



MEDIA RELEASE

Pest and Noxious Weed Control – feral chickens

Pest and Noxious weed control within public reserves and public roads is managed by the Norfolk Island Regional Council. The Pest and Noxious Weed Control operator falls within the Waste and Environment section of Council. The Pest and Noxious Weed Control program includes trapping feral cats, culling feral chickens, baiting rats and managing noxious weeds.

The program included responding to complaints of nuisance feral chickens on private property however going forward, Council will no longer be offering this service on private property. Shooting of feral chicken is not a new program on Norfolk Island and is part of the pest species management of the Plans of Management for Norfolk Island Public Reserves and is conducted to meet Objective 2 of the Community Strategic Plan 2016-2026 – *Protect and Preserve environmentally sensitive areas and those of high conservation value, through improved land management and pest control practices.* The operator is a competent and licensed gun operator and all appropriate licenses and clearances are held.

Feral chicken control has occurred on Norfolk Island for many years to control the numbers across the island. Norfolk Island provides a very successful breeding environment for chickens, and left uncontrolled, feral chicken numbers would be very high. Feral chickens cause disruption to the local ecosystem through scratching and displacing native seedlings in forested areas, dispersing noxious weed seeds and feeding on endemic invertebrates which play a vital role in the local ecosystem. These species including endemic snails that feed on the pine needle leaf litter to assist in the breakdown of this acidic material and dung beetles who efficiently process the cattle waste across the island.

Beyond environmental impacts, roaming chickens can cause havoc in vegetable and ornamental gardens on private properties and roosters can wake residents at unreasonable hours during the night.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Customer Care via email customercare@nirc.gov.nf or by telephone on local free call 0100.

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TEAM LEADER WASTE AND ENVIRONMENT

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