



CENTRAL TABLELANDS

**WEEDS
AUTHORITY**

(Legal Entity Upper Macquarie County Council)

ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023

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1. Welcome

Chairman's Message

The 2022-23 year saw the momentum and tenacity of the organisation has continued in undertaking our single purpose; that of reducing the Biosecurity risk of weeds in the area covered by our four constituent Councils (Bathurst, Blayney, Lithgow and Oberon).

Council rebadged itself during the year, now operating as Central Tablelands Weeds Authority, (CTWA), (*Legal Entity Upper Macquarie County Council*). The name change was to ensure our location of work and function is clearly pronounced, our website has been updated to provide our mandatory information and providing access to and guidance in relation to reducing weed risks on the Central Tablelands of NSW.

The Council has continued to provide guidance, support and improvement aiming to achieve its stated objectives and in delivering value for money to its constituent Councils, landholders and the environment in our hugely important agricultural area of this State.

CTWA's prime objective is to encourage and assist landholders to reduce the biosecurity risk they pose to their neighbours and others. It is only as a last resort and in most cases after at least 2 years, of issuing notices and directions without success, that CTWA is forced into issuing fines or prosecuting landholders.

A total of 89 Penalty Infringement Notices have been issued in accordance with the Biosecurity Act and Councils Compliance & Enforcement Policy. CTWA will prosecute landholders in the Local Court for failure to reduce the Biosecurity risk on their landholding after repeated attempts to encourage and coerce the landholder to comply with Individual Biosecurity Directions.

The Aerial program for blackberries and serrated tussock has continued to garner wide support amongst landholders with the CTWA staff providing the organisational and logistic input for the program provided by Commercial Helicopters. During 2023 Council has changed helicopter operators engaging with Rotor Solutions following a tender process, Rotor will commence operations in 2024. The Council has had a long and successful relationship with Commercial Helicopters over many years, I thank them for that service.

The Council plans and manages roadside weed spraying for our 4 constituent councils, Lithgow, Oberon, Blayney, and Bathurst. In October 2022 consultation commenced to review this program. The outcome was to develop a Service Level Agreement that detailed the roadside program consisting of spraying all roads within an identified sector being treated annually over a 3-year program. Each Council area has been broken into 3 sectors. I thank the constituent councils for reaching this strategic agreement it will deliver cleaner road reserves in the longer term. It is acknowledged that roads in sector 3 will not be treated in the next 2 years and will have a heavy infestation at that time. Once we move into years 4 to 6 the weed infestation within road reserves will be reduced and maintained at a low level. I thank the constituent councils for making these changes. The 3 sectors of each Council area can be viewed on our CTWA website.

Some key performance metrics for the organisation **since 1st July 2018** are as follows demonstrating how active the small team of inspectors have been:

- Total number of inspections 9,139.
- The area inspected 919,840 ha.
- 4,942 first inspections were assessed as being low risk, no further action was taken.
- 1,676 first inspections were assessed as high risk.
- 988 of these have reduced the risk to low.
- 688 properties were still going through the compliance system as at 30 June 2023
- 1,858 klm of Roads were sprayed in the 2022 – 2023 year.

Biosecurity Inspection 1st July 2022 to 30th June 2023.

TOTAL: 1,764 Inspections conducted from 1 st July 2021 to 30 th June 2022	847 of the 1,764 were high risk
	971 of the 1,764 were low risk
	1177 of the 1,764 were Re-inspections
	587 of the 1,764 were First Inspections

1,177 of the 1,764 were Re-inspections	453 of the 1,177 were high risk
	724 of the 1,174 were low risk
587 of the 1,764 were First inspections	123 of the 587 were high risk
	464 of the 587 were low risk

NSW Weeds Action Program 2022-2023	Target	Achieved
Key activity results		
Regional Inspection Program - Inspection of high risk roadsides (Inspection) km's	1700	1858
Regional Inspection Program - Inspection of high risk TSRs (Inspection)	10	15
Regional Inspection Program - Inspection of high risk water courses (Inspection) km's	40	63
Regional inspection Program - Inspections of high risk rail corridors (Inspection) km's	150	477
Regional Inspection Program - Inspections of nurseries, pet shops and sale yards (Inspection)	20	11
Regional Inspection Program - Inspections of land owned / managed by State bodies (Inspection)	100	48
Regional Inspection Program - Inspections of council owned land (Inspection)	30	46
Regional Inspection Program - Private Property Inspections (Inspection)	500	505
Compliance - Re-inspections (Compliance)	1157	1177
Develop plans for priority species in consultation with landholders (Compliance)	450	710
Relevant educational material is made available to landholders during inspections (Extension)	400	700
Training activities to improve capacity of weed officers (Co-ordination)	30	18
Attend or hold public events to raise public awareness of new incursions and local mechanisms for reporting weeds (Extension)	20	22
Distribution of the NSW Weed Control Handbook and print outs from NSW Weed Wise (Extension)	400	710

The County Council has engaged with the other 6 Weed County Councils in NSW. This network of Weed County Councils is focused on the development and delivery of best practice weed management including compliance & enforcement practices. This networking will not detract from CTWAs core role as a local control authority to our four constituent Councils.

CTWA is dependent on the continuing support of our 4 constituent Councils, the dedication of our staff and, the support from the Department of Primary Industries and, Local Land Services has been greatly appreciated. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Please remember the importance of all landholders meeting their legal weed biosecurity duty is crucial to the viability of our farming sector, the quality of agricultural production, and the conservation of our natural environment.

Andrew McKibbin

Chairman

Central Tablelands Weeds Authority

Legal Entity: Upper Macquarie County Council

2. Introduction

2.1 Purpose of the Annual Report

The main aim of the Annual Report is to report on Council's progress in implementing its Delivery Program and Operational Plan as these documents are wholly within council's responsibility. The Annual Report is a key point of accountability between Council and its community.

2.2 How to read the Annual Report

This Annual Report is prepared to match the Activity Details and Performance measures in the Annual Operational Plan for Financial Year 2022/2023.

2.3 Highlights

During 2022/2023 negotiations with our constituent councils occurred in developing and agreeing on a new strategic approach for the Roadside Weed Treatment Program. The changes are significant dividing each Local Government Area (LGA) into 3 sectors and treating all roads within a sector annually resulting in all roads within an LGA being treated once every 3 years. These new strategic targets were based on 5 years of Roadside programs data collected when the program operated under a non-binding MOU. The change to a Service Level Agreement required significant changes to the annual financial contributions being made by Constituent Councils in treating Roadside weeds.

Council's Weed Biosecurity Officers achieved NSW Weeds Action Program inspectorial targets as reported in the Chairman's message above and, managed and assisted with a successful Aerial Spraying program in March 2023 and, complemented Council's Roadside Spray Contractors by undertaking spraying of local roads.

2.4 Financial Summary

Council ended the 2021-2022 financial year with a net operating result of \$129,000. Several key factors contributed to this:

Revenue key factors:

- Changeover of 4 fleet vehicles.
- Improved investment markets increasing returns.
- The success of the 2023 aerial spraying program.

Expense key factors:

- Depreciation was less as several assets had already been fully expensed.
- Materials and services expense were decreased significantly \$111,000.
- Council finished the 2022-2023 financial year with \$1,313,000 total equity compared to the previous financial year 2021-2022 of \$1,184,000.

3. Overview

What the County Council business is.

The Central Tablelands Weeds Authority is a single purpose local government authority that is the 'Local Control Authority' for Weed Biosecurity.

Constituent Councils.

Two representatives from each of the four (4) constituent local government councils come together to form the governing body of the County Council. The Members of the County Council elect the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

The Members of the Governing Body of the County Council.

As at the 30th of June 2022, the County Council was comprised of eight (8) Members as follows:

Cr Andrew McKibbin - Oberon Council [County Chairman]
 Cr Bruce Reynolds -Blayney Shire Council [Deputy Chairman]
 Cr Allan Ewin - Blayney Shire Council [Member]
 Cr Stephen Lesslie- Lithgow City Council [Member]
 Cr Col O'Connor - Lithgow City Council [Member]
 Cr Bruce Watt - Oberon Council [Member]
 Cr Andrew Smith Bathurst Regional Council [Member]
 Cr Ben Fry - Bathurst Regional Council [Member]

Council Meeting Attendance

Member attendance at County Council Meetings for the 12 months to 30th June 2023, was as follows:

Cr. Andrew McKibbin	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	7
Cr. Stephen Lesslie	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	7
Cr. Bruce Reynolds	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	7
Cr. Allan Ewin	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	5
Cr. Bruce Watt	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	7
Cr. Ben Fry	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	7
Cr. Andrew Smith	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	8
Cr. Col O'Connor	Meetings attended out of 8 held.	7

Stakeholders and Staff

The County Council has nine (9) permanent staff and is supported as required by various contractors that assist with delivery of landholder support services. A part-time General Manager managing governance and business strategy, while Biosecurity Administration Manager and the Biosecurity Operations Manager respectively manage the administration of both business and biosecurity systems and processes, the field-based biosecurity operations are provided by five (5) Weed Biosecurity Officers supported by a Program Assistant part-time.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI), in conjunction with the Central Tablelands - Local Land Services (LLS), are key stakeholders providing State and regional strategy and planning. DPI through LLS provides funding support involving an annual operating grant from the NSW Weed Action Program. These agencies also provide invaluable in-kind support with research results; weed identification; weed species risk assessment; and weed information and extension materials.

The constituent councils being the councils from the local government areas of Bathurst, Blayney, Lithgow, and Oberon are the primary funding agencies through annual operating grants provided in proportion to the relative strategic weed risk associated with each council area. The constituent council communities are the direct beneficiaries of the County Council's work and accordingly have a keen interest in the County Council's activities and in particular the impacts of weed biosecurity in relation to farmland productivity, local economic impacts and more generally the quality of life in rural communities.

Beyond landholders and residents in the County area, the effectiveness of local weed biosecurity impacts on all Australians in different ways, as efforts to control weeds in our district, is part of a national effort to control serious invasive pest plants that unchecked will cause insurmountable damage to the productivity of agricultural land, country landscapes, and waterway environments.

The County Council's source of authority.

The County Council was first constituted by proclamation of the Governor of NSW in February 1949, pursuant to the provisions of the Local Government Act (1919). The initial charter was for the *eradication of noxious plants – particularly Serrated Tussock*. More recently that charter was clarified to pursue control of various *Priority Weeds* (still commonly referred to as noxious weeds).

Today the Council derives its power and authority from two primary sources:

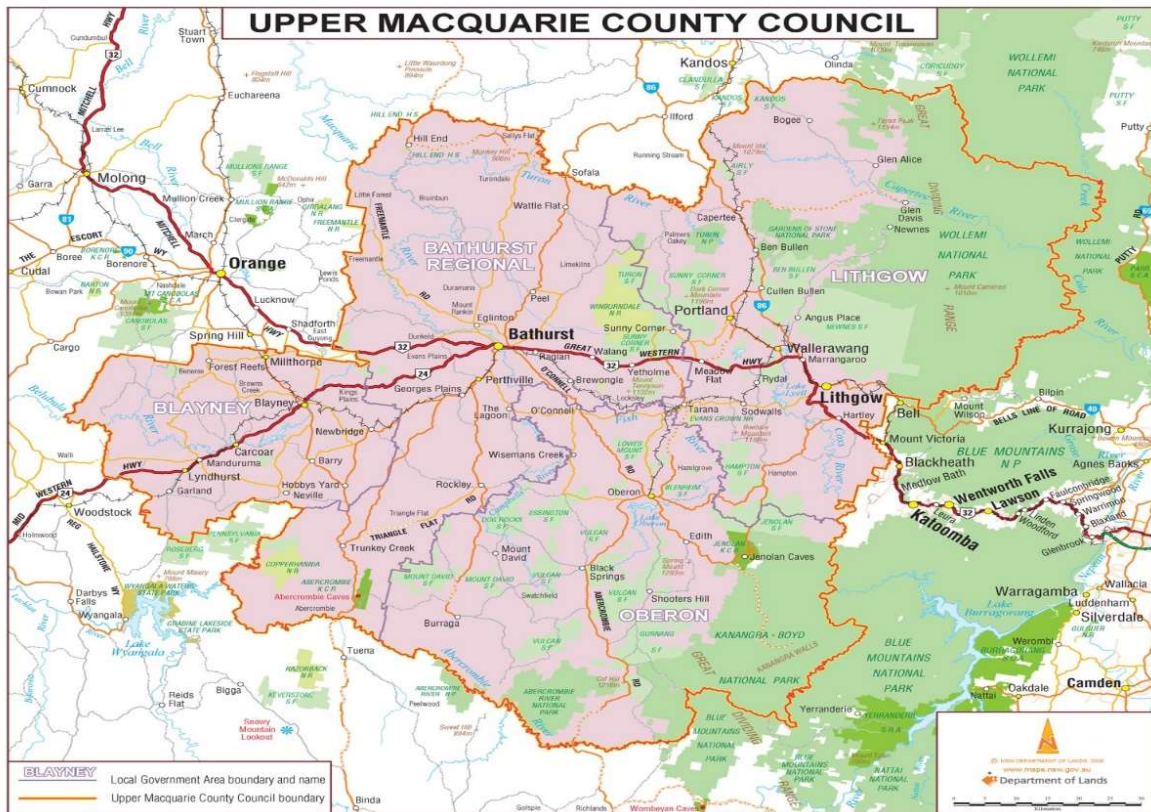
- The *local weed control authority* roles and responsibilities come from the provisions of the Biosecurity Act (2015).
- The *local government authority* duties and obligations come from the provisions of the Local Government Act (1993).

The area of operations of the Central Tablelands Weeds Authority comprises the whole of its constituent council local government areas of Bathurst, Blayney, Lithgow, and Oberon and has the local weed control authority function to the absolute exclusion of those local councils.

The County Council has the following key operational functions in relation to the land for which it is the local control authority:

- a) The prevention, elimination, minimisation, and management of the biosecurity risk posed or likely to be posed by weeds,
- b) To develop, implement, co-ordinate and review weed control programs,
- c) To inspect land in connection with its weed control functions,
- d) To keep records about the exercise of the local control authority's functions, and
- e) To report to the NSW Government about the exercise of the local control authority's functions.

The County Council operating profile.



The Central Tablelands Weeds Authority has an 'Area of Operations' that covers the whole of the local government areas of Bathurst, Blayney, Lithgow, and Oberon

The County Council has responsibilities covering an area of 1.35 million hectares. The area extends from high in the Blue Mountains in the east, from the Abercrombie National Park south to Kanangra Walls in the south-east, as far west as Limestone Creek and beyond Forest Reefs, and to the north-west reaching Hill End and Wattle Flat then to the north-east beyond Capertee and Glen Davis across into Wollemi National Park.

The area of operations has a population of 78,113 residents and 41,000 landholdings made up of 842,000 Ha of private land, 122,000 Ha of forest plantations, 377,000 Ha of National Parks and 11,000 Ha of other public land.

The County Council area of operations includes highly productive agricultural land, high ecological value national parks, and vast areas of forest operations.

Climatically the area is susceptible to rapid weed invasion from roads, rivers, and properties where landholders do not properly control weeds. The Tablelands' undulating country is also prone to weed invasion with seed being blown by prevailing winds.

There are 34 priority weeds in the Central Tablelands region, the Regional Strategic Weed Management Plans details these weeds, please refer to the link below.

[Central-Tablelands-Regional-Strategic-Weed-Management-Plan-2023-2027.pdf](#)

4. STATUTORY REPORTING

The NSW Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (LG (G) Reg.) in Clause 217 requires the following specified information to be included in the annual report: This information has been included in the Regulation because the Government believes that it is important for community members to know about it – to help their understanding of how the council has been performing both as a business entity and a community leader.

A. Details of overseas visits by members and council staff [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a)]

Central Tablelands Weeds Authority had no Council Member, nor Council staff member make any overseas visits on its behalf or at its expense during the reporting period.

B. Details of the Chairman and Members fees, expenses and facilities [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a1)]

Chairman's Allowance (S249 LGA)	\$6K
Members Fees (S248 LGA)	\$28K
Members Travelling & Subsistence (Council Policy)	\$8K
ANNUAL TOTAL	\$42K

C. Contracts awarded by the Council [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a2)]

Central Tablelands Weeds Authority						
CONTRACTS						
Contracts Listing	2022.2023 Financial Year					
Contractor	Contract Details	Contract Purpose	Contract Value	Contract Commenced	Duration of Contract	Funding in Budget
Commercial Helicopters	Aerial weed spraying program	Aerial spraying	\$232,000	1/7/2019	4 years	\$232,000
Gregaldon Pastoral	A part of a panel to perform roadside spraying	Roadside spraying panel	Part thereof \$116,000	15/11/2021	3 years	Part thereof \$116,000
MJC Contracting	A part of a panel to perform roadside spraying	Roadside spraying panel	Part thereof \$116,000	15/11/2021	3 years	Part thereof \$116,000
Dean Grabham	A part of a panel to perform roadside spraying	Roadside spraying panel	Part thereof \$116,000	15/11/2021	3 years	Part thereof \$116,000
Brett Howarth	A part of a panel to perform roadside spraying	Roadside spraying panel	Part thereof \$116,000	15/11/2021	3 years	Part thereof \$116,000

- D. Amounts incurred in relation to legal proceedings [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a3)]
 4 matters: Fail Individual Biosecurity Direction \$4,794.
 1 finalised with a Conditional Release Order 12months.
 3 matters progressing as at 30th June 2023.
 General Legal matters and advice \$8,165.
- E. Private works and financial assistance [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a4, a5)]
 \$NIL - Central Tablelands Weeds Authority neither undertook private work nor provided any financial assistance during the reporting period.
- F. Details of external bodies, companies and partnerships [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a6, a7, a8)]
 Central Tablelands Weeds Authority was not a part of, nor did it have any legal interest in an external body, company or partnership.
- G. A statement of the activities undertaken by the council to implement its equal employment opportunity management plan. [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(a9)]
 Central Tablelands Weeds Authority has an Equal Opportunity Management Plan that applies to all 9 of its staff. There was one vacancy during the year, being the General Manager's position. The Council has permitted flexible working arrangements for its staff in order that they can attend to family and related duties when the need arises during otherwise normal work hours. All staff have had training opportunities and participated in training activities based on position requirements and individual training priorities. There have been no EEO related complaints during the reporting period.
- H. Details of the General Manager's total remuneration [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(b)]
 Acting General Manager Lisa Monardo and General Manager Tim Johnston's total remuneration package for the reporting period was \$115K.
- I. Details of the total expenditure on Senior Staff remuneration [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(c)]
 This matter is not applicable to Central Tablelands Weeds Authority, as it has no Senior Staff other than the General Manager
- J. Statement of Total number of persons who performed paid work on Thursday 25 May 2023 c.217(d)
- | | |
|---|--|
| Permanent/Part time/temporary employees that were working 25/5/2023 | 8 (this includes the Acting General Manager) |
| Senior Staff working on 25/5/2023 | 1 x Acting General Manager |
- K. Information on storm-water levies and charges or coastal protection services [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(e, e1)]
 This matter is not applicable to Central Tablelands Weeds Authority
- L. Information on storm-water levies and charges [LG (G) Reg. c.217 (1)(e)]
 This matter is not applicable to Central Tablelands Weeds Authority
- M. Information included on government information public access activity.
 Nil public access activity.
- N. Information included on public interest disclosure activity.
 Nil public interest disclosure activity.

5. Operational Plan 2022/2023 Reporting

What is an Operational Plan?

Section 405 of the *Local Government Act (1993)* requires that the County Council have an annual Operational Plan that is adopted before the beginning of each financial year and outlines the activities to be undertaken that year as part of the Delivery Program.

The Operational Plan is an annual sub-plan of the 4-year Delivery Program and must include the Statement of Revenue Policy.

The draft Operational Plan must be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days and public submissions invited, before a final plan can be adopted. The County Council must accept and consider any submissions made on the draft Operational Plan before adopting the Operational Plan.

Clause 201 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* includes provisions relating to the content of the County Council's annual statement of revenue policy. This includes details (as applicable) of: Estimated income and expenditure; Ordinary rates and special rates; proposed fees and charges; Council's proposed pricing methodology; and proposed borrowings.

This Operational Plan:

- Is prepared as a sub-plan of the Delivery Program.
- Directly addresses the actions outlined in the Delivery Program and is linked to the Business Activity Strategic Plan which identifies strategic projects, programs and activities that Council will undertake progressively within the subject financial year, and subsequently, towards achieving the County Council's principle activity of managing weed biosecurity.
- Allocates nominal responsibilities for each project, program or activity.
- Identifies suitable measures to determine the effectiveness of the projects, programs and activities undertaken.
- Includes a detailed budget for the activities to be undertaken in the subject year.

6. What is a Delivery Program?

Section 404 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires that the County Council must have a Delivery Program detailing the principal activities it will undertake to achieve the objectives established in the Business Activities Strategic Plan, within the resources available under the Resourcing Strategy.

The County Council must prepare a new Delivery Program by 30 June in the year following a local government ordinary election to cover the principal activities of the council for the 4 year period commencing on 1 July following the election. It is then updated annual during the Council term.

The Delivery Program must –

- directly address the objectives and strategies of the Business Activity Strategic Plan,
- identify principal activities that council will undertake in response to the objectives and strategies,
- inform, and be informed by, the Resourcing Strategy,
- address the full range of council operations,
- allocate high level responsibilities for each action or set of actions, and
- include financial estimates for the four year period covered by the Program.

The draft Delivery Program must be exhibited for public comment for a minimum of 28 days and public submissions must be accepted and considered before the final program is adopted.

The Council must review its Delivery Program each year when preparing its Operational Plan.

The General Manager must ensure that progress reports are provided to the council, with respect to the principal activities detailed in the Delivery Program, at least every 6 months.

Council may choose to roll the Delivery Program forward beyond its elected term to enable effective forward planning, provided it is consistent with its Business Activity Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy. Where a council does this, it is still required to report on the implementation of its initial Delivery Program. Council is required to prepare a new Delivery Program after each general local government election.

Where an amendment to the Delivery Program is proposed, it must be included in a Council business paper which outlines the reasons for the amendment and be tabled and resolved to be noted at that meeting and considered by Council at its next meeting.

Where significant amendments are proposed, the Program must be re-exhibited.

The Delivery Program aligned with the Annual Operating Plan are detailed in the Tables below demonstrating achievements in the reporting period.

Operational Plan Achievements 2022 / 2023

1. Weed Biosecurity Risk Detection and Monitoring

Implement a suitable landholdings inspection regime across the county district to identify and rank weed biosecurity risks and encourage the landholder or occupier to adequately meet their weed biosecurity duty.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
1.1: All areas are inspected in proportion to the Weed Action Plan target funding level.		
1.1.1 Implement a recurrent routine annual property inspection regime targeting priority weed species across all constituent council areas based on weed classifications set in the current Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan.	<p>Inspect properties to assess weed invasion risk and advise landowners to fulfil their legal responsibilities in relation to weeds.</p> <p>Provide information to landowners on priority weed control.</p> <p>Respond to priority weed complaints.</p>	Achieved
1.2: Prior notice during cooperative compliance phase according to the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> .		
1.2.1 Provide an appropriate level of advance notice to landholders and occupiers for routine initial inspections and follow-up inspection of properties.	Where appropriate, send Council's "Notice to Enter and Inspect"	Achieved
1.3 Property Inspection Schedule is in accordance with the weed biosecurity risk ratings established by the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> .		
1.3.1 Develop and implement a risk-based property 'compliance re-inspection' program that targets weed biosecurity risks on the basis of objective risk ranking.	Produce monthly a "re-inspection" list for Weed Biosecurity Officers to guide their compliance re-inspections.	Achieved
1.4. An in-house review of the potential and extent of / upgrades/ additional technologies is undertaken on an annual basis. As improved technologies become available as appropriate to support detection and ranking of weed biosecurity risks.		
1.4.1 Utilise geographic information systems, global satellite positioning, satellite imagery and drone technologies as appropriate to support weed biosecurity risk detection, monitoring and targeting.	<p>Provide adequate computer facilities to run an appropriate Geographical Information System (GIS).</p> <p>Continue and enhance the present practice of entering arrangements with constituent councils, or others, for obtaining GIS data.</p> <p>Continue the training of staff in the use of the CREST and associated GIS system in order to ensure it's most effective and efficient use.</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Advancing</p> <p>Achieved</p>

2. Weed Biosecurity Risk Reduction

Achieve a reduced overall level of weed biosecurity risk in the county district through an appropriate mix of cooperative compliance and enforced compliance measures.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
2.1: Weed biosecurity officers undertake extension work in relation to stakeholder interest group meetings, attending agricultural shows, and consulting with quarrying, agriculture and forest industry organisations.		
2.1.1 Take opportunities to engage directly and indirectly with the landholder community to educate and advise landholders and occupiers of their weed biosecurity duties and what is required of them in that regard.	Where appropriate have Council staff attend community meetings. Continue to participate in the Regional Weeds Committee Meeting.	Achieved Achieved
2.2: A suite of 'property inspection reports' including for establishing weed infestation status,' weed control advice', and weed management programs are available.		
2.2.1 Develop and deliver (chargeable and no-charge) 'value-add' services to support landholders prepare realistic and acceptable programs/plans for meeting their weed biosecurity duties.	Work with landholders to help meet their Biosecurity Duty	Achieved
2.3: Encourage binding biosecurity undertakings from landholders as part of the cooperative enforcement phase.		
2.3.1 Facilitate landholders and land occupiers entering 'binding undertakings' with regard to a suitability staged approach to fulfilling their weed biosecurity duties.	Work with landholders to help meet their Biosecurity Duty.	The option is presented to Landholders. No uptake at time of reporting.
2.4: Enforceable direction notices are all issued in accordance with the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> .		
2.4.1 Issue enforceable direction notices to property owners and occupiers that resist or otherwise fail to fulfil their weed biosecurity duties where significant weed biosecurity risks persist after initial advice.	Follow the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.	Achieved
2.5: Penalty Infringement Notices are all issued in accordance with the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> .		
2.5.1 Issue on-the-spot fines (PIN's) to property owners and occupiers that fail to adequately meet their weed biosecurity duties in relation to direction notices or binding undertakings or other serious biosecurity matters.	Follow the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.	Achieved
2.6: Court proceedings are instigated against any recalcitrant owner or occupier of land in accordance with the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> .		

2.6.1 Initiate court proceedings against property owners and occupiers that ignore statutory direction or penalty notices, otherwise seriously fail to meet their weed biosecurity duties, or to secure outstanding charges and penalties relating to weed biosecurity matters.	Follow the Compliance and Enforcement Policy.	Achieved
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3. Weed Biosecurity Risk Treatment Programs

Develop, implement, co-ordinate and review weed control programs in support of cooperative landowners or occupiers seeking practical Council support in tackling weed biosecurity matters.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
3.1. Where seasonal conditions permit, implement a spring and autumn program annually - targeting 'serrated tussock' grass. Where seasonal conditions permit, implement one programs annually - targeting 'blackberry'.		
3.1.1 Supplement the routine annual recurrent property inspection regime with an 'opt-in' aerial weed spraying program delivered notionally by the County Council on a cost + recovery basis.	Organise aerial spraying programs for priority weeds across the district	Achieved
	Publicise aerial spraying programs as applicable to ensure optimum landholder participation.	Achieved
	Organise aerial spraying (involving all inspectors) throughout the county area in accordance with programs.	Achieved
3.2: Engage with Forests NSW and have them participate in roadside weed spraying programs. Engage with NSW Crown Lands, Transport for NSW and National Parks in weed management and control programs.		
3.2.1 Make NSW government agencies aware of the opportunity to 'opt-in' the general aerial weed spraying program delivered notionally by the County Council on a cost + recovery basis OR a custom designed program to assist them meet their weed biosecurity duty.	Inspect Forestry Corporation land areas and advise of weed control requirements.	Achieved
	Follow-up to ensure control work is carried out on priority weed risks.	Achieved
	Inspect un-fenced road areas surrounding forest areas.	Achieved
	Communicate with NSW government agencies elected employee.	Achieved
3.3: Maintain or increase the level of roadside control to constituent Council funding levels.		
3.3.1 Reform the established roadside weed spraying program delivered notionally by the County Council for constituent Councils at a direct full cost to the County Council	Provide regular communication with each constituent Council on their obligations under the act.	Achieved Achieved

<p>– to become a direct cost (only) recovery basis OR a custom designed program to assist them meet their weed biosecurity duty.</p>	<p>Ensure that any infestations of Priority Weeds found on member Council property are mapped and properly recorded.</p>	<p>Advancing</p>
	<p>Ensure that Priority Weed infestations on Council Lands and roadsides are mapped and properly recorded, with reports provided to constituent councils.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
	<p>In conjunction with member Councils, conduct a regular and systematic program of property visits to constituent Council land.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
	<p>Undertake control work on Constituent Council roadsides as funded by each constituent Council.</p>	<p>Advancing</p>
	<p>Respond promptly to complaints about the presence of Priority Weeds.</p>	

4. Weed Biosecurity Records & Audits

Keep suitable records about the exercise of the Council’s weed biosecurity control functions to meet operational, enforcement and compliance auditing requirements.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
4.1: Maintain ‘job numbers’ system.		
4.1.1 Adapt the Council’s accounting system to better capture and produce a wide range of operationally oriented management accounting information.	Ensure Council’s accounting software is kept up to date	Advancing
4.2: Refreshed suite of operational data is recorded in biosecurity register according to procedural requirements on an ongoing basis.		
4.2.1 Refine and integrate the existing operational data collection systems to ensure a suitable range of management information becomes available in a timely manner.	Provide appropriate hardware and software to establish and maintain a database. Ensure that it is appropriately backed up and kept secure.	Not achieved Achieved
4.3: Provide performance measures that address quality, effectiveness and efficiency for key areas of operation.		
4.3.1 Establish a sound set of operational performance measure that facilitates enhanced performance reporting to key stakeholders	At regular and frequent intervals, report to the Council on additions to the database since the last report and how the Council might modify its activities, or otherwise react to, input received.	Not achieved

4.4: Self-audit undertaken annually and reported to Council in association with annual reports.		
4.4.1 Introduce self-audits of UMCC compliance with NSW State Weed Committee Standard for Weed Management Compliance.	Participate in and cooperate with the newly established ARIC.	Not achieved. Regulatory changes to ARIC requires independent internal audit function to commence July 2024

5. Weed Biosecurity Statutory Reporting

To meet all statutory reporting requirements imposed under the Local Government Act (1993), Biosecurity Act (2015) and other legislation as per reporting timetables.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
5.1: Agency data requests are met within agreed submission timeframes / deadlines.		
5.1.1 Submit to NSW Department of Primary Industries and Local Land Services, as applicable, all available weed biosecurity meta-data on a regular basis in support of regional and state level understanding of weed biosecurity risks.	Submit monthly (BIS) WAP Data reports to Department of Primary Industries.	Achieved
5.2: In a timely manner when matters arise.		
5.2.1 Present matters of key importance relating to gaps and anomalies in the biosecurity legislation to the Regional Weeds Committee and the State Weeds Committee as appropriate.	Continue to attend the quarterly Regional Weeds Committee Meetings.	Advancing
5.3: Annual report following Council consideration is submitted by the due date.		
5.3.1 Provide an annual report to the DPI Secretary (and Minister when appropriate) outlining any substantive achievements and difficulties experienced as the local control authority and information about any recalcitrant government authorities.	Submit ¾ report to LLS, indicating figures against WAP estimates.	Achieved
	Submit EOFY actual figures, against WAP estimates.	Achieved

6. Sustainable Resourcing of the Principal Business Activity

Secure the allocation of sufficient financial and human resources and to optimise those scarce resources in pursuit of core business duties and obligations.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
6.1: Review to inform this 2022/23/2031/32 strategic business activity plan. Further review annually to transform and maintain the strategic business activity plan as a long-term sustainable model.		
6.1.1 Periodic review of the established budget structure and	Provide regular investment reports.	Achieved

associated funding priorities and testing the suitability of established service priorities and pricing in view of the new more comprehensive approach to weed biosecurity.	Analyse and provide Council with Quarterly Budget Review Statements.	Achieved
6.2: Apply a zero-based approach to budget preparation before adoption of annual operating budget and ongoing thereafter. Cost/ benefit testing process is in place (for new or different proposals) before adoption of annual operating budget and ongoing thereafter.		
6.2.1 Apply ongoing cost / benefit principles to testing the suitability of established and new individual budget allocations and sourcing methods and restructure where appropriate to improve business sustainability.	Analyse and provide Council with Quarterly Budget Review Statements.	Achieved
6.3: Procurement Policy and procedures in place and reviewed when required.		
6.3.1 Apply sensible market testing practises to all procurement activities by the UMCC with a view to minimising waste, obtaining best value for money, and improving financial sustainability.	Follow the Procurement Policy	Achieved
6.4: Ongoing scanning for opportunities and applications made where there is a clear cost / benefit evident.		
6.4.1 Assess alternative funding options for both replacing future capital funding requirements with recurrent expense alternatives and attracting/ devising new recurrent funding opportunities.	Monitor and apply for suitable Grant opportunities.	Not Achieved

7. Innovation and Quality

To continuously innovate, adapt and apply initiative in decision-making and problem solving with a view to achieving an efficient, effective and quality-focussed business.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
7.1: Evidence of achievements presented to and recognised by the Council on an ongoing basis.		
7.1.1 Foster an organisational culture that supports innovation and targets excellence	Conduct regular team meetings.	Achieved
	Participate in multiorganizational meetings where appropriate	Achieved
7.2: Drone inspection fleet be maintained in support of biosecurity officer in their field.		
7.2.1 Operate aerial drone technologies as an enhancement to operational effectiveness and staff productivity.	Conduct training in the operation of drones.	Achieved
	Ensure all records, appropriate licences and insurances are kept up to date	Achieved

7.3: Subject to cost / benefit result and available funds - ongoing review on available technology.		
7.3.1 Investigate and introduce the use of satellite imagery as an aid to identifying, monitoring and ranking weed biosecurity risk at a catchment, district, or other relevant local boundary.	Continue to cooperate with and communicate with those conducting research and development in remote sensing technology.	Not achieved
7.4: Subject to cost / benefit result and available funds - refined or upgraded GIS system and support mechanisms in operation.		
7.4.1 Review and refine the existing use of geographical information systems with a view to achieving enhanced integration with information capture, reporting and monitoring outcomes.	Work with GIS technicians to achieve best outcomes.	Advancing

8. Biosecurity Advice & Information

To leverage of information and material created by NSW DPI and LLS with a view to enhancing the impact of target educational and advisory functions (i.e. achieve greater cooperative compliance with biosecurity duties).

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
8.1: Relevant information prepared / obtained and provided with all Intention to Inspect Notices.		
8.1.1 Provide a relevant and targeted suite of weed biosecurity information and information sources to landholders in conjunction with property inspections and re-inspections.	Add DPI created fliers on related weeds with Weed Control Notices.	Achieved
	Continue to hand our DPI created weed treatment handbook	Achieved
8.2: Targeted advice annually. Public advice on an ongoing basis.		
8.2.1 Remind the real estate and land conveyance industry in the district of the availability and benefits of obtaining BOTH a Weed Biosecurity Information Notice (about outstanding fees, charges or penalties etc) as well as a Weed Status Assessment before agreeing to buy a property or as a benefit before trying to sell a property.	Continue to supply Certificates as to Adverse Affectations.	Achieved
	Continue to supply Subdivision Weed Certificates	Achieved
8.3: Liaise closely on an ongoing basis with DPI and Central Tablelands LLS regarding available information sources.		
8.3.1 Make full use of established weed biosecurity information, data and advisory opportunities available through NSW DPI and LLS where appropriate.	Refer landholders to DPI website and app Weed Wise.	Achieved

9. Weed Biosecurity Enforcement

To strengthen and expand the effectiveness of the County Council’s regulatory role and enhancing credibility in the regulatory process – particularly in terms of fairness and consistency.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
9.1: Compliance and enforcement policy for implementing the Biosecurity Act (2015) in place and reviewed. Ensure compliance and enforcement policy is implemented in a consistent and equitable manner tested by peer review process.		
9.1.1 Implement a biosecurity compliance and enforcement policy and associated procedures to carefully guide authorised officers throughout the whole compliance inspections and enforcement activities journey.	Review Policy to ensure it is “best practice”	Achieved
9.2: Direct contact between the County Council GM and each key agency (Forests NSW; ; Crown Lands; Transport for NSW; NPWS) creating and maintaining a binding undertaking. Direct contact between the County Council, Local MP and relevant Ministers of the Crown regarding each key agency (Forests NSW; ; NPWS; Crown Lands; Transport for NSW;) seeking a binding undertaking if an agency declines to cooperate.		
9.2.1 Pursue an initial cooperative compliance approach (and later a forced compliance approach if required) to ensuring NSW State Government agencies meet their weed biosecurity duties as set out in the Biosecurity Act (2015).	Follow the Compliance and Enforcement Policy	Achieved
9.3: Forced compliance actions ‘ramp-up’ according to the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> from the start of 2018/2019. Direct enforcement action by the County Council against each key agency (Forests NSW; NPWS; Crown Lands; Transport for NSW;). <i>(IF REQUIRED)</i>		
9.3.1 For recalcitrant landholders - including NSW State Government Agencies – those who ignore or otherwise fail to meet or reasonably progress with their weed biosecurity duty - commence forced compliance options including legal action.	Follow the Compliance and Enforcement Policy	Achieved
9.4: A risk based assessment model, tailored for the county district circumstances is the basis for ranking weed biosecurity risk (and hence subsequent levels of enforcement activity) according to the <i>UMCC compliance and enforcement policy</i> .		
9.4.1 That the local weed biosecurity inspection, monitoring and enforcement regime is based on an objective ‘risk based’ process to establish the degree of weed biosecurity risk / weed biosecurity compliance level for each property.	Follow the Compliance and Enforcement Policy	Achieved and being promoted to other Weeds County Councils in NSW.

10. An Exemplary Biosecurity Workforce

To leverage off the experience and understanding of weed biosecurity matters, held by council staff, LLS and DPI to evolve the UMCC Weed Biosecurity Officers into the new proactive and motivational era of weed biosecurity under the Biosecurity Act (2015).

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
10.1: The training plan maintained and reviewed. Incremental planned and staged training delivery. On an ongoing basis.		
10.1.1 Identify and provide a comprehensive targeted training program providing skills and knowledge enhancement associated with weed biosecurity to ensure they are highly skilled, confident and well informed in all aspects of their role.	Collaborate with Council staff to create individualised training programs.	Moderate achievement
10.2: Involve weed biosecurity officers in all stages of creating and refining operational and enforcement procedures and guidelines that they are required to implement Iterative feedback and continuous refinements to documented systems and processes as they are implemented on an ongoing basis.		
10.2.1 Develop a full suite of appropriate procedures and guidelines [for implementing legislation and policy] to support biosecurity decision-making by officer in the field and in association with enforcement activities.	Review and Update policies	Policy development achieved. Policy review not achieved.
10.3: Liaise closely on an ongoing basis with DPI and central tablelands LLS regarding updated information and guidance information.		
10.3.1 Make full use of established weed biosecurity procedures and guidelines prepared and updated from time to time by NSW DPI and LLS where appropriate.	Review DPI and LLS procedures and guidelines	Moderate achievement. DPI Weed Policy and Procedures dates 2018.
10.4: Continue to engage regionally on an ongoing basis with DPI and central tablelands LLS and related advisory committees regarding weed biosecurity matters.		
10.4.1 Work closely with NSW DPI and central tablelands LLS, and other local control authorities where appropriate to share knowledge and experience and keep up to date with contemporary weed biosecurity issues.	Communicate with Regional Weeds Coordinator on a regular basis.	Achieved.

11. Measuring Weed Biosecurity Activity and Outcomes

To suitably monitoring organisational achievements and measure outcomes accordingly as a means of demonstrating value for money to stakeholders and informing the organisation about areas for attention.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
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11.1: Management Information System (MIS) devised and activated and reviewed.		
11.1.1 Establish a suitable <i>management information system</i> for the Council that allows for and supports a comprehensive reporting and information source for staff, Council and other stakeholders as appropriate.	Maintain Council's property inspection register	Moderately achieved.
11.2: Reports to be provided on an ongoing basis.		
11.2.1 Provide periodic information reports to key stakeholders (including constituent councils) to assist their understanding of the of the current status and progress with addressing weed biosecurity matters in the district.	Create and provide Council regular property inspection reports which includes high risk inspections, low risk inspections and re-inspections that are yet to be inspected and have gone beyond 90 days.	Achieved
11.3: Contact meetings between the County Council and the Constituent Councils 2 times annually or otherwise by agreement.		
11.3.1 Liaise periodically with the Constituent Councils regarding Weed Biosecurity matters relevant to each council local area of operations.	Conduct meetings with nominated constituent council employees to collaborate and advise on weed biosecurity matters.	Moderately achieved

12. Support Good Organisational Governance

To ensure that the County Council governance structures and processes are designed (and appropriately implemented) to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity and inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation.

Delivery Program 2022/23-2026/27	Operation Plan 2022/2023	Outcome
12.1: All mandatory policies and procedures linked to statutory requirements are refreshed and up to date and reviewed annually or biannually thereafter. All discretionary policies and procedures reviewed annually or biannually.		
12.1.1 Review and update the Council's manual of policies, codes and procedures to ensure they meet regulatory requirements.	As stated	Not achieved
12.2: The <i>Annual Report</i> following Council consideration is published / submitted by the due date.		
12.2.1 Provide an annual report to the OLG CEO (and Minister when appropriate) compliant with all of the requirements of the Local Government Act (1993).	As stated	Not Achieved Annual report lodged 22 nd December
12.3: Designated documents including annual financial and auditors reports, management plans and various codes, agendas, business papers and minutes of meetings; information contained in certain registers; as well as plans and policies will be listed in the Councils <i>Agency Information Guide</i> updated annually.		

12.3.1 Have all relevant designated open access information available to the public as per the Government Information (Public Access) Act (2009).	Abide by all relevant GIPA legislation.	Moderately achieved. Not achieved during redesign of website.
12.4: Annual Auditor General's Report contains no substantial qualifications.		
12.4.1 Councils financial, asset management and procurement functions meet all statutory procedural and reporting requirements and are implemented in accordance with all relevant policies, codes and regulatory requirements.	Review procedures surrounding these functions to ensure they meet all relevant requirements.	Financial Statements and Auditor Report Achieved.
12.5: All relevant codes, standards and regulatory requirements for Council, Council meetings and Councillors are adhered to.		
12.5.1 Council is provided with frank and fearless advice, council business is properly transacted, decisions of the council are implemented in a timely manner, and council meetings are conducted in an orderly manner.	As stated.	Moderately achieved
12.5.2 Council renews, updates, and develops as required a comprehensive suite of the policies and procedures necessary for meeting statutory duties and obligations and others to ensure the safe, efficient and effective undertaking of works and delivery of services.	As stated.	Moderately achieved

APPENDIX 1: AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The NSW Local Government Act (1993) in Section 428 (2) (a) requires the audited financial reports be included in the council's annual report.

Those audited financial reports are provided as Appendix 1 herein



CENTRAL TABLELANDS

WEEDS
AUTHORITY