

# Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland

Submission No. 022

**To:** [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)  
**Subject:** [SPAM ?] Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland  
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**Importance:** Low

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Please find following the submission to the Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland for local governments within the Wide Bay Burnett region

## **What compliance activities does your council undertake in relation to biosecurity?**

Councils carry out

- Biosecurity Surveillance programs to establish what presence/absence of plant and animal pests on all land tenure and identify control options being used by the relevant responsible person
- Monitoring of other places such as stall and markets
- Prevention and Control Program when applicable.
- Property inspections, surveys and mapping of invasive species, education and awareness activities such as workshops, flyers, correspondence and onsite meetings, development of sustainable property management planning that includes pest management, pasture management, weed hygiene and quarantine measures for landholders, treatment of invasive species on Local Government controlled reserves, provide advice to service providers regarding biosecurity risks and controls.
- Enforcement

## **Are there other compliance activities your council would like to undertake?**

Not compliance

However, there are other activities that Council would like to undertake if resources were available

- More property inspections
- education and awareness programs,
- landholder incentive programs

## **Are there barriers to undertaking these activities?**

Resources

Compliance activities are being resolved on an adhoc basis as Council has developed own procedures to deal with compliance. Local governments need access to follow up legislative training to ensure that implementation of necessary sections of the Biosecurity Act is standardized across Queensland

Identified barriers to compliance:

- Compliance process is fine, once the surveillance program has been approved access can be gained without having to go through the Entry with consent process.
- Resources

Does your council undertake surveys for priority weed species?

**Councils in the South Burnett have different approaches to weed surveys, ranging from**

- regular surveys for Bitou Bush
- surveys for groundsel and honey locust as required
- surveys for priority weeds as required
- establish if a pest has entered Council area
- general survey

## **Does your council undertake enforcement of non-compliant landholders**

- All Councils in region undertake compliance activities, however with different processes incorporating advice letters, biosecurity orders and biosecurity order (entry) stages

## **Do you think there is value in undertaking surveys, compliance and enforcement activities?**

- All Councils in region undertake compliance, surveys and enforcement activities

## **Is your council part of a regional enforcement approach?**

The following Councils have formed a regional group aligned with the Wide Bay Burnett Regional

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Organisation of Councils and are in the process of developing a regional strategy. At this point, Councils are not undertaking a regional approach to enforcement as Councils have different resources and priorities.

Gympie Regional Council  
Fraser Coast Regional Council  
Bundaberg Regional Council  
South Burnett Regional Council  
Cherbourg Shire Council  
North Burnett Regional Council

. **Does your council use technology to assist in the identification and mapping of invasive plants and/or to monitor compliance?**

- GPS, Pest Central, SUMMIT CrestSX, mappings apps and a number of program to key out species.

. **Does your Council work with state land managers in your LGA to coordinate management of weed species**

This issue is varied across local governments, some do work with state agencies; some do not as state agencies do not respond to Council requests to control pest plants and/or animals. An example of working together is the Wild Dog Mitigation project being conducted by Gympie Regional Council whereby control is being undertaken across all tenures in a specific area.

Local Governments advise state governments of presence of weeds on state lands as part of

. **Does your council consider that the control of weed species on state managed lands is effective? Please provide specific examples where this is or is not the case.**

**Not Effective**

Groundsel bush, rat tail grasses on forest lands are probably the main weed pests that are not controlled or poorly controlled in State forests (Cooloola forest, Wongi Forest) most likely due to lack of resources and funds.

National Parks - Woodgate, Buxton & Kinkuna section of the Burrum Coast National Park & Cordalba state forest, undertake little to no control of GRT along roads or boundaries

The South Burnett Community is currently undertaking a regional Lantana control program, local government is treating roads and reserves, and landholders are actively managing on private property. Department of Transport and Main Roads will only fund control adjacent to environmental areas leaving corridors of untreated lantana adjacent to active control sites. Not aware of any weed control programs on state land in our region.

**13. Please list the weed programs currently being funded by Biosecurity Queensland in your local government area.**

Partial funding of Bitou Bush surveys in Gympie Regional Council

Control of new incursions of (previous) class 1 species

Nothing in at least 8 years

. **Do you think these programs are effective at controlling the target species?**

Adhoc or non-existent

. **What other programs do you think BQ should be delivering in your area?**

- Continue to develop/research biological control or other/better herbicide control for luecana, hymenachne (as when there is plenty of water this weed is difficult to control)
- Coordination of weed control programs across state and local government tenure, education and awareness programs, support with landholder assistance programs.
- More extension and research into managing the impacts of pests

. **Does your council believe that current federal, state and local government weeds programs are coordinated to maximise their achievements?**

- Possibly in the areas where projects are being managed, but generally not being coordinated

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- State and Federal government funding for pest management has been significantly reduced over recent years
- less funds are being provided to regional natural resource management bodies to assist LG tackle priority pests,
- limited federal funds for weed control on federal controlled roads with councils required to use state and their own funding to tackle weeds on federal roads

### . What does your council see as the barriers to achieving a whole of government approach to weed management?

- Lack of resources, people, budgets and better control options
- failure by governments to adequately fund onground control programs particularly east of the dividing range,
- (until recently) no interest in providing funds to undertake research into controlling GRT which is the greatest pest issue facing landholders in the eastern half of Q'ld.
- lack of information regarding other government weed control programs in the area.
- the level of local government resources required for effective management of weeds continues to increase with no substantial breakthroughs in treatment technologies. This is particularly concerning when we are faced with herbicide resistance and community pressure to significantly reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides in public areas.

### . Does your council feel that regional NRM bodies support the priorities of both the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and local government?

Local governments in the Wide Bay Burnett varied in their response to this question, particularly wrt priorities of local government

- **Yes** when **adequately** funded and funding is not tied to environmentally significant areas but also considers economic impacts caused by pests in the regions
- **No**, Local Government are not included in planning to prioritise state government funding programs and have only recently been consulted prior to the development of co investment programs. Priorities for funding are based on state government criteria that often don't fit Local Government needs.
- The level of administration required to apply for, report on and acquit these projects can require substantial local government resources, in some cases the costs of reporting and administration can outweighing the actual onground value of works. In regional areas these projects are added to the workload of existing staff putting core local government pest management programs at risk.

### . Are you aware of any of these weed species prevalent in your local government area (prickly acacia, GRT, fireweed)

GRT is widespread along the coastal part of the Wide Bay Burnett  
Some fireweed in Gympie Regional Council

### . What programs is your council undertaking to address these species?

Councils undertake

- inspection, compliance and enforcement programs,
- provides subsidised herbicide, spray equipment,
- extension advice to landholders such as property pest planning, field days & workshops,
- research projects looking at alternative control options
- Ongoing maintenance program, surveying & monitoring & compliance
- Education and awareness, development of individual sustainable land management plans for landholders,
- herbicide assistance programs,
- funding for treatment when available,
- access to weed treatment equipment ie quick spray units at no cost,
- reduced contractor rates through Councils pest management contractors

### . What extra assistance does your council need to manage these weed species?

The only way currently to improve outcomes would be to have more treatments/year to current infestations, this can only be achieved with more resources i.e people, vehicle, budget.

A biological control that is effective seems to be the only way to prevent the spread as current controls are not stopping the spread, there are too many vectors for GRT and the resilience of the seeds makes it

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difficult to control.

Additional landholders incentive programs, development of effective, low cost treatment techniques for large infestations

More funds from State and Federal governments to be spent on research into control options that are cost effective for landholders to implement otherwise there will be a large economic impact through lost production over a large portion of Queensland caused by the spread of GRT.

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[www.gympie.qld.gov.au](http://www.gympie.qld.gov.au)

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