



Guidelines for Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups

Adapted from the City of Onkaparinga, Guidelines for Abundant/Pest Birds Community Reference Groups, 2003

1. Background

Throughout South Australia there are a number of rural and urban areas experiencing problems with abundant native birds. The nature of the problem differs widely according to species present, type of land use, the natural ecology of the area, and both past and present bird management efforts.

The most prominent native bird species to be regarded as a pest in South Australia is the Little Corella (*Cacatua sanguinea*). Unwanted impacts of the Little Corella have come about partly due to an increase in range and abundance of the species, but more so due to their feeding and flocking behaviour.

Over the past 25 years, the South Australian Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) has received consistent complaints about large numbers of Little Corellas that invade numerous districts during the summer months.

The problems highlighted by communities associated with large numbers of Little Corellas include defoliation damage to roost trees, competition with other native bird species, damage to property and crops, and noise nuisance. A reduction in these impacts is a key objective for communities and Local and State Government.

The development of Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups provides an opportunity for adaptive management to be tailored to target the specific problems experienced within a region, and therefore meet the individual aims and objectives of the Reference Group.

2. Purpose

The purpose of an Abundant Bird Community Reference Group is to:

- provide a forum for local communities to discuss abundant or pest bird issues within their locality,
- provide a two-way information exchange between Local and State Government and the community in relation to abundant or pest bird issues,
- allow communities to become involved in the management of abundant birds that impact upon their communities, and
- provide a forum via which members of the community may have input into the management of abundant birds within their region.

3. Role of Abundant Bird Community Reference Group

The role of an Abundant Bird Community Reference Group is to (within their locality):

- assist with the collection of information required to assess the impacts of abundant or pest birds,
- consult their community on the impact of pest birds in their community,
- coordinate the development of abundant bird management plans for their community,
- coordinate the implementation of abundant bird management plans in their community,
- provide information to their community on actions able to be taken within relevant laws upon private land to control abundant birds, and
- be self-managing within these guidelines, with support and input from Local and State Government.

4. Role of Government and NRM Boards

The role of Local Government (Local Council) is to:

- provide advice to communities regarding the formation of an Abundant Bird Community Reference Group, and provide initial support to establish groups where there is a demonstrated community demand, as a lead-in to self-management by the groups,
- provide advice to Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups regarding impact assessment and control strategies for abundant birds, and
- undertake bird management activities on land under the care and control of Council when impact assessment indicates that such action is required.

The role of State Government (Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH)) is to:

- promote the use of bird management strategies that adhere to best practice principles,
- provide scientific and technical advice and information to local Councils and the Abundant Bird Community Reference Group regarding adaptive management and the various control methods available to minimise the unwanted impacts of native bird populations on communities and individuals,
- ensure that abundant native bird management practices adhere to accepted animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice,
- provide sufficient background information regarding the management of abundant birds (e.g. past management efforts, scope for future management and

the legalities and responsibilities of persons undertaking abundant bird management),

- promote the use of comprehensive monitoring programs that consider bird impacts and damage, bird numbers, management activities undertaken and their efficacy, impacts on bird populations, bird behaviour and humaneness,
- provide assistance to the Abundant Bird Community Reference Group regarding the formation of local action groups and how they can best achieve their goals, and
- provide appropriate training for the Abundant Bird Community Reference Group to undertake management.

The role of NRM Groups is to:

- participate as a key stakeholder to resolve the issue in the region through liaison with community, industry and Local and State Government in planning and decision-making.

5. Composition

Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups will be comprised of representatives of community groups from within the effected communities such as;

- Community Associations
- Sporting Clubs
- Neighbourhood/Rural/School Watch Groups
- School Management Committees
- Environmental Groups

It is anticipated that Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups will be representative of the range of views across their community and be formed as a sub-group of one of the incorporated bodies that exist within that community.

Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups may invite elected members and/or staff of local and State Government and other interest groups (such as NRM, animal ethics etc) to their meetings to provide advice or guidance but these representatives may not become members of the reference groups.

The reference groups may invite relevant experts to their meetings to provide additional advice as required.

6. Forum Committees

Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups are owned by the community. Accordingly each Abundant Bird Community Reference Group should elect office bearers and/or a committee to lead the reference group.

7. Frequency and Location

Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups should meet on an as needs basis.

The meeting date, time, agenda and venue should be organised by the Reference Group Convenors.

Meetings should be held at a convenient and accessible time and location.

8. Publicity

Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups meetings should be publicised to the local community.

Abundant Bird Community Reference Groups will be responsible for promoting and communicating the details of meetings.

9. Meeting Protocol

The way in which an Abundant Bird Community Reference Group proceeds is at the discretion of the office bearers or committee.

Meetings of an Abundant Bird Community Reference Group should be chaired by an office bearer or member of the committee.

An Abundant Bird Community Reference Group should appoint a Secretary to ensure effective communication.

These positions can rotate or be reappointed at the reference group's discretion.

Recommendations from an Abundant Bird Community Reference Group should be minuted and acted upon accordingly.



Government of South Australia
Department for Environment
and Heritage