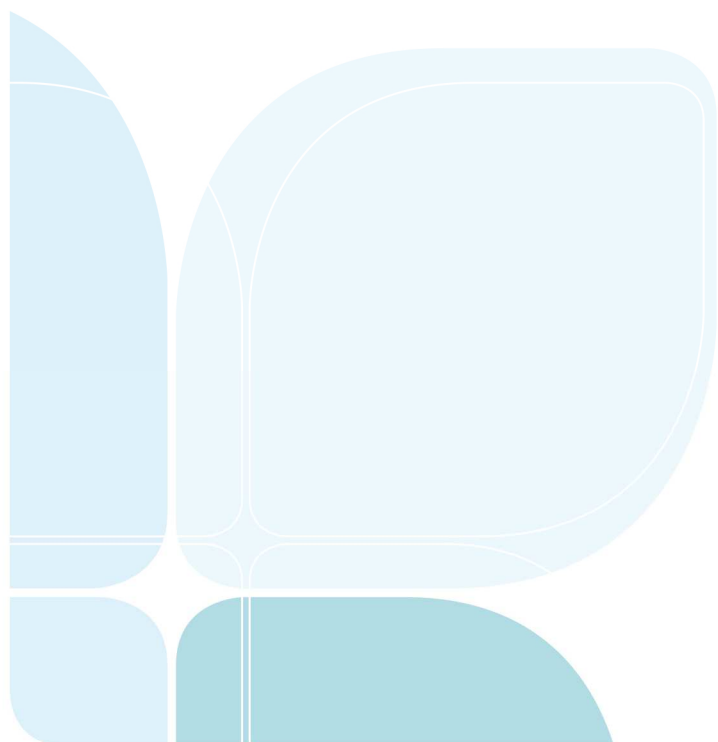


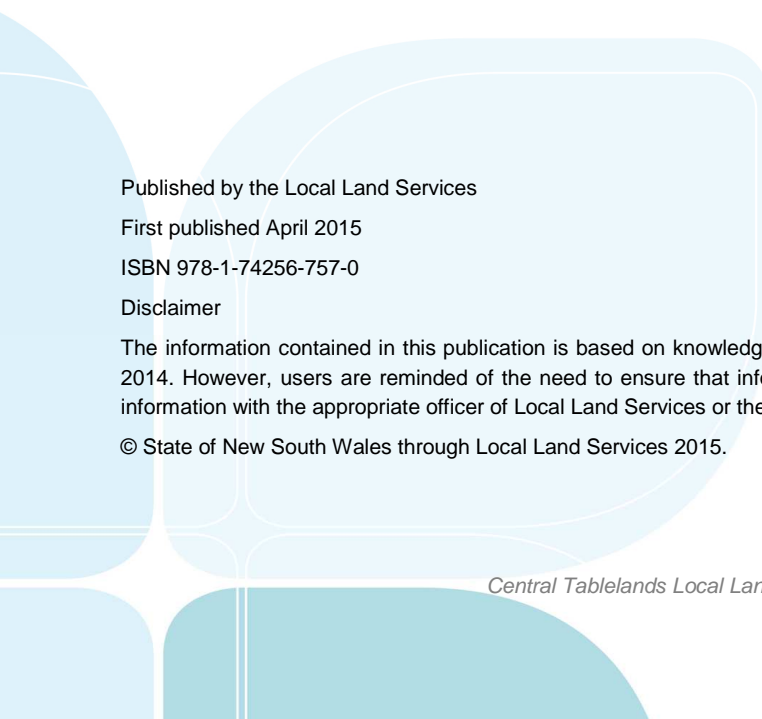


Local Land
Services
Central Tablelands

ANNUAL REPORT

1 January 2014 – 31 December 2014





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Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of the report January 2014 to December 2014. However, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Local Land Services or the user's independent adviser.

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Chairperson Foreword

Following the establishment of Local Land Services on 1st January 2014, it is my pleasure on behalf of the Board of Directors to welcome you to the first Annual Report for Central Tablelands Local Land Services.

The Board appreciated the strong support shown by our management team and staff during our initial year, and I am pleased to report that Central Tablelands Local Land Services has performed well in the first 12 months.

There have been, and will continue to be, persistent challenges faced by landholders across the region. These include; pests such as wild dogs, foxes and pigs, dry conditions and weeds. We will continue to work closely with landholders, community groups and local government to facilitate control measures to manage these issues.

The transition from three organisations into one has brought with it some significant change, most obviously in terms of governance, service provisions and reporting. Our board, management and staff have put in a considerable effort to meet these new requirements and deliver the services needed by our customers.

The Board is confident that the organisation is on track to deliver a strong Strategic Plan in 2015. This plan will set the strategic path for Central Tablelands Local Land Services and provide the Board, Staff and Management with a platform to strengthen our services to landholders and industry across the region.

Central Tablelands Local Land Services will continue to listen to, and explore the needs of our customers. This will be done through customer feedback, online engagement and our Customer Advisory Groups.

On behalf of the Board I wish to thank our staff for the great work that they have done over the last year. They know the business, they are focused on what is important for customers, have a future vision, are innovative and approachable and enjoy working with landholders to improve the services that are expected and to grow our client activity.

Yours faithfully



Ian Armstrong AM OBE
Chairman
Central Tablelands Local Land Services

About Local Land Services

Local Land Services (LLS) brings together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. Eleven LLS regions, managed by 11 local boards cover NSW: Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, North West, Riverina, South East and Western regions.

Each Region is accountable for delivering services that add value to local industries, enhance natural resources, protect industries from pests and disease and help communities respond to emergencies like flood, fire and drought.

Local boards headed by local chairs work closely with farmers, landholders and communities. Each region will develop operational management plans that will prioritise service delivery on a regional basis, reflecting regional priorities.

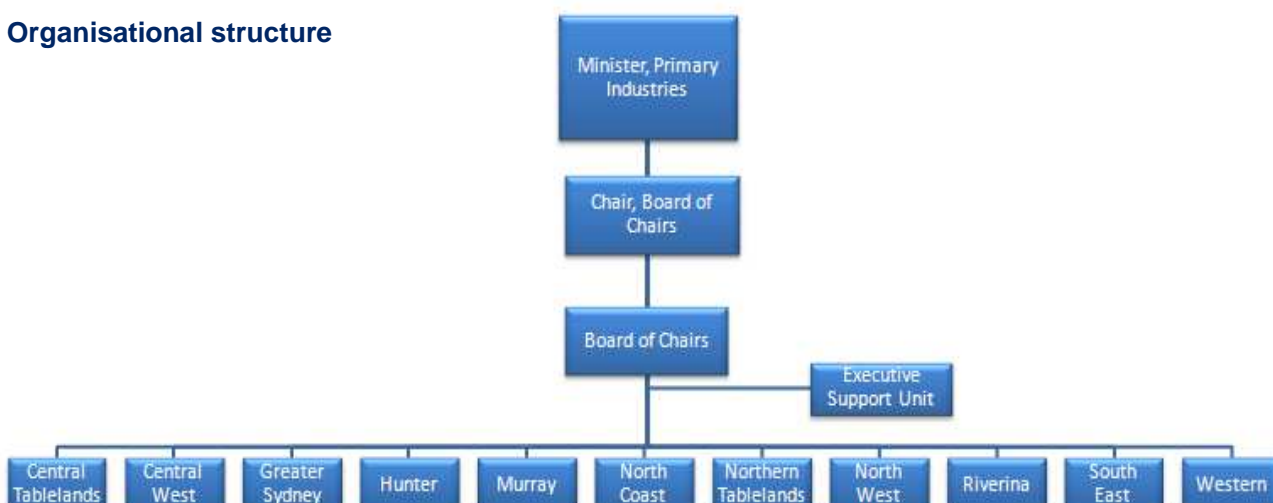
All the local Chairs together form the Local Land Services Board of Chairs. The Local Land Services Board of Chairs is led by the Local Land Services Chair of the Board of Chairs, John Macarthur-Stanham. See the organisational structure below.

Local Land Services boards are accountable for:

- administering and delivering local land services
- developing and implementing appropriate governance arrangements for the delivery of local land services
- preparing a state strategic plan and local strategic plans
- providing and facilitating education and training in connection with agricultural production, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management
- making recommendations regarding rates, levies and contributions on rateable and other land
- providing and administering grants, loans, subsidies or other financial assistance for local land services
- communicating, consulting and engaging with the community, including the Aboriginal community, to encourage participation in the delivery of local land services.

The Regions and the Board of Chairs are supported by a small Executive Support Unit (ESU) located primarily at Dubbo. The Executive Support Unit seeks to provide Local Land Services with operational leverage and administrative and policy consistency, while respecting Regional decision making and accountability.

Organisational structure



Our Region

The Central Tablelands LLS region has a fantastic complexity of people, land, water and biodiversity leading to vibrant communities enhanced by abundant natural resources and agricultural industries. The region consists of:

- An area of approximately 31,365 km²
- Includes the major towns of Bathurst, Blayney, Cowra, Lithgow, Molong, Mudgee, Oberon and Orange
- Falls predominantly within Wiradjuri Aboriginal country
- Home to over 156,000 residents including an Aboriginal population of 7,012 (4.5% of the population)
- Comprises 3% of the Murray-Darling Basin
- Substantial urban growth and the development of large areas of peri-urban land - a large proportion of land around major centres is now divided into small lifestyle blocks

CENTRAL TABLELANDS



Agriculture & Industry

Agriculturally the region is highly diverse including horticulture, viticulture, livestock, cropping and forestry. Evenly spread summer and winter rainfall supports productive cropping systems. Grazing is the most significant land use followed by broad acre crops and horticultural enterprises including areas of fruit and vegetable growing and viticulture.

The region contributes 4.2% of NSW's annual value of agricultural production. It includes almost 10% of NSW's agricultural business on 3.2% of NSW's agricultural land. Approximately 7% of the region's population is employed in agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

Other significant industries across the region include mining operations which are focused around Orange, Lithgow and Mudgee and tourism particularly in the significant wine areas of Orange, Cowra and Mudgee.

Natural assets

The Central Tablelands has numerous natural resource assets such as national parks, culturally significant areas and is home to a vast range of native fauna and flora.

Threatened or endangered species in the region include the:

- Copper Wing Butterfly
- Superb Parrot
- Booroolong Frog

The Central Tablelands includes the headwaters of the Macquarie, Lachlan and Cudgegong River valleys. Some of the streams and waterways are noted as being very close to pristine.

Many of the eastern areas of the region feature high value aquatic assets such as hanging swamps, nationally recognised wetlands and unique valley fill stream formations.

Local Government areas in the region

The region encompasses 8 local government areas (LGAs) these being;

Bathurst Regional

Blayney

Cabonne

Cowra

Oberon

Orange

Lithgow

Mid Western Regional



Principal Office

Principal Office Address	Principal Office Phone	Email & Website
30 Lynch Street Cowra NSW 2794	(02) 6341 9300	www.centraltablelands.lls.nsw.gov.au admin.ct@lls.nsw.gov.au

Senior Staff

	General Manager	Manager Land Services	Manager Business, Finance & Strategy	Manager Biosecurity & Emergency Management
Name	Peter Sparkes	Richard Carter	Ian Shepherd	<i>Vacant</i>
Location	Cowra	Orange	Cowra	
Contact	0417 676862	0412 820361	0407 212688	

Governance

CHAIR MEMBER	BOARD MEMBER	BOARD MEMBER	BOARD MEMBER	BOARD MEMBER	BOARD MEMBER	BOARD MEMBER
Ian Armstrong	Bruce Gordon	Pippinella Job	Reg Kidd	John Lowe	Ian Rogan	John Seaman
0427 424524	0427 663324	0428 168240	0407 892614	0427 111133	0418 484088	0429 372471

Board Attendees

LLS	Name of Board Member	Number of Possible Meetings	Number of Meetings Attended
Central Tablelands	Ian Armstrong	9	9
	Bruce Gordon	7	6
	Pip Job	9	8
	Reg Kidd	9	9
	John Lowe	7	7
	Ian Rogan	9	8
	John Seaman	7	7

Operational overview by General Manager

I am pleased to present the Central Tablelands Local Land Services Annual Report for January – December 2015. This report provides a summary of our performance, audited financial report, corporate governance statement and other statutory information required by the Department of Trade and Investment.



Through listening to our customers and the commitment of our staff and board we have built a strong foundation for Central Tablelands Local Land Services to grow. Undeniably there have been challenges. Regional climate variability, day to day operational efficiencies and the development of a new cohesive culture has been an interesting and sometimes challenging journey.

During our first year we have strengthened existing relationships with partners and stakeholders across the region. We continue to work closely with new and existing partners such as Local, State and the Australian Government, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Landcare.

Our Community Advisory Groups have been established and will provide an integral link to our communities. These Groups will provide invaluable knowledge and advice to our board about the views and opinions of our region's communities and agricultural industries.

Customer service, financial sustainability and accountability are fundamental drivers of our strategic plan that will be released in 2015. We aim to have these elements embedded in our culture and central to our day to day operations. It will be built around the needs of our customers and stakeholders and align with our four service provisions of; Agricultural Advice, Animal Health & Biosecurity; Natural Resource Management and Emergency Management – it will set the focus for our core business.

Most importantly, I would like to extend my appreciation to our board and staff. Without each member of the team, we could not achieve our objectives as an organisation. Their ongoing commitment to the delivery of services puts our customers, community and stakeholders in good stead for the future. We will continue to understand the needs of our customers and deliver the services that align with their needs, government priorities and our Strategic Plan.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Sparkes". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Peter Sparkes
General Manager
Central Tablelands Local Land Services

Local Community Advisory Groups

Local Community Advisory Groups provide input into the development of plans, projects and services and are an integral link between Local Land Services and the community it serves. All Local Land Services regions have set up, or are in the process of setting up, community advisory groups.

Some regions have, or intend to establish, a single group, often with sub-groups related to regions or areas of focus. Other regions have multiple groups, each with a different scope. Other than general community advisory groups, the most common types of groups focus on the Aboriginal community, Local Government, agriculture and Natural Resource Management.

A range of processes have been used to establish the groups, from public expressions of interest, to direct appointment of known representatives. Most groups intend to meet at least biannually and many will conduct community and stakeholder consultation or engagement outside of formal group structures.

The Central Tablelands Board has the following Local Advisory Groups:

Aboriginal Network

Aboriginal community members with a strong interest in caring for country attend Aboriginal Network Group meetings. These are held bi-monthly in the following places:

- Cowra
- Lithgow
- Orange
- Mudgee
- Bathurst

These groups provide advice on the following:

- Incorporation of Aboriginal cultural heritage into service delivery
- Consideration of strategic planning priorities for Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Acknowledgement of traditional ownership and traditional cultural practices

Local Government Advisory Group (Salinity & Water Quality Alliance)

Purpose/focus: Engage Local Government as a key collaborator and provide a forum for discussion and feedback on common issues/activity.

The Central Tablelands Board communicates with the eight Councils of the region through the Salinity & Water Quality Alliance (Alliance) Local Government Reference Group. The total Alliance is a group of 20 Councils across the Central Tablelands and Central West LLS regions that focus on natural resource and stormwater issues. The Alliance represent the operational arm of the participating Councils.

The group meets four times per year to plan and develop actions and have a TOR and membership agreement in place for each of the participating councils - which also contribute financially to the running of the Alliance. The group's activities are guided by their 5 Year (Rolling) Plan which aligns with LLS and State Government Strategic Plans as well as Council Community Strategic Plans.

The Board meet with the group at least once a year and further meetings and input are arranged on a needs basis.

Landcare / Natural Resource Management Network

Purpose/focus: Build strong relationships with local Landcare and Natural Resource Management stakeholders to support effective service delivery.

Selection process: Members selected to represent five sub-regions of the region.

Membership/group details: Single overarching advisory group with five sub-regional groups sitting underneath.

Meeting details: Both the sub-regional network meetings and overarching advisory group meetings are biannual. Two meetings held to date to progress group establishment.

Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee

Purpose/focus: Provide advice to the region in delivery of agricultural services.

Selection process: Open invitation requesting member nominations. Local Land Services regional Board formed a sub-committee to review applicants; applying criteria based on geographical and industry representation.

Membership/group details: Single overarching advisory group with three sub-regional groups sitting underneath. Groups will be guided by a single TOR.

Meeting details: Three to four sub-regional meetings each year and biannual advisory group meetings.



Key Achievements

Manage Weeds and Pests	
Measure	Achieved
Area (ha) of pest plant control measures implemented	907

Protect and Conserve Land, Biodiversity and Native Vegetation	
Measure	Achieved
Number of conservation covenants or other agreements attached to title negotiated	0
Area (ha) protected	0
Number of voluntary conservation agreements negotiated	94
Area (ha) protected	3,237
Area (ha) of terrestrial native vegetation enhanced/rehabilitated	537
Area (ha) of terrestrial native vegetation protected by fencing	223
Area (ha) planted to terrestrial native species	187
Area (ha) of land treated and/or protected from soil erosion by engineering works	0
Area (ha) of soil treatment for other than erosion or acid sulphate soils	0
Area (ha) of land managed for sustainable grazing	104

Community Involvement and Support	
Measure	Achieved
Number of awareness raising events such as demonstrations, field days or study tours conducted	43
Number of participants who attended	2,369
Number of written products such as brochures, newsletters, posters or fact sheets developed	4
Estimated number of recipients	1,030
Number of training sessions, workshops, seminars or other skills and training events conducted	33
Number of participants	1,461
Number of community groups OR projects assisted	5
Number of activities undertaken to support community groups	607

Protect Rivers, Wetlands and Coastal Environments	
Measure	Achieved
Area (ha) of riparian native vegetation protected by fencing	133
Streambank length (km) of riparian vegetation protected	40
Area (ha) planted to riparian native species	251
Number of stream bank engineering works	0
Length (m) of stream bed stabilised	0
Number of stream bed stabilisation sites	0
Number of off-stream (alternative) watering sites installed	27
Length (km) of streambank protected from stock	43
Area (ha) of wetland native vegetation protected by fencing	0
Area (ha) of wetland native vegetation enhanced/rehabilitated	0
Area (ha) planted to wetland native species	0
Area (ha) of coastal native vegetation enhanced/rehabilitated	0

Animal Biosecurity & Welfare	
<p>Successful management of emergency animal diseases (EADs)</p> <p>During 2014 all Local Land Services regions successfully worked with Department of Primary Industries to minimise the impacts of EADs on trade, production, the environment and public health and wellbeing. This was achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency animal disease Investigations • Preparing for and responding to EAD Incidents • Inspecting piggeries for swill feeding • Submitting brains from suitable cases to exclude Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE and scrapie) 	
Measure	Achieved
Number of investigations to exclude an EAD	Approx. 5
Number of training exercises conducted by region	1
Number of staff that participated in a EAD response during 2014	0
Percentage of (at risk) pig properties inspected for swill feeding in last 4 years	Approx. 20%
Number of sudden death investigations to exclude anthrax	Approx. 8
Number of Anthrax incidents managed	0
Number of Hendra incidents managed	0
Number of cattle and sheep brains collected and submitted to exclude TSE	Approx. 6

Improving market access for NSW livestock and products, supported by adequate and relevant surveillance information

During 2014 all Local Land Services regions successfully worked with Department of Primary Industries to ensure market access for NSW was supported by adequate and relevant surveillance information. This was achieved through:

- A network of District Veterinarians and Biosecurity Officers undertaking disease investigations to maximise likelihood of early detection of notifiable exotic and endemic diseases
- Managing Property Identification Codes for all holdings with stock
- Certifying holdings to enable live exports
- Entering surveillance events in the electronic Livestock Health Management System
- Submitting articles (case reports) to the DPI-LLS Animal Health Surveillance News
- Sampling sentinel herds and managing light traps as part of the National Arbovirus Monitoring Program (NAMP)
- Regional surveillance projects
- Sale yard inspections

Measure	Achieved
Number of District Veterinarians (as at 31 Dec 2014)	4
Number of specialist Animal Biosecurity Officers (as at 31 Dec 2014)	8
Number of disease investigations: visits	100
Number of disease investigations: telephone	175
Total number of PICs	12,331
Total number of PICs that required active management during 2014 (new, amalgamated, subdivided)	NA
Number of articles submitted to DPI-LLS Animal Health Surveillance News	3
Number of NAMP sentinel herds	2
Number of NAMP light traps	0
Number of regional surveillance projects	1
Number of sale yard inspections	NA

Animal welfare standards are effectively managed to allow market access and meet community expectations

During 2014 all Local Land Services regions successfully worked with DPI to ensure the welfare of stock grazing on rated land meets community and industry expectations and allows market access for NSW products. This was achieved through:

- District Veterinarians and Livestock Officers, at the requests of the RSPCA, providing advice to stock managers and enforcement agencies in "failure to feed" cases under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act.
- Animal welfare is effectively managed in incidents and emergencies (including flood and fire).

Measure	Achieved
Number of 'failure to feed' cases attended	0
Number of incidents and emergencies requiring animal welfare management	Approx. 3

The negative impact of established diseases and pest of animal are minimised in NSW

During 2014 all Local Land Services regions successfully worked with DPI to assist industry to manage the priority diseases that exist in NSW. This was achieved through the delivery of the following endemic disease programs:

- Maintaining all of NSW a Footrot Protected Area - NSW Footrot control program
- Maintaining the NSW Beef herd's Bovine Johne's disease (BJD) Protected Area Status - National BJD program
- Supporting producer groups to form regional biosecurity groups to manage and prevent the spread of OJD into areas with low rates - Ovine Johne's disease (OJD) management program
- Cattle Tick and Tick Fever
- NSW Sheep Lice Program
- *Cysticercus bovis*
- Other notifiable disease investigations and management

Measure	Achieved
Total number of lameness investigations to exclude sheep footrot	Approx 50
Number of footrot infected flocks under management to eradicate footrot during 2014	6
Number of disease investigations to exclude BJD	Approx.10
Number of BJD traces investigated	10
Number of BJD infected herds under property disease management plans	4
Number of OJD Regional Biosecurity Areas	0
Number of disease investigations to exclude Cattle Tick or Tick Fever	NA
Number of producers provided with advice on sheep lice control	Approx. 50
Number of <i>Cysticercus bovis</i> field investigations	NA

NSW manages residue or contaminant risks in livestock production and significant zoonotic risks from animal diseases

During 2014 all Local Land Services regions successfully worked with DPI to ensure:

- trade is not disrupted by residues or contaminants in livestock or livestock products
- human health is not at risk from contaminants and
- people are safeguarded from significant animal diseases that also affect humans (i.e.zoonoses)

This was ensured by:

- Prompt investigation of all residue cases originating from the National Residue Survey
- Property management plans (PMPs) for all properties with residue contamination with grazing animals.
- Delivery of the National Organochlorine Management Program
- Management of lead and other toxicity cases with residue implications
- Liaison with NSW Public Health Units to ensure knowledge of any zoonotic incidents are shared between the organisations

• Investigation of any relevant wildlife or feral animal diseases	
Measure	Achieved
Number of Organochlorine Management and other trace back residue investigations	2
Number of holdings with current OC and other residues Property Management Plans	10
Number of lead and other toxicity cases managed	4
Number of disease events referred to Public Health Unit	0

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- trade is not disrupted by residues or contaminants in livestock or livestock products
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- Management of lead and other toxicity cases with residue implications
- Liaison with NSW Public Health Units to ensure knowledge of any zoonotic incidents are shared between the organisations
- Investigation of any relevant wildlife or feral animal diseases

Measure	Achieved
Number of Organochlorine Management and other trace back residue investigations	0
Number of holdings with current OC and other residues Property Management Plans	0
Number of lead and other toxicity cases managed	4
Number of disease events referred to Public Health Unit	0

Invasive Species

Local Land Services has responsibility to lead the coordination of strategic control programs in regions where invasive species threaten Biosecurity. The key focus of the work is aimed at reducing the impact of endemic species (i.e. declared) and prioritising the exclusion or eradication of emerging and new species. LLS achieves this work through collaboration and where necessary compliance and enforcement services with landholders and local, state and commonwealth stakeholders who all share responsibility and the benefits for managing invasive species.

Exclude Prevent the establishment of new invasive species

Measure	Achieved
Number of identified high risk locations for the establishment of new invasive species	0
Number of surveillance programs aimed at detecting new invasive species from high risk locations	0
Number of new invasive species identified	0

Eradicate or contain – eliminate, or prevent the spread of new invasive species e.g. Deer

Measure	Achieved
Number of control programs targeting new or emerging invasive species	3
LLS full time equivalent positions supporting the eradication or control of new or emerging invasive species	0.2
Number of holdings consulted for the management of new or emerging invasive species	12
Number of holdings participating with control programs for new or emerging invasive species	12

Effectively manage – reduce the impacts of widespread invasive species i.e.; wild pigs, rabbits, foxes , dogs and plague locusts

Measure (Wild Dogs)	Achieved
Percentage of holdings not reporting wild dogs	97
Number of wild dog management plans	5
Percentage of land managers within an area defined by a wild dog management plan participating with on-ground strategic baiting programs	5% whole plan area 30% in affected area
Number of integrated aerial baiting programs for wild dogs	3
LLS full time equivalent positions supporting wild dog management (control and coordination)	1.2
LLS financial resources committed to wild dog management	\$10K

Measure (Foxes)	Achieved
Percentage of holdings not reporting foxes	92
Percentage of land managers participating with fox baiting programs	7.7
Number of group control programs	28

Measure (Rabbits)	Achieved
Percentage of holdings not reporting rabbits	98

Percentage of land managers participating with rabbit baiting programs	2
Number of group control programs	4
Measure (Feral Pigs)	Achieved
Percentage of holdings not reporting feral pigs	98
Percentage of land managers participating with feral pig control programs	1.4
Number of group control programs	11
Measure (Other LLS Activities)	Achieved
Number of property compliance inspections undertaken to complement proactive and compliant land managers	79
Number of enforcement actions undertaken to compliment proactive and compliant land managers	0
LLS full time equivalent positions committed to managing invasive species	7.5
Capacity – ensure NSW has the ability and commitment to manage invasive species	
Measure	Achieved
Number of training and workshop days aimed at building the capacity of land managers to undertake effective invasive species management	20
Number of land managers participating with training programs and development workshops	295
Number of new strategic management plans implemented	0
Number of existing strategic plans reviewed	4

Emergency Response

Local Land Services has a responsibility to provide emergency management roles in prevention, preparedness, response and recovery for biosecurity emergencies and natural disasters. LLS is a supporting government agency under the Agriculture and Animal Services Function Area (AASFA), so it must ensure that resources of LLS are available during a natural disaster or biosecurity emergency. The AASFA allocates the responsibilities for emergency management and the measures below reflect those responsibilities.

Prevention Building capacity in the community to minimise the impacts of emergencies on agriculture and animals

Measure	Achieved
Number of regional industry <u>strategies</u> that LLS has been involved with that assists with prevention and/or building capacity to minimise the impacts of emergencies on agriculture and animals.	0
Number of regional industry <u>groups</u> that LLS has been involved with that assists with prevention and/or building capacity to minimise the impacts of emergencies on agriculture and animals.	0

Preparation – Building capacity in LLS and the community to prepare for and reduce the impact of emergencies affecting agriculture and animals.

Measure	Achieved
% of staff identified in the regional Emergency Response Team that are trained to the applied level.	20
Number of LLS staff that have been trained to the introduction level	2
Number of LLS staff that have been trained to the applied level	10
Number of LLS staff that have been trained beyond the applied level	1
Response – Ensuring an effective, coordinated response to emergencies impacting on agriculture and animals	
Measure	Achieved
Number of estimated working days devoted to emergency responses	15 9
List of emergency responses participated in	Oberon/Bathurst fires Fire ants
Recovery - helping communities recover from the impacts of an emergency affecting agriculture and animals	
Measure	Achieved
Number of natural disaster response reports that have been prepared and submitted to the Regional Director	1
Number (and location) of natural disaster declarations that have been made as a result of LLS preparing natural disaster reports.	1, Trunkey Creek

Plant Biosecurity	
Prevention There will be no introductions into the region of any plant biosecurity issues	
Measure	Achieved
Education and training of LLS personnel on biosecurity awareness, best practice, preparedness and prevention	1 (KOM)
Identification of local plant biosecurity threats and incursion pathways with local industry	Plant Biosecurity issues identified and documented in each region in a factsheet
LLS field personnel trained for surveillance activities	1 (KOM)
Early detection – Any plant biosecurity incursions into the region are immediately identified and reported	
Measure	Achieved
Receive training in emergency management and response procedures	Incident Management Team identified.
Field personnel trained for Emergency Plant pest surveillance activities	Nil. No DPI training provided
Surveillance results reported to Plant Biosecurity	Nil. No DPI training provided
Containment and eradication – All plant biosecurity incursions are contained and eradicated	
Measure	Achieved
Delivery of education and training to other LLS staff and local groups on biosecurity awareness, best practice, preparedness and prevention.	Nil. No DPI training provided
Field personnel trained for Emergency Plant pest surveillance activities	Nil. No DPI training provided
Transition to management	
Measure	Achieved
Action transition to management projects including recovery	Nil requirement
Effective management of established pests and diseases	
Measure	Achieved
Promotion of practices to prevent spread	Plant Biosecurity information provided at local field days and events to producer groups and industry.

