



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

17-H-220

08 August 2017

fyi-request-6268-227949ab@requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Andy

Auckland Island Pig Eradication

Thank you for your email to the Minister of Conservation dated 3/08/2017 about Auckland island pig eradication. Your mail has been referred to the Department of Conservation for reply.

As stated in response to your Official Information Request, the exact density of pigs is not known. Large population variations between years have been observed. Estimates vary between 860 and 2000 pigs. In responding to a question, the Minister did not recall the correct number when she said, "I think 5000 feral pigs". This was a slip of the tongue and was not a deliberate exaggeration to make people hate feral pigs.

Pigs have significantly modified Auckland Island flora, fauna and ecosystem processes. Substantial changes in vegetation community composition has occurred, principally by eliminating palatable species such as mega herbs. Pigs, in combination with cats, have decimated ground- and burrow-nesting seabirds. The profound differences between pest -free Adams island and Main Auckland Island is the best indicator of the impact of these predators.

When an eradication is attempted methods will strictly comply with The Animal Welfare Act 1999 which regulates methods for pest control to prevent unacceptable pain and suffering.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Harry Maher'.

Harry Maher
Director Operations (Acting)
Southern South Island
Department of Conservation