

# Weeds and Local Land Services

## The general position

The management of weeds is inseparable from other aspects of land management, whether for production, environmental benefit, public amenity, in urban as well as rural environments.

An LLS system that fails to integrate weeds management into landscape management generally will be less effective than it could be, with higher costs for all now and forever.

## The Government statements

At the outset of the LLS exercise the Government linked weeds management with the LLS development, by indicating that:

*General weed management will stay with local councils, however, there will be increased cooperation between local councils and the new Local Land Services. This may be reviewed in the future.,*

and by including weeds as a component of land management throughout the initial powerpoint presentation on the LLS development.

A DPI media release of 23 January included biosecurity as a mainstay of LLS, including weeds:

*It is important that biosecurity risks are managed for the whole of NSW, focusing on the protection of the economy, environment and the community from pests, weeds and diseases.*

In pre election statements the government parties promised stronger action on weeds, including better cooperation and collaboration among all affected parties.

## Consultation so far

The Australian Farm Institute report on an initial round of consultations includes:

*There was a strongly held and universal view that weed and pest animal management and control should be the sole responsibility of the LLS in future.*

## Conclusion

The LLS review provides a golden opportunity to scrap regulation and legislation that has done little to control weeds expansion or eradication over the last one hundred years, and to develop twenty first century LLS practices and management assistance and reward systems to ensure land managers, whether public or private, become more active in the maintenance of biodiversity and biosecurity frameworks with environmental, economical and sustainable outcomes in perpetuity for all.

How to do this?

First choice:

- include weeds management issues in LLS functions from the outset
- replace weeds legislation with new provisions in a new Biosecurity Act.

Second choice:

- align LLS boundaries with local government boundaries
- establish county councils where they are not already local control authorities, in all cases to be wholly within an LLS area
- include LLS representatives on weed committees
- oblige LLSs to include weeds issue explicitly in their plans
- generate coordinated and collaborative action plans, including LLSs, county council, industry and volunteer interests,

so that an easy transition to the much more preferable first choice can be made later.