**MANAGING RISK ON HIGH-RISK PATHWAYS**

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**SUMMARY**

The spread of weeds along artificial corridors such as roads is a significant pathway for increasing weed distribution at State, regional and local levels. In effect these pathways provide a source of infestation to neighbouring properties.

High risk pathways may be any pathway along which vectors can accelerate the transport of weeds. They are typically heavily trafficked, being a main road for example, and have a high risk of new weed incursions being introduced from external sources. They may also have an existing issue with a high risk weed.

The management of weeds along high-risk pathways also poses a significant safety threat to those involved.

This paper illustrates the importance of both managing weeds along artificial pathways such as roads whilst at the same time managing the risk to Weeds Biosecurity staff whom are vested the responsibility under the Biosecurity Act 2015 to schedule and conduct routine inspections.

In the Illawarra region of NSW the Illlawarra District Weeds Authority (IDWA) and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) have committed to a coordinated and cooperative approach to managing priority weeds along designated high risk road pathways.

As part of routine road maintenance activities undertaken by TfNSW the IDWA has been able to coordinate its priority weed inspection and control program to align with TfNSW night road closures. Closing all or part of the road ensures the safety of workers, means less disruption to motorists and allows for the completion of essential weed surveillance and maintenance work.

The willingness of TfNSW to participate in this approach to weed management has further potential to be used as part of maintenance shutdowns along other major transport corridors as well as on regional and local roads. It also provides opportunities for managers of high risk pathways to connect with Local Control Authorities and bring positive engagement.

**Keywords –** road, weed spread, safety, cooperation, coordination.