



Victorian Gorse Taskforce

Charter of Operations

Gorse is one of the twenty Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) due to its highly invasive nature, its negative impacts on agricultural production and its threat to biodiversity.

The new Victorian Gorse Control Strategy was published in 2008 this replaced the Gorse Control Strategy developed in 1999.

The primary role of the VGT is to oversee the coordination and implementation of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy.

The VGT's Charter of Operations relates directly to the goals and key directions contained within the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy, these are:

1. The Victorian Gorse Control Strategy is coordinated at a state level.
2. Achieve an accurate knowledge of the extent and threat of Gorse in Victoria.
3. Promote best practice management for Gorse control in Victoria.
4. Prevent the spread of Gorse into new areas of the state.
5. Achieve a reduction in the core infestations of Gorse across Victoria.
6. Reduce infestations and the spread of Gorse in and along pathways.
7. Achieve a reduction of Gorse infestations within townships.
8. Increase the community's capacity to be actively engaged in long term Gorse control.
9. Ensure compliance with statutory obligations to control Gorse.
10. Ensure effective monitoring and reporting of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy.

1. Terms of Reference

1. To oversee the implementation across Victoria of the goals and key directions of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy.
2. To align the VGT approach with the Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework for Victoria within the context of the Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria.
3. To operationally contribute to the Victorian Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework by promoting and implementing measures that support:
 - The containment of Gorse in Victoria (Containment involves measures to eradicate outlying (satellite) infestations and to prevent spread beyond the boundaries of core infestations (those that are too large and well established to eradicate)).
 - An asset-based approach to managing Gorse. (The asset-based approach is to manage the species only where reducing its adverse effects provides the greatest benefits by achieving protection and restoration outcomes for specific highly valued assets).
4. Contribute to the National Gorse Strategic Plan.
5. Advise the State Government and Catchment Management Authorities on Gorse control matters.
6. To oversee the preparation of annual budgets.
7. To ensure that the Victorian Gorse Taskforce is adequately resourced.

8. To monitor and evaluate Gorse management across Victoria.
9. To develop and deliver project plans that implement a biosecurity approach - using risk management to identify threats and then assess their relative risk to determine the most appropriate intervention to maximise public benefit.
10. To report against annual budget and project plans.
11. Increase the acceptance of wider ownership of Gorse control issues within the community and across all land tenures.

2. Administrative Arrangements

2.1 Membership

The VGT is to regulate its own proceedings, subject to the following:

- The VGT shall not exceed eighteen (18) members (this includes relevant representation from agencies). Unless a larger number can be justified and approved by the Chair.
- A quorum shall consist of 6 members.
- Membership shall include:
 - Community / landholder representatives.
 - An independent Chair elected from the community / landholder representatives.
 - A Treasurer elected from the community / landholder representatives.
 - Victorian Gorse Control Coordinator – Executive Officer.
 - Municipal Council representatives (appointed and endorsed by the VGT community / landholder representatives).
 - Nominated representatives of Department of Primary Industries (from Biosecurity Victoria) and Department of Sustainability and Environment.
 - Catchment Management Authority representatives (appointed and endorsed by the VGT community / landholder representatives).
 - Research representative(s) (appointed and endorsed by the VGT community / landholder representatives).
- Technical experts can be co-opted depending upon the issues.
- Observers may be invited at the discretion of the Chair.

2.2 Election of Community Group / Landholder representatives

Nominations of community group / landholder representatives for election as members of the VGT:

- In the appointment of members the VGT shall take account of the need for consistency and continuity between retiring and new committee membership.
- Members are to be appointed by the VGT following a call for “Incoming Committee Membership”.
- Nominations shall be made in writing, signed by both the nominator and the nominee.
- If possible both the nominator and the nominee should be present at the Annual General Meeting.
- Nominations shall be delivered to the Executive Officer of the VGT not less than 7 days before the date fixed for the holding of the Annual General Meeting.
- The skills, knowledge and experience that the nominee can bring to the committee will be considered by the VGT outgoing committee prior to the AGM and in making appointments. Geographic representation can also be considered when appointing members.
- The Chair at his or her discretion may call for nominations to be received for all or any position at the annual general meeting provided any person so nominated consents to their nomination.

- If required a ballot for the election of officers and community group / landholder representatives of the Committee shall be conducted at the Annual General Meeting in such usual and proper manner as the outgoing Committee may direct.

2.3 Terms of Appointment

- Members shall be appointed for a one year period and shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting (however all members shall be eligible for re-election).
- A maximum of three (3) consecutive terms is suggested.
- If the office of a VGT Committee member becomes vacant, the VGT may recommend the appointment of a person to the VGT to act in the place of that member for the remainder of that person's term of office. Such appointment will be ratified by the VGT.
- The VGT will appoint the Chair for an initial period of two (2) years. In making this appointment the VGT can nominate the appointment occupant for a further term(s) after the expiry of their initial term.

2.4 Meeting Frequency

- The VGT shall meet at least 4 times per year.
- The VGT meeting year is from 1 July to 30 June.
- The Annual General Meeting shall be held on or after July 31.
- All general meetings other than the Annual General Meeting shall be called ordinary meetings.
- Each committee member shall be given at least 4 days written notice (including email) of any meeting.

2.5 Sub-Committees and Working Groups

- The VGT may establish sub-committees or working groups to address specific tasks / issues between meetings.

2.6 Guests

- Invitations for guests to attend VGT meetings must be endorsed by the Chair.

2.7 Representing the VGT externally

- VGT members will contact the Chair or Executive Officer prior to representing the VGT at external meetings.

2.8 Pecuniary Interest

- Members are required to declare pecuniary or other interest in any item on the agenda.

2.9 Voting

- The VGT will seek to ensure consensus of all members on issues. However, if voting is necessary to facilitate reaching conclusions on matters, each member of the VGT committee will have one voting right and voting can only be made by attendees.
- A question arising at a general meeting of the VGT shall be determined on a show of hands. A declaration by the Chairman that a resolution has, on a show of hands, been carried or carried unanimously or carried by a particular majority or lost, and an entry to that effect in

the Minute book of the VGT is evidence of the fact, without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour of, or against, of acceptance of that resolution.

- In the case of an equality of voting on the question, the Chairman of the meeting is entitled to exercise a second or a casting vote.

3. VGT Roles

3.1 Chair

The Chair of the VGT will:

- Authorise meeting agendas.
- Begin meetings on time and keep to “agenda items” allowing reasonable time for each item.
- Facilitate discussion during the meeting, encouraging all members to participate.
- Bring agenda items to a conclusion with a brief review of points.
- If a vote is required for a decision to be made on a particular item / issue the Chair will clarify the voting procedure. In the event of a tie the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- The Chair will be delegated to act on behalf of the VGT but limited to those outcomes as agreed by the VGT committee.
- Act as media representative for the VGT.

3.2 Executive Officer

The Executive Officer plays the key support role for the VGT working closely with the Chair and undertakes the administrative roles of Secretary / Treasurer.

The Executive Officer will undertake the following:

- Prepare meeting agendas.
- Arrange for guests to attend the meeting (with consent of the Chair).
- Distribute information required for the meeting (including minutes post meeting).
- Arrange meeting venue and meals if required.
- Provide administrative support (if required) for the meeting.
- Prepare meeting outcomes and follow up on actions as required.
- Contact VGT committee members between meetings to inform them of important matters as they arise.
- To monitor the organisation’s financial resources.
- To advise the VGT on the use of those resources to provide maximum value.
- To accurately maintain the books of the VGT account.
- To prepare estimates and budgets.
- To submit regular financial reports to the VGT committee.
- To obtain an external audit of the VGT books of account annually.
- To oversee fundraising developments and applications.
- Exhibit leadership behaviours.

3.3 Treasurer

- The treasurer shall be responsible for presenting the statement of accounts to the Annual General Meeting and will also have the roles of an ordinary member.
- The day-to-day administration duties are delegated to the Executive Officer.

3.4 Ordinary Members

Ordinary members have voting rights regarding the acceptance or rejection of motions and shall:

- Be regular in attendance.
- Have completed any action points required of them.
- Be able to contribute to discussions constructively.
- Be well briefed and informed about the various items on the agenda.
- Be aware of the VGT's Terms of Reference and bear them in mind in all discussions.
- VGT members will contact the Chair or Executive Officer prior to representing the VGT at external meetings.
- Exhibit leadership behaviours.

4. Community / Landholder Member Expenses

Only community / landholder members are eligible to claim a member session fee and expenses such as travel.

- VGT committee members are eligible to be paid incidental expenses such as travel and a member session fee upon receipt of a signed "Personal Expenses Claim Form" to the Executive Officer.
- VGT committee members are eligible to be paid a session fee and incidental expenses for attending other meetings as an official representative of the VGT (to be endorsed by the Chair).
- Each member will decide whether to submit a claim based on their individual employment and other circumstances.

5. Media Protocols

- The Chair or a Chair-nominated VGT member will be the media representative for the VGT.
- All VGT members have a duty to provide support for the VGT's programs and agendas in a public forum.
- Wherever appropriate, the VGT will seek to provide joint responses to management issues. This will enable a collective message to be communicated.