

BIOSECURITY

FACT SHEET

Protecting the environment, land and landuse wherever we operate is a core value of the Hunter Gas Pipeline project.

We are acutely aware of the need to manage weeds and the spread of other biosecurity risks.

We will have a detailed process outlined in our Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which is a secondary approval to be endorsed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) before construction starts.

Weed control

Weed populations are a major environmental issue, intrinsically linked to land productivity, maintenance of healthy ecosystems and habitat condition.

Hunter Gas Pipeline regards the management of biosecurity risks as a high priority for the Project. Consequently, Hunter Gas Pipeline will develop and implement a Biosecurity Management Plan (BMP) to manage the risk of spreading invasive species.

Constructing and operating a pipeline involves several discrete activities including:

- Planning (pre-construction investigation)
- Clearing/Preparation of the Right of Way
- Construction
- Restoration/Rehabilitation
- Operations

Each of these activities has different potential exposure profiles and biosecurity risks.

Effective weed control requires the development of species specific knowledge of the weeds present: their capacity to germinate, based on seed burial depth, temperature, moisture and soil type; the time between plant germination and flowering or seeding, seasonal growth requirements to be considered in the context of project activities and project schedules; and control methods appropriate for the species, population and regional distribution.

Land disturbance

Land disturbance can provide favourable conditions for weeds to establish. Where ground cover is restricted and there is a lack of plant competition, invasive plants can proliferate. Additionally, the exposed soil may contain a bank of dormant weed seeds that can germinate during the period of disturbance.

Therefore, construction methods that reduce the ability for invasive plants to compete and opportunistically take advantage of climate conditions for growth, can benefit a project's cost effectiveness. Examples include:

- Restoring lengths of the Right of Way as soon as possible, and prior to the wet season to optimise plant growth of cover crops
- Maximising cover to outcompete invasive plants by appropriately selecting grass species

- Stockpiling topsoil and resowing with a sterile cover crop to reduce seed bank germination
- An inspection and control program to prevent weeds from setting seed.

Biosecurity plans

Our biosecurity plans are based on a risk approach developed from a scientific understanding of the pipeline route and regional setting.

The Biosecurity Management Plan focuses on identifying priority weed species through engagement with all relevant parties, including local government, landholders and field survey. A control matrix is developed to match control strategies with project activities.

Utilising the 'science' of weed management is fundamental to success. It is tailored to regional and property context and will be specific to the stages of a project.



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