

The National Browsing Ant Eradication Program - Northern Territory

PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR PEST AND DISEASE PREPAREDNESS
AND RESPONSE PROGRAMS

Table 1: Formalities and operation of schedule

Parties	Commonwealth Northern Territory
Duration	<p>This Schedule is expected to expire on 30 June 2027.</p> <p>For the purposes of Clause 10 of the <i>Project Agreement for Pest and Disease Preparedness Programs</i>, this Schedule also expires on completion or termination of the National Browsing Ant (<i>Lepisiota frauenfeldi</i>) Response Plan (<i>the Response Plan</i>) as determined by the National Biosecurity Management Group (NBMG). 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 Northern Territory Response Plan to eradicate the exotic invasive ant species, <i>Lepisiota frauenfeldi</i>, Browsing Ant from the Northern Territory.</p> <p>The Browsing Ant Eradication Response Plan 2024-27 was agreed to on 21 May 2025.</p> <p>Activities under the revised schedule continue to build on work previously undertaken during the National Browsing Ant Eradication Response Plans 2017-18 to 2021-22 (Response Plan v2.2) and 2023-24 to 2025-26 (Response Plan v4.0) while delivering a more intensive strategy for 2024-25 to 2026-27 (Response Plan v5.0b).</p> <p>This Schedule (Q3) replaces Schedule (Q2) – National Browsing Ant Eradication Program 2023-24 to 2025-26 signed August 2023 and due to expire on 30 June 2026.</p>
Project Elements	<p>The Northern Territory response to the National Browsing Ant outbreak will deliver the actions as detailed in version 5.0b of the Response Plan. Version 5.0b of the Response Plan was approved by the NBMG on 21 May 2025.</p> <p>The project elements for the Eradication Program are:</p> <p>(a) Treatment: Treatment methods consist of pesticide applied via spray. Preventative treatment measures will be deployed for areas identified with a detection confidence as low or medium risk.</p> <p>(b) Surveillance: Surveillance methods include odour detections dogs, luring, observation, and community reporting focusing on the infested</p>

	<p>premises in Darwin and Kakadu, taking into consideration factors such as weather, temperature, humidity, and the environment being surveyed.</p> <p>(c) Community engagement: Direct tailored correspondence will be delivered to infested property landholders. Other communication and engagement activities will be delivered through a variety of media and materials.</p> <p>(d) Science: Scientific and technical activities for diagnostics and treatment efficacy will be undertaken in support the eradication program and Proof of Freedom claims.</p> <p>(e) Containment: The response plan includes strategies such as movement controls, treatments, tracing, and surveillance activities, which are conducted in conjunction with extensive community engagement.</p> <p>(f) Policy and planning: Surveillance activities will be undertaken in accordance with the Northern Territory Plant Health Act. The Energy Resources Australia (ERA) mine site has multiple pieces of legislation that govern activities, in particular the Atomic Energy Act 1953 and Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011. Restrictions apply to accessing certain areas or removal of items that pose a radiation or injury risk. National Browsing Ant Northern Territory Eradication Program is working with ERA.</p> <p>(g) Support services: The program will continue collaboration across government agencies and non-government organisations, traditional owners, industry, and community groups. The Queensland Government will maintain a Browsing Ant colony and supply odour laden items to the Northern Territory for a fee (cost recovery).</p>												
<p>Estimated financial contributions</p>	<p>The Commonwealth will provide an estimated total financial contribution to the Northern Territory of up to \$1.90 million in respect of this Schedule. The agreed maximum financial contribution for the National Browsing Ant Eradication Program for the Northern Territory is outlined in Table 1 and payable in accordance with the milestones set out in Table 2.</p> <p>Table 1</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>(\$ million)</th> <th>2025-26</th> <th>2026-27</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Australian Government</td> <td>0.69</td> <td>1.21</td> <td>1.90</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Maximum Australian Government Contribution to Northern Territory</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.90</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>Note: table 1 reflects financial year in which response activities are conducted and may differ to the 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.</i></p>	(\$ million)	2025-26	2026-27	Total	Australian Government	0.69	1.21	1.90	Maximum Australian Government Contribution to Northern Territory	1.90		
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<p>Additional terms</p>	<p>1. The Program will be conducted as a response under the National Biosecurity Response Agreement (NEBRA) Deed.</p>												

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.1. Reporting obligations are set out in Table 2, however circumstances may give rise to additional reporting being sought. The Northern Territory will provide such additional reporting at the request of the Commonwealth as is reasonable.2. Each party will contribute funding in accordance with the financial commitments approved by the NBMG on 21 May 2025.<ol style="list-style-type: none">2.1. Final contributions, of 'Up to' the Commonwealth's maximum, will be based on actual expenditure and determined by the NEBRA custodian (Department Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) in accordance with the Deed and the Response Plan.2.2. 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 2.1.2.3. 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 NBMG 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.3. This Schedule will be reassessed in conjunction with reviews of the status of the National Browsing Ant Response Plan and decisions by the NBMG.
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Table 2: Northern Territory – Performance requirements, reporting, and payment summary

Output	Performance milestones	Report due	Payment
Implement strategy to eradicate the exotic invasive ant species, <i>Lepisiota frauenfeldi</i> browsing ant from the Northern Territory	Milestone 1 – 2024-25 Commonwealth acceptance of Annual progress report (2024-25) endorsed by National Biosecurity Management Consultative Committee (NBMCC) as demonstrating satisfactory progress towards the above Project Elements of the Response Plan.	October 2025	Up to \$690,204 subject to the additional terms.
	Milestone 2 – 2025-26 Commonwealth acceptance of Annual progress report (2025-26) endorsed by NBMCC as demonstrating satisfactory progress towards the above Project Elements of the Response Plan.	September 2026	Up to \$713,393 subject to the additional terms.
	Milestone 3 – 2026-27 Commonwealth acceptance of Final progress report endorsed by NBMCC as demonstrating satisfactory progress towards the above Project Elements of the Response Plan.	June 2027	Up to \$503,117 subject to the additional terms

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

[Signature]
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

12 December 2025

[Signature]
Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory
by

The Honourable Gerard Maley MLA
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

[Day] [Month] 2025

14/1/26