



NATIONAL
FERAL PIG
ACTION PLAN

The Pig Brig Trap – Practical insights, tricks and tips



This information was originally delivered at the SouthWest WA Feral Pig Forum in June 2024. The aim of this forum was to enhance communication between stakeholders in the region - sharing both successes and challenges with feral pig management.

Initial trial of the Pig Brig mesh trap

In late 2022, the Peel Harvey Biosecurity Group (PHBG) acquired a Pig Brig trapping system to complement their existing Matlock trap system. This addition was necessary to provide an alternate trapping option for land managers located in areas within their region that do not have reliable network coverage, which the Matlock system relies on for remote operation of the gate.

As with any new equipment, the use of the Pig Brig trap presented both initial challenges and learning opportunities. An ideal site was identified for their Pig Brig trial - an isolated location with a significant pig population. The Pig Brig's initial assembly was straightforward, thanks to its lightweight components and assembly instructions. PHBG used 1800mm star pickets as net holders and 600mm star pickets as ground anchors, deviating slightly from the manual to allow the net to be easily removed from a landholder's property. A site with heavy clay soil was chosen over sand, assuming it would offer longer-term stability.

The trap performed well, with the pigs quickly acclimating to it. Dry and fermented barley was used as bait and two cameras were set up to monitor pig activity. This revealed 3 different mobs accessing the trap. Over a week, the entrances were gradually lowered, enabling the pigs to become familiar with the net running across their backs. A total of 18 pigs trapped themselves in the net resulting in the humane destruction of 5 boars and 13 sows.



During setup, it became apparent that 1800mm star pickets were too short; 2100mm or 2400mm posts would have been more appropriate. It was initially assumed the 1800mm length pickets would suffice during the acclimatisation phase, with plans to replace them later and repurpose the shorter pickets as ground anchors. However, the site received 120mm of rain the week before trapping, causing the clay to swell and loosen all of the star pickets.

With multiple pigs accessing the trap, the net became embedded in the clay, resulting in the star pickets collapsing slightly inward. During the last phase of net lowering, the pigs managed to further collapse the sides and walk the net into the clay, resulting in their accidental capture.

Future improvements

To prevent similar issues in the future:

- Use longer pickets: PHBG will switch to 2400mm star pickets (noting that many forum participants reported success with 2100mm pickets).
- Secure anchors: 1800mm star pickets will be used as anchor posts, with D shackles added for a more secure cam strap anchor point.
- Maintain tension: PHBG will regularly check and ensure the net remains exceptionally tight throughout the trapping program.
- Replace 5 anchor stakes: Anchor stakes may need replacing with heavier duty stakes as the stakes supplied in the kit bend significantly. These stakes are purposely malleable, so pigs do not injure themselves when trapped.
- Refine acclimatisation protocols: PHBG will continue experimenting with different methods for lowering the net before setting it for capture.

Also see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SGa6BiUQzU>

Continuous improvement

PHBG constantly evaluate their feral pig trapping programs to identify areas for improvement. By incorporating feedback from others, their methods are being refined more rapidly, and sharing their experience helps to prevent multiple groups from encountering the same issues.

For more information on our feral pig program contact:

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