NSW Weeds Training Program

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Tocal COLLEGE
NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES
The NSW Weed Training Program is run through NSW DPI. The program develops and co-ordinates training for Local Control Authority (LCA) weed officers and other NRM officers involved in weed management.

Funded through Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee (NWAC)

Tocal College is the DPI Registered Training Organisation (RTO) providing assessment and nationally recognised qualifications.
Background

- Originated from objectives of the NSW Weeds Strategy (now adopted NSW Invasive Species Plan)
- The Weeds Officer Training Program was then shaped and promoted by Macquarie Valley Weeds Committee and Tocal College.
- Provide clear career pathways for Weeds Officers through implementation of nationally accredited training.
- Relevant and quality training for Weeds Officers combined with recognition of acquired industry skills, Weeds Officers can be awarded nationally recognised qualifications in weed management.
The Weeds Training program offers short courses which are relevant, current and reflect best practice management.

The training is designed for NRM officers to achieve their responsibilities under the Noxious Weed Act and provide the necessary knowledge and skills for meeting:

- LCA obligations under the Noxious Weed Act
- Catchment Action Plans (CAPs)
- NSW Invasive Species Plan targets.
Products

Through Tocal College, the Weeds Training Program offers face-to-face training as well as an expanding range of external study units.

The Training Program is structured to provide Weeds Officers with the ongoing training opportunities needed to assist with progression from operational level though to strategic management.
Products

- weed management and planning
- plant identification and assessment of vegetation
- chemical planning and use
- legal training (for the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*)
- hygiene of vehicles and machinery
- Communications, grants applications
- biological control
- awareness of garden escapes

*(What does your garden grow?)*
New Products

- Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting & Improvement (MERI) and Performance Measurement
- Weed Risk Assessment
- Conference paper writing and presentations
- Currently assessing the development of Best Management practice of technical weed control under train the trainer format.
MERI and Performance Measurement

**Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting & Improvement (MERI) and Performance Measurement**

**Rationale:** increasing demand from Govt and funders to ensure accountability and strategic use of grants (grant applications getting tougher)

**CMAs adopted MERI and required to have MERI plan & Program Logic for CFOC applications**

**Shows short to long term targets, how to achieve and how to monitor and evaluate progress at each level.**
MERI and Performance Measurement

**Longer term outcomes**
- NSW invasive species plan
  - Objectives
  - 3 reduce impacts
  - 4 increase capacity
- Caring for Country NHT Targets
  - 1 Community skills, knowledge & engagement
  - 2 Increase biodiversity
- Australian Weed strategy Goals
  - 1 Prevent new weed problems
  - 2 Reduce impact of existing weeds
  - 3 Enhance capacity
- NSW State Plan targets
  - E4
  - 4 reduction in the impact of invasive species
  - 13 increase in the capacity of natural resource managers

**Intermediate outcomes**
- Weed control more efficient through adoption of skills and BPM
- Greater public awareness and acceptance of weed control
- Weeds more readily identified through increased skills
- Increased strategic management of weed control
- Reduction of weed infestation, increased biodiversity, increase in agricultural productivity
- Unified approach to weed control and education across agencies

**Immediate results**
- Increased knowledge and skills through training
- Increased inspections, compliance and convictions of landholders
- Increased networks through training, conference and meetings
- Increased monitoring and evaluation of weed control
- Increased capacity through training
- Increased knowledge and awareness through newsletter and publications
- Increased participation & knowledge through conference

**Outputs influencing activities**
- Planning, survey and assessment training
- Legal and compliance training
- Weed identification and weed control training
- Monitoring, evaluation & reporting training, risk management
- Professional development, capacity building training
- Biennial Weeds Conference, grants and conference training

**Output influencing activities**
- Promotional Booklet Newsletters
- Profarm WeedED Training Calendar
- Meetings NWAC, CCE, LCA Weed Committees
- Direct assistance phone & email enquiries
- Develop new training courses and resources,
- DPI weeds extract
- Weeds Conference

**Inputs and foundational activities**
- Staff & resources MERI plan & Work plans
- Existing Training Programs Noxious Weed Act
- Networks NWAC, Local Councils, CMAs, DPI, RLPB, DECC
- Funding NWAC Course fees
- Publications DPI, CRC, Internal publications
- Partnerships with regional weed co-ordinators & district agronomists

Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee
Weed Risk Assessment

- Weed Risk Assessment
- **Rationale:** increasing demand from Govt and funders to ensure accountability and strategic use of grants (grant applications getting tougher)
- Consistent assessment throughout NSW
- Targeted to meet NSW Invasive Species Plan objectives
- Preparing for central database for NSW weed data management
Conference papers & presentations

Conference papers and presentations

Rationale: Feedback form Weed conference wanted more weed officer presentations

Providing training and skills should encourage more uptake of conference participation

Training provides units toward diploma in CLM and increased skills for career
Challenges

- Trying to cover whole of NSW for training
- Try to be fair and rotate training throughout regions
- Some courses have to be cancelled due to lack of enrolments
- Timing, demographics, apathy, council support, tighter budgets with economic down turn
- Continue to develop courses and resources to meet industry demands and changes
AEO Boundaries on new NSW LGAs
Since 2001, 65 weeds staff have been awarded Diploma of Conservation and Land Management.

Effective partnerships have been formed between the Training Program, Tocal College and the Weeds CRC.

Selected Weeds Officers now deliver training through the training program.
## NSW Weed Training Program Achievements

### Resources produced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training resource</th>
<th>Developed by</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective Writing Skills</td>
<td>Tocal College (NWAC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficient Weed Management</td>
<td>Tocal College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biocontrol - Australian Weed Management</td>
<td>Weeds CRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weed Movement - Machinery inspection and clean-down</td>
<td>VIC DPI and Weeds CRC</td>
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<td>Regional Planning for Weed Management</td>
<td>Tocal College (NWAC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognising Weeds In Our Waters</td>
<td>NHT and Tocal College (NWAC)</td>
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<td>Inspecting for weeds - Weed Officer manual</td>
<td>Les Tanner and Tocal College (NWAC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Plant or Weed? Volume 1</td>
<td>Ann Loughran and Tocal College (NWAC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native Plant or Weed? Volume 2</td>
<td>Ann Loughran and Tocal College (NWAC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vegetation Survey and Assessment</td>
<td>Tocal College</td>
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NSW Weed Training Program Achievements
2008 Evaluation Results

Evaluation of the Weeds Training program showed:

- 99% of participants agreed/strongly agreed that the Program was worthwhile and should be continued & the Program had increased their knowledge in weed management
- 97% agreed/strongly agreed they have developed new skills in weed management after attending the Program & that they were better weed managers
- 96% noted that their confidence in the community had increased
- 93% agreed/strongly agreed their confidence in the workplace had increased
Further Information

For any information regarding the NSW Weeds Training Program please contact:

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