BHP

Carrapateena Operation

EPBC Compliance Report 2025

31 March 2026

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements go to all staff across the Carrapateena Operations for their contributions to the overall report and for undertaking all activities in a safe and effective manner. We also acknowledge the Kokatha People for their ongoing support and assistance provided at Carrapateena.

Document control

CA-0000-ENV-REP-1060

Version	Description	Author	Approval	Date
1	EPBC Compliance Report 2025	Luke Boehm Specialist Environment Trent Anderson Specialist Environment Josh Allen Superintendent Environment Operations	Sally Durandt Manager Asset Environment Approvals and Sustainability	31/03/2026

Executive summary

BHP Carrapateena submits this Compliance Report for the period January 2025 to December 2025; as required by the Conditions of Approval attached to EPBC 2017/7895 authorised under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

This Compliance Report has been prepared in accordance with the Annual Compliance Report Guidelines and demonstrates compliance with the Conditions of Approval associated with EPBC 2017/7895.

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1 Introduction

BHP is operating the Carrapateena mine located approximately 160 km north of Port Augusta, South Australia (Figure 1.1). On 2 May 2023 BHP Group Limited completed the acquisition of OZ Minerals Limited. The Carrapateena operation has been developed and operated by OZM Carrapateena Pty Ltd and OZ Minerals Carrapateena Pty Ltd, wholly owned by OZ Minerals Limited. The Carrapateena site has been integrated into the BHP Copper South Australia (SA) asset, also incorporating BHP's Prominent Hill mine, Olympic Dam mine and Oak Dam exploration site. Copper SA falls under the BHP Minerals Australia business portfolio which also incorporates Western Australia Iron Ore, Western Australia Nickel, Coal, Mt Arthur Coal and Operations Services.

OZ Minerals submitted a Mining Lease Proposal (MLP) and Miscellaneous Purposes Licence (MPL) Management Plans (collectively referred to as the MLP) on 26 May 2017 (OZ Minerals 2017b) to support applications for a Mining Lease (ML) and three MPLs. An associated Response Document was submitted on 22 September 2017 (OZ Minerals 2017d). OZ Minerals received formal notification of the granting of the tenements:

- MPL 149 was granted on 15 September 2017
- ML 6471, MPL 152, MPL 153 and MPL 154 were granted on 3 January 2018
- MPL 156 was granted 11 December 2018.

The initial PEPRs related to these tenements include:

- PEPR2017/028, for MPL 149, was approved on 15 September 2017
- PEPR2018/019, which covered all works proposed in the Mining Lease Proposal and included ML 6471, MPL 152, MPL 153 and MPL 154, was approved on 5 July 2018.
- PEPR2019/001, for MPL 156, was approved 13 February 2019.

The subsequent revised PEPRs for these tenements include:

- MPEPR2019/026, which consolidated the three aforementioned PEPRs into a single document encompassing ML 6471, MPL 149, MPL 152, MPL 153, MPL 154 and MPL 156, was approved on 12 November 2020.
- MPEPR2024/009 was approved on 1 October 2024, superceding MPEPR2019/026
- MPEPR2025/011 was approved on 18 September 2025, superceding MPEPR2024/009, and is the current approved PEPR.

Related to the approvals required under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) for Carrapateena:

- An EPBC referral (OZ Minerals 2017a) was submitted in March 2017.
- A variation (OZ Minerals 2017c) was requested in June 2017.
- Carrapateena Operation (EPBC 2017/7895) was determined to be a controlled action (DoEE 2017) in April 2017, to be approved via the *Mining Act 1971* (SA) (Mining Act) approvals process, in accordance with the Assessment Bilateral Agreement between the Government of South Australia and the Commonwealth of Australia.
- Approval of Carrapateena, under the EPBC Act, subject to Conditions of Approval (DoEE 2018a), was received on 29 March 2018.
- A variation of conditions (OZ Minerals 2017c) was approved (DoEE 2018b) on 14 December 2018.
- A subsequent correction notification (DCCEEW 2025) was published on 10 February 2025.

BHP submits this Compliance Report as required by Condition 14 of the Variation of Conditions Attached to Approval EPBC 2017/7895 (DoEE 2018b) for the approved action to construct and operate an underground mine, processing facility and associated support infrastructure as described in the EPBC Referral (OZ Minerals 2017a and OZ Minerals 2017c).

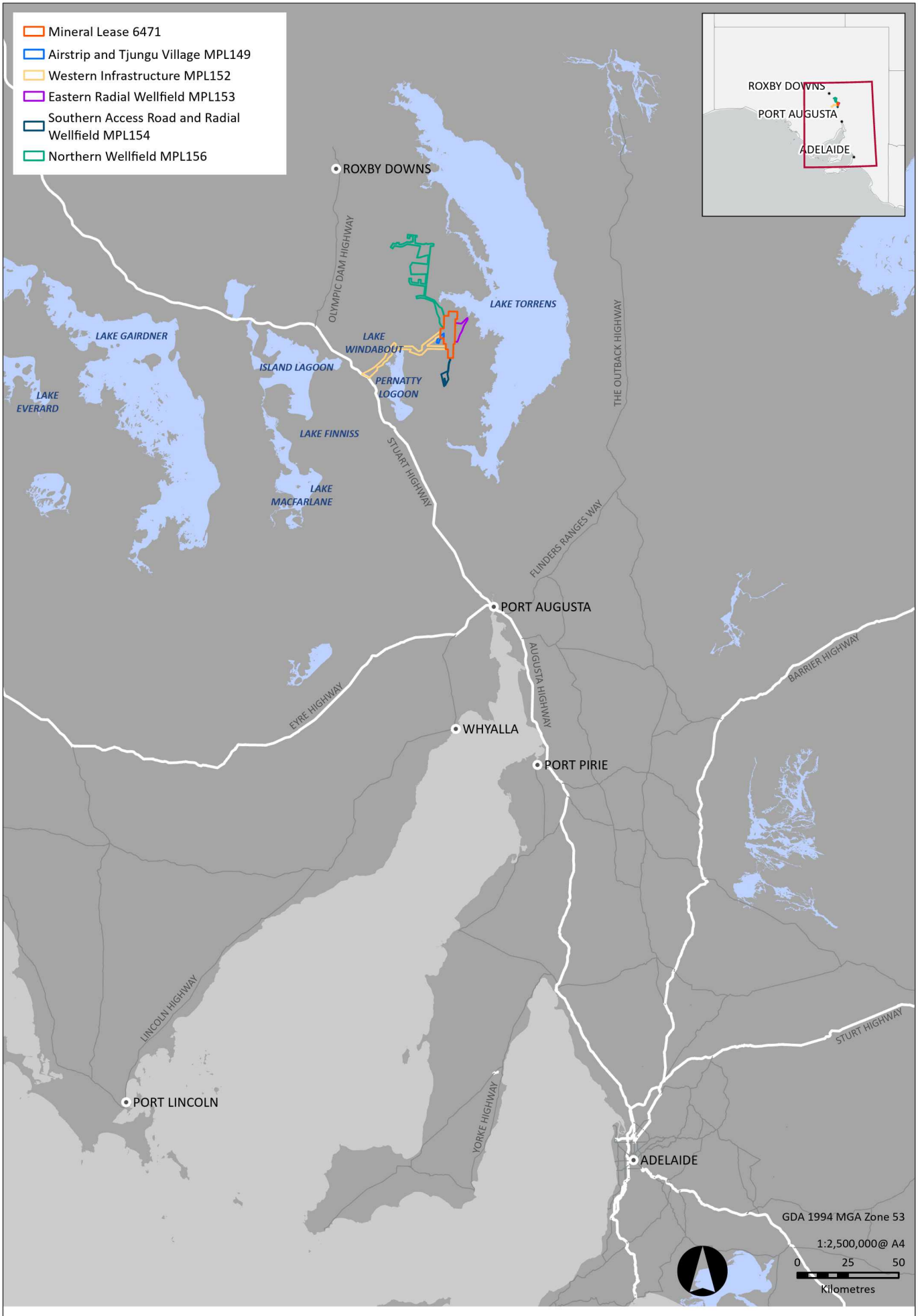

Figure 1.1 | Operation location

Carrapateena BHP

2 Declaration of accuracy

Person responsible for the preparation of the Compliance Report			
In making this declaration, I am aware that sections 490 and 491 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) make it an offence in certain circumstances to knowingly provide false or misleading information or documents. The offence is punishable on conviction by imprisonment or a fine, or both. I declare that all the information and documentation supporting this Compliance Report is true and correct in every particular. I am authorised to bind the approval holder to this declaration and that I have no knowledge of that authorisation being revoked at the time of making this declaration.			
Name	**Position or Agent**	**Signature**	**Date**
Anna Wiley	Asset President Copper South Australia		27 March 2026

3 Key activity information

Table 3.1 | Key activity information

Operation Name	Carrapateena	EPBC Number	2017/7895
Approval Holder	OZM Carrapateena Pty Ltd (58%) and OZ Minerals Carrapateena Pty Ltd (42%), wholly owned by BHP Lonsdale Investments Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of BHP Group Limited.		
Australian Company Number	149 626 255 and 007 756 443, respectively.		
Approved Action	To construct and operate an underground mine, processing facility and associated support infrastructure, 65 km east of Woomera, SA (EPBC 2017/7895 (DoEE 2018a, DoEE 2018b and DCCEEW 2025))		
Operation Location	Located approximately 160 km north of Port Augusta, in close proximity to the Carrapateena Arm on the western boundary of Lake Torrens. Nearby townships include Woomera (approximately 65 km west) and Roxby Downs (approximately 90 km north-west). Refer to Figure 1.1.		
Site Contact	Vinod Perera, General Manager, Carrapateena		
Telephone	08 8422 3713	Email	vinod.perera@bhp.com
Reporting Period	January 2025 – December 2025		
Date of compliance report preparation	March 2026		

4 Activities undertaken during the reporting period

BHP submits this Compliance Report for the reporting period of 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. The Compliance Report relates to the activities undertaken for the approved action to construct and operate an underground mine, processing facility and associated support infrastructure as described in the EPBC Referral (OZ Minerals 2017a and OZ Minerals 2017c) and approved under EPBC 2017/7895 (DoEE 2018a, DoEE 2018b and DCCEEW 2025).

BHP undertook the activities related to the approved action during the reporting period. The disturbance footprint for the activities as of December 2025 is provided in Figure 4.1. Of the activities undertaken during the reporting period, the following were undertaken within Plains Mouse habitat:

- Construction of a weather station at the Carrapateena Aerodrome.
- Installation of TSF Stage 2B tailings pipeline.
- Expansion of Northern Wellfield including pipeline duplication.
- Commenced construction of TSF Stage 3 Embankment Raise.

Specifically related to the EPBC Condition 4, Nature Foundation, acting on behalf of OZ Minerals, initiated a program of land management on the South Gap Offset in 2021. The work program was dictated by the management goals of the offset, which include:

- Establish baseline conditions, including the distribution and condition of Plains Mouse habitat, the presence and distribution of target species, and the identification and prioritisation of local threats.
- Refine the presence, distribution and abundance of Plains Mouse within the offset.
- Reduce total predation pressure (from cats, foxes and wild dogs).
- Maintain and/or enhance the condition of habitat for the benefit of Plains Mouse, through the management of total grazing pressure and invasive weeds.
- Improve knowledge of local target species populations including how they respond to management locally.

Details of the activities undertaken, related to Nature Foundation's work program, during the reporting period are described in Table 4.1.

A copy of the South Gap EPBC Offset Annual Report is provided as Appendix A.

Table 4.1 | Nature Foundation's work program activities undertaken during the reporting period

Management goal	Activities undertaken
Establsih and monitor the state of vegetation	Weed assessments Continued research on cracking clay function and ecology
Refine the presence, distribution and abundance of Plains Mouse within the offset	Baited motion camera program across twenty (20) sites Incidental surveys for other bird and reptile species
Reduce predation pressure	Quarterly feral eradication campaigns (spotlight shooting) Predator monitoring with motion cameras
Maintain habitat condition through management of grazing and invasive weeds	Maintain stock exclusion boundary fence Motion camera program including at a core goat habitat location Rabbit monitoring and warren fumigation Maintain a sustainable population of kangaroos within the offset to reduce impact – thermal cameras used in conjunction with a point-based survey methodology

Management goal	Activities undertaken
Improve knowledge of local target species populations including how they respond to management locally	Bird surveys at designated sites

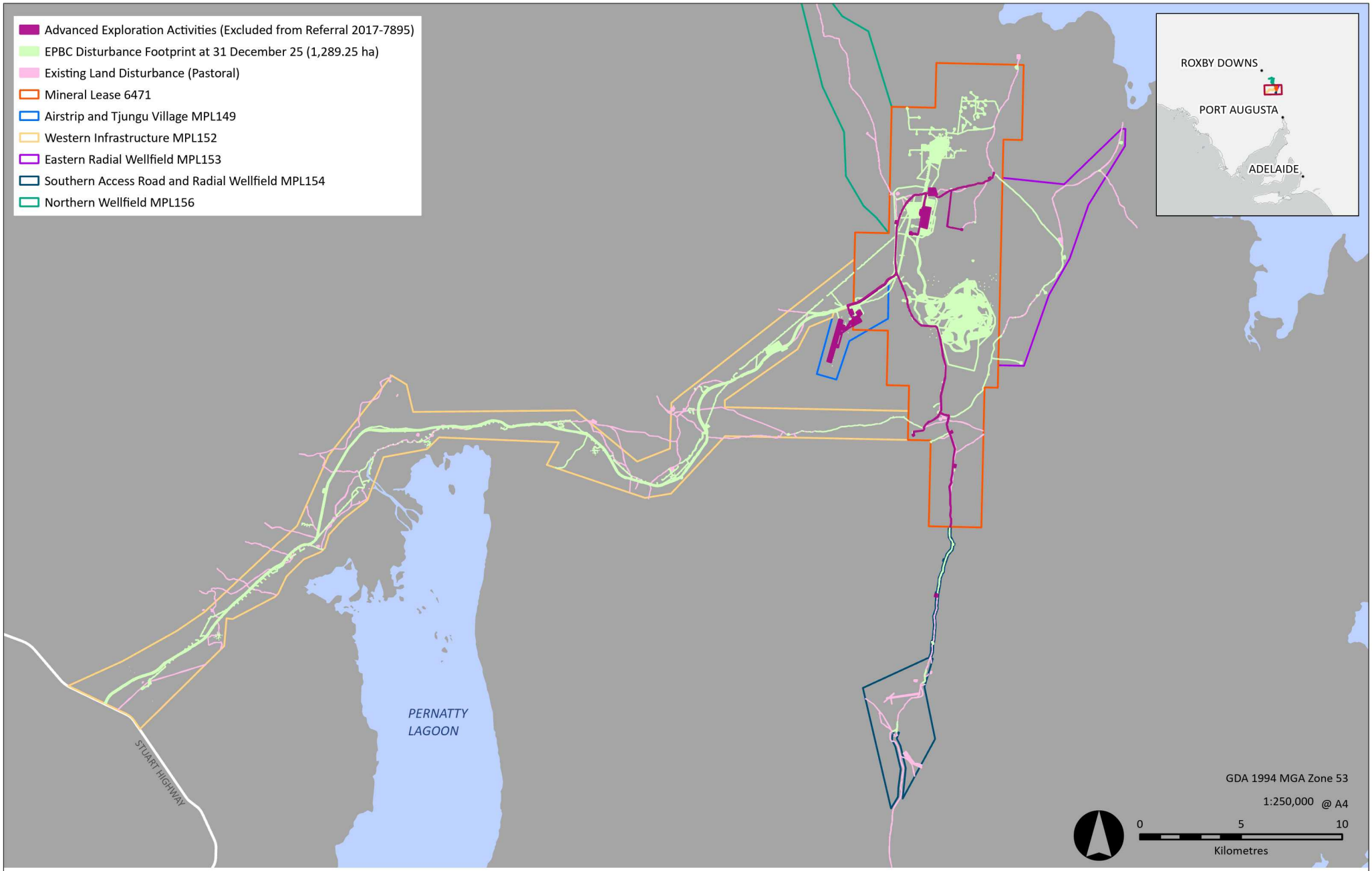

Figure 4.1 | EPBC disturbance footprint (December 2025)

Carrapateena BHP

5 EPBC Act approval conditions and compliance status

The Conditions of Approval associated with EPBC 2017/7895 are detailed in Table 5.1, together with clear statements regarding the status of compliance with the Conditions of Approval. Where necessary, statements regarding compliance are supported by a summary of evidence clearly demonstrating the conclusion that compliance with the condition was (or was not) fully met.

Table 5.1 | EPBC Act approval conditions and compliance status

Condition number	Condition	Compliance status	Evidence demonstrating compliance with condition
1	To manage the impacts of the action on the environment, the person taking the action must implement the conditions of the SA approval.	Compliant	The Compliance Report associated with the granting of the Carrapateena tenements under the Mining Act will be submitted to DEM on 31 March 2025 indicating compliance with the conditions of the SA approval. The Compliance Report will be publicly available on the DEM website at: https://www.energymining.sa.gov.au/industry/minerals-and-mining/mining/major-projects-and-mining-activities/major-operating-and-approved-mines/carrapateena
2	The person taking the action must not impact more than 1,740 hectares of Plains Rat habitat within the disturbance footprint.	Compliant	Total disturbance since the commencement of the referred action is 1,669.82 ha, including 313.18 ha of Plains Rat (Plains Mouse) habitat, as shown in Figure 4.1 and Figure 5.1, respectively.
3	Prior to commencement of the action, to compensate for residual impacts to the Plains Rat, the person taking the action must acquire an offset property which must contain: • a population of the Plains Rat • no less than 1,740 hectares of Plains Rat habitat • habitat quality equal to that of the Plains Rat habitat within the disturbance footprint.	Compliant	Following on from an 'Agreement to Underlease' (CA-APR-AGR-1037) with the Pastoral Lessee of South Gap Pastoral Station two offset areas, OZ Minerals established two individual Underlease Agreements, one for each offset area, securing a total of 3,251 ha of suitable Plains Mouse habitat (Northern Offset Underlease Agreement 1,882 ha and Southern Offset Underlease Agreement 1,369 ha (CA-APR-LET-1178). The Underlease Agreements have a 10-year expiry term, with successive Agreements to be established totalling the required duration as per the approval conditions. The offset areas consist of Arcoona Tablelands habitat that is similar in quality and structure to the land disturbed at Carrapateena and are considered to represent equally viable Plains Mouse habitat. Historical observations of Plains Mouse have been recorded nearby the northern offset, and within the same stretch of continuous tablelands habitat connecting disturbed Plains Mouse habitat at Carrapateena, to the offset areas on South Gap Station.
4	The person taking the action must maintain or improve the habitat quality of the existing Plains Rat habitat at the acquired offset property for the life of this approval.	Compliant	BHP Carrapateena has developed an Environmental Offset Management Plan (CA-0000-ENV-PLN-1004) (the Plan) which aims to: • Establish baseline conditions, including the distribution and condition of Plains Mouse habitat, the presence and distribution of target species, and the identification and prioritisation of local threats. • Define the potential presence, distribution and abundance of other target species within the offset (i.e. Thick-billed Grasswren and Night Parrot). • Manage total predation pressure (fox, cat, wild dog/dingo). • Enhance the condition of habitat for the benefit of Plains Mouse, through the management of total grazing pressure (i.e. stock exclusion) and invasive weeds. • Improve knowledge of local target species populations including an understanding of how they respond to management locally. The Plan presents fourteen (14) individual objectives grouped under eleven (11) management strategies to address EPBC Act offset liability, and associated legislative and policy obligations, for the first ten (10)-year period of management.
5	Within 2 years from commencement of the action, the person taking the action must change the tenure of the offset property for conservation purposes using an appropriate legal mechanism for long term protection.	Compliant	Underlease agreements signed, executed and back-dated from to 21 April 2020 (2 years from the commencement of the action) for the Northern Offset Area and the Southern Offset Area. The areas have been officially registered with the Lands Titles Office: two registrations as associated with each offset area. The Agreements to Underlease clearly define that the areas are to be set aside for environmental offset purposes. The change in land use will apply for ten (10) years, after which the change in land use will need to be renewed (permission granted from the Commonwealth to manage as rolling terms to achieve the total required tenure).
6	Prior to the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must engage a suitably qualified expert to undertake a Night Parrot survey within the development envelope. The Night Parrot survey must be undertaken in' accordance with the EPBC Act Night Parrot survey guidelines. Within three months of the Night Parrot survey being completed, the person taking the action must provide the Department with the Night Parrot survey results.	Compliant	OZ Minerals completed a targeted Threatened Species Survey for Night Parrot in March 2018 (CA-ENV-REP-1040). There were no Night Parrots or evidence of Night Parrots detected during the survey. The results of the survey were forwarded to the Department of the Environment and Energy (DoEE) in April 2018 (DOE: CA-APR-EML-1077). Night Parrot has not been reconfirmed as locally extinct within South Australia.

Condition number	Condition	Compliance status	Evidence demonstrating compliance with condition
7	Should the Night Parrot or evidence of the Night Parrot be recorded during the survey, the person taking the action must submit for the Minister's approval, a Night Parrot Management Plan that must include: • Details of the Night Parrot survey results, including the methodology, timing and area surveyed. • An assessment of the impacts to the Night Parrot that will result from the action. • Management actions that will avoid, minimise and/or offset both the immediate and long-term impacts of the action on the Night Parrot. • Monitoring and reporting requirements that demonstrate the management actions are effectively being implemented and achieve the intended results. This should include the frequency, intensity and duration of monitoring. The person taking the action must not commence the action prior to the Minister approving the Night Parrot Management Plan. The approved Night Parrot Management Plan must be implemented.	Not Applicable	The targeted survey (CA-ENV-REP-1040) did not find evidence of the Night Parrot in the Operation area. Night Parrot has not been reconfirmed as locally extinct within South Australia.
8	Prior to the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must engage a suitably qualified expert to undertake a *Frankenia plicata* survey within the development envelope. The *Frankenia plicata* survey must be undertaken in accordance with contemporary survey methods. Within three months of the *Frankenia plicata* survey being completed, the person taking the action must provide the Department with the *Frankenia plicata* survey results.	Compliant	OZ Minerals completed a targeted Threatened Species Survey for *Frankenia plicata* in March 2018 (CA-ENV-REP-1040). *Frankenia plicata* was not detected during the survey. The results of the survey were forwarded to DoEE in April 2018 (CA-APR-EML-1077). Follow-up work by the engaged consultant uncovered the incorrect classification of locally collected Frankenia samples lodged with the SA Herbarium. Consultation with the SA Herbarium coupled with extensive survey work within the Carrapateena tenements and more broadly within the region has failed to detect this species, which is more likely to occur much further north of the Operation.
9	Should the *Frankenia plicata* be recorded during the survey, the person taking the action must submit for the Minister's approval, a *Frankenia plicata* Management Plan that must include: • Details of the *Frankenia plicata* survey results, including the methodology, timing and area surveyed. • An assessment of the impacts to the *Frankenia plicata* that will result from the action. • Management actions that will avoid, minimise and/or offset both the immediate and long-term impacts of the action on the *Frankenia plicata*. • Monitoring and reporting requirements that demonstrate the management actions are effectively being implemented and achieve the intended results. This should include the frequency, intensity and duration of monitoring. The person taking the action must not commence the action prior to the Minister approving the *Frankenia plicata* Management Plan. The approved *Frankenia plicata* Management Plan must be implemented.	Not Applicable	The targeted survey (CA-ENV-REP-1040) did not find evidence of *Frankenia plicata* in the operational area. Follow-up work by the engaged consultant uncovered the incorrect classification of locally collected *Frankenia plicata* samples lodged with the SA Herbarium.
10	Within 3 months following the change of tenure referred to in condition 5) the person taking the action must provide the Department with written evidence that the offset property has been secured for conservation purposes using an appropriate legal mechanism.	Compliant	Written evidence provided to DoEE via letter dated 16 December 2020 (CA-APR-LET-1178).
11	Within 30 days after the commencement of the action, the person taking the action must advise the Department in writing of the actual date of commencement.	Compliant	OZ Minerals advised DoEE of the commencement of the action on 21 April 2018 (CA-ENV-LET-1001).
12	The person taking the action must maintain accurate records substantiating all activities associated with or relevant to the conditions of approval, and make them available upon request to the Department. Such records may be subject to audit by the Department or an independent auditor in accordance with section 458 of the EPBC Act, or used to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Summaries of audits will be posted on the Department's website. The results of audits may also be publicised through the general media.	Compliant	BHP Carrapateena maintains an Environmental Management System that includes electronic data management systems for document control (Aconex), obligations management and land access (LandFolio) and consultation/correspondence (INX InForm). Data collected during Carrapateena monitoring is recorded on the site environmental data management system (MonitorPro) or within ArcGIS. Data collected for the environmental offsets on South Gap pastoral station will be collected, managed and reported on by a third party engaged to manage the offset (Nature Foundation) with select information captured back into the Carrapateena systems.
13	Within 30 days after completion of the action, the person taking the action must advise the Department in writing of the actual date of completion and provide a map clearly defining the date, location and actual impact within the Disturbance footprint of the action and be accompanied with a shape file.	Not Applicable	BHP Carrapateena is currently undertaking the action.

Condition number	Condition	Compliance status	Evidence demonstrating compliance with condition
14	The approval holder must prepare a compliance report for each 12-month period following the date of commencement of the action, or as otherwise agreed to in writing by the Minister. The approval holder must: • publish each compliance report on the website within 60 business days following the relevant 12-month period; • notify the Department by email that a compliance report has been published on the website within five business days of the date of publication; • keep all compliance reports publicly available on the website until this approval expires; • exclude or redact sensitive ecological data from compliance reports published on the website; and • where any sensitive ecological data has been excluded from the version published, submit the full compliance report to the Department within 5 business days of publication. NOTE: The first compliance report may report a period less than 12 months so that it and subsequent compliance reports align with the similar requirement under state approval.	Compliant	The EPBC 2017/7895 Compliance Report is posted annually in April to BHP's website where copies of previous Compliance Reports can also be located.
15	Upon the direction of the Minister, the person taking the action must ensure that an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval is conducted and a report submitted to the Minister. The independent auditor must be approved by the Minister prior to the commencement of the audit. Audit criteria must be agreed to by the Minister and the audit report must address the criteria to the satisfaction of the Minister.	Not Applicable	BHP Carrapateena has not been directed by the Minister to commission an independent audit of compliance with the conditions of approval associated with EPBC 2017/7895.
16	If, at any time after 5 years from the date of this approval, the person taking the action has not commenced the action, then the person taking the action must not commence the action without the written agreement of the Minister.	Not Applicable	OZ Minerals commenced the action in late March 2018, as communicated to DoEE in April 2018 (CA-ENV-LET-1001).
17	The approval holder must notify the Department in writing of any: incident; non-compliance with the conditions; or non-compliance with the commitments made in plans. The notification must be given as soon as practicable and no later than two business days after becoming aware of the incident or non-compliance. The notification must specify: • the condition which is or may be in breach; and • a short description of the incident and/or non-compliance.	Compliant	There were no non-compliances with the EPBC 2017/7895 conditions of approval, nor non-compliances with commitments described in any plans required therein during the reporting period. There were no incidents associated with the action during the reporting period that caused, or had the potential to cause, significant impacts to matters of national environmental significance.
18	The approval holder must provide to the Department details of any incident or non-compliance with the conditions or commitments made in plans as soon as practicable and no later than 30 days after becoming aware of the incident or non-compliance, specifying: • Any corrective action or investigation which the approval holder has already taken or intends to take in the immediate future; • the potential impacts of the incident or non-compliance; and • the method and timing of any remedial action that will be undertaken by the approval holder.	Compliant	There were no non-compliances with the EPBC 2017/7895 conditions of approval, nor non-compliances with commitments described in any plans required therein during the reporting period. There were no incidents associated with the action during the reporting period that caused, or had the potential to cause, significant impacts to matters of national environmental significance.

Figure 5.1 shows the current disturbance footprint for activities subject to the action in relation to the Plains Mouse habitat.

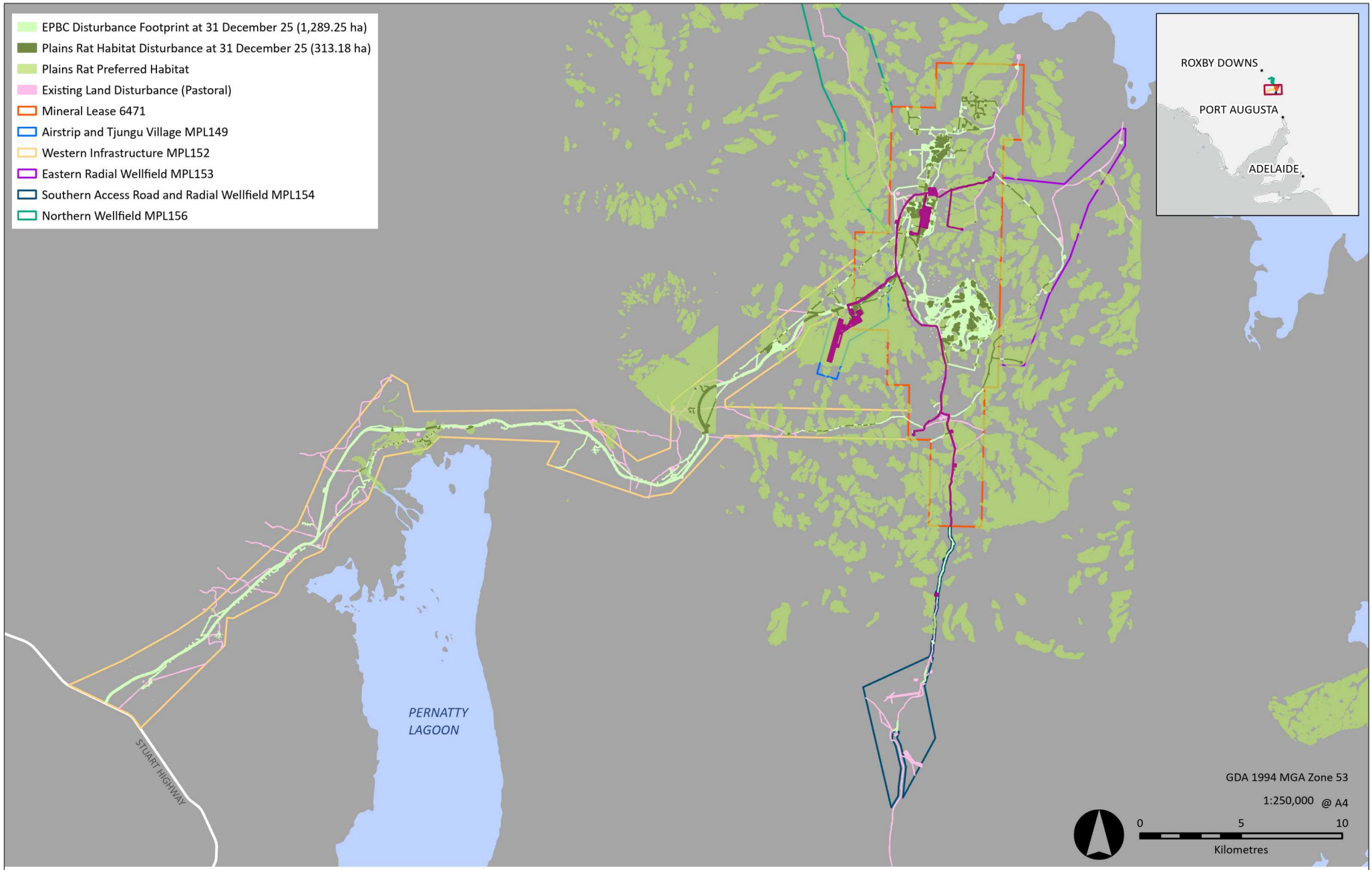

Figure 5.1 | Plains Rat (*Pseudomys australis*) habitat disturbance at 31 December 2025

Carrapateena BHP

6 Corrective actions

There were no non-compliances with the Conditions of Approval during the reporting period.

There were no corrective actions carried over from previous reporting periods, and therefore no assessment of the effectiveness of the corrective actions was required.

7 New environmental risks

There were no new environmental risks that were identified during the reporting period, and subsequently no risk analysis is presented.

8 References

BHP (2024) *Carrapateena Operation Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation for ML 6471 Mineral Lease, MPL 149 Airstrip, MPL 152 Western Infrastructure Corridor, MPL 153 Eastern Radial Wellfield and MPL 154 Southern Access Road and Radial Wellfield and MPL 156 Northern Wellfield*. June 2024. MPEPR2024/009.

BHP (2025) *Carrapateena Operation Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation for ML 6471 Mineral Lease, MPL 149 Airstrip, MPL 152 Western Infrastructure Corridor, MPL 153 Eastern Radial Wellfield and MPL 154 Southern Access Road and Radial Wellfield and MPL 156 Northern Wellfield*. September 2025. MPEPR2025/011.

DCCEEW (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water) (2025) *Correction Notification. Variation of conditions attached to approval, Carrapateena Project copper-gold mining and processing, 65 km east of Woomera, SA (EPBC ref 2017/7895)*. 10 February 2025. Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Canberra.

DoE (Department of the Environment) (2014) *Annual Compliance Report Guidelines 2014*. Commonwealth of Australia 2014. Australian Government Department of the Environment. Canberra.

DoEE (Department of the Environment and Energy) (2017) *Notification of Referral Decision and Designated Proponent – controlled action.* 12 April 2017. Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy. Canberra.

DoEE (Department of the Environment and Energy) (2018a) *Approval Carrapateena Project copper-gold mining and processing, 65 km east of Woomera, SA (EPBC 2017/7895)*. 29 March 2018. Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy. Canberra.

DoEE (Department of the Environment and Energy) (2018b) *Variation of Conditions Attached to Approval Carrapateena Project copper-gold mining and processing, 65 km east of Woomera, SA (EPBC 2017/7895)*. 14 December 2018. Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy. Canberra.

OZ Minerals (2017a) *Carrapateena Project Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 – Referral of Proposed Action.* March 2017.

OZ Minerals (2017b) *Carrapateena Project Mining Lease Proposal and Miscellaneous Licence Purposes Management Plans*. May 2017. Version A. OZ Minerals, South Australia, Adelaide.

OZ Minerals (2017c) *Request to vary proposal (Referral EPBC 2017/7895)*. 2 June 2017. OZ Minerals, South Australia, Adelaide.

OZ Minerals (2017d) *Carrapateena Project Mining Lease Proposal and Miscellaneous Licence Purposes Management Plans Response Document*. September 2017. Version A. OZ Minerals, South Australia, Adelaide.

OZ Minerals (2018) *Carrapateena Project Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation, ML 6471 Mineral Lease, MPL 152 Western Infrastructure Corridor, MPL 153 Eastern Radial Wellfield, MPL 154 Southern Access Road and Radial Wellfield*. March 2018. Version A. OZ Minerals, South Australia, Adelaide.

OZ Minerals (2020) *Carrapateena Project Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation. ML 6471 Mineral Lease, MPL 149 Airstrip, Workers' Accommodation Village, Access Road and Ancillary Infrastructure, MPL 152 Western Infrastructure Corridor, MPL 153 Eastern Radial Wellfield, MPL 154 Southern Access Road and Radial Wellfield, MPL 156 Northern Wellfield*. February 2020. MPEPR2019/026.

9 Abbreviations and units of measure

9.1 Definition of acronyms

Acronym	Expansion
DCCEEW	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
DoEE	Australian Government's Department of the Environment and Energy (now DCCEEW)
EPBC Act	*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth)
Mining Act	*Mining Act 1971* (SA)
ML	Mining Lease
MPL	Miscellaneous Purposes Licence
PEPR	Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation
TSF	tailings storage facility

9.2 Units of measure

Acronym	Expansion
%	percent
ha	hectare
km	kilometre

Appendices

Appendix A

2025 South Gap EPBC Offset Annual Report

South Gap EPBC Offset Annual Report 2025

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Contents

Abbreviations

IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (Region, Sub-region, Association)
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth)
EOMP	EPBC Offset Management Plan
MNES	Matters of National Environmental Significance

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report details work undertaken at the South Gap Station in central South Australia to offset the impacts of the Carrapateena mine (originally OZ Minerals, now BHP), as required by the EPBC Offset Management Plan (EOMP). The offset is now in the fifth year of management with a focus on protecting and restoring habitat for the EPBC listed Plains Mouse (*Pseudomys australis,* see more in 1.5), and improving overall ecosystem health. The EOMP has five specific goals:

Goal 1- Establish baseline conditions, including the distribution and condition of Plains Mouse habitat, the presence and distribution of target species, and the identification and prioritisation of local threats (refer to Jacobs 2020)
Goal 2- Refine the presence, distribution, and abundance of Plains Mouse within the offset
Goal 3- Manage total predation pressure (from Cats, Foxes and possibly Wild Dogs)
Goal 4- Maintain and/or enhance the condition of the habitat for the benefit of Plain Mouse through the management of total grazing pressure and invasive weeds
Goal 5- Improve knowledge of local target species populations, including how they respond to management locally.

The EOMP presents 14 individual objectives grouped under 11 management strategies to address EPBC Act offset liability and associated legislative and policy obligations for the first 10-year management period.

1.2 Location and site features

The South Gap EPBC offset program involves two distinct offset areas. Both are located on South Gap Station in central South Australia, approximately 100 km north of Port Augusta (Fig. 1). The site is adjacent to Lake Torrens. It is in the traditional country of the Kokatha people, who have strong connections to this land. The pastoral industry has utilised the landscape for the last 160 years, with sheep as the dominant stock for the area. The northern South Gap EPBC offset area is 1882 ha in size, and the southern is 1369 ha. The northern offset was fenced and managed directly by the Nature Foundation since 2021, while active management began on the southern offset in 2024.

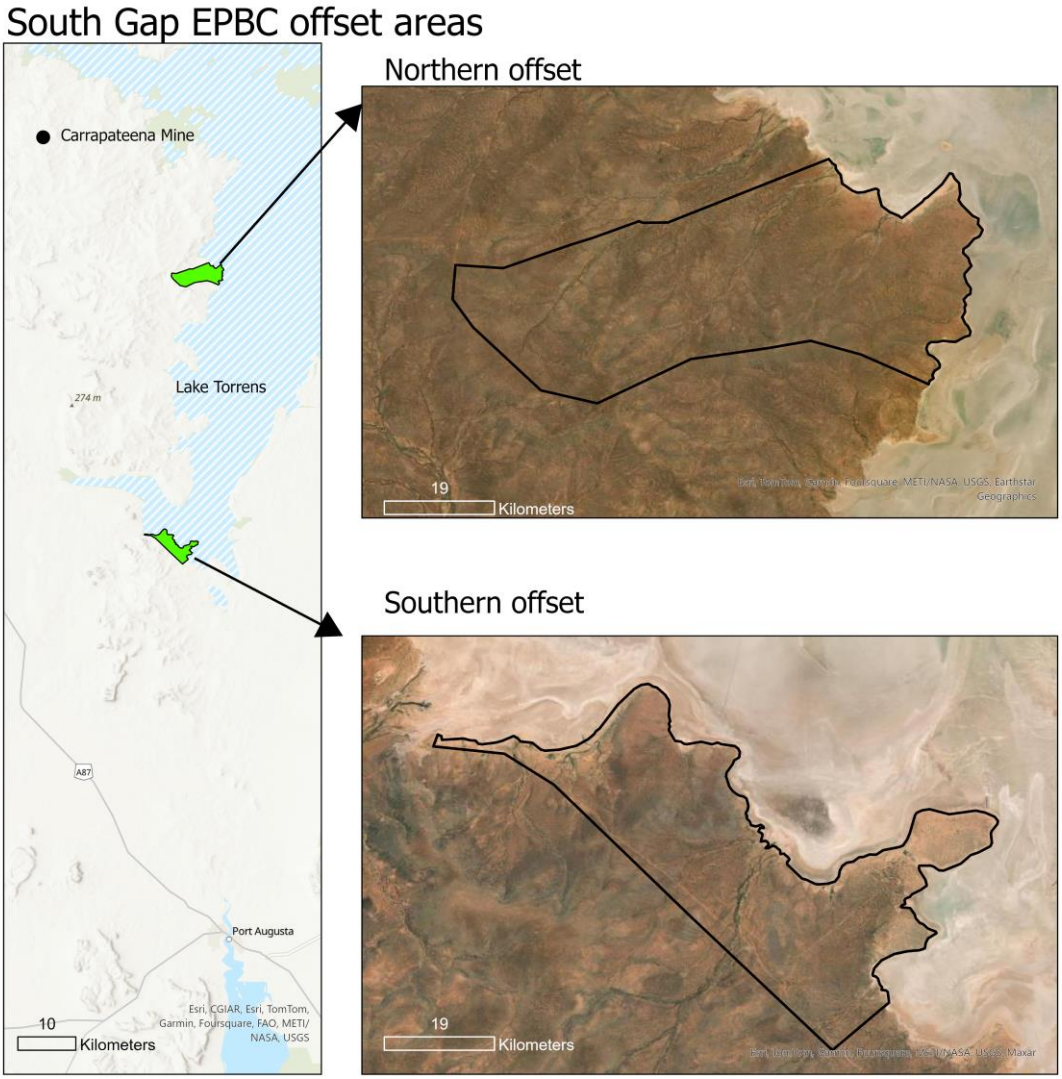

Figure 1. Location of the two South Gap EPBC offset areas within South Australia

1.3 Landscape

The habitats for both South Gap EPBC offset areas are similar, dominated by low plateau hills around 200m high. The prevalent habitat type is low open Chenopod shrublands, which is dominated by Bladder Saltbush (*Atriplex vesicaria*) and Samphire (*Tecticornia medullosa*). Also dissecting the landscape are ephemeral drainage lines with trees and shrubs such as Western Myall (*Acacia papyrocarpa*) and Black Oak (*Casuarina pauper*). Scattered through the landscape are patches of cracking clay (also known as Gilgai's), the most important habitat features for the Plains Mouse (*Pseudomys australis*). There are no waterpoints in the northern offset. There is a dam on the southern offset (Gum dam) that intermittently holds water after large rains.

1.4 Climate

The climate for both offsets is similar. Annual average rainfall is around 180 mm per year (nearest Bureau of Meteorology station, South Gap homestead station number 016043, complete records for 1884–November 2025), characteristic of a semi-arid climate. Annual rainfall varies greatly between years (Fig. 2). In the recent decade, there was a major drought in 2018 and 2019, and a return to ~average rainfall from 2020 to 2024.

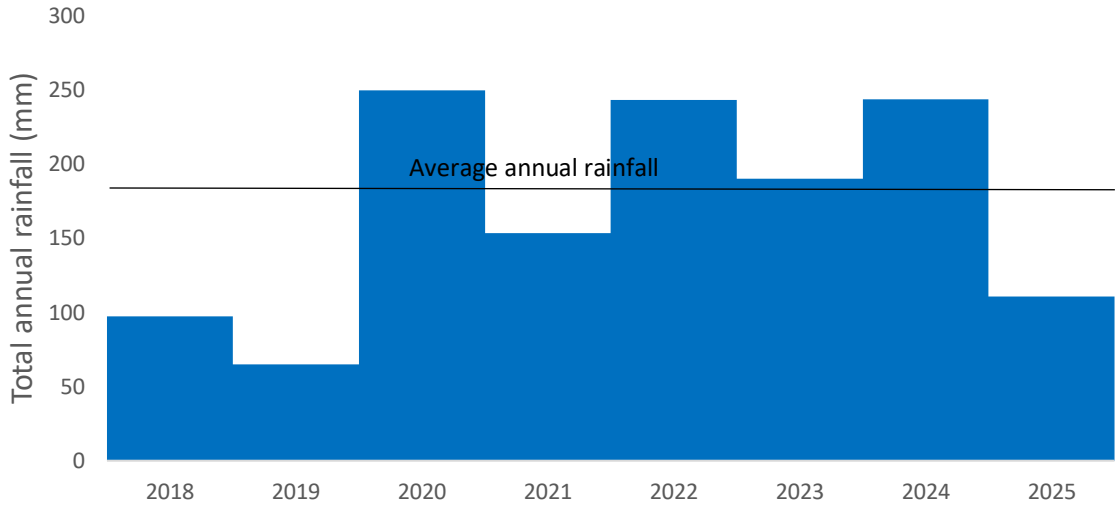

Figure 2. Total rainfall by year between 2018 and 2025, as measured by the South Gap weather station (Bureau of Meteorology # 016043)

Rainfall at South Gap homestead in 2025 was below the annual average, with a total of 110 mm. There was a particular dry start to the year, with scant rain falling between January and June (Fig. 3). There were however late winter rains and some spring rains. Rain gauges were deployed in both offsets in 2025 to obtain a more accurate understanding of the patchiness of rainfall at each site.

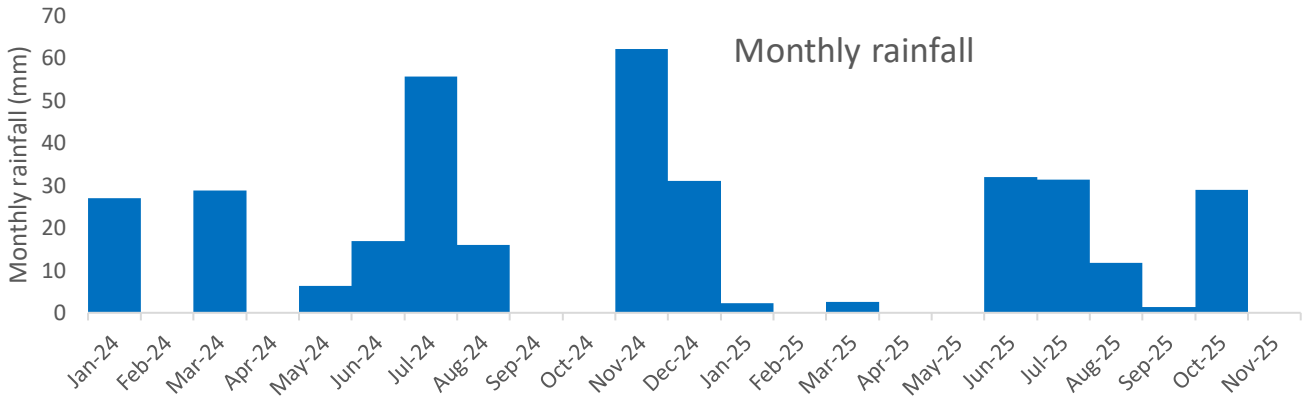

Figure 3. Rainfall for each month from January 2024 to November 2025, measured by the South Gap weather station (Bureau of Meteorology # 016043).

1.5 Conservation Values

The primary conservation value for the offset is the preservation of habitat for the Plains Mouse, a threatened native rodent (Fig. 4). This species weighs ~55 g and lives in the open dry shrubland, building small burrows. This size positions the species within the critical weight range of mammals likely to be threatened by feral Cats and Foxes (i.e. species with a body mass between 35 – 5500 g, Johnson and Isaac 2009, Woinarski, Burbidge et al. 2015). Plains Mice are listed under Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) as a Vulnerable Matter of National Environmental Significance, along with being listed in some form in every state in which it occurs (Moseby 2012).

Figure 4. Plains Mouse (*Pseudomys australis*). Photo by Jack Bilby.

Two other nationally threatened species may occur on the offset, although there are no known recent records from the surrounding area. These are the Thick-billed Grass-wren (*Amytornis modestus*) and night parrot (*Pezoporus occidentalis*). Other local species of note include the locally endemic Pernatty knob-tailed gecko (*Nephrurus deleani*), and small native mammals like Spinifex Hopping mouse (*Notomys alexis*) and Bolam's Mouse (*Pseudomys bolami*).

1.6 Threatening processes

Key threatening processes most likely impacting the offset areas and the Plains Mouse include:

- Predation by European Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)
- Predation by Feral Cat (*Felis fus*)
- Predation by Wild Dog (*Canis* spp.)
- Competition and land degradation by European Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)
- Competition and land degradation by domestic stock (*Bos* spp. and *Ovis aries*)
- Competition and land degradation by Feral Goats (*Capra hircus*)

2. Legislative Framework

2.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (1999)

The Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth) (EPBC Act) is the primary Commonwealth legislation established to protect and manage Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES), including nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities, and heritage places.

The EOMP guides the delivery of on-ground offset activities required to address the residual impact to Plains Mouse (Condition 3, 4 and 5) as per the EPBC Act Approval conditions (granted on 29 March 2018).

2.2 Other legislation

Other relevant legislation relating to the offset area includes the National Parks and Wildlife Act (1972), Native Title Act (1993), Aboriginal Heritage Act (1988), Landscape Act (2019) and the Pastoral Land Management and Conservation Act (1989). For more detail on these acts, refer to the EOMP.

3. Management Goals, Strategies and Objectives

Goals	**Strategies**	**Objectives** (under same acronym headings as EOMP)
Goal 1- Establish baseline conditions	Strategy 2: Improve knowledge of target species population dynamics and management	PM1: Quantify and monitor Plains Mouse habitat within the offset
Goal 2- Refine the presence, distribution, and abundance of Plains Mouse within the offset	Strategy 2: Improve knowledge of target species population dynamics and management	PM1: Quantify and monitor Plains Mouse habitat within the offset
Goal 3- Reduce predation pressure	Strategy 3: Cat control Strategy 4: Fox control Strategy 5: Wild dog control	CC1: Reduce Cat density to less than 4 Cats / 100 km within the offset area. FC1: Reduce Fox density to less than 1 Fox / 100 km within the offset area. DC1: Keep the offset area free of Wild Dogs.
Goal 4- Reduce total grazing pressure	Strategy 1: Stock management Strategy 6: Rabbit control Strategy 7: Weed control	SM1: Keep the offset area free of domestic livestock. RC1: By 2023, reduce Rabbit numbers and warrens by 80% within the offset area. RC2: Map and rip 5 km^2 of chenopod shrublands in priority areas each year for 4 yrs. WC1: By 2028, the distributions of invasive weeds (i.e. Declared and Weeds of National Significance) will be reduced.
Goal 5- Improve knowledge of local target species populations	Strategy 2: Improve knowledge of target species population dynamics and management	PM1: Quantify and monitor Plains Mouse habitat within the offset

4. Results

4.1 Goal 1 – Establish baseline conditions

The vegetation of the South Gap EPBC offset area is important to manage and understand. We monitor vegetation condition with annual Rangeland Assessment Method (RAM) floral surveys and Jessop transects (described in more detail below).

4.1.1 Vegetation mapping

Basic vegetation maps have now been established for both offsets. These were generated from field notes and observations, linked to observable landscape and vegetation patterns from satellite imagery. Maps were created manually by drawing polygons in ArcGIS PRO around known features, assigning a vegetation type, then conducting a site visit and taking a photo in each created polygon to check for accuracy (Fig. 5). The vegetation types were selected primarily based on the dominant perennial woody vegetation. The exception to this is the distinction between cracking clay and low Chenopod shrublands, where soil type was also a key defining factor.

4.1.2 RAM scores

Ecosphere Ecological Solutions were contracted in 2025 to assess vegetation condition (Blackall and Sinel 2025). The eight RAM sites and three Jessops sites in the Northern offset that had previously been surveyed in 2019, 2022 and 2023 were resampled. Six new sites were also established in the southern offset, with a baseline survey conducted. The RAM scores at the northern EPBC offset have remained stable through time (Fig. 6), but variation has decreased. This is likely due to the refinements in how the RAM scores are calculated (Blackall and Sinel 2025).

4.1.3 Weed assessments

To limit the spread of weeds to the South Gap EPBC offset area, vehicles are washed down before and after arrival. In the northern offset, no weeds of national significance were detected. However, some annual exotic forbs were found at cracking clay sites, including sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), malvastrum (*Malvastrum americanum*) and London rocket (*Sisymbrium irio*). These will be monitored through 2026 and controlled as required.

There is a substantially greater weed load in the southern offset area. Three declared weeds have been recorded, Prickly Pear (*Opuntia* spp.), Tree Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*) and Bathurst Burr (*Xanthium spinosum*). Every live Prickly Pear plant encountered during every field trip is controlled either manually by digging them up, or biologically by placing a chunk of Prickly Pear infected by Cochinel on top of it. We at present are mapping and recording details for each plant, however, this was not done consistently initially. On each trip we will also count the number of plants encountered, and recorded our lowest count yet of Prickly Pear in November 2025 (Fig. 7). Tree Tobacco is only known from a single dense patch. Manual control was attempted in 2024, but this was unsuccessful as plants resprouted from below-ground root stock. We cannot use herbicides to control this patch due to South Gap Pastoral's organic certification. In 2026 we aim to use an organic oil like

Orange Oil or Neem Oil to control this species. Bathurst Burr was detected at highly disturbed gilgais, and will be a focus of control efforts in 2026.

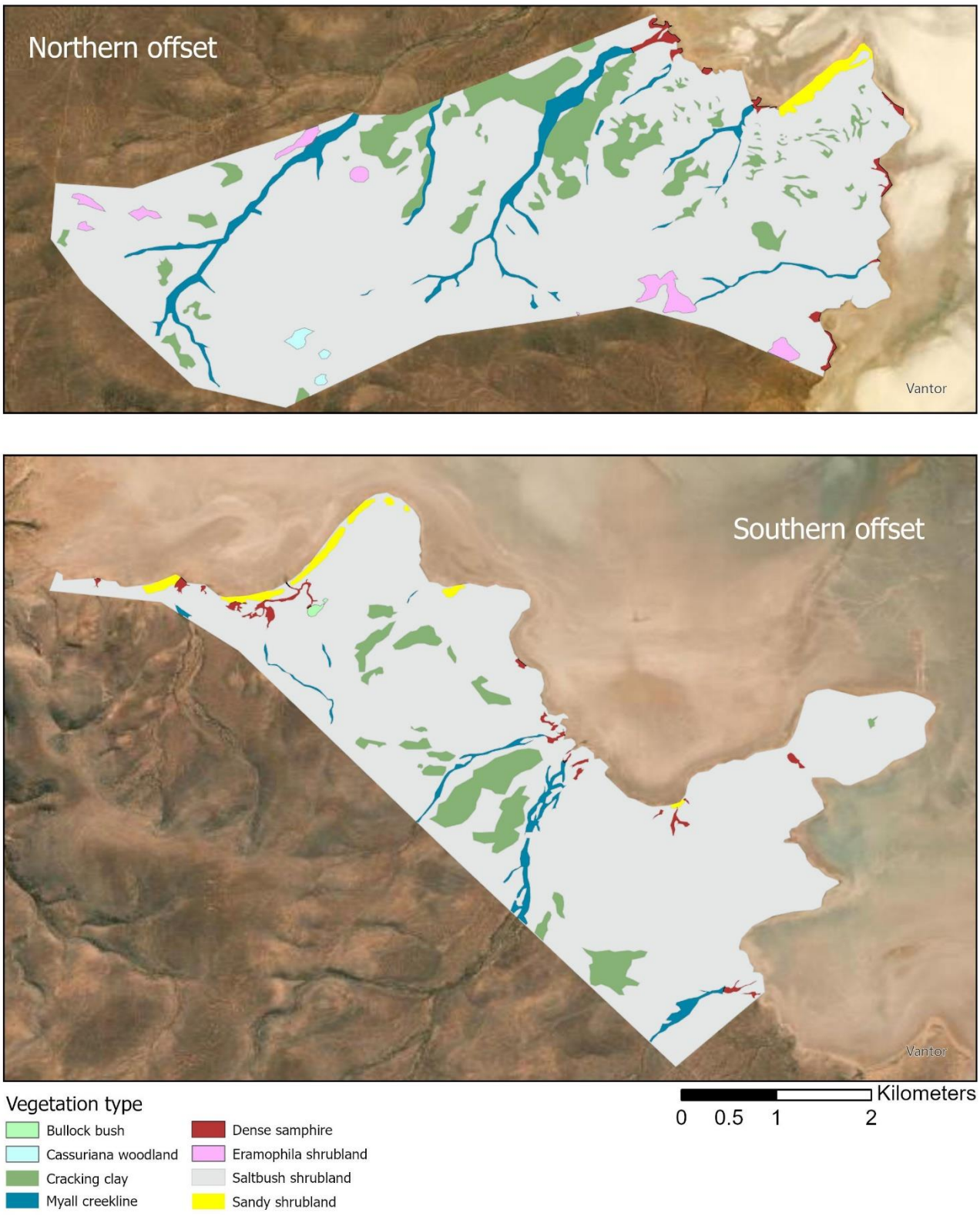

Figure 5. Vegetation map of the different habitat communities in the northern (top) and southern (bottom) offsets.

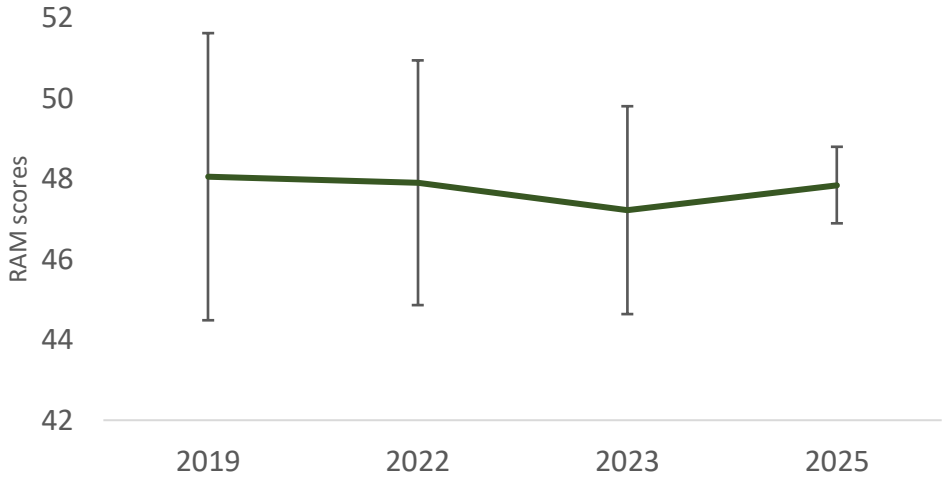

Figure 6. RAM scores at the northern offset.

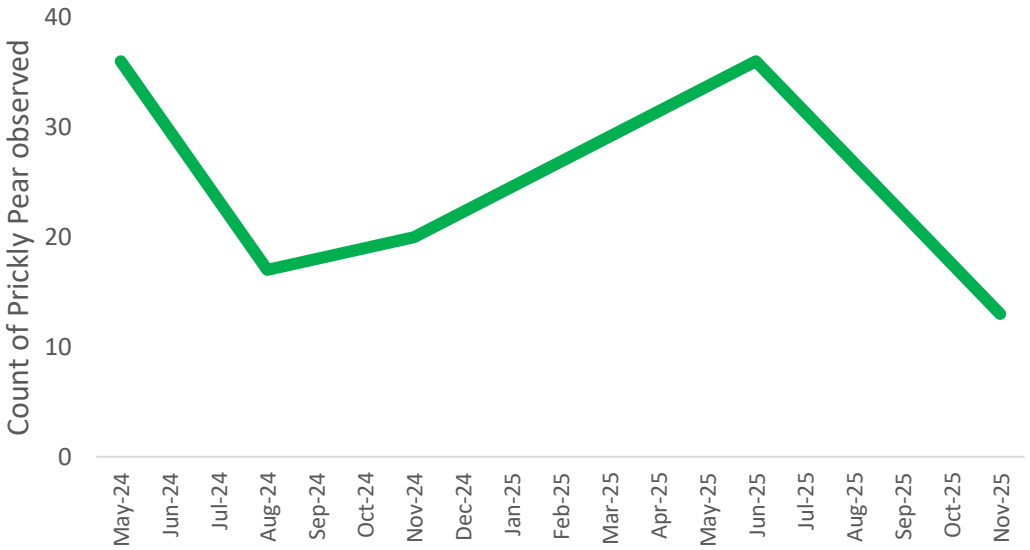

Figure 7. Detections of Prickly Pear (*Opuntia* spp.) at the southern offset on the 16 km central track.

4.2 Goal 2 – Presence, distribution, and abundance of Plains Mouse

Plains Mouse activity is monitored via 10 permanent remote camera sites in the northern offset, with 10 recently established in the southern offset. Each consists of a remote camera (Reconyx Hyperfire 2 Professional HP2X) with focus adjusted to 90 cm, set on a star-picket facing down at a lure (PVC tube with peanut butter). A 50 x 50 cm corkboard with 10 mm gridlines

was placed underneath the field of view to enable measurements of animal size. Cameras were last checked in November 2025. In the northern offset, seven were operational for the whole year. The other three either had too many false triggers or became waterlogged. In the southern offset, six were operational through the whole year.

Once images were downloaded, any small animals recorded were identified. Plains Mouse were confirmed from a head and body length of 90 to 145 mm and a tail shorter than 125 mm (Van Dyck, Gynther et al. 2013). Images of rodents with a head and body length of approximately 90 mm were only classed as 'likely' Plains Mouse. We could reliably identify to species level the Spinifex hopping-mouse (*Notomys alexis*), Narrow-nosed Planigale (*Planigale tenuirostris*), and Desert Short-tailed Mouse (*Leggadina forresti*). Some individuals of the other small mammal species could be identified to species level, though not all. For example, some Dunnart images could be differentiated between *Sminthopsis crassicaudata* or *S. macroura*. These species were therefore often clumped together, along with small rodents (*P. bolami*, *P. hermanbergiensis* or *M. domesticus*).

No Plains Mice were detected during 2025 at either offset (Fig. 8). Detection rates other small mammals such as Dunnarts and small rodents, remained low and stable (Fig. 9). It appears 2025 was not an ideal year for small mammals, and the Plains Mouse unlikely had favorable weather conditions to expand its range.

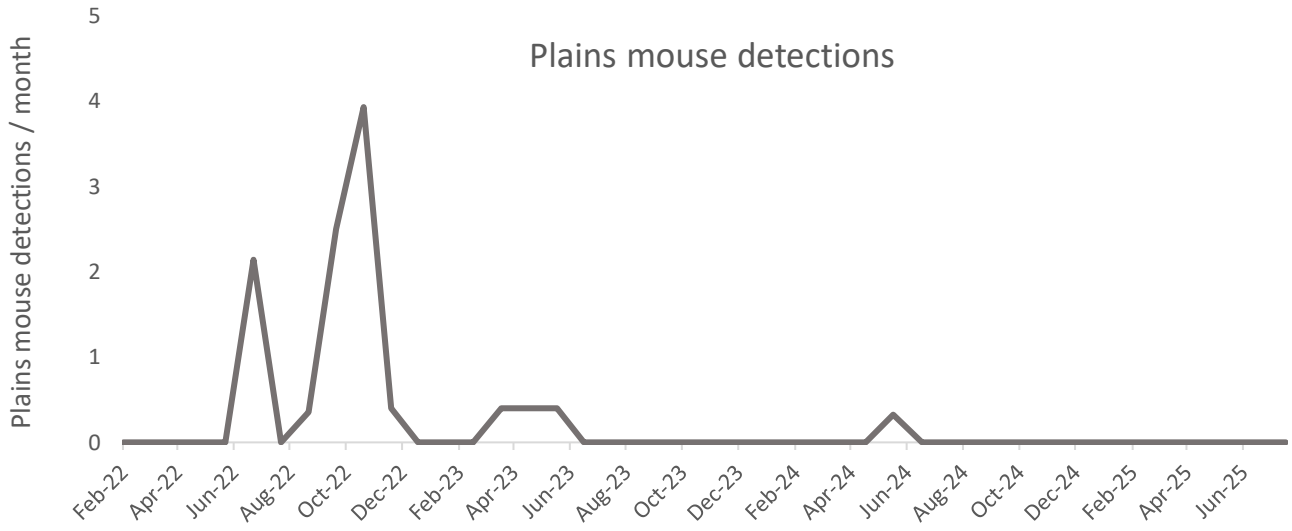

Figure 8. Plains Mouse detections on remote cameras at the northern South Gap EPBC offset.

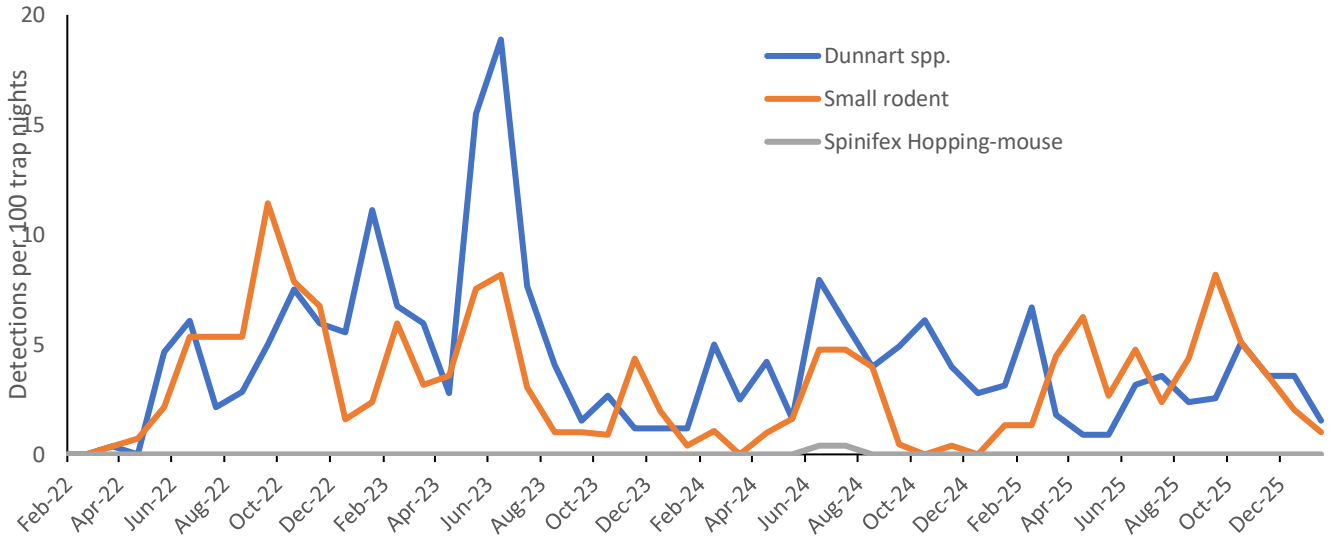

Figure 9. Detection rates of Dunnarts (*Sminthopsis* spp.), small rodents (<20g) and Spinifex Hopping-mice at the South Gap EPBC offset area.

4.3 Goal 3 – Reduce predation pressure

Feral control activities were conducted ~quarterly. To date, all shooting has been conducted on the northern offset. In 2025 there were three shooting events; two by Graham Miller and one by Phil Johns. The planned December shoot was cancelled due to extreme heat, and is now earmarked for late February. Feral control activities will start in the southern offset in 2026.

There are 15 remote cameras set up in the northern offset to monitor predator activity, with 9 also set in the southern offset. Each camera is placed facing into a likely pathway for feral predators, such as a road, dry creek or open area. These are checked 3-4 times per year.

Very few feral predators were detected or shot in 2025. These low numbers are likely due to extreme low activity of cats and foxes. Indeed, our remote cameras recorded historically low activity of both predators in the northern offset (Fig. 10). The activity rate of foxes was much greater in the southern offset especially around winter 2025. As mentioned above, feral control activities in this offset have not yet begun.

Table 1. Feral predators removed from South Gap EPBC northern offset area through EOMP activities.

Year	Cats	Foxes
2021	4	12
2022	2	8
2023	6	2
2024	3	1
2025	1	2
Total	15	23

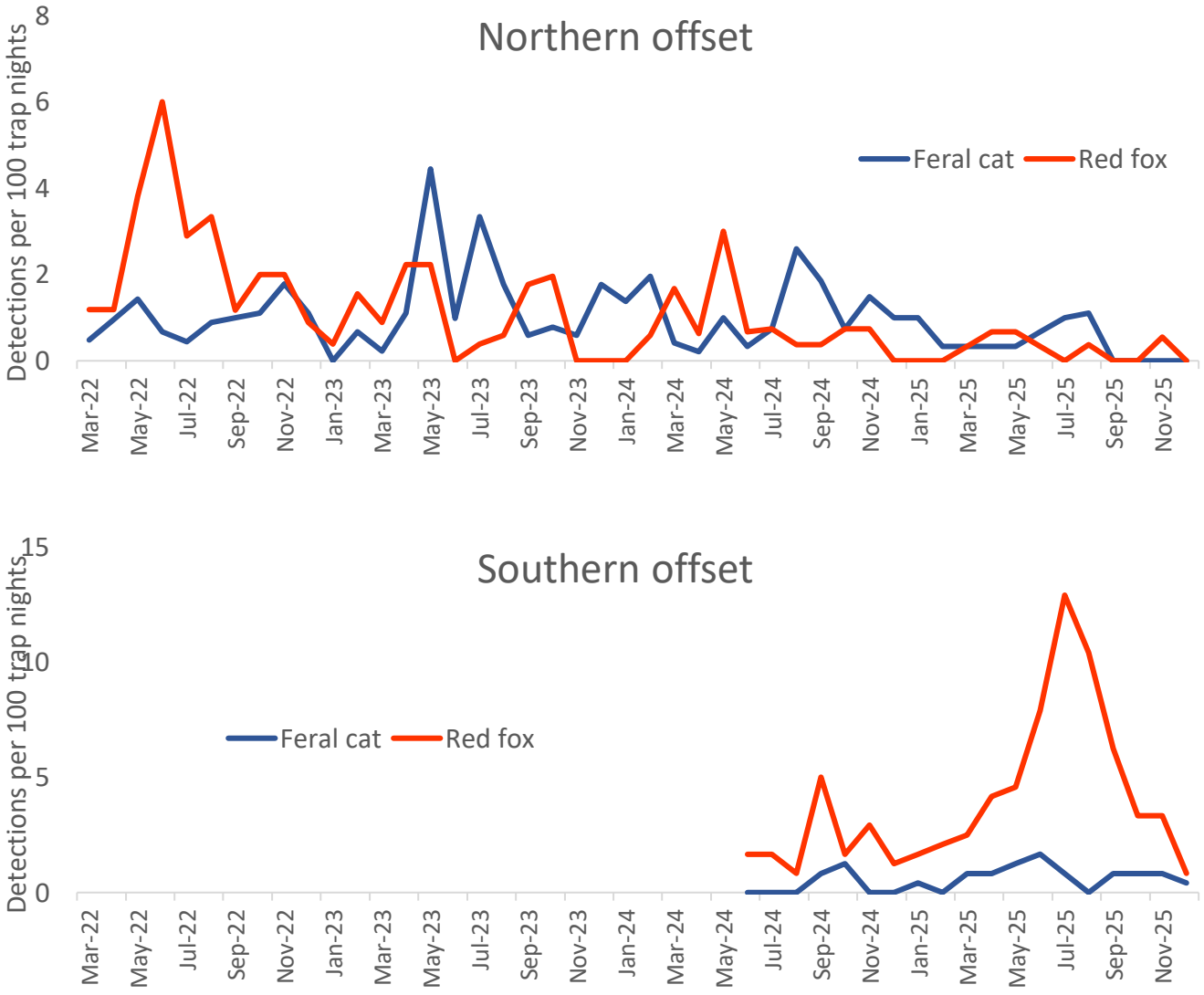

Figure 10. Detection rates of Feral Cats (blue) and Red Foxes (red) from remote cameras spread across both South Gap EPBC offset areas, with the northern offset above and southern offset below. Northern offset cameras were deployed from intial deployment in Feb 2022 to December 2025. Southern offset cameras were deployed from May 2024 to December 2025.

4.4 Goal 4 – Reduce total grazing pressure

Reduction of total grazing pressure in the offsets, to prevent negative impacts on vegetation and maintain and enhance habitat condition, is achieved through stock-proof perimeter fencing, the removal of sheep and goats, rabbit control activities, and the management of kangaroo numbers.

4.4.1 Fence condition

A stock-proof fence was erected around the northern offset in 2020. An older section of this fence was in disrepair in 2023, with a new fence built in 2024. The stock proof fence around the southern offset was erected in winter 2025. During each site visit, all fencelines are audited and any issues found are repaired, where possible. For example, in 2025 we found six small holes dug under the southern fence by Kangaroos, which were all patched up with small sections of mesh (Fig. 11). These holes did not appear large enough for sheep to easily get under.

Figure 11. Example of a hole dug underneath the stock exclusion fence by Kangaroos. These were patched up each time they were found with either large rocks or mesh wire.

4.4.2 Sheep activity

Sheep activity is monitored through the remote camera arrays. Although the fence in the northern offset was operational for all of 2025, a small number of sheep were able to get in over winter. Sheep activity has been low in the southern offset even prior to construction of the fence (Fig. 12).

4.4.3 Goat activity

Feral goats were a major issue in the southern offset in 2025. During 2025, there was a massive influx early in the year. During the April field trip a herd of at least 200 were observed, with damage evident on shrubs indicative of goat browsing. Remote camera data revealed a spike in detections from spring 2024 to autumn 2025, that tapered off after South Gap pastoral conducted large-scale removal across the entire property (Fig. 13). Goat numbers are reported to South Gap Station managers to inform ongoing mustering and harvesting activities to manage the population. Approximately 2000 were removed from South Gap in 2025.

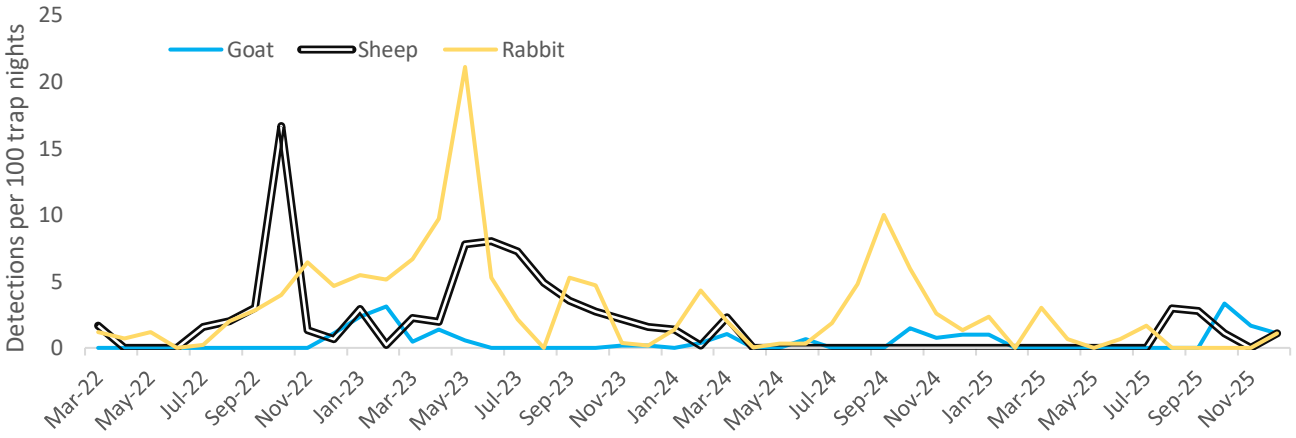

Figure 12. Detection rates of Goats, Sheep and Rabbits on remote cameras in the northern offset.

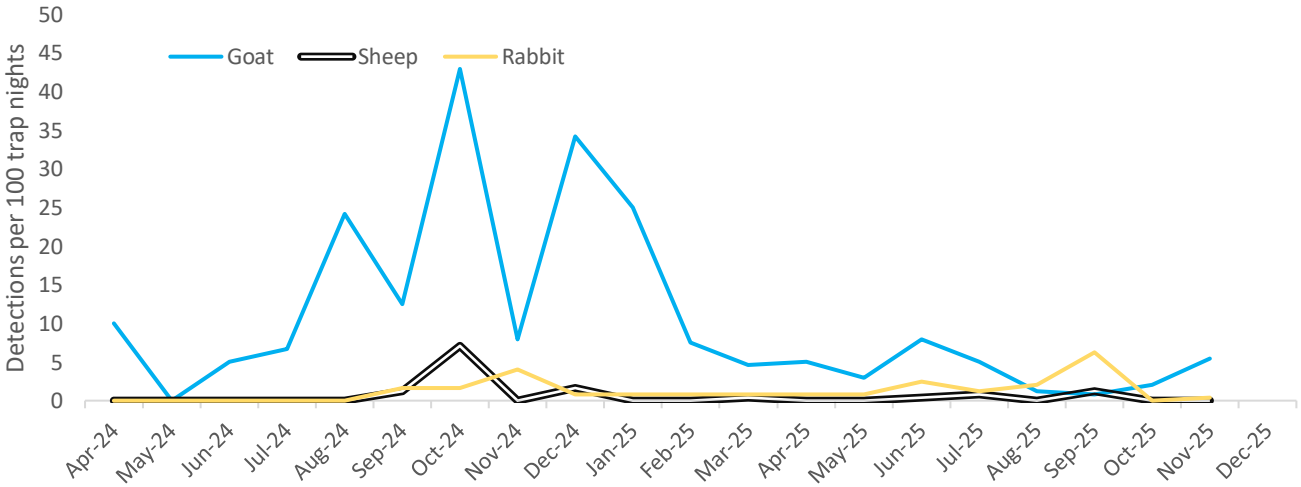

Figure 13. Detection rates of Goats, Sheep and Rabbits on remote cameras within the southern offset.

4.4.4 Rabbit activity

There were few rabbits detected in 2025 in either offset (Figs. 12, 13). To reduce potential breeding rates, we conducted small-scale, localized control in the northern offset in June 2025. The aim of this was to reduce rabbit breeding potential, not necessarily reduce overall population numbers. The entire 3 km stretch of sandy habitat on the banks of Lake Torrens was scanned for rabbit warrens. Eleven different warrens were found. Four of these were trapped with soft-jaw leghold traps for two nights then collapsed, and the rest were simply collapsed (see Fig. 14). Two rabbits were captured. Twenty old warrens in other habitats were also checked. Only one active warren was found, located near the main camp site on the side of a clay cliff. None of the other old warrens were active, and all warrens were collapsed.

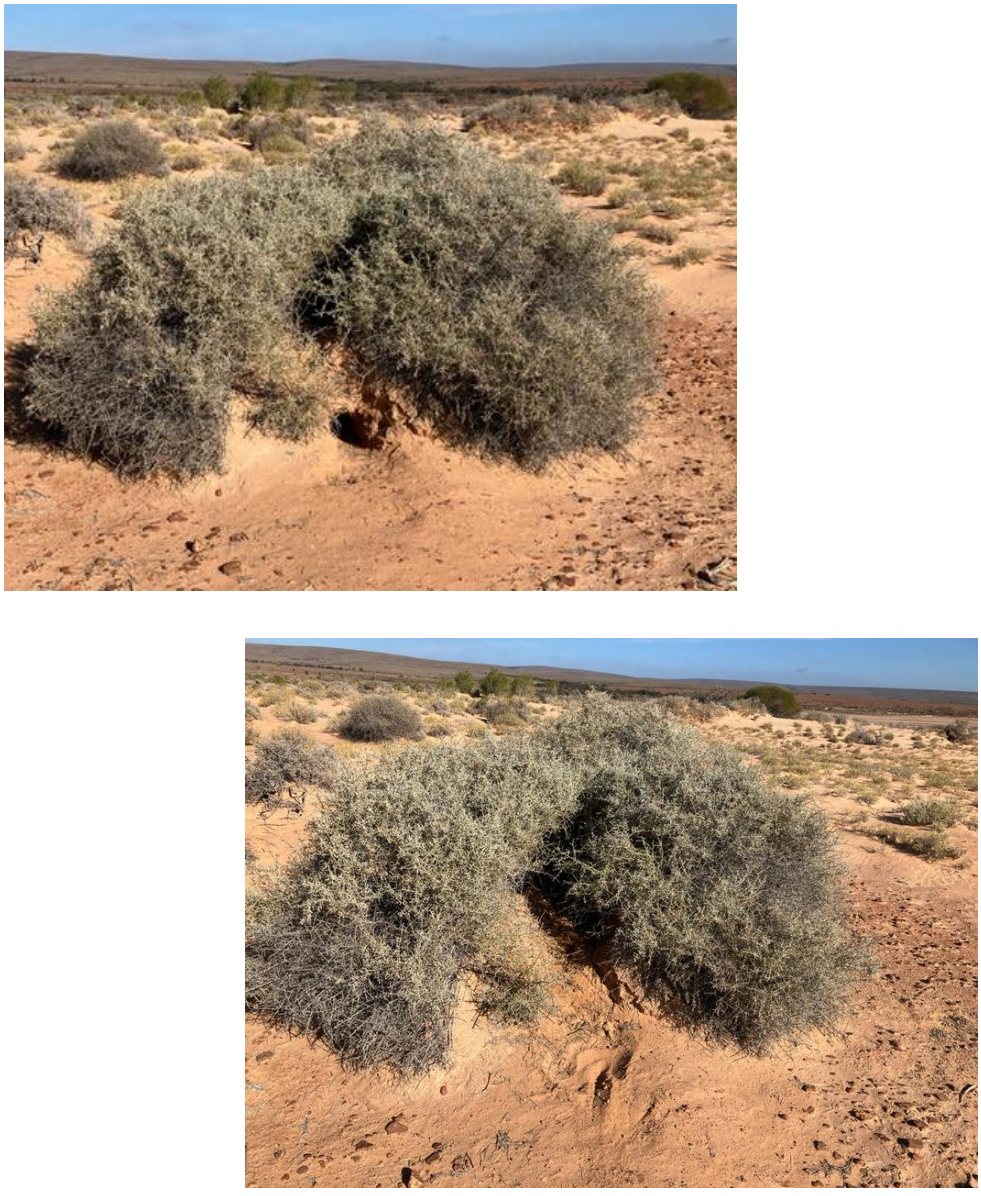

Figure 14. Before and after photos of collapsing of a rabbit warren at the northern offset.

4.4.5 Kangaroo activity

Kangaroo activity was high in both offsets in 2025 (Fig. 15). Kangaroo control was conducted in the northern offset under South Gap Pastoral harvest quota and will continue in 2026.

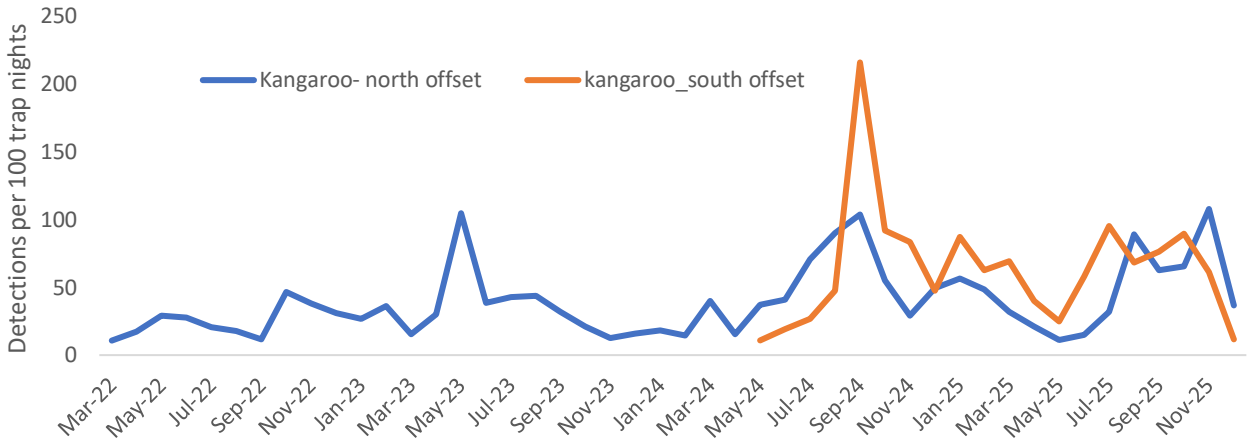

Figure 15. Activity rates of Kangaroos (both Red Kangaroos and Euros) from remote cameras in the northern (blue) and southern (orange) offset areas.

To investigate the impact of kangaroo grazing on cracking clay habitat, we set up two small temporary exclusion areas in the northern offset. These are around 6.5m x 6.5m in area, surrounded by fences that are around 1.2m high and constructed with 4 - 5 star pickets, with wire attached to the ground with pegs (Fig. 16). While probably not completely impervious to kangaroos, these exclosures should reduce grazing impacts. A remote camera was placed in each exclosure has been deployed to test effectiveness. We aim to create more and potentially improve their design in 2026.

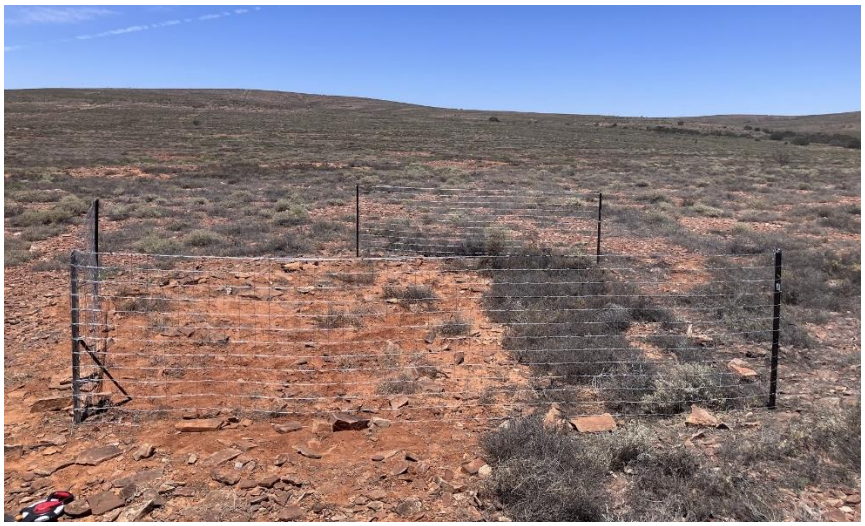

Figure 16. Small temporary kangaroo grazing exclosure created to measure the impact of grazing on cracking clay habitats.

4.5 Goal 5 – Improve knowledge of local target species populations, including how they respond locally to management.

While the key focus of the EOMP is on Plains Mouse, birdlife is also monitored on the offset to improve knowledge of other local target species. Birds were surveyed at three sites during each trip in both offsets. At each site, we scan for birds for 20 minutes, with a count taken of each species seen or heard. All incidental sightings of note were also recorded. Each site was surveyed twice in 2025 (June-July and November). Habitat varied at each site, from creek woodland near Gum dam, open saltbush plains, and dense saltbush on the banks of Lake Torrens.

A total of 72 birds have been detected thus far (Table 2). Two species detected are listed as Vulnerable under the EBPC act, the Blue-winged Parrot and Southern Whiteface. Two new bird species have been detected in 2025; the White-winged Triller (*Lalage tricolor*) and Buff-banded Rail (*Gallirallus philippensis*,).

We have now begun a monitoring and conservation program for the vulnerable Sandalwood plant (*Santalum spicatum*), which is currently found on the southern offset. Each year the length of Gum creek will be walked, with records taken for all Sandalwood and Quandong plants observed, including height, size, and leaf density at different heights (to measure browse effects). Five adult sandalwood trees have been found to date, with no saplings. Adult trees had no leaves below 1.5m height (roughly goat-browsing height, see Fig. 17). This suggests browsing pressures of goats have been high and inhibited recruitment. One sandalwood had a small, basic grazing-exclosure put around it. In 2026 we aim to create another grazing exclosure around a sandalwood plant, and conduct some replanting if rainfall conditions are ideal.

All confirmed records of animals detected during works on this project are cleaned and submitted to the **Biological Databases of South Australia (**https://linkeddata.tern.org.au/prez/bdbsa-cv/v/**),** managed by the SA Department for Environment. This is generally loaded by June each year.

Figure 17. An adult Sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) at the southern offset with a distinct goat browse line with no herbage present under 1.5m high.

Table 2. South Gap offset bird list from 2021 to 2025. Species listing under EPBC act in brackets. New species are listed in bold.

Bird List	
Australian Boobook	Mulga Parrot
Australian Magpie	Nankeen Kestrel
Australian Owlet-nightjar	Orange Chat
Australian Pipit	Pacific Black Duck
Australian Raven	Pied Butcherbird
Banded Stilt	Pink-eared Duck
Barn owl	Purple-backed Fairywren
Black-faced Woodswallow	Red-capped Robin
Black-shouldered Kite	Red-necked Avocet
Black-tailed Native-hen	Rufous Field-wren
Blue-winged Parrot (Vulnerable)	Rufous Songlark
Brown Falcon	Rufous Whistler
Brown Goshawk	Singing Honeyeater
Budgerigar	Slender-billed Thornbill
Buff-banded Rail	Southern Whiteface (Vulnerable)
Chirruping Wedgebill	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater
Cinnamon Quail-thrush	Spotted Harrier
Common Bronzewing	Spotted Nightjar
Crested Bellbird	Striated Pardalote
Crested Pigeon	Stubble Quail
Crimson Chat	Tawny Frogmouth
Eastern Bluebonnet	Wedge-tailed Eagle
Elegant Parrot	Weebill
Emu	Welcome Swallow
Galah	White-backed Swallow
Grey Fantail	White-browed Babbler
Grey Shrike thrush	White-faced Heron
Grey Teal	White-fronted Honeyeater
Grey-crowned Babbler	White-winged Fairywren
Hooded Robin	**White-winged triller**
Inland Dotterel	Willie Wagtail
Inland Thornbill	Yellow Chat
Little Buttonquail	Yellow-throated Miner
Little Crow	Zebra Finch
Mallee Ringneck	Silver Gull

5. Future Priorities

In 2026 we will continue all ongoing monitoring and management actions as directed by the EOMP. Additional priorities will include:

- Exploring the possibility of deploying weather stations that provide data in near real-time
- The promotion of sandalwood regeneration in the southern offset, via herbivore exclusion and possible replanting
- The continuation of Gilgai research to improve understanding of Plains Mouse habitat use, including the set up of more kangaroo grazing exclosures
- Expansion of feral animal control to the southern offset
- Vehicle-track improvement to ensure safe access to and through the offsets
- A review of the need to establish merino fence upgrade on southern offset to prevent stock from entering the southern paddock from across Lake Torrens

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