



EASTERN WHEATBELT BIOSECURITY GROUP INC.

Annual Report

For

2019/20 FINANCIAL YEAR

Prepared by Lisa O'Neill

Proudly supported by

- ◆ SHIRE OF KONDININ ◆ SHIRE OF KULIN ◆ SHIRE OF LAKE GRACE ◆ SHIRE OF MERREDIN ◆
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- ◆ SHIRE OF TRAYNING ◆ SHIRE OF WESTONIA ◆ SHIRE OF YILGARN ◆



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



ROYALTIES
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2.0 Chair Report – Stuart Putt (Mount Marshall Representative)

The year 2020 will be long remembered for many reasons with the worldwide pandemic of Covid19 making life incredibly challenging at times, unfortunately no one told the wild dogs about regional borders or social distancing protocols. Thankfully for the land holders of the Eastern Wheatbelt our three LPMT (Licensed Pest Management Technicians) continued to be able to do their work throughout the year resulting in a significant reduction in declared pests across the eleven shires of the Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group.

The work of the LPMT's included almost 30 000 baits being laid resulting in an estimated 290 wild dogs controlled, 15 wild dogs confirmed destroyed, 144 foxes and 2 cats controlled for the year to date. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the LPMT's for their continued hard work.

The past year has also seen a number of RCP workshops run in the shires of Trayning, Mukinbudin, Kulin and Westonia, thanks to Dylan Copeland and NRM for the help and support. The EWBG was also successful in obtaining an IFS grant for an Aerial Baiting Project scheduled to be starting in October 2020. This year has seen the installation of the new Evanston Rd grid which will greatly help in the efforts to keep the wild dogs out of the agricultural land, thanks go to Ramelius Resources, The Shire of Yilgarn, and DPIRD for funding and completing the grid.

Finally I would like to finish by thanking everyone involved at the EWBG including the board, shire representatives, our hard working employees Jamie Taylor (LPMT), Stuart McEwan (LPMT), Nathan Richards (LPMT) and Lisa O'Neill (EO) your hard work is very much appreciated. Also, one final thank you is to Glenice Batchelor who left her role at DPIRD, after many years of hard work helping and supporting the EWBG you will be missed.

As I said at the start 2020 has been a challenging year for the whole world but the EWBG look forward to working with all stakeholders in the industry and keeping the agricultural region clear and safe from declared pests for many years to come.

Cr Stuart Putt – EWBG Chair.

Shire of Mt Marshall

3.0 Overview

The Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group (EWBG) is an incorporated organisation that commenced operating in 2001. It has eleven Shire representatives making up the EWBG membership. A management group is elected every two years who direct and manage the day to day operations via an Executive Officer.

EWBG is a Recognised Biosecurity Group which allows the implementation of a Declared Pest Rate (DPR). This was raised for the first time in October 2016, so this year saw its fourth year with the DPR in place. The Minister of Agriculture and Food, through the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) matches rates collected for the management of WA's Declared Pests. The collection rate of the DPR over the past three years has been excellent and the group thanks landholders for their support to allow ongoing management of declared pests across the prescribed area.

The management group work on a voluntary basis, with an in-kind contribution of approximately \$15,000 a year across the eleven shires (volunteer's contribution of time and travel to meetings, plus attending workshops and bait making days). This does not include individual landholder and community contributions which are extensive.

The EWBG employ an Executive Officer part time and contract highly skilled and experienced Licenced Pest Management Technicians (LPMTs) - one part time (60 days) and two full time (200 days per year).

The group is supported financially by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), the State Governments' Royalties for Regions program and the eleven member Shires (Kondinin, Kulin, Lake Grace, Merredin, Mount Marshall, Mukinbudin, Nungarin, Narembeen, Trayning, Westonia and Yilgarn).

Achieving success in this role ensures Eastern Wheatbelt agricultural businesses can become more robust and remain viable through improved productivity and increased income associated with reduced stock losses due to increasingly effective and coordinated declared pest management practices.

3.1 Achievements

Through necessity, the focus to date of the EWBG has been on the management of wild dogs and in conjunction with this, European red foxes and the feral cat.

The EWBG has been very successful in reducing wild dog predation across the extensive area enabling farming businesses to enter back into livestock and providing additional opportunities for agistment of sheep in the area over the summer months thus diversifying the agricultural economic base.

In 2000-2001 **reported** sheep losses were more than 2000 head. EWBG coordinated activities halved this to 1000 in 2008, 135 head in 2017/18 and 55 in 2019/20. With approximately 30 new RCP Permits in 2019/20 in place in the area due to assistance from the EWBG, this allows landholders to carry out

COMMUNITY CONTROL OF COMMUNITY PESTS



KONDININ • KULIN • LAKE GRACE • MERREDIN • MT MARSHALL • MUKINBUDIN • NAREMBEEN • NUNGARIN • TRAYNING • WESTONIA • YILGARN

their own pest control activities as well as provide immediate access and support if required by LPMTs in key target areas. The EWBG encourages all landholders to obtain an RCP Permit.

EWBG requests from community and LPMTs any reports of wild dogs and records all management activities of Wild Dogs undertaken in the EWBG area. This supports the National Wild Dog Strategy and provides data via the nationally funded Feralscan database.

The EWBG has played a significant role in ensuring farmers can continue to stock sheep and other livestock in the South West of WA by leading a collaborative and coordinated approach to provide management of wild dogs inside and outside the WA State Barrier Fence, from Northampton to Esperance in 2019/20.

4.0 EWBG Aims and Objectives

4.1 Our Aim (Vision)

Community control of community pests.

4.2 Our Role (Mission)

Protect and support the future of the Eastern Wheatbelt by working with landholders to fulfil their responsibility of managing declared pests on their land.

The EWBG believes declared pests can be better managed by working together as a community in conjunction with industry and government. Through a coordinated approach utilising a variety of strategies and technologies, EWBG can better assist and support landholders.

4.3 Objectives

The objectives of the EWBG are to:

- Control current predation of livestock by declared pests.
- Develop and implement management strategies to minimise future declared pest impacts on livestock.
- Implement best practice declared pest management on private and public lands in the region.
- Increase landholder participation, both private and public.
- Monitor, evaluate and report on the progress towards minimising declared pest impact on livestock in member shires.
- Provide proactive and positive extension activity driven by the group that will facilitate broader community awareness of declared pest issues.

5.0 Direction

The Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group is playing a key role in assisting land managers to manage declared pests in the region. Data from a range of sources shows that the Eastern Wheatbelt region has significant populations of declared animal pests that pose substantial environmental and economic risks to privately held farmland, unallocated crown land and river systems.

Declared animal pests of most concern for our communities and region, include wild dogs and foxes.

Wild dogs continue to cause livestock losses across the Eastern Wheatbelt. Whilst significant reductions in wild dog populations has occurred through the long-term activities of the EWBG, ongoing work is essential to keep populations at a level that will enable ongoing, profitable livestock operations across the region and state.

Management of wild dogs is in alignment with the *Western Australian Wild Dog Action Plan 2016-2021*. This is an 'industry led and driven plan that considers the economic, environmental and social impacts of wild dogs and identifies the key issues for managing them across Western Australia. The plan is designed to protect the livestock and tourism industries and public safety and recognises the ecological and cultural values of the dingo'. The EWBG is contributing to a key component of the WA Biosecurity Strategy 2016-2025 and DPIRD's Invasive Species Plan for Western Australia 2015-2019.

Fox and feral cat control has also been identified as a priority management issue throughout our operational area, particularly for landholders with livestock. The group also recognises the negative impact that foxes have on biodiversity, particularly native fauna.

As the EWBG operational area incorporates many larger areas of remnant vegetation close to and beyond the clearing line, the control of foxes and feral cats is important for the sustainability of livestock enterprises and for the benefit of nature conservation. It is also foundational in ensuring any efforts in Wild dog control are maximised. The management of foxes is imperative to maximise wild dog control however the EWBG have increased monitoring of foxes as response to concern and interest in the Shire of Narembeem.

The EWBG conducted two extensive aerial baiting programs in 2019/20. The first operation was in September 2019 which focused on the northern area of the EWBG and the second operation was conducted in June 2020. The aerial baiting program allows maximum control and also provides the LPMT's the ability to conduct surveillance of the area. This control program is essential to the EWBG and reduces the pressure Wild Dogs place on the SBF and allows the EWBG LPMT's to control Wild Dogs that have infiltrated the SBF into agricultural land.

The EWBG has been working with DPIRD in the use of reporting through Feralscan. This will provide landholders the ability to report pests so the group can better understand the various pests, prevalence and current pest management in EWBG areas. The EWBG has also included motion censored cameras in their control program to help increase surveillance and monitoring of declared pests within the prescribed area.

6.0 Summary

This year has seen the EWBG develop even further as a Recognised Biosecurity Group. This is the fourth year of the Declared Pest Rate (DPR) within the Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group's prescribed area. This rate allows the Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group (EWBG) to support landholders in their ongoing obligation and responsibility to control declared pests on their land.

The group has received great support from landholders and industry. EWBG continued to engage with the local community to canvas declared pest priorities and develop relevant activities and partnerships to pursue continuous improvement of pest management.

Throughout 2019/20 the Eastern Wheatbelt Biosecurity Group has provided landholders the opportunity to obtain 1080 accreditation and apply for a Restricted Chemical Permit (RCP), which the EWBG are currently covering the associated costs, to ensure maximum participation and widespread pest management. This allows landholders the opportunity to control declared pests on their property to the best of their ability. EWBG provide this service so landholders have the ability to engage with the RBG and to provide opportunities to input into priority declared pests. Representatives from the group have attended multiple community events (those available due to Covid 19), allowing landholders the opportunity to engage with the group and discuss priority pests. The group will continue to attend industry events in the future as it provides a voice for landholders within the area.

The Executive Officer is active in the AWI/DPIRD workshops to maximise collaboration with South West RBGs managing wild dogs: NBG, CWBA, SBG, MBA and EBA. This also allows the EWBG Executive Officer to provide support and networking with other RBG Executive Officers. Committee Members are also active in any industry relevant discussions or meetings.

The EWBG also worked in cooperation a number of stakeholders to see the replacement of the Evanston Road Grid. Thankyou to Ramelius Resources, the Shire of Yilgarn and DPIRD for funding and completing the new Evanston Road Grid.

The group is very appreciative of the great co-operation they have had from the landholders, the member Shires, Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development, AWI, Western Area's Ltd and Department of Biosecurity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA). The group is also very grateful for the hard work and dedication the three LPMT's have put towards the group, the success of the group is a large reflection of their solid work.

Committee of Management:

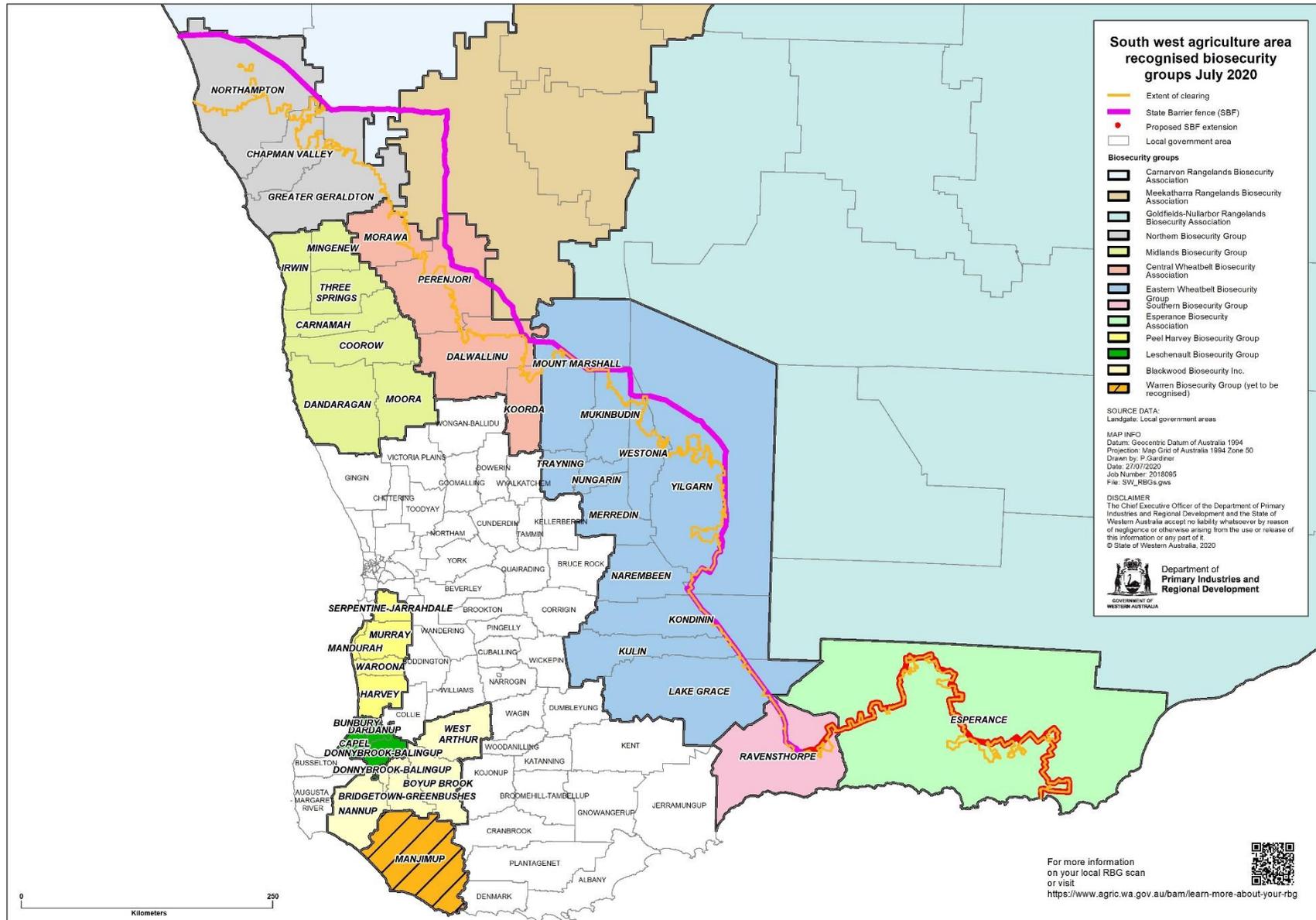
Chair - Stuart Putt, Deputy Chair - Steve Palm.

Committee: Jim Sullivan, Helen Shemeld, Bill Cowan, Cyril Smith, Mark Crees, Steve Hunt, Dean Sinclair, Ross Della Bosca, Kent Mouritz.

Shire Representatives for EWBG

Merredin - Mal Willis, Mukinbudin- Steve Palm, Narembreen- Bill Cowan, Westonia- Ross Della Bosca, Trayning- Marlon Hudson, Nungarin- Gary Coumbe, Mt Marshall- Stuart Putt, Lake Grace-Stephen Hunt, Kulin-Brad Taylor, Kondinin- Kent Mouritz, Yilgarn- Wayne Della Bosca.

Appendix 1: RBG Area of Operation



Appendix 2: Audited Financial Report

EASTERN WHEATBELT BIOSECURITY GROUP INC
ABN 97 381 980 973

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2020

| Income | DPR Carryover | DPR | R4R | Other | Total |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|
| Grant Funding | - | - | - | - | - |
| Declared Pest Account | 5,538 | 260,000 | - | - | 265,538 |
| R4R Funding | - | - | 93,750 | - | 93,750 |
| Membership Fees Received | - | - | - | 1,100 | 1,100 |
| Interest | - | - | - | 2,706 | 2,706 |
| Other Income | - | - | - | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Total Income | 5,538 | 260,000 | 93,750 | 13,806 | 373,094 |
| Expenses | | | | | |
| Accounting Fees | - | 2,558 | - | 750 | 3,308 |
| Administration Support | - | - | - | 4,023 | 4,023 |
| Advertising & Promotion | - | - | - | (75) | (75) |
| Aerial Baiting | - | 28,200 | - | - | 28,200 |
| Audit | - | 55 | - | - | 55 |
| Bank Charges | - | 138 | - | - | 138 |
| Catering | - | - | - | - | - |
| Community Engagement | - | 10,223 | - | 143 | 10,366 |
| Computer Software & Support | - | - | - | 117 | 117 |
| Consultancy Fees | - | - | - | 2,146 | 2,146 |
| Contractor Payments | 5,538 | 115,079 | 93,750 | 126,881 | 341,248 |
| Executive Support | - | - | - | 2,365 | 2,365 |
| Wages | - | 44,048 | - | - | 44,048 |
| Superannuation | - | 4,036 | - | - | 4,036 |
| COM Event Attendance | - | - | - | - | - |
| Insurance | - | 6,240 | - | 4,281 | 10,521 |
| Meeting Expenses | - | 463 | - | - | 463 |
| Administration Costs | - | 4,218 | - | - | 4,218 |
| Office Hire | - | 3,545 | - | - | 3,545 |
| Postage & Stationery | - | - | - | 57 | 57 |
| RCP Permits | - | 1,518 | - | - | 1,518 |
| Subscriptions & Licenses | - | 229 | - | - | 229 |
| Baits, Toxin & Traps | - | 42,590 | - | - | 42,590 |
| Travel | - | 817 | - | - | 817 |
| Other - Annual Leave Provision | - | 4,774 | - | - | 4,774 |
| Total Expenses | 5,538 | 268,731 | 93,750 | 140,688 | 508,707 |
| Carryover | - | (8,731) | - | (126,882) | (135,614) |

Appendix 3: Reported Wild Dog Activity in EWBG Operational Area

END OF YEAR STATICS

2019-20 Fiscal Year

| | LPMT 1 | LPMT 2 | LPMT3 | Total for EWBG |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Number of days worked | 199 | 203 | 72 | 294 |
| Baits laid (inc Aerial Bait) | 8000 | 13010 | 4000 | 25010 |
| Wild Dogs destroyed (not inc. all baited) | 7 (40 expected baited) | 5 (65 expected baited) | 1 (20 expected baited) | 13 (125 expected baited) |

*5 dogs per 1000 baits laid estimate.

Total Wild Dogs Destroyed (including destroyed by landholders) and number of Wild Dogs with a very high probability of having taken a 1080 Wild Dog bait.

| | | Baited | Shot | Total trapped | Total |
|--------------|---------|------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| Landholders | Private | unknown | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| LPMT 1 | EWBG | *40 | 1 | 6 | 47 |
| LPMT 2 | EWBG | *65 | 0 | 5 | 70 |
| LPMT 3 | EWBG | *20 | 2 | 4 | 26 |
| Total | | 125 | 6 | 15 | 146 |

*5 dogs per 1000 baits laid estimate.

Reported Wild Dog attacks and stock death:

| Year | Month | July | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb | Mar. | Apr. | May | Jun. | TOTAL |
|---------|--------------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|------|-------|
| 2012/13 | Attacks | 3 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 35 |
| | Stock Losses | 16 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 23 | 31 | 10 | 13 | 124 |
| 2013/14 | Attacks | 2 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 37 |
| | Stock Losses | 14 | 9 | 64 | 34 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 30 | 195 |
| 2014/15 | Attacks | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 16 |
| | Stock Losses | 2 | 40 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 80 |
| 2015/16 | Attacks | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| | Stock Losses | 8 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 30 | 5 | 0 | 59 |
| 2016/17 | Attacks | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| | Stock Losses | 4 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 16 |
| 2017/18 | Attacks | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| | Stock Losses | 5 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 60 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 27 | 12 | 5 | 135 |
| 2018/19 | Attacks | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 11 |
| | Stock Losses | 10 | 3 | 28 | 2 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 70 |
| 2019/20 | Attacks | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| | Stock Losses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 50 | 1 | 55 |