

WALGETT REGIONAL BIO-SECURITY PLAN 2015-2016

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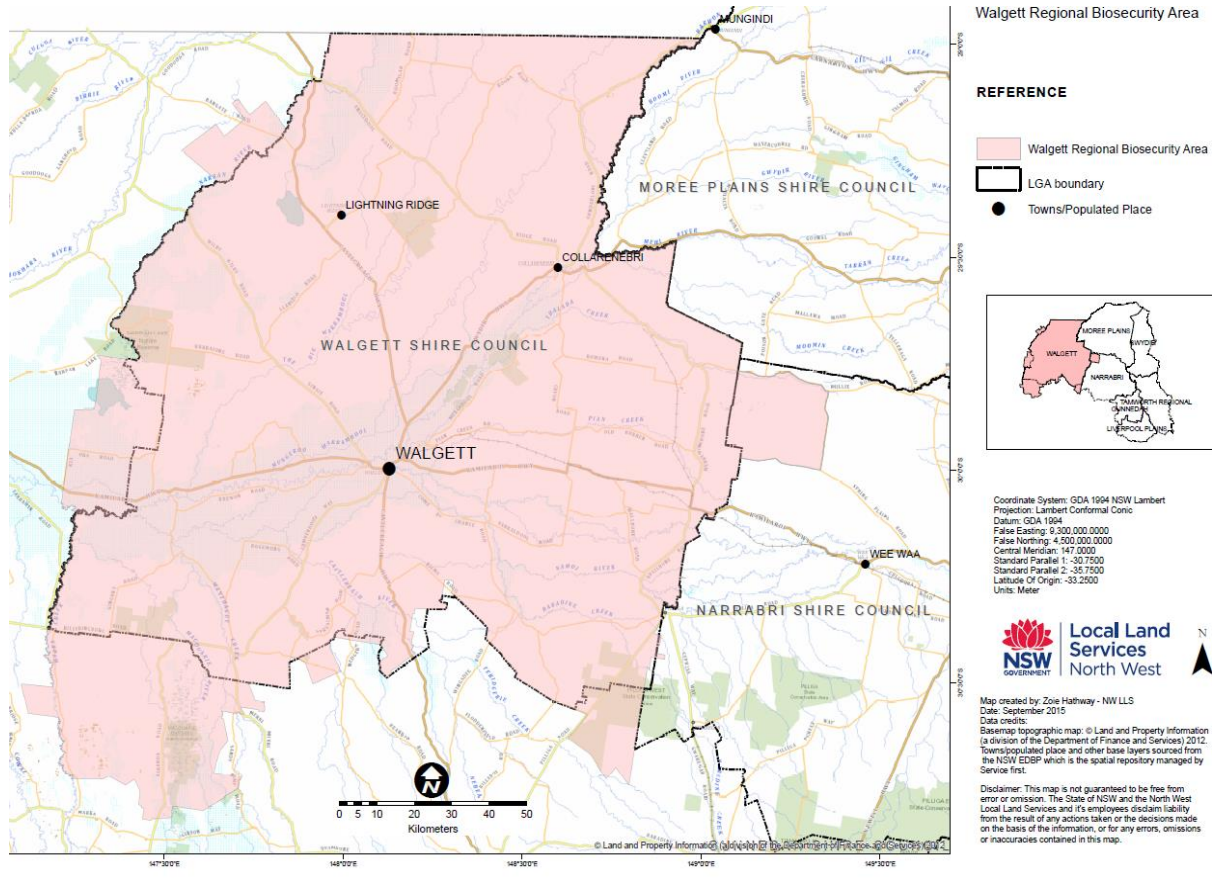
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1. Defined Area & Map

The Walgett Regional Biosecurity Area is defined by the boundaries of the former Walgett Rural Lands Protection Board Boundaries (RLPB), and is open to accepting adjoining landholders forming additional Biosecurity areas to be included; once it is assured that they meet the criteria set by the Walgett OJD Steering Committee.



In March 2015 Walgett Biosecurity Inc accepted the neighbouring Spring Plains group of 17 sheep producers with estimate of 30 815 sheep into the Walgett RBA.

The area extends from the Walgett Shire eastern boundary with SR1 Millie Rd to north, SR4 Spring Plains Rd to east, SR45 and Nowley Rd - Fairview Rd to the south.

The OJD RBA group accepted the addition in July 2015.

2. Background

The Walgett Shire is renowned for sheep breeding, particularly with Merinos and the vast majority of flocks are self-replacing. Some crossbred lamb production from Merino ewes does occur, only with sheep from within the Walgett shire or adjoining low risk areas such as Queensland.

Sheep trading patterns in the Walgett area are similar to those of the Central West (Coonamble and Nyngan) and Darling RBAs.

There is very strong producer support for this plan to be implemented & a great drive from all stakeholders involved to ensure that the plan works.

Management of risk regarding the introduction of OJD will be paramount to the success of this plan; hence a lot of the plan is based on following low risk procedures.

The enthusiasm for making this plan work is at its greatest currently as producers are now better informed of what the process is & the Walgett area is now within the thresholds required to implement a Regional Biosecurity plan.

Information determined from the 2013 Land and Stock Returns indicate that the former Walgett Rural Lands Protection board area hosted 159 landholders with total sheep numbers estimated to be 319,993.

The Spring Plains group of 17 producers with estimate 30815 sheep was added to the Walgett RBA in July 2015. All producers have agreed to follow the Walgett Regional Biosecurity Plan and guidelines for entry of sheep into their area.

Evidence of Producer Support

2010 OJD Exclusion Area Survey Results, Walgett Region for maintaining an exclusion area for OJD.

Valid Poll Results

94.5%, Voting YES in favour of maintaining an Exclusion area for OJD

4.4%, Voting No

1.1%, Invalid

Abattoir Survey Results

Negative Monitoring

2013 - 6 Lines, 6 PICs

2012 – 29 Lines, 16 PICs

2011 – 19 Lines, 10 PICs

Year	Number lines inspected	Number animals inspected	Number of PIC's inspected	Number of PIC's infected
2013	6	1720	6	0
2012	29	7810	16	0
2011	19	4876	10	0

Positive Traces

12 PICs have had positive trace backs from abattoir surveillance testing during periods 1999 to 2009. At this time Walgett was an OJD Protected Area and then an OJD Exclusion area.

The infected sheep were all introduced with no evidence of transfer of infection to other sheep within the Walgett area.

10 PIC Flocks have undergone testing and property management plans and have subsequently been reinstated from infected or suspect flocks to non-assessed (NA) Flocks.

ONLY 2 PICs currently have Suspect Status.

The plan:

- Relies on producers and agents cooperating with each other to protect the status of the Walgett RBA for their mutual benefit;
- Provides producers with tools to minimise the risk of introduction and spread of OJD within their area.
- Encourages producers to take action if OJD is suspected or proven to have occurred in their sheep.
- Assists with traditional trading partners interstate and neighbouring RBA's.
- Committee formed on 30th May 2014, comprising of Merino Breeders including registered Studs, traders, a livestock agent and wool broker.

3. Objectives of the Regional Biosecurity Plan

To prevent the entry of OJD into the Walgett RBA and to manage any detections with a view to eradication.

To re-instate our sheep marketing and trading options, as the Walgett RBA is traditionally a breeding area, selling sheep into all areas of NSW, as well as the relevant areas of Queensland and South Australia.

4. Strategies

- Discourage the entry of OJD infected sheep into the Walgett RBA
- Record any movements and OJD status of sheep being moved into the Walgett RBA
- Manage any detection of OJD within the Walgett RBA so that the disease is eradicated (at best) or effectively contained (if eradication is not feasible)
- Utilise abattoir monitoring of sheep for OJD to demonstrate:
 - No disease has been introduced, and
 - That the prevalence of the disease remains low
- Promote the concepts of biosecurity to producers and agents within the Walgett RBA to ensure understanding of the responsibilities and benefits of compliance with those responsibilities.
- Create a sense of community responsibility to maintaining the OJD free status of the Walgett RBA for the benefit of all industry participants within the area.

5. Responsibilities of stakeholders within the Walgett RBA

Walgett Bio Security Inc.

("the Committee") shall

- Provide producer input into the direction and functioning of the Walgett RBA
- Develop the RBP
- Deliver key messages to producers within the Walgett RBA which include that individual producers are responsible to only introduce Low Risk sheep and check that the National Sheep Health statement is provided.
- Request producers who have introduced high risk sheep to contact the NWLLS technical advisor to develop a PDMP to ensure that they are not a risk to other producers in the area.
- Assist producers with the development of a Property Disease Management Plan (PDMP) when necessary
- Consultation with LLS Technical advisor and also seek advice from NW LLS technical advisor.

Producers

- Responsible for the introduction of low risk sheep into the Walgett RBA
- Responsible for trading only sheep with the Sheep Health Statement (SHS)
- Retain copies of SHS, NVD's and records of sheep movements for auditing
- Keep records, SHS and NVD's for 5 years
- Record mob to mob based movements on NLIS database
- Regularly monitor sheep flocks for signs of disease
- Report any suspicion of OJD in their flocks to District Veterinarian
- Be responsible for developing and implementing an on-farm biosecurity plan
- Develop and implement a PDMP to minimise the risk of spread of OJD and to eradicate the disease if OJD is suspected or confirmed in their sheep.
- Assist technical advisors with investigations and assessment of OJD risk and spread of OJD infection including trace forwards and tracebacks.
- Identify and notify owners of flocks to which they have sold at risk sheep or flocks from which they have introduced high risk sheep.
- Maintain boundary fences so as to minimise straying sheep

Stock Agents

- Encourage producers to introduce low risk sheep into the Walgett RBA
- Encourage producers to trade sheep with SHS
- Educate producers about the use of SHS and understanding the SHS

- For Auctions Plus, complete SHS at assessment
- Collect and keep Sheep Health Statements for sheep introductions into the Walgett RBA for auditing.
- Placard sale lots at saleyards, and otherwise advertise sheep, as being “RBA eligible” if they meet the requirements as set out in 5, below
- Liaise with the Committee to advise of compliance with the plan

Technical Advisors to the Committee – North West LLS District Veterinarians

- Provide technical advice to the Committee , to manage the Walgett Regional Biosecurity Plan
- Provide technical advice to producers of infected or suspect flocks to investigate and develop individual Property Disease Management Plan (PDMP) which will include:
 - Biosecurity for the benefit of the infected flock and neighbours
 - Trading options
 - Testing
 - Vaccination
 - Destocking
- A combination of the above strategies
- With the affected producer’s permission, notify neighbours and traces within the Walgett RBA.
- With affected producer’s permission notify traces to or from other RBA’s to the technical advisor, Government Veterinary Officer or District Veterinarian of that RBA.
- Traces from other authorities and direct line abattoir trace-backs will be investigated.
- The assessed risk will determine what further action is required and will be dependent on epidemiology, financial constraints, trade patterns and the support of the producer/s involved.
- The mob based movement report on the NLIS database will be assessed bimonthly, and reported to Walgett Biosecurity Inc committee.
- Sheep Health Statements that are inconsistent or indicate the introduction does not comply with Walgett Biosecurity Inc Regional Biosecurity Plan guidelines will be referred to NWLLS technical advisors for an assessment.
- Follow up action on high risk introductions will include :
 - Contact the purchaser to verify the details on National Sheep Health Statement and discuss the introduction.
 - Inform the purchaser what the requirements are for sheep to enter the Walgett Regional Biosecurity Area.
 - Inform the purchaser what they need to include on their National Sheep Health Statement.
 - Provide advice for a Property Disease Management Plan – which may include an agreement to test and/or vaccinate (at their expense).
- Notify all producers of infected or suspect flocks of their obligations when completing Sheep Health Statements.
- Act in compliance with the relevant Act, Regulations, Policies and Procedures
- Investigate cases of owner reported suspicion of OJD and cases of ill-thrift, wasting and death in adult sheep to rule out OJD
- Provide advice to producers to assist their understanding of OJD, evaluating risks, management and control

- Maintain property disease records on LHMS database
- Report results of OJD abattoir monitoring to the Committee and maintain property disease status records.
- Will report (in summary form) the statistics concerning OJD investigative and advisory activities within the Walgett RBA to the Committee annually.

6. Guidelines for entry of low risk (OJD) sheep into the Walgett RBA

1. Adult Sheep and lambs should originate from:

- A Regional Biosecurity Area (RBA) recognised by the Committee as meeting similar standards to the Walgett RBA (other than from known infected or suspected to be infected flocks), or
- SheepMAP flocks; or
- Flocks that have had a negative PFC 350 or Abattoir 500 test within the last two years and the flock is a closed flock (no introduced sheep, including rams); OR
- Flocks that have had a negative PFC 350 or Abattoir 500 test within the last two years and all sheep introduced¹ within the preceding 5 years were from;
 - Flocks located in the Protected Area; OR
 - SheepMAP flocks OR
 - (prior to 1st July 2013) flocks that met the requirements for moving into SA (except KI) and NSW Exclusion Areas (i.e. ABC Score 4 or higher under the superseded ABC scheme), OR
 - (after 1st July 2013) flocks that had a negative test²
- A Regional Biosecurity Area flock, and have attended a show or breeding centre at which they have been housed, fed and watered separately from all other stock, and are returning direct to the Regional Biosecurity Area within 14 days.
- A flock that will be attending a show, or breeding centre in a Regional Biosecurity Area at which they will be housed, fed and watered separately from all other stock, and will be returning direct to their Area within 14 days.

¹All introduced sheep must have been accompanied by a Sheep Health Statement that has been retained as evidence of the sheep status.

²PFC350 or Abattoir500 test within the preceding two years.

2. Terminal 't' tag lamb

- A lamb which is to be slaughtered before it cuts its first permanent teeth and is identified by an NLIS (sheep) 'T' tag

Use of SHS

All sheep introduced to the Walgett RBA shall be accompanied by a SHS and NVD that is retained by the receiver for at least 5 years.

Ineligible sheep

Sheep from flocks with known INFECTED or SUSPECT status for OJD are ineligible to enter the Walgett RBA.

Transiting through Saleyards

Sheep transiting through the RBA via saleyards or shows should be segregated based on their eligibility to be on-sold or returned to a RBA (respectively). This means that they should be:

- Clearly demarcated as being RBA eligible or ineligible
- Sheep of different eligibility status shall be physically segregated when housed at the saleyards, utilising different lanes and loading ramps

7. Surveillance

Surveillance is undertaken to detect OJD. It may consist of:

- Industry testing, e.g. abattoir surveillance or producer testing, OJD MAP testing
- Passive surveillance: investigation of disease events where OJD is considered a differential diagnosis

8. Financial

This RBP is based on individual and collective producer responsibility.

9. Education and Extension

The Committee will

- Promote the Walgett RBA and Walgett RBP through newspaper articles and advertisements
- Seek the cooperation of producers, agents and saleyard managers in the conduct of the plan, in particular the use of the SHS
- Encourage producers to seek advice from technical advisors to assist their understanding of OJD, evaluating risks, management and control

10. Key Performance Indicators

The RBP will be reviewed annually taking consideration of these Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Low disease prevalence
- Effectiveness of the response to OJD detections during the year:

- Development of PDMPs
 - Compliance with PDMPs, and
 - Progress of containment/eradication efforts on properties with pre-existing disease
- Compliance with entry standards
 - Liaison with stock agents
- At least three extension activities annually about the RBP

11. Reporting

The committee will retain records of their activities suitable for auditing against the Plan's objectives and KPIs.

12. Audit

There is a requirement that the Plan shall be auditable, with the detail to be decided at a later date.

Internal audit and reporting is conducted annually. Audit outcomes are reported to the other RBAs.

External audit as decided by the collective RBA groups.