

TERMS OF REFERENCE

State-wide review of pest animal management

The Premier requests the Natural Resources Commission (Commission) to review the management of pest animals in NSW (under Section 13(1) (f) of the *Natural Resources Commission Act 2003*).

Pest animals create economic, social and environmental costs for the NSW community. Across Australia, pest animals have been estimated to cost \$745 million annually, including losses in agriculture and expenditures on management, administration and research. They also threaten the environment. Within NSW more than 350 species, populations and communities are considered to be threatened by the impacts of pest animals. The social and emotional impacts on farmers and communities are also significant, especially where pest animals kill livestock.

Pest animals are managed across different tenures by private and public land managers including the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Local Land Services. Several pieces of legislation are relevant to pest animals and their management, including the *Local Land Services Act 2013*, *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995*, the *Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002*, and the *Biosecurity Bill 2014*.

There is a perception that the pest animal problem is getting worse despite efforts of landholders and governments, and that more coordinated approaches are needed.

The purpose of the review is to identify opportunities to improve the management of pest animals in NSW across all land tenures for environmental, economic and social benefits.

In particular, the Commission will investigate and identify:

- quality of the evidence base and processes supporting prioritisation decisions
- priority pest animal issues in NSW and emerging risks
- examples of current good practice, including from other jurisdictions
- any policy, regulatory or organisational barriers to more effective pest animal management
- opportunities to better coordinate, redirect or grow investment and management across tenures and across different pest species and maximise benefit per dollar invested
- priority research needs
- ways to promote community understanding of and involvement in pest animal management.

The review will recommend options for improving arrangements for pest animal management across NSW, including potential funding models. The review will also consider implementation and transitional issues for any recommendations.

The review will consider introduced terrestrial and freshwater vertebrate species. Animals in the marine environment are excluded.

The Commission will chair an advisory committee to inform the review. The Committee will include one representative from each of the Department of Primary Industries, Office of Environment and Heritage, Local Land Services and an independent member with pest animal management expertise.

The Commission will provide an issues paper followed by a draft report within six months of receiving the terms of reference, and a final report including outcomes of public consultation within four months of providing the draft report.