

BSES Limited



**REPORT FOR TERRAIN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
EXTENSION OFFICER SUPPORT SERVICES TO CANE FARMERS IN THE
HERBERT/TULLY REGION**

By

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CONTENTS

	Page No
1.0 BACKGROUND	1
2.0 OBJECTIVES.....	1
3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS.....	2
3.1 3.1 Participation in regional cane industry working groups	2
3.2 Assist and Support Incentive Grants Applications	2
3.2.1 Herbert	2
3.2.2 Tully.....	3
3.3 Further Extension Activities.....	3
3.4 Delivery of 6ES and IWM courses and development of nutrient and weed management plans	4
3.5 Contribute to continual review and update of ABCD frameworks and application and industry survey by GHD	4
Appendix 1	5
Appendix 2	7

1.0 BACKGROUND

As part of the Reef Rescue project, BSES Limited has two contracts with Terrain Natural Resource Management involving the delivery of specific extension services to the sugar cane industry in the Terrain region sugarcane districts from the Herbert to Mossman. These extension services sit within the BSES strategic plan (2008-13) and are designed to support improvements in water quality outcomes that also potentially improve long-term sustainability of the industry.

The two contracts are for Extension Support for growers to access on-farm funding (BSES code 2420420) and delivery of industry training (BSES codes 2425420 and 2430420 run as one project).

This report is for 2420420 and involves the following key areas of activity:

1. Provide technical support and membership to the Terrain sugar industry working group
2. Provide specific extension services to assist Herbert and Tully growers in accessing Federal Government on-farm matched funding for works that improve both productivity and water quality outcome
3. Provide an increased volume of industry support in areas of nutrient management and weed management programmes
4. Provide technical support to the ABCD land-use practice guidelines and industry surveys for reporting to the Federal Government.

Within these four areas, BSES staff operates to set milestones and guidelines. For the Herbert, an extension position is dedicated to this project to cater for the larger numbers of growers in that region. In Tully, the BSES extension staff work closely with Tully Cane Productivity Service Limited and CANEGROWERS staff to achieve the similar outcomes. For all other districts, BSES extension staff is dedicated to this project to varying degrees as part of the overall BSES strategic workplan for each district, helping to organise workshops, promoting the project and assisting in delivering training. These are further explained in the Objectives section.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

There are four distinct objectives within the Reef Rescue programs:

1. Participate in regional cane industry working groups to facilitate identification and early development of priority on-farm and cross-farm projects, and encourage incentive grants applications to:
 - Raise knowledge of grants process amongst the grower community
 - Identify targeted numbers of individual and multi-farm projects and encouraged them to complete an application
 - Assist in setting application guidelines and process and provide farm surveys to facilitate application
 - Provide practical support in making applications
 - Provide follow up for projects funded in previous rounds.
2. Assist and support farmers to complete incentive grants applications:
 - Incentive grant applications received from identified growers
 - Survey growers wishing to apply to determine where applications most suit their operations.

- Meet targeted number of growers for each application round. .
3. Assist in the roll out of the “Six Easy Steps” (6ES) nutrient and “Integrated Weed Management “(IWM) workshops in each district of the terrain region.
 4. Contribute to continual review and update of ABCD frameworks and application:
 - Active participation in relevant ABCD review activities within the northern sugar industry working group.

3.0 ACHIEVEMENTS

3.1 Participation in regional cane industry working groups

- Sam Sellick, Danielle Skocaj and Jordan Villaruz attended meetings in Tully and Innisfail to review and update process of application, frameworks and communications within districts.
- Promotion of the round 3 (2010) Reef Rescue incentive program to growers in the Herbert and Tully regions took place through a series of industry meetings and media outlets as well as direct telephone contact.
- David Calcino and Greg Shannon attended the northern Sugar Working group meetings in Innisfail and supplied technical advice and industry feedback to Terrain. Ash Benson also attended one of those meetings.
- Greg Shannon has also met with John Reghenzani on a regular basis to monitor BSES’s involvement with Terrain NRM.

3.2 Assist and Support Incentive Grants Applications

3.2.1 Herbert

- BSES Special Projects Extension Officer Sam Sellick was appointed to carry out this function. Sam facilitated a large number of grower enquiries with varied interests and awareness in the grants process. This, combined with the return applications from round 3, meant that there were over 120 expressions of interests fielded.
- From these interests, 76 applications were processed, which included undergoing a comprehensive grower survey for each one as part of the application preparation. One of these applications was a group one, involving multiple growers. A total of 91 growers were involved in the overall applications
- 61 project applications were successful, with 55 going ahead.
- Sam Sellick ran a very efficient process, making sure all growers complied with the requirement of the application process. This involved detailed grower interviews with farm surveys followed by the application procedure and writing. Sam was very diligent in making sure growers returned with appropriate paperwork, dockets, quotes etc., on time. In this process Sam was assisted on a part time basis by BSES administration officer (casual) Melissa Royle.
- Follow up post cyclone Yasi – Sam Sellick spent considerable time and effort ensuring that growers could continue with their projects following Cyclone Yasi and

the extended 2010-11 wet season. In some cases, extensions of milestones had to be arranged for those requiring them, as well as altering project conditions to suit the changed conditions following the cyclone.

For further details see Appendix 1.

3.2.2 Tully

- Jordan Villaruz (BSES), Trent Stainley, Graham Cripps and Claire Bailey (TCPSL), along with Peter Lucy (Tully CANEGROWERS), worked together in the development of incentive grant applications.
- For Tully, the contract with Terrain for this work is held by CANEGROWERS.
- The interest generated through various workshops and media resulted in 24 applications.
- The team work displayed between BSES, Tully CANEGROWERS and TCPSL was very consistent and effective, as it has been in previous years.

For full details see Appendix 2.

3.3 Further Extension Activities

The Tully industry conducted a highly successful water-quality field day on 2 December 2010 at which major aspects of the Reef Rescue program were highlighted. Over 150 growers attended the event held at Tully BSES. BSES staff Jordan Villaruz and Danielle Skocaj and TCPSL's Claire Bailey and Graham Cripps put an enormous amount of work into making this day a success. Key exhibitors on the day included Terrain, DERM, DEEDI and various agribusinesses.



Figure 1 - Tully Water-Quality Field Day December 2010. BSES Northern Agronomist chairing the information sessions at the field day

3.4 Delivery of 6ES and IWM courses and development of nutrient and weed management plans

Both the Six Easy Steps (first delivered 2004) and Integrated Weed Management courses (first delivered 2008) are vital components of regional BSES extension in the sugar industry. Courses delivered in 2010-11 are summarised in BSES' report CO11011.

3.5 Contribute to continual review and update of ABCD frameworks and application and industry survey by GHD

The ABCD framework was reviewed in early 2010 with some questioning over where liquid fertiliser fitted into the system as well as mill mud. Subsequently, some of the grower projects applied for mill-mud application equipment.

In addition, BSES staff David Calcino, Michael Porta, Daniel Skocaj, Ash Benson, Adam Royal, Jordan Villaruz and Greg Shannon was heavily involved in the GHD baseline survey. GHD were contracted by CANEGROWERS to undertake an industry-wide survey to provide a baseline and progress report as to the effectiveness of the Reef Rescue project. This involved considerable work for some of the BSES staff.


In the Herbert a separate night meeting was arranged by BSES staff for GHD to which growers and contractors were invited to widen the sampling. This event was put on because local BSES staff saw a need to widen the sampling set to get the most accurate information as possible.

Appendix 1

**REEF RESCUE WATER QUALITY INCENTIVE SCHEME
EXTENSION CONTRACT
PROGRESS REPORT 1 due 31 May 2011**

HERBERT



Extension officers: Sam Sellick BSES Limited

Contractor:			Progress report submitted (date):
Project code:		RR (02) Sugarcane Partnerships	Progress report approved (date):
Project description:		Support the delivery of the Reef Rescue Program in the Herbert area by delivering water quality grant support services to cane growers and supporting the delivery of Six Easy Steps and Weed Management courses.	(Terrain use only)
Activity	Deliverables	Project comment (please indicate numbers achieved and a brief description of how the activity was achieved)	Completion date (if delayed, please explain why and indicate expected completion date)
Deliver water quality grants and support activities to cane farmers	Publicise information about WQ grants to district farmers.	CB1.2 No. of articles developed for release through farmer network and number of recipients <i>The grower's application process was explained at two (2) Cane productivity Initiative meetings, 2 Herbert River BSES Newsletters, and the CANEGROWER magazine.</i>	By 30 September 2011
	Assist cane farmers to apply for water quality grants (Year 4).	CB5.1 No of applicants assisted <i>A total of 110 growers were part of 76 applications which included 2 mill area applications with 19 growers and 15 applications with two or more growers in each.</i> <i>Over 400 phone calls were involved with approximately 3 calls and 3 face to face meetings for each application</i>	By 30 September 2011 (to date)
	Support successful applicants to complete paperwork accurately (contracts, tax invoices, property maps, progress and final reports) and submit to Terrain	CB5.1 No of projects supported <i>Of the 76 applications, 61 were approved and 55 have gone ahead, 73% of applications therefore successful</i>	By 30 June 2011 (to date)
	Carry out field checks to ensure granted funding is spent in accordance with approved project	RA1.2 One monitoring program developed to audit successful projects <i>Checks include multiple phone calls, emails, photos and farm visits to 31 so far.</i>	By 30 June 2011

Support the delivery of Six Easy Steps and Weed Management Courses in the Herbert district	Assist in the organisation of Six Easy Steps (6ES) and Integrated Weed Management courses (IWM) in your respective districts in conjunction with BSES, and the preparation of a proposed delivery plan for each type of course	CB5.1. Organisational assistance to 91 growers for nutrient and weed management courses. <i>Each application was encouraged, as part of the process to attend both the 6ES and IWM course if they hadn't already.</i>	By 30 June 2011
	Notify successful applicants for nutrient and pesticide related projects of their need to attend relevant courses to receive their second payment if they have not already attended	CB2.1 No. of farmers attending training in IWM and 6ES (number of person-days). <i>Six Easy Steps - A total of 63 Herbert growers completed the 6ES course in three workshops held during the 2010-11 year. This means a total of 136 Herbert growers have now completed the workshop which equates to just fewer than 40% of the total district production area. One workshop was held in August 2010 and the others in April – May 2011. Cyclone Yasi and four floods disrupted February and March planned workshops</i> Integrated Weed Management – A total of nine were conducted, with three in the Herbert. Two other meetings were cancelled due to flooding.	
	Follow up contacts are made with at least 75% of attendees at IWM and 6ES courses to ensure that Nutrient and Weed Management Plans are in place or identify when growers need follow up assistance from technical officers.	CB5.1 No of farmers supported to implement nutrient and weed management plans. <i>A total of 85 growers completed the IWM plans, which included 34 from the Herbert district</i>	
Reef Rescue program monitoring and evaluation	Record the number of farm visits or farmer visits (at office) and number of separate telephone enquiries for reporting and promotion purposes.	CB4.4 Database developed. <i>Each grower who applied had a minimum of 2 phone calls and some up to 15 calls concerning their applications.</i>	Ongoing
	Provide feedback on process or design of grants administration to Terrain.	CB2.1 No of seminars/ feedback sessions attended (in people-days). <i>3 meetings with each of the 55 projects, equating to 165 meetings or 41 days. 1 day RR4 event in Tully</i>	Ongoing
	Provide progress reports to Terrain (using template provided by Terrain).	No of reports completed <i>4 quarterly</i>	By 31 May 2011

Appendix 2

**REEF RESCUE WATER QUALITY INCENTIVE SCHEME
EXTENSION CONTRACT**
PROGRESS REPORT 1 due 31 May 2011
**Extension officers: Claire Bailey and Graham Cripps (TCPSL) and Jordan Villaruz
(BSES Limited)**

Contractor:  		Progress report submitted (date):	
Project code: RR (02) Sugarcane Partnerships		Progress report approved (date): (Terrain use only)	
Project description: Support the delivery of the Reef Rescue Program in the Tully district by delivering water quality grant support services to canegrowers, supporting the delivery of Six Easy Steps and Weed Management courses and undertaking Reef Rescue monitoring and evaluation activities.			
Activity	Deliverables	Project comment (please indicate numbers achieved and a brief description of how the activity was achieved)	Completion date (if delayed, please explain why and indicate expected completion date)
Deliver water quality grants and support activities to cane farmers	Publicise information about WQ grants to district farmers.	CB1.2 No. of articles developed for release through farmer network and number of recipients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Advertisement for Reef Rescue info/mapping day in Tully Canegrowers Newsletter mail out (all Canegrower members).</i> • <i>Slides promoting Reef Rescue at pre-season breakfast meeting presentations: (57 growers attending).</i> • <i>Advertisement in the Tully Times newspaper (area wide).</i> • <i>Small ad in mail out to growers regarding this year's variety release (95% of growers).</i> 	By 30 September 2011
	Assist cane farmers to apply for water quality grants (Year 4).	CB5.1 No. of applicants assisted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>RR4 -8 growers attending meeting gave us their basic vision for their projects. Ring around to all 24 growers who had lodged interest beforehand.</i> • <i>Meetings scheduled with 3 growers so far to complete their applications.</i> 	By 30 September 2011 (to date)
	Support successful applicants to complete paperwork accurately	CB5.1 No of projects supported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>12 Tax invoices generated.</i> 	By 30 June 2011 (to date)

	(contracts, tax invoices, property maps, progress and final reports) and submit to Terrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 phones checks/organising photos and invoices from other growers. • 12 grower interviews on farm for mid-project report. 	
	Carry out field checks to ensure granted funding is spent in accordance with approved project	RA1.2 One monitoring program developed to audit successful projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm visits for 12 growers for supporting evidence for 2nd round of invoices. 	By 30 June 2011
Support the delivery of Six Easy Steps and Weed Management Courses in the Tully district	Assist in the organisation of Six Easy Steps (6ES) and Integrated Weed Management courses (IWM) in your respective districts in conjunction with BSES, and the preparation of a proposed delivery plan for each type of course	CB21. No of farmers attending training in IWM and 6ES (number of person days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 IWM workshop December 2010 • 2 IWM workshops and 2 6-Easy steps workshops in 2011. • 27 out of 33 courses required by growers in RR3 completed. 	By 30 June 2011
	Notify successful applicants for nutrient and pesticide related projects of their need to attend relevant courses to receive their second payment if they have not already attended	P3.2 No of farms with nutrient and weed management plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All growers in those projects phoned and notified of their requirements. 	
	Follow up contacts are made with at least 75% of attendees at IWM and 6ES courses to ensure that Nutrient and Weed Management Plans are in place or identify when growers need follow up assistance from technical officers.	CB5.1 No of farmers supported to implement nutrient and weed management plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most growers who have completed their 6 easy steps course have been supported to develop soils maps and complete a full nutrient management plan. (Exception those growers with soils maps pending). • Most growers who have completed IWM workshop have completed full Weed management folders with Jordan's help (exception those that only did course on the 31st May). 	
Reef Rescue program monitoring and evaluation	Record the number of farm visits or farmer visits (at office) and number of separate telephone enquiries for reporting and promotion purposes.	CB4.4 Database developed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 visits by farmers to office to drop of invoices, receipts, photos etc. • 120 phone call to growers for: post Yasi survey; 2nd round RR3 payment visits/invoices reminder and organisation; Landholder ID number saga; reminder about info night; extension of terms forms. 	Ongoing
	Provide feedback on process or design of grants administration to Terrain.	CB2.1 No of seminars/ feedback sessions attended (in people-days). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.5 days spent doing the ring around after cyclone Yasi for growers' comments/responses. 	Ongoing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-5 days spent crosschecking farmer and business names against landholder numbers etc. • 3 days (3 people 1 day) at RR4 info day. 	
	Provide progress reports to Terrain (using template provided by Terrain).	No of reports completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 midterm reports completed. 	By 31 May 2011