



# **Garden Island (West) Fox and Cat Management Plan**

**SRF-West Priority Infrastructure Works**

Department of Defence

27 February 2026

→ **The Power of Commitment**



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# Abbreviations and acronyms

Acronyms and abbreviations	
ADES	Regional Assistant Director Environment and Sustainability (Department of Defence)
AUKUS	Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States
DBCA	Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
Defence	Department of Defence
EPBC Act	<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>
ESM	Environment and Sustainability Manager (Department of Defence)
FCMC	Fox and Cat Management Coordinator
FCMP	Fox and Cat Management Plan
HMAS	His Majesty's Australian Ship
PMCA	Project Management and Contract Administration
SEO	Site Environment Officer
SRF-West	Submarine Rotational Force - West
SRF-West Project CEMP	The Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the SRF-West Priority Infrastructure Project developed to meet the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 requirement

# Glossary

Term	Definition
Action area	As defined in the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 and illustrated in Map 1 of the approval.
Cat	Feral cat ( <i>Felis catus</i> )
Colony	A group of little penguins that nest, breed, and shelter within a defined site, and rely on the same habitat resources
Eradication	As defined in Section 1.4
Fox	Red fox ( <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> )
Incursion	The unwanted entry of a species (fox or cat) into an area (Garden Island) where they do not naturally occur.
Little penguin nesting site	The areas used by little penguins for breeding and moulting, and the known nesting areas identified in the Little Penguin Monitoring and Management Plan (RPS, 2026).
Population	A group of same species individuals that occupy a defined area and interact with that environment
Suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert	means a person who has relevant professional qualifications and at least five years of work experience with preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species and can give an independent authoritative assessment and advice on the implementation of methods to prevent the introduction or spread of the invasive species of concern using relevant protocols, standards, methods and/or literature.
Website	Means the website as defined in the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031, currently the Department of Defence Submarine Rotational Force-West Infrastructure Project

website: <a href="https://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/infrastructure-projects/submarine-rotational-force-west-infrastructure-project">https://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/infrastructure-projects/submarine-rotational-force-west-infrastructure-project</a>
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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Australia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) have joined together through the AUKUS partnership to support a stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. The AUKUS partners have identified an Optimal Pathway that will:

- deliver Australia a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine (SSN) capability
- elevate all 3 nations' industrial capacity to produce and sustain advanced and interoperable SSNs for decades to come
- expand the partner nations' individual and collective presence in the Indo-Pacific and contribute to global security and stability in the region.

The first major initiative of the Optimal Pathway is the increased rotational presence of US and UK SSNs in Australia. This initiative is known as the Submarine Rotational Force – West (SRF-West, or the approved Action).

The approved Action was referred under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and assessed under the 'Preliminary Documentation' pathway.

Defence was granted approval with conditions by DCCEEW for the works on 27 May 2025 (**EPBC Act approval 2024/10031**).

This Fox and Cat Management Plan (FCMP) has been developed to comply with relevant conditions of the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 related to little penguin predation.

## 1.2 Purpose of this FCMP

The purpose of this FCMP is to address Condition 21, 22 and 23 of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031. Table 1 indicates how these conditions have been addressed in this FCMP.

Table 1 Conditions of Approval relevant to this FCMP

Condition number	Requirement	Relevant section
21a	The approval holder must, within 6 months of <b>commencement of the Action</b> , develop a <b>Fox and Cat Management Plan for Garden Island</b> . The <b>Fox and Cat Management Plan</b> must: be prepared by a <b>suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert</b> ,	Section 8 (Management and monitoring plan)
21b	Seek to implement a combination of measures, which may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– exclusion fencing, baiting, shooting, trapping, den fumigation or den destruction, and</li> </ul>	Section 8 (Management and monitoring plan)
21c	Establish a monitoring and reporting <b>plan</b> that monitors progress towards <b>fox</b> removal.	Section 6 (Communication and reporting) Section 8 (Management and monitoring plan) Section 12 (Audit and review)
22	<i>The approval holder must, within 6 months of commencement of the Action, begin implementation of the Fox and Cat Management Plan, and continue to implement it until at least 6 years after the completion of construction.</i>	Section 8 (Implementation of the management plan)

Condition number	Requirement	Relevant section
23a-c	<p><i>The approval holder must ensure that in implementing the Fox and Cat Management Plan, the following environmental outcomes are achieved:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>a) there is no fox or cat presence on Garden Island by the year 2030,</i></li> <li>– <i>b) following eradication of foxes, Garden Island remains free of foxes until at least 6 years after completion of construction, and</i></li> <li>– <i>c) Garden Island remains free of cats until at least 6 years after the completion of construction.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Section 8 (Implementation of the management plan) Section 10 (Adaptive management measures)</p>

The objectives of this FCMP are:

- to comply with conditions 21, 22 and 23 of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031
- to achieve eradication of fox and cats on Garden Island by 2030
- to maintain eradication of foxes and cats until at least 6 years after the completion of construction
- to avoid, minimise or manage potential impacts from predation from invasive species such as foxes and feral cats through implementing management measures
- to monitor and report on the progress towards and achievement of eradication of fox and cats on Garden Island
- to continuously improve and adaptively manage potential impacts from predation from invasive species such as foxes and feral cats.

### 1.3 Scope of FCMP

This FCMP applies across the entirety of Garden Island and extends beyond the defined Action area for EPBC 2024/10031. This FCMP is intended to guide management actions throughout the construction phase and for at least 6 years after the completion of construction to achieve compliance of long-term, island-wide fox and cat predator control and ecological protection.

The scope of this FCMP includes the following:

- **Eradication of foxes and feral cats** from Garden Island in accordance with Condition 23(a).
- **Implementation of prevention and biosecurity measures** to minimise the risk of incursions (to maintain eradication status) via the causeway, marine access points, construction activities, and Defence operations.
- **Development of monitoring and reporting frameworks** to demonstrate progress towards eradication, confirm eradication status and support ongoing predator-free management status.
- **Assessment of available eradication and prevention techniques**, including their suitability for Garden Island's ecological, operational, and logistical context.
- **Integration of best-practice approaches** from comparable eradication programs in Australia and internationally.
- **Protection of native fauna**, particularly the little penguin colony, through targeted management actions that reduce predation risk.
- **Implementation timeframes** consistent with EPBC Act approval conditions, including the requirement to maintain a predator-free status for at least six years following completion of construction.

### 1.4 Key definitions

For the purposes of this management plan, and the interpretation of Condition 23(a) we provide the following definitions:

**Eradication** is deemed (Saunders et al, 2010; Rout et al. 2014; Ramsey et al, 2023):

*“The complete and total removal of foxes and cats from Garden Island, with no incursions, or detections for a period of at least two years of high-intensity monitoring, with this monitoring period validated through statistical analyses”*

If:

- 1) A fox incursion onto Garden Island occurs, then the 2-year monitoring period of no-detection recommences from day “0” in order to declare eradication successful.
- 2) If statistical analyses deem the monitoring being conducted is required to be continued for longer than a two-year period to be confident of eradication, then this period be extended in line with statistical recommendations prior to eradication being declared.
- 3) Once eradication is declared successful should an incursion onto Garden Island be detected, this is considered a reinvasion and is dealt with under the biosecurity “Rapid Response Procedure”.
  - a) The individual incursion should be eradicated quickly and efficiently before additional incursions or breeding (or birth of young in the case of females) are detected. If these are detected, the island is deemed no longer “cat and/or fox free”.

**Incursion** is deemed:

*“Any detection (whether through scat/tracks, camera image, or other verified report) of a fox on Garden Island and/or the adjoining causeway”*

If:

- 1) An unverified report is received, all reasonable steps must be taken to verify the report, and Rapid Response Actions be initiated as a precautionary measure.

## 2. Site context

### 2.1 Existing environment

HMAS Stirling is Australia's largest naval base and is located on Garden Island, approximately 5 km offshore from Rockingham, Western Australia. The island is a limestone-based landform extending roughly 10 km in length and 1.5 km in width, supporting a combination of Defence infrastructure, operational facilities, and areas of high ecological value. Historical environmental working papers prepared for HMAS Stirling describe Garden Island as containing significant coastal dune systems, limestone ridges, shrublands, and associated terrestrial and marine ecosystems (Department of Defence, 2025).

Garden Island supports a diverse assemblage of native terrestrial fauna, including reptiles, small mammals, seabirds, and invertebrates. Of ecological significance is the little penguin colony, recognised as one of the most important breeding populations in WA. Recent assessments undertaken for the SRF West Priority Works confirm the presence of active nesting sites across the island and highlight the colony's sensitivity to disturbance and predation by red foxes. The 2025 Garden Island Little Penguin Population Estimate provides the most current population data and reinforces the ecological importance of the colony (Department of Defence, 2025).

#### 2.1.1 Site description

Garden Island is connected to the mainland via a 5 km causeway that supports vehicle access. Access points to the island include vehicle access through the primary causeway entry, controlled Defence checkpoints, and public boat access to specific beaches in the north of the island that may be reached during low tide or favourable wind conditions. The northern part of Garden Island is managed by the WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). Figure 2.1 depicts a map of Garden Island.

The developed area of Garden Island (HMAS Stirling) is dominated by Defence infrastructure, rock walls, and modified coastal environments. Key ecological features include several little penguin colonies, with the causeway colony identified as the most vulnerable due to its proximity to potential predator entry points.

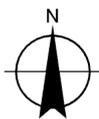
The mainland immediately adjoining the causeway is managed by Rockingham Shire Council and is a high human use with public access area including beach recreational activities. Cape Peron also provides coastal dunes with native vegetation and habitat for red foxes and feral cats.

Limited knowledge of previous fox dens is available, with foxes previously observed using human structural features, such as rock walls, vegetated pockets, and service corridors for nesting. Several of these structures may also provide temporary shelter or movement pathways for predators.



**Legend**  
 Defence property boundary - HMAS Stirling

Paper Size ISO A4  
 0 500 1,000 1,500  
 Meters  
 Scale: 1:55,000  
 Map Projection: Transverse Mercator  
 Horizontal Datum: GDA2020  
 Grid: GDA2020 MGA Zone 50



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE  
 SEA1010-1 USW SUPPORT FACILITIES AND  
 INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM  
 SRF-WEST PRIORITY WORKS  
**FOX AND CAT MANAGEMENT PLAN  
 GARDEN ISLAND**

Project No. **12613283**  
 Revision No. **A**  
 Date **26/02/2026**

**FIGURE 2.1**

An overview of fauna species this FCMP applies to are detailed below.

## 2.1.2 Invasive species

### 2.1.2.1 Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Fox incursions are known for Garden Island, and it is unknown if there is a current resident population on the island. The species has been confirmed as a predator of little penguins on the island.

Predation by the European red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) is listed as a 'key threatening process' under the EPBC Act (Commonwealth of Australia 2026); and is identified by the DBCA as a primary threat to native fauna, particularly ground-nesting birds and small mammals (Saunders et al. 2010; DBCA, 2025). Evidence from comparable island systems, such as Phillip Island in Victoria, demonstrates that fox predation can cause severe mortality in little penguin colonies (Dann 1992).

### 2.1.2.2 Feral cat (*Felis catus*)

A singular feral cat is known to have been removed from Garden Island; however, this was 20+years ago and it is thought that there is currently not a feral cat population on the island. Defence policies relating to feral cats are in place to prevent their presence on the island. Predation by feral cats is listed as a key threatening process under the EPBC Act (Commonwealth of Australia 2026). The cat's cryptic behaviour and ability to reproduce rapidly make them particularly challenging to detect and manage, and although feral cats have not been recorded in recent year on Garden Island, there is still the potential for feral cats to be there. Cats can similarly predate little penguins a study by Colombelli-Negrel & Tomo (2017) report that feral cats have been identified as predators of little penguin chicks and eggs on Granite Island, South Australia.

Given the above risks, even a single fox or cat incursion onto Garden Island poses a substantial threat to the little penguin colony and other native fauna. The EPBC Act approval conditions therefore require a comprehensive and sustained management response to meet compliance of eradication and prevent reestablishment and protect the island's biodiversity values.

### 2.1.2.3 Little penguin (*Eudyptula minor*)

Little penguins are a faunal species of high significance on Garden Island, and their vulnerability is strongly influenced by both human activity and past predation pressure. Research shows that little penguins exhibit heightened vigilance and elevated stress responses in areas with greater human disturbance or where colonies have previously experienced predation. These behavioural changes can reduce breeding success and increase energetic costs, underscoring the need for site-specific management approaches tailored to local disturbance levels (Schaefer and Colombelli-Negrel 2021).

In addition to managing disturbance and predator risk, the approved Action requires implementation of a dedicated little penguin monitoring program to meet compliance that construction activities do not adversely affect the colony (RPS, 2025). This program monitors nest numbers, breeding adult pairs, breeding success, and behavioural responses throughout the breeding season, providing an evidence base for detecting changes in population size or behaviour. This data will be used to maintain the established baseline little penguin population and to inform adaptive management responses with behavioural shifts, or nest instability be detected. Given the proximity of the Garden Island colony to operational infrastructure and historical predator incursions, careful management of disturbance and predator risk is essential to maintaining the long-term viability of this species on the island.

## 2.2 Existing management

DBCA currently performs a fox monitoring and control program on Garden Island which provide a strong foundation for management on going incursions. The current program combines camera networks, targeted baiting and rapid-response removal. Despite the strengths of the current program, it does not provide full-island coverage and detections occur at very low fox densities remains uncertain. The implementation of this FCMP enhances the current program by strengthening and formalising existing actions and meets compliance through monitoring, detection and response actions being fully integrated and consistent across Garden Island. Through enhancing

coverage, coordination and readiness, this FCMP provides the structure that is required to maintain Garden Island’s fox and cat free status within the appropriate timeline.

This FCMP has been prepared to be consistent with and to be implemented alongside the current DBCA Feral Cat Strategy (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Feral Cat Strategy 2023-2028).

The primary vulnerability for predator entry is the 5 km causeway, which provides a direct land bridge from the mainland. The risk of members of the public bringing and releasing foxes and/or cats onto the island in the northern publicly accessible sections is low. The causeway has several key features of concern with respect to predator entry and movement which can be split into two key categories (Table 2):

1. Ability to cross the causeway
2. Access to the causeway by foxes

**Table 2** Key features potentially contributing to predator entry risk onto Garden Island via the causeway

	Vulnerability category	Description	Likelihood of occurrence
Ability to cross the Causeway	Service tunnels and shafts	Subsurface and enclosed structures under the causeway infrastructure that will enable undetected fox or cat movement along the causeway.	<b>Moderate</b> - These structures provide concealed, continuous pathways that could be exploited without detection, increasing the probability of use during an incursion.
	Powerline and bridge structures	Overhead and structural elements that create additional physical access routes onto the island.	<b>Low</b> - While structurally possible, these routes are less accessible and less likely to be used by foxes or cats under normal conditions.
	Human-mediated transport	Movement of vehicles, equipment, and personnel that will inadvertently transport predators or facilitate their entry.	<b>Low</b> - Defence access controls and vehicle screening reduce the likelihood of accidental predator transport, though the risk cannot be fully eliminated.
	Water-based access	Conditions such as low tide or low wind that allow foxes to cross by water or along exposed substrates, with documented instances of foxes foraging for crabs during crossings.	<b>Low</b> - Crossings require specific environmental conditions and are opportunistic rather than routine, resulting in a lower overall likelihood.
Access to Causeway	Limited physical barriers	Fencing infrastructure has multiple weak points including holes in fences, openings under fence gates, non-fenced driveway, fence infrastructure is climbable and not going to limit fox incursions	<b>High</b> - Foxes have multiple opportunities to access the causeway area, including cryptic ways such as via beaches to the north or south of the causeway. A lack of limited entries makes monitoring incursions, and attempts to “funnel” incursions into smaller areas are not possible.
	Food resource incentives	In the immediate area surrounding the defence infrastructure that facilitates human access to the causeway there are food resources that are likely to attract foxes or cats to the vicinity of the causeway including European rabbits (a primary food source in Australia Doherty et al. 2015; Flemming et al. 2021). In addition, there are considerable nesting birds (silver gulls	<b>Moderate</b> - Food resources in the entryway to the causeway are likely providing incentives for foxes and cats to enter the area, and motivate them to further travel down the causeway given the available food sources down the causeway

		( <i>Chroicocephalus novaehollandiae</i> ) and feral pigeons ( <i>Columba livia domestica</i> ) on the first section of the causeway, visible from outside the fence around the causeway	
	Unknown, yet uncontrolled fox population	The immediate mainland area is currently not monitored for fox abundance, and no fox management is currently undertaken. This habitat is highly suitable for fox presence. Larger fox abundances in the surrounding area of the causeway entry would increase competition between foxes for food resources and result in foxes seeking new foraging opportunities, potentially enhancing the interest in resource availability on the causeway	<b>High</b> – the more foxes in the vicinity of the causeway, the greater the innate probability a fox elects to explore the causeway, and subsequently potentially make it across to Garden Island.

The surrounding infrastructure and incentive to interact with the causeway (for foxes and cats) and the pathways available for foxes and cats to cross the causeway collectively increase the likelihood of intermittent fox incursions, even if no resident population is currently present or established.

Environmental and structural features that support predator persistence Garden Island is a potentially attractive location for foxes and cats with several features potentially supporting their presence on the island. These include:

- **Food resources.** There are abundant food resources available on Garden Island (as well as an abundance of silver gulls and feral pigeons along the causeway and rabbits observed near the entry gate). This includes rodent populations, Tammar wallaby and little penguins as well as human refuse and waste, although well managed, can attract and support fox and cat populations.
- **Dense cover.** Particularly within rock walls and causeway structures, where foxes have previously been detected and where nesting seabirds will attract scavenging behaviour. Foxes and cats are also known to readily use human structures and dense vegetation to hide and could use these currently or post any incursion.
- **Artificial structures.** These provide temporary shelter or movement corridors.

These features increase the probability of foxes impacting biodiversity of conservation significance such as little penguins on Garden Island.

### 2.2.1.1 High-risk interaction zones for native fauna

Little penguins represent the species most at risk from fox and cat incursions on Garden Island. One of the colony's is situated near the primary entry pathway at Careening Bay onto Garden Island for foxes and therefore experiences the highest exposure to potential predation events. The colony locations within modified and largely open coastal infrastructure provides limited natural protection, making penguins especially vulnerable during periods of fox movement across the causeway. Historical incidents on Garden Island, which include multiple penguin deaths and a case of a penguin beheading, demonstrate the severity of impact that even a single fox can inflict within a short timeframe. These events highlight the colony's sensitivity to incursions and reinforce the need for strengthened surveillance and rapid response capability along the causeway corridor.

## 2.2.2 Operational constraints

Control efforts are influenced by several site-specific constraints, including restricted access due to Defence operations, variable terrain, and the need to minimise disturbance to sensitive wildlife habitats. These factors shape the timing, methods, and intensity of management activities. Maintaining a predator-free status remains the overarching objective, supported by ongoing surveillance, rapid-response capability, and adaptive management informed by new data as it becomes available.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

Key environmental management roles and responsibilities for this FCMP have been provided below in Figure 3.1 with the roles and responsibilities for the specific management controls and monitoring requirements in this FCMP provided in Table 7.13. The arrows indicate the direction of process flow while the dash lines represent conditional steps and the solid lines show the primary sequence of actions.

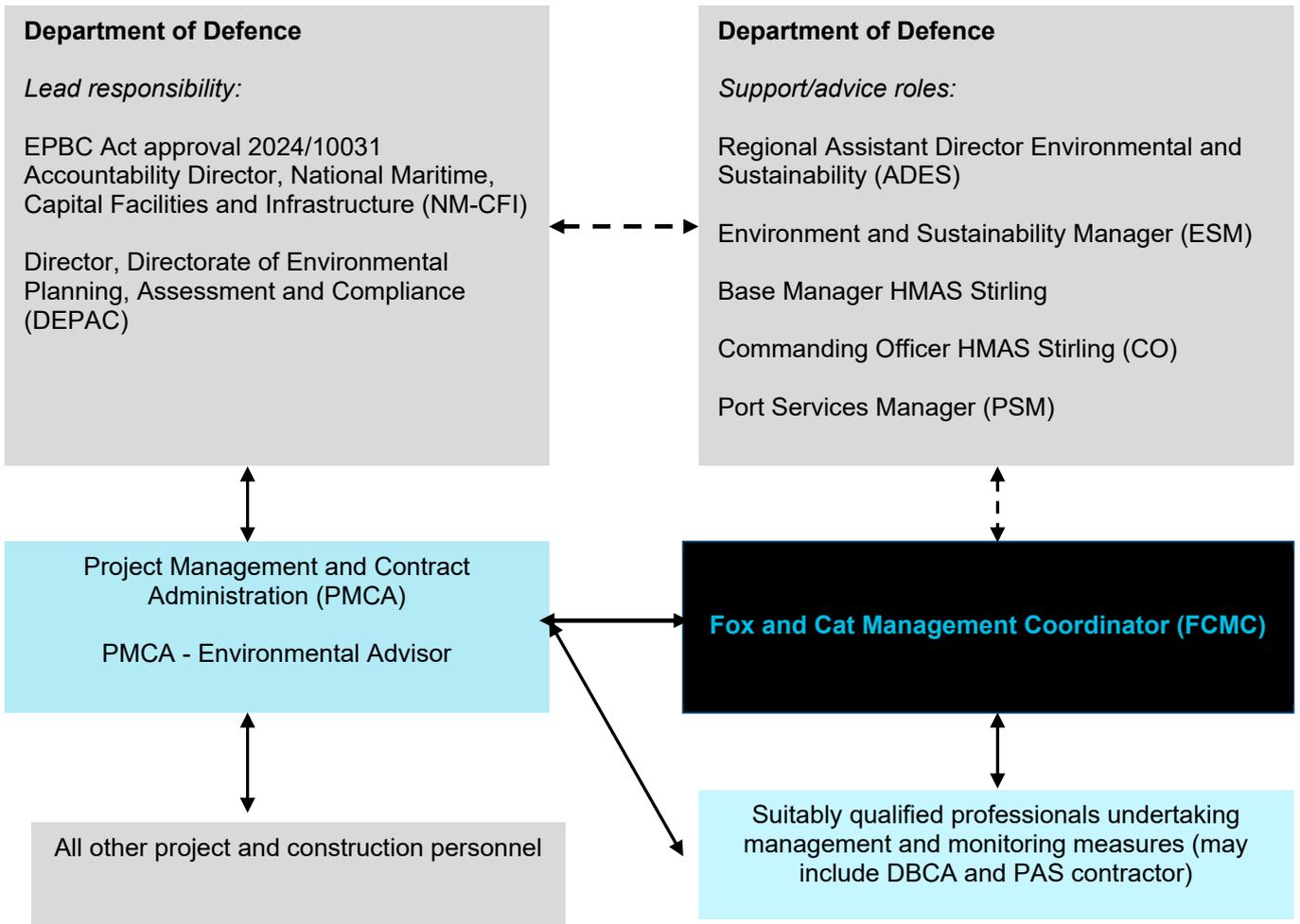


Figure 3.1 Roles and responsibilities for this FCMP

Roles identified in the table below also represent key stakeholders that have an interest and or responsibility for achieving the implementation success of this FCMP.

**Table 3** Roles and responsibilities for this FCMP

Role	Responsibilities
<p>Director Delivery, Fleet Base West Project management Office (FBW-PMO), Department of Defence</p> <p>Also referred to as EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 Accountability Director, National Maritime, Capital Facilities and Infrastructure (NM-CFI)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– As the approval holder on behalf of Defence, manage the joint overall accountability for the preparation, implementation and approval of this FCMP in accordance with EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.</li> <li>– Engage suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert to prepare this FCMP within 6 months of construction commencing.</li> <li>– Engage suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert to manage and report on the implementation of this FCMP, including a fox and cat management coordinator (FCMC).</li> <li>– Provide for adequate resources for the implementation of this FCMP through to at least 6 years post construction.</li> <li>– Maintain compliance requirements of this FCMP to ensure consistency with conditions of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.</li> <li>– Approve, and declare accuracy of, this FCMP within 6 months of construction commencing.</li> <li>– Publish this FCMP that is required by EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 (refer to Section 5.3) on the website within 15 business days prior to implementation and submit to DCCEEW electronically upon request within 5 business days.</li> <li>– Direct and undertake management reviews in accordance with Section 11.1 of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Engage an independent auditor to undertake an audit every 3 years, that includes compliance against this FCMP, or as directed by the Minister, in accordance with Section 11.5, including publishing the audit report and request DEPAC notification to DCCEEW within 5 business days of the date the audit report is published.</li> <li>– Provide information to DEPAC to support notification to DCCEEW of an incident within 2 business days and provide an incident report within 12 business days for all incidents (refer to Section 5.4.3).</li> </ul>
<p>Directorate of Environmental Planning, Assessment and Compliance (DEPAC), Department of Defence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Primary direct point of contact with DCCEEW for Defence.</li> <li>– As the approval holder on behalf of Defence, manage the joint overall accountability for the preparation, implementation and approval of this FCMP in accordance with EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.</li> <li>– Participate in and support management reviews undertaken in accordance with Section 11.1 of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Support the engagement of an independent auditor to undertake an audit every 3 years, that includes compliance against this FCMP, or as directed by the Minister, in accordance with Section 11.5, including publishing the audit report and notifying DCCEEW within 5 business days of the date the audit report is published.</li> <li>– Notify DCCEEW of an incident within 2 business days and provide an incident report within 12 business days for all incidents (refer to Section 5.4.3).</li> <li>– Review and issue annual compliance reporting, that includes compliance with this FCMP, to DCCEEW.</li> <li>– Review and issue independent auditor reporting and notify DCCEEW of such within 5 business days of the date the audit report is published.</li> <li>– Maintain reporting pathways and documentation for EPBC compliance</li> <li>– Support the engagement the FCMC.</li> <li>– Support Defence to provide adequate resources for the implementation of this FCMP through to at least 6 years post construction.</li> <li>– Lead adaptive management reviews and update procedures as required</li> </ul>
<p>Regional Assistant Director Environment and Sustainability (ADES) (Defence) Environment and Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be familiar with the requirements of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Attend management reviews as required or requested in accordance with Section 11.1 of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Confirm they have access to and are using the current version of this FCMP, and related procedures, forms and templates.</li> <li>– Acting in accordance with their general environmental duty, specifically, all personnel must not carry out any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm, unless that person takes all reasonable care to prevent and minimise the harm.</li> <li>– Provide base specific environment advice, support and approval (where relevant) to fox and cat management activities associated with the approved Action.</li> </ul>

<p>Manager (ESM) (Defence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Participate in incident investigations.</li> </ul>
<p>Commanding Officer HMAS Stirling (CO) (Defence) Base Manager HMAS Stirling (Defence) Port Services Manager (PSM) (Defence)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be familiar with the requirements of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Attend management reviews as required or requested in accordance with Section 11.1 of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Confirm they have access to and are using the current version of this FCMP, and related procedures, forms and templates.</li> <li>– Acting in accordance with their general environmental duty, specifically all personnel must not carry out any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm, unless that person takes all reasonable care to prevent and minimise the harm.</li> </ul>
<p>Project Management Contract Administrator (PMCA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be familiar with the requirements of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Support adequate resourcing for the implementation of this FCMP through to at least 6 years post construction.</li> <li>– As directed by Defence, undertake management reviews in accordance with Section 11.1 of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Comply with requirements that they have access to and are using the current version of this FCMP, and related procedures, forms and templates.</li> <li>– Acting in accordance with their general environmental duty, specifically, all personnel must not carry out any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm, unless that person takes all reasonable care to prevent and minimise the harm.</li> </ul>
<p>PMCA – Environment Advisor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provide guidance, support and review functions to the FCMC and the FCMC responsibilities.</li> <li>– Prepare this FCMP within 6 months of construction commencing and submit to Defence for approval.</li> <li>– Facilitate regular communication with the FCMC and DBCA in accordance with Section 5.</li> <li>– Facilitate fox and cat management performance requirements, audits, review and continuous improvement activities, including update and/or review of this FCMP through adaptive management or corrective action identification.</li> <li>– Oversee the environmental approval of infrastructure upgrades (predator proof gate, fencing, access controls) if required.</li> <li>– Support the FCMC in tracking fox and cat monitoring programs and provide advice, where requested, on environmental incident investigations.</li> <li>– Communicate any requirements from the FCMC that are relevant to the SRF-West Project CEMP to the Site Environment Officer (SEO) and update the CEMP accordingly.</li> <li>– Review incident reporting as per Section 5.4 of this FCMP.</li> </ul>
<p>Fox and cat management coordinator (FCMC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Oversight and monitoring the implementation of fox and cat management measures, during the project on behalf of Defence for the approved Action.</li> <li>– Coordinate rapid response activation and resource deployment in accordance with Section 7.3.</li> <li>– Provide site induction for this FCMP to support all personnel undertaking management and monitoring activities for this FCMP.</li> <li>– Communicate required fox and cat management measures to sub-contractors and suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert and other professionals, including DBCA.</li> <li>– Coordinate infrastructure upgrades (predator proof gate, fencing, access controls).</li> <li>– Report to the PMCA and Defence on the adequacy and management performance against this FCMP for the Approved Action.</li> <li>– Support Defence with external reporting matters where required.</li> <li>– Co-ordinate a response following a reported incident relating to this FCMC including coordinating with Defence and all personnel.</li> <li>– Incident and event reporting (including near misses) responsibilities to the key Project and Defence personnel (PMCA, and where directed, to Defence staff (DEPAC, ADES, ESM, CO and Base Manager HMAS Stirling)).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report non-conformances to the PMCA and DEPAC, to facilitate DEPAC notification to DCCEEW where required.</li> <li>– Update this FCMP, where required, to consider new activities or where incident and event reports recommend revision.</li> <li>– Undertake reviews as per Section 11 of this FCMP, and meetings and communication as per Section 5 of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Compile and maintain the required reporting and records to be distributed to the Project and Defence personnel as per Section 5 of this FCMP.</li> </ul>
DBCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promoting biodiversity and conservation through sustainable management of WA's species, ecosystems, lands and the attractions in their care, including Garden Island</li> <li>– Manage the current fox and cat management and monitoring measures undertaken on Garden Island, including baiting, shooting, and monitoring of scats and tracks</li> <li>– Provide technical guidance on eradication, monitoring, and baiting</li> <li>– Advise on habitat protection and native species monitoring</li> <li>– Assist with rapid response operations</li> </ul>
Property and Asset Services Contractor (currently Ventia)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be familiar with the requirements of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Comply with requirements that they have access to and are using the current version of this FCMP, and related procedures, forms and templates.</li> <li>– Act in accordance with their general environmental duty, specifically, all personnel must not carry out any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm, unless that person takes all reasonable care to prevent and minimise the harm.</li> <li>– Undertake relevant training, competency and induction requirements for work being undertaken.</li> <li>– Report all incidents and events in accordance with Section 5.4.3.</li> <li>– Maintain surveillance systems (camera traps, track pads, infrastructure checks)</li> <li>– Implement waste management and prey suppression measures</li> <li>– Implement current response strategy</li> </ul>
Suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert (for this FCMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be familiar with the requirements of this FCMP.</li> <li>– Comply with requirement that they have access to and are using the current version of this FCMP, and related procedures, forms and templates.</li> <li>– Act in accordance with their general environmental duty, specifically, all personnel must not carry out any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm, unless that person takes all reasonable care to prevent and minimise the harm.</li> <li>– Undertake relevant training, competency and induction requirements for work being undertaken.</li> <li>– Report all incidents and events in accordance with Section 5.4.3.</li> </ul>
Suitably qualified seabird conservation ecologist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Monitor little penguin activity, breeding success, and colony trends</li> <li>– Provide early warning ecological indicators of predator presence</li> <li>– Share data to inform success indicators and adaptive management</li> <li>– Collaborate on research supporting long term predator free outcomes</li> <li>– Receive and review fox monitoring reports</li> </ul>
City of Rockingham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provide updated information surrounding</li> <li>– Phase 2 updates if required</li> </ul>
All other contractors, suppliers and island personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report all incidents and events including any suspected predator in accordance with Section 5.4.3.</li> <li>– Comply with all biosecurity and waste management protocols.</li> <li>– Maintain clean freight, equipment, and work areas to reduce incursion risk.</li> </ul>

## 4. Induction and training

All personnel working on management and monitoring measures identified in this FCMP are required to complete inductions commensurate with their responsibilities, in accordance with this FCMP, and to generally act in a manner that minimises environmental harm.

Specific training or qualifications will be required for particular activities required by this FCMP. Where competence is to be acquired through training, including site inductions, training records will be stored and kept in accordance with Section 11.6.

### 4.1 FCMP induction

All personnel that are engaged to undertake any of the management or monitoring measures identified in this FCMP will undergo an FCMP induction that will include:

- Awareness of this FCMP
- Incident and reporting requirements in accordance with this FCMP
- Biosecurity and waste management protocols
- Details of the relevant management and monitoring requirements for their work

The FCMC is responsible for delivering the FCMP induction to all personnel prior to management and monitoring measures commencing. All new personnel undertaken works required by this FCMP are to be provided the induction by the FCMC. Records of attendees are to be kept in accordance with Section 11.6.

Specific training will be required for particular management and monitoring activities required by this FCMP. Where competence is to be acquired through training, including site inductions, training records will be stored and kept in accordance with Section 11.6.

### 4.2 Construction site induction

All construction personnel working on site will complete a project site induction in accordance with the SRF-West Project CEMP. The PMCA Environmental Advisor is responsible for confirming that the project site induction will include:

- Awareness of this FCMP
- Biosecurity and waste management protocols
- Incident and reporting requirements in accordance with this FCMP

Records of attendees are to be kept per the SRF-West Project CEMP.

## 5. Communication and reporting

The communication and reporting pathways for this FCMP meets compliance that all stakeholders receive timely and accurate information to support coordinated management actions. Stakeholders for this FCMP also have roles and responsibilities that are listed in Section 3.

### 5.1 Internal communication

Internal communication will be led by the FCMC and the PMCA, who will provide updates to relevant Defence personnel (including DEPAC and Base Command), integrate incident reporting and biosecurity requirements into contractor inductions (refer to Section 4), and communicate any access restrictions required during eradication activities.

Communication between the FCMC, PMCA, Defence, DBCA, Property and Access Contractors, and the SRF-West suitably qualified seabird conservation ecologist team will occur regularly to share monitoring data, coordinate field activities, discuss emerging risks, and review adaptive management needs. During Years 1–2, this will be supported by quarterly coordination meetings, transitioning to biannual meetings in Years 3–6 as the program moves into long term monitoring.

### 5.2 External communication

Stakeholder communication, including engagement with DBCA, and specialist consultants (including suitably qualified experts), by the FCMC and PMCA will be maintained through scheduled progress meetings, data sharing platforms, review of draft reports, and participation in verification surveys.

Communication with the regulator (DCCEEW) will be coordinated through DEPAC. This includes submission of annual reports, notification of any incidents or noncompliance, provision of additional information upon request, as required under EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.

Although Garden Island is a restricted Defence site, public communication will be required in certain circumstances, such as predator free confirmation, collaboration with DBCA on regional conservation messaging, or media interest in little penguin conservation. Any public communication will be managed by Defence in consultation with DBCA.

### 5.3 Reporting

To provide transparency, regulatory compliance and coordinated implementation of this FCMP, effective reporting and communication is essential. Table 4 describes the reporting requirements that will support the long-term purpose of eradication of fox and cats on Garden Island.

Table 4 Reporting requirements

Report	Frequency	Purpose	Responsibility	Requirements	Recipients
<b>Internal reporting and notification requirements</b>					
Internal environmental incident and event notification	As soon as possible (within 4 hrs of predator detection)	Triggers rapid response protocols and regulatory notifications	All personnel	– All personnel must report all incidents and non-conformances in accordance with Section 5.4 to the FCMC.	FCMC
	As soon as possible (within 4 hrs of predator detection)	Triggers regulatory notifications	FCMC	– The FCMC is responsible for notifying PMCA, DEPAC, ESM and others as directed, of all incidents and	PMCA/ DEPAC / ESM / DBCA Ranger / Property and Asset

Report	Frequency	Purpose	Responsibility	Requirements	Recipients
				non-conformances within 24 hours. Refer to Section 5.4 for further details.	Services Contractor
Internal environmental incident and event report	Within <b>72 hours</b> of the incident	Meet reporting requirements to DCCEEW	FCCMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The PMCA is responsible for reporting all environmental incidents and non-conformances to Defence via GEMS Incident Report Form within 72 hours of the incident. Refer to Section 5.4 for further details.</li> </ul>	DEPAC
Implementation progress report (Years 1-2)	Quarterly	Track progress of eradication activities and compliance	FCCMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Predator detections (camera traps, sightings, tracks, scats)</li> <li>- Number and type of control actions (trapping, baiting, fencing)</li> <li>- Individuals removed</li> <li>- Monitoring results from high-risk zones</li> <li>- Vehicle, equipment, and material inspection records</li> <li>- Biosecurity breaches and corrective actions</li> <li>- Adaptive management updates</li> <li>- Progress against eradication milestones</li> </ul>	DEPAC DBCA
Implementation Progress Report (Years 3-6)	Annually	Demonstration of ongoing predator-free status	FCCMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring results (camera traps, spotlighting, track/scat surveys)</li> <li>- Evidence supporting predator absence</li> <li>- Vehicle, equipment, and material inspection records</li> <li>- Biosecurity breaches and corrective actions</li> <li>- Any incursions and response actions</li> <li>- Ecological indicators (e.g., penguin breeding success where relevant)</li> </ul>	DEPAC DBCA

Report	Frequency	Purpose	Responsibility	Requirements	Recipients
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations for adaptive management</li> </ul>	
Predator-free verification report	Once After at least 24 consecutive months of zero detections (Year 3), subject to the outcomes of the spatial probability of absence modelling	Confirm eradication success and transition to long term monitoring	FCMC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary of 24-month detection data</li> <li>Verification survey methods</li> <li>Independent review findings (if required)</li> <li>Statement of predator free status</li> <li>Recommendations for ongoing biosecurity</li> </ul>	DEPAC
<b>External reporting and notification requirements</b>					
Submission and publication of plans	Within <b>15 business days</b> prior to implementation Within <b>5 business days</b> of request	Demonstrate compliance with approval conditions	DEPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All plans required by Condition 21 of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031, including this FCMP, must be published on the website and electronically submitted upon request.</li> </ul>	DCCEEW
Incident report	Immediate (within 24 hrs of predator detection)	Triggers rapid response protocols and regulatory notifications	DEPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Description of detection (date, time, location)</li> <li>Evidence (photos, tracks, scats, carcasses)</li> <li>Initial response actions taken</li> <li>Required follow up actions</li> <li>Risk assessment</li> </ul>	DCCEEW
Incident notification	Within <b>2 business days</b> of becoming aware of an incident (refer to Section <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b>	Demonstrate compliance with approval conditions	DEPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electronic notification to DCCEEW of an incident in accordance with Condition 50 of the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 (refer to Section 5.4.3).</li> </ul>	DCCEEW
Incident report	Within <b>12 business days</b> of becoming aware of an incident (refer to Section <b>Error! Reference source not found.</b> ).	Demonstrate compliance with approval conditions	DEPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of an incident report to DCCEEW in accordance with Condition 51 of the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 (refer to Section 5.4.3).</li> </ul>	DCCEEW
Annual Compliance Report	Within 20 business days following the end of each ACR period, that is every <b>12 months</b> from the	Demonstrate compliance with approval conditions	DEPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submission of an ACR that is consistent with Conditions 42-49 of EPBC Act approval</li> </ul>	DCCEEW

Report	Frequency	Purpose	Responsibility	Requirements	Recipients
	commencement of the Action until the completion of the Action (or for the components relating to this FCMP until completion of the FCMP)			2024/10031 and the Annual Compliance Report Guidelines <b>Invalid source specified.</b> which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Summary of FCMP implementation</li> <li>– Monitoring and eradication outcomes</li> <li>– Any noncompliance and corrective actions</li> <li>– Supporting evidence and data</li> </ul>	
Fauna sightings	At least <b>annually</b>	Demonstrate compliance with approval conditions	PMCA, via HMAS Stirling ESM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Upload to the relevant database, all fauna sightings recorded during the Action in accordance with Condition 41 of the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.</li> </ul>	Atlas of Living Australia or relevant state biodiversity database
Independent audit report	Within 3 months following the end of each audit period, that is every <b>3 years</b> from the commencement of the Action until the completion of the Action	Demonstrate compliance with approval conditions	DEPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Submission of an audit report to DCCEEW to the satisfaction of the Minister and consistent with the Independent Audit and Audit Report Guidelines <b>Invalid source specified.</b> and Conditions 52-60 of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.</li> <li>– The audit report will be published on the website within 10 business days of the date DCCEEW agrees to the audit report in line with Condition 58.</li> <li>– DCCEEW will be notified that the audit report is published on the website in accordance with Condition 59.</li> </ul>	DCCEEW

## 5.4 Environmental incidents and event reporting

The following sections provide the definitions, response processes, and reporting requirements for environmental incidents and non-conformance with this FCMP respectively.

### 5.4.1 Incident definition

What constitutes an environmental incident in this FCMP for the approved Action has been defined in the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 and with reference to the activities detailed in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** means any:

- event which has the potential to, or does, harm any protected matter, which includes, but is not limited to:
  - a decline in the little penguin population at Garden Island/*Meeandip* below the baseline population or a declining population trend that has the potential to decrease the little penguin population at Garden Island/*Meeandip* below the baseline population
- potential non-compliance with the conditions of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031, including the administrative requirements
- actual non-compliance with the conditions of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031, including the administrative requirements
- potential non-compliance with one or more commitments made in a plan (including this FCMP) required under EPBC Act approval 2024/10031
- actual non-compliance with one or more commitments made in a plan (including this FCMP) required under EPBC Act approval 2024/10031.

### 5.4.2 Incident response process

All personnel working on this FCMP are required to report any environmental incidents or non-compliances to the FCMC as soon as practicable and within 4 hours of the incident. The FCMC has the responsibility to:

- undertake emergency response following a reported environmental incident including coordinating with Defence, the PMCA, the relevant Contractor, and any other required project personnel
- notification of all environmental incidents (including near misses) to the PMCA, the ESM, DEPAC and where directed, to the Command Team at HMAS Stirling as soon as practicable and within 24 hours of the incident
- update this FCMP where environmental incident reports recommend revision and submit to Defence for review and approval.

### 5.4.3 Incident reporting

Reporting of all environmental incidents and non-conformances related to the implementation of this FCMP will be documented and submitted to Defence via Defence's Garrison and Estate Management System (GEMS) Incident Report Form within 72 hours of the incident and are to include the following details:

- A short description of the environmental incident.
- The location (if applicable, including co-ordinates), date and time of the environmental incident.
- All corrective measures and investigations which have been undertaken.
- Any recommendations to prevent environmental incidents in the future.

The GEMS incident management process is not currently part of an incident response. Incident records in GEMS document events, investigations and outcomes of an incident, often after all necessary management actions directly related to the incident have been completed. For example, a GEMS record is not a method to request a spill response, but the form will be used to document a spill that resulted in an environmental incident or near miss after response and "make good" actions have been completed.

Slower elements of incident management such as root cause investigations, lessons learned and external agency interactions, will be managed and documented directly into a GEMS incident record. In general, an incident will be recorded in GEMS as soon as it is practical to do so.

If any person outside the Project would like to report an environmental incident or near miss relevant to this FCMP, they can notify the Defence National Switchboard on 1300 333 362, or via email at [srf-west.infrastructureproject@defence.gov.au](mailto:srf-west.infrastructureproject@defence.gov.au) or to the HMAS Stirling base on +61 8 9553 2222 or via email at [fbw.basemanagement@defence.gov.au](mailto:fbw.basemanagement@defence.gov.au).

In accordance with the requirements of Conditions 50 and 51 of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 on behalf of Defence, DEPAC is responsible for:

- determining that an environmental incident as defined in the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 has occurred and notifying DCCEEW as required
- notifying DCCEEW electronically, within 2 business days of becoming aware of any environmental incident
- providing to DCCEEW in writing, within 12 business days of becoming aware of an environmental incident, the details of that environmental incident.

The notification to DCCEEW from DEPAC will include:

- any condition or commitment made in a plan required by the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 which has not been, or will have not been, complied with
- a short description of the environmental incident
- the location (if applicable, including co-ordinates), date and time of the environmental incident.

The details provided to DCCEEW from DEPAC within 12 business days will include:

- all corrective measures and investigations which the approval holder has already taken in respect of the environmental incident
- the potential impacts of the environmental incident
- the method and timing of any corrective measures that the approval holder proposes to undertake to address the environmental incident
- any variation of these conditions or revision of a plan that will be required to prevent recurrence of the environmental incident and/or to address its consequences.

#### 5.4.4 FCMP event definition

FCMP events are occurrences that do not meet the definition of an incident under the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 but are relevant to the ongoing performance against this FCMP.

FCMP events will include, but are not limited to:

- Exceedance of 'review' trigger levels of the rapid response protocol (once identified)
- Evidence of predator detection
- Discovery of damage to fencing or other eradication measures (e.g., traps etc).
- Discovery of minor nest or burrow damage where suitably qualified seabird conservation ecologist has noted no injury or mortality to protected fauna has occurred.

#### 5.4.5 FCMP event response process

All personnel are encouraged to report any potential FCMP events or behaviours that will elevate the risk to environmental conditions to the FCMC as soon as practicable. The FCMC has the responsibility to:

- activate the rapid response strategy team and actions (refer to Section 7.3)
- notify DEPAC within 24 hours of the event
- prepare an incident report and submit within 72 hours to maintain compliance of swift and coordinated action to prevent predator establishment or breeding
- record all reported events in a register, including details of location, date of occurrence, description and immediate actions taken
- verify that the event does not meet the definition of an environmental incident (as per Section 5.4.1)
- initiate corrective or preventive actions to address contributing factors and prevent recurrence
- review environmental event trends to identify emerging risks or areas for improvement in environmental controls
- include a summary of events and associated management actions in regular communication with DEPAC.

## 5.5 Maintenance of fox and cat eradication post construction

Maintaining the successful eradication status of Garden Island following construction is essential to protecting Garden Island's ecological values, particularly the little penguin colony, which is highly vulnerable to predation (Kirkwood et al. 2014; Phillip Island Nature Parks 2024; Department of Defence 2025). This objective will be achieved through a comprehensive biosecurity framework that includes strict controls over the transport of vehicles, equipment, and materials entering the island, as well as mandatory protocols for personnel to prevent accidental introductions of foxes or cats.

Quarantine procedures will maintain compliance that high risk materials are inspected, secured, and managed appropriately. Ongoing surveillance will support early detection of incursions, with a network of camera traps, regular track and scat surveys, and rapid response protocols enabling immediate intervention if predator sign is detected. Contingency planning will define clear intervention points and emergency eradication procedures to maintain compliance of swift action in the event of an incursion. Reporting obligations will comply with requirements of transparency and regulatory compliance, with regular updates provided to Defence, DBCA, and DCCEEW in accordance with EPBC Act approval requirements. Performance indicators for this objective include the continued successful eradication status of Garden Island, adherence to biosecurity protocols, and timely and effective responses to any suspected incursions, ensuring they are eliminated in line with the defined criteria in Section 1.3 to maintain eradication status, ensuring Garden Island remains predator-free for at least six years post-construction.

## 6. Control methods

The control methods included in the development of this FCMP draw on established best practice fox and cat eradication and incorporate lessons from successful programs in Australia and internationally. Although control methods are reasonably well established for foxes, there are limitations with respect to cats and the relative efficacy of different methods. Equally, one of the most challenging decisions is when to declare an eradication successful and remains relatively unknown and is best developed in a site-by-site context.

This background research highlights some key challenges that need to be addressed to achieve effective eradication of foxes and cats, but also a wide range of options for this program to be successful. A summary of the key research findings is described below in Table 5.

*Table 5 Key findings from desktop research*

<b>Research category</b>	<b>Key findings</b>
Past eradications and methods	<p>Sixteen fox eradications have been successful globally (twelve in Australia), mostly using 1080 baiting as the primary method</p> <p>Multiple control methods (baiting, trapping, shooting, den fumigation/destruction) are essential for eradication success</p> <p>Cat eradications are more common, using a mix of baiting and trapping</p> <p>Confirming eradication requires long-term, multi-method monitoring; absence is harder to prove than presence</p> <p>Biodiversity benefits from predator removal are well documented, including recovery of penguins, wallaby, bandicoots and other native fauna.</p>
Effective actions in similar contexts	<p>Successful programs (such as Dampier Archipelago, Phillip Island) relied on 1080 baiting combined with trapping, shooting and dog-assisted hunting.</p> <p>Key principles include evidence-based method selection and multiple control tools, ensuring all individuals are exposed to risk</p> <p>Reinvasion prevention is critical with ongoing baiting and strong biosecurity measures essential in past successes</p> <p>Low-density detection requires robust monitoring tools such as remote cameras, detector dogs and analytical modelling</p>
Implications for Garden Island	<p>Foxes access the island via the causeway, making reinvasion risk challenging</p> <p>Current monitoring is insufficient; a denser camera grid, track/scat surveys and detector dogs are required</p> <p>Existing control methods (such as baiting, shooting) are viable but require expanded spatial coverage and adjusted bait spacing</p> <p>A Rapid Response Procedure is needed to address incursions quickly once eradication is achieved</p> <p>Eradication would significantly benefit native species such as little penguins, Tamar wallaby and little terns</p>

## 7. Management and monitoring plan

The management plan measures for Garden Island are informed by the targeted desktop research and a focused field assessment. The findings from the desktop review and field assessment in Section **Error! Reference source not found.** provided the foundation for developing the practical, evidence-based measures tailored to Garden Island's unique environmental and Defence context and was designed and written with the knowledge and practical guidance of a suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert.

The management and monitoring plan comprises core components that are divided into three phases:

- **Phase One: Eradication.** Eradication of fox and cat populations currently present on Garden Island
  - 1a Eradication strategies
  - 1b Eradication monitoring and strategies to confirm eradication
- **Phase Two: Incursion Prevention.** Prevention of incursions through strengthening biosecurity measures. It is important to note that Phase One and Phase Two are not mutually exclusive and are proposed to be used in combination to achieve full eradication. Phase Two has been designed to allow a phased approach to implementation of infrastructure and/or additional biosecurity measures, subject to the outcomes of Phase One.
- **Phase Three: Rapid Response.** Development of a rapid response strategy in the event of future incursions

Current management actions are understood to be included in the DBCA's current management protocols. These are outlined in section 12.1.1.1 and 12.1.2.1. The enhanced measures described in 12.1.1.2 and 12.1.2.2 are in addition to DBCA's current management measures and are additional requirements under this plan.

Before implementing any component of the plan, it is essential to first determine whether foxes or feral cats are currently present on Garden Island. This initial assessment informs which management pathway is activated. For example, if no foxes or cats are detected, the first step shifts to verification of predator absence through confirming eradication rather than the deployment of eradication strategies. The decision-making framework guiding this process is outlined in Figure 3 with each of the three phases clearly defined.

A summary of the management measures required by this FCMP and the responsibility for implementation of the measure is provided in Table 6.

Table 7.1 Management and monitoring measures for this FCMP

Item	Specific management or monitoring measure	Reference	Responsibility
<b>Phase One - Eradication</b>			
1.1	FCMC will meet regularly with DBCA to confirm and track adherence to DBCA's current management measures including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Baiting</li> <li>– Shooting</li> <li>– Rapid response eradication</li> </ul>	DBCA management plan Section 7.1.1.1	FCMC
1.2	Strict protocols for freight, waste transport, and contractor access in accordance with Defence protocols will be implemented	Defence Protocols	ESM
1.3	In addition to the management measures identified in item 1.1 and 1.2, FCMC will engage suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert and other suitable professionals to undertake the following in addition to the measures currently undertaken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Traps will be placed around infrastructure edges, vegetated gullies, and areas where prey species are known and other areas informed by suitably qualified professionals, including suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert, based on surveillance data, habitat assessments, and known movement corridors</li> </ul>	Section 7.1.1.2	FCMC

Item	Specific management or monitoring measure	Reference	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular trap checks will be undertaken to meet animal welfare obligations and to minimise interference risks from wildlife, personnel, or Defence activities</li> </ul>		
1.6	<p>FCMC will meet biannually with DBCA to confirm and track adherence to DBCA's current monitoring measures to confirm fox and cat eradication including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scat and track monitoring</li> <li>Camera trapping</li> </ul>	Section 7.1.2.1	FCMC
1.7	<p>In addition to the monitoring measures identified in 1.6 FCMC will engage suitably qualified vertebrate pest control expert and other qualified professionals to undertake the following enhanced measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bait uptake</li> <li>Detection dog monitoring</li> <li>Data model to support more real time data feedback</li> <li>Spatial model probability of absence</li> </ul>	Section 7.1.2.2	FCMC
1.5	<p>If the current management and monitoring measures undertaken by DBCA identified in item 1.1 and/or 1.6 cease, then a review of this FCMP must occur and relevant management and monitoring measures adopted.</p>	Section 11.1	FCMC
<b>Phase Two – Incursion prevention actions</b>			
2.1	<p>Implementation of biosecurity controls will continue to be undertaken to prevent movement of foxes and cats onto Garden Island in accordance with Defence protocols.</p>	Section 7.2.2 Defence Protocols	ESM
2.2	<p>Biosecurity protocols will be reviewed and further protocols developed to assist in minimising incursions of foxes and cats onto the island. These protocols and procedures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biosecurity coverage of high-risk entry pathways</li> <li>Consistency and effectiveness of vehicle, freight and equipment checks</li> <li>Biosecurity integration with existing surveillance systems</li> </ul>	Section 7.2.2 Defence Protocols	FCMC
2.3	<p>Improved infrastructure will be erected and controlled in accordance with Section 12.2.1 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved fencing at high-risk areas</li> <li>Gate construction</li> <li>Closure of gate to causeway at designated evening times</li> </ul>	Section 7.2.1	DEPAC
2.4	<p>Suppression of prey to decrease fox and cat presence on the causeway and island will be achieved through undertaking the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Netting placement across causeway</li> <li>Localised management of rabbits</li> </ul>	Section 7.2.3	PCMA
2.5	<p>All wastes will be segregated and disposed of in designated areas with appropriate signage and containment to reduce food and waste sources that attract prey species.</p>	Section 7.2.3	All personnel
2.6	<p>FCMC will biannually meet with DBCA to confirm that current mainland fox and cat management within the Defence buffer zone is being implemented including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Camera trapping</li> <li>Track-pad monitoring</li> </ul>	Section 7.2.4	FCMC

Item	Specific management or monitoring measure	Reference	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Routine assessment of predator activity near the causeway</li> </ul>		
2.5	FCMC will coordinate with local land managers and authorities to discuss potential measures to minimise incursion risk of foxes and cats onto the causeway and Garden Island.	Section 7.2.4	FCMC
<b>Phase Three – Rapid response strategy</b>			
3.1	<p>The rapid response strategy is reviewed and updated to confirm that it includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Clear triggers of fox or cat detections</li> <li>– Rapid mobilisation</li> <li>– Immediate containment</li> <li>– Targeted control</li> <li>– Enhanced monitoring</li> <li>– Review and adaptive management</li> </ul>	Section 7.3	FCMC
3.2	<p>In the interim period, the current response strategy is implemented and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Removal of fox or cat when detected at the earliest opportunity</li> </ul>	Section 7.3	Property and Asset Services Contractor

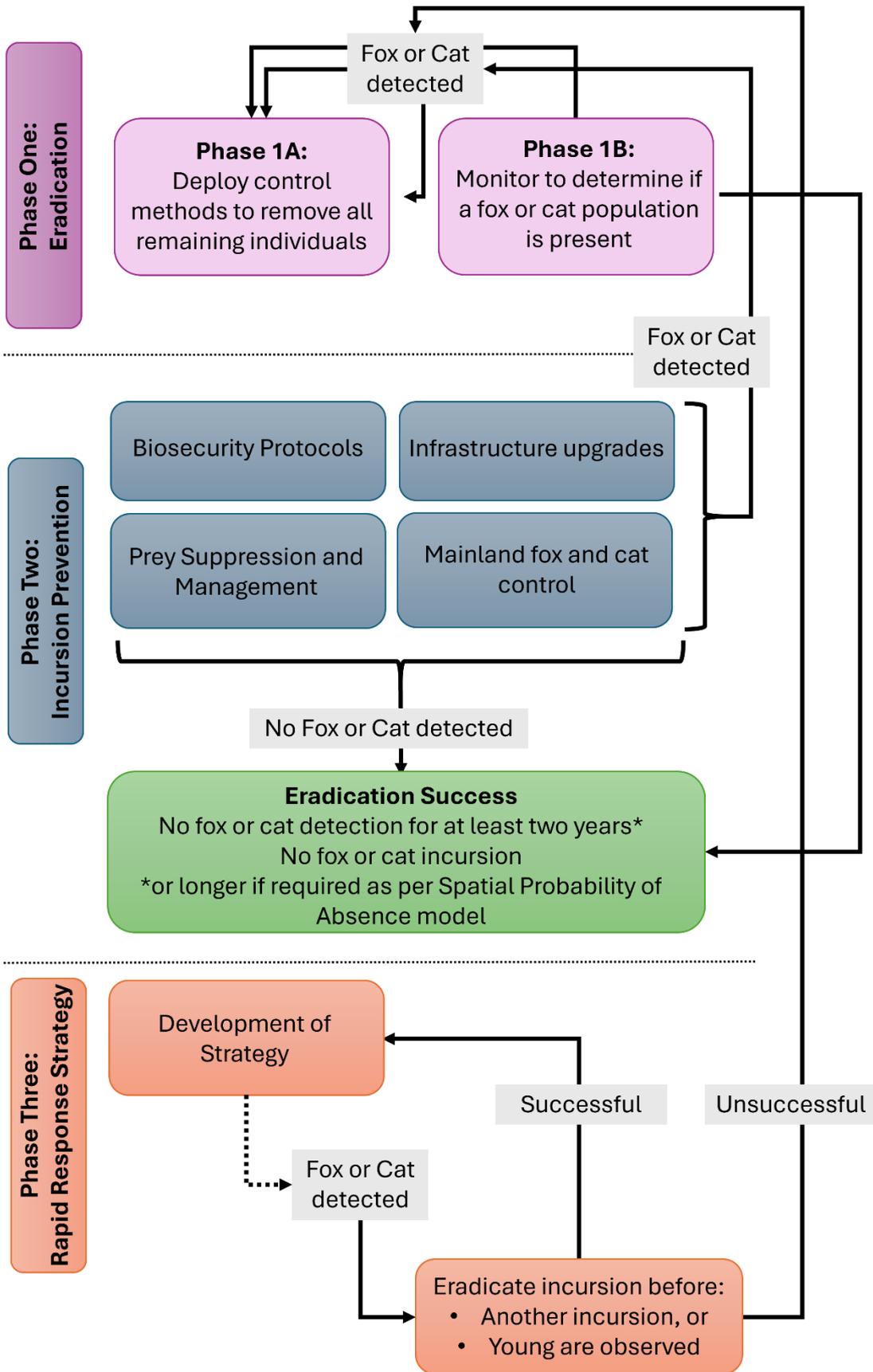


Figure 7.1 Decision-making framework for fox population management on Garden Island

## 7.1 Phase One: Eradication

Phase One involves determination of whether foxes or feral cats are currently present. This first step is fundamental to providing the most robust management plan. If monitoring confirms the presence of foxes and/or cats, management will prioritise the complete removal of all individuals through targeted eradication strategies. Conversely, if no individuals are detected despite an expanded and robust monitoring effort, the plan shifts to confirming predator-free status through continued surveillance and strengthened biosecurity measures.

It is assumed the DBCA will continue implementing their existing fox and cat management protocols as outlined in their current plan and if these procedures change or are not maintained to provide adequate fox and cat management in accordance with the conditions of the approved Action this FCMP must be reviewed and updated in accordance with Section 12 of this FCMP. For this reason, the management plan distinguishes between current management actions and the enhanced actions introduced through this FCMP with both areas of actions required to meet the Project's obligations.

### 7.1.1 Phase 1a: Eradication measures

Phase 1a outlines the eradications measures that are required to remove fox or cat individuals and populations on Garden Island. This phase applies actions that are targeted and evidence-based to make sure that all individuals are located and efficiently removed.

#### 7.1.1.1 Current management actions

DBCA's existing eradication management actions form the basis for current management measures implemented on Garden Island and are described below.

##### 7.1.1.1.1 Baiting

The use of baiting as a primary eradication strategy for foxes on Garden Island is required to continue to meet compliance of the conditions as it remains one of the most effective broad-scale tools and is supported from the evidence of previous fox management plans across Australia. Foxes show strong behavioural responses to bait attractants and have high susceptibility to 1080-based baits, making baiting a critical mechanism for rapidly reducing fox numbers during the early eradication phase. It can also be implemented precautionarily to target the elimination of potential incursions and/or to reduce fox abundance on the mainland surrounding the causeway entry point. On Garden Island, baiting would involve the targeted placement of approved fox baits along movement corridors, sandy tracks, dune systems, and the causeway entry point in areas where foxes are most likely to travel or forage. Deployment should be island-wide (see Figure 7.2), and would occur under strict regulatory controls, with bait placement done with consideration of non-target species. DBCA rangers already have a current baiting program which is required to be reviewed to meet compliance with baiting locations and frequency of bait sites, including baited and non-baited motion camera traps, to be assessed.

The use of baiting for fox eradication of Garden Island offers several important advantages that strengthen its role within the broader strategy plan (Table 7) and despite some sources of variability (Table 8).

*Table 7 Advantages of the baiting strategy*

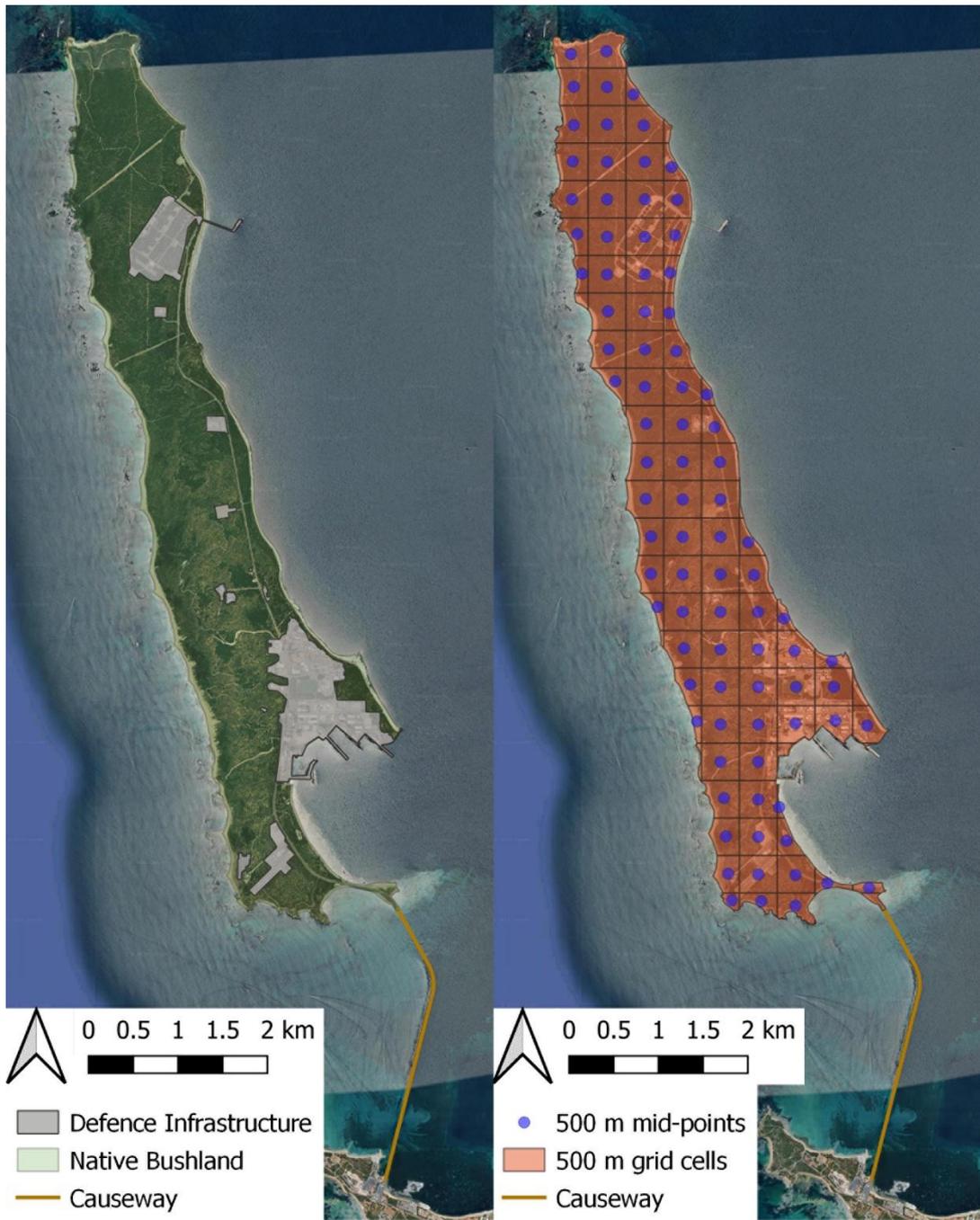
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Description</b>
Broad-scale coverage	Baits can be deployed across large areas of the island, reaching foxes that avoid human activity or remain undetected by other surveillance tools.
High effectiveness for foxes	Foxes show strong bait uptake and high susceptibility to 1080, making baiting a reliable method for rapid population reduction.
Rapid reduction of fox numbers	Particularly useful during early incursion stages when multiple foxes have the potential to be present, helping prevent dispersal and establishment.
Complementation with other eradication tools	Increases the likelihood of removing individuals that evade detection dogs, cameras, or track surveys, strengthening overall eradication success.

**Table 8** *Influencing variables of the baiting strategy*

<b>Limitations</b>	<b>Description</b>
Specialist training and strict protocols	Baiting requires trained personnel, careful planning, and stringent biosecurity measures
Weather-dependent effectiveness	High temperatures, rainfall, and strong winds can reduce bait longevity, palatability, and scent dispersion, lowering overall effectiveness.
Limited suitability for all areas	Some parts of Garden Island, such as rocky terrain, or high-use zones, are unsuitable for safe or effective bait placement.
Variable uptake	Some foxes will exhibit bait shyness, meaning baiting alone cannot guarantee complete eradication.
Operational disruptions	Certain Defence or island activities will need temporary adjustment to comply with requirement of safe deployment and monitoring of baits.

The use of baiting is not recommended as a primary strategy for targeting feral cats on Garden Island and this is supported through the evaluation of previous cat management plan assessments. Feral cats are far less reliably controlled through baiting than foxes. Unlike foxes, cats are highly selective feeders and often show low interest in baits unless they are already under food stress with uptake rates inconsistent, especially in environments like Garden Island where natural prey is abundant. Cats also tend to prefer live prey over carrion or manufactured baits, meaning many individuals simply ignore bait stations altogether. This behavioural difference makes baiting an unreliable standalone method for cat eradication. Because of these limitations, cat eradication control recommendations will rely more heavily on complementary tools such as trapping, shooting, and detection dogs. That said, when a feral cat takes a bait, the bait would still be a lethal dose.

A spatial map of the proposed baiting locations has been prepared to illustrate what the distribution of baits across Garden Island should be using a 500 m grid. This map supports operational planning by providing a clear overview of bait placement and coverage across the landscape (Figure 7.2).



**Figure 7.2** Baiting location map and 500 m grid. Grid for use with the distribution of 1080 baits across the island. Representing a 500m grid (orange) with blue dots as indicative centre points.

Baiting remains an essential tool for fox eradication on Garden Island, but its success depends on careful planning, strict safeguards, and strong integration with complementary detection and control methods. When used as part of a coordinated measure, it significantly strengthens the risk-scenario for foxes due to the diverse array of control methods.

#### 7.1.1.1.2 Shooting

Shooting is required as a very target-specific eradication measure for removing foxes or feral cats. This method is particularly valuable during the final stages of an eradication campaign where one or a small number of predators remain and when those remaining individuals are unlikely to be targeted by primary methods such as lethal baiting. Shooting operations would be carried out by accredited marksmen under strict safety, animal welfare, and biosecurity protocols, with deployment guided by recent detections from camera traps, detection dogs, or field sign. Unlike broadscale tools such as baiting, shooting allows managers to directly target specific individuals that have been identified through monitoring, including animals that are bait-shy or trap-averse. It also provides immediate confirmation of removal, which is critical for rapid response and for verifying eradication progress. Individuals removed can be retained to sample genetic information to compare with collected scats, or to compare genetic relatedness to previously removed individuals which can help to determine breeding activity. The advantages to the shooting strategy are described in detail in Table 9 and influencing variables in Table 10.

**Table 9** *Advantages to the shooting strategy*

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Description</b>
High precision and selectivity	Allows trained marksmen to target specific foxes or feral cats confirmed through monitoring, with very limited risks to non-target species.
Immediate confirmation of removal	Provides instant verification that an individual predator has been eliminated, supporting rapid response and decision making.
Effective for trap or bait averse individuals	Removes animals that avoid baits, traps, or other control tools, making it especially valuable in late-stage eradication.
Strong integration with detection tools	Works seamlessly with detection dogs, camera traps, and track surveys to locate and remove remaining individuals.

**Table 10** *Influencing variables to the shooting strategy*

<b>Limitations</b>	<b>Description</b>
Requires specialist personnel	Must be conducted by accredited marksmen operating under strict safety and animal welfare protocols.
Dependent on accurate detections	Shooting is only effective when predators have been reliably located through monitoring tools such as cameras or detection dogs.
Limited effectiveness in dense vegetation or low visibility	Although most marksmen shoot under thermal condition, if using the terrain for visibility, the thick scrub, rugged terrain, and human use areas can restrict safe and effective shooting opportunities.
Potential operation disruptions	Some Defence or island activities will need temporary adjustment to allow safe firearm use.
Not suitable for use as a broad-scale tool	Shooting cannot replace landscape-scale control methods and is best used as a targeted follow-up strategy.

In summary, shooting integrates effectively with other surveillance tools, forms a key component of a responsive, adaptive eradication framework for Garden Island.

#### 7.1.1.1.3 Rapid response eradication

The rapid response of eradication is a current action by DBCA to remove a fox or cat if one is detected on Garden Island. The aim is to remove the fox or cat before it can cause damage to native vegetation and wildlife (especially little penguins) and to limit the species ability to establish a population. This action is effective as it closes the gap

between detection and action which is a critical window in any biosecurity breach. Foxes and cats can spread quickly and cause major ecological damage in a short time, so this rapid response reduces the chance of an individual moving far or going unnoticed. The response prevents an incursion turning into an established population which is far harder and more costly to remove later.

### 7.1.1.2 Enhanced actions

The enhanced actions outlined in the eradication measures builds on the DBCA's existing measures and provide additional requirements to strengthen the eradication outcomes and meet compliance requirements.

#### 7.1.1.2.1 Trapping

The use of targeted trapping is an eradication strategy, specifically for feral cats (red foxes are not readily live trapped making this method not suitable) and is well suited to Garden Island's Defence controlled environment. The island's restricted access, sensitive ecological values, and operational security requirements make trapping a practical and controlled approach for removing remaining individuals without introducing broad-scale disturbance.

Placement of the traps will be informed by surveillance data, habitat assessments, and known movement corridors, particularly around infrastructure edges, vegetated gullies, and areas where prey species are known, including little penguins .

Regular trap checks are essential to meet animal welfare obligations and to minimise interference risks from wildlife, personnel, or Defence activities. Trapping is most effective when integrated into an adaptive eradication program that responds to monitoring results and adjusts the effort of trapping as required. The advantages of the use of trapping for feral cats is detailed in Table 11 with the influencing variables described in Table 12.

**Table 11** Advantages to the trapping strategy

Advantages	Description
Prevents incursion before they occur	Reduces the likelihood of foxes or cats reaching the island, lowering the need for reactive eradication efforts.
Cost-effective over the long term	Minimising incursions reduces the frequency and intensity of expensive response operations.
Supports sustained predator-free status	Strengthens the island's long-term biosecurity and protects native fauna by preventing reestablishment.
Integrates with monitoring systems	Works alongside detection dogs, cameras, and track pads to create a layered defence against predator entry.

**Table 12** Influencing variables to the trapping strategy

Limitations	Description
Reliance on compliance and consistent enforcement	Effectiveness depends on all personnel, contractors, and visitors adhering to biosecurity protocols.
Potential operational delays	Vehicle inspections, freight checks, and access controls will slow routine activities on the island.
Infrastructure and maintenance requirements	Fencing, gates, and checkpoints require ongoing upkeep to remain effective.
Not completely reliable	Even with strong controls, occasional breaches can still occur, requiring complementary surveillance and rapid response tools.

Trapping provides a controlled and defensible method for removing feral cats within the operational constraints of Garden Island. While labour intensive and occasionally limited by access restrictions, it remains a highly effective tool for targeting low-density populations and allows compliance with Defence environmental and safety requirements.

## 7.1.2 Phase 1b: Eradication monitoring and strategies to confirm eradication

Phase 1b details the monitoring framework required to evaluate the effectiveness of the eradication measures described in Phase 1a and to provide action measures to manage any incursions to meet compliance of the condition for eradication. Confirming eradication on Garden Island requires a focused monitoring program capable of reliably detecting any remaining foxes or feral cats. Monitoring must be sensitive, comprehensive, and aligned with Defence operational requirements to provide confidence in the island's predator-free status. The strategies outlined below establish the verification processes needed to support this assessment of confirmed eradication.

### 7.1.2.1 Current monitoring actions

DBCA's existing eradication monitoring actions form the baseline for current fox and cat monitoring on Garden Island and are described below.

#### 7.1.2.1.1 Scats and tracks

Monitoring foxes and feral cats through scat and track counts provides a simple, low-cost, low-impact method for detecting presence on Garden Island. In practice, this approach involves establishing fixed transects (recommended to be 1 km long) along pre-existing tracks, beaches and coastal dunes (i.e., key movement corridors) across the entirety of Garden Island including the causeway. Preference will be given to substrates that allow clear imprint detection. Surveys will be conducted at dawn when human tracks have not yet been made and tracks found/identified are fresh, recent tracks. Regular (all transects will be monitored at least once monthly) surveys of all sites would be conducted by trained personnel who record, photograph, and remove scats or tracks to comply with requirements that subsequent detections represent new activity. Scat samples will be collected for genetic analysis to confirm individual identity and assist in tracking individuals across the island (and knowing if one or more individual is present). The advantage of these methods is described in Table 13, and known influencing variables articulated in Table 14.

**Table 13** Advantages of scat and track count monitoring strategy

Advantages	Description
Cost effectiveness	Requires minimal financial investment or training (although training in print and scat identification would be important for staff conducting transects) and can be implemented using existing staff and routine patrol schedules.
Minimal equipment requirements	Relies primarily on visual identification of tracks and scats, needing only basic field tools such as GPS units, cameras, and sample bags.
Rapidly cover large areas	Allows personnel to survey extensive sections of Garden Island efficiently, particularly along beaches, tracks, and other open substrates.
Early detection during late eradication stage	Highly effective for identifying sign left by single, low-density predators; integrates seamlessly with ongoing patrols and biosecurity checks to provide timely detection of incursions.
Flexible schedule	Transect can be conducted in and around Defence infrastructure, with surveys able to be somewhat flexible on the specific day they are conducted to enable co-occurrence with Defence operational requirements.
Individual Identification (scats)	Collection of scats can enable genotyping of individuals to be able to determine if multiple individuals are present or not

**Table 14** Influencing variables of scat and track count monitoring strategy

Limitations	Description
Inconsistent track visibility	Tracks can be variably identifiable, i.e. windy conditions can reduce clarity and visibility of tracks; however, this is mitigated through repeated surveys at multiple sites
Inability to estimate population size (tracks)	Track counts cannot distinguish between multiple individuals and repeated sign from a single individual, limiting their usefulness for population assessment.
Environmental human interference	Weather, high-traffic areas, and native species with similar footprints can obscure or confuse sign, reducing detection accuracy.

Limitations	Description
Limited immediacy for decision-making	Results are only useful when surveys are frequent and systematic; otherwise, the method provides slow or incomplete information for operational response.

A spatial overview of the track-monitoring layout has been prepared to illustrate the distribution and configuration of survey points across Garden Island. This map provides the grid design used for track-based monitoring and supports the consistency and repeatability of field surveys (Figure 5). Overall, scat and track monitoring is a valuable supplementary tool for confirming fox and cat presence or absence on Garden Island, and when used in conjunction with other detection methods, such as camera trapping and detection dogs provide reliable surveillance.

#### 7.1.2.1.2 Camera trapping

Camera trapping is a core component of the eradication-confirmation program on Garden Island, providing a non-invasive and highly reliable method for detecting foxes or cats. Motion sensor cameras function as passive monitoring devices that operate continuously, allowing detection across extended time periods and in areas where human access is limited due to Defence operational requirements.

On Garden Island, camera traps can be strategically deployed along likely movement corridors, track junctions, coastal edges, and other locations informed by previous surveillance data. Cameras will be programmed to capture imagery constantly to maximise detection probability. Deployment locations will also be aligned with the established scat and track-monitoring grid to comply with requirements to provide complementary spatial coverage across the island. Within each grid, 3 – 4 cameras should be deployed at ~500 m spacing to allow the detection of individuals across multiple sites. This is recommended to better understand individual movements and detectability. The grid layout used to guide this alignment is provided in Figure 7.3.

Deployment of multiple camera sites in each of the “sections” (i.e. the causeway is segmented into sections of ‘causeway’ and ‘bridge’) each of these will have full-time monitoring (we recommend with remote download and integrated AI for automatic detection). In doing so, defence will have the capacity to monitor invasion rate, and detect foxes early on the causeway, before they reach the island where control becomes more difficult.

Regular retrieval and review of imagery by authorised personnel enables early identification of any predator presence and supports a defensible assessment of eradication status. When combined with other monitoring tools, such as track surveys and bait-uptake monitoring, camera trapping provides a robust, evidence-based method for confirming the absence of fox and feral cats and maintaining confidence in the island’s predator-free status.

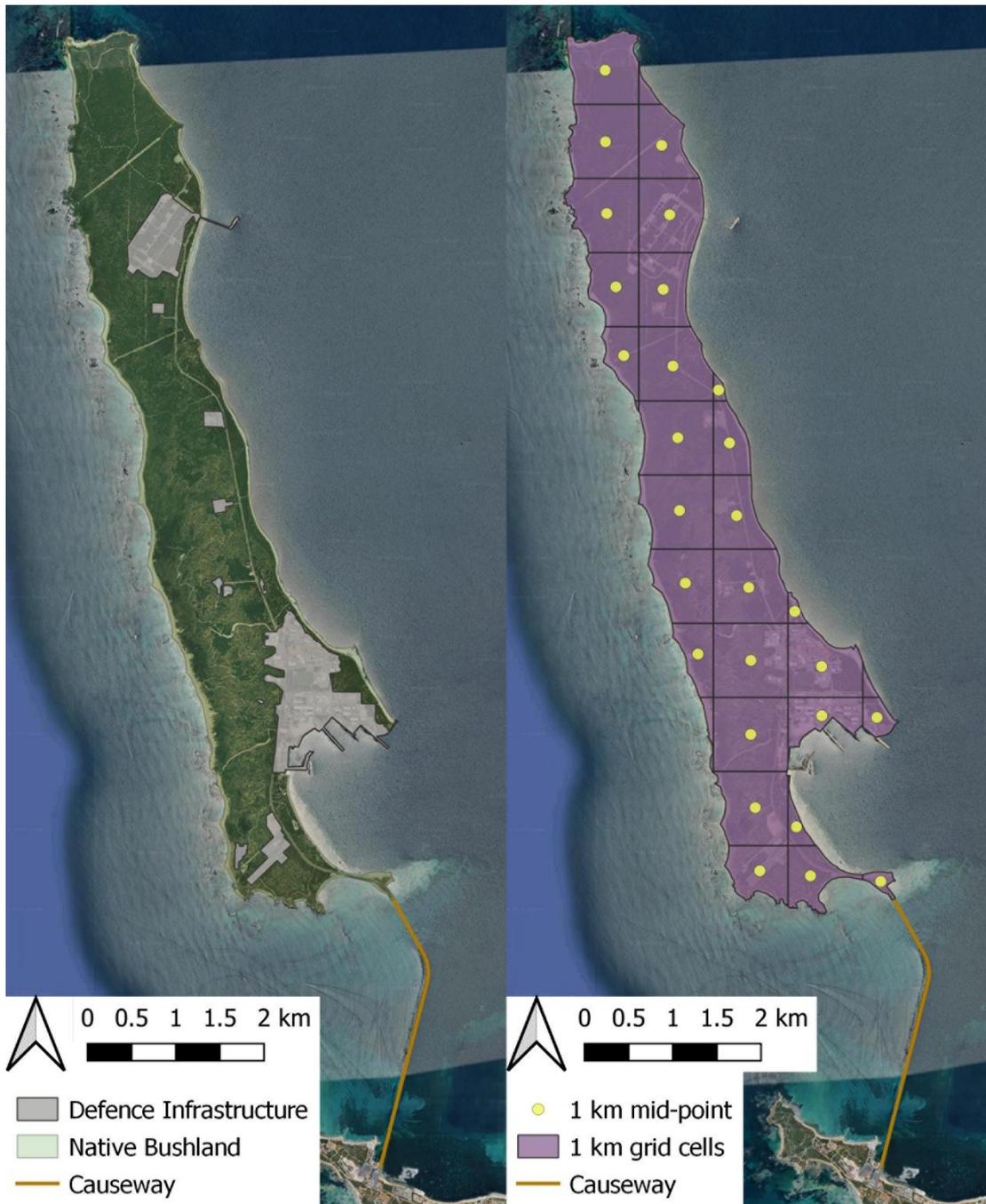


Figure 7.3 Design Framework for Scat and Track Count Monitoring. 1 kilometre grid cells (right) in purple, points to demonstrate the mid-point of the cell (not where monitoring needs to occur)

### 7.1.2.2 Enhanced monitoring actions

The enhanced monitoring actions supplements DBCA's baseline measures and provides additional detection capabilities to meet compliance of the condition.

#### 7.1.2.2.1 Bait uptake

Bait uptake monitoring can be undertaken by placing marker-based baits at strategically selected sites. These baits are positioned in secure, mapped stations that allow personnel to track disturbance, removal, or handling marks. Stations are checked at defined intervals to document any signs of fox interaction, with all observations recorded in accordance with Defence environmental reporting requirements.

This method is particularly suited to Garden Island's environment, as it enables broad spatial coverage with minimal disturbance and can be integrated with existing surveillance activities. When combined with camera monitoring and track surveys, bait uptake data contributes to a robust, multi-method assessment of eradication success. A complete absence of bait disturbance over an extended monitoring period strengthens confidence that foxes are no longer present on the island.

#### 7.1.2.2.2 Detection dogs

Detection dogs are required as a high sensitivity tool within this FCMP and eradication strategy. Detector dogs are one of the most reliable methods for locating foxes or feral cats at very low densities. Their use involves deploying trained conservation dogs and handlers to systematically search the island for evidence, including the causeway, coastal dunes, infrastructure corridors, and any locations where sign, carcasses, or camera detections suggest possible predator activity. Dogs can identify fresh scats, tracks, dens, and live animals with far greater accuracy than human observers, making them particularly valuable during incursion response or the final stages of eradication when remaining individuals are difficult to detect. Dogs can be used to monitor for absence, or to support the hunting of foxes present on the island. Dog searches should be completed in each of the grids shown in Figure 7.3.

The strategy of detection dogs provides key advantages that make them a highly effective component of Garden Island's predator eradication strategy (Table 15) while acknowledging some influencing variables (Table 16).

**Table 15** Advantages of detection dog strategy

Advantages	Description
Exception sensitivity	Able to detect foxes or feral cats at extremely low densities, providing rapid and high confidence in fox or cat presence or absence.
Reduced search time	Significantly shortens the time required to locate surviving individuals during an incursion or late-stage eradication.
Effective across varied substrates	Performs reliably on sand, vegetation, and rocky terrain, making detection dogs well suited to Garden Island's diverse landscapes.
Immediate operational feedback	Provides real time information to managers, enabling swift decision making during active response efforts.
Flexible schedule	Transect can be conducted in and around Defence infrastructure, with surveys able to be somewhat flexible on the specific day they are conducted to enable co-occurrence with Defence operational requirements.

**Table 16** Influencing variables of detection dog strategy

Limitations	Description
Specialist handler required and site logistics	Deployment depends on trained dog–handler teams, coordinated scheduling, and adherence to strict biosecurity protocols.
Weather-dependent effectiveness	High temperatures, strong winds, or other adverse conditions can significantly reduce scent detection efficiency and limit search effectiveness.

Limitations	Description
Restricted deployment areas	Dogs cannot always operate safely or effectively in all parts of Garden Island with their use most effective when paired with tools such as camera traps and track monitoring.
Operational adjustments required	Certain island activities will need to be temporarily modified or paused to meet compliance with safe, controlled, and effective detection dog searches.

Overall, the use of detection dogs will provide a powerful and targeted capability for confirming incursions and locating elusive predators on Garden Island. When integrated with complementary monitoring methods, the strategy will significantly strengthen the island's capacity to achieve and maintain predator-free status.

### 7.1.2.2.3 Verification of a predator-free status and data modelling

Maintaining a predator-free Garden Island status by 2030 requires a monitoring program capable of confirming that foxes and feral cats remain absent, particularly at very low densities where detection is most challenging. Alongside the current and enhanced actions, confirmation that the monitoring methods are adequate is essential, it's therefore required to have a Spatial Probability of Species Absence model completed (*sensu* Ramsey et al. 2023) this will confirm that a two-year period is adequate to confirm an eradication, or if not, how much longer monitoring is required to be confirm the eradication.

Although early evidence suggests that these species are no longer present, ongoing verification is essential to demonstrate eradication success with confidence and to meet compliance that any isolated individuals are detected before they can establish. Monitoring also supports the recovery of native species, identifies emerging ecological risks, and comply with requirements that habitat conditions do not inadvertently favour predator persistence. The actions in Table 17 outline the measures required to protect sensitive habitats, support native fauna, and maintain robust survey protocols that verify the island's predator-free status.

Table 17 Actions to protect and support the flora and fauna on Garden Island towards a predator-free status

Action area	Measures
Protection of sensitive habitats	Implement habitat-specific management (such as, vegetation protection, erosion control, minimising disturbance) to safeguard areas where native fauna are most vulnerable to predation.
Support for native species recovery	Use long term monitoring of key indicator species, track population trends, and apply targeted conservation actions (such as, nesting site protection, habitat enhancement) to measure ecological benefits of predator absence.
Reduce favourable predator persistence conditions	Manage waste, food sources, and artificial shelter opportunities; maintain vegetation structure that discourages predator concealment; and comply with requirements that human activities do not create attractants.
Ongoing survey protocols	Conduct regular island wide surveys using ranger patrols, camera traps, track pads, and detection dogs to verify predator absence and detect any incursions at the earliest possible stage.

Ongoing monitoring provides the assurance needed to confirm that Garden Island remains free of foxes and cats while supporting the continued recovery of native species and habitats. By maintaining consistent survey effort, protecting vulnerable areas, and reducing conditions that favour predator persistence, the island can uphold a high level of ecological security and meet compliance a fox and cat-free status.

## 7.2 Phase Two: Incursion prevention actions

Phase Two focuses on preventing new incursions of foxes or feral cats onto Garden Island. Where Phase One eradication measures remain effective and more information is gained through monitoring activities, the Phase Two measures may be modified or re-evaluated. As stated above for maximum likelihood of eradication success through prevention of fox and cat incursion, Phase Two measures should be implemented. A population with immigration (i.e. foxes accessing the causeway) means that the island doesn't meet the requirements of an eradication as constant reinvasion remains a perpetual risk. Phase Two actions complement the eradication tools outlined in Section 7.1 by strengthening biosecurity systems, improving physical barriers, and reducing attractants that will draw cats and foxes toward access points. Together, these measures form a layered defence designed to

prevent incursions before they occur and to support rapid detection, and subsequent rapid removal, when a breach takes place.

## 7.2.1 Infrastructure enhancement and physical barrier systems

Infrastructure enhancement and physical barrier systems strengthen Garden Island's structural defences to meeting the compliance of eradication while also working at preventing fox and cat incursions. These measures focus on reducing opportunities for predators to cross the causeway or exploit gaps in existing fencing and access points. Given the 5 km length of the causeway and its role as the primary pathway connecting Garden Island to the mainland, the infrastructure at the mainland end of the causeway is the most critical component of the exclusion system. The current fencing and checkpoint layout at the entrance to the causeway provide a basic barrier, but they are not sufficient on their own to reliably prevent foxes or feral cats from entering the island. Strengthening this infrastructure is therefore essential to reduce incursion risk. The infrastructure upgrades are detailed in Table 18.

**Table 18** *Infrastructure upgrades on Garden Island and the causeway*

<b>Infrastructure upgrades</b>	<b>Description</b>
Fully enclosed predator-proof access gate	A solid and lockable gate installed immediately after the causeway, designed to prevent foxes and cats from slipping underneath, squeezing through gaps, or climbing over (i.e. a floppy-top fence, see next point). Incorporates tight mesh, sealed lower edges with a skirt to prevent digging, and controlled opening/closing procedures while integrating with existing security infrastructure.
Floppy-top fencing	A flexible overhang added to the existing perimeter fence (especially near the causeway mainland entrance and attaching to the gate infrastructure) that droops under an animal's weight, preventing foxes and cats from climbing over without requiring major reconstruction.
Prey-exclusion netting in high-risk zones	Netting installed along potential nesting and feeding areas of prey birds (including areas in the causeway rock-wall) to limit prey species inhabiting areas that would encourage foxes and cats to the area.
Ground-level reinforcement	Dig-proof barriers such as buried mesh skirts or concrete footings added beneath the gate and fence to prevent tunnelling, especially in sandy or loose soils near the causeway.
Controlled-access vehicle corridor	A single-lane, funnelled entry point that complies with requirements that all vehicles pass through a defined inspection zone, reducing opportunities for predators to bypass checks.
Scheduled closure of island access	Scheduled closure of the island entrance during low traffic periods (nighttime) which coincide with higher activity periods of foxes and cats. This will reduce opportunities for predators to cross the causeway undetected. Scheduled closures also allow for targeted surveillance sweeps and infrastructure checks without vehicle movement interfering. Opening of gates to occur when operational activities require.

A spatial map has been included in Figure 6 to illustrate the required infrastructure upgrades across Garden Island. The map in Figure 6a presents the full island layout, with the relevant upgrade area highlighted. A second map in Figure 6b provides a detailed, zoomed in view of this highlighted area to clearly show the proposed location of the new access control gate. Together, these maps support accurate planning and implementation of the intended works.

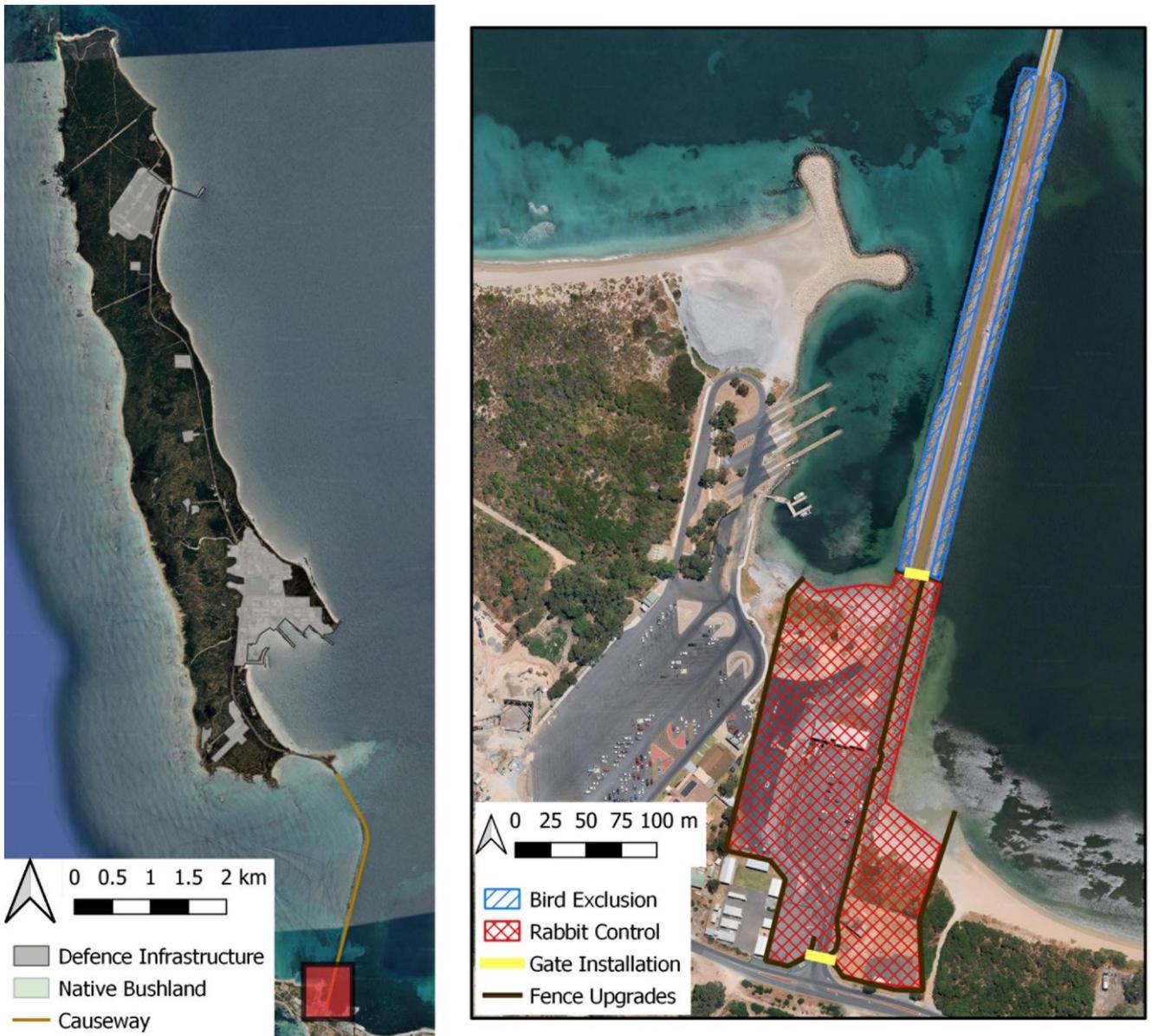


Figure 7.4 Infrastructure Upgrades on Garden Island: (a) Full-Island Map; (b) zoomed-in inset showing proposed gate location

In conjunction, these upgrades create a robust, multilayered physical barrier that significantly reduces the likelihood of foxes or cats entering Garden Island via the causeway. When paired with strong biosecurity protocols and ongoing surveillance, the enhanced infrastructure forms the backbone of the island’s incursion prevention strategy. Preventing incursions is most critical as it’s a fundamental requirement to limit immigration and thus meet the criteria for an eradication to be feasible.

## 7.2.2 Biosecurity protocols

Biosecurity protocols form the foundation of Garden Island’s incursion prevention strategy and are essential for reducing the likelihood that foxes or feral cats reach the island via human mediated pathways. While stowaways of these species are rare, the island’s causeway connection and regular movement of vehicles, freight, contractors, and personnel movements, means that simple, targeted and consistently applied checks remain important for maintaining a predator-free status.

For foxes and cats, biosecurity measures focus on a small number of high-risk pathways that are primarily concealed spaces within vehicles, freight compartments, and equipment that could provide temporary shelter during transit. Protocols include quick visual inspections of undercarriages, cargo areas, and storage spaces prior to island entry, along with clear requirements for contractors and suppliers to meet compliance that loads are

secured and free of potential stowaways. These checks are proportionate to the low risk but provide confidence that any accidental transport of predators is highly unlikely.

Routine awareness training for personnel and contractors supports compliance, while integration with existing surveillance tools, which include cameras, track pads, and detection dogs, provides an additional safeguard when an incursion occurs. Together, these streamlined biosecurity protocols act as a practical first line of defence, complementing this FCMP's eradication and monitoring systems without imposing unnecessary or pathogen-style controls.

### 7.2.3 Prey suppression management

Prey suppression and management reduce the availability of food resources that will attract foxes or cats toward the causeway and subsequently Garden Island, or support them if an incursion occurs. By lowering prey abundance, particularly around high use areas on the mainland side of the causeway, the motivation for foxes and cats to explore the causeway is reduced. Table 19 details the measures that aim to suppress prey species and each of their purposes.

*Table 19 Actions for prey suppression management*

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Netting of rock wall at causeway mainland end	It is recommended to net the causeway at the mainland entrance to prevent silver gulls and feral pigeons' nesting. Figure 4 illustrates the location on the causeway that are of the main concern.
Fencing improvement of current structures	Rabbits currently exist inside the fence around the causeway entrance point, as a dominant prey for foxes and cats, eradicating this invasive species from this area would further reduce incentives for foxes and cats to enter the area.
Handling of waste	Effective waste handling reduces food sources that attract prey species. Limiting these attractants, decreases the likelihood of prey animals.

### 7.2.4 Mainland predator management

Mainland predator management supports Garden Island's incursion-prevention strategy by reducing the likelihood that foxes or feral cats approach the causeway or adjacent shoreline areas where accidental crossings or stowaways could occur. Although the risk of fox or cat movement onto the island is considered low, maintaining low predator activity in the Defence-managed area surrounding the causeway provides an additional safeguard that complements on-island biosecurity and monitoring systems.

Management actions on the mainland focus on targeted surveillance and control within the Defence-managed area surrounding the causeway, including regular camera trapping, track-pad monitoring, and periodic assessment of predator activity. Where foxes or feral cats are detected in proximity to the causeway, responsive control measures, such as trapping or ground-based removal, can be implemented to prevent individuals from approaching potential access points. Coordination with local land managers and relevant authorities meet compliance that predator management in the surrounding landscape remains consistent and effective.

## 7.3 Phase Three: Rapid Response Strategy

With eradication achieved through the actions outlined in Phase One, and the likelihood of new incursions reduced through the targeted prevention measures in Phase Two, the third and final component of the management framework focuses on ensuring that any breach is addressed immediately. It is described in Section 12.1.1.1.3 that as part of DBCA's current eradication actions, there is a rapid response strategy currently taking place. Phase Three is to review and build on this current eradication action should the current measures in Phase One become unable to meet compliance of eradication targets by 2023.

Phase Three builds on the rapid response strategy required to detect, contain, and remove any fox or feral cat that reaches Garden Island, safeguarding the long-term success of this FCMP and maintaining the island's predator-free status. A rapid-response strategy will be activated immediately when signs of incursion are detected through tracks, scats, camera detections, eyewitness reports or confirmed prey remains as the speed and coordination of the response directly influence the likelihood of a successful removal. As biosecurity measures will

never be perfect, it is essential to have a rapid-response strategy to the detection of new invasions of both foxes and cats. The rapidity of responses required are inextricably linked to the biology of the species (Boser et al. 2017), but cost efficacy and outcomes are best as early as possible (**Error! Reference source not found.7**).

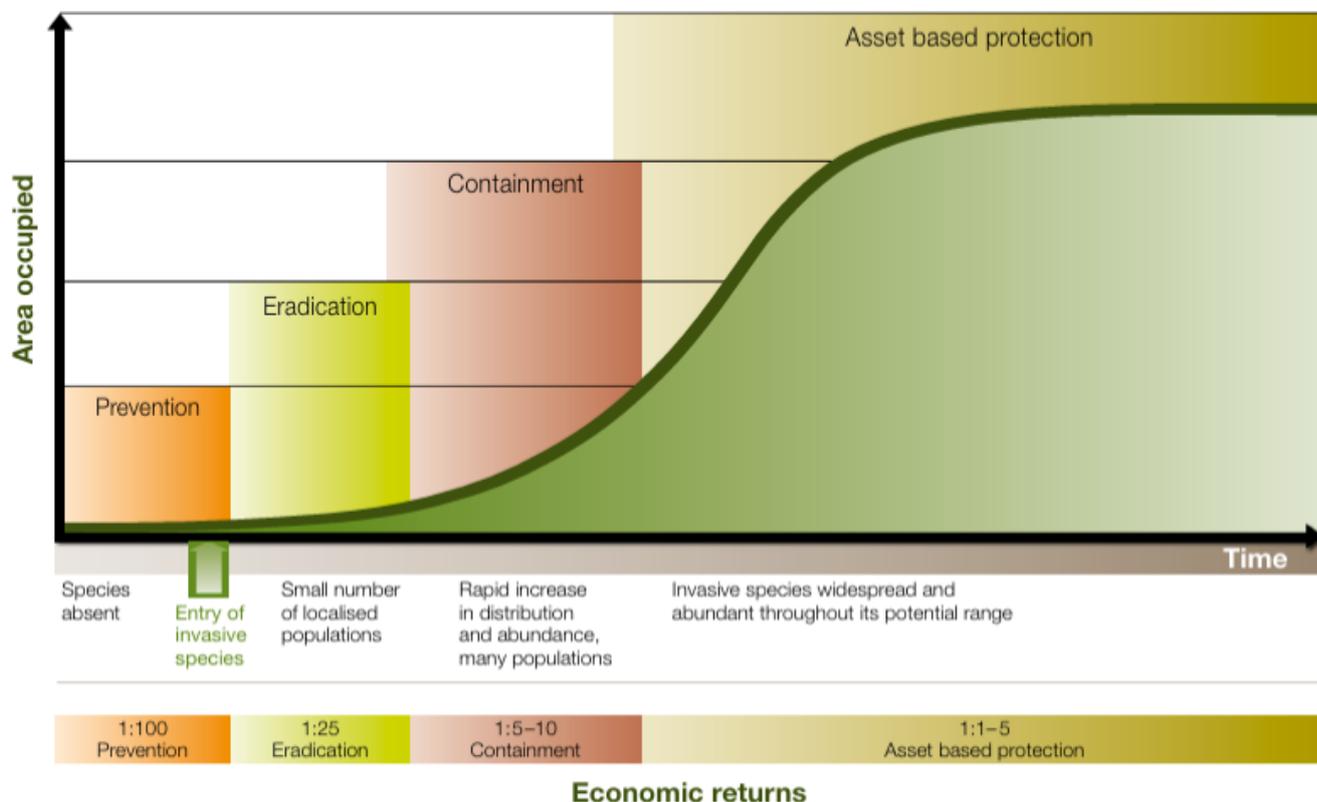


Figure 7.5 Invasive species invasion curve (Victorian Government, 2010)

A rigorously designed rapid-response framework is essential to comply with requirements that any predator incursion is identified promptly and addressed with immediate and coordinated action. The key components of the rapid-response framework are summarised in Table 20.

Table 20 Rapid-response framework

Component	Action
Activation triggers	Initiates the response when verified tracks, scats, camera detections, detection dog alerts, or unverified credible sightings occur and are under investigation.
Immediate containment	Narrows the search area by increasing surveillance density.
Deployment of trained response team	Mobilises skilled personnel to conduct spotlighting, deploy traps, use detection dogs, and undertake humane dispatch.
Targeted control tools	Applies appropriate tools (thermal-scope shooting, lures, and detection dogs) based on terrain and urgency in the vicinity of where the incursion was detected.
Intensified surveillance	Intensified monitoring island wide, as well as a specific focus on the area where the incursion was detected.
Communication protocols	Identification and communication to all stakeholders about appropriate reporting, including ensuring a single FCMP coordinator is the central point of contact, Immediate reporting process clearly communicated, daily updates post an incursion, and full documentation of actions taken.
Stand-down and review	Confirms removal of the incursion through continued surveillance, followed by an investigation of how the incursion occurred (was it missed, or is there weaknesses in biosecurity and/or monitoring processes) debrief to identify improvements and address biosecurity gaps.

A well-coordinated rapid response system meets compliance that any predator incursion is dealt with swiftly and effectively, preventing establishment and minimising ecological risk. By combining early detection, decisive action, and structured follow-up, Garden Island can maintain a high level of protection and support its long-term goal of remaining predator-free.

## 8. Performance criteria

The performance criteria establish the measurable standard by which the effectiveness of the fox and cat management plan on Garden Island will be assessed. These criteria provide benchmarks for implementation, monitoring and long-term success, making sure that control actions during construction and throughout the post-construction period achieve sustained reductions in fox and cat presence with ultimate requirement of eradication.

A summary of the key performance criteria are provided in Table 21 and further details and context are provided in the sections below.

Table 21 Performance criteria for this FCMP

Eradication objective	Performance Criteria
Eradication of fox and cats on Garden Island by 2030	<p>Absence of fox and cat detections (for a 2-year monitoring period or longer if recommended on the Spatial Probability of Absence Modelling (refer to Section 1.3) this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– no verified tracks or scats,</li> <li>– no verified camera trap images,</li> <li>– no verified detection dog alerts, or credible sightings</li> </ul>
Maintain eradication of foxes and cats until at least 6 years after the completion of construction	<p>Zero immigration to island as indicated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– no verified evidence of individuals on Garden Island (including genuine attempts to verify unconfirmed reports)</li> </ul>
	<p>All fox and cat incursions onto Garden Island are detected and eradicated quickly and efficiently before additional incursions or breeding (or birth of young in the case of females) are detected.</p>
Avoid, minimise or manage potential impacts from predation from invasive species such as foxes and feral cats through implementing management measures	<p>100% compliance with management measures in Table 7.1</p>
	<p>Stabilisation or increase in little penguin activity, breeding success, and colony attendance in accordance with Little Penguin Monitoring and Management Plan (RPS, 2026)</p>
	<p>No evidence of predation pressure or disturbance of little penguins attributable to foxes or cats.</p>
To monitor and report on the progress towards and achievement of eradication of fox and cats on Garden Island	<p>100% compliance with monitoring requirements in Table 7.1 including high functioning camera networks, ranger patrols, and track pads with consistent coverage of high risk zones, including penguin access routes and shoreline habitats</p>
	<p>100% compliance with reporting requirements in Table .</p>

### 8.1 Eradication targets

The primary eradication targets of this management plan are the fox and the cat, both of which are recognised as significant invasive predators in Western Australia (DBCA 2025; WAFCWG 2025) and Australia (EBPC Act). These species pose substantial risks to native fauna, particularly ground-nesting seabirds such as the little penguin, which is of high ecological significance on Garden Island (Department of Defence 2025). The quantitative goal of the plan is the complete eradication of both species from Garden Island with eradication success defined as per Section 1.3.

### 8.2 Indicators of success

The success indicators provide measurable end-state outcome benchmarks that demonstrate Garden Island has achieved and is maintaining a predator-free status while delivering clear biodiversity benefits. Although the removal of foxes and feral cats is a critical milestone, the ultimate purpose of this FCMP is to secure positive ecological outcomes (particularly the recovery and long-term stability of the little penguin population). Their

sensitivity to predation makes them a key indicator species for assessing whether management actions are achieving their intended conservation goals.

Success on Garden Island is therefore demonstrated not only through the confirmed absence of foxes and feral cats, but also through strong ecological responses, including improved penguin breeding activity, stable or increasing colony attendance, and enhanced habitat condition. These indicators described in Table 22 provide a clear benchmark for evaluating long-term outcomes and guide adaptive management to comply with requirements that conservation gains are sustained.

**Table 22** *Success indicators on Garden Island*

<b>Success indicators</b>	<b>What success looks like on Garden Island</b>
Eradication progress	All planned control operations completed, all known individuals removed, and no further signs of fox or cat activity following targeted eradication efforts and with enhanced and expanded monitoring in line with this FCMP.
Absence of fox and cat detections	No verified tracks, scats, camera trap images, detection dog alerts, or credible sightings across multiple monitoring cycles island wide.
Little penguin response	Stabilisation or increase in penguin activity, breeding success, and colony attendance, with no evidence of predation pressure or disturbance attributable to foxes or cats.
Surveillance strategy performance	High functioning camera networks, ranger patrols, and track pads in line with Figure 7.3.
Habitat and prey condition	Reduced availability of non-native prey species that could attract predators to the mainland side of the causeway; including reduce availability of prey (pigeons, silver gulls, rabbits) through exclusion (pigeons/silver gulls) or lethal control (rabbits)
Biosecurity compliance	Compliance with vehicle inspections, freight screening, and access control procedures, to prevent fox and cat entry.

The indicators of success form the basis of the adaptive management framework which is described in Section 12 and will keep the management plan responsive and effective over time.

Little penguins remain the central measure of success, reflecting both the ecological importance of Garden Island and the urgency that prompted development of this FCMP. By tracking predator absence, habitat condition, and positive trends in penguin activity, managers can demonstrate that the island is secure and that conservation actions are delivering meaningful outcomes. Through adaptive management and clear success indicators, Garden Island can maintain a resilient, long term predator free status that safeguards its native wildlife.

## 9. Implementation of management plan

The implementation of this management plan outlines how the required actions will be delivered in a structured and coordinated manner. Section 9.1 presents the timeline of key milestones and the roles and responsibilities required to meet compliance that is effective and compliant delivery of all management actions. This FCMP must align with the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 conditions, including the requirement to maintain a verified predator free status for a minimum of six years following completion of construction. To meet these obligations, the management actions are structured into three sequential phases: eradication, construction period biosecurity, and long-term post-construction verification. The phases of the management plan operate within a flexible framework (Figure 7.1) that can be adapted as required, reflecting the dynamic nature of eradication progress and the conditions encountered throughout implementation.

### 9.1 Timeline

The timeline outlined in Table 23 describes the key phases, milestones, and deliverables required to maintain a predator-free Garden Island by the end of 2030. With the timelines required to begin in March 2026 to meet compliance, the schedule integrates eradication activities, biosecurity enhancements, infrastructure upgrades, long-term monitoring, and compliance reporting. This structured approach meets compliance that all management actions are delivered in a coordinated and transparent manner, providing clear accountability and demonstrating ongoing protection of Garden Island's ecological values.

Table 23 *Timeline for the implementation of key milestones and deliverables*

Phase	Step	Timeframe	Milestones	Deliverables
<b>Phase 1: Eradication</b>	1	March 2026	– FCMP operational launch	– Rapid-response team roster and readiness plan
	2	March 2026 – June 2026	– All personnel who are responsible for monitoring strategies are trained in detection and reporting	– Knowledge of appropriate reporting lines
<b>Phase 1a: Eradication Strategies</b>	3	June 2026 – Eradication success	– Implementation of all measures (Section 10)	– Monthly reports on fox and cat individuals removed
<b>Phase 1b: Monitoring to confirm eradication</b>	4	June 2026 – ongoing (6 years post construction)	– Establishment of monitoring sites – Record keeping – Expansion of monitoring to include monitoring of incursion of causeway	– Monthly reports of monitoring findings – Annual compliance reports of monitoring findings (in alignment with conditions of approval) – Establishment of intergraded record keeping database of all monitoring efforts
	5	June 2026 – Dec 2026	– Development of data model to support more real time data feedback	– Development and implementation of Garden Island specific data model
	6	Jan 2027 – June 2027	– Development of the spatial model probability of absence	– Delivery of spatial model of probability of absence

Phase	Step	Timeframe	Milestones	Deliverables
	Confirmation of eradication			– Report to DCCEEW
<b>Phase 2: Incursion prevention strategy (to occur if required from findings from Phase 1)</b>	8	June 2026	– SOPs	– Delivered to all required personnel
	9	From March 2027*	– Infrastructure enhancement of fencing	– Floppy top installed – Skirting around base of the fence and gates that is sufficient to exclude rabbits
	10	From March 2027*	– Infrastructure gate construction	– Construction of gate and implementation of evening closures
	11	From March 2027*	– Prey suppression management of netting for birds	– Deployment of netting across entry causeway
	12	From March 2027*	– Prey suppression management	– Localised eradication of rabbits
	13	From March 2027*	– Mainland predator management	– Establishment of relationships that facilitate mainland predator management – Monitoring of population
	Confirmation of eradication			– Report to DCCEEW
<b>Phase 3: Rapid Response Strategy</b>	15	March 2026 - ongoing	– Development of a Rapid Response Framework	– Framework developed prior to confirmation of eradication success (Step 7)
	Confirmation of eradication			– Report to DCCEEW

\*Subject to success of Phase 1 implementation and monitoring results

By sequencing actions across defined phases, assigning measurable milestones, and identifying deliverables, the timeline meets compliance that eradication, biosecurity, monitoring, and reporting activities are carried out in a coordinated and transparent manner. This structured approach supports Defence and partner agencies in maintaining a verified predator free status through to 2030, safeguarding Garden Island’s ecological values and ensuring long term protection for vulnerable species such as the little penguin.

## 10. Adaptive management measures

The aim of adaptive management measures for this FCMP is to facilitate continuous learning and improvement in the fox and cat eradication management and confirmation of eradication at Garden Island. Examples of when a review of the approach and/or an adaptive management measure will be triggered include:

- Operational or environmental changes such as emerging risks or evidence that the eradication objectives are not being met under the current approach
- Monitoring outcomes which include when fox and cat incursion rates are not declining to zero
- DBCA reduces, alters or ceases any fox or cat management activities that this FCMP assumes will continue under their current plan.

For Garden Island, the adaptive management approach involves:

- Regular reviewing of monitoring results (relating to little penguin activity)
- Adjusting management actions when indicators show reduced effectiveness
- Incorporating lessons learned from detections, near-misses or change in ecological conditions.

This flexible adaptive management approach meets compliance that new technologies, improved detection tools, and updated best practice methods can be integrated seamlessly into the program.

# 11. Audit and review

This section outlines the processes that are to be used for reviewing and evaluating this FCMP and describes the key lessons learnt during the management plan development. These elements allow this FCMP to remain operationally feasible, ecologically effective and maintain compliance with the conditions under the EPBC 2024/10031 approval throughout the implementation phase.

## 11.1 Review of FCMP

This FCMP is a dynamic document that will be reviewed regularly to allow the plan to remain aligned with Defence operational requirement, environmental outcomes and regulatory obligations of the approved Action.

As part of the implementation of this management plan, periodic review is required to meet compliance that actions remain effective and aligned with on ground conditions. This plan also assumes that DBCA will continue delivering their existing component of their fox and cat management activities as outlined in their current protocol. If these activities are reduced, altered or ceased then this FCMP must be reviewed in accordance with Section 12 of this FCMP. A review will also be initiated when monitoring outcomes indicate that current strategies require adjustment, such as when the model outputs suggest refinements to monitoring design or when the rate of predator incursions does not decline at a rate that is anticipated. Additional triggers include operational changes, emerging risks, or any evidence that eradication objectives will not be met under the existing approach. These triggers comply with requirements that the plan remains adaptive and responsive throughout implementation.

The FCMC will be responsible for coordinating the review of this FCMP when triggered by any of the triggers listed in Table 24. DEPAC, ADES, ESM, Base Command and PMCA will be notified of all reviews by the FCMC and will participate where required.

A summary of the type of review and a description of what the review entail are described in Table 24.

*Table 24 Triggers for review of the FCMP*

Review type/ trigger	Description
Annual review	Assessment of progress toward eradication and prevention objectives, including evaluation of monitoring data and control effectiveness.
Post-activity review	Conducted following major management activities such as baiting, trapping, or targeted surveillance operations.
Event-triggered review	Initiated after significant environmental or operational changes, including new predator detections, changes to access arrangements, or updates to best-practice predator management.
Change in management review	If current management responsibilities or activities are reduced, altered or ceased that this FCMP must be reviewed and adaptive management measure adopted in accordance with Section 10.
Post-construction review	Comprehensive review undertaken six years after completion of construction, consistent with EPBC 2024/10031 approval requirements for maintaining predator-free status.

Each review will evaluate the effectiveness of control measures, the adequacy of prevention strategies, and the performance of monitoring programs.

## 11.2 Evaluation approach

The evaluation of the plan will be based on the performance criteria and success indicators as described in Section 10. The evaluation approach encompasses the following to meet compliance:

- Evaluate eradication actions and outcomes
- Verification of absence detections
- Assess maintenance of eradication

- Evaluate the little penguin’s response
- Assess performance of monitoring systems
- Assess prey and habitat conditions
- Verify compliance with management, monitoring and reporting requirements

The evaluation of findings of the performance criteria and success indications from the evaluation approach will inform adaptive management decisions and help guide this FCMP updates.

## 11.3 Lessons learnt

The development of this FCMP has identified several key lessons that will guide future updates and support continuous improvement of the management plan. These are detailed in Table 25.

*Table 25 Summary of the lessons learnt*

Theme	Lessons learnt
Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Early, structured engagement with Defence departments, DBAC, regulators, and operational staff is essential to meeting compliance that the plan is practical and aligned with Defence operations.</li> <li>– Consolidated feedback processes reduce delays and improve clarity during review cycles.</li> <li>– Clear governance pathways support coordinated implementation and transparent reporting.</li> <li>– Foxes operate “cross-tenure” emphasising the importance of early and on-going engagement with surrounding landholders who manage land that could influence the biosecurity of Garden Island</li> </ul>
Operational constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Access to Garden Island is influenced by weather, security requirements, and Defence-managed permissions for future planning must incorporate realistic timeframes and contingencies.</li> <li>– Tight report deadlines and limited review cycles highlight the need for early preparation and proactive communication.</li> <li>– Survey and implementation activities must be scheduled around Defence operational commitments.</li> </ul>
Monitoring and data continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Long-term monitoring requires consistent methods, adequate resourcing, and clear assignment of responsibilities.</li> <li>– Integration with existing Defence reporting frameworks improves efficiency and reduces duplication.</li> <li>– Reliable data collection is essential for detecting trends, informing adaptive management, and demonstrating compliance.</li> </ul>
Implementation sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Achieving eradication by 2030 requires a structured, phased approach with clear milestones and decision points.</li> <li>– Control methods must remain flexible and responsive to monitoring results and operational constraints.</li> <li>– Early identification of resource requirements supports timely and effective implementation.</li> </ul>
Review and approval processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Early engagement with regulators improves approval efficiency and reduces the risk of delays.</li> <li>– A single review cycle requires consolidated stakeholder input; therefore, future updates will benefit from more iterative review processes.</li> <li>– Clear documentation of assumptions and limitations supports transparency and informed decision-making.</li> </ul>

## 11.4 Application of lessons learnt

The lessons identified above in Section 9.3 for the implementation of this FCMP will be systemically applied to strengthen future planning, implementation and compliance. Their application allows this FCMP to remain as a live document that evolves in response to operational experience, environmental outcomes and regulatory requirements. Table 26 describes how the lessons will be incorporated into ongoing and future management activities.

Table 26 Application of the lessons learnt

Application area	How lessons will be applied	Responsibility
Integration into Review Cycles	Lessons learned will inform annual reviews, post-activity evaluations, and event-triggered assessments. Review findings will directly guide updates to control strategies, monitoring design, and prevention measures.	FCMC
Adaptive management	Operational and ecological insights will be used to refine management actions, including sequencing of control methods and resource allocation. Monitoring results will drive adjustments to comply with requirements that management remains effective under changing conditions.	FCMC
Governance and coordination	Lessons relating to stakeholder engagement and governance will strengthen communication pathways and clarify responsibilities. Improved coordination will support efficient implementation and transparent reporting to regulators and stakeholders.	Director Delivery, Fleet Base West Project management Office (FBW-PMO), Department of Defence
Operational planning	Insights into access constraints, weather dependencies, and Defence operational requirements will inform future scheduling and contingency planning. Field activities will be planned with greater foresight to minimise delays and operational conflicts.	Director Delivery, Fleet Base West Project management Office (FBW-PMO), Department of Defence
Compliance reporting	Lessons will be applied to refine reporting processes, ensuring monitoring outputs and control outcomes are documented clearly and consistently. Reporting improvements will support Defence in meeting EPBC 2024/10031 obligations.	Director Delivery, Fleet Base West Project management Office (FBW-PMO), Department of Defence
Continuous improvement of the FCMP	Each update to this FCMP will incorporate relevant lessons to meet compliance and that the plan remains current, practical, and effective. Methodologies, risk assessments, and monitoring approaches will be refined as new evidence, technologies, or operational insights emerge.	FCMC

The application of these lessons meet compliance and that this FCMP remains a living document that is capable of evolving in response to new information, operational experience, and environmental outcomes while maintaining compliance with the EPBC 2024/10031 approval and supporting Defence's long-term management objectives.

## 11.5 Independent audits

Conditions 52-60 of the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 require that independent audits are undertaken each subsequent 3-year period following the commencement of the approved Action until the expiry date of the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 (or as otherwise directed by the Minister).

The approval holder is responsible for engaging an independent auditor to undertake this audit every 3 years or as directed by the Minister in accordance with Conditions 52-60 of EPBC Act approval 2024/10031. A copy of the audit report will be published on the Department of Defence Submarine Rotational Force-West Infrastructure Project website: <https://www.defence.gov.au/about/locations-property/infrastructure-projects/submarine-rotational-force-west-infrastructure-project>.

## 11.6 Document control

All environmental management documents and records required by this FCMP will be managed so that they can be identified, stored, protected, retrieved, retained and disposed appropriately.

If DCCEEW makes a request in writing, DEPAC will provide electronic copies of compliance records to DCCEEW within the timeframe specified in the request.

All reports and plans required by EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 to be published on the Defence website and kept on the website from the first date which that report must be published and until the expiry date of the EPBC Act

approval 2024/10031, inclusive of all attachments. Plans and reports that are required to be published on the website include:

- this FCMP
- the ACR, including all attachments, for each reporting period
- independent audit reports for each audit period

All other management and monitoring records required by this FCMP will be kept by the FBW PMO on behalf of the approved Action in accordance with the EPBC Act approval 2024/10031 conditions and be accurate, complete, legible, identifiable, and traceable. This includes:

- monitoring data
- control records
- biosecurity logs.

## 12. Conclusion

This FCMP for Garden Island has been developed to establish a clear, evidence-based management plan for safeguarding one of Western Australia's most significant island ecosystems. Through a combination of targeted eradication tools, strengthened biosecurity systems, rapid response capability, and long-term ecological monitoring, the plan provides a comprehensive framework for preventing fox and cat incursions and protecting vulnerable species, and particularly the little penguin.

The management actions described operate as an integrated strategy plan. Eradication measures such as baiting, detection dogs, trapping, and targeted shooting meets compliance that any existing predators are removed swiftly and humanely. Biosecurity protocols, infrastructure upgrades, and prey suppression programs form a layered defence that reduce the likelihood risk of future incursions. Rapid response strategies meet compliance that any incursion event is met with immediate, coordinated action, minimising the risk of a predator population persistence. Ongoing monitoring through cameras, track pads, ranger patrols, and species-specific surveys provide the verification needed to demonstrate the absence of fox and cat presence on the island.

The implementation timeline aligns with the EPBC Act approval conditions for SRF-West Priority (2024/10031), including the requirement to maintain a predator free Garden Island by 2030. This long-term commitment is supported by clear milestones, defined responsibilities, and a robust adaptive management framework that allows strategies to evolve as new information, technologies, or environmental conditions emerge.

Achieving and maintaining a predator-free Garden Island is both an ecological necessity and a practical possibility. Through following the structured actions in this management plan and with the support by a strong collaboration between Defence, DBCA, contractors, researchers, and community partners, the island can remain a secure refuge for native wildlife and be seen as a model for effective fox and cat management that could be utilised in other regions.

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