

Minutes

Meeting Nine of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group

Teleconference held on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant, DAFF (Chair); Louise Clarke, DAFF; Tegan Honing-Wassenburg, DAFF; Nin Hyne, DAFF; David Forsyth, DSEWPaC; Alex Blanden, DSEWPaC; Greg Fraser, PHA; Nick Woods, PHA; Jenna Taylor, PHA (Secretariat); Satendra Kumar, NSW DPI; Pat Sharkey, DPI Vic; Russell McMurray, DPI Vic; Hugh Bramwells, DSE; Shaun Sutor, DSE; Gavin Matthew, AFPA.

Apologies: Vanessa Findlay, DAFF; Mike Cole, DAFF; Andrew Wilson, DAFF; Belinda Brown, DEWHA; Rod Turner, PHA; Suzy Perry, DAFF Queensland; Jim Thompson, DAFF Queensland; Mark Panitz, DAFF Queensland; Gordon Guymer, DSITIA; Bruce Christie, NSW DPI; Kathy Gott, NSW DPI; Graham Wilson, OEH; Anne Dennis, DSE; Andrew Greenwood, DSE; Lucy Sutherland, ASBP; Peter Grist, AFPA.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

Colin Grant welcomed all Members of the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group (MRTMG) and in particular David Forsyth from DSEWPaC, Nick Woods from PHA, and Shaun Sutor from DSE who were attending for the first time. Colin then explained that Vanessa Findlay was an apology and that, in her absence, he would be chairing the meeting.

Item 2 – Endorsement of Minutes from the Previous Meeting

It was discussed that the draft minutes from Meeting Eight had been circulated for comment out of session. Members were given a final opportunity to comment or request that an amendment be made. There were no further comments or amendment requests and the minutes were taken to be endorsed. PHA will make them available on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program website.

Item 3 – Action Items from the Previous Meeting

Colin Grant ran through the action list from Meeting Eight. All action items had been completed.

Item 4 – Report from PHA

Contracts

Jenna Taylor advised that all but one of the contracts for the Australian Government funded projects in the Plan for Transition to Management of Myrtle Rust have now been signed and these projects are all underway. In most cases the researchers had commenced work prior to the signing of the contracts.

There are two progress reports and a final report due at the end of November. These will be circulated to the MRTMG prior to the next meeting.

The remaining contract is for Project 3.4, the collecting trip to South America to collect isolates of *P. psidii* and send them back to Australia for use in some of the other projects. As has been discussed in previous meetings, PHA has become aware of a ban on the export of specimens and DNA out of Brazil and has been investigating the possibility of Professor Acelino Alfenas from the Department of Plant Pathology of the Federal University of Viçosa, Brazil making collections of *P. psidii* in South America and bringing them to Australia. Acelino has a collaborative group of international researchers working on *P. psidii* that includes Australian researchers and, following the previous meeting, PHA held a teleconference with some of these Australian researchers to discuss this option. Acelino will be contacted and a proposal developed for this work. This will be circulated to the MRTMG prior to the next meeting.

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Item 5 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Queensland

There was no representative from Queensland in attendance. As such, no update was given on Myrtle Rust activities in Queensland.

Item 6 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in NSW

Satendra Kumar gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in NSW. His report is attached at Attachment A.

Item 7 – Report on Myrtle Rust Activities in Victoria

Russell McMurray gave an update on Myrtle Rust activities in Victoria. His report is attached at Attachment B.

Item 8 – Report on National Myrtle Rust Activities

David Forsyth gave an update on national Myrtle Rust activities. His report is attached at Attachment C.

Colin Grant praised the idea of the workshop and suggested that Jenna Taylor provide DSEWPaC with the contact details of the MRTMG members; researchers working on Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program funded projects; and the members of the Myrtle Rust Scientific Advisory Group, all of whom should be invited to the workshop. Colin also suggested that PHA give a brief presentation on the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program at the workshop.

Hugh Bramwells commented that it would be useful to hear from the other states on the impacts that they have observed in their jurisdictions. David agreed and advised that he was also proposing to invite representatives from non-affected states and territories in order to increase their awareness of key issues regarding Myrtle Rust.

It was also discussed that the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program may be able to provide some financial assistance for key people to travel to Canberra to attend the workshop if required.

Item 9 – Report on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership

There was no representative from the Australian Seed Bank Partnership in attendance. As such, no update was given on the Australian Seed Bank Partnership's Myrtle Rust activities.

Colin Grant reminded members that and that Lucy Sutherland had prepared a collaborative response to the Caring for our Country Program Consultation Discussion Paper on *Protecting and conserving national significant species, ecosystems and biodiversity in the next phase of Caring for our Country* highlighting Myrtle Rust and that this submission has been accepted by Caring for our Country and will be reviewed by the Caring for our Country design team before becoming a public document and being made available from the Caring for our Country website. It is hoped that the submission will help inform the direction of the next round of Caring for our Country funding.

Item 10 – Report on Forestry Activities

Gavin Matthew gave an update on the Forestry industry's Myrtle Rust activities. His report is attached at Attachment D.

Item 11 – Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting was scheduled for 3.00-4.00pm AEDST on Tuesday 11th December 2012 and were asked to add this time and date to their diaries.

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Item 12 – Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked the Members of the MRTMG for their participation in the teleconference and closed the meeting.

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Attachment A

Myrtle Rust in NSW – report from NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Geographic Range

Myrtle Rust is considered endemic in NSW, with a confirmed distribution in native environments from Batemans Bay to the Queensland border. However, there have been no reports of Myrtle Rust in natural vegetation to the west of the Great Dividing Range thus far.

Communication

There have been no reports on Myrtle Rust on biosecurity hotline in the last four months.

The NSW DPI Biosecurity website (<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant/myrtle-rust>) is the major site for information on Myrtle Rust management and this is being updated regularly. Further information on Myrtle Rust management in natural vegetation is available from <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/pestsweeds/20110683myrtlerustmp.htm>.

Research and Development

Work on the fungicide project under the Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Program is progressing well. Some preliminary will be available for circulation prior to the next MRTMG meeting.

Management

Discussions are being held within NSW DPI for Myrtle Rust to be managed as an established disease and management information has been provided by the extension arm of NSW DPI.

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Attachment B

Myrtle Rust in Victoria – report from DPI Vic for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Geographic Range

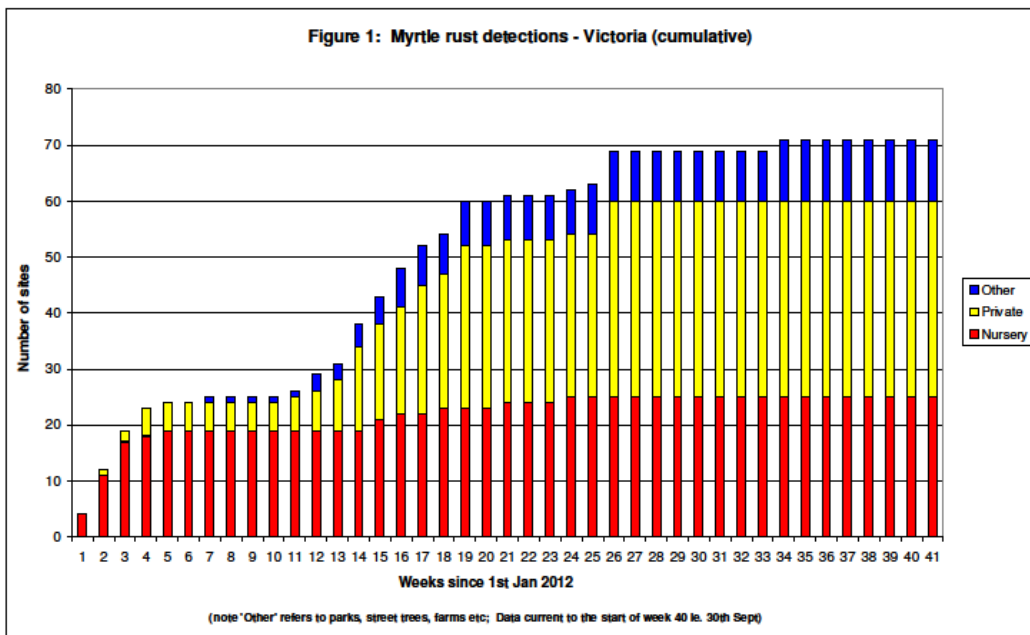
There have been 3 new detections of Myrtle Rust in Victoria since August bringing the total to 71 infected premises mainly across Melbourne with outliers in Shepparton, Lorne, Bairnsdale and Ballarat.

The new infected premises were found in the Casey Shire (metro Melbourne) where natural spread has been identified.

The recent detections have been on much larger plants which represents a significant management issue for home owners.

Myrtle Rust has not yet been detected in Victorian bushland or the natural environment.

The expectation is that as temperatures rise in late spring there will be a marked increase in Myrtle Rust detections.



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Figure 2 Map of detection sites as of 15 October 2012

Host Range

Myrtle Rust has currently been detected on the following hosts in Victoria:

Acmena smithii (lilly pilly); *Agonis flexuosa* (willow myrtle); *Austromyrtus dulcis* (midgen berry); *Backhousia citriodora* (lemon scented myrtle); *Callistemon harkness* (bottle brush); *Callistemon* 'Kings park special' (bottle brush); *Callistemon viminalis* (bottle brush); *Chamelaucium uncinatum* (Geraldton wax); *Eucalyptus olida* (strawberry gum), *Lophomyrtus X ralphii* (Black Stallion); *Metrosideros carminea* Red rata (Crimson rata); *Metrosideros collina* (Fiji Christmas bush); *Metrosideros excelsa* (New Zealand Christmas bush); *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle); *Syzygium anisatum* (aniseed myrtle); *Syzygium australe* (lilly pilly/scrub cherry/Aussie southern); and *Syzygium paniculatum* (dwarf magenta cherry).

Training and Communication

Over 1600 people have attended ongoing Myrtle Rust information and ID sessions.

There is still a strong demand from local councils and other land management groups for training.

Two information sessions were held in September and more are planned for regional councils in the next few months.

There has been no need to run any ICA-42 Authorised Inspection Person training courses over winter.

The website was updated in September and factsheets distributed as required.

There was a well presented segment on the TV show Gardening Australia (ABC) in early October where John Arnett from the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne was interviewed about Myrtle Rust.

20 public enquiries regarding Myrtle Rust have been recorded over the last 2 months.

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Surveillance and Tracing

There has been good participation from stakeholder groups in the surveillance program.

Over 120 sentinel sites, mainly in forested areas, have been established around the state (with the assistance of stakeholder groups) to provide early warning in high risk areas and significant bushland sites. DPI is coordinating the sentinel site network but is actively monitoring only a small number of these sites with much of the monitoring work being done by stakeholder groups. Data from these other sites is being provided by land managers for collation by DPI

Market Access and Compliance

From 30 June 2012, Myrtle Rust has been declared as an endemic disease in Victoria and the Victorian Importation Order has been rescinded. This means that Myrtle Rust host materials are able to enter Victoria from New South Wales and Queensland without certification. It remains illegal under Victorian plant biosecurity legislation to sell plants with visible symptoms of Myrtle Rust. In addition, businesses are encouraged to adhere to the Nursery and Garden Industry Australia's Myrtle Rust management plan to minimise the risk of spreading Myrtle Rust further within the State.

Management

The Victorian Myrtle Rust Coordination Committee consisting of Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Parks Victoria (PV), local councils, botanic gardens, forestry, nursery and beekeeper representatives met in early September to plan "monitoring" activities over the next six months.

Phase 3 – Monitoring Plan for Myrtle Rust has been developed and was endorsed at the meeting. The Plan focuses on providing training and technical advice to land managers, following up detections in new hosts and high risk areas of plantation and natural bush and collecting surveillance and impact data.

DPI has appointed a pathologist to assist with the program over the next six months.

Yates is continuing to pursue a minor use permit for the Zaleton fungicide product for use against Myrtle Rust.

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Attachment C

National Myrtle Rust activities – report from DSEWPaC for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Situation Update

DSEWPaC is proposing to hold a national workshop on the environmental impacts of Myrtle Rust on Wednesday 12 December, 2012, in Canberra. A draft agenda will be circulated to the MRTMG this week and comments regarding the agenda, potential speakers, and attendance will be welcome. Invites will be sent out in the next few weeks.

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Attachment D

The Forestry Industry's Myrtle Rust activities – report from the Australian Forest Products Association for Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group Meeting Nine held by teleconference on Tuesday 16 October, 2012

Situation Update

The forestry industry's annual forest health surveillance activities have been tailored to Myrtle Rust and key staff involved in these surveillance activities are being trained in the identification of Myrtle Rust.

A broader training program for operational staff is underway also.

Screening of seedlings has been undertaken by CSIRO with the screening of high risk areas such as nurseries being a priority.

AFPA has been working with PHA to review the forestry industry's Industry Biosecurity Plan.

In anticipation of becoming a Party to the EPPRD, AFPA has met with the Levies Revenue Service within DAFF to discuss the implementation of an EPPRD levy.