

Weed Management Resourcing in Local Government

On behalf of the State Weed Committee and in partnership with NSW DPI, Local Government NSW is undertaking this survey of councils and local government organisations to better understand how they are resourcing their weed-related responsibilities, which in turn helps us understand the need for support and training/capacity building opportunities. Results of the survey will also inform the statutory review of the Biosecurity Act 2015.

We are seeking one completed survey from each organisation and would ask this be completed by a Director or Senior Manager with responsibility for weed-related functions. If this function (including compliance and on-ground weed management) is split across different areas of your organisation, please collate their information into this response.

We appreciate that the last 12 months has posed challenges and COVID-19 continues to affect how we all work. Please respond to the questions in a pre-COVID context (unless specifically asked about COVID impacts).

The survey should take approximately **15 minutes** to complete.

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Lets start with some contact information

*** 1. Your organisation**

2. Name of person completing the survey

*** 3. Position of person completing the survey**

*** 4. Contact email**

*** 5. Contact phone**

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Your organisation's role in biosecurity

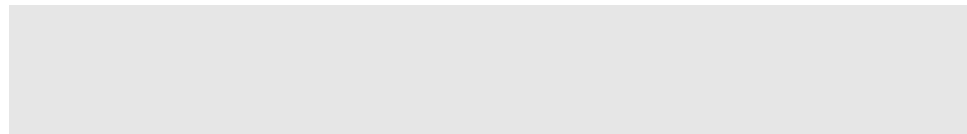
*** 6. What is your organisation's role with respect to the Biosecurity Act 2015?**

- ☐ **General biosecurity duty only (weed functions have been conferred to another organisation)**
- ☐ **Local control authority - council**
- ☐ **Local control authority - county council**
- ☐ **Local control authority - joint organisation**
- ☐ **Other (please specify)**

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*** 7. The council of a local government area is the local control authority for weeds under the Biosecurity Act 2015.**

What is difficult or challenging about discharging your functions as a local control authority?



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Council structure

*** 8. What staffing does your organisation currently allocate to weed-related work in FTE (full-time equivalent)**

For example 0.6 FTE = 3 days/week

If none, answer 0.

*** 9. What staffing does your organisation currently allocate to weed-related work in number of staff? ie, the actual number of staff**

If none, answer 0

10. Only answer this question if you entered zero in Q8 and Q9 above.

If your organisation **does not have staff allocated to this function, what arrangements does Council have in place?**

- ☐ Has an arrangement (contract/funding etc) with a (weeds) County Council
- ☐ Has an arrangement with another Council
- ☐ Has an arrangement with a Joint Organisation
- ☐ No arrangements in place
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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11. Where do the staff focused on weeds-related work sit in Council's structure?

☐ Regulatory / Compliance team

☐ Operations eg parks

☐ Environment

☐ across multiple teams

☐ Other (please specify)

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Authorisation / Training

*** 12. How many staff are authorised officers under the Biosecurity Act 2015?**

*** 13. Do all authorised officers have on-ground weed management skills and knowledge?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Some only
- ☐ No (please describe)

*** 14. Have all authorised officers completed the mandatory training?**

The mandatory training is EMTrain NSW Biosecurity Legislation On-line training Modules 1 - 11.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ No - please elaborate as to why eg lack of funding? time? access?

*** 15. What is the minimum level of training that your organisation requires of its weed officers?**

*** 16. What award are weed management staff employed under?
Tick all that apply (if more than one award is relevant)**

- ☐ Local Government (State) Award 2020
- ☐ Local Government Industry Award 2020 (Federal)
- ☐ Not sure
- ☐ Other (please specify)

*** 17. For staff employed prior to the commencement of the Biosecurity Act in 2017, has their position description and award been reviewed since then (to incorporate risk-based approach)**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)

*** 18. Do staff working on weeds-related functions have a broader role than weeds within your organisation?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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19. Are weed functions prioritised over the other roles?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other
- ☐ If No or Other please elaborate

20. How much time within their role is dedicated to weeds functions?
Please give your best estimate.

- ☐ Less than 20%
- ☐ 20 - 50%
- ☐ 51- 70%
- ☐ More than 70%
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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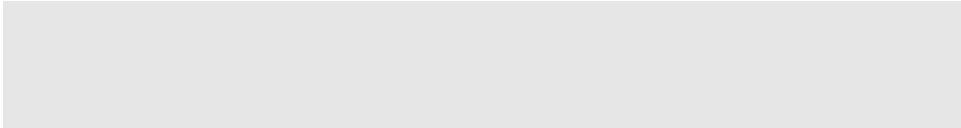
21. Are there other staff in the organisation that are able to step in to manage weeds-related issues if and when required?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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Succession Planning

22. What makes it difficult or challenging about employing and keeping weeds staff?



*** 23. Does your organisation have a succession plan for weed-related staff?**

- ☐ **Yes**
- ☐ **No**
- ☐ **Don't know**
- ☐ **Other (please specify)**



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24. If your organisation **does not have a succession plan, please indicate reasons from those below**

- ☐ Existing staff are relatively new in role
- ☐ No funding for trainees / back up staff
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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*** 25. What form of succession planning is your organisation using?
Tick all that apply.**

- ☐ Council employs trainee weed officers
- ☐ Council offers intern/graduate programs
- ☐ Other staff in the team are being progressively trained
- ☐ Other (please specify)

26. Is COVID having an impact on succession plans?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)

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Equipment / Resources

*** 27. What weed-related equipment or technology does your organisation use?
Tick all that apply.**

- ☐ Vehicle
- ☐ Drone
- ☐ Aerial imagery (eg ADSL40, LIDAR)
- ☐ In-field data collection / updates (eg tablets)
- ☐ Mechanical harvesters / tools
- ☐ Other (please specify)

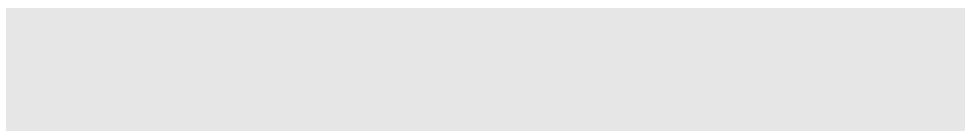
*** 28. Is there any specific weeds-related equipment or technology that your organisation has identified it needs but does not have?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ If yes please specify

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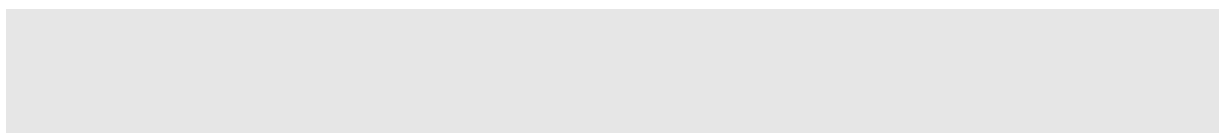
Compliance

*** 29. How does your organisation determine its weeds-related inspection and compliance regime?**



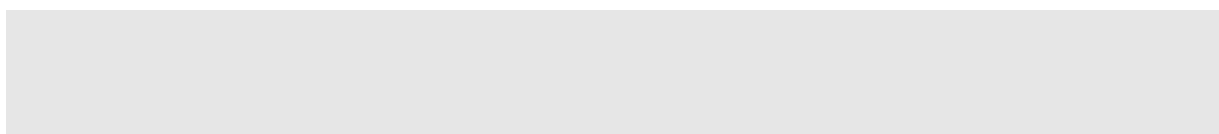
*** 30. Do weed officers also undertake compliance work?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Some (please specify)



*** 31. Does your organisation have a separate compliance team that takes over weed / biosecurity compliance matters?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please specify)



32. Is there close interaction between weeds and compliance staff?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable
- ☐ Other (please specify)

*** 33. Has your organisation considered prosecuting a weeds-related offence under the Biosecurity Act?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ N/A - haven't found it necessary
- ☐ Other (please elaborate)

*** 34. If an authorised officer issued a Penalty Notice to a person for a weeds-related offence under the Biosecurity Act would your organisation be confident if the person opted to have the matter determined by a court?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other (please elaborate)

*** 35. Which of these (if any) would your organisation find helpful?**

Tick all that apply.

☐ a panel of solicitors to review weeds-related cases

☐ a state-level weeds compliance advisory service

☐ a fund to cover court costs of reviewed cases

☐ Other (please specify)

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Thank you for completing our survey.