

SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES

Purpose

The SCA is seeking a Service Provider to design and implement an evaluation methodology for the first 3 years of the Grazier Education Partnership Program, up until 2010.

Background

The vision of the Sydney Catchment Authority (SCA) is to achieve 'Healthy catchments, quality water- always'. The main role of the SCA is to capture, store and supply quality raw water from well-managed catchments.

Grazing has been identified as the largest private land use in the Sydney drinking water catchments, occupying 585 000 hectares or approximately 38% of catchment land. A map of grazing land use within the SCA Area of Operations is attached. Grazing can be a source of pollutants such as pathogens, sediment, nutrients, pesticides, weeds, salinity and dissolved natural organic matter. The SCA seeks to engage with the grazing community, to acknowledge and increase their contribution to healthy catchments. The SCA's education and rural lands strategy is discussed in more detail in Attachment 1.

NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) have a range of education and training courses specifically to improve grazing practices. These courses are conducted across NSW and include Pasture Identification, PROGRAZE™ and LANDSCAN™. A summary of the learning outcomes from these courses and an overview of the NSW DPI role in fostering primary industries is provided in Attachment 2. A partnership agreement between the SCA and NSW DPI has been developed. The SCA will provide funding to NSW DPI to increase the delivery of education and training courses in the Sydney priority drinking catchments with the long term intent of improving water quality.

This partnership will build the capacity of NSW DPI to deliver training courses for grazing and improve the integration of water quality objectives into training courses and materials, specifically the Best Management Practices for Graziers in the Tablelands of NSW.

The funding provided by the SCA will enable NSW DPI to employ a Coordinator to manage the project, to increase training by up to 20 courses a year, improve the integration of water quality objectives into course materials and courses and link SCA science and research to NSW DPI education. Furthermore, this program meets the requirement of the Healthy Catchments Program Rural Lands Strategy and the SCA Education Strategy.

This partnership is expected to have a lifecycle of up to 7 years with annual agreements and annual reporting between the agencies involved. The project will be jointly managed by both agencies with the project delivery lead by NSW DPI and the evaluation lead by the SCA.

Diagram one demonstrates how the education program will interact with other initiatives. Furthermore, management structures have been put in place for accountability and reporting. The education program has integrated provisions for evaluation monitoring which is to be supported by an overarching external evaluation.

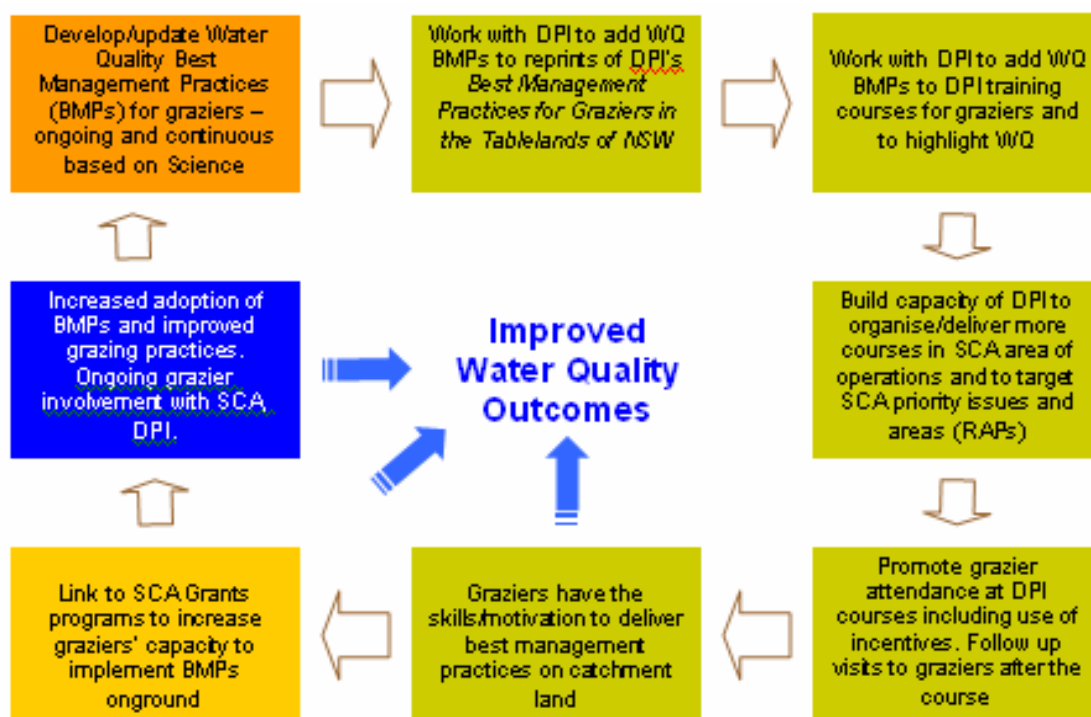
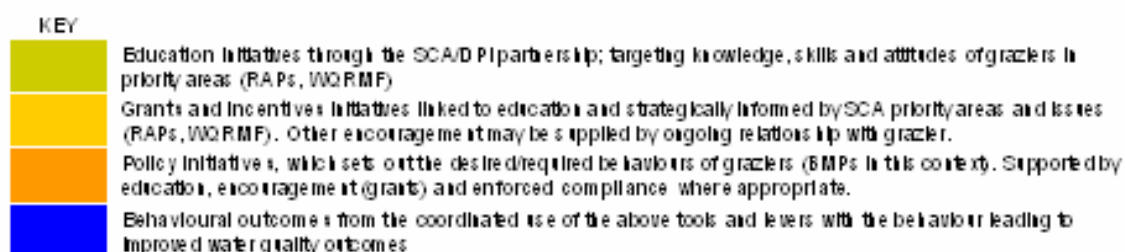


Diagram 1: Using education, encouragement and policy to influence behaviour



Scope

This project aims to develop and implement a strategic evaluation of the SCA and NSW DPI Grazer Education Partnership Program. An evaluation will link day to day monitoring provided by NSW DPI to the short term and long term outcomes of the education project. Similarly, evaluation outcomes will inform monitoring data requirements. It will enable an insight into the longitudinal benefit of education while being able to map and track the external influences and relationship patterns over time.

A significant focus of the evaluation will be to build the capacity of SCA and NSW DPI staff to deliver evaluation and improve education processes and outcomes.

A comprehensive evaluation will benefit the SCA, NSW DPI and the environmental education industry. It will provide project managers with an assessment of value for money, efficiency, effectiveness and impact over the short, medium and long term. It

will measure a range of outcomes which can be loosely categorised under the following areas:

- Partnership
- Environment
- Social
- Economical
- Education
- Behaviour change

The evaluation component of the project will be coordinated by the SCA while the delivery of the education project will be coordinated by NSW DPI. Immediate and some intermediate monitoring data will be collected by NSW DPI which the Service Provider will incorporate into the intermediate and ultimate outcomes of the project. NSW DPI have previously conducted evaluation of their courses utilising survey instruments. It is anticipated that previous evaluations will contribute to baseline data for evaluation objectives integrated into this evaluation.

Evaluation model and methods

An outcome hierarchy is a framework that is used to determine the logic of a program. It aims to provide a logical chain of cause and effect from needs through to outcomes. Also known as program logic, it has multiple uses such as negotiating the criteria to guide the design of the program, determining the criteria by which performance will be judged, negotiating levels and limitations of accountability, developing a shared understanding of the program, and communicating the intent and rationale to outsiders (English and Kaleveld 2003).

This evaluation is integrated into the education program incorporating a process of adaptive management throughout the life of the education program. Evaluation will be based on outcomes defined in the program's outcome hierarchy. The outcome hierarchy will provide a framework for the evaluation linking the actions in the education to the higher order impacts of the success of the program.

Outcomes may need to be measured by more than one monitoring method which will provide a richer picture of the impact of the program. The appropriateness of the monitoring method must relate to the outcome being measured.

This type of evaluation has been selected because of the complexity of the program itself and the many variables, social, biophysical, economical and political that will influence the program's success. Quantifiable information alone, such as participation numbers, will fail to provide sufficient insight into the validity of partnership agreement and the impact of behaviour change on a community.

In the context of this evaluation, the outcome hierarchy will be used to guide the program planning and implementation, support management decisions, determine program performance, link actions to outcomes and model the programs development and implementation. The evaluation will also need to address the external influences that may enhance or distort the program's performance.

The evaluation methods and outcome hierarchy were initially developed by the project team but will need to be continually developed by the service provider as the project progresses.

Evaluation Outcomes

This initial outcome hierarchy has been developed by the SCA. It is expected that the Service Provider will continue to develop and record outcomes and indicators as part of the evaluation process.

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Performance Information	Evaluation Question
Ultimate Outcomes Partnerships Strong partnerships between agencies and graziers produce efficient and effective change that results in improved grazing culture and practices.	Agencies and graziers have established and maintained an ongoing relationship which is continued beyond the implementation of the project The partnership is modelled and can be transferred to other projects The partnership supports graziers to improve grazing practice	Stakeholder mapping Interviews and focus groups Course database Annual reports Stakeholder mapping Interviews Site inspections Interviews and focus groups	Do partnerships improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education programs? How does this partnership function? Has the education program influenced the culture and practice of grazing?
Environmental Improved water quality leaving grazing properties to achieve sustainable catchments and a water supply of high quality.	Water quality monitoring indicators in SCA catchments has improved by X%? Water quality leaving participant properties has improved by X%	Water quality reports Water quality monitoring Site inspections	Has water quality improved as a result of the education program?
Properties belonging to participants and surrounds have reduced land degradation and improved environmental outcomes.	Land degradation has decreased by X% Catchment Protection has improved by X%	Site inspections Annual reports Aerial photographs Interviews and focus groups	Has the education program improved biodiversity and decreased land degradation on participant properties?

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Performance Information	Evaluation Question
Intermediate Outcomes			
Social			
The education program and the recommended practices are promoted through informal networks between graziers.	The education messages are communicated through community networks Communication networks are used by graziers	Media and marketing coverage Community networks meetings and information Community stakeholder relationship mapping	Have the education messages been integrated into community networks? Have the education messages reached a critical mass in the SCA catchment areas?
The program has influenced or improved community networks, sense of place, and community pride	Community networks respond positively to the education program Recorded community benefits	Community stakeholder relationship mapping Community newsletters, radio, community group meetings	Have the community as a whole benefited from intensified education programs in their areas?
Economic			
Program participants have greater capacity to improve the economic value of their property while not compromising water quality	Number of grants applied for and received Property value Increased productivity off property	Grant application reports and announcements Interviews with graziers	Has the education program influenced the economic value of participant properties?
Change in Practices			
NSW DPI resource material and training courses reflect best management practices for grazing	Best Management practice documentation, training courses and materials have undergone at least 2 reviews and updates	Training manuals, resource materials, review meetings	Are agencies working together effectively to produce materials that reflect current recommended practices for grazing?
Participants have implemented changes to their properties to improve water quality outcomes	Change in practice as a result of the education program Implementation of action plan	Site visits to grazing properties after program Feedback from course facilitators Aerial photographs	Has the education program changed the behaviour of individual graziers?
Environment			
Grazier's observe changes to their properties that improve grazing and have an environmental benefit	80% of participants report improved environmental management on their property	Surveys Interviews and focus groups Site inspections	Are course participants implementing or starting to implement the learning gained from the training courses?

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Performance Information	Evaluation Question
	Post course site inspections show improved environmental management on grazing property		
Immediate Outcomes Education/Learning Participants have an improved knowledge of water quality and current recommended practices for grazing Participants have the capacity, tools and resources to improve grazing practices on their property Change in practice Graziers with the largest environmental impact attend at least one course.	Participant knowledge, appreciation and understanding of water quality Delivery of tools and resources during the courses Positive course feedback from participants Action plans developed by graziers Comparison between priority areas and grazer attendance from those areas Number of graziers who have been identified as having significant environmental impact in attendance	Feedback from the course Interviews Story telling, feedback from facilitators Course materials Feedback forms and interviews Evaluation database Action plans for properties Demographic data Annual reports and action plans SCA priority area documentation	Do participants have increased knowledge, access to resources and an appreciation of current recommended practices as a result of the education program? Has the education program assisted in changing the practice of graziers who participated? Are graziers in priority catchments participating in the program?
Outputs and Activities Grazer education and training courses Grazer property action plans Facilitated site visits to participant properties Workshops and partnership meetings with SCA DPI representatives Executive Steering Group and Project Working Group meetings Mail outs, advertising and promotional materials courses Course materials including Best Management Practices 'Green Book' Evaluation reports, annual reports and annual action plans			

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Performance Information	Evaluation Question
Evaluation database and course database Administration and management of the program			
<p>Current State and Need</p> <p>Grazing is a significant land use in the catchment areas, approx 38%. Grazing can contribute to environmental problems in the drinking catchment areas. Education and training is one activity that can influence grazing practices.</p> <p>Need to establish baseline data to effectively evaluate the education program</p>	<p>Current grazing practices are contributing to environmental degradation in the drinking catchment areas</p> <p>Existing training and education for graziers successfully improves grazier land management</p> <p>Baseline data is established and informs the education and training program</p>	<p>Evaluation reports from existing grazier education and training</p> <p>Research on environmental problems caused by graziers in the SCA drinking catchments</p> <p>Demographic information on graziers and grazing practices</p> <p>Research recommending best management practice for graziers in regards to water quality</p>	<p>Are graziers contributing to environmental problems in the drinking catchments?</p> <p>What do graziers already know about best management practices?</p> <p>What positive environmental practices to graziers already undertake?</p> <p>What are the barriers and incentives to change grazier behaviour for environmental benefit</p>

Service Requirements

General Requirements

Publications and materials

It is anticipated that a range of publications and evaluation instruments will be developed as a result of this project. Publication of any materials will be within SCA Publication Policy and style.

Development of materials will require consultation with stakeholders. Consideration will be given to a variety and combination of evaluation tools and instruments.

Consultation with stakeholders

A range of internal and external stakeholders have been identified. Development and implementation of the evaluation will in consultation with appropriate stakeholders. Stakeholders include:

Internal

- Sydney Catchment Authority staff

External

- Project working group, which includes representation from the SCA, NSW DPI, Hawkesbury Nepean CMA and Southern Rivers CMA
- Executive Steering Committee, which includes General Managers from SCA and NSW DPI
- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- Reference groups, which are likely to include industry representation, SCA staff, NSW DPI staff and others as identified
- Department of Environment and Conservation
- Community groups
- Landowners and farmers
- Catchment Management Authorities
- Rural Lands Protection Boards
- Other stakeholders as identified