

Report to Forest Biosecurity Consultative Committee

Update on Current Biosecurity New Zealand Forest-related Surveillance and Incursion Response Activities for meeting 27 June 2007

PAINTED APPLE MOTH and FALL WEBWORM, AUCKLAND (Eradication)

- Following advice from the Technical Advisory Group, painted apple moth (*Teia anartoides*), was formally declared eradicated from New Zealand on 20 March 2006. A surveillance trapping programme continued around sites at which males were trapped during 2005 and 2006 (found to be likely Australian ‘hitchhikers’) has continued during the 2006 and in the first part of 2007. No further moths have been trapped.
- The painted apple moth surveillance programme has been closed by the end of April 2007 with all moth breeding colonies, used to produce virgin females for surveillance purposes) or sterile male moths, destroyed. These activities practically denoted the end of the programme that started with PAM detection in parts of Auckland in 1999.

DUTCH ELM DISEASE, AUCKLAND (Disease Management programme)

- Biosecurity New Zealand and currently affected territorial local authorities (TLAs) have continued an interim Dutch elm disease (DED) management programme in 2006/07. The programme objectives are to prevent or stop the disease spread and to control its impacts in greater Auckland.
- During the 2006/07 season one full survey of all elms in the high risk areas has been conducted at the beginning of the season. Approximately 75 % of the highest risk elms have been inspected in the second part of the season. There has been an additional special survey conducted in parts of the Waitakere City.
- Beetle trapping programme has been operated in parts of some of the highest risk areas
- There have been three elms detected with the disease throughout the season as well as one beetle positive for carrying spores of the disease.
- Biosecurity New Zealand will be contacting TLAs shortly to advise its current position and to provide one final opportunity for them to express effective interest in the DED management programme. Biosecurity New Zealand’s level of continued involvement in the programme will be based on the combined financial commitment from TLAs.

SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES NELSON

- A colony of Australian subterranean termites, *Coptotermes acinaciformis*, was reported from a single property in Richmond, Nelson in January 2006. BNZ initial investigations indicated that the termites appear to have arrived in Richmond concealed within imported Australian used railway sleepers more than 10 years ago.
- A delimiting survey resulted in termite activity being located at two neighbouring properties. A strategy has been implemented involving placement of wooden monitoring stakes and implementation of the Sentricon baiting system. Another delimiting survey of 38 properties within a 100 metre radius of the infected 2 properties was completed late November 2006 but there was no additional activity located.
- Inspections throughout summer 2006/07 indicated that termites were ingesting considerable amounts of toxic baits. The latest bait station inspections were completed at the end of March 2007 and at the beginning of May 2007 and in June 2007. There were no signs of termites’ activity, thus indicating that the colony is eliminated. A monitoring programme will be operated for up to 5 years before the infestation can be declared

eradicated. Biosecurity New Zealand is optimistic about successful eradication of *C. acinaciformis* from Richmond, Nelson.

SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES AUCKLAND

- The presence of exotic subterranean termites, *Coptotermes acinaciformis*, was confirmed at a property in South Rodney (Auckland) on 10 January 2007. An initial inspection detected termite activity within a shed and in adjacent planter boxes. The likely sources of the infestation are imported Australian railway sleepers used to construct the boxes.
- There have been no new infected sites or risk movements identified through trace back/forth activities. However, in mid-January 2007, a large swarm of winged alates was seen emerging from one of the planter boxes. The probability that new colonies have established as a result of alate flights from the known infestation is considered low.
- No termites have been detected so far in the property's main house or in neighbouring properties. Surveillance of the wider area has been completed by the end of March 2007. Intensive surveys of 500-m radius around the infestation source resulted in detection of numerous native termites; however no exotic termites have been detected strongly suggesting that the infestation remained confined to the initial incursion spot (planter boxes and the adjacent structures).
- Biosecurity New Zealand is eradicating the subterranean termites using hexaflumuron baited stations. The baits have been laid by the end of January 2007. Inspection of stations in February and March 2007 indicated that the termites commenced with ingesting the baits.
- A service of the Sentricon installation in May and June 2007 revealed no termite activity in the monitoring and baiting stations; however it is not considered at this site that the colony has been eliminated. It cannot be forecasted precisely how long the eradication action might take. Once the initial colony elimination is achieved, it will be followed with a monitoring programme for a several years before the colony can be declared eradicated. Biosecurity New Zealand is optimistic about successful eradication of *C. acinaciformis* from Rodney.

RED IMPORTED FIRE ANT - WHIRINAKI

- On June 7th 2006 *Solenopsis invicta* (Red Imported Fire Ant – RIFA) was identified from Pan Pac Forest Products Ltd, Whirinaki. The nest was thoroughly treated with an insecticide drench and insecticidal ant bait on June 9th.
- The nest is estimated to be two to three years old and dispersal flights may have occurred.
- This form of RIFA is more likely to disperse by walking short distances rather than flying but is also capable of human-assisted dispersal. We are taking measures through surveillance, movement control and tracing to cover all three possibilities.
- A Controlled Area has been declared out to a 2 km radius from the nest site with restrictions on the movement of all risk goods for RIFA spread including soil, gravel, hay and goods that have been in contact with the ground for more than 24 hours (except operational cars).
- The RIFA Technical Advisory Group was reconvened in September to provide independent advice to the CTO on the proposed plan. This advice formed the basis of the response plan.
- Tracing the movements of high risk items over the past three years has identified a number of high risk sites. The majority of these sites have been surveyed with the balance being surveyed next summer.

- The first round of surveillance out to a 2 km radius from the nest was completed in December 2006, and the second round completed in April 2007. The second round of surveillance will be repeated in each of the next two years.
- Aerial applications of insecticidal ant baits were completed in December 2006 and April 2007. These applications will be repeated in the next two summers.
- No further fire ants have been found to date.

This is the third detection of a RIFA colony in New Zealand, both previous finds were eradicated. Genetic analysis has confirmed that the Whirinaki colony is unrelated to the previous incursion at Port of Napier in 2004.

PHYTOPHTHORA KERNOVIAE (Update to presentation 6 July 2006)

- An application was made to the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) for a determination whether *Phytophthora kernoviae* is a new organism. ERMA has determined on the basis of the evidence presented that *P. kernoviae* is not a new organism.
- Based on the wide distribution of *P. kernoviae* and the lack of any disease symptoms in the pine forest at Tokoroa MAF has removed the unwanted organism status of *P. kernoviae*.