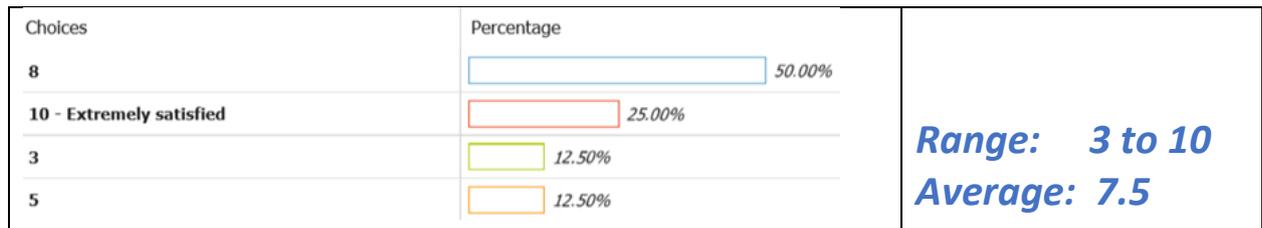


# Greater Sydney Weeds Action Program (WAP) 1520 Feedback Survey Report

In June 2020 project partners of the Greater Sydney Region Weeds Action Program (WAP) 2015-2020 project were invited to complete a feedback survey. The survey is designed to help Greater Sydney LLS meet the needs and expectations of project partners in how the project is administered. 8 out of 23 project partners completed the survey. The results are summarised below.

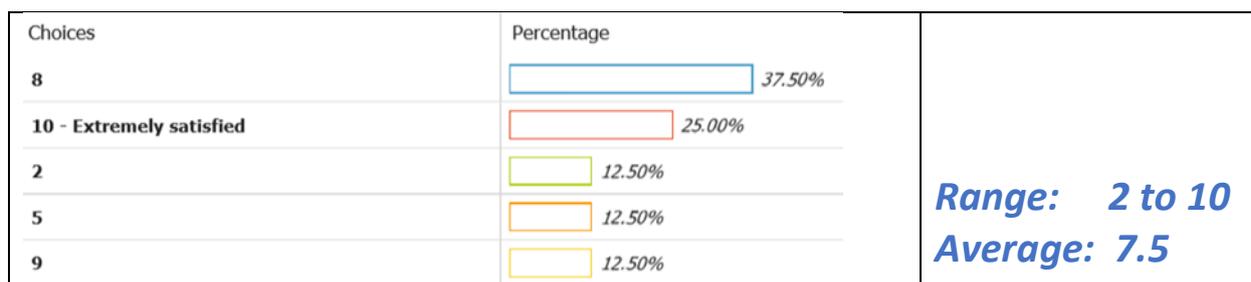
## ***Overall, how satisfied are you with the WAP1520?***



## **Comments**

- The WAP program provides funding to execute our duties for regional priority weeds and has provided excellent financial and organisational support for our emergency weed incursion response.
- The WAP is a great opportunity to obtain additional funds for priority weeds. Further opportunities for funds were provided throughout the program as funds became available.
- It was difficult to spend all the money towards the end of the project.
- Our organisation has only engaged an employee to undertake this program in the last 6 months, we have come into the program at a late stage so we lacked some of the training and guidance that may have occurred across the region at the start of the program but have been able to access guidance where needed.
- Some of the application and reporting measures/units are very subjective and difficult to accurately report against. For example, *number of hectares of priority weeds treated* which doesn't reflect the actual number of plants managed.
- It was good but there is always room for improvement.
- Overall very satisfied with WAP1520.

## How satisfied are you with the administration of WAP1520?



## Comments

- We had issues with resourcing the 'authorised officer' role including staff vacancy, training of staff and confusion of roles. WAP admin have been reasonable and responsive to Councils enquiries to extend the contract period to ensure completion of agreed activities.
- As the funding for this program finishes in a few weeks we are concerned that we haven't received the report template so that the project officer that will be finishing up can draft the final report before they are no longer employed by Council.
- Our council didn't undertake any works in the 2018-19 grant year and were able to return funds and begin 2019-20 fresh even though we hadn't achieved outcomes in 2018-19 which was great.
- The process is much more structured and equitable since being run by the Greater Sydney LLS.
- Reporting can be challenging particularly into the BIS.
- The timing of the funding is always an issue but that is a State Government issue.
- Receiving funding so late in the financial year is challenging and involves carrying funds forward into the next financial year which adds administrative challenges.
- Since GSLLS have taken over the WAP, the dual-layer of State government (DPI/LLS) have only made things more prescriptive, less flexible and more onerous to agencies trying to deliver weed management outcomes.
- GSLLS has no context of weed operations and is unwilling to accept input when it is provided to them.
- Very responsive to Council's needs
- Very satisfied with the administration.
- No problems

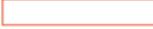
## How would you rate support provided in relation to WAP1520?

Choices	Percentage	
10 - Extremely satisfied	 37.50%	<p><b>Range: 1 to 10</b></p> <p><b>Average: 7.4</b></p>
8	 25.00%	
1 - Extremely dissatisfied	 12.50%	
5	 12.50%	
7	 12.50%	

## Comments

- We have been provided with excellent support, both verbal feedback on project proposals and funding to undertake emergency actions.
- The GSLLS team, Gen and Anthony were great when we had any questions or queries. It would have been good to have the information/ details all together but again if we started this program when the original grant started this information would have probably been disseminated at that time.
- Since the GS LLS have been responsible, communication and support has been good and requests have been reasonable.
- Emails ignored, told not to contact GSLLS staff, funding reduced and threatened with further reductions unless we do as we are told, provided with increasingly narrow funding parameters.
- Support has always been excellent.
- Support and assistance always given in a timely manner.

## How would you rate communication in relation to WAP1520?

Choices	Percentage	
10 - Extremely satisfied	 37.50%	<p><b>Range: 1 to 10</b></p> <p><b>Average: 7.6</b></p>
8	 25.00%	
1 - Extremely dissatisfied	 12.50%	
5	 12.50%	
9	 12.50%	

## Comments

- I have found communication from the WAP program helpful and timely. For a new officer it has allowed me to better understand the boundaries for funding opportunities to tackle priority weeds in Greater Sydney, rather than wasting my time applying for 'pie in the sky' projects for asset management. Thanks!
- The emails and details of the grant and program were distributed to us efficiently.
- I think communication by the GS LLS has been good. This extends to application, reporting and enquiry processes.
- Communication is ad hoc, and normally sent with an urgency that LCA's are expected to "jump to action". GSLLS undermines its relationships with its key stakeholders, then expects their loyal support when it suits them.
- Always been clear communication.
- Communication is very good, emails are always replied to and phone contact and availability is excellent.

## How satisfied are you that grant funds are consistent with State and Regional priorities?

Choices	Percentage	
8	50.00%	<p><b>Range: 3 to 10</b></p> <p><b>Average: 7.5</b></p>
10 - Extremely satisfied	25.00%	
3	12.50%	
5	12.50%	

## Comments

- Regional weeds and state weeds should be targeted first, although some funding should have gone to the control of species such as alligator weeds where councils are trying to control it.
- All correspondence and feedback has been consistent from the WAP administration team. I am yet to be shocked or upset by a WAP funding decision. This may be that I liaise prior to proposing funding projects to build a project that is consistent, rather than trying my luck.
- The funding seems to be in line with the state and regional priorities.
- I am satisfied and think that the decisions are based on proper prioritisation against the regional and state priority weeds. We only apply for funds for higher priority weeds where funding complements our programs.
- This is positive, but it comes at a huge cost. That cost is the core philosophy of the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015 (which promotes local government as free agents in species neutral legislation). This legislation was meant to empower and enable communities to deal with their weed issues, instead, LLS has turned it into a hybrid of the Noxious Weeds Act by heavy reliance on priorities (lists) set at the State level.
- I trust the WAP steering committee
- I think it is well structured in regards to this.
- Very satisfied.

## **Additional questions**

### ***In relation to the Weeds Action Program, what is being done well and why?***

- Encouraging inspections, giving councils money to aid in inspections which would not normally have been carried out.
- Support of regional target priority weeds at an eradication level and to a lesser extent containment level - funding allows Councils to leverage internal (Council) and external (WAP) funding sources. This helps to justify Council funding.
- The WAP response to our council's requirement for emergency funds was fast and adaptable. WAP took the lead quickly when DPI programs were unable to allocate funds.
- Clear indication of what areas of weed management will be funded through the action program.
- Coordination and raising the profile of high priority weeds that threaten the state/region. I think a more cooperative and collaborative approach can be observed in GS region compared to other regions.
- More bureaucratic staff being employed at the State level. Development of spin rhetoric to deflect the issues which are really affecting on-ground activity. Flushing funds at the end of the financial year. Staff meeting narrow personal goals.
- Contingency/ emergency funding is good
- Communication is done well with clear messages and requests.
- The help and support is being done very well. Availability of staff to talk through issues and solutions as they arise is invaluable.

### ***In relation to the Weeds Action Program, what is an area that can be improved and why?***

- Time that you have to spend the funds. The funds need to come out at the start of the financial year. otherwise councils only have 4 - 5 months to spend the money. Due to the approval process. it does not make it worthwhile to apply for large funding.
- Ensure variations and flexibility can be applied on outcomes achieved especially in relation to the disruption that has been caused by COVID this year.
- It would be great to get WAP funds earlier in the financial year to allow expenditure in the same year.
- It would be great if the BIS could accommodate information direct from our Pest and Weed Information System. It takes a large amount of time to get our WAP data into BIS which is already in our system - so duplication of data entry process.
- Allow local government to manage their money directly. GSLLS should remove themselves from the process if this past year is anything to go by.
- The state government needs to be better at timely delivery of funds.
- Containment and possibly Asset Protection species should be considered on a case by case basis, as some LGA's have very low occurrences of some these weeds and eradication is feasible.

### ***Are there any other comments you would like to make?***

- Our organisation thanks you Greater Sydney Local Land Services for the continued support through administration of WAP. The funding from WAP provides justification for our investment of staff time and resources for weed surveillance and control of priority weeds. If WAP was to be reduced or not funded it would be unlikely that these activities would be continued, even at a reduced level.
- Great program, well delivered with great results.
- Thank you and please keep up the great work!