



MT LOFTY RANGES ANIMAL & PLANT CONTROL BOARD

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10th March 2004

Kate McArthur
National Weed Warriors Coordinator
Department of Primary Industries / CRC for Australian Weed Management
PO Box 48
FRANKSTON VIC 3199

RE: Letter of Support for CRC Association's Award for Excellence

Dear Kate

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Weed Warriors program. It has far exceeded our expectations in delivering Integrated Weed Control education programs into local schools and their communities.

It enabled us to achieve one of the objectives of our strategic plan that is:

OBJECTIVE

Community understanding and acceptance of the Act, the Board and its objectives.

We were struggling to meet this objective in terms of its delivery within the many schools and related communities within our region.

We have been able to obtain external funding to deliver the program into primary schools within our board area, so it has not had a significant impact on current resources.

Weed Warriors has benefited our Board in the following ways:

1. Raised significant awareness within the extended school community (students, parents, grandparents, neighbours etc) about the impact of weeds in their community.
2. Allowed students to explore integrated weed control techniques.
3. Provided extra linkages between our on-ground staff, students and parents.
4. Enabled the raring and release of Bio-logical control agents that would not normally have happened.
5. Provided interaction between the school community and actual land managers.
6. Provided the Board with several good news stories for local press.

Establishment of the program in 4 pilot schools during 2003 was a real highlight for us. We were continually amazed at the enthusiasm from students and teachers as well as the

uptake of knowledge. This year we are looking at introducing the program into 25 schools within the region.

Delivery of the program within our region has required significant collaboration between the following participants:

1. Schools and their communities
2. Land Managers (Public and Private)
3. Four Animal & Plant Control Board staff
4. Three Water Catchment Management Board's

The schools continue to show enthusiasm for Weed Warriors and all schools involved last year will be continuing with the program this year. Students have been fascinated with the rearing of biological control agents and because of it can easily see a practical example of how research can directly benefit their community.

Yours sincerely

John Wills
(Senior Officer)