



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

Minister for Small Business

MEDIA RELEASE

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WEED WAR BOOSTED: HODGKINSON

New measures have been passed by NSW Parliament to strengthen the Noxious Weeds Act and help farmers tackle problem weeds across the State, Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, said today.

“The new measures strengthen the Act, reduce the spread of weeds from other states and bolsters our compliance powers to manage noxious weeds,” Katrina Hodgkinson said.

“The changes follow an extensive consultation process with stakeholders on how we can improve weed management in NSW and fine-tune the Noxious Weeds Act.

“Weeds are a big problem for the State’s farmers and costs the sector around \$1.2 billion a year in control activities and lost production.

“By reducing the spread of weeds, we can also improve the survival of threatened and endangered plants and animals and deliver broader environmental sustainability benefits.”

In developing the new measures, Katrina Hodgkinson said the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) called for feedback, ideas and submissions on an issues paper.

“We received a total of 64 submissions from various industry stakeholders and farmers on the Noxious Weeds Act and how it can be further enhanced,” Katrina Hodgkinson said.

“The review of the *Noxious Weeds Act* builds on a range of weed funding initiatives, including the \$8 million NSW Weeds Action Program, \$2.5 million to the funding of weed control on public lands, and a number of biological control, community involvement, training, policy and research projects.

“These initiatives are all aimed at working with the community and farmers to improve weed management and reducing the economic and environmental impacts of invasive weeds.”

Some of the new measures passed by NSW Parliament include:

- Strengthening the objectives of the Act to better reflect the current weed management policy and to provide greater consistency with the *NSW Invasive Species Plan*;
- Reducing the spread of weeds from other States, including by extending the requirements for cleaning agricultural and non-agricultural machinery and equipment;
- Expanding inspection powers;

- Boosting Ministerial powers to prohibit or regulate the importation of noxious weeds into NSW;
- Providing a mechanism to allow for the eradication of noxious weeds on Lord Howe Island.

The roles and responsibilities of public and private land managers for weed control is under active consideration. As stated in the Statutory Review of the *Noxious Weeds Act*, the matter requires further consideration and consultation to ensure cost-effective and equitable solutions are developed.

This work is underway as part of the development of a new over-arching Biosecurity reform package for NSW.

The NSW Government recently specifically allocated \$2.5 million to the funding of weed control on public lands, which is additional to the \$8 million regional Weeds Action Program.

This additional funding will ramp-up on-the-ground weed control, monitoring and coordination across the NSW Government's 36 million hectare land portfolio - taking in Crown Lands and Travelling Stock Routes.