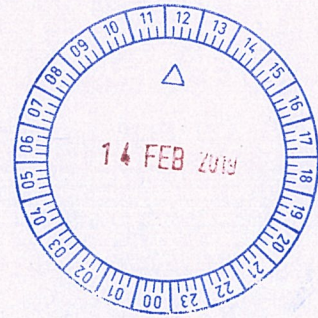




**The Hon Niall Blair MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Regional Water  
Minister for Trade and Industry



OUT18/19219

Dr John Keniry AM  
Commissioner  
Natural Resources Commission  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

12 FEB 2019

Dear ~~Dr~~ Keniry *John*

Thank you for providing me with the Commission's Audit of Local Land Services' implementation of the sustainable land management reforms on 15 October 2018.

I am pleased to note the Commission found the Sustainable Land Management group of Local Land Services is providing landholders with accurate, timely and consistent advice in administering the new land management framework.

The Commission identified clear improvements in processing times for certifications over the course of the audit. The Commission also found some areas for improvement, many of which I understand Local Land Services is already in the process of addressing.

I endorse the Commission's 10 recommendations. Local Land Services has prepared the attached Action Plan to implement them. Please feel free to publish the action plan on your website with the final report, as you think appropriate.

If you require additional information or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Mr Kristian Holz, Group Director, Sustainable Land Management, Local Land Services on (02) 9338 6720.

Yours sincerely

**The Hon Niall Blair MLC**  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Regional Water  
Minister for Trade and Industry

Encl. LLS action plan for NRC sustainable land management audit recommendations



## LLS Action Plan to address Natural Resources Commission's sustainable land management audit recommendations

Recommendation #	Reform Recommendations	Priority	Timeline	Adopt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Actions to incorporate recommendations
1	The SLM group should consistently implement, and make publicly available their process for prioritising applications.	Low	By March 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Assessment Services to submit draft process to the Contentious Issues Group (CIG)
2	The SLM group should consider a more streamlined review process for lower risk applications in the future.	Low	By June 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Assessment Services to submit draft process to the CIG
3	The SLM group should implement a more integrated IT system as a matter of urgency to improve efficiency and accuracy of data collection that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eliminates duplicative manual data entry and the need to reconcile records manually</li> <li>integrates with the SLM group's daily record keeping protocols</li> <li>collects customer interaction and transaction data within one system.</li> </ul>	High	Prioritised delivery of SLM projects from Dec 2018 to Dec 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Delivered as part of the LLS ICT program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>integrated geospatial system</li> <li>information management system</li> <li>automated reports and record management</li> <li>online customer portal</li> <li>consolidated data warehouse</li> </ul>
4	Until an integrated system is in place, SLM should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take steps to ensure team leader reviews are consistently undertaken and address common mistakes</li> <li>continue to ensure that staff are well trained in the use of primary record keeping systems to ensure data continues to be accurately documented and maintained</li> <li>maintain data quality assurance measures to check manual data entry</li> </ul>	High	Current BAU activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Manual review and quality assurance processes are in place.
5	The SLM group should formalise the process for recording the application of discretionary decision making to ensure use of discretion is transparently documented and reviewed.	Medium	By March 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All formal variations are recorded. Certificate documentation captures the decision making. Will seek to further define what the NRC wants SLM to record.
6	SLM should provide additional support and oversight for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the application of the farm plan code and continuing use provisions of the Code</li> <li>determination of a functioning ecological community, and</li> </ul>	Medium	By June 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	These areas will be included on the next round of face to face training. An online module on the EPBC Act is being developed.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>management of EPBC Act issues.</li> </ul>				
7	SLM group should implement their policy on management of EPBC Act referrals as a matter of priority and continue to actively engage with the Commonwealth to try to facilitate a more efficient approach to EPBC Act approvals.	High	By June 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The SLM EPBC Act Referrals Policy has been approved and provided to staff. The Commonwealth is not actively engaging with LLS on this issue at present.
8	SLM should review its current communications strategy based on the findings of the landholder survey and ensure that it targets a range of communication channels and aligns with landholder preferences for sourcing information and advice.	Low	By December 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SLM will review its communications strategy as suggested.
9	SLM should strengthen relationships with other agencies involved in land management (such as the Biodiversity Conservation Trust) to ensure that they are providing landholders with comprehensive land management advice.	Medium	By March 2018	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SLM maintains a relationship with the BCT. Further work will be undertaken with SLM staff and BCT to ensure landholders receive comprehensive advice about their sustainable land management options.
10	<p>The SLM group should take steps to further improve training and guidance including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhancing guidance in regards to recording keeping requirements including recording of discretionary decisions</li> <li>providing additional formal training in key aspects of the Code such as plant identification and evaluation of endangered ecological communities</li> <li>additional training in regards to the areas of the Code where staff are less confident</li> <li>ensuring training is consistently provided across all regions.</li> </ul>	Medium	By June 2019	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Training and guidance will continue to be provided to the staff and captured in their Performance and Development Plans (PDPs).