



Natural
Resources
Commission



TIME TO GET SERIOUS:

REVIEW OF WEED MANAGEMENT IN NSW

September 2014

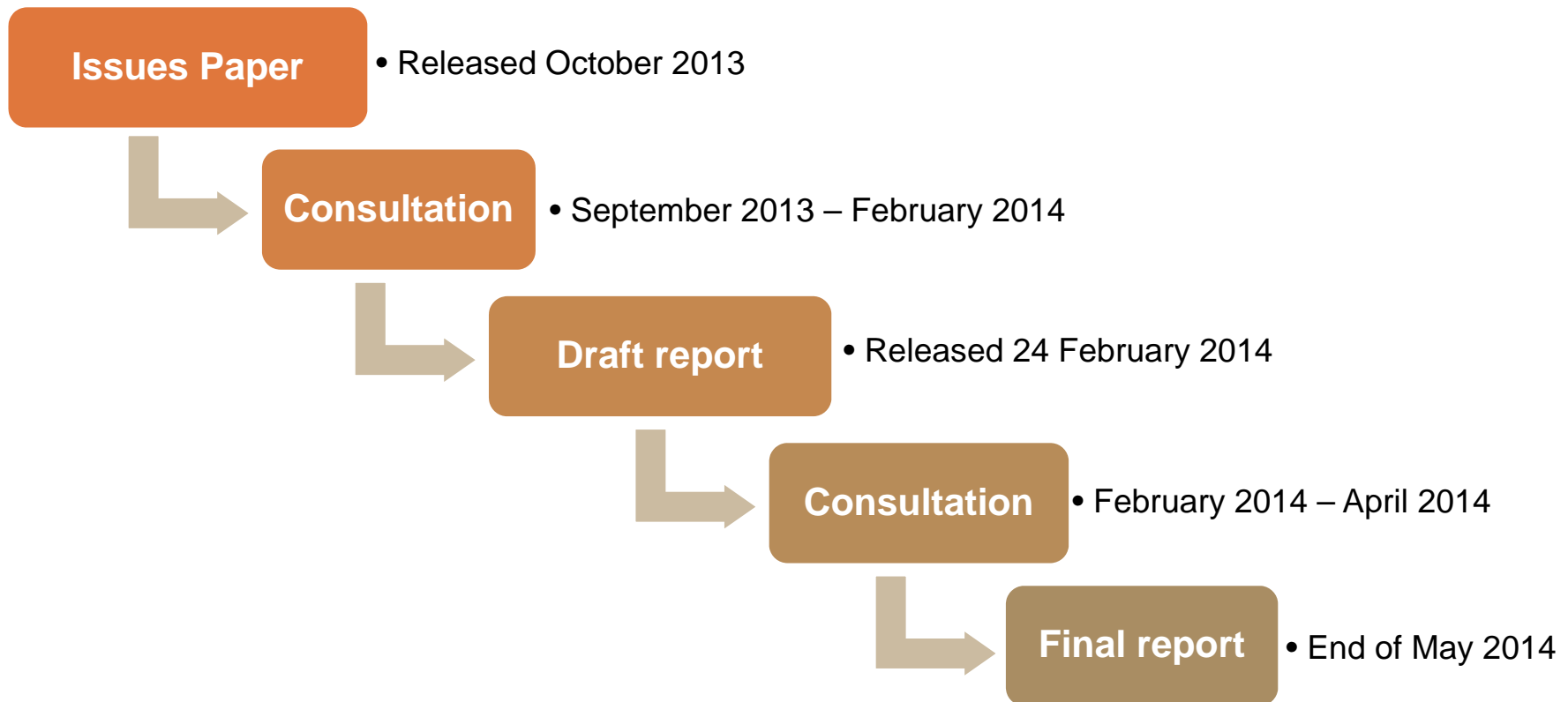
NSW Natural Resources Commission

- The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) is an independent body set up to help government find evidence-based solutions to complex natural resource problems.
- The NRC's advice aims to:
 - develop practical solutions that have triple bottom line outcomes
 - promote performance, good governance and accountability
 - support evidence-based decision making

Review of weed management in NSW

- Assess the distribution and abundance of weeds in NSW based on available data, their impacts, likely trajectories and risk creators and bearers
- Evaluate current regulatory and institutional arrangements across public and private tenures
- Evaluate weed management programs funded by Australian and NSW Governments
- Identify and assess viable alternative weed management arrangements
- Make recommendations, including on potential transitional arrangements

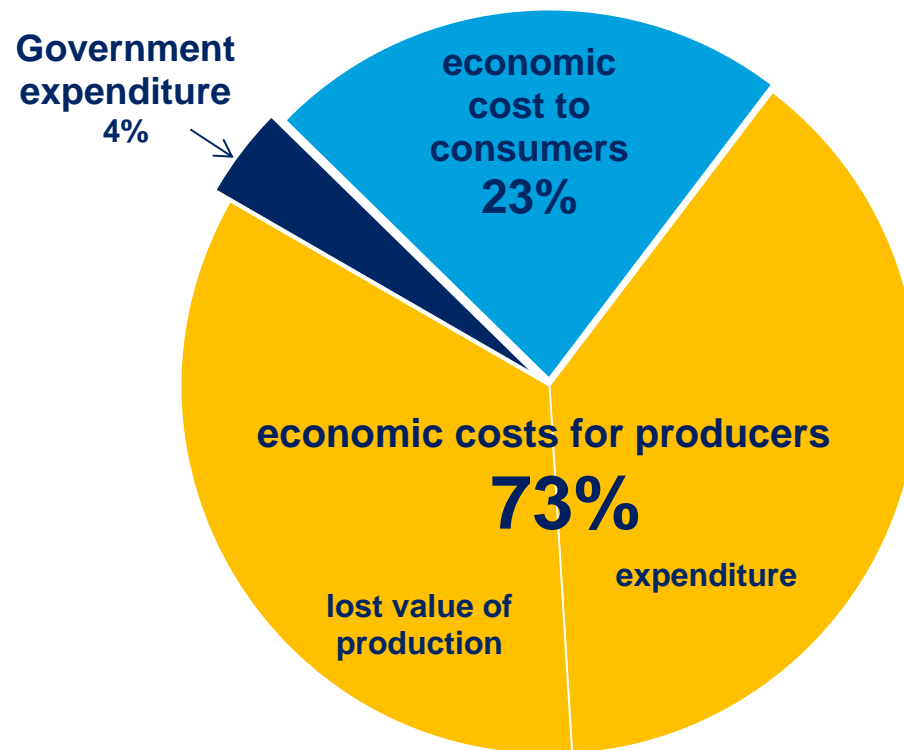
Review process



Key findings

- Lots of positives, especially skills on the front-line
- Industry, the environment and the community bear the huge cost of established weeds
- Current NSW arrangements lack coordination, consistency and accountability
- The different requirements for public and private land managers is a significant barrier to improvement
- A greater focus on high-risk pathways is required

Economic impacts



Total estimated economic costs = approximately **\$1.8 billion** annually

- This graph indicates % of total costs assessed which does not include value of environmental or health impacts

What can we build upon?

- Strength of local government service delivery
- Weeds Action Program
- Regional Weed Advisory Committees
- Volunteer / community work
- Biosecurity Strategy
- New Local Land Services institutions

Mt Rogers Landcare Group managing serrated tussock; Source: Rosemary Blemings



Where can we improve?

- Insufficient data to meaningfully assess outcomes
- Inconsistent requirements across tenure
- Inconsistent performance of Local Control Authorities
- Insufficient accountability

Where can we improve?

- Roles and responsibilities lack clarity and resourcing is inadequate and not strategic
- Response to new incursions
- Risk management - including plant and fodder trade
- Research and development

Volunteers assist NPWS in managing Orange
Hawkweed
Source: NPWS – Jo Caldwell





Recommendations

- Shared Responsibility
 - Clear accountabilities
 - Tenure neutral approach
 - General biosecurity obligation
 - Education and capacity building

- Consistent and transparent state level guidance
 - A new state weed committee
 - More transparent weed declaration process
 - Simplified weed categorisation
 - Exclude
 - Eradicate
 - Impact reduction
 - Readily available taxonomy services

Recommendations

- Co-ordinated regional planning and local delivery
 - Continue local service delivery
 - Form regional weed committees on Local Land Services boundaries
 - Develop regional weed management plans
 - Integrate pest plant and animal management

- Improve prevention and response to new incursions
 - Implement eradication plans
 - Establish a high-risk incursion fund
 - Establish 'permitted for sale' regulations

Recommendations

- Improve management of high risk pathways
 - Consistent state wide property inspection program
 - Property weed status certification
 - Registration of high risk industries
 - Better co-ordination of aquatic weed management

- Improve accountability and enforcement at all scales
 - Strengthen enforcement provisions
 - Regular audits against service delivery standards
 - Provide for consistent state-wide data management

Recommendations

- Support research and development
 - commit to the strategic rebuilding and maintenance of NSW weeds research capacity
 - work with other states to establish a permanent, national weeds research, development and extension organisation
 - support researchers to effectively communicate research findings to land managers



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QUESTIONS?

Draft recommendations: management objectives

