

# Stop The Toad Foundation (Inc)



## Annual Report 2005/06



*Committee of Management member Russell Gueho checks traps - June 2006*



WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
A better place to live.



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# CONTENTS

BACKGROUND:	3
OBJECTS OF ASSOCIATION:	4
CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION:	5
TOADS IN A NUTSHELL:	6
THE DRY SEASON STRATEGY:	7
<u>REPORT ON ACTIVITY</u>	10
1) OPERATIONS AND TRAINING:	10
2) LOGISTICS:	12
3) INFORMATION (& COMMUNICATIONS):	13
4) ADMINISTRATION (AND FUNDRAISING):	15
POSTSCRIPT: A BRIEF REPORT ON THE GREAT TOAD MUSTER	17
THE YEAR AHEAD:	18
COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERSHIP:	18
APPENDIX 1: PRE – FOUNDATION HISTORY:	18
APPENDIX 2: EARLY STRATEGIC DIRECTION:	20
APPENDIX 3: STRATEGIC PLAN:	21
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:	23



**Annual Report 2005-2006  
Stop The Toad Foundation (Inc)  
To June 30 2006**



*Typical billabong scene at the end of the Wet season*

**BACKGROUND:**

The STOP THE TOAD FOUNDATION is a not-for-profit organisation incorporated in Western Australia in October 2005 with the primary purpose of preventing the invasion of cane toads into Western Australia. The strategic focus of the Foundation is to alert all Australians to the potential impacts of the cane toad and to try to engage everyone in the protection of Western Australia from the toad's imminent invasion.

This report covers the period from incorporation on 7 October 2005 to the end of its first financial year, 30 June 2006.

The Foundation secured \$500,000 of Western Australian Government funding in December 2005 to support cane toad control in the Northern Territory and within Western Australia in the event that populations of toads do establish in this state.

The Committee of Management of the STTF was established at an inaugural AGM on 27 October 2005. It has held ten meetings in the 2005/06 financial year. The Foundation also held one Special General Meeting on 26 June 2006.

## OBJECTS OF ASSOCIATION:

- (a) To prevent the migration of cane toads into Western Australia.
- (b) To fund, develop, install and operate toad trapping devices and other toad control mechanisms with the aim of preventing cane toads entering Western Australia.
- (c) To protect Western Australia's native fauna and flora from the infestation of cane toads.
- (d) To educate the public on the risks and danger posed by cane toads and the ways to prevent the migration of cane toads into Western Australia.
- (e) To conduct and finance research into the development of effective methods of controlling, reducing or eliminating cane toad populations.
- (f) To implement cane toad control measures in Western Australia in the event that populations of cane toads are established in the State.
- (g) To carry out activities that promote or to facilitate the above objectives, including fund raising activities.
- (h) To establish and maintain a public fund to be called the "Stop the Toad Fund" for the specific purpose of supporting the environmental objects/purposes of the Association. The Public Fund is established to receive all gifts of money or property for this purpose and any money received because of such gifts must be credited to the Public Fund Bank Account. The Public Fund must not receive any other money or property into the Public Fund Bank Account and it must also comply with subdivision 30-E of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

*Stop The Toad Foundation (Inc) Rules of Association – Clause 3*



*Foundation Vice-Chair Luc Longley provides a skills session for some budding Timber Creek basketball stars and looked on by Graeme Sawyer (STTF Regional Coordinator) - April 2006*



## CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION:

Cane toads are a noxious pest. Since their misguided release into the sugar cane fields of Queensland seventy years ago they have spread in vast numbers across northern Australia, from Queensland into the Northern Territory, with disastrous results for native wildlife. And now they are bearing down upon the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Until recently, Australians were strangely fatalistic about the proliferation of this feral menace. As a result no concerted effort was ever made to even slow its westward advance, let alone eradicate it completely. Some scientists and policy-makers held that a biological control was just around the corner, but decade followed decade and no silver bullet emerged. Meantime, the toad marched unchecked across our tropical north. Into Kakadu. Into the suburbs of Darwin. And now much further westward, to the Victoria River and beyond. The toad frontline is now 100 kilometres from the WA border. Once toads reach the vast Ord River catchment, the game will be up. This, then, is the eleventh hour.

Community groups here and in the Northern Territory have worked tirelessly to awaken the public to the ecological crisis at our doorstep and, I'm pleased to say, that as a direct result of their work the old fatalism has lost sway and a new energy has taken hold. **Many Western Australian's believe that inaction is simply not an option. That defending our state against a cane toad infestation is not just possible – it's vital.** A spirited resistance to cane toad infestation is now firmly abroad in the public imagination. This is visible in schools and the media, in business groups and volunteer organisations, and in state government policy. A sharp new focus and fresh urgency have already stepped up levels of research and practical measures, both professional and volunteer, to aid in the fight. The Stop The Toad Foundation is proud of its pivotal role in helping foster this new can-do mindset. Our founding members and patron deserve every credit for their efforts to bring people and ideas together in the cause of toad control.

We stand now at the end of our first year of operations and our results to date are enormously encouraging. After wide consultation with scientists, indigenous stakeholders, and toad specialists from all over Australia we are better placed than we were a year ago to have an impact on the westward movement of the toad. The success of the Great Toad Muster in the critical Auvergne region has confirmed our strategy and strengthened our resolve.

The Foundation's Committee of Management is enormously grateful for the wave of support we have benefited from. Thanks go especially to our primary sponsor, the Western Australian Government, and to our other major sponsors, Skywest and Lotterywest. A host of other supporters deserve thanks but foremost amongst them are Barwick Estate Wines, Toll West and Slingair/Heliwork. Special thanks also go to Sally Malay, Air Liquide, St John Ambulance, The University Club of WA, the WA Museum and Scitech.

But most importantly to all those volunteers who did their bit to reduce the cane toad threat to WA this year, those who cooked, drove, answered phones, created spreadsheets, spoke to schoolkids, ran raffles, built traps, told their friends and relatives, charged batteries, or caught, killed and counted toads in the heat, thank you and congratulations on an amazing effort.

On behalf of the Committee of Management of the Stop The Toad Foundation I would also like to thank our staff who worked so hard and so well under such testing circumstances to maximize and guide the volunteer effort this first year.

**Robert Edel**



**Chairperson  
Stop The Toad Foundation (Inc)**



Robert Edel  
Chairperson of the  
Stop The Toad Foundation  
(Partner at Phillips Fox)

## TOADS IN A NUTSHELL:

Cane toads (*Bufo marinus*) were introduced to Queensland by the Bureau of Sugar Experimental Stations at Meringa in 1935 in a failed attempt to control a sugar cane pest. Since then cane toads have devastated the biological landscape of Queensland, northern New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

The cane toad is recognised by the IUCN (the World Conservation Union) and the Global Invasive Species Programme as one of the world's 100 worst invaders. The National Cane Toad Taskforce has recognized growing evidence and concern about the impact of cane toads on Australia's ecosystems. The cane toad has been listed as a key threatening process in Australia.

Cane toads are both aggressive predators and highly toxic when eaten by other animals (this includes the toad's eggs and tadpoles). They have an instant and deadly impact on anything that bites them. Cane toads feed on a broad variety of prey items including insects; small reptiles and frogs. They even eat ground-nesting bird chicks and eggs. They out-compete native species for food and shelter sites and (having no natural enemies) can deplete resources so severely that their impacts are major.

Cane toads have spread from Queensland, south into New South Wales where the front has reached Port Macquarie and east into the Northern Territory, devastating ecosystems throughout Arnhem Land and Kakadu.

In the Northern Territory there is evidence of localised extinctions of northern quolls (*Dasyurus hallucatus*), severe population declines of large predatory reptiles such as the varanid (monitor) lizards. Reports of deaths of freshwater crocodiles, water birds, freshwater fish and turtles are accumulating.

Now cane toads are on the Western Australian doorstep, with populations just 100 kilometres from the Northern Territory/Western Australia border. This puts them potentially within a year's walk of the East Kimberley town of Kununurra and the world-class RAMSAR wetlands of Lake Argyle, Lake Kununurra and the Ord River. There is great concern that should the toads cross the WA border they will decimate many species that are unique to Western Australia.

CSIRO predictions warn that unless stopped, cane toads will colonise Perth and could even eventually infest areas as far south as Margaret River.

The downstream environmental, social, economic, health and cultural impacts of toad colonisation of Western Australia are potentially enormous. The impact on tourism in the Kimberley alone could be worth many millions of dollars each year. In affected areas, Aboriginal people suffer as resources that have been traditionally used for thousands of years are diminished – fish, turtles, goanna, crocodiles and small mammals.

Cane toads are very adaptable and can infiltrate urban areas, grasslands, woodlands, sand dunes, coastal heath, mangroves and the margins of rainforest.

The toads are prolific breeders with large females recorded as producing 30,000 eggs at a time. The eggs are capable of surviving in freshwater systems and brackish systems with salinity levels up to 15‰.



The cane toad front tends to be comprised of large animals in large numbers creating major ecosystem disruption. Following colonisation of an area by toads, in time, there appears to be a general reduction in size and number of toads, allowing some native species to re-establish. While these ecosystems will never be the same again, it is expected that reducing the impacts of the initial wave may have benefits in rate and scale of ecosystem recovery, after the front has passed.

There are likely benefits in even slowing the toads advance, but the Foundation is committed to thorough exploration all potential to eradicate the advancing front and thereby halt the westward progression of toads.

Toads require access to water at least every 4 days. Given the extended dry seasons experienced in the Northern Territory and the Kimberley this is a weakness that can be exploited.



*Bufo marinus – the cane toad*

## THE DRY SEASON STRATEGY:

The Foundation conducted a nation-wide video conference in February 2006 involving leading cane toad researchers, experts in feral control and people with specific knowledge of the Northern Territory country that the toads are moving through. The purpose was to bring together information on:

- the ecology/biology/behaviour of the cane toad
- the terrestrial and aquatic environments that the front is passing through
- land tenure and legislative settings
- past experience of cane toad control measures
- studies and other resources which may assist

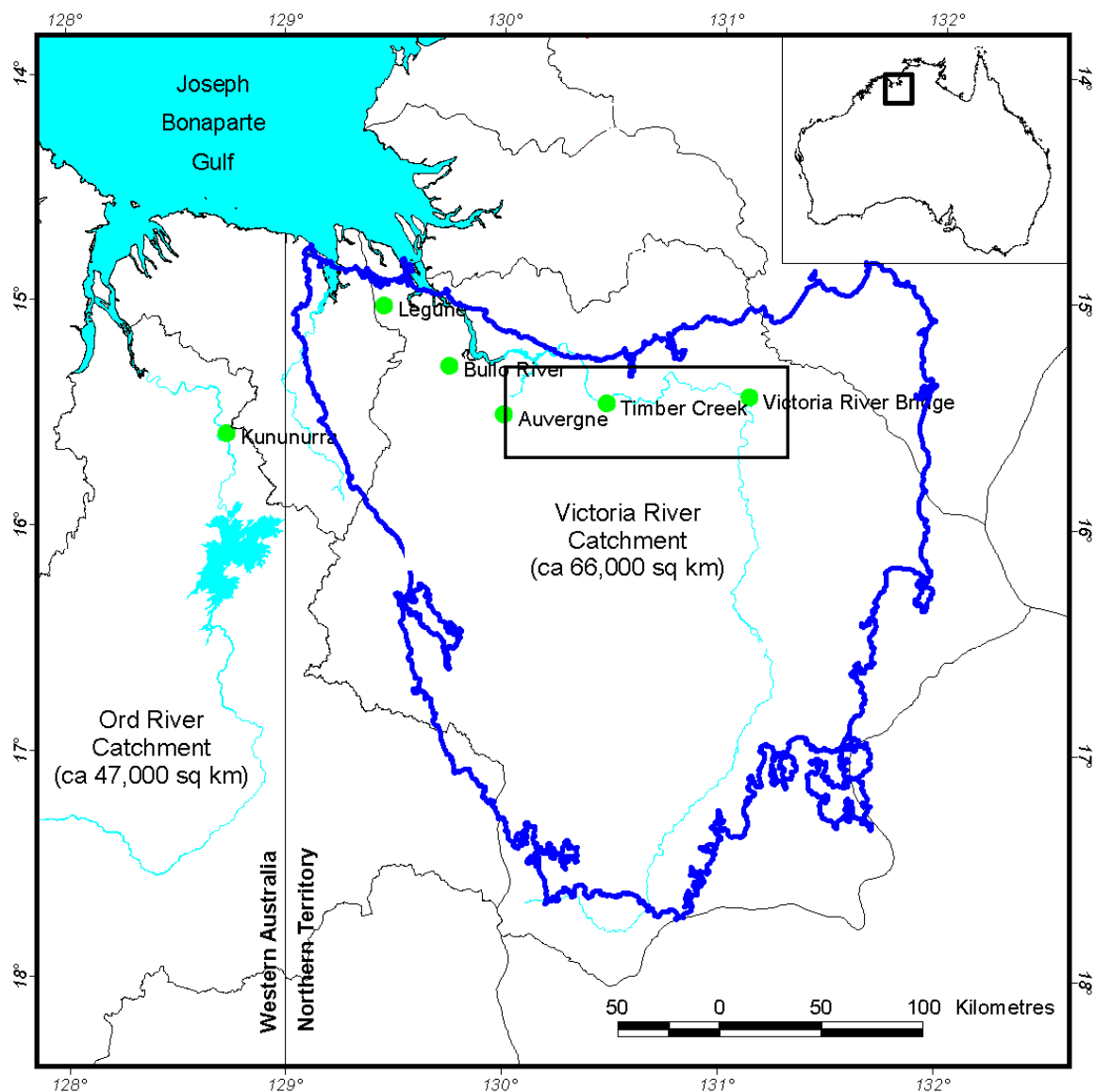
The aim was to develop an answer to the question: How best would you go about stopping the toad's advance? Matters of strategy, cost-effectiveness and safety for participants were considered.

Information gathered in this process underpinned the Foundation's **Dry Season Strategy** which was released for stakeholder comment in April 2006. This Strategy in turn underpinned the **Great Toad Muster** which took place in September - October 2006.

The Dry Season Strategy proposes that there is one time of year when cane toads are particularly vulnerable and that an opportunity exists to drive their numbers down to very low levels. This is at the end of the Dry Season, when water is at its scarcest in the landscape but temperature, humidity and insect life are on the increase. Toads are therefore congregated around any remaining water and beginning to be active, as they sense imminent rains and prepare to breed.

At this time, toads will be found only in very close proximity to water, and in fact are usually found right on the perimeter of it. They tend to be out in the open and are easily captured.

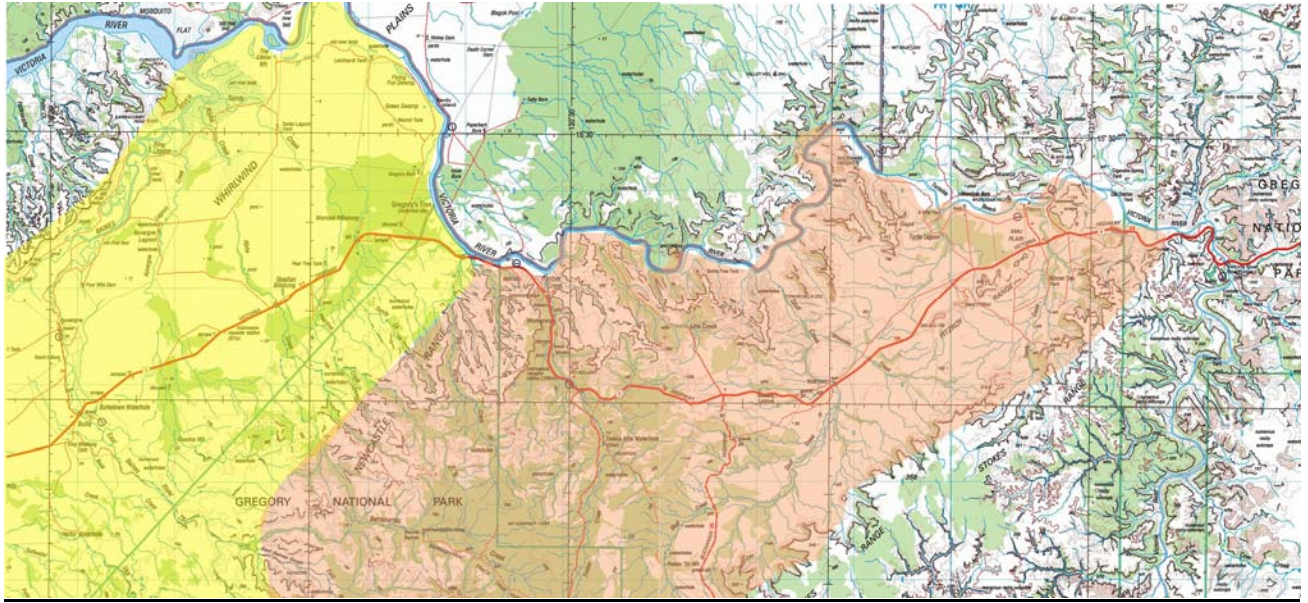
It has been demonstrated that, at this time of year, toad populations around a specific water body can be driven to very low levels indeed. This is achieved by trapping and hand-capture of toads at a site on multiple consecutive nights. This approach presents an opportunity to clear water bodies in a 'sweep' across the landscape. The aim is to push them as far east as possible before the rains arrive and they become free to move westward once again.



*The frontline in the NT could be as big as Tasmania. For now the Foundation's focus is on buffer zones defined on the leading edge of the front in the boxed area (see below)*



At its heart then, the Dry Season Strategy is the creation of a 'buffer zone' in the most toad unfriendly areas. Clearing the buffer zone will need to be repeated each year until a biological solution can be found to bring the cane toad under control.



*The first priority is to clear the primary buffer zone (yellow), working from west to east and if time allows, to begin to clear the secondary buffer zone (pink). See legend in map on page 8*

The Dry Season Strategy determines to start on the western leading edge of the current infestation and work back towards the east. The basic principal of the program is that the toads closest to the WA border take the highest priority, as they are of the greatest threat to the toad free integrity of WA. The first priority is to clear the primary buffer zone (yellow) and if time allows, the secondary buffer zone (pink).

Given the remote nature of much of this country, focussing on-ground control effort within this annual window of opportunity may present the most cost-effective use of resources, especially in light of the fact that it may need to be repeated for some years to come.

## **REPORT ON ACTIVITY**

This report on the achievements of the Stop The Toad Foundation should be read in conjunction with the Foundation's Strategic Plan (see Appendix 3).

### **1) OPERATIONS AND TRAINING:**

***Primary Goal: To implement the most thorough on-ground control operations achievable to slow, and if possible halt, the westward movement of cane toads; and to effectively deal with any (hitch-hiker) outbreaks ahead of the front.***

***Secondary Goal: In the advent of cane toads entering Western Australia, to minimise their spread and the harm they do to natural systems and ecological communities.***

- Retrospectively supported Frogwatch toad expert Graeme Sawyer deliver the initial toad-busting training programs to the Kimberley Toadbusters.
- Liaised with CALM (now Department of Environment and Conservation), local landholders and other interested parties to collect intelligence on the extent and position of the current toad front line.
- Used its relationship with the Mulayee Aboriginal Women Rangers in Timber Creek to access information on where cane toads have reached and where water remains in the landscape at the end of the dry season - to define areas where cane toad control is most likely to be effective.
- Conducted numerous field trips to the control area for the purposes of:
  - surveillance
  - site evaluation for fencing trials
  - experimentation with acoustic devices
  - vegetation and soil type reconnaissance
  - liaison with Timber Creek communities
  - trapping and hand-capture operations
  - aerial reconnaissance



*Auvergne Lagoon*

- The Foundation conducted a reconnaissance of the Auvergne Lagoon (along with Chris Spurr of the Kimberley Toadbusters), to confirm whether there were toads in the area as had been predicted by Graeme Sawyer. The Auvergne Lagoon is a section of the Auvergne Lagoon Creek system where water remains after the plains have dried up and the creek has stopped flowing. Based on observations in the vicinity of Gregory's Cairn and Alpha and Sandy Creek in February and March 2006, Graeme Sawyer predicted that there would be significant numbers of toads in the area. Toads were confirmed in significant numbers.
- A toad bust was organised in the area in June 28 – July 1 2006 in which 571 cane toads were removed. This exercise also tested a theory that multiple consecutive night toad busts on an area were required to be effective in reducing toad populations. Visits to this area subsequent to the initial busts lent weight to the theory.
- In the absence of any confirmed toad reports from north of the Pinkerton Ranges or from any southerly areas of more immediate concern, the Foundation defined its Primary buffer zone as being sited on the Whirlwind Plains (including Auvergne Lagoon and nearby water) with the Secondary buffer zone adjoining on its south/eastward side, back to the Victoria River.
- The Foundation confirmed its commitment to its Dry Season Strategy as the most cost effective approach to cane toad control and set a five and a half week period from 23 September to 31 October 2006 as the term of its first Great Toad Muster.
- Provided first-aid and other relevant training to staff members involved in on-ground exercises.



## 2) LOGISTICS:

**Primary Goal: To deploy the necessary people, machinery, equipment and supplies reliably and cost-effectively - where needed, when needed.**

- Established a trap building program which engaged more than 400 students across more than 20 schools state-wide, resulting in components for in excess of 200 trap bodies. These are mainly Perspex finger trap doors. A further 60 of these doors have been provided to Kimberley Toadbusters.
- Provided financial support through the Northern Land Council's 'Caring For Country Unit' to Elaine Watts, the coordinator of the Mulayee Aboriginal Women Rangers, Timber Creek. The young women in her care have been involved in surveillance, water audits and mapping of vegetation and soil types to define areas where cane toad control is most likely to be effective - drawing on the expertise of the local indigenous traditional owners and stockmen to help determine where cane toad control is most likely to be effective. This work was central to STTF's emerging concept of a buffer zone within the control area. The Women Rangers have also been involved in hand capture and trapping activities.
- Developed a strategy for promoting the major Dry Season initiative to individuals and organisations likely to be interested in participating, in preparation for The Great Toad Muster.
- Purchased and prepared two second-hand Toyota Troop carriers to operational readiness.
- Purchased and prepared a range of other essential machinery and equipment to operational readiness, including EPIRBs, UHF radios, handheld GPS units, trap electronics, personnel support equipment, first aid equipment, etc.
- Established asset management and maintenance regimes for vehicles, machinery and other equipment.
- Initiated logistical planning regimes for on-ground control operations including toad surveillance work prior to June 30 and in preparation for operations post June 30, including The Great Toad Muster.

### 3) INFORMATION (& COMMUNICATIONS):

**Primary Goal: To establish and maintain high levels of information flow, to and from the Foundation, which maximise:**

- **intelligence gathering to satisfy our knowledge needs, and**
  - **stakeholder awareness, participation and support**
- 
- Continued upon the work of the Conservation Council of WA to raise the profile of the issue to all Western Australians, especially those in the populous south of the State. Sought to create opportunities for the broader community to become part of the solution. More than 30 press, radio and TV interviews were conducted in the period.
  - Conducted many awareness raising exercises throughout the year, such as the stalls (eg. WA Caravan and Camping Show), including sidewalk displays, talks to schools and interested clubs and associations and participation in events such as the Gould League's Cane Toad awareness day and securing the cane toad issue as a HOT TOPIC audio/visual display at SCITECH during April – June 2006.
  - Established a website to promote awareness of the issue and act as a conduit for enquiries, donations, etc. The website now contains:
    - All relevant information on the activities of, and publications by STTF
    - A comprehensive list of links to STTF media releases and relevant media coverage of STTF activity
    - A secure online donations facility
    - An automated letter page through which supporters could make relevant politicians aware of their opinions
    - An opt-in/opt-out eNewsletter list
  - Produced printed materials for use in awareness raising and to build support for the campaign, including:
    - KEEP WA CANE TOAD FREE bumper stickers (15,000 printed and distributed)
    - A generic brochure outlining the purpose and approach of the Foundation (10,000 printed and distributed)
    - Numerous special purpose flyers and email updates
  - Established a Joint Coordinating Committee with CALM (now Department of Environment and Conservation) to assist integration of community/government activity. The group met twice in the period.
  - Met with the Federal Environment Minister, Senator Ian Campbell, and encouraged him to increase spending on the search for biological cane toad controls and to support on-ground community-based control initiatives.
  - On 21 February 2006 conducted a nation-wide Strategic Forum (via video conference) combining the best available expertise in cane toad ecology/behaviour and control techniques with the best available knowledge of the control area terrain and conditions. The panel's outputs shaped the Foundation's overall strategic planning and particularly the development of the Dry Season Strategy. The panel comprised: Professor Ross Alford & Dr Lin Schwarzkopf (JCU); Dr Mike Bamford (Joint Coordinating Group), Dr Winston Kay, Gordon Graham and Gae Mackay (CALM), Keith Saalfeld & Garry Fischer (NT P&W), Ian Morris (Frogwatch), and Graeme Sawyer (STTF).

- Undertook research which indicated that not all toads in an area are active on a given night and that the manual collection of toads would need to be repeated over multiple nights if an area is to be cleared of toads. This has significant implications for toad control activity and shaped the Foundation's Dry Season Strategy.
- In March 2006 developed 'Hitchhiker - Rapid Response Strategy' and 'Fencing Strategy' discussion papers and distributed them to key stakeholders for comment.
- In April 2006 launched an 'Application for support' process which provides a mechanism by which Foundation finances and equipment can be made available to groups and individuals who wish to participate in or contribute to cane toad control.
- On 10 April 2006 launched a Dry Season Strategy (and sought comment from stakeholders). The strategy formed the operational basis of the Great Toad Muster (underway in Sept-Oct 2006).
- 5/6 June 2006 STTF attended and presented at the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre workshop on Cane Toads, in Brisbane.
- On 17 June 2006 STTF ran the second Perth Cane Toad Forum at the Alexander Library. This event was opened by the Hon Mark McGowan Minister for the Environment. He announced a further investment of \$3.6M by the Western Australian Government for the cane toad battle.
- Developed a 'Golden Toad Award' to recognise groups and individuals for extraordinary effort in the cane toad issue. Nine awards have now been presented
- Established a database of more than 2500 individuals and organisations interested in the issue.
- Explored the potential of manufacturing low-cost 'leave and retrieve' audio recording devices to assist in determining the whereabouts of the cane toad front at the end of the wet season. Still under consideration, this remains on the list of potentially useful tools.
- Trap research and development has been ongoing. Numerous new trap types have been prepared for experimentation, including trials using lures.
- A 16 page A5 'glovebox' booklet 'The Frog And Toad – a travellers guide to cane toad control' is under development for release for the 2007 northern tourist season.



#### 4) ADMINISTRATION (AND FUNDRAISING):

***Primary Goal: To develop and operate an administration which effectively supports the work of the Foundation while remaining as lean as possible.***

As a new organisation, the Foundation had to create a completely new structure, employ staff, establish procedures, and develop policies and communications materials:

- In October 2005 the Foundation appointed two core staff (Strategic Campaign Manager and Community Coordinator) to perform duties on behalf of the STTF Committee of Management. Both appointees had been working with the Conservation Council of WA on the cane toad project prior to the establishment of the Foundation and were employed for initial three month periods to allow the positions to be advertised. Both interim staff applied, and being the best of the applicants, were engaged.
- The Foundation's identified objective of finding cost effective approaches to operating from multiple locations was met by:
  - Forging an agreement with the Conservation Council of WA to be:
    - providers of key administrative functions (eg. book keeping),
    - a centre of Perth-based operations, and
    - 'front-of-house' for the Foundation (phone number, reception, etc)
  - Forging an agreement with CALM (now DEC) to host the STTF Operations Manager in Kununurra
- Development of a suite of policies to enable clear guidance for Foundation operations eg. equal opportunity policy.
- Appointment of a part-time fundraising manager who developed a fundraising plan for the Foundation and initiated an application to Lotterywest.
- Appointment of Graeme Sawyer to the key role of STTF Regional Coordinator in January 2006. Graeme Sawyer is a coordinator of Frogwatch NT and widely acclaimed as the most knowledgeable cane toad control expert in Australia. He was a member of the Commonwealth Government's National Cane Toad Task Force.
- Appointment of a full-time Operations Manager in Kununurra in January 2006, with the aim of fostering and administering community effort and integrating STTF/CALM activities.
- With the departure of the Foundation's fundraising manager (due to the birth of her second child) the STTF engaged two new part-time staff in June 2006 to manage fundraising, funding applications and event management.
- Ensured appropriate and adequate insurance cover for all staff and volunteers and developed a risk management plan.
- Development of relationship with all relevant landowners and statutory bodies from whom permissions would be required including being granted approvals to conduct a fencing trial on the boundary between Auvergne Station (Consolidated Pastoral Company) and Gregory National Park (NT Parks and Wildlife).

## Fundraising:

- Fundraising to support and promote the Stop the Toad Foundation began in earnest in November 2005 with an Art Exhibition titled "From Kakadu to the Kimberley" held at Challen & Rafferty Gallery in Subiaco. The exhibition successfully created interest amongst diverse elements of the public through a positive media campaign that focused on the impact of the cane toad on our environment. The exhibition raised \$6000 for the Stop the Toad Foundation.



- An ongoing partnership with Barwick Estate wines was established. Two new wines were launched with 'Stop The Toad' branding. 33% of proceeds from wine sales are donated to the Stop The Toad Foundation.
- In December 2005 applied to be added to the Register of Environmental Groups in order to achieve Deductible Gift Recipient status.
- A trap sponsorship appeal was launched at the 2006 Perth Cane Toad Forum in June. The Appeal has proved to be popular with the general public and to date over \$10,000 worth of trap sponsorships have been secured.
- In June fundraising efforts began to focus on defining cash and in-kind support for the first Great Toad Muster. Tens of thousands of dollars of support flowed from a range of businesses who donated, loaned or gave substantial discounts on equipment, vehicles, helicopter time and commercial flights.
- Fundraising staff successfully negotiated sponsorship from a philanthropic foundation to provide \$150,000 over 3 years.
- A Lotterywest detailed application for equipment was progressed (lodged after June 30).

## POSTSCRIPT: A BRIEF REPORT ON THE GREAT TOAD MUSTER

A report on **The Great Toad Muster 2006** is being prepared at the time of printing this Annual Report, however the following information can be provided.

**126 volunteers participated across the duration of the Muster, generating a total of 1128 days and nights of human activity (including staff) and removing in excess of 48,000 toads from the primary buffer zone (see map page 8).**

No cane toad was sighted more than 300 metres from water during the period and the vast majority of the toads were found within 10 metres of water.

This means that the environmental pressure on cane toads to move to water during the dry season is incredibly strong and it now appears certain that they have to do this to survive. This and the premise that multiple night toadbusts in one area can drive local populations close to zero, are now considered to be proven.

Follow-up surveillance and busting in mid-2007, after the 2006/07 Wet season will determine the effectiveness of the Dry Season Strategy and demonstrate whether it is an effective means to halt/slow the westward progression of toads.

### THE YEAR AHEAD

We stand at the end of our first year of operations with encouraging results. The success of the Great Toad Muster in the critical Auvergne region has confirmed our strategy and strengthened our resolve. We now look forward.

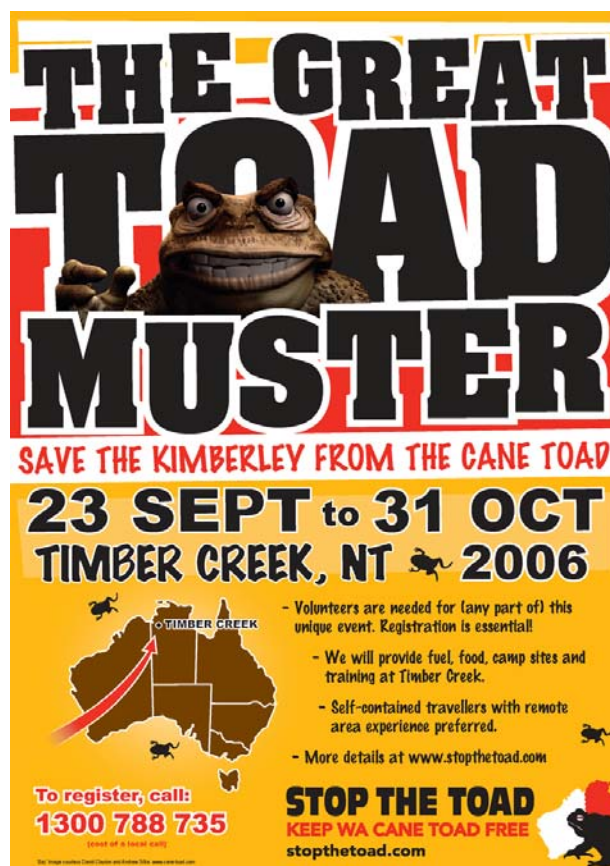
The linchpin of our strategy in the coming year will be to determine the exact nature and extent of the toad front line along its entire length. Are we being outflanked by toads in the remote and hard to access areas of the north or south? We need to know. We will utilise every tool available, from high-tech recording devices and helicopter reconnaissance, to simple observation and trapping strategies.

Once the front has been mapped as the wet recedes, we will design on-ground control regimes which employ the tools and techniques developed over the past year to best advantage, at the most critical points along the frontline. We will also support appropriate research and development into biological or other controls and into the creation of areas of biodiversity protection.

No one pretends that this task will be easy. The country is remote, difficult to access and potentially dangerous to operate in. The Stop The Toad Foundation is dedicated to the defence of our Western Australia and is committed to fighting the toad in a strategic manner, bringing teams of volunteers and professionals together in complementary action.

From the air, by quad bike, in 4x4 and on foot, we'll do whatever is needed to hold back the toad tide until the long-awaited biological control arrives.

Working together as communities, as a state, and as a nation, we believe we can do it.





## COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERSHIP:

The Committee of Management of the Stop The Toad Foundation Inc. is comprised of:

- Chairperson: Robert Edel (Phillips Fox)
- Vice-chair: Luc Longley
- Secretary: Chris Tallentire (Conservation Council of WA)
- Treasurer: Kenneth Bradley (Volunteering WA)
- Dr Andrew Storey (University of WA)
- Russell Gueho (Northern Habitat – Broome)
- Rosh Ireland (WA Govt. Representative)

(at the time of the Foundation's AGM 30 October 2006)

The Foundation's Patron is WA writer Tim Winton.

It should be noted that many of the documents cited here are available online at [www.stopthetoad.org.au](http://www.stopthetoad.org.au), in the 'Publications' section, including:

- Transcript of the Strategic forum video conference
- Dry Season Strategy
- Hitchhiker - Rapid Response Strategy discussion paper
- Fencing Strategy discussion papers
- Application for support process documents
- Report on the Auvergne lagoon exercise

## APPENDIX 1: PRE – FOUNDATION HISTORY:

**1935** - 102 cane toads (a native of south/central Americas) brought into Australia by Meringa Sugar Experimental Station (Cairns)

**1936** - 3400 juvenile toads released into cane fields in a failed attempt to control cane beetles

**1980** – First reports of cane toads arriving in Arnhem Land (NT)

**1984** - Reports of cane toads beginning to impact on Kakadu National Park (NT)

**1999** - Reports of cane toads in Katherine area (NT)

**February 2004** - Cane toad Forum in Cairns produces climate projection maps that indicate likely future extent of infestation for WA (Kimberley and Kalbarri to Esperance).

**April 2004** – Northern Habitat (an organisation from Broome and Foundation member-to-be) produces a discussion paper "Tourism Nightmare" and follows up with "Toad Strategies". Both are sent to government and industry and they receive a strong response from Kimberley Tourism Industry who request that a position statement be sent to State and Federal parliamentarians.

**December 2004** – Northern Habitat brings Graeme Sawyer (future Foundation Regional Coordinator) to Broome and Kununurra for public meetings and presents information on what could be achieved with cross community support. The message – Keep Toads out of WA.

**February 2005** – Northern Habitat press releases point to failures by past political parties to address the cane toad issue adequately. The State Government begin to develop a policy specifically for the control of cane toads. Local candidates in the Kimberley make commitments to address the issue if elected.

**March 2005** – The East Kimberley community with Kimberley Specialists and future Foundation board member Dr Andrew Storey (University of WA) hold the Kununurra Cane Toad Forum and sponsor attendance from 28 experts and presenters. Evidence suggests that a serious attempt at toad control is possible. Hon. Robin Chapple drafts a petition for the Legislative Council and over 300 signatures are collected in its first day. The Conservation Council of WA decides to support the fight and suggests a number of strategies including developing a stand alone Foundation to attract government and public contributions to support on-ground control activities.

**May 2005** – Over 500 signatures to a petition are tabled in Parliament by Robin Chapple (Greens WA) for Legislative Council Environment Committee.

**June 2005** – A public meeting is organised in Perth by the Conservation Council of WA. Presenters are: Russell Gueho (Northern Habitat), Graeme Sawyer (Northern Frogwatch), Alan Thompson (Save Endangered East Kimberley Species), Dr Judy Edwards (former WA Minister for the Environment) and Tim Winton (Author). WA govt. announces a further allocation of \$900,000 to the fight and calls on the Federal Government to match this commitment.

Northern Habitat invites author Di Morrissey and naturalist Ian Morris to present at a fundraising film night in Broome in late June and the attraction results in an article in the Bulletin magazine.

**August 2005** – State Government announces \$1 million towards toad control. \$500,000 to a public awareness and education campaign and \$500,000 to be issued to Stop the Toad Foundation upon incorporation.

70th Anniversary of the original release of cane toads into Qld – 19th August 1935

**September 2005** – CALM releases draft WA cane toad control strategy.

First toad busting weekend organised by Kimberley Specialists and Frogwatch at Victoria River introduces volunteers to cane toads and outlines identification, safe handling and disposal. Northern Habitat represented by Russell Gueho. Conservation Council of WA represented by Lisa Brideson.

**October 2005** – Stop The Toad Foundation incorporates.

**December 2005** – A State Government contribution of \$500,000 to the Stop The Toad Foundation is received and cleared.

## APPENDIX 2: EARLY STRATEGIC DIRECTION:

Under the auspices of the Conservation Council of WA, early work on the establishment of a Foundation and the setting of early strategic direction for a Perth-based entity to work in unison with Kimberley communities had begun in July 2005.

Early work focussed on the shape and structure of the Foundation-to-be, and the nature of the relationship between it and the Kununurra volunteer effort then being forged, which came to be known as the Kimberley Toadbusters.

The Foundation offered support to the Kununurra volunteers, but agreement could not be reached between the two groups. There was an openness by (what became) the Foundation that it could become a funds and awareness raising organisation that provided a framework for local toad control groups (including the Kimberley Toadbusters). This would have been on the proviso that any on-ground operations were strategic, cost-effective and safe for participants with the expectation that those conditions would be satisfied and confirmed through consultation, and cooperative and mutually agreed processes. Kimberley Toadbuster's declined on the grounds that this was a form of 'control' that they were not prepared to submit to.

Despite invitations, the Foundation never received from Kimberley Toadbusters an application for funding, or receipts for retrospective payments of costs incurred by them for their activities.

Liaison between The Stop The Toad Foundation and Kimberley Toadbusters has included:

**4 October 2005** – Dennis Beros (who became STTF Strategic Campaign Manager) met with Lee Scott Virtue and Dean Goodgame (Kimberley Specialists) in Kununurra to discuss options for relationship and cooperation between the two groups.

**19 January 2006** – Graeme Sawyer (STTF Regional Coordinator) and Derek Monks (STTF Operations Manager) met with 10 representatives of the Kimberley Toadbuster group in Kununurra to discuss ways forward.

**23 January 2006** – Sandy Boulter, representing the Kimberley Toadbusters, made a presentation to Foundation board members in Perth.

**7 & 10 April 2006** – On behalf of STTF, Robert Edel (Chair), Luc Longley (Vice-Chair), Dennis Beros (Strategic Campaign Manager), Graeme Sawyer (Regional Coordinator) and Derek Monks (Operations Manager) met with representatives of Kimberley Toad busters in a final effort to resolve differences, in Kununurra.

On 21 April 2006 the Foundation received notification that the Kimberley Toadbusters had decided not to apply to the Foundation for funding. Faced with the fact that a partnership with Kimberley Toadbusters was now no longer a possibility, the Foundation initiated its own field operations in accordance with the Dry Season strategy that it had been developing. The Foundation invited the Kimberley Toadbusters to input to its strategic planning and to participate in its Great Toad Muster, but they declined.

The Foundation is disappointed that it has failed to establish cooperation with Kimberley Toadbusters, but hopes to build a better relationship between all groups conducting on-ground cane toad control operations (CALM, Kimberley Toadbusters and the Stop The Toad Foundation) in the future. The Foundation considers this essential if we are to better understand the toad's movement through these landscapes.

## APPENDIX 3: STRATEGIC PLAN:

As well as the Dry Season Strategy, an overarching strategic plan for the activity of the organisation has been in development. It identifies the following goals and key objectives and these have shaped the Foundation's activity throughout the year:

### 1) Operations and Training

**Primary Goal:** *To implement the most thorough on-ground control operations achievable to slow, and if possible halt, the westward movement of cane toads; and to effectively deal with any (hitch-hiker) outbreaks ahead of the front.*

**Secondary Goal:** *In the advent of cane toads entering Western Australia, to minimise their spread and the harm they do to natural systems and ecological communities.*

- Conduct on-ground cane toad control activities to deliver maximum impact on the advance of the front.
- Design and implement a rapid response capability to effectively deal with toad incursions ahead of the front (by toads which hitchhike on vehicles), in concert with responsible government agencies.
- Develop a culture of safety and implement and maintain robust safety procedures at all times for all Foundation staff and volunteers.
- Develop a training program which ensures that all Foundation staff and volunteers are adequately prepared for all activities and all foreseeable contingencies.
- Develop and promote sound holding and disposal procedures for toads captured.
- Protect the environment in all phases of operations to the maximum extent possible.

### 2) Logistics

**Primary Goal:** *To deploy the necessary people, machinery, equipment and supplies reliably and cost-effectively - where needed, when needed.*

- Establish cost-effective and secure processes for provisioning of all field activities.
- Develop a transport capability for moving people, machinery, equipment and supplies through the landscape.
- Establish a vehicle and equipment control register including repair and maintenance schedules for all STTF assets.
- Establish cost-effective production processes for traps and other in field requirements.
- Establish temporary field operations centres as required.



### **3) Information**

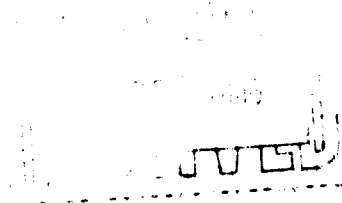
**Primary Goal: To establish and maintain high levels of information flow, to and from the Foundation, which maximise:**

- **intelligence gathering to satisfy our knowledge needs, and**
  - **stakeholder awareness, participation and support**
- 
- Create and maintain awareness of, and support for, the Foundation and its objectives and activities at local, state and national levels.
  - Establish relationship with a broad range of stakeholders prepared to assist the Foundation achieve its objectives.
  - Identify clear, simple and direct pathways for interested parties to find ways of assisting and engaging the Foundation.
  - Identify all Foundation knowledge needs and ways to fulfil them.
  - Identify all Foundation Research and Development priorities and develop plans to satisfy them.
  - Satisfy all needs for centralised information and data management on toads, control results, volunteers and stakeholders.

### **4) Administration**

**Primary Goal: To develop and operate an administration which effectively supports the work of the Foundation while remaining as lean as possible.**

- Achieve sound but efficient Human Resource Management outcomes to ensure staff and volunteers are the right people in the right roles, adequately trained and resourced to do the job.
- Find cost effective approaches to operating from multiple locations including front of house, secretarial support, communications, financial management, accounting and auditing.
- Fulfil the Foundation's duty of care to its staff and volunteers by providing best practice risk minimisation strategies and adequate insurances at all times.
- Ensure that all licences, permissions and permits required by the organisation are in order at all times.
- Create an organisational structure and system of governance and decision making which is robust and accountable but also transparent, responsive and inclusive.
- Raise sufficient funds to enable the operations of the Foundation.



## STOP THE TOAD FOUNDATION (INC)

### FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

30 JUNE 2006

# STOP THE TOAD FOUNDATION (INC)

## EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

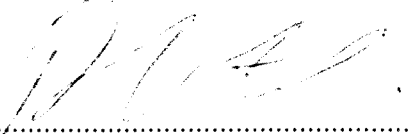
The committee of management has determined that the foundation is not a reporting entity.

The committee of management has determined that this special financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies in Note 1 to the accounts.



In the opinion of the committee of management the financial statements as attached: -

1. present fairly the financial position of the Stop The Toad Foundation Inc as at 30 June 2006 and the results of the association for the year ending on that date, and
2. at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Stop The Toad Foundation Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee of management and is signed for an on behalf of the committee of management by:

  
.....

Chairperson

Date:   


# ANDERSON MUNRO & WYLLIE

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

1st Floor 1174 Hay Street, West Perth WA 6005  
PO Box 389, West Perth WA 6872  
Telephone: (08) 9322 7200 Fax: (08) 9322 7211  
ABN 93 479 551 720

## STOP THE TOAD FOUNDATION (INC)

### INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

#### Scope

We have audited the attached special purpose financial report of Stop the Toad Foundation (Inc) for the year ended 30 June 2006. The Executive is responsible for the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies used are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Council and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of Stop the Toad Foundation (Inc). No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's financial reporting requirements. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report and the evaluation of significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements. (These policies do not require the application of all Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements).

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

#### Qualification

Stop the Toad Foundation (Inc) is a non profit organisation which depends on grants, donations and fund raising activities as its main sources of income. It is not practicable to establish controls over donations, fund raising activities and other cash receipts until their initial entry in the accounting records. Therefore our audit testing of donations, fund raising activities and other cash receipts was limited to the amounts recorded.

#### Qualified Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements the financial position of Stop the Toad Foundation (Inc) as at 30 June 2006 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

  
**ANDERSON MUNRO & WYLLIE**  
Chartered Accountants

  
**G D Anderson**  
Partner

Perth, Western Australia

Dated 15 June 2006



# Stop The Toad Foundation Inc

Stop The Toad Foundation Inc  
City West Lotteries House  
2 Delhi Street  
West Perth. WA 6005

## Balance Sheet

As of June 2006

4/10/2006

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### Assets

Current Assets	
Main Acc #592933700	-\$1,017.56
Maximiser Acc #592365993	\$297,990.02
Fund #593279923	\$4,938.50
Petty Cash	\$100.00
Trade Debtors	\$981.82
Total Current Assets	\$302,992.78
Other Assets	
Prepayments	\$1,389.90
Total Other Assets	\$1,389.90
Plant & Equipment	
Plant & Equipment	\$44,610.63
Plant & Equip Accum Dep	-\$1,525.10
Total Plant & Equipment	\$43,085.53
Total Assets	\$347,468.21

### Liabilities

Current Liabilities	
Trade Creditors	\$34,977.73
GST Liabilities	
GST Collected	\$212.71
GST Paid	-\$6,445.65
Total GST Liabilities	-\$6,232.94
Payroll Liabilities	
Payroll Superannuation Payable	\$346.28
PAYG Withholding Payable	\$0.13
Leave Provision	\$4,174.16
Total Payroll Liabilities	\$4,520.57
Total Current Liabilities	\$33,265.36
Total Liabilities	\$33,265.36

Net Assets \$314,202.85

### Equity

Current Year Earnings	\$314,202.85
Total Equity	<u>\$314,202.85</u>

# Stop The Toad Foundation Inc

Stop The Toad Foundation Inc  
City West Lotteries House  
2 Delhi Street  
West Perth. WA 6005

## Profit & Loss Statement

July 2005 through June 2006

4/10/2006

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### Income

WA Government	\$500,000.00
Wages Recovery	\$12,206.39
Airfare recovery	\$1,785.12
Donations	\$4,026.30
Fundraising	\$16,270.27
Bank interest Acc#592933700	\$0.03
Bank interest Acc#592365993	\$13,160.02
Total Income	<u>\$547,448.13</u>

### Expenses

#### Operations

Administration cost for CCWA	\$9,513.84
Bank fees acc#592933700	\$104.50
Depreciation Accum	\$1,525.10
Catering	\$239.54
Promotional Material	\$5,441.35
Public Forum	\$728.96
Rent	\$1,800.00
Travel	\$12,737.44
Website	\$750.00
Freight	\$45.45
Postage	\$226.66
Office Supplies	\$489.80
Legal fees	\$203.94
Business Insurance	\$630.24
Volunteer Insurance	\$170.24
Printing	\$112.73
Photocopying	\$167.73
Advertising	\$1,983.60
Fundraising	\$2,323.32
Telephone/internet	\$3,725.18
Minor Contracts	\$561.40

#### On-ground Operations

Mobile Units	\$6,589.32
Fuel & Servicing	\$956.43
Equipment	\$3,210.40
Traps	\$21,606.05
Other consumables	\$96.82
Community Funds	\$17,264.41

#### Employment Expenses

Professional development	\$131.37
Superannuation	\$6,208.93
Wages	\$65,240.53
Wage recovery	\$48,206.09
Leave Provision	\$4,174.16
Workers' Compensation	\$759.75
Contract Work	\$15,320.00

Total Expenses \$233,245.28

Net Profit / (Loss) \$314,202.85

# **STOP THE TOAD FOUNDATION (INC)**

## **NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS**

### **NOTE 1 – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

These financial statements are a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the accounts preparation requirements of the foundation. The committee of management has determined that the foundation is not a reporting entity.

No applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Consensus Views or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied in the preparation of this report.

The statements are also prepared on an accrual basis. They are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous year unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of these statements:

### **DEPRECIATION OF FIXED ASSETS**

Depreciation has been charged on fixed assets at rates assessed to write-off the cost of each of the assets over their economic life.