

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT NO. 14

WEEDS ON CALM LAND

NOVEMBER 1986

1. BACKGROUND

For the purpose of this policy a weed is defined as any plant which is disadvantageous from the viewpoint of effective management for the land use concerned. The definition concerns native and exotic species and both herbaceous and woody plants. It embraces all land uses including agroforestry (skeleton weed, double gee), grazing (mesquite) forest production (eucalypt coppice), conservation reserves (arum lily, wheat, oats, veldt grass, pines); on water areas within land uses (water hyacinth, salvinia).

A list of declared species, with their levels of declaration in various areas of the State is published annually in the Government Gazette pursuant to Section 37 of the Agricultural and Related Resources Protection Act. These weeds are also listed with recommended treatments, in the Agriculture Protection Boards "Declared Plant Control Handbook 1985".

Some non-declared species of weeds of ecological significance have come to attention so far, but more are likely to exist.

Both these lists, especially the latter, will change with time, circumstances and experience.

Ecological considerations place constraints on weed control because, whilst control of weeds may be desirable, possible side effects such as those on native plants or habitat, or the pollution of water bodies, may rule out the use of corrective procedures in some situations.

Weed control is further limited by finance and manpower availability. At the present level of funding, control of all weed infestations on CALM land, including the necessary follow-up treatment, is not possible.

Technical advice on weed control is available in the APB handbook mentioned above or through the Environmental Protection Branch, or the Chemicals Officer.

2. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

To take preventative measures to avoid the introduction and to achieve the systematic and safe control of weeds on CALM lands.

3. POLICIES

3.1 Adequate measures will be taken to prevent the accidental introduction of weeds on to CALM lands. Care is required in all operations including access by vehicle, fertiliser additions, burning, grading and thinning to prevent the increase of harmful weeds on CALM lands. (See policy on Rehabilitation re species choice).

- 3.2 The Department will continue to attempt a vigorous control of declared weeds on CALM land.
- 3.3 Where funds are available and conservation priorities dictate, the Department will also attempt the control of non-declared weeds of ecological significance on CALM land.
- 3.4 A high priority for weed control is recognised. Funds will be made available on a continuing basis.
- 3.5 All available methods of control must be considered (physical, chemical, biological). The final choice will depend on a comparison of the feasibility, cost, efficiency and environmental efficacy of the alternatives (see also Policy on the introduction of exotic species).

4. STRATEGIES

- 4.1 Each District or Region shall survey weed infestations on CALM lands. The information will be recorded on an operation control system appropriate to both the CALM and the Agriculture Protection Board (APB).

Each District or Region will prepare and maintain a weed control management plan. After consultation with an APB officer, the silviculturist or environmental protection officer, the plan will form the basis for works programmes.

By agreement with the Minister, the Department will convene a meeting with the APB in October and February each year to coordinate planning for effective weed control on CALM land.

Each District or Region will record details of weed treatment undertaken, the success of the treatment and follow-up required.

- 4.2 Priorities for control of weeds in CALM land will be as follows:

Priority 1: Areas of particular importance or value to the Department, from a conservation, recreation, protection or production aspect:-

- 1.1 adjacent to private property and likely to affect it,
- 1.2 not adjacent to private property.

Priority 2: Small new infestations particularly those in headwaters of streams:-

- 2.1 adjacent to private property and likely to affect it,
- 2.2 not adjacent to private property.

Priority 3: Large infestations adjacent to private property and likely to affect it.

Priority 4: Remainder of CALM land.

- 4.3 Non-chemical control methods will be investigated and used wherever practicable.
- 4.4 Biological control procedures using exotic species (ie. blackberry rust) must be approved by the Director of Nature Conservation.

- 4.5 Spraying will be undertaken by trained operators (contractors or employees), in accordance with the guidelines in the Chemical Users Manual.
- 4.6 Spraying of weeds must not have a harmful effect on rare plant or animal species. Alternative control techniques or unsprayed buffers may be required.
- 4.7 Only chemicals approved by the Department of Health and endorsed where appropriate by the Water Authority, will be used.
- 4.8 The Water Authority will be advised one month before any spraying is undertaken in a water supply catchment.
- 4.9 Staff will receive training in weed problems, control measures and safety aspects. Priority will be given to employees and staff directly involved in weed control.
- 4.10 Employees will be advised at the time of their employment that they may be required to use chemicals.
- 4.11 Contracts for weed control on CALM land may be awarded for a period of up to three years, subject to favourable performance reports. Contracts will include a penalty for unsatisfactory results.
- 4.12 The CALM Officer must verify that the equipment nominated by the contractor is suitable for the job.
- 4.13 When awarding weed control contracts, CALM will take account of contractors who meet the Agricultural Protection Board standards.
- 4.14 The Police will be advised immediately of any discovery of marijuana plants on CALM land.

Syd Shea
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Distribution: LISTS A, B, C, D, E, F