

# Buffel Grass Weed Advisory Committee

**Time:** Arrive 8.30am for 9am start (suggest members joining via Teams log on from 8:50 am)

**Date:** 30 April 2025

**Location:** Tom Hare Conference Room, Arid Zone Research Institute, Alice Springs

If you require [workplace adjustments](#) to participate in this meeting, please advise the meeting organiser.

### Attendees:

- **Phillip Cowan** – Director, Central Australian Parks, Parks and Wildlife Division, Northern Territory Government (NTG) Department of Tourism and Hospitality.
- **Tracey Guest** – Natural and Cultural Resource Manager, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Parks Australia.
- **James (Jimmy) Cocking** - Chief Executive Officer, Desert Knowledge Australia (DKA)
- **Joel Andrew** – Director, Technical Services, Alice Springs Town Council (ASTC)
- **Roy Chisholm** - Pastoral Land Board (PLB)
- **Benjamin (Ben) Kaethner** – Manager, Land Management, Central Land Council (CLC)
- **Garth Forrester** – Regional Land Management Coordinator, Region 2, CLC
- **Romy Carey** – Chief Executive Officer, Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association (NTCA) (proposed new member, awaiting official appointment).
- **Ross Nowland** – Acting Director Southern Region, NTG Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (proposed new member, awaiting official appointment).
- **Margarita Towers** – Acting Assistant Director, Operations, Bushfires NT, NT Fire and Emergency Services - **proxy** for **Nathaniel Staniford/Lachlan Donchi**.  
Via Teams (before 9.30am and after 11am).
- **Ross Stanes** – NT Cattlemen's Association, Director Lyndavale Cattle Co.
- **Josef (Joe) Schofield** – Regional Operations Manager, Central & South Australia, Australian Wildlife Conservancy

**Chairperson:** Philip Cowan

**Executive Officer:** Amber Clarke - Buffel Grass Weed Advisory Committee, Weed Management Branch (WMB), NTG Department Lands, Planning and Environment (DLPE)

**Guests:** Roni Opden - Manager Planning & Science, WMB, NTG DLPE  
Max Arkley-Smith - Buffel Grass Officer, WMB, NTG DLPE

**Guest Presentation:** Troy Bowman - Buffel Grass State Coordinator, South Australia (SA)

**Minutes:** Tabitha Fudge - Buffel Grass Support Officer, WMB, NTG DLPE

**Meeting open and welcome: 9am**

## Chairperson:

Welcome and round table introductions.

Acknowledge and pay respects to Arrernte peoples, as the First Nations people of this country and acknowledge their continuing connection to the lands, water, and communities.

Thank you, Buffel Grass Weed Advisory Committee (WAC) members, for your ongoing commitment and time.

Members are kindly reminded to uphold impartiality and objectivity in all discussions and decisions, appointments have been made on the basis that members have a genuine desire and ability to collaborate with others, who may have competing interests or opposing viewpoints on weed management.

The Minister has appointed each member for their strong existing networks which will enable broad community consultation and the dissemination of weed management advice and information, technical expertise, and experience. To provide advice and recommendations, to develop draft weed management plans and advise the Minister on the progress of weed management.

### 1. Apologies:

**Lachlan Donchi** - Fire Management Officer, Bushfires NT, NT Fire and Emergency Services.  
Proxy for **Nathaniel Staniford**. Informal proxy, not yet officially appointed.

### 2. Disclosure of interest: real, potential, or perceived:

Committee members to advise of any conflict of interest issues. Committee to discuss, classify and provide advice as required. Information added to the Register of Interests table.

### 3. Minutes previous meetings:

**27NOV24**                      **Move:**    **Second:**

**20 FEB25**                      **Move:**    **Second:**

Circulated out of session for WAC review.  
That the Minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### 4. Business Arising from the Minutes:

## 5.0 Action Items from previous WAC meetings

Actions list			
Action	Who	Due	Status
Investigate potential buffel grass funding sources	Roni Opden		List of sources to be circulated to WAC out of session.
Email details of any legal precedents regarding spray drift onto organic farms	Will Evans		
Invite Troy Bowman to present at a future meeting	Amber Clarke		
WMB to investigate what buffel grass information can be supplied for the upcoming NTCA annual conference.	Amber Clarke	Prior to NTCA Conference 19-21 March.	
Update TOR to reflect updated priorities for WAC, and clarify proxy nominations	Amber Clarke		
Investigate WAC document sharing via a central point	Amber Clarke		
Develop and circulate a Communique after each WAC meeting	Amber Clarke	Within 2 weeks of each meeting	
Collate comments from WMP workshop into a document for further review by the WAC	Amber Clarke	April Meeting	

## WAC recap on Actions list:

Update above table

## 6.0 Correspondence in:

Letter dated 08 April 2025 from the Chair of the Pastoral Land Board to Chair of Buffel Grass WAC.

The PLB has considered the declaration of buffel grass as a weed in relation to Land Condition Reports for the pastoral estate. While PLB does not plan to change current reporting practices, the PLB acknowledges the threat posed by buffel grass on non-pastoral land uses and encourages the WAC to develop frameworks that address its varying land use values and impacts.

## 7.0 Correspondence out:

Communiqués from Meetings 5 and 6 circulated to stakeholders and available on the website:

[Buffel grass weed advisory committee | NT.GOV.AU](https://www.nt.gov.au/land-planning-environment/buffel-grass-weed-advisory-committee/)

## 8.0 Business Arising from Correspondence:

Discuss if any response to the PLB correspondence is required.

## 9.0 General Business: Committee Updates

Members can provide a brief 5-10 min update, on any buffel management actions or issues arising since the February 2025 meeting.

**a. Weed Management Branch update**

**i. Corporate update - *Roni/Amber***

**ii. Buffel Grass Officer, Landholder support - *Max***

**b. Central Land Council update**

**c. Parks Australia update**

**d. Central Australian Parks update**

**e. Pastoral Land Board update**

**f. Australian Wildlife Conservancy update**

**g. Desert Knowledge Australia update**

**h. Alice Springs Town Council update**

**i. NT Cattlemen's Association update**

**j. Bushfires NT update**

**BREAK: 10:30am**

**RECONVENE: 10:45am**

## **10.0 WAC Business - Discussion**

### **Member appointments and proxies**

Appointment of proxies has not progressed as WMB staff have been advised the Minister is expected to nominate additional members to the WAC. New appointments will be progressed as a package, as soon as possible.

WAC members wishing to nominate a proxy who have not yet done so, please email details to Amber by 12 May.

### **Updated Terms of Reference**

Refer to proposed updated Terms of Reference circulated as part of the WAC meeting papers. If WAC is in agreement WMB staff will progress to Minister for approval.

## Next meeting/s

Confirm date of meeting #8: Tuesday, 17 June 2025.

Proposed dates for meeting #9:

August: 20, 21 or 27, 28

September: 3, 4, or 10, 11

## 11.0 Guest Presentation: Troy Bowman - Buffel Grass State Coordinator, SA

Troy scheduled to present on the SA buffel management experience and implications for the NT from 11-12.

**Complete items 9 or 10 if required.**

**LUNCH: 12:30pm**

**RECONVENE: 1.00pm**

## 12.0 Weed Management Plan, including review of Have Your Say Survey responses - Discussion

Refer to 'Have Your Say' survey response data and Discussion Paper.

**BREAK: 2:30am**

**RECONVENE: 2.45am**

**Continue with item 12**

**MEETING CLOSE: 4pm**