Wild dog auditory deterrents: Squawker and howler boxes

Where to use auditory deterrents?

- Non-lethal deterrents reduce wild dog activity on a small scale, at specific locations within the landscape (approximately 20 m x 20 m).
- They suit gaps and hard-to-maintain places in fences, gateways, and grids.
- They can deter wild dogs from livestock in the immediate area.
- There are two types of auditory deterrents currently used in Western Australia:
    - Squawker boxes which give off a loud siren noise.
    - Howler boxes which emit a male wild dog warning howl.

How do auditory deterrents work?

- Squawker and howler boxes have a passive, infrared security sensor that measures infrared light radiating from objects in its field of view.
- There are generally two options for altering the sensitivity of the sensor: by adjusting the range (distance the deterrent will sense activity) and sensitivity.
- Adjusting the sensitivity of the sensor is important when deploying auditory deterrents in heavily used thoroughfares or locations where vegetation is likely to repeatedly trigger the device.
- Auditory deterrents are typically powered by a deep cycle battery and solar panel, allowing you to deploy them at almost any location. It will run continually and autonomously.
- Auditory deterrents can be assembled in pieces for a unique set-up or an all-in-one system that is mounted on a post.

Using squawker and howler boxes

Positioning: Position your deterrent in clear surroundings with the sensor pointing towards the direction from which wild dogs are anticipated to approach. Ensure the solar panel is facing north and clear of shade or vegetation that may obscure the panel

throughout the day. This needs to be considered in open areas where grass or vegetation growth can occur rapidly following sufficient rainfall.

Auditory deterrents were originally designed for use on open roads and grids to stop wild dogs crossing a fence line from one paddock to another. Placement of auditory deterrents around trees and bushes will potentially reduce the effectiveness of the deterrent.

Height: Ensure the deterrent sensor is set approx. 1.1 m off the ground. This is the optimum height at which the sensor best detects dogs or dog-sized objects. Auditory deterrents placed higher than 1.1m requires the sensor settings to be adjusted accordingly, refer to manufacturer instructions.

Range: The sensors have a wide-angle detection zone that typically covers a 15 m x 15 m area. It is important to test the deterrent once it is installed to ensure that a wild dog will trigger the device upon approaching but before they enter the gateway or gap.

Squawker and howler box set-ups including deep cycle battery, solar panel and squawker devices deployed separately. They are easily moved.

All in one box in the mid-west of WA and a wild dog.

Auditory deterrents can be effective at deterring wild dogs from specific locations. However, their use does not replace the need for other management techniques.