

2010

**THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE REPORT ON THE
ACT LOWLAND NATIVE GRASSLAND INVESTIGATION BY THE
COMMISSIONER FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Presented by
Mr Simon Corbell MLA
Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water**

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Recommendation	Site Affected	Government Response
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>Streamline ACT Government planning and nature conservation legislation to ensure all land management matters are covered by the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1980</i> (NCA).</p>		<p>Noted</p> <p>Pages 13-15 of the Commissioner's report highlight land management agreements, agistment licences and management plans as of particular interest. Generally, the Commissioner finds fault not with the processes that establish licences, plans or agreements nor with their contents, but with the lack of compliance, auditing, monitoring and enforcement. Improvements in these areas can be made with or without legislative change.</p> <p>Currently Plans of Management (POMs) are required for all public lands. They are prepared by TAMS as the land custodian, with input from the Conservator of Flora and Fauna. Development Applications have to be assessed as to whether they are consistent with a plan. A matter raised for discussion in the NCA review is whether it should also be a stated requirement that activities undertaken on public land must be consistent with the relevant POM.</p> <p>Under Section 283 of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>, a rural lease cannot be granted, varied, assigned or transferred unless a Land Management Agreement (LMA) has been made between the Territory and the lessee. Section 119 of the Act requires that a Development Application for a rural lease must be consistent with any LMA for the land. LMAs are executed by the Conservator on behalf of the Territory. They are prepared by TAMS with ACTPLA responsible for compliance monitoring. An LMA details the management of rural land. Rural leases apply to land on which agriculture is a use.</p> <p>TaMs will be undertaking a review of the content, management and scope of LMAs. This review will involve consultation with ACTPLA who have compliance responsibilities under the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i> for LMAs.</p>

<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>The EPBC Act should be strengthened so sites and species are more effectively protected and managed.</p>		<p>Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>This is a matter for the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth are currently reviewing of the EPBC Act. The Commissioner has made a submission to this review.</p> <p>The ACT and Commonwealth Governments have entered into a bi-lateral agreement, such that the documentation required under the ACT EIS process will now also meet Commonwealth requirements. The Commonwealth has recently released a draft offsets policy, which states that offsets (after all actions to avoid and minimise impacts have been taken) will increasingly be required to gain EPBC approval.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>The current review of the NCA must ensure that lowland native grasslands are protected by the Conservator of Flora and Fauna having powers to direct, when necessary, that land management actions be undertaken.</p>		<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>The Department of the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and Water are currently undertaking a review of the NCA. This matter will be considered in the context of the NCA review. A discussion paper written to stimulate input from the ACT community to the review of the NCA will be released in the near future.</p>

<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Resolve the heritage status of lowland native grassland sites in a timely manner - ACT nominations.</p>	<p>Majura Training Area (MA01), Air Services Beacon (MA02), Canberra International Airport (MA03), Malcolm Vale (MA04), Campbell Park (MA05), Majura West (MA06), Callum Brae (JE02), Jerrabomberra West Reserve (JE03), Jerrabomberra East Reserve (JE05), Harman Bonshaw South (JE06), Harman Bonshaw North (JE07), Lawson Territory (BE07), Belconnen Naval Transmission Station (BE08), Kama South (BE12) and Black Street Yarralumla (CC11).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>A consultant has been engaged to document the heritage values of the grassland sites nominated to the ACT Heritage Register. This documentation will be considered by the Heritage Council in its decision as to whether or not to place each grassland on the Register. Decisions are likely to be made by the end of 2009.</p> <p>In relation to Lawson (Territory land), a concept planning study for this area is near completion. A draft variation to the Territory Plan is likely to occur in spring, with land release planned to commence from 2010/11.</p> <p>The Eastern Broadacre Planning Study and investigations into the Kowan link road, currently being undertaken by ACTPLA, provide relevant information in relation to Callum Brae and the Majura Training Area.</p> <p>The Department of Defence has indicated that it does not support the nomination of the seven Defence-managed grasslands for listing on the ACT Heritage Register. Defence considers that listing would be contrary to Defence policy and the construct of the EPBC Act whereby states and territories are responsible for heritage sites on their land and the Commonwealth is responsible for heritage sites on Commonwealth land.</p>
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<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Resolve the heritage status of lowland native grassland sites in a timely manner - Commonwealth nominations.</p>	<p>Campbell Park (MA05), Majura West (MA06), Callum Brae (JE02), Jerrabomberra West Reserve (JE03), Jerrabomberra East Reserve (JE05), Harman Bonshaw South (JE06) (although not identified in the Commissioner's report it would appear that the Majura Training Area (MA01) and Malcolm Vale (MA04) grasslands have also been nominated to the Commonwealth.</p>	<p>Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>These grasslands on Commonwealth land have been bundled together into one grassland nomination, which is currently on the program of the Australian Heritage Council to consider and must be assessed no later than December 2010, unless the Commonwealth Minister approves otherwise. If any of the land were to be transferred from the Commonwealth to the Territory, these areas would need to be excluded from the nomination or any listed area as only Commonwealth land can be included within the category of listing under which the nomination has been made.</p> <p>This recommendation does not seek heritage listing of these areas, rather that the heritage nominations and status concerning the lands be resolved.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>As part of the NCA review ensure that lowland native grasslands are protected by innovative mechanisms such as conservation leases, voluntary agreements, bio-banking and offsets are investigated and progressed.</p>		<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>This matter will be considered in the context of the NCA review.</p>

<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>Existing MOUs between ACT Government and Defence, NCA and CSIRO with DEWHA as a signatory be updated and implemented.</p> <p>Recommendation 7</p> <p>Develop MOU between ACT Government and Finance, Air Services Australia and the Canberra Airport group with DEWHA as a signatory.</p> <p>Recommendation 8</p> <p>Establish an MOU coordination and implementation group with an ACT Government agency being the lead agent.</p>	<p>Majura Training Area (MA01), Malcolm Vale (MA04), Campbell Park (MA05), Harman Bonshaw South (JE06), Harman Bonshaw North (JE07), Lawson Commonwealth (BE08), CSIRO, headquarters (CC01), Ginninderra Experimental Station (BE01), Yarramundi Reach (CC06), Lady Denman Drive (CC07), Guilfoyle Street (CC09), Kaleen East Paddocks (BE09), Caswell Drive (BE10), Glenloch Interchange (BE11), Constitution Avenue (CC02), St John's Church (CC03), ACCC (CC04), Dudley Street (CC08), Novar Street (CC10), Black Street (CC11), York Park (CC05), Air Services Beacon (MA02), Canberra International Airport (MA03).</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>It is proposed that this recommendation be implemented through alternative consultative mechanisms. There is little support within the Commonwealth for MOUs to be updated or developed.</p> <p>The Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) is of the view that the advent of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC Act) has made the MOUs somewhat redundant and it would prefer to concentrate on the statutory controls of the EPBC Act rather than on non-binding MOUs. The Department of Defence, and the Department of Finance and Deregulation also consider that MOUs are not warranted. CSIRO and the National Capital Authority would be willing to renew their MOUs but are not strong supporters.</p> <p>It would appear that the Commissioner sees the main value of the MOUs as fostering communication and integration of activities between government agencies. It is proposed that this be fostered through the establishment of a co-ordination group of relevant Commonwealth and ACT agencies which would meet once or twice a year. At these meetings, Managers of Category 1 and 2 grasslands would table annual operational plans, which would be short documents or spreadsheets detailing the management for the upcoming year.</p>
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<p>Recommendation 9</p> <p>Amend the <i>Canberra Nature Park Management Plan</i> to incorporate Action Plan 28 and new reserves of Callum Brae and Jerrabomberra East and West.</p>		<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>This recommendation should be read in conjunction with recommendation 26.1.</p> <p>It should be noted that there is no existing Callum Brae Reserve. The southern third of the Callum Brae grassland is within the Jerrabomberra West Nature Reserve. A recent variation to the Territory Plan allows a mobile home park as a use within the northern section – Block 17 section 102; Blocks 17 and Block 18 Section 102, in between Block 17 and Jerrabomberra West Nature Reserve are considered in the Eastern Broadacre Planning Study, which broadly examines the long term possible uses and ecological issues in the area. Subject to Government consideration, the study is expected to be released for public comment in the first half of 2010.</p> <p><i>Canberra Nature Park Management Plan</i> will be reviewed – timing is subject to resourcing.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10</p> <p>Develop and implement annual site operation plans for all lowland native grassland sites.</p>	<p>All grassland sites.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>As per recommendations 6, 7 and 9 - it is proposed that annual operational plans for Category 1 and 2 sites be tabled annually at the proposed co-ordination group meeting. Management priorities will reflect particular values for a site. For agencies with many sites the preparation of operational plans may need to be prioritised and undertaken in accordance with available resources.</p>
<p>Recommendation 11</p> <p>Amend the Belconnen Urban Parks and Sportsgrounds and Lake Ginninderra POM to include grassland site of Lake Ginninderra.</p>	<p>Lake Ginninderra (BE06).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>TAMS and ACTPLA has advised that they will address this recommendation as part of the development of the Plan of Management (POM).</p>

<p>Recommendation 12</p> <p>Simplify administration of agistment licences covering grasslands through standardising their conditions, including termination dates; and have one government signatory to an agistment lease.</p>	<p>Dunlop (BE02), Crace (GU03), Gungaderra (GU02), Majura West (MA06), Jerramlee (BE03), Kama South (BE12), Tennant Street (JE10), Mitchell (GU05), Lawson Territory (BE07).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>TAMS is reviewing current agistment licence processes in relation to standardisation and conditions imposed. This will include consideration of administration arrangements such as issuing of licences, compliance, regulation and auditing.</p> <p>Any changes will be cognisant of ACTPLA's role of maintaining a register of licences and leases through the PALM database and ACTMAPI.</p>
<p>Recommendation 13</p> <p>Ensure rural lease processes (including those for land management agreements) are simplified and responsibilities are clarified.</p>	<p>Cookanella (JE08), Callum Brae (JE02), Jerrabomberra West (JE03), Harman Bonshaw South (JE06), Harman Bonshaw North (JE07), Crace (GU03), Canberra Riding Club (GU06), Caswell Drive (BE10), Gungaderra (GU02).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>TAMS are undertaking a review of LMAs and their effectiveness. This will inform how this recommendation could be implemented.</p>
<p>Recommendation 14</p> <p>Review Crace and Caswell Drive land management agreements.</p>	<p>Crace (GU03), Caswell Drive (BE10).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>TAMS will reconsider these LMAs in light of the wider review of LMAs.</p>

<p>Recommendation 15*</p> <p>Immediately enforce the provision and conditions in the land management agreement, which is part of the rural lease for Cookanella</p> <p>* Identified as ‘for urgent action’ by the Commissioner</p>		<p>Agreed</p> <p>The Lessee has agreed to remove Boxthorn infestation as detailed in the LMA. The grazing level on the natural temperate grassland has been reduced, with stock being removed from the lease for a period of months. Discussions will be undertaken with the lessee regarding the inclusion of tighter enforceable grazing conditions as part of the 5-year review of the LMA, now due. Options for compliance enforcement (if required) are also under consideration by the ACT Government.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16</p> <p>Foster a strong culture of compliance, monitoring and enforcement within the government agency responsible for administering land management agreements.</p>		<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>TaMs and ACTPLA will continue to work together with a focus on implementing a strong culture and formal process of compliance, monitoring and enforcement of LMAs. This will occur through strengthening existing processes and clearly delineating responsibilities - TaMs will monitor LMAs and ACTPLA will enforce LMA terms and conditions as part of lease compliance. The Conservator of Flora and Fauna, with the assistance of TaMs and ACTPLA, will report annually in the DECCEW Annual Report.</p>
<p>Recommendation 17</p> <p>Establish a formal monitoring, assessment and auditing process aimed at ensuring conditions in land management agreements achieve the desired ecological results.</p>		<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>As per recommendation 16.</p>
<p>Recommendation 18</p> <p>Permit grazing under rural lease and licences on lowland native grassland sites if it is part of a long-term conservation management strategy.</p>		<p>Agreed</p> <p>Conservation grazing will continue to be permitted. Agistment licences and leases will be conditioned so that any stock grazing permitted does not threatened the conservation values of a site.</p>

<p>Recommendation 19</p> <p>Undertake experimental ecological burns on selected sites to determine the appropriateness of a wider application for managing lowland native grassland sites in the ACT.</p>	<p>Air Services Beacon (MA02), Constitution Ave (CC02), St John's Church (CC03), ACCC (CC04), Yarramundi Reach (CC06), Guilfoyle Street (CC09), Umbagog Park (N+S) (BE04), Lawson Commonwealth East (BE08b), Isabella Pond (TU01), Mitchell (GU05).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Isabella Ponds, the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, Dudley Street and Black Street were burnt in autumn 2009. Grass cover has been reduced by kangaroo grazing at the Air Services Beacon. Cover at Yarramundi has been reduced through slashing and hay making. The on-ground application and results of the 4 burns has and will further inform how ecological burns are undertaken elsewhere.</p>
<p>Recommendation 20</p> <p>Give priority to weed management and implementing appropriate mowing practices as part of routine work programs.</p>		<p>Agreed</p> <p>The ACT Government allocated in 2008-09 an additional \$100,000 and around \$40,000 of the existing weed control budget towards control of grassland weeds and, along with the Commonwealth agencies, has in most cases implemented weed control as recommended by the Commissioner. Guidelines for appropriate mowing are in place across grassland sites.</p>
<p>Recommendation 21</p> <p>All threatening processes (e.g. grazing by kangaroos, weed invasion, rabbit control) that require urgent action to be taken, relative to each site.</p>		<p>The Commissioner identified these actions as urgent. Specific details relative to each site are at Attachment A1</p>

<p>Recommendation 22</p> <p>The ACT and Australian Governments commit to a strategic approach to protecting lowland native grassland and fostering sustainable development by:</p>		
<p>Recommendation 22.1a</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Majura Training Area (MA01).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>38 hectares of grassland are proposed to be excised by Canberra Airport for a northern road connection to Fairbairn. The works have received approval from the Australian Government but are subject to stringent requirements. It is the view of the Commissioner that construction of the road would make the grassland unviable. The ACT Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Water made representations to the relevant Federal Minister urging that the development of the road be reconsidered.</p> <p>As the decision for declaration of a nature reserve in this location is primarily a DEWHA responsibility, any role the ACT Government has in this will reinforce the need to protect important habitat as well as considering the reserve in the context of the Eastern Broadacre Planning Study and investigations into the Kowen link road – both being coordinated by ACTPLA.</p> <p>The grassland would also be impacted upon by the Canberra Airport Master Plan including runway lights, taxiway widening and extensions. Commonwealth approvals associated with Canberra Airport may affect the future of the site and the ability to establish a viable Majura Valley Reserve.</p> <p>Management of the land as a conservation reserve could occur by the Commonwealth without transfer of the land from the Commonwealth Government to the ACT. To date, there has been no formal discussion between the Commonwealth and the ACT Governments regarding the possible transfer of this land.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.1b</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Air Services Beacon (MA02).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>This site may be affected by northern airport road and extension of airport lights. Commonwealth approvals associated with Canberra Airport may affect the future of the site.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1c</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Canberra International Airport (MA03).</p>	<p>Noted/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>This site may be affected by the proposed northern airport road. Master Plan developments on grassland include apron expansion, taxiway widening and extension and glidepath facility. Commonwealth approvals associated with Canberra Airport will affect the future of grassland at the site.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1d</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Campbell Park (MA05).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>The ACT Government supports the addition of this land to Mt Ainslie Nature Reserve. Advice has been sought from the Department of Defence as to its intent for this land. Any transfer of land to the Territory would need to be subject to budget considerations.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1e</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Majura West (MA06).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>It is proposed that this land be added to the conservation reserve network. The Eastern Broadacre Planning Study will provide information in determining the boundary of the reserve area.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.1f</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management - but see also Recommendation 26.</p>	<p>Callum Brae (JE02).</p>	<p>Agreed in Part</p> <p>The southern third of Callum Brae grassland (JE02) is already within Jerrabomberra West Nature Reserve.</p> <p>A variation to the Territory Plan has recently occurred that incorporates the most northern part (Block 17, Section 102 Symonston) into Symonston Area ‘b’ which specifically allows a mobile home park as an use additional to other uses permitted within Broadacre Zoning. Actual development of the land is subject to gaining development approval under the <i>Planning and Development Act 1997</i>. Both Blocks 17 and the adjoining Block 18 Section 102 (which lies between Block 17 and the Jerrabomberra West Nature Reserve), are being considered as part of the Eastern Broadacre Planning study, which broadly examines the long term uses and ecological issues in the area. Subject to Government consideration, the study is expected to be released for public comment in the first half of 2010.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1g</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Jerrabomberra West Reserve (JE03).</p>	<p>Agreed in Part</p> <p>Virtually all this area is existing reserve except for a 3 hectare lease held by model aircraft club. It is not the Government’s intention to reserve the land held by the model aircraft club.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1h</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Jerrabomberra East Reserve (JE05).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The proposed reserve boundary needs to be finalised with a Territory Plan Variation required. ACTPLA is progress this work.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.1i</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Harman Bonshaw South (JE06).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>Possible future nature reserves are identified in the Southern Broadacre Planning Study and more recently in the Eastern Broadacre Planning Study.</p> <p>The Department of Defence the current owner of the land would need to be willing for the lands to be put under conservation management. The ACT Government will continue to liaise with the Department of Defence with respect to the future of this site.</p> <p>Management of the land as a conservation reserve could occur without transfer of the land from the Commonwealth Government to the ACT.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1j</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Harman Bonshaw North (JE07).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>Possible future nature reserves are identified in the Southern Broadacre Planning Study and more recently in the Eastern Broadacre Planning Study.</p> <p>The Department of Defence the current owner of the land would need to be willing for the lands to be put under conservation management. The ACT Government will continue to liaise with the Department of Defence with respect to the future of this site.</p> <p>Management of the land as a conservation reserve could occur without transfer of the land from the Commonwealth Government to the ACT.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1k</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Mulanggari Nature Reserve (GU01).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Nature reserve already exists.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.1l</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Gungaderra Nature Reserve (GU02).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Nature reserve already exists.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1m</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Crace Nature Reserve (GU03).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Nature reserve already exists. The Department of Defence has recently transferred that part of the land to the ACT, which they previously owned.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1n</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Dunlop Nature Reserve (BE02).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Nature reserve already exists.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1o</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Belconnen Naval Transmission Station (BE08).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>The ACT Government is of the view that the area should become nature reserve. However this is a decision for the Commonwealth. The Department of Defence has advised that it is currently considering the future of this site. If the land is transferred to the Territory, the Conservator of Flora and Fauna will request ACTPLA to vary the Territory Plan to make the area a nature reserve.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.1p</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Caswell Drive (BE10).</p>	<p>Not Agreed</p> <p>A 99-year Rural Lease applies to this land. The LMA is due for review – the revised LMA will have a greater focus on conservation management.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1q</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Glenloch Interchange (BE11).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>This is currently public land – it will be added to the reserve network.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1r</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Kama South (BE12).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Nature reserve already exists.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.1s</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture (CC04).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>A draft conservation plan is in place for this site.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.1t</p> <p>Giving priority to protecting all Category 1 sites and ensuring that they are not affected by development and where possible placed into a reserve or placed under conservation management.</p>	<p>Isabella Pond (TU01).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Ecological burn recently undertaken. This site is being managed to retain conservation values.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22.2</p> <p>Integrating conservation values with development considerations for all Category 2 and 3 sites, ensuring connectivity is retained and enhanced.</p>	<p>All Category 2 and 3 sites.</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>This recommendation will be progressed as part of the review of the NCA, the Eastern Broadacre Planning Study and by developing the draft ACT biodiversity offsets approach.</p> <p>Retaining lowland connectivity is being addressed as part of the NCA review. A number of options are being considered including a "green" or connectivity overlay in the Territory Plan and National Capital Plan; publication of a map and land use zones as per recommendation 27; identification of corridors with revised Nature Conservation Strategy; or changes to the NCA to allow declaration of areas of connectivity importance are being considered.</p> <p>Offsetting may also help protect and enhance those parts of the ACT that are of particular importance to connectivity.</p> <p>Note that recent studies affect Category 2 and 3 sites, for example, the Southern Broadacre Planning Study and more recently the Eastern Broadacre Planning Study. These studies have implications for JE08 - Cookanalla and JE04 - Woods Lane (ACTPLA/TAMS responsible agencies). For JE09 - Amtech, and JE10 - Fyshwick, the LDA has responsibility.</p> <p>The ANU connectivity study will help to inform future planning and development assessment in the ACT. The report is expected by the end of 2009.</p>

<p>Recommendation 22.3</p> <p>Develop offset policy that includes identification of offset restoration sites for loss of lowland native grassland due to development.</p>	<p>All native grassland.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>DECCEW is currently preparing a draft biodiversity offsets approach for Cabinet consideration.</p>
<p>Recommendation 23</p> <p>Plan a Majura Valley Reserve to protect grassland and Earless Dragon by defining the boundaries of this proposed reserve in the near future.</p>	<p>Majura Training Area (MA01), Air Services Beacon (MA02), Canberra International Airport (MA03), Malcolm Vale (MA04).</p>	<p>Noted/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>Any ACT Government response will be informed by the Majura Parkway EIS, Airport Master Plan, Eastern Broadacre Planning Study, the Commissioner's grassland report, any relevant heritage listings and decisions made by the Commonwealth under the EPBC.</p> <p>As ACT legislation is subservient to that of the Commonwealth, the future of grassland in the Majura Valley will largely be determined by Commonwealth decisions.</p>
<p>Recommendation 24</p> <p>Expand the Mount Ainslie Reserve to include areas of lowland native grassland in Campbell Park and Majura West.</p>	<p>Campbell Park (MA05), Majura West (MA06).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle/Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>Advice has been sought from the Department of Defence in relation to the future of Campbell Park. The ACT Government supports the addition of both areas to the formal reserve network. Management of Campbell Park as a conservation reserve could occur without transfer of the land from the Commonwealth Government to the ACT.</p> <p>The Eastern Broadacre Planning Study will provide information of assistance to determining where the reserve boundary should be placed at Majura West.</p>
<p>Recommendation 25</p> <p>Expand Aranda Bushland and Black Mountain Reserve by including areas of lowland native grassland in Caswell Drive and Glenloch Interchange.</p>	<p>Caswell Drive (BE10), Glenloch Interchange (BE11).</p>	<p>Agreed in Part</p> <p>Transfer of the Caswell Drive land is problematic as the land is currently subject to a long-term rural lease. The Government considers that improved grassland management can be achieved through revision of the LMA.</p> <p>The grassland at Glenloch Interchange will be added to the conservation reserve network.</p>

<p>Recommendation 26</p> <p>Define the long-term land use for lowland native grassland sites, while strategically protecting lowland native grasslands and progressing appropriate developments specifically:</p>		
<p>Recommendation 26.1</p> <p>Define the areas of ecological connectivity on Callum Brae. If development occurs, an offset should be required.</p>	<p>Callum Brae (JE02).</p>	<p>Agreed-in-part</p> <p>The Eastern Broadacre Planning Study is examining this issue. ACTPLA is undertaking this work.</p>
<p>Recommendation 26.2</p> <p>Conduct a grassland Earless Dragon Survey. If areas of grassland are developed an offset should be required.</p>	<p>Cookanalla (JE08).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The Eastern Broadacre Planning Study is examining this issue. ACTPLA is undertaking this work. A habitat survey was undertaken in 2009 and will inform the planning for this area under the Eastern Broadacre project.</p>
<p>Recommendation 26.3</p> <p>Reassess the sites ecological value. If areas of grassland are developed an offset should be required.</p>	<p>AMTECH (JE09).</p>	<p>Agreed-in-part</p> <p>The AMTECH site is already zoned Industrial, thereby denoting its broad suitability for urban development. A Grassland Earless Dragon survey was undertaken in 2008. It did not locate any endangered lizards. TAMS will assess current condition and extent of native grassland on the development site, which will inform any decision about an appropriate offset. The AMTECH site (Section 1, Symonston) land is on the Indicative Industrial Land Release Program.</p>
<p>Recommendation 26.4</p> <p>Reassess the ecological value of Kaleen East Paddocks.</p>	<p>Kaleen East Paddocks (BE09).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>TAMS will undertake the reassessment, subject to resourcing.</p>

<p>Recommendation 26.5</p> <p>If areas of grassland are developed an offset should be required.</p>	<p>Lawson Commonwealth – East (BE08), Constitution Avenue (CC02).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>DECCEW is developing a draft biodiversity offset approach for Government consideration which could apply to these situations.</p>
<p>Recommendation 27</p> <p>A map of the location of lowland native grassland sites relative to planning zones to be published.</p>		<p>Agreed</p> <p>ACTPLA and TAMS have agreed to provide this map.</p>
<p>Recommendation 28</p> <p>Use adaptive management to guide land management so that good condition sites are maintained and other sites are restored.</p>	<p>All grassland sites.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Related to Recommendations 8 and 10 and will require prioritisation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 29</p> <p>Assess the ecological values of seven grassland sites.</p>	<p>Evatt Footbridge, Wells Station Road (GU07), Nicholls (GU08), Novar Street (CC10), Canberra Riding Club, Lawson Commonwealth – East (BE08b) and Mitchell (GU05).</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>TAMS has advised that it will undertake these assessments. Assessment will be done within existing resources.</p>

<p>Recommendation 30</p> <p>Conduct an annual community and stakeholder lowland native grassland forum to, among other things, coordinate research, monitoring and data collection and raise awareness.</p>		<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>The community group the Friends of Grasslands (FOG) with assistance from the Conservation Council, together with the Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment would be willing to assist in the forum. It is possible that the role of running the forum could be a task of a resource information facilitator/coordinator discussed below in relation to recommendation 31.</p>
<p>Recommendation 31</p> <p>Establish an accessible central register of information and expertise on lowland native grassland.</p>		<p>Agreed in Part</p> <p>The Natural Resource Management Council (NRM Council) has identified collation and access of information and expertise on ACT's natural resources as an issue that needs to be addressed. Grassland information would be an important sub-set of this. The NRM Council is recommending that the collation and dissemination of information on the ACT's natural environment be undertaken through the funding of an information facilitator/coordinator in a similar way to that in which catchment and landcare co-ordinators are currently funded.</p> <p>Such a funding bid would be given careful consideration by the ACT Government.</p> <p>TAMS is working towards including spatial information on the web through its Corporate Geospatial Database.</p>

<p>Recommendation 32</p> <p>Increase community awareness of the importance of lowland native grassland, in particular Natural Temperate Grassland and the endangered grassland species.</p>		<p>Agreed</p> <p>With ACT Government support, the Conservation Council has prepared a booklet for free distribution to Gungahlin residents on the heritage values, including grasslands, of Gungahlin. There is the possibility that similar publications will be produced for Belconnen and Tuggeranong. Pamphlets have also been produced for some of the ACT's grassland reserves, which explain their values to nearby residents and visitors to the reserves.</p> <p>Commonwealth landcare funding is also being directed, with support from the ACT NRM Council, PCL and FOG, towards developing a fact sheet targeted specifically at ACT Rural landholders which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maps where natural temperate grasslands and native grasslands are in the ACT; • addresses identifying grassland species; and • advises of appropriate management of these grasslands to protect and enhance both their ecological and production values. <p>In addition annual field days will be held on Rural Landholder properties on Best Practice Management of Natural Temperate Grasslands and native-based pastures to protect ecological and production values of these systems.</p>
<p>Recommendation 32.1</p> <p>Suggested that this could include the placement of signs with interpretative material.</p>	<p>Callum Brae (JE02), Jerrabomberra West (JE03) and East Reserves (JE05), Mulanggari NR (GU01), Gungaderra NR (GU02), Crace NR (GU03), North Mitchell (GU04)+ Dunlop NR (BE02).</p>	<p>Agreed in Part</p> <p>Generic grassland signs, which contain limited general information on ACT's grasslands, have already been erected at Crace, Gunaderra, Mulanggari and Jerrabomberra. Rather than addressing this recommendation on a site-by-site basis, it is suggested that an environmental grant (2010/2011) (and/or if the grasslands become listed on the ACT Heritage Register a heritage grant) be applied for to establish a signposted grasslands trail across Canberra. The community group Friends Of Grasslands expressed a willingness to be involved.</p>

<p>Recommendation 32.2</p> <p>Placement of signs with interpretative material.</p>	<p>Canberra International Airport (MA03).</p>	<p>Matter for the Commonwealth</p> <p>The Airport Master Plan if fully implemented would result in loss of much of the grassland currently within the airport.</p>
<p>Recommendation 32.3</p> <p>Placement of signs with interpretative material.</p>	<p>St John's Church, Reid (CC03).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>Rather than addressing this recommendation on a site-by-site basis, it is suggested that an environmental grant (2010/2011) (and/or if the grasslands become listed on the ACT Heritage Register a heritage grant) be applied for to establish a signposted grasslands trail across Canberra. The community group Friends Of Grasslands has expressed a willingness to be involved.</p>
<p>Recommendation 32.4</p> <p>Placement of signs with interpretative material</p>	<p>Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture, Barton (CC04).</p>	<p>Agreed In-Principle</p> <p>Rather than addressing this recommendation on a site-by-site basis, it is suggested that an environmental grant (2010/2011) (and/or if the grasslands become listed on the ACT Heritage Register a heritage grant) be applied for to establish a signposted grasslands trail across Canberra. The community group Friends Of Grasslands has expressed a willingness to be involved.</p>

ACT Government Response to Urgent Grassland Recommendations of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment

Abbreviations: Parks, Conservation and Lands – TAMS (PCL), National Capital Authority (NCA), ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA), Land Development Agency (LDA), Ginninderra Peppercross (GP), Button Wrinklewort (BW), Golden Sun Moth (GSM), Striped Legless Lizard (SLL), Grassland Earless Dragon (GED) and Perunga Grasshopper (PG)

Action and Action Number	Location	Responsibility	Area (size) ha	Category	Threatened spp.	Government Response
21.1 Reduce Kangaroos	Malcolm Vale (MA04).	Defence	155	2	GED	Agreed Cull completed July 2009.
21.2 Reduce Kangaroos	Majura West (MA06).	PCL - agisted	133	1	GED	Agreed Cull completed July 2009.
21.3 Reduce Kangaroos	Majura Training Area (MA06).	Defence	114	1	GSM GED BW PG SLL	Agreed Cull completed June 2009.
21.4 Reduce Kangaroos	Jerrabomberra East (JE05).	PCL	72	1	GED GSM PG	Agreed Cull completed July 2009.
21.5 Reduce Kangaroos	Crace Nature Reserve (GU03).	PCL	61	1	SLL BW	Agreed Cull completed July 2009.
21.6 Reduce Kangaroos	Dunlop Nature Reserve (BE02).	PCL	120	1	N/A	Recommended action not required. Inspection in 2009 revealed low kangaroo numbers not requiring cull.
21.7 Reduce Kangaroos	Jarramlee (BE03).	PCL - agisted	52	2	N/A	Recommended action not required. Inspection in 2009 revealed low kangaroo numbers not requiring cull.
21.8 Reduce Kangaroos	Ginninderra Experimental Station (BE01).	CSIRO	19	2	N/A	Agreed Cull completed June 2009.
21.9 Reduce Kangaroos	Caswell Drive (BE10).	Lessee	5.8	1	N/A	Not Agreed. Public safety issues make culling problematic thus culling has not been progressed with the lessee.
21.10 Control Rabbits	Cookanalla (JE08).	Lessee	81	2	GED	Recommended action not required. Rabbits assessed in August 2009 as only existing in very low numbers on site and not in need of specific control program. However, agreed removal of Boxthorn infestation by lessee will reduce cover favourable to rabbits.
21.11 Control Rabbits	Crace Nature Reserve (GU03).	PCL	61	1	SLL BW	Agreed A visual inspection of the area has been undertaken showing few rabbits present. Rabbits will be controlled over the coming months as funds allow. Recommendation to be implemented in 2010.

21.12 Control Rabbits	Dunlop Nature Reserve (BE02).	PCL	120	1	N/A	Recommended action not required A visual inspection of the area has been undertaken showing few rabbits present. No specific control required at this stage.
21.13 Control Rabbits	Jarramlee (BE03).	Agisted PCL/Lessee	52	2	N/A	Agreed A visual inspection of the area has been undertaken showing few rabbits present. Recommendation to be implemented in 2010.
21.14 Control Rabbits	Majura West (MA06).	PCL/ Agistee	133	1	GED	Agreed Rabbits have been controlled in conjunction with the Mt Ainslie control program. Very few rabbits were on this block.
21.15 Remove Stock	Cookanalla (JE08).	Lessee	81	2	GED	Agreed Stock were removed allowing grass growth. Restocking to an agreed level has since occurred.
21.16 Remove Stock	Crace Nature Reserve (GU03).	PCL	61	1	SLL BW	Agreed in Part A grazing lease exists over part of the nature reserve. Stock has been removed from nature reserve. There are still some cattle on rural lease area of the reserve. Grazing assists in the control of Phalaris and fences have been installed to assist this weed control. The impact of cattle grazing is being monitored and assessed.
21.17 Remove Stock	Dunlop Nature Reserve (BE02).	PCL	120	1	N/A	Agreed Stock has been removed. In the long term new fencing will enable more targeted conservation grazing.
21.18 Remove Stock	Jarramlee (BE03).	PCL - agisted	52	2	N/A	Agreed Stock removed on 3 July 2009.
22.19 Remove Stock	Majura West (MA06).	Agistee/PCL	133	1	GED	Agreed All stock removed.
21.20 Modify Mowing Regimes	Black Street Yarralumla.	PCL	3.6	2	GSM	Agreed Mowing is undertaken in accordance with specifications and carried out in late August each year. Mowing is carried out by a tractor and slasher with the deck raised to 150 mm in order to prevent damage to the GSM and Wallaby Grass. The mower is washed down prior to mowing.
21.21 Modify Mowing Regimes	Dudley Street Yarralumla (CC08).	PCL	2.2	2	GSM	Agreed Mowing is carried out twice per year with clumps of grass removed afterwards to ensure the survival of the Themeda. PCL avoids mowing when ground is wet to prevent soil compaction.

21.22 Modify Mowing Regimes	Guilfoyle Street Yarralumla (CC09).	NCA	0.8	2	BW (1 plant) GSM	Agreed Mowing is undertaken in accordance with specifications and carried out in late August each year. Mowing is carried out by a tractor and slasher with the deck raised to 150 mm in order to prevent damage to the GSM and Wallaby Grass. The mower is washed down prior to mowing.
21.23 Modify Mowing Regimes	Lady Denman Drive (CC07).	PCL + NCA	0.4	2	GSM	Agreed The NCA has prepared an operation plan for the site which it is implementing including enhanced weed management + mowing. Mowing by PCL is carried out at 150 mm in late summer. Mowers are washed down to prevent the spread of African Lovegrass, Chilean Needle Grass, St John's Wort and Serrated Tussock.
21.24 Modify Mowing Regimes	Novar Street Yarralumla (CC10).	PCL	0.2	3	GSM	Agreed Mowing for this site is carried out when the surrounding area is mowed approximately 5 times per year. This is a small, low-quality site. Mowing policy will apply to site.
21.25 Weed Control	BNTS (BE08(a)) Lawson.	Defence	94	1	GSM GP PG SLL	Agreed Weeds are now mapped annually at all Defence sites and control undertaken. Implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations has been given priority and has commenced.
21.26 Weed Control	Crace Nature Reserve (GU03).	PCL	61	1	SLL BW	Agreed PCL has undertaken a concerted weed control program (Chilean Needlegrass, Serrated Tussock, St John's Wort) in this reserve over the past 12 months with all priority weeds being controlled. Follow-up included in the 2009/10 Weed Control Program. Chilean Needlegrass was sprayed in August 2009.
21.27 Weed Control	Dudley Street Yarralumla (CC08).	PCL	2.2	2	GSM	Agreed Weed control undertaken to date has been largely unsuccessful. Considerable experimentation with various methods of weed control was implemented in the mid-1990s. Weed issues include Chilean Needlegrass, paspalum and African Love Grass. Chilean Needlegrass was sprayed in July 2009.
21.28 Weed Control	Guilfoyle Street Yarralumla (CC09).	NCA	0.8	2	BW (1 plant) GSM	Not Agreed The National Capital Authority has prepared an operation plan for the site which it is implementing to some degree. However, weed control on hold till decision made whether it will be built upon (currently land is designated as an embassy site).

21.29 Weed Control	Harman Bonshaw North (JE07).	Defence	115	1	GED BW	Agreed Weeds are now mapped annually at all Defence sites and control undertaken. Implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations has been given priority and has commenced.
21.30 Weed Control	Harman Bonshaw South (JE06).	Defence	106	1	GED	Agreed Weeds are now mapped annually at all Defence sites and control undertaken. Implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations has been given priority and has commenced.
21.31 Weed Control	Lady Denman Drive (CC07).	PCL 0.2 ha NCA 0.2 ha	0.4	2	GSM	Agreed The NCA has prepared an operation plan for the site which it is implementing including enhanced weed management + mowing. Roadside spraying of African Lovegrass and Chilean Needlegrass has occurred to protect core area of native grass.
21.32 Weed Control	Lawson Territory (BE07).	LDA	59	3	GSM	Agreed Weed control adjacent to high-quality grassland has occurred. Serrated tussock weed control programmed for 2010.
21.33 Weed Control	Majura Training Area (MA06).	Defence	114	1	GSM GED BW PG SLL	Agreed Weeds are now mapped annually at all Defence sites and control undertaken. Implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations has been given priority and has commenced.
21.34 Weed Control	Malcolm Vale (MA04).	Defence	155	2	GED	Agreed Weeds are now mapped annually at all Defence sites and control undertaken. Implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations has been given priority and has commenced.
21.35 Weed Control	Nicholls (GU08).	PCL	0.3	3	SLL	Agreed in Principle Follow-up spraying of weeds may occur in 2010 funding, but rated as a low priority.
21.36 Weed Control	Umbagong (BE04(b)).	PCL	2.8	3		Agreed Chilean Needlegrass, African Love Grass , Serrated Tussock and St John's Wort spraying has occurred.
21.37 Weed Control	Wells Station Road (GU07).	PCL	0.2	3	SLL	Agreed Weeds will continue to be controlled as per the Rural Roadside Weed Control Contract.

21.38 Weed Control	Yarramundi Reach (CC06).	NCA	21	2	GSM SLL	Agreed The NCA has prepared an operation plan for the site which it is implementing including enhanced weed management + mowing. PCL staff met with NCA staff in July 09 on site to highlight Chilean Needlegrass infestations and nearby Serrated Tussock infestations and the need for their control.
21.39 Weed Control	York Park (CC05).	NCA	0.4	2	GSM	Agreed Finance adopted a maintenance plan in 2008; weeds have been sprayed since the Commissioner's inspection.
21.40 Fencing of kangaroos + stock over grazing continues	Campbell Park (MA05).	Defence	11.7	1	GED BW SLL GSM PG	Agreed The level of grazing on Campbell Park will continue to be monitored every November and April. Grazing level has been monitored since 2004. The grazing level has remained stable at Campbell Park over this time. Currently fencing is not required.

Response to the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment Recommendations Concerning the Belconnen Naval Transmission Station

Recommendation	Government Response
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>Urgent action is to be taken to restore the ecological condition of the grassland, and provide opportunities for the Perunga Grasshopper, Golden Sun Moth and Ginninderra Peppercress to survive and thrive at the BNTS.</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Grazing pressure by kangaroos at the BNTS has been significantly reduced. There has been good recovery in native pasture biomass. However, probably as a result of depleted seed stock in the soil and dry conditions, there remains bare soil between grass tussocks in many areas. It will take time for the grasslands to fully recover.</p> <p>The area containing the Ginninderra Peppercress has been fenced off.</p> <p>Post the reduction in kangaroo numbers, initial monitoring of the Perunga Grasshopper, Golden Sun Moth and Ginninderra Peppercress populations occurred. This will provide a benchmark level for comparison under less intense kangaroo grazing. The Commonwealth report that populations of the Perunga Grasshopper and Ginninderra Peppercress are currently stable and that the Golden Sun Moth is increasing. The Commonwealth will provide available monitoring results to the ACT Government and the Commissioner.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Kangaroos are to be removed immediately from the BNTS to achieve a stocking rate of 1 kangaroo per hectare or fewer. This is to be done by the land manager, preferably before the end of April 2008, to prevent impacts on pasture biomass occurring during the dormant 2008 winter season.</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>530 kangaroos were culled by May 2008, reducing the stocking rate from 5 kangaroos per hectare to below 1 kangaroo per hectare.</p>

<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Kangaroo population numbers are to be maintained at the targeted level for the foreseeable future using fertility-controlled kangaroos only. A program to maintain this situation is to be implemented as needed. (This recommendation is made on the assumption that all remaining kangaroos at the BNTS will be part of fertility-control research programs.)</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Kangaroos are being maintained at less than 1 kangaroo per hectare, with a total population of around 100 animals. All remaining kangaroos at the BNTS are part of a fertility-control research program. This includes a small number of “control” animals that are not subject to fertility controls, but are required to gauge the success of the measures trialled on the majority of animals.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Further reductions in the number of kangaroos at the BNTS (i.e. even below the proposed stocking rate of 1 kangaroo per hectare) is to occur if recovery of the grassland does not improve over the next growing season even if research projects are compromised.</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Biomass has shown marked improvement. Diversity and bare ground is showing some improvement or is stable. Ongoing condition is being monitored on a six-monthly basis and includes measures of biomass, bare ground and species richness.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Kangaroos are to be removed from the BNTS by the most humane method suitable for that site having regard to advice from the AFP that firearms are not to be used at the BNTS. (The Expert Panel has recommended sedating by darting followed by euthanasia by lethal injection.)</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>The kangaroos were culled by herding, sedation by darting followed by euthanasia by lethal injection. The Australian Federal Police would not give permission to use firearms due to site conditions and the proximity to residential areas.</p>

<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>The policy of the Conservator of Flora and Fauna, to the effect that translocation of eastern grey kangaroos is not an appropriate management technique, is to remain unchanged and that this policy position be confirmed to the Department of Defence immediately.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>No translocation has been undertaken. The Draft ACT Kangaroo Management Plan advises that translocation is not an appropriate management technique for reducing kangaroo numbers. The Department of Defence is aware of the ACT policy position.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7</p> <p>The interim grassland management plan and interim kangaroo management plan for the BNTS are to be completed by the end of August 2008 by the land manager in consultation with key stakeholders. These plans are to adopt adaptive management principles and be based on a stocking rate of 1 kangaroo per hectare or fewer prior to winter 2008.</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Interim plans were in place by August 2008 and have been implemented, including maintaining a stocking rate of less than 1 kangaroo per hectare a year.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8</p> <p>Conditions at the BNTS are to be reported on a quarterly basis to all relevant agencies and to the Commissioner's Office.</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>The site is monitored at six-monthly intervals. Defence has prepared an annual report on conditions, which will shortly be made available to the Commissioner and ACT Government.</p>

<p>Recommendation 9</p> <p>A long-term grassland management plan covering the BNTS is to be developed prior to the abutting Lawson lands being developed for residential purposes. This plan should incorporate clear management objectives and be based on an adaptive management approach to protect the grassland, Perunga Grasshopper, Golden Sun Moth and Ginninderra Peppercreess at the BNTS. (The interim grassland management plan and interim kangaroo management plan (Recommendation 7) should be incorporated into the long-term plan. This long-term plan could cover all ACT natural temperate grassland areas.)</p>	<p>Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Defence is near completion of a draft long-term grassland management plan. The draft plan incorporates the two previous interim plans. Defence is committed to undertaking specified actions at least until the end of 2009. Finalisation of the plan is complicated by uncertainty as to when and how the land will be transferred to the ACT Government.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10</p> <p>The Territory is to ensure that legal measures are implemented to protect and preserve the high conservation value of the grassland and its threatened species when the land at the BNTS is transferred from the Commonwealth to another entity. (This recommendation is made on the assumption that Territory laws will fully prevail post the transfer.)</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Both the Commonwealth and ACT Governments are committed to the protection of the high conservation grasslands. Negotiations are still continuing as to exactly how this will occur. The expectation and decision of the ACT Government is that the high conservation area be added to the conservation reserve network.</p>

Recommendation 11

The review of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Defence and ACT Government (TAMS) is to be completed by August 2008.

Noted. Matter for the Commonwealth Government.

Neither the Department of Defence nor the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) are supportive of updating and implementing an MOU. Such an update has not commenced. DEWHA is of the view that the advent of the *Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* has made the MOUs somewhat redundant and it would prefer to concentrate on the statutory controls of the EPBC Act rather than on non-binding MOUs. In the short term, the grassland management plan is performing the same function as an MOU, while in the medium term it is expected that the land will be preserved and transferred to the ACT and become Territory land under ACT conservation management.