identification Code.

Declared to be destroyed means that all land managers must carry out proper measures for the destruction of all pigs until there are none left.

## **Purpose**

To reduce the environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts of feral pigs.

## **Objectives**

- Reduce numbers of feral pigs on all properties and in all populations.
- Prevent domestic pigs from escaping into the wild.
- Prevent the release of domestic and feral pigs.

## **Feral pig risk**

### Invasiveness

The number of feral pigs in South Australia is small (estimated to be 3,000-6,000 in 2018) (Appendix 1). Populations are concentrated in four areas; western Kangaroo Island, Lake Eyre Basin, North Eastern Pastoral District and the Riverland. Isolated incursions have also been reported across the State, particularly since 2013.

There is a risk that new populations of feral pigs will establish in South Australia and that existing populations may spread. Feral pigs have a rapid reproductive rate and so their populations can double or more in size each year. Feral pigs move into South Australia along waterways, from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, especially during good seasons.

### Impacts

Feral pigs impact agriculture, the environment and public safety by:

- spreading diseases to domestic pigs, other stock and humans (including potential for spreading Foot and Mouth disease)
- eating pasture for stock
- eating crops
- eating native plants and digging soils in wetlands, grasslands and forests
- eating culturally important bush foods
- eating native animals and lambs
- spreading plant diseases and weeds
- increasing soil erosion
- reducing water quality
- damaging fences

Local impacts of feral pigs vary and they can be severe where populations are large.

### Trends

Numbers of feral pigs in established populations are stable in the North Eastern Pastoral District (more than 1000 pigs). Numbers of feral pigs probably fluctuate in the Lake Eyre Basin. In the Riverland coordinated control reduced the population to about 200 pigs in 2010. Active

control by individual landholders has continued but the population may have increased between 2010 and 2018. On western Kangaroo Island, pig numbers were significantly reduced by the 2020 bushfires (from 1000-5500 pigs to now less than 1000).

Numbers of new areas where incursions of feral pigs were reported has remained stable since 2013, but the numbers of pigs in some incursions are increasing.

The number of properties registered to keep domestic pigs increased from 438 to 1274 properties between 2006 and 2018.

The number of pigs that escaped from captivity is unknown, because many domestic pigs are not tattooed.

### **Feasibility of Containment**

The prevention and early response to incursions is the cost-effective alternative to ongoing control of established feral pig populations. Annual baiting, trapping, aerial and ground culling over district scales (including groups of adjacent properties) are effective methods to reduce feral pig populations. To be effective, the number of female pigs culled each year must exceed the number of female piglets produced. Reducing pig numbers is particularly effective in drier years when reproduction and survival rates are lower. Once populations become large and established, they are prohibitively expensive to eradicate.

The eradication of feral pigs will not be possible in the Chowilla floodplain, North East Pastoral and Lake Eyre Basin populations because feral pigs from New South Wales or Queensland will continue reinvading along waterways.

### **State Level Risk Assessment**

The [SA Pest Animal Risk Management Guide](#) was used to assess the future risks of feral pigs and the feasibility to contain them. The guide indicated a need to focus on surveillance and mapping, destruction of all populations and to prevent keeping, movement and sale of feral pigs so that new populations do not establish.

## **Management plan for feral pigs**

### **Management required for an ongoing decline in the numbers of feral pigs in established populations**

Under section 185(1)(a)(i) of the LSA Act, the Minister for Environment and Water has declared that section 192(1) of the LSA Act applies to feral pigs, meaning public and private landholders are responsible for destroying feral pigs on their land.

It is recommended that regional landscape boards inform landholders about the importance and methods of culling feral pigs before populations grow and impacts become intolerable.

Landscape boards should try to source external funding to assist the community in coordinating culling programs in the areas of greatest impacts. Boards recognise the need to collaborate with interstate organisations on coordinated culling programs, where feral pigs are moving from New South Wales or Queensland, into South Australia.

## **Management required to prevent the establishment of new populations of feral pigs in South Australia**

Regional landscape boards should encourage and facilitate community surveillance programs to detect incursions of feral pigs.

Regional landscape boards should inform landholders of local incursions of feral pigs and require that all feral pigs are destroyed at incursion sites.

Landholders are responsible for destroying feral pigs on their land.

Under section 185(1)(a)(i) of the LSA Act, the Minister for Environment and Water has declared that section 190 of the LSA Act applies to feral pigs, meaning that if a landowner becomes aware of the presence of feral pigs on their land, they must notify the regional landscape board.

Any sightings of escaped domestic pigs must also be reported to the landscape board. Escaped domestic pigs become feral pigs (by definition) once they are no longer kept in captivity, and should be destroyed by landholders, on whose land pigs have strayed.

## **Management required to prevent feral pigs from being released illegally**

Under section 185(1)(a)(i) of the LSA Act, the Minister for Environment and Water has declared that sections 186(1), 186(3), 187(1), 188 and 189 of the LSA Act apply to feral pigs, meaning they must not be moved, sold, kept or released.

## **Welfare**

Methods used to cull feral pigs must adhere to the National Animal Welfare Codes of Practice (Feral Livestock Animals) and the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*. It is an offence to allow a dog to harm, bring down or kill a pig, under the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*. The use of dogs in pig hunting poses welfare risks to the pig and the dogs.

Dogs can only be used to flush feral pigs from vegetation to assist with control programs.

## **Management plan for domestic pigs**

### **Management required to prevent domestic pigs from escaping due to unforeseen circumstances or being released illegally**

South Australia has a productive pig farming industry. Under section 185(1)(a)(i) of the LSA Act, the Minister for Environment and Water has declared

- that sections 189, 191(1) and 192(3) of the LSA Act apply to domestic pigs **across the whole state (excluding Kangaroo Island)**, meaning that they cannot be released; a person in possession of them must comply with the instructions of an Authorised Officer; and a person in possession of them must comply with any measures stipulated in any Chief Executive Control Notice that are gazetted.
- **that sections 186(1), 187, 189, 191(2), 192(3) of the LSA Act apply to domestic pigs on Kangaroo Island, meaning that they are prohibited from entering Kangaroo Island; they cannot be kept on Kangaroo Island, they cannot be released, a person in possession**

of them must comply with the instructions of an Authorised Officer; and a person in possession of them must comply with any measures stipulated in any Chief Executive Control Notice that is gazetted.

Permits may be issued by the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board under section 197(1) of the LSA Act that will enable domestic pigs to enter or be kept on Kangaroo Island, subject to a range of conditions relating to identification, fencing and movement specified in the permit.

If an Authorised Officer determines that a landholder has not taken reasonable steps to confine domestic pigs, they may require that specific fencing standards are applied. On Kangaroo Island, fencing suitability will be assessed by an Authorised Officer as part of a property risk assessment prior to any domestic pig permit being issued by the Kangaroo Island Landscape Board. An example of recommended best practice fencing standards for domestic pigs is provided in Attachment 2.

When domestic pigs, which weigh more than 20kg, leave the property where they are normally kept (e.g. in transit between properties of different registered owners, or at an abattoir), they must be tattooed with an identification linked to the Property Identification Code, as per section 72 of the *Livestock Regulations 2013*.

Domestic pigs (with or without tattoos), which belong to a pig keeper who is registered to keep them as per the *Livestock Regulations 2013*, may be moved for emergency veterinary care or on a short-term temporary basis as may be required by the *Animal Welfare Act 1985* and due to any welfare emergency such as a bushfire emergency. While domestic pigs are absent from their enclosure (for welfare purposes), they must be confined and supervised by a responsible person.

### **Regional Implementation**

Refer to management plans of local landscape boards for details on culling programs for feral pigs. Landscape board management plans may use a risk management approach to minimise the number of domestic pigs that escape farms.

### **Exclusions**

This policy does not seek to address the issue of hunting feral pigs. Legislation relating to hunting is under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*, the *Firearms Act 1977* and the *Animal Welfare Act 1985*.

### **Declarations**

To implement this policy, feral pigs and domestic pigs are declared under the LSA Act.

The following sections of the LSA Act apply to feral pigs across the whole of the State:

Sections of Act	Declared Area	Whole of the State
186(1) Prohibiting entry of feral pigs to area		
186(3) Prohibiting movement of feral pigs within area		
187(1) Prohibiting possession of feral pigs in area		
188(1) Prohibiting sale of feral pigs		
189 Prohibiting release of feral pigs		
190 Requiring notification of feral pigs		
192(1) Landowners to destroy feral pigs on their properties		

The following sections of the LSA Act apply to domestic pigs across the whole of the State:

Sections of Act	Declared Area	Whole of the State (Excluding Kangaroo Island)	Kangaroo Island
186(1) Prohibiting entry into the area			
187 Cannot be kept in the area			
189 Prohibiting release of domestic pigs			
191(1) Domestic pig keepers to comply with instructions of Authorised Officers			
191(2) Landowners must comply with instructions of Authorised officer for keeping			
192(3) Landowners to take any measures prescribed by the Regulations or specified by a relevant authority in the prescribed manner for the control of pigs on their properties.			

## Review

This policy will be reviewed by 2024, including evaluation of:

- Whether the management plan was effectively implemented
- Whether the numbers and distributions of feral pigs in established populations changed between 2018 and 2024
- Whether the number and size of incursions changed between 2018 and 2024
- Unintended consequences

## References

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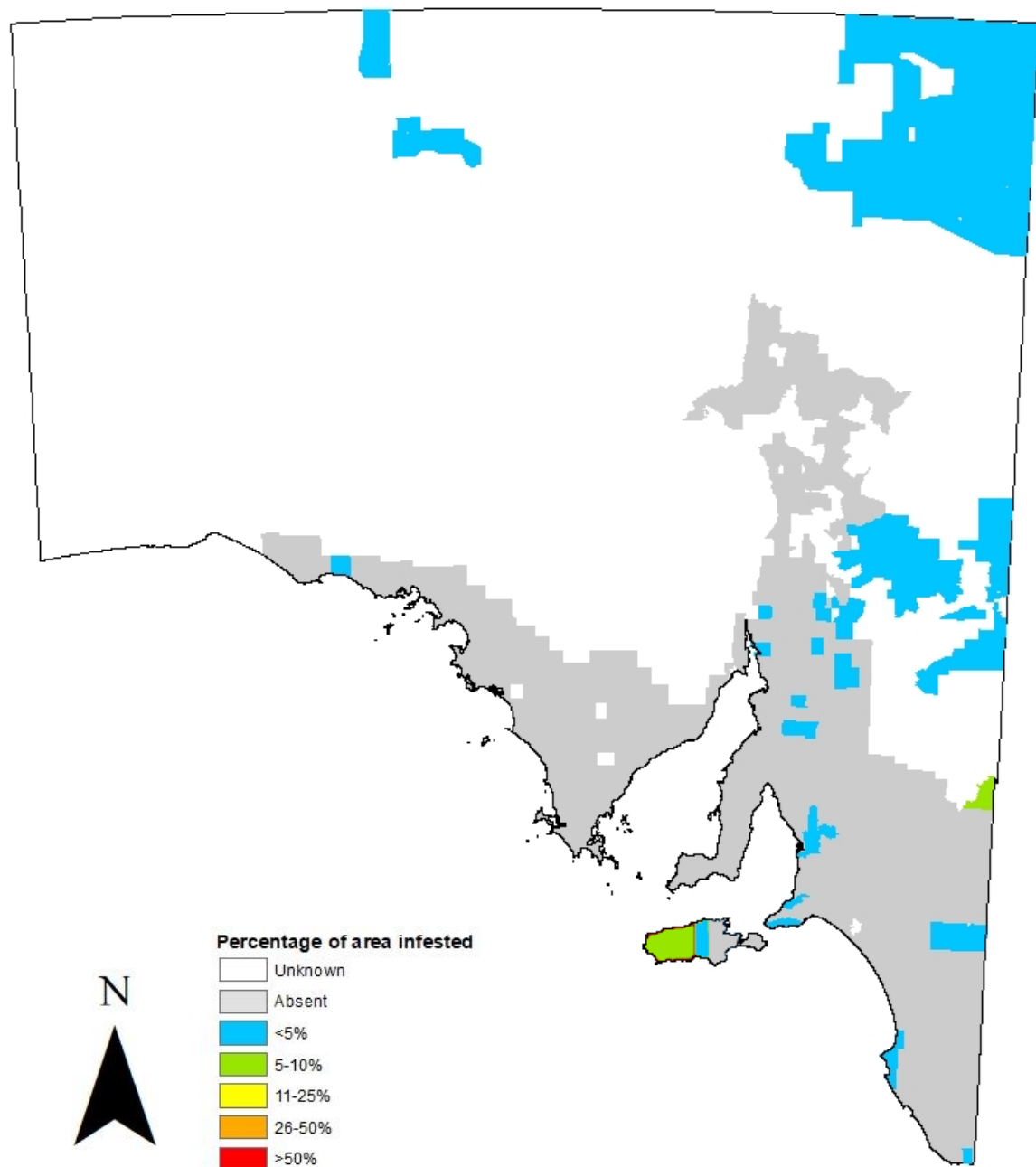
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**Appendix 1. The distribution of feral pigs in South Australia (2021).**





## Appendix 2.

To prevent their escape, domestic pigs need to be kept in an enclosure with security measures designed to ensure that the pigs cannot escape.

Where an Authorised Officer under the LSA Act has reason to believe that domestic pigs on land with the consent of the owner are not being kept securely and are not remaining confined within the property boundary, the officer may require the owner of the domestic pigs to erect or modify and permanently maintain a pig enclosure fence. The following are best practice specifications:

- All boundary fences of pig enclosure should be constructed so that fences and gates are a minimum of 1.1m in height from the ground.
- All boundary fences of pig enclosure should be constructed using:
  - a) Hingejoint or ringlock pig mesh (size 8/80/15) to a minimum of 0.8 m above the ground, plus wire spaced each 50 mm above the mesh to the maximum height of the fence. Fences must use steel posts, that are a minimum of 2 m long, on the outside of the mesh, and the posts must be spaced no more than 10 m apart. Two electrified wire outriggers should be installed on the inside of the fence, which must be live at all times while pigs are enclosed. The outriggers should be spaced 375 mm from the ground and set out 200 mm from the fence, and 200 mm from the ground and set out 350 mm from the fence, respectively, or;
  - b) solid panels of metal, brick, concrete or wood.
- All boundary fences of pig enclosures should be kept clear of fallen trees or branches, which are lying over or have damaged the fence.
- All holes under boundary fences and gates of pig enclosure should be repaired or blocked with additional mesh (or equivalent material) in accordance with the minimum standard for size and strength and the fence should be pegged down so that the bottom horizontal wire in the fence or the bottom of the gate is not greater than 50 mm distance in a vertical direction down to the ground level at any point.
- Where the contour of the land under the boundary fence is deeply undulating, or where the soil is sandy or rocky, such that it increases the risk of pigs escaping, sections of the boundary fence post spacing should be less than the 10 m.

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