

## SFAG CHAIRMANS REPORT TO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015

On reading through my last year's Chairman's Report I was struck with how many items that have not changed in the last 12 months, so I would recommend that you have a look on our website and read what I said last year.

However, there have been a few changes during the year that weren't the same as last year and I'm not sure many of them have been for the better.

I will start with DAFWA. As we all know DAFWA is being starved of money and this has brought on a number of changes to personnel working in the stable fly (SF) industry.

1. Dr Ian McPharlin has taken a redundancy and left the Department
2. Tony Shimmin (SF Inspector) has moved to another project in Broome
3. DAFWA has informed us that it does not have enough money to pay for any SF Inspectors in the future
4. The Regulatory Reference Group have lost the services of Megan Hevron (senior policy officer in Irrigated Agriculture), who helped put the management plan together
5. We are now working with two new directors, Kevin Chennell (Director, Biosecurity and Regulation) and David Windsor (Director Irrigated Agriculture).
6. Don Telfer has increased his involvement with SF and has taken over from Ian McPharlin

As you can imagine the SFAG has a number of concerns about the loss of people who had experience with the SF problem. However, we had a meeting with Kevin Chennell soon after he was appointed which was positive and look forward to continue working with him positively in the future. We also welcome the other new appointments as well.

On the really positive side though (we hope) ... at long last DAFWA has appointed a brand new Compliance Officer who will have a role with both the Mediterranean Fruit Fly and SF problems in WA. The SFAG very much welcomes the appointment of Mr Paul Cassidy to this role and we look forward to hearing from Paul in a little while.

DAFWA tells us that despite all the cutbacks the SF issue has the largest R&D funding budget in the agency and the appointment of a compliance officer when everyone else is being laid off is, I feel, a great reflection on the hard work and lobbying by your committee!!

Another challenge that the last year has presented has been the increase in usage of "conditioned RPM". The Management Plan regulations state that the RPM must be conditioned so as not to breed SF. The SFAG is lobbying to have some sort of regulatory system in place so that this 'conditioned manure' can be checked on a regular basis to make sure that this is the case. We have recently had some positive feedback from representatives of the Broiler Industry regarding this matter. Your committee will be working with the Broiler growers as well as Local Government and DAFWA to put a protocol in place that will be a win-win for all concerned.

The committee continues to support the compost industry as a great way to use of RPM and during the year we visited the site of Garden Organics on Aurisch Road, Gingin. We thank Donovan Farrell and his dad for showing us around. To say that we were impressed with the efforts they were going to, to compost the RPM without increasing any flies in the process, would be an understatement!! They have outlaid the expense for a completely closed-in shed

to receive the initial RPM, which then has air pumped through it to activate the composting process. All fully enclosed. Well done to them!

Now, onto some thank yous.

Firstly, a big thank you to all our long suffering members who have supported us over all these years. It may not seem like it sometimes but we do feel we have come a long way in the last 10 years. Hopefully we are seeing some positive outcomes for all our hard work.

The committee in 2016 will see some changes. Our representative from the Perth NRM in Sandy Pate with assistance from his lovely wife Val has decided to retire and will no longer be on the committee. Sandy's position at Perth NRM has been taken over by Graham McAlpine, who we welcome here tonight and we look forward to whatever input you can give our committee.

To the rest of the committee who represent at least 3 local government areas but who also work so hard for the betterment of all the people in the affected districts I salute you and encourage you to continue on for another year.

I would especially like to thank Dr Dave Cook for his unending quest to find some answers to this SF breeding problem. Like all scientific research it is not all a 'bed of roses' with everything you try working out. But despite some disappointments Dave has soldiered on, always learning and always looking for the next potential solution.... never giving up!! Dave has also spent his own time in looking for outbreak sources during the year which he doesn't have to do, and he doesn't always get thanks for. Well, here is mine Dave... thank you!

I would also like to mention that a couple of months ago Dr Dave was asked to present a paper at a Stable Fly Conference at Boston USA, which had other presentations by scientists from all around the globe. Some of the SF problems in other areas of the world are quite mind-boggling and hopefully when we hear from Dave shortly he can give us some feedback from what he learned. We also hope to hear that he has been funded for another couple of years to continue his research.

I would like to give a special acknowledgement to our hard working secretary Jo Ottaway. Jo is without doubt the most efficient secretary and most proficient and professional letter writer that I have had the good fortune to work with. Jo has been absolutely crucial to the ongoing success of the SFAG. In fact, we pretty much fell apart when Jo took off walking around England for 3 months. Don't do that again Jo!!

Finally, I would like to thank my wife Anne for her support over these past 10 years of monthly meetings and various other meetings and excursions connected with Stable Flies. Sometimes it would have been easier to give up but Anne's support has kept me going.

Bob Wilson  
CHAIRMAN, SFAG INC  
29 September 2015

