

The National Red Witchweed Eradication Program

PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR PEST AND DISEASE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROGRAMS

Table 1: Formalities and operation of schedule

Parties	Commonwealth Queensland
Duration	<p>This Schedule is expected to expire on 30 June 2026.</p> <p>For the purposes of Clause 10 of the <i>Project Agreement for Pest and Disease Preparedness Programs</i>, this Schedule also expires if the National Management Group (NMG) determines that the <i>National Red Witchweed (Striga asiatica) Response Plan (the Response Plan)</i> should be terminated early. However, in those circumstances this Schedule still allows for the processing of any payments for milestones met up to termination.</p>
Purpose	<p>This Schedule will support the delivery of the Response Plan ensuring red witchweed is extirpated from the eight Infected Premises (IP) by 2025, with eradication confirmed following no further detections after a ten-year Proof of Freedom surveillance period.</p> <p>This extension of the <i>Red Witchweed (Striga asiatica) Eradication Response Plan</i> was agreed on 14 May 2024.</p> <p>The activities under this schedule, continue to build on work previously undertaken for the <i>National Red Witchweed (Striga asiatica) Response Plans 2015-25 (Response Plan v1.11)</i> and <i>2019-2025 (Response Plan v1.0)</i>, with a further intensive strategy for 2022-25 (<i>Response Plan v2.1</i>).</p> <p>This schedule also allows for the payment of 2022-23 and 2023-24 contributions for activities completed under the previous version of the Response Plan (<i>Response Plan 2019-2025 v1.0</i>). Accordingly, this Schedule replaces <i>Schedule S – National Red Witchweed Eradication Program 2018-19 to 2024-25</i> which was executed in January 2020.</p>
Project Elements	<p>Queensland will deliver the actions set out in <i>Red Witchweed (Striga asiatica) Eradication Response Plan (the Response Plan)</i>, which was approved by the NMG on 14 May 2024.</p> <p>The project elements for the Eradication Program are:</p> <p>(a) Treatment: Treatment activities designed to prevent seed production and eliminate persistent dormant soil seedbank. A combination of the use of false hosts, true hosts, pre- and post-emergent herbicides, a soil germination stimulant (ethylene gas) and soil fumigation.</p>

Intensive treatment activities on paddocks expected to be released from quarantine during each year.

(b) **Surveillance:** Surveillance to be conducted Zones A and B every 5-14 days (5-10 days during peak emergence period), and Zone C periodically. Zone R every 5-10 days during peak emergence periods. Additional surveillance to be conducted at adjoining scrub habitat and 'At Risk' properties annually.

A ten-year surveillance period following release from quarantine to provide confidence Red Witchweed has been eradicated.

(c) **Community engagement:** The program undertakes community engagement activities raising the awareness and encouraging support and assistance from local community groups, general public, agricultural and environmental groups, state, and local governments. Awareness campaigns involve use of social media, radio and television and participation on field days.

(d) **Science:** Research evaluating if seed viability rundown can be accelerated via ethylene injection.

(e) **Containment:** The response strategy includes containment through implementation of quarantine, movement controls and comprehensive hygiene requirements.

(f) **Policy and planning:** The program will undertake activities outlined in the response under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. The *Red Witchweed Consultative Committee (RWWCC)* comprised of technical experts provides advice to the NMG strengthening governance across the program.

(g) **Support services:** The program is working closely with key stakeholders including Government, Industry, environmental and community groups. The local Farleigh Mill and the Department of Transport and Main Roads provide fact sheets to staff enabling reporting of suspicious plants.

Estimated financial contributions	<p>The Commonwealth will provide an estimated maximum total financial contribution to Queensland of up to \$1.279m in respect of this Schedule.</p> <p>Queensland will receive up to the agreed maximum financial contribution for the National Red Witchweed Eradication Program as outlined in Table 1 and payable in accordance with the milestones set out in Table 2.</p>															
	<table><tr><td>Table 1 (\$ million)</td><td>2022-23</td><td>2023-24</td><td>2024-25</td><td>Total</td></tr><tr><td>Australian Government</td><td>0.367</td><td>0.507</td><td>0.404</td><td>1.279</td></tr><tr><td>Maximum Australian Government Contribution to State/Territory</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1.279</td></tr></table> <p>Note: table 1 reflects financial year in which response activities are conducted and differs to financial year of payment which is shown in table 2 below. All payments are exclusive of GST. Figures are rounded to the nearest thousand and are outlined in full in table 2.</p>	Table 1 (\$ million)	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total	Australian Government	0.367	0.507	0.404	1.279	Maximum Australian Government Contribution to State/Territory				1.279
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Additional terms	<ol style="list-style-type: none">The Program will be conducted as a Deed-Like response agreed by the National Management Group (NMG) in 2015.<ol style="list-style-type: none">Reporting obligations are set out in Table 2, but circumstances may give rise to additional reporting being sought. Queensland will provide such additional reporting at the request of the Commonwealth as is reasonable.Each party will contribute funding in accordance with the financial commitments approved by the NMG on 14 May 2024.<ol style="list-style-type: none">Final contributions will be based on actual expenditure and determined by the NMG in accordance with the Response Plan.The Commonwealth’s maximum potential payments are set out in the Table 2 milestones but, where applicable, will be adjusted to match the Commonwealth’s share of actual expenditure as determined under additional term 2.1.The Commonwealth Minister may, at their discretion, move all or part of an underspend against a milestone in a financial year to a milestone in another financial year. Such a circumstance may arise where the NMG has agreed that the Response Plan can be varied to include additional cost-shared activities, or extend duration, without increasing the overall maximum contribution under this schedule.This Schedule will be reviewed in conjunction with reviews of the National Red Witchweed Eradication Program and decisions by the NMG.															

Table 2: Queensland – Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary

Output	Performance milestones	Report due	Payment
The eradication of Red Witchweed (<i>Striga asiatica</i>) from the eight IPs by 2025, with eradication confirmed following no further detections after a ten-year Proof of Freedom surveillance period.	Milestone 1 – 2022-23 Commonwealth acceptance of evidence of National Management Group (NMG) agreement of the revised Response Plan 2022-25 and the associated budget and activities.	October 2024	Up to \$367,345 subject to the additional terms.
	Milestone 2 – 2023-24 Commonwealth acceptance of an annual progress report (2023-24) endorsed by RWWCC as demonstrating satisfactory progress towards progress elements of the Response Plan.	December 2024	Up to \$507,422 subject to the additional terms.
	Milestone 3 – 2024-25 Commonwealth acceptance of an annual progress report (2024-25) endorsed by RWWCC as demonstrating satisfactory progress towards progress elements of the Response Plan.	August 2025	Up to \$403,811 subject to the additional terms.

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this schedule as follows:


Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by


The Honourable Julie Collins MP
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

[Day] [Month] 2025

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Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by


The Honourable Anthony Perrett MP
Minister for Primary Industries

[Day] [Month] 2025