

Response to question on notice

Questions on Notice Paper No 09

05 September 2025

Question No. 576

Thomas Emerson MLA: To ask the Minister for Climate Change, Environment Energy and Water

1. How are priorities determined for which species to target and in which areas.
2. What programs are currently in place for the control of feral cats and foxes.
3. What is the estimated population of feral cats and foxes in the ACT, and how has this changed over the last decade.
4. What programs are currently in place for the control of wild dogs and dingoes.
5. What is the estimated population of feral dogs in the ACT, and how has this changed over the last decade.
6. How many feral cats have been removed in the last 12 months.
7. How many foxes have been removed in the last 12 months.
8. How many wild dogs have been removed in the last 12 months.
9. How many dingoes have been removed in the last 12 months.
10. How many hours of staff time were spent on trapping, baiting, or shooting each of the species referred to in parts (6) to (9) in the last financial year.
11. How many (a) traps were deployed, (b) baits laid, and (c) shooting operations conducted for each of the species referred to in parts (6) to (9).
12. Are control efforts undertaken by government staff, contractors, or in partnership with community groups or landholders.
13. What monitoring is conducted to measure the success of each control method.

SUZANNE ORR MLA - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. Priorities for vertebrate pest control are identified in statutory Reserve Management Plans, Species Action Plans, and other plans under the Nature Conservation Act. Priorities are also informed by the observations by land managers of pest signs, spotlight counts and camera trap data. Control of large vertebrate pests primarily occurs in rural and peri-urban areas. Fox and Waragul¹ (Dingo) baiting and trapping is also only undertaken in rural areas due to the risk posed by current control methods in urban areas. Rabbit control is undertaken in both rural and urban areas.

¹ ACT Government uses the Ngunnawal term Waragul to refer to Dingoes on Ngunnawal Country.

2. Fox, Waragul and cat control currently occurs on rural lands and in buffer areas within select Parks and Reserves. Control is primarily undertaken through baiting, trapping and thermal shooting. Two main baiting programs are implemented yearly these occur in Autumn and Spring. Extra baiting programs are implemented in response to acute management requirements from October through to February. Rural land holders are supported to deliver Waragul/fox baiting which occurs in Winter (June, July) and fox baiting around lambing season from August through to November.
3. No estimates are available as this information is not collected.
4. Refer question 2.
5. Genetic analysis has revealed that there are very few feral dogs in the ACT. Of 50 individuals genetically sampled in Namadgi National Park, only one was identified as a feral dog with a small amount of Dingo genes (13% ancestry) from other regions, indicating an escaped domestic dog.
6. In the 2024/25 financial year, 1 cat was trapped, 1 cat was shot and the total number of cats removed due to baiting is unknown.
7. In the 2024/25 financial year, 28 foxes were trapped, 30 foxes were shot and the total number of foxes removed due to baiting is unknown.
8. In the 2024/25 financial year, 35 animals were trapped, 4 were shot and the total number removed due to baiting is unknown.
9. See question 8.
10. The hours spent trapping and baiting is not recorded. In 2024/25, 336 hours were spent on shooting operations.
11. a) This data is not recorded.
b) In the 2024/25 financial year, 3,154 baits were laid on PCS land and 932 baits were distributed to rural lessees.
c) in the 2024/25 financial year, 336 hours were spent on shooting operations.
12. Yes, control efforts undertaken by government staff, contractors, and in partnership with landholders.
13. Monitoring of stock losses by rural lessees is undertaken as a measure to determine the effectiveness of wild dog/Dingo control programs. Monitoring Waragul activity using camera arrays dispersed across Namadgi National Park also commenced in October 2024.

Approved for circulation to the Member and incorporation into Hansard.


Suzanne Orr MLA
Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water

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