

# **The Stable Fly Action Group Inc (SFAG)**

## **Time Line of Significant Events**



Compiled by The Stable Fly Action Group (SFAG) as an  
ongoing record of events  
pertaining to  
The Stable (Biting) Fly Problem in Western Australia  
from 1992  
to  
December 31 2012

# 2012

## **5 December 2012**

Second RRG meeting took place. Stakeholders, including SFAG representatives, had input into the second Draft of the Management Plan.

## **13 November 2012**

Initial RRG meeting was held at DAFWA in Perth. Stakeholders, including SFAG representatives, had input into the first Draft of the Management Plan.

## **26 October 2012**

Minister Terry Redman MLA announced stable flies as a Declared Pest under the BAM Act at Bogdanich Farms, Cowalla Road, Gingin, with politicians, VWA, growers, Shire of Gingin, SFAG representatives and members of the community present.

## **8 August 2012**

Inaugural Meeting of the Project Stakeholder Group (PSG) held at Council Chambers, Shire of Gingin with DAFWA, Vegetable Industry, Shires and SFAG representatives present to discuss future management of Stable Flies under the BAM Act and the scientific research programme. Dr David Cook will be employed almost full time through UWA for 2 years, commencing on 1 October.

Mr Viv Read, Director of Invasive Species, DAFWA, advised sf will be a declared pest Level 3, and will be the first new species, under the BAM Act.

A Regulatory Reference Group (RRG) of 12 members will be formed and will include representatives from SFAG, DCook, VWA, DAFWA, local government, feedlot, piggery and poultry industries, and an independent chairperson.

## **6 July 2012**

SFAG representatives attended a meeting with Shire of Gingin to finalise funding arrangements for the Project.

## **14 June 2012**

Funding application prepared by Dr David Cook and Dr Ian McPharlin (DAFWA) to Horticulture Australia Ltd (HAL) in March 2012 was approved, under the condition that all the participating Councils, the vegetable industry and DAFWA made a financial contribution to the Managing Biting Fly in Vegetable Crop Residues Project (The Project).

## **12 March 2012**

On 12 March SFAG and Woodridge Community Association (WCA) jointly convened a public meeting on the stable (biting) fly issue at the Woodridge Community Hall. Present were the Minister for Agriculture, Hon T Redman MLA, Member for Moore Hon Grant Woodhams, and Member for the Agricultural Region Hon Jim Chown. Hon Paul Papalia, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, also attended.

Dr David Cook gave his usual comprehensive presentation at the beginning of the meeting to remind the MPs of the extent of the problem.

Speakers on the stable (biting) fly issue included members of the affected community, particularly Woodridge; Shannon Farmer, long time resident of Caraban;

and SFAG Committee members, after which the Minister responded that he would consult with all stakeholders and try to resolve the problem. When pressed about regulatory reform via the BAM Act, he expressed reservations that this would be the best option.

Approximately 150 people attended the public meeting, including representatives from the Shire of Gingin, the CEO and members of the VWA Executive, and representatives from the local horticultural community.

### **8 March 2012**

On 8 March SFAG Committee members and Dr David Cook met with the RSPCA at their headquarters in Malaga. Present were CEO David van Ooran, and Senior Inspectors Helen Milne (Great Southern) and Simon ? (Perth) to ask if the RSPCA could support SFAG's campaign.

David van Ooran agreed to the following :

- Dr Cook to provide training for inspectors re stable flies
- Inspectors to provide incidental training for the public on stable fly breeding sources
- RSPCA inspector will contact Dr Cook to arrange to see the impacts of stable flies on animals first hand
- RSPCA will consider how they can publicly support SFAG, including consideration of a public statement.

### **21 February 2012**

On 21 February SFAG Committee members, and Dr David Cook, met with Hon Paul Papalia MLA, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, at his office in Parliament House to provide him with background information and discuss solutions to the stable (biting) fly problem.

### **14 February 2012**

On 14 February SFAG met with Hon Dr Sally Talbot MLC, Shadow Minister for Environment, Climate Change, Lands, Youth, Peel at The Maze, Neaves Road, Bullsbrook.

This meeting was in response to an invitation received by SFAG from the Labor Party Shadow Cabinet in order to familiarise themselves with the stable (biting) fly issue and how it could be resolved.

In attendance were Hon Dr Sally Talbot MLC, Cr Kevin Bailey (City of Swan), Dr David Cook, SFAG Chairman Bob Wilson (who chaired the meeting), SFAG Committee members Dr A Sibbel, G Harley and Bill White, and members of the affected communities of Lancelin, Gingin, Woodridge, Bullsbrook and Muchea. Apologies were received from Hon Fran Logan MLA and Hon Paul Papalia MLA.

Dr Cook presented a comprehensive background to the stable (biting) fly issue, including breeding sources, lifecycle information and prevention measures.

Affected landowners told their stories of the impact of stable (biting) flies on their livestock, pets, lifestyles and wellbeing.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Dr Talbot undertook to :

- Fully brief Hon Paul Papalia, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, on the stable (biting) fly problem
- To relate to others the personal and emotional impacts and costs as told by those at the meeting
- Invited those willing to email her a paragraph of their personal stories of stable (biting) fly impacts
- If Labor comes to power following the 2013 election she will ensure the issue comes before Cabinet

### **5 February 2012**

On 5 February SFAG wrote to Minister Redman, attached the Questions on Notice presented to him prior to the 1 December meeting, and asked him to provide a written response to the Questions on Notice regarding new Regulations and penalties via the BAM Act, and the progress of the DEC Waste Management Strategy.

# 2011

## 1 December 2011

On 1 December SFAG representatives met with Hon Terry Redman MLA, Minister for Agriculture & Food, at Parliament House.

The following Questions on Notice had been sent to the Minister prior to the meeting.

### Questions on Notice

#### 1. REGULATIONS AND PENALTIES

##### Preamble

- On 1 September 2013 the Department of Health will relinquish the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations.
- Department of Premier & Cabinet have suggested the regulations come under Local Government By-Laws
- SFAG have consulted with the seven local governments involved in the Stable (Biting) Fly Management Project and they expressed reservations, including doubts that local governments would adopt the By-Laws

SFAG suggests an alternative and workable solution could be the BioSecurity & Agricultural Management (BAM) Act -

- The Minister for Agriculture can have stable (biting) flies included in the Act as a declared pest
- There are three levels of declared pests under the BAM Act :
  - C1 - Exclusion
  - C2 - Eradication
  - C3 - Management
- C3 appears to be the most appropriate option
- DAFWA can then put in place a project to ascertain the level of the problem – this is already underway with the current project
- DAFWA can then put in place a Management Plan
- Relevant parties could agree to comply with the Management Plan
- Realistic penalties could be put in place for non-compliance

##### Question 1

**a) Will Minister Redman take steps to have stable (biting) flies included in the BAM Act as a declared pest?**

**b) If not, what state based legislation will be used to control fly breeding?**

#### 2. DAFWA/UWA STABLE (BITING) FLY MANAGEMENT PROJECT

##### Preamble

VegetablesWA (VWA) are not attending stakeholder meetings and have not contributed financially to this stakeholder project.

##### Question 2

**a) Does Minister Redman know why the VWA are not participating?**

**b) What steps will the Minister take to ensure that the vegetable industry, including those growers that are not members of the VWA, participates in the Stable (Biting) Fly Management Project?**

#### 3. LONG TERM SOLUTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIC WASTE

##### Preamble

It is imperative that the total ban on raw poultry manure (rpm) remains in place after the Department of Health relinquishes the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations on 1 September 2013

Problems with rpm use are not confined to fly breeding – nitrates in groundwater is also a serious public health problem

Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC)/Waste Management Authority's *Waste Management Strategy* addresses waste management in WA

*The Report to the WMB Working Group on Standards for Organics (including compost) Applied to Land* Key Findings states:

*“There is a need for government to develop policies and programs that promote the recycling of organic materials ...”*

and the Recommendations states :

- 1) *That the WA Government should adopt minimum standards for all organics applied to land to address the potential health risk*
- 2) *That pasteurization be set as a minimum processing requirement for all organics prior to land application*

Composting of organic waste, which includes vegetable crop residue, olive processing residue, and untreated manures from feedlots, piggeries and saleyards, must be promoted and encouraged by the government to create a long term solution for management of organic waste, simultaneously creating alternative soil conditioners and fertilizers for the agricultural sector that will not breed flies

### Question 3

- a) ***Will Minister Redman commit to retaining the total ban on the use of raw poultry manure in the irrigated horticultural industry after the Department of Health relinquishes the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations on 1 September 2013?***
- b) ***If not, why not?***

### Question 4

- a) ***Will the Minister commit to developing policies to adopt minimum standards for all organics applied to land to address the potential health risk (including the risk caused by vectors such as flies)?***

and

- b) ***Will the Minister commit to setting pasteurization (composting) as a minimum processing requirement for all organics prior to land application, as per the Recommendations of the Working Group on Standards for Organics, in order to provide a long term solution to management of organic waste in Western Australia?***

## **1 December 2011**

Notes (taken by SFAG Secretary) of Meeting with Minister for Agriculture Hon T Redman MLA at Parliament House on 1 December 2011 :

### **PRESENT**

Hon T Redman MLA, Minister for Agriculture & Food; Dexter Davies, Principal Policy Adviser Agriculture & Food; Hon Grant Woodhams, Member for Moore, Hon Frank Alban, Member for Swan Hills; Dr Ian McPharlin, DAFWA; Dr David Cook, Centre for Forensic Science, UWA; Bob Wilson, Chairman SFAG; Jo Ottaway, Secretary SFAG; Dr Anne Sibbel, President Bullsbrook Residents & Ratepayers Association (BRRA) and Committee member SFAG

### **APOLOGIES**

Nil

### **+PURPOSE OF MEETING**

To discuss Questions on Notice sent to Minister Redman prior to the meeting (copy above).

SFAG Chairman Bob Wilson gave a short introduction as follows :

- SFAG have met with Director General of Department of Premier & Cabinet (DPC) who advised DAFWA is now the lead agency in stable (biting) fly matters, and had recommended that Local Government ByLaws may be the solution to the management of the problem
- SFAG have met with local government representatives, who have reservations about the workability of this arrangement and some may decide not to adopt ByLaws
- SFAG have concerns about management of raw poultry manure after 1 September 2013 when DOH relinquish the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations
- Stronger legislation and penalties are a priority
- Revisiting of the BioSecurity & Agricultural Management (BAM) Act for the purpose of including stable (biting) flies as a declared pest at the Category 3 level, including appropriate Regulations
- VWA not participating in the Stable (Biting) Fly Management Project to date

### **REGULATIONS AND PENALTIES**

Minister Redman responded -

The total ban on rpm will remain in place after 1 September 2013.

He reiterated that the DPC has given a commitment that if the local government ByLaws, or some other relevant legislation, are not in place by 1 September 2013 the existing Regulations will remain, and the government will honour that commitment.

He was receiving advice it was unlikely stable (biting) flies would come under one of the declared pest categories in the BAM Act as it is not a statewide problem, but he did not discount it entirely. He acknowledged the BAM Act would give more power to local government than ByLaws. He indicated this option could be investigated further by his department.

## **DAFWA/UWA STABLE(BITING) FLY MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

Minister Redman responded -

He did not know why VWA were not attending the Project Stakeholder Meetings and he is unable to force VWA to participate financially in the project, however his department would contact them to recommend it would be in their best interests to attend the project meetings.

He acknowledged the contribution of the horticultural industry to the stable (biting) fly problem is the result of poor management of vegetable crop waste (both intentional and unintentional), and that changing practices to achieve a positive outcome will require collaboration between stakeholders.

## **LONG TERM SOLUTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIC WASTE**

Minister Redman responded –

He was not familiar with the Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC) reports *Waste Management Strategy* or the *Report to the WMB Working Group on Standards for Organics (including Compost) Applied to Land*, which address long term solutions for management of all organic wastes, and make recommendations to the government.

He expressed interest in these DEC reports and their recommendations to the government, and undertook to ascertain what progress was being made.

He recommended a cost benefit analysis for horticulturalists regarding recycling and composting of crop residues should be carried out. Dr Cook undertook to do this.

### **October 2011**

As the two months timeframe for the Draft Model By Laws had expired with no progress being made, SFAG Chairman contacted DPC and spoke to Robert Kennedy, who has replaced Rebecca Hamilton, and updated him on chain of events. Mr Kennedy undertook to find out what was happening and report back prior to SFAG's Committee meeting on Tuesday 25 October.

### **25 October 2011**

At its October 25 Committee meeting, having had no response from the DPC, SFAG resolved to -

- o contact Member for Moore Grant Woodhams to arrange a meeting with Peter Conran, Director General DPC and Minister for Agriculture Terry Redman as soon as possible to bring to their attention the lack of progress and come up with solutions, or alternative courses of action
- o compile a letter to all politicians to re-publicise the stable (biting) fly issue and its ongoing effects on communities, and lack of action being taken by government to solve the problem. Letter to be accompanied by photographs showing infestations and their effects.

### **September 2011**

Email to SFAG Secretary from Llew Withers (DOH) declining attending the SFAG AGM as guest speaker to update the members on progress of the ByLaws, stating that DAFWA is the lead agency for stable fly matters therefore a representative from that agency should attend.

Dr Ian McPharlin, who has replaced Mr Bob Paulin in stable fly matters, attended and addressed the AGM on DAFWA's role, which is limited to educating growers in best practice, rather than regulation.

### **August 2011**

SFAG representatives met with Shire of Gingin to discuss implementation of new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws proposed by the DPC and the difficulties foreseen by Shire CEO and officers.

CEO D Burt was provided with copy of notes taken by SFAG at the meeting with DPC, which had been approved by DPC as a correct record of discussions and undertakings that took place.

Problems regarding Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws (Local Laws) foreseen by Shire staff are :

- No compulsion without support of State legislation
- Penalties in Local Laws too low to act as a deterrent
- Law enforcement
- Resourcing of enforcement
- Local Laws are limited to their particular local government district, ie they do not cross boundaries
- Power of entry to properties

Discussion took place regarding the writing of new specific Fly Breeding legislation and to which Act any new legislation could be attached. Suggestions included the Environmental Protection Act and the Agricultural Protection Act.

As a result of discussions, Sh of Gingin staff undertook to :

- Progress the introduction of Local Laws to cover Fly Breeding in whatever substance it occurs
- Liaise with, and seek assistance from DOH regarding the writing and implementation of Local Laws

SFAG representatives undertook to :

- Obtain a meeting with Minister for Agriculture T Redman as soon as can be arranged to discuss DAFWA's role
- Obtain a meeting with Member for Moore Grant Woodhams re obtaining advice on writing of new Fly Breeding legislation
- Lobby politicians

### **August 2011**

SFAG informed by Rob Delane that DAFWA were waiting for a letter of instruction from DPC.

### **August 2011**

SFAG informed by Rob Delane (Director General DAFWA) that Llew Withers (DOH) has been given the task of drawing up the model Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws.

## **August 2011**

SFAG received letter from Peter Conran (DPC) confirming that if appropriate local government by laws cannot be successfully implemented before the planned sunset of the *Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations 2001* in September 2013, the existing regulatory regime will be reinstated until such time as a viable alternative can be put in place.

No mention was made of the ***Fly Eradication Regulations***.

## **27 July 2011**

On 27 July SFAG representatives met with Director General of DPC Peter Conran, and Staff member Rebecca Hamilton, to discuss and resolve :

*Which government department will be taking responsibility for the management of raw poultry manure, vegetable crop waste, and the related stable (biting) fly breeding issue after 1 September 2013, when responsibility for the issue will be relinquished by the Department of Health (DOH)*

Mr Conran advised the SFAG representatives that the Department of Agriculture & Food (DAFWA) have been directed by the DPC to take responsibility for the raw poultry manure, vegetable crop waste and related stable (biting) fly breeding issue after 1 September 2013 because of their links with horticulture as well as the animal industry.

The Director General of DAFWA, Rob Delane, will be the initial contact person.

It is intended that :

- DOH *Health (Poultry Manure) and Fly Eradication Regulations?* will remain in place until 1 September 2013, after which they will expire as per the Amended Regulations (Clause 10) gazetted on 24 May 2011
- DAFWA, in conjunction with local government, will compile model Local Government By Laws to manage fly breeding in whatever situations (or substances) it occurs
- The new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws will replicate the provisions of the present DOH Regulations
- No gap will take place in the timeframe between expiry of the DOH Poultry Manure & **Fly Eradication Regulations?** and implementation of the new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws
- Any Shire in WA may use the new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws, whether that Shire is currently covered by the current DOH Regulations or not
- It is anticipated that the new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws will have broad powers, including the issuing of on-the-spot infringement notices
- The power behind the infringement notices is that in the event the infringer does not pay their fine, or continues to flout the law, then they can be prosecuted for being in contempt of a court order. A court order for breaching conditions is stronger than current penalties in that the offender could be forced to stop operating
- SFAG Committee will be given the opportunity to have input into the draft Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws
- DOH and DAFWA will assist local Shires implement and administer the new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws, although how this will take place and in what capacity is not clear
- Drafting of the new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws will take approximately 2 months

- The new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws will be required to go through the usual approvals process of Council approval, Department of Planning, WA Planning Commission, and final signing off by the Minister for Local Government. SFAG expressed concern that at any stage of this approvals process the By Laws may be lobbied against and their progress slowed or held up indefinitely
- If any problems are encountered with these intended procedures, SFAG is to contact DPC to resolve them

**Regarding the increasing of penalties for offenders against the current DOH Regulations or the proposed new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws, no commitment was made by the DPC .**

The DPC representatives present committed to confirm to the SFAG in writing that should the proposed new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws not be in place by 1 September 2013, that the provisions of the present *Health (Poultry Manure)* and *Fly Eradication Regulations* will remain in place until the new Local Government Fly Breeding By Laws are signed off by the appropriate Minister and become law.

### **1 July 2011**

#### **Funded Stable (Biting) Fly Consultancy & Field Work Project**

On 1 July Dr David Cook began his scientific and educational consultancy work on managing stable (biting) flies. This project, which has been jointly funded by DAFWA and the Shire of Gingin, with contributions from seven other affected Shires, involves

- visiting horticultural properties throughout the State
- conducting educational workshops for growers regarding good practice
- evaluating the best method of totally removing crop residues from the soil to prevent stable (biting) fly breeding, and
- training of local government officers in detecting stable (biting) fly development across horticultural industries

### **3 June 2011**

SFMSG advised by DOH of the amendments to the *Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations* in a letter dated 3 June 2011.

SFAG were not direct recipients of this letter, but obtained a copy because SFAG Chairman is the livestock industry representative on the SFMSG.

### **24 May 2011**

On 24 May amendments to *Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations 2001* gazetted to include a new Clause 10 which reads,

#### *Expiry of Regulations*

*These regulations expire on 1 September 2013.*

### **17 May 2011**

SFAG instigated Questions on Notice to the State Legislative Council on 17 May, which were asked by Hon A Xamon to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Health in Parliament on 28 June.

Question Reference 3883 re increasing the penalties for those do not comply with the total ban on rpm.

*The Minister responded that DOH has been directed to address this through amendments to the Health Act 1911, and that the new penalties will be similar to those in the Food Act 2008.*

**April 2011**

SFAG wrote to all Shires and Cities covered by the *Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations* and *Fly Eradication Regulations* recommending that all Shires covered by the Regulations adopt the Shire of Gingin's policy regarding Planning Application Advice Notes, which are automatically applied to all new planning applications for developments that have the potential to breed flies, in order to promote compliance.

**24 March 2011**

SFAG instigated Questions on Notice to the State Legislative Council on 24 March, which were asked by Hon A Xamon to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Health in Parliament on 12 April  
Question Reference 3770 re responsibility for rpm under the new WA Health Act  
Question Reference 3771 re responsibility for implementation of the ban on rpm

*The Minister responded in the affirmative to both questions.*

**January 2011**

In his January Consultancy Report to the Shire of Gingin, Dr David Cook recommended that

*"...all reference to the stable fly (*Stomoxys calcitrans*) now be replaced with "biting fly" to more accurately reflect what the fly is doing to livestock and humans. The name "stable fly" suggests that this fly only comes from stables, which is not the case."*

(All Dr Cook's Consultancy reports are available in their entirety on the SFAG website [www.stableflyactiongroup.org.au](http://www.stableflyactiongroup.org.au) )

# 2010

## **12 August 2010**

### **Meeting with Minister for Health**

On 12 August SFAG representatives met with the Minister for Health, Dr Kim Hames and his Chief of Staff, Ian Wight-Pickin, to further discussions on implementation of increased penalties for offenders against the Poultry Manure and Fly Eradication Regulations. Also present were Jim Dodds, (DOH), and Member for Moore, Grant Woodhams, who organized the meeting on SFAG's behalf. SFAG had been advised by DOH that 'legal difficulties' were being experienced with increasing the penalties. Minister Hames was fully supportive of increasing penalties and making the necessary changes to the Act, however SFAG recognized that lobbying DOH would be required to get them implemented.

## **19 July 2010**

### **Meeting with Department of Premier & Cabinet**

On 19 July SFAG representatives met with Rebecca Hamilton, Principal Policy Officer (Cabinet & Policy Division) from the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The Premier, Hon Colin Barnett, has strongly supported the SFAG Committee's efforts to solve the stable fly problem since it was brought to his attention at the Gingin Forum.

As a result of this initial meeting, and subsequent discussions, a proposal for state government funding assistance for stable fly research and field work which will encompass several shires is now being considered.

## **11 March 2010**

On 11 March SFAG representatives attended a workshop at Moora for community input in to the BAM Act. Unfortunately DAFWA were dismissive of the importance of the stable fly issue and were unable to be persuaded of its relevance to the BAM Act and its Regulations.

## **24 February 2010**

As a result of a deputation to the Shire of Gingin by SFAG Chairman and Professor Dadour and Dr Cook of UWA, on 24 February Dr David Cook, Forensic Entomologist UWA, commenced stable fly field work consultancy for the Shire of Gingin. Scientific results of this field work reveal indisputably that there is clearly a major and extensive problem with stable fly breeding in vegetable crop waste.

Dr David Cook has had a long association with the stable fly problem, being one of the professional team involved in the initial scientific study of stable fly breeding in Western Australia, the results of which were used in the compilation of the SFMSG Report in 1998.

# 2009

## **November 2009**

SFAG sent letter of submission on the *Draft Waste Strategy for WA* compiled by the Waste Authority of Western Australia, expressing disappointment and concern that agricultural wastes, such as raw poultry manure and vegetable crop residues, were excluded.

## **August 2009**

SFAG advised by DAFWA that two "Interagency Working Committees" established to deal with rpm issues, one pertaining to the broiler industry and the other pertaining to nitrate contamination of groundwater.

## **August 2009**

Notes taken by SFAG Secretary at the June 17 meeting could not be confirmed by the Minister's office as Dr Thomas had resigned his position, and another officer was appointed to deal with the rpm and stable fly issue. (Changes in staff in government departments is one of the more challenging issues the SFAG faces when dealing with government on rpm and stable fly matters.)

## **July 2009**

In a letter dated 9 July, Minister for Health, Dr Kim Hames MLA, declined to meet with SFAG representatives on rpm issues, stating "...it is more appropriate that your Group liaise or meet with the Minister for Agriculture to obtain an update on developments."

However, he also stated that DOH had given an undertaking to local government to review the *Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations* to address "certain areas of difficulty."

## **17 June 2009**

On 17 June SFAG Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary met with Dr Steve Thomas from the Office of the Minister for Agriculture as arranged.

Points raised by Dr Thomas and discussed -

- The discovery of nitrates in groundwater at Carabooda and the Gnangara Mound was proving to be a catalyst for action
- there was a possibility the total ban on rpm could be expedited
- an interdepartmental working group had been formed to work on resolving the issues
- strengthening of the Regulations under the Health Act would be quicker than new legislation under the BAM Act or Environmental Protection Act
- Dr Thomas would write to the Minister for Health regarding strengthening of the Regulations

## **May 2009**

SFAG representatives attended Stakeholder Consultative Forum at Moora convened by the Water Corporation regarding their Trial BioSolids Storage Facility.

## **21 April 2009**

On 21 April representatives from SFAG, DOH, DAFWA, Shire of Gingin and City of Wanneroo met with Minister for Agriculture Hon Terry Redman MLA and Dr Steve Thomas, Principal Policy Adviser to the Minister, at the Shire of Gingin Council Chamber. Apologies were received from Member for Moore, Grant Woodhams MLA, City of Swan and Shire of Dandaragan.

A ten minute video presentation of stable fly infestation of livestock, wildlife and people was shown to the Minister to familiarise him with the stable fly issue.

Discussion points –

- Raw poultry manure management
- Responsibility for stable fly control
- Regulation and enforcement
- Industry good practice

Actions agreed upon –

Use of rpm will be totally banned by December 2011

VWA Code of Practice will be reviewed, strengthened and made enforceable prior to it being adopted in legislation

Dr Thomas undertook to meet with SFAG representatives in the near future to continue discussion on which government department will take control for the stable fly issue in the future, and regulation and enforcement.

#### **24 April 2009**

At the invitation of Federal Liberal MP Mal Washer, SFAG representatives attended a large gathering of market gardeners at a property on Karoborup Road, Carabooda on 24 April. Federal Member for Pearce, Judi Moylan, was also present, along with retiring MP Hon Murray Nixon and MP Hon Jim Chown.

The gathering was convened to discuss the implications of the discovery of dangerous levels of nitrates in bore water at Carabooda, caused by rpm being applied or stored on land and leaching into the groundwater, resulting in potentially serious human health issues.

# 2008

## **November 2008**

SFAG requests meeting with new Minister for Agriculture, Hon T Redman, to familiarise him with the ongoing stable fly scourge, and to discuss the following matters :

- The lack of long term strategies for disposal of large quantities of raw poultry manure after the proposed total ban on its use in irrigated horticulture after 2011
- Fears that the raw poultry manure disposal problem will be put in the too hard basket and the 2011 total ban on its use, recommended to the government by the government appointed Stable Fly Management Steering Group (SFMSG), will be extended
- Delays being experienced by SFAG in obtaining a meeting with DAFWA officers to progress the Group's input into strengthened fly breeding regulations under the new Biosecurity & Agricultural Management Act, even though this had previously been promised for 2008
- Perceived lack of government support – both local and state – for the poultry industry's efforts to gain planning approval for a site for their pyrolysis plant
- Perceived lack of government support for an economically viable, competitive and sustainable composting industry to be developed as being a useful means of disposing of raw poultry manure and other organic wastes
- The perceived lack of progress being made by the current committee set up by the previous Minister for Agriculture, Hon Kim Chance, and led by Mr Roger O'Dwyer (Executive Director Industry and Rural Services, DAFWA) to "sort the problem out". The SFAG hopes that this committee is not trying to "reinvent the wheel" by revisiting issues previously thoroughly investigated and reported on by the government appointed Stable Fly Management Steering Group (SFMSG) in 1998
- To request the new state government revisits the Recommendations of the SFMSG Project Report to Monty House, MLA, Minister for Primary Industry & Fisheries, August 1998 and facilitate their implementation

SFAG expressed the concern that years of commitment and work by the SFMSG, the Shire of Gingin, the poultry industry and the community based Stable Fly Action Group will be wasted should these issues continue to be ignored.

## **September 2008**

SFAG website, containing background and historical information, scientific reports, photographs, video, forms, and advice for affected landowners, successfully launched at SFAG AGM and received approval from members and local and state government representatives.

## **May 2008**

*VWA Good Practice Guide* published and sent out to the VWA membership. Included in the *Good Practice Guide* is the section entitled *Good Practice Management of*

*Manure and Vegetable Crop Residue*, which the SFAG contributed to in November 2007.

Richard Walker, BioSecurity Policy Officer, leaves DAFWA.

**March 2008**

SFAG hosts a public information evening at the Sportsmens Club in Bullsbrook as a result of infestations of stable flies affecting livestock and residents at properties in the Shire of Swan. Attendees included representatives from DAFWA, DOH, VWA, Shires of Gingin and Swan, the WA Broiler Growers Association, and an officer from Minister Chance's office, at the Minister's request.

# 2007

## **12 November 2007**

On 12 November, at the request of Minister Chance, the SFAG and DAFWA jointly convened a meeting at Gingin Council Chamber with VWA representatives to discuss and have input into the VWA Code of Practice.

The VWA expressed an intention that improved communication between all the stakeholders involved in solving the stable fly breeding problems is a priority and will be addressed.

SFAG Chairman Bob Wilson reminded the VWA representatives that the SFAG would continue to work towards the finalised Code of Practice being enshrined in the BAM Bill, and the establishment of Regulations under the Bill to ensure a mechanism is in place to deal with those growers who fail to comply with the VWA Code of Practice.

## **September 2007**

SFAG financial membership reaches 80.

Gingin Shire Councillor Reg Beale replaced Cr Gifford on the SFMSG, making two members of the SFAG Committee on this statutory committee.

Richard Walker, BioSecurity Policy Officer, DAFWA, is guest speaker at the SFAG AGM. Richard spoke on the BAM Bill and its ramifications for the agricultural industry, the horticultural industry, and stable fly control. The Bill's regulations, including those pertaining to the VWA Code of Practice, will be referenced in the Bill. It is the intention that horticultural producers will be made aware of their responsibilities to the community, and be expected to carry out their practices accordingly.

## **July/August 2007**

SFAG lobbying the State Government to achieve legislative reform via the new Biosecurity & Agricultural Management (BAM) Bill, which has completed its passage through the State Parliament. After reviewing the draft Bill, the SFAG wrote to Minister Chance proposing stable flies be designated a declared pest.

SFAG rigorously pursuing the development of a strongly enforced VWA Code of Practice for the horticultural industry, and lobbying for the new Code of Practice and attached Regulations to be enshrined in the BAM Bill legislation.

SFAG keeping a watchful eye on the Water Corporation BioSolids Facility in the Shire of Moora, attending meetings and supporting scientific trial work being carried out to control stable fly breeding in biosolids.

## **April 2007**

SFAG lobbying MPs, heads of Government Departments and VWA, by sending them letters and photographs of severe stable fly infestations at Caraban in January, in order to keep the stable fly issue on their agenda.

# 2006

## 20 October 2006

Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations 2001 Section 6 (4) amendment was gazetted and commenced on 20 October removing the month of May from the permitted months for use of rpm on land, thus reducing the open season to the three months of June, July and August of any year.

## October 2006

SFAG sent letter of submission to the Waste Management Board regarding their Draft Organics Strategy as follows :

### 1. Interim Standards for Organics Applied to Land

#### p1, 2.0 Purpose

It is strongly recommended by the SFAG that these proposed Standards be given a "head of power" and regulated, to ensure all organic wastes are legally required to be processed so as to not cause nuisance, animal welfare, or environmental problems when applied to land.

### 2. Organics Strategy

#### p10, Agricultural and Forestry Wastes

It is strongly recommended by the SFAG that the Waste Management Board Policy be extended to include all organic wastes applied to land (including all agricultural wastes, such as raw manures) and include regulations to control fly breeding.

## September 2006

SFAG representatives met with Minister for Agriculture, Hon K Chance, to discuss

- VWA Proposed Protocols dated 22 March 2006, including Code of Practice
- Implementation of recommendations of the SFMSG on 16 July 2006
- Proposed Biosecurity & Agricultural Management (BAM) Act and how the stable fly problem could be managed within this new Act
- Current review of the Health Act
- Waste Management Board Draft Organics Strategy

## July 2006

SFAG and Departments of Agriculture and Health representatives met at a Bullsbrook property that was experiencing a severe outbreak of stable flies affecting their livestock, highlighting that infestations were not limited to the Shire of Gingin. It was noted that a horticultural property with links to the May/June 2005 outbreak east of Lancelin was in close proximity.

This property inspection initiated contact between SFAG and the City of Swan on stable fly issues, and culminated in the SFAG attracting new memberships and two new committee members from Bullsbrook.

## 16 July 2006

SFMSG met on 16 July, with SFAG Chairman Bob Wilson included, representing the livestock industry. Points discussed -

- Stable fly outbreaks on properties east of Lancelin
- Formation of the SFAG
- Problems with the Poultry Litter Incineration Power Station Project – refusal of planning consent by Shire of Chittering
- Minister Chance had met with DOH, SFAG and VWA to progress matters
- Protocols developed by VWA for the use of raw poultry manure
- Notices of Motion (previous meeting ) to be voted upon

Shire of Gingin President Cr George Gifford moved

- that the protocols developed VWA be implemented immediately (after review and amendment), and
- that effective from 31 December 2011 a total ban be implanted on the use of raw poultry manure in districts included in the Health (Poultry Manure) Regulations

Motion was put to the vote and carried unanimously by members of the SFMSG.

**May 2006**

Hon G Snook MLA, Shadow Minister for Agriculture, releases Media Statement entitled *Agriculture Minister should act and wipe out stable fly breeding sources* and urging Minister Chance to adopt the key recommendations of the *Report to the Waste Management Board by the Working Group on Standards for Organics*

# 2005

## **November 2005**

Report to the Waste Management Board by the Working Group on Standards for Organics (including Compost) Applied to Land released with two of the Key Recommendations being that the WA Government should adopt minimum standards for all organics applied to land, and that pasteurization be set as a minimum processing requirement for all organics prior to land application.

## **October 2005**

SFAG representatives met with Minister for Agriculture, Hon K Chance, to discuss

- Legislation for a total ban on the use of raw poultry manure (rpm)
- Raising the penalties for offenders against the legislation
- Promotion of composting of raw poultry manure

Minister Chance agreed there is a problem and it needed to be solved. He acknowledged the four month open season for use of rpm, designed to be an interim measure to see if it had the desired effect of reducing stable fly breeding, had not been successful.

He agreed the penalties in place were too low to be effective and would recommend they be raised.

He believed best management of the poultry industry waste was composting, and did not believe the cost factor of compost vs raw manure was a valid argument put forward by the horticultural industry. He was of the view it was fact of life that farmers of all persuasions had to deal with costly fertilizer inputs.

The Minister acknowledged that the stable fly problem was not only an economic problem for livestock farmers, it was a serious animal welfare issue which needed to be addressed.

## **September 2005**

SFMSG resolved to put together Notice of Motion that the open season for the use of raw poultry manure be reduced by removing the months of May and June (dependent on further studies regarding temperature) and would consider a time frame for the introduction of a total ban on the use of raw poultry manure.

## **September 2005**

The Stable Fly Action Group Incorporated (SFAG) formed as an Association with 56 inaugural financial members

## **August 2005**

The Stable Fly Action Group Interim Committee confirmed Constitution and Rules of Association

## **July 2005**

The Stable Fly Action Group Interim Committee formed as a result of the severity of the impact of stable flies on livestock and residents throughout the Shire of Gingin

## **June 2005**

Severe, unprecedented outbreaks of stable fly infestation on livestock properties in vicinity of Lancelin, affecting ewes and new born lambs, cows and calves, and horses, causing considerable economic losses and animal welfare issues. Department of Agriculture senior personnel (Perth) and veterinary officer (Moora) and Shire of Gingin officers called in to assess damage and make recommendations to State Government

## 2001

### **September 2001**

Health(Poultry Manure) Regulations 2001 came into effect. These Regulations prohibited the storage, supply, sale, transport or use of commercially derived untreated poultry manure except for the months of May, June, July and August of any year.

The Regulations apply to local government districts of Armadale, Cockburn, Joondalup, Kwinana, Chittering, Gingin, Rockingham, Harvey, Swan, Wanneroo, Kalamunda, Serpentine-Jarrahdale and the portion of the Shire of Murray described as the Peel Harvey Coastal Plain Catchment.

### **August 2001**

In August 2001 the Department of Health advised the Shire of Gingin that State Cabinet had approved the implementation of a strategy aimed to restrict and regulate the handling and use of raw poultry manure in localities that had been affected by stable flies, or had the potential to be affected (*Sh of Gingin CEO S Fraser Report to Council 19/7/2005*)

# 1992 – 2001

## Events prior to the formation of The Stable Fly Action Group Inc (SFAG) in September 2005

### July 1999

Shire of Gingin Council resolved that -

- a Memorandum of Understanding be sought between the Ministers of Agriculture, Health, Planning and Local Government to progress the necessary legislation in order that the Recommendations from the SFMSG be carried out, and
- that the Avon Midland Ward of the Country Shire Councils Association and the Western Australian Municipal Association be requested to elicit support from Local Governments experiencing stable fly problems for the purpose of developing a Model Local Law preventing the use of poultry manure in agricultural applications.

### July 1999

Minister House advised he would not proceed with the necessary legislation to ban the use of raw poultry manure until alternatives for its disposal were in place.

### August 1998

*Stable Fly Management Project Report* presented to Minister House, who accepted it and supported it in its entirety.

Key Recommendations of the Report were :

1. *Banning the application of raw poultry manure to land for either crop production or any other purpose after December 31, 1999, or earlier. After that date, only poultry manure that has been treated to prevent it breeding flies can be applied to land in Western Australia.*

2. *That in relation to horticultural and turf crop wastes, these industries will be required to formally adopt the practices as defined in the "Best Crop Production Practices for Managing Fly breeding and for Using Manure" by December 31, 1999 or earlier."*

### October 1996

Inaugural SFMSG meeting 8 October. Mr Colin Philpott independent Chairman. Representatives from local government, state government departments, horticulture and livestock industries. Poultry industry was co-opted at a later date. After two and a half years of scientific research, the SFMSG Report was produced.

### August 1996

Establishment of Stable Fly Management Steering Group (SFMSG) by then Minister for Agriculture, Hon MG House

*"to provide direction, coordinate inputs and ensure that the interests as well as the concerns of stakeholders were considered in the development of solutions to the stable fly problem."*

### June 1995

Shire of Gingin endeavoured to initiate an amendment to its Town Planning Scheme Number Eight banning the use of raw poultry manure in horticultural applications.

The Minister for Planning refused to grant consent for the amendment to be advertised. Further efforts to ban the use of raw poultry manure also failed.

#### **1992-1994**

*“The stable fly problem first became evident in the Shire of Gingin in 1992, in a Rural Residential area adjacent to a large market garden using significant quantities of raw poultry manure. The problems subsequently spread to other areas of the Shire, with the result that livestock were being severely affected by 1994” (Shire of Gingin CEO S Fraser report to Council 12 July 2005)*

- Shire of Gingin employed Dr I Dadour, entomologist, to investigate and report to the Council
- Dr Dadour found extensive stable fly breeding in raw poultry manure and in vegetable crop waste
- Extensive lobbying campaign by the community and the Shire of Gingin to state government for assistance