

Biosecurity Advisory Group Terms of Reference

The areas of each Biosecurity Advisory Group are shown in Map 1.

Context

Biosecurity Advisory Groups are community advisory groups of Environment Canterbury (Canterbury Regional Council). They work with Environment Canterbury and local communities to support the delivery of Environment Canterbury's biosecurity programme.

Environment Canterbury is responsible under the Biosecurity Act 1993 for providing leadership in activities that prevent, reduce or eliminate adverse effects from harmful organisms in Canterbury. This includes regulatory activities, like creating and enforcing the Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan (CRPMP), and non-regulatory activities, including monitoring pests, eradicating or controlling pests in accordance with the CRPMP, and improving coordination between people involved or interested in managing pests.

Biosecurity Advisory Groups support Environment Canterbury in its biosecurity leadership role. The groups do this by providing advice and feedback that helps Environment Canterbury run an efficient, effective and relevant biosecurity programme, and by promoting public support for pest management in Canterbury.

Purpose and Role

The purpose of each Biosecurity Advisory Group within its specified area is to:

- support the delivery of an effective biosecurity programme for the Canterbury region (which includes supporting implementation of the CRPMP)
- encourage community involvement in biosecurity in Canterbury.

The groups will achieve this purpose by:

- providing Environment Canterbury with advice on the management of pests to protect a range of values including biodiversity, economic and cultural values¹
- advising Environment Canterbury on emerging biosecurity threats
- advocating for and championing the implementation of the CRPMP
- providing a public forum for discussion of biosecurity matters of concern²
- liaising with local communities and providing Environment Canterbury with community feedback and recommendations on biosecurity programme matters (including policy, operational plans and on-the-ground activities)
- supporting and championing good biosecurity practices (both pest control and hygiene practices)
- participating in promotional and educational programmes to improve community understanding of biosecurity issues
- engaging with other groups that are involved or interested in pest management.

¹ This may include other organisms not formally specified as a 'pest' under the Biosecurity Act 1993

² The forum is not intended to resolve CRPMP compliance complaints

Limitations of Powers

The Biosecurity Advisory Groups are formed as other subordinate decision-making bodies under Schedule 7 of the Local Government Act 2002. Each group is intended to fulfil an informal consultative and advisory role in accordance with the above purpose and role. The groups have no statutory powers or functions nor are they delegated any functions or powers of the Council in relation to biosecurity.

Each Biosecurity Advisory Group has a consultative and advisory role and in accordance with its purpose may:

- Conduct meetings for the above purposes, including receiving reports and information;
- Make recommendations and provide advice to Environment Canterbury in accordance with its purposes outlined above;
- Submit on rating matters to Environment Canterbury as part of the Annual Plan or Long-Term Plan consultation processes;
- Provide advice to Environment Canterbury during the development of biosecurity plans.

The Biosecurity Advisory Groups do not have the authority to commit Environment Canterbury to any path or expenditure.

Any recommendations made by the Biosecurity Advisory Groups do not bind Environment Canterbury.

The groups do not have the authority to submit on resource consent matters, or plans made under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) or Biosecurity Act 1993 or other local government plans. Membership on a Biosecurity Advisory Group does not prevent individuals or their organisations from submitting on resource consent matters or RMA, Biosecurity Act or other local government plans.

Biosecurity Advisory Group Membership

Each Biosecurity Advisory Group will comprise:

1. Between 7 - 10 community members appointed in accordance with these terms of reference
2. One to two Papatipu Rūnanga representatives based on interests in the area, nominated by the relevant Rūnanga within the area and confirmed by Environment Canterbury
3. One councillor appointed by Environment Canterbury
4. Up to two representatives for the Territorial Authorities operating within the Biosecurity Advisory Group area, nominated collectively by those Territorial Authorities and confirmed by Environment Canterbury. These representatives may be staff or elected members
5. Any other appropriate representatives co-opted by the Biosecurity Advisory Group for a specific purpose, on recommendation by the selection working party and approved by Environment Canterbury.

Selection of Biosecurity Advisory Group Members

Selection of Environment Canterbury representatives

Environment Canterbury will appoint their councillor representatives.

Selection of Territorial Authority representatives

Territorial Authorities within the geographic area that the Biosecurity Advisory Group relates to will recommend their representatives.

Selection of Papatipu Rūnanga representatives

Rūnanga will recommend their representatives.

Selection of community members

To be eligible for membership, community candidates must live in or have a significant relationship with the area.

Recommendations on the community members will be made by a working group of Environment Canterbury councillors, supported by Environment Canterbury staff.

The working group will:

- consider applications from community candidates, and may invite applications from community members following discussion with relevant biosecurity stakeholders
- consider candidates and recommend community representatives to ensure each Biosecurity Advisory Group achieves a balance of the following:
 - geographic spread
 - a broad and balanced range of interests relating to biosecurity
 - pest management and/or biosecurity knowledge and experience
 - links with local communities
 - ability to work collaboratively and seek consensus
 - ability to operate using a solution-based and future-focussed approach
- make recommendations to Environment Canterbury on preferred candidates
- Environment Canterbury will receive the recommendations and make the appointments.

Environment Canterbury may delegate to the working group the power to make the appointments. If the working group is delegated the power to make the appointments, the working group is not required to make recommendations to Environment Canterbury on preferred candidates.

Chair and Deputy Chair

Each Group shall appoint a Chair from the membership by simple majority.

The Chair will be appointed annually, with a limit of six consecutive years in this position.

The Deputy Chair will also be appointed annually by simple majority.

Review of Biosecurity Advisory Groups

Environment Canterbury may review or discharge the Biosecurity Advisory Groups at any point in the three-year term.

Quorum

The quorum at a meeting consists of:

- Half the members (if number of members is even); or
- A majority of members (if number of members is odd).

Term of Appointment

Group members are appointed for a term of between three years and three years and six months. The term will commence at the date of appointment of community members and will expire on 30 June 2026.

From 1 July 2026 onwards, the term of appointment will be three years. This three-year term may be reduced at the discretion of Environment Canterbury at the time the appointment is made.

Community members can serve consecutive terms, with no restriction on the number of terms served. All community members (whether returning or new) will be subject to the same selection process.

Financial Delegations

None.

Meeting and Remuneration Guidelines

Each Biosecurity Advisory Group will meet in person three-four times per year, or occasionally more frequently. Meetings will be run in a workshop style and may involve a field trip component as part of the meeting. There may be additional (separate) field trips, invitations to attend community events, and shorter online sessions to progress work between in-person meetings.

The meeting venue will move around the Biosecurity Advisory Group area throughout the term.

Group Chairs will meet with Environment Canterbury staff prior to meetings to discuss the upcoming meeting.

Proxies or alternates are not permitted.

Remuneration for community and Papatipu Rūnanga members will be paid per meeting, set at the following levels:

- a. Chair \$300
- b. community and Papatipu Rūnanga members (including Deputy Chair) \$200

This per-meeting payment covers meeting attendance, preparation for the meeting (which will involve reading any meeting materials provided in advance of the meeting), and online attendance at any shorter online sessions ahead of or following the in-person meeting.

Members will not receive remuneration for additional field trips or attendance at community events.

Environment Canterbury's councillor representatives, and the staff or elected members of each Territorial Authority who are appointed as its representatives, shall not be eligible for remuneration.

Mileage of community members and Papatipu Rūnanga members for travel to and from meetings will be reimbursed.

Code of Conduct

Each participant in a Biosecurity Advisory Group agrees to abide by the Code of Conduct (attached) in all their engagement with, and on behalf of, the Biosecurity Advisory Group.

Public transparency

Meetings of the Biosecurity Advisory Groups shall be open to the public. Meeting documents will be made available for the public to view on the Environment Canterbury website.

All communications within or outside of the Biosecurity Advisory Groups will be subject to the Local Government Official Information Act 1987.

Group Support

Each Biosecurity Advisory Group and its members will be supported by Environment Canterbury. In particular, Environment Canterbury staff will provide:

- information and advice on pest management matters
- opportunities to upskill in biosecurity knowledge and understanding
- updates and information from other organisations and agencies in the community that undertake pest management
- coordination and administration support for meetings
- financial support to cover incidentals such as photocopying, circulation of agenda material, advertising, and venue hire.

Working Groups

Working groups may be required to progress a specific biosecurity issue. Working groups may only be established to achieve a specific objective and must have a specified end date.

The establishment of a working group must be approved by Environment Canterbury.

The membership of a working group may consist of members external to the relevant Biosecurity Advisory Group.

There is no remuneration for participation in a working group. Mileage of community and Papatipu Rūnanga members of a working group will be reimbursed for travel to and from working group meetings. Staff or elected members of Territorial Authorities or Environment Canterbury councillors that have been appointed to the Biosecurity Advisory Group as representatives will not be reimbursed for mileage.

Engagement with other community groups

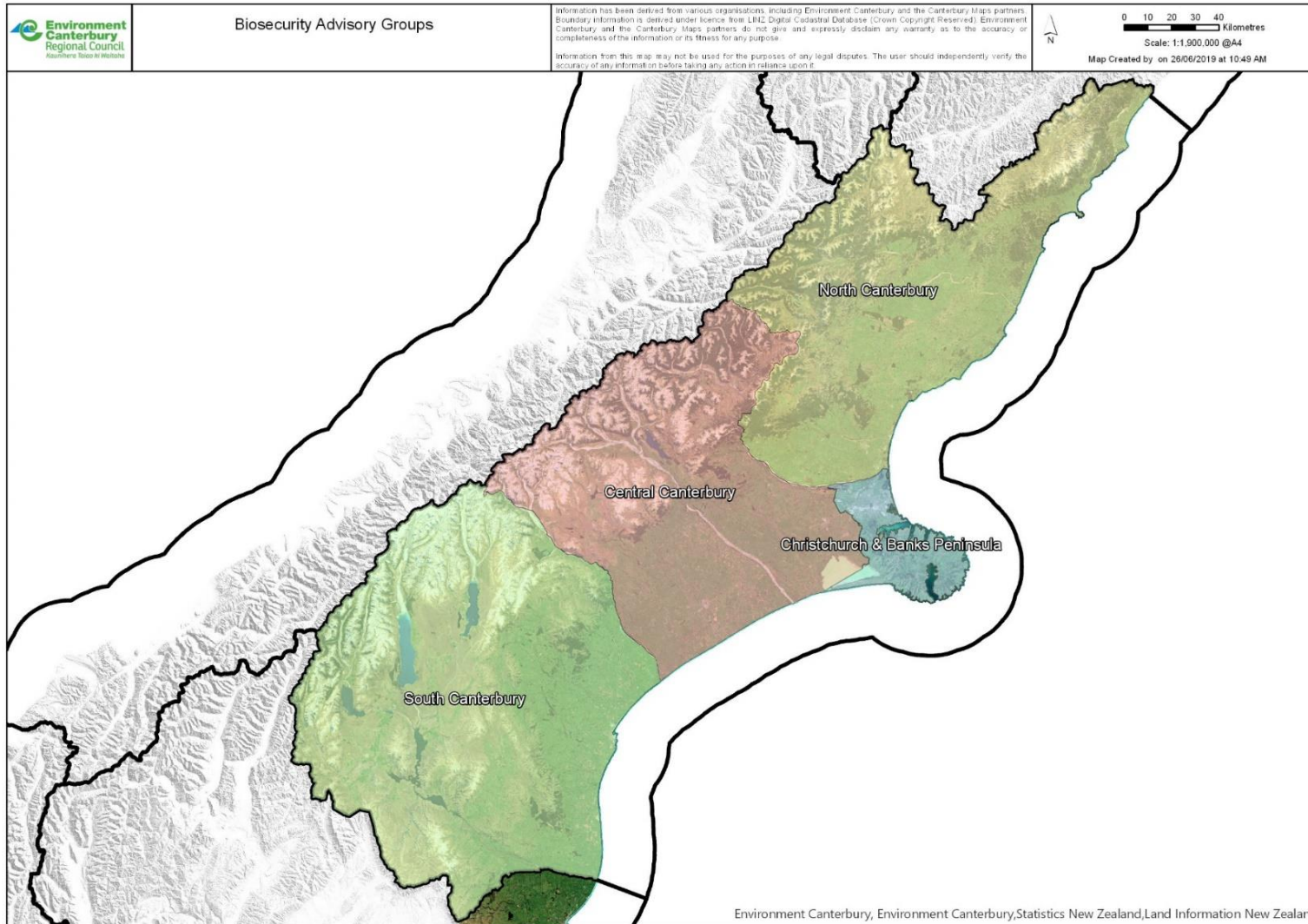
Environment Canterbury will engage with other biosecurity or pest management groups in the community outside of the Biosecurity Advisory Groups. This is to ensure activities of the groups are as complementary as possible and do not duplicate effort.

Conflicts of Interest

Biosecurity Advisory Group members must be careful that they maintain a clear separation between their personal interests and their duties as a group member. This is to ensure that group members carry out their duties free from bias (whether real or perceived).

It is the responsibility of group members to identify and declare a conflict of interest. If in doubt on whether a conflict of interest exists, the group member should disclose the potential conflict of interest. Group members can seek guidance on conflict of interest concerns from the Chief Executive Environment Canterbury.

Map 1



Biosecurity Advisory Group Code of Conduct

Introduction

Biosecurity Advisory Groups (each a Group, or together the Groups) have been established as part of Environment Canterbury's biosecurity programme. The purpose of the Groups is to support this programme by providing advice on local pest management issues and Canterbury Regional Pest Management Plan implementation, and championing good biosecurity practices.

The Code of Conduct describes how the Groups will work as a Group and as individual Group members. It also outlines the role of the Chair and deputy Chair. This Code of Conduct shall apply to the liaison committee members acting in their capacity as a Group member, and not as a private citizen.

Operating philosophy

The following outlines the operating approach and how the Groups will:

- Take a collaborative and solution-focused approach;
- Engage with local communities and key stakeholders to understand and advise on local pest management matters;
- Recognise the Treaty of Waitangi and the roles and rights of Ngāi Tahu in the exercise of kaitiakitanga;
- Operate in accordance with Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act 1987 (LGOIMA) and Local Government Act 2002;
- Manage conflicts of interest;
- Expect Group members to act at all times in an ethical and professional manner;
- Respect confidential and privileged information.

How the Groups will work

Collaborative, co-operative, participatory and solution-focused

The Groups will:

6. Work in a collaborative and co-operative manner using best endeavours to reach solutions that take into account the interests of all sectors of the community;
7. Cultivate a sense of group responsibility, emphasising the Group as a whole rather than individual Group members;
8. Use the expertise of individual members to enhance the Group as an advisory body;
9. Give consideration to and balance the interests of all pest management stakeholders in the Group's area;
10. Work in a manner that encourages the involvement and collaboration of the community, and other stakeholders in identifying, developing and implementing pest management solutions in the area;
11. Seek consensus in its recommendations or advice;
12. Work with other Biosecurity Advisory Groups or other groups with pest management interests to ensure a joined up, local approach to pest management;

13. Operate in a manner that emphasises:
 - o Solutions rather than issues or blame;
 - o Focus on the future rather than the past.

Treaty of Waitangi

The Groups will:

14. Operate in a manner that recognises Ngāi Tahu rights as protected under Treaty of Waitangi;
15. Operate in a manner that recognises the role and rights of Ngā Papatipu Rūnanga as Mana Whenua in the exercise of kaitiakitanga to all water and lakes, rivers, hapua, waterways and wetlands in the area;
16. Be culturally sensitive, observing tikanga Māori;
17. As required, access advice on Treaty of Waitangi responsibilities and tikanga Māori from Environment Canterbury staff or Ngāi Tahu group members.

External communication (contact with the media)

18. Media contact and public comment on behalf of a Group will be directed to and handled by the Chair.
19. The Chair can only represent the views of the Group and does not represent Environment Canterbury.
20. The Chair may refer any matter to a spokesperson agreed by the Group.
21. No other member may comment on behalf of the Group without having first obtained the approval of the Chair.
22. Group members are free to express a personal view in the media provided the following rules are observed:
 - o Media comments must not state or imply that they represent the views of the Group;
 - o Media comments must observe the other requirements of this Code of Conduct including:
 - i. Avoiding public criticism of other members, of the Group and its work, or other comments that could undermine the performance of the Group;
 - ii. Recognising the limitation of power of the Group;
 - iii. Not disclosing confidential information.

Linkages to the community, stakeholder and interest groups

23. The Group is a conduit for community and stakeholder engagement in pest management matters in the area.
24. The Group will work in a manner that ensures the views of the local community and key stakeholders are reflected in advice provided to Environment Canterbury.
25. Where a Group member has a close association with a particular community, stakeholder, interest group or sector, the Group member will keep the Group informed.

Linkage to Environment Canterbury

26. The Group will ensure that it maintains close links with and excellent working relationships with Environment Canterbury.

27. The Group will keep Environment Canterbury informed of its work, and of any issues that arise. This includes a “no surprises” approach for Environment Canterbury in relation to the Group.
28. The Group will report at the request of Environment Canterbury. This will include verbal reports, from the Chair to Environment Canterbury.

How Group members will work

Collaborative approach

29. Group members will behave in a manner that enables the Group to work effectively and collaboratively. This behaviour will include:
 - Listening respectfully to other members;
 - Engaging constructively with different views;
 - Helping the Group to build collaboration;
 - Helping the Group to reach solutions.
30. Members of the Group are appointed on the basis of their experience and knowledge and not to represent a particular interest or group. Accordingly, members will contribute their knowledge and perspective but not promote the views or positions of any particular interest or stakeholder group.

Act in a professional and ethical manner

Group members will at all times act in a professional and ethical manner. This includes:

31. Members will extend towards each other respect, integrity, courtesy and fairness;
32. Members will avoid public criticism of other members, of the Group or its work;
33. Members will avoid actions, including public comment, that would or could undermine the performance of the Group or of other members in the duties as a Group member;
34. Members will act at all times in a manner that maintains public confidence in the Group;
35. Members will ensure they attend Group meetings and are adequately prepared for meetings;
36. Members will not influence, or attempt to influence, any Environment Canterbury employee to take actions that may benefit the member, or the member’s family or business interests;
37. Members will only claim for legitimate expenses, consistent with the appointment Terms of Reference.

Relationship with Environment Canterbury staff

The Group members will, with respect to Environment Canterbury staff:

38. Recognise that the Chief Executive is the employer (on behalf of Environment Canterbury) of all Council employees, and as such only the Chief Executive may hire, dismiss, or instruct, or censure an employee;
39. Treat all employees with courtesy and respect;
40. Not do anything which compromises, or could be seen as compromising, the impartiality of an employee;
41. Not publicly criticise the competence, integrity and personality of any employee;

42. Raise concerns about employees only with the Chief Executive, and concerns about the Chief Executive, only with the Chair of Environment Canterbury.

Confidential and privileged information

In the course of its duties the Group may occasionally receive information that may need to be treated as confidential or privileged. This will generally be information that is either commercially sensitive or is personal to a particular individual or organisation, or is legally privileged.

43. Group members shall not use or disclose confidential or privileged information for any purpose other than the purpose for which the information was supplied to the Group;
44. Members must be aware that any information they hold as a member of the Group shall be deemed to be official information held by Environment Canterbury. In terms of the LGOIMA this means information must be made publicly available upon request unless good reasons exist to withhold it.

Conflicts of Interest

Group members must be careful that they maintain a clear separation between their personal interests and their duties as a Group member. This is to ensure that Group members carry out their duties free from bias (whether real or perceived).

It is the responsibility of Group members to identify and declare a conflict of interest. If in doubt on whether a conflict of interest exists, the Group member should disclose the potential conflict of interest. Group members can seek guidance on conflict of interest concerns from the Chief Executive Environment Canterbury.

Adoption of this Code of Conduct

45. The Group will formally adopt this document as a record of how the Group and its members will work.
46. The Group will re-adopt this document every three years, in line with the three-year term for members.
47. Changes to this Code of Conduct can only be made with the agreement of all Group members and Environment Canterbury.

Group roles

Chair

48. Following the completion of the one-year term of the establishment Chair, the Group will appoint a Chair from its members in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
49. As a Group member the Chair shares the same responsibility as other Group members. In addition to this the Chair has the following roles:
 - o Chair Group meetings with all commonly recognised authority of that position. The Chair may have an Environment Canterbury staff member facilitate meetings and workshops of the Group.
 - o Speak on behalf of the Group and act as an advocate for it, including taking the primary responsibility for interaction with the media and representing the Group at meetings with external parties.
50. The Group will appoint a Deputy Chair from its members in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

51. The Deputy Chair exercises the same roles as other members, and if the Chair is absent or incapacitated, the Deputy Chair must perform all of the responsibilities and duties of the Chair (as above).