



Title	Role and method of operation of the Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee	Version	01
Policy no.	O-063	Effective date	11/06/2009
Authorised by	Executive Director Agriculture Biosecurity and Mine Safety	Authorisation date	12/01/2009

1. OVERVIEW

This policy was developed to define the role and operation of the Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee.

2. BACKGROUND

A Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee (NWAC) is established under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* to:

- provide a forum for consultation about the control of noxious weeds;
- provide advice to the Minister on all matters related to noxious weed control;
- recommend to the Minister allocations from the Government's noxious weeds grant; and
- recommend plant species to be declared as noxious weeds by the Minister.

In addition to providing advice to the Minister and NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI), committee members are expected to keep their nominating organisations informed about developments and issues concerning noxious weeds.

3. SCOPE

This Policy covers the role of the Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee, conduct of meetings, disclosure of information, payments to members and declaration of interests of committee members.

4. POLICY

4.1 Operation of committee

Members are appointed by the Minister for Primary Industries for a fixed term. The organisations that are invited to nominate representatives to the NWAC may include Shires Association, Local Government Association, NSW Farmers' Association, Livestock Health & Pest Authorities, State and Council of Chairs of Catchment Management Authorities Management Council, Nursery and Garden Industry NSW & ACT and Nature Conservation Council of NSW. The Minister also appoints a representative of the community, NSW Department of Primary Industries and other organisations from time to time.

The Minister appoints the Chair.

4.2 Sub-committees and working groups

The Committee may form sub-committees and working groups to provide technical recommendations and to efficiently develop recommendations for the Committee. The Chair may invite other people to a meeting or to participate on a working group or sub-

committee to assist the Committee. Currently there are three sub-committees each comprised of two members of NWAC, an officer nominated by the Weed Officers Association and a NSW DPI officer. NSW DPI may provide support services to working groups and sub-committees.

4.3 Meetings

At least four meetings are held each year subject to the discretion of the Chair. Subcommittee and working groups meetings may be held more frequently. Where possible meetings are held in Sydney; meetings may be held in regional centres to facilitate meetings with local stakeholders. The Committee determines meeting procedures.

4.4 Disclosure of information

In general, members are expected to discuss weed issues with the organisations that they were nominated by and to assist with informing the community about weed issues and the role of the Committee.

The Committee primarily provides advice to the Minister. Any recommendations to the Minister must remain confidential. Generally prior to the Committee meeting members may discuss agenda papers within their nominating organisations and with any other appropriate groups or individuals. The principle is that advice to the Minister is confidential and members cannot assume that the Minister will agree with that advice. Once the Minister has made a decision and appropriate announcements, members of NWAC will be notified and the Minister's decision may be disseminated.

4.5 Payments to members

NSW Department of Primary Industries covers the operating expenses for the Committee. The Chair must ensure that payments are within the budget amount. Details about members' entitlements are included in *Guidelines for NSW Board and Committee Members: Appointments and Remuneration* published by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

For attendance at Committee meetings, including sub-committee and working group meetings:

- Members who are not employed by the Government are entitled to a sitting fee as approved by the Minister. This sitting fee is liable for taxation.
- Actual expenses are reimbursed. A claim for actual expenses must be supported by receipts or other evidence of expenses.
- Members may be reimbursed for the use of private vehicles to attend meetings at the NSW Public Service Official Business Rate. Alternatively, public transport will be arranged. NSW DPI may also reimburse other invited participants costs subject to prior specific approval by the Manager Weeds.

4.6 Declaration of interests

Where members or observers have any pecuniary interest from matters decided by the Committee they must declare the interest as soon as practical, and must not be present at the meeting at any time which a matter to which they have declared a pecuniary interest is considered. Real and perceived non-pecuniary conflicts of interest of members should also be declared to the Committee.

4.7 Executive and administrative support

NSW Department of Primary Industries provides an Executive Officer and limited secretarial support to the Committee, its sub-committees and working groups.

5. PROCEDURES

Role and Method of Operation of Noxious Weeds Advisory Committee (NSW DPI Noxious Weeds Procedure 5)
 Procedures for Issuing Noxious Weed Permits (NSW DPI Noxious Weeds Procedure)

6. DEFINITIONS

noxious weed any plant or plant taxa that has been declared a noxious weed under the provisions of Section 7 of the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*.

7. RELATED LEGISLATION

Noxious Weeds Act 1993

8. RELATED POLICIES

Policy O-067 Declaration of noxious weeds (was NWAC PP1)
 NWAC PP2 Policy on the Allocation and Use of Grant Funds

9. RELATED DELEGATIONS

- Delegation of Ministerial powers under *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* Section 34 to Manager Weeds.

10. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Guidelines for NSW Board and Committee Members: Appointments and remuneration published by the Premiers' Department.

11. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date
01	01/07/2009

12. DATE OF NEXT REVIEW

11/06/2015

13. CONTACT OFFICER

Manager Weeds