

31 July 2025

Draft Change Management Plan

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Agriculture & Biosecurity
Research Assurance - Wollongbar AgEnviro Labs

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1. Background and reasons for the proposed organisational changes

The Wollongbar AgEnviro Lab provides analytical chemistry services for a range of matrices, including soil, water, plants, and others, to support primary industries and research services, encompassing analytical chemistry. The

lab currently delivers analytical testing, projects, and method development to Local Land Services, for departmental research, and external clients.

In recent years, the Wollongbar AgEnviro Labs have been operating in a well-established competitive market alongside commercial companies and universities that offer a comprehensive suite of soil, water, plant, and environmental testing services. These commercial entities and universities offer customers a wider range of testing services at generally lower costs compared to what AgEnviro Laboratories can provide, primarily due to higher overhead, equipment maintenance, and salary expenses. The Wollongbar AgEnviro Labs does not provide any specialist testing services that are unavailable from commercial or university laboratories.

The AgEnviro Labs at Wollongbar, as a standalone business entity, has been unable to achieve a net cost of service neutral result for the past 4 years, with losses each year. It is proposed that the Wollongbar Ag Enviro lab cease operations, with any existing lab testing contracts to be completed by the Wollongbar Lab or transferred to the Wagga Wagga AgEnviro Labs if the work is not completed by the proposed cessation date.

This Draft Change Management Plan (Draft CMP) proposes to impact all roles currently assigned to Wollongbar AgEnviro Labs.

2. Ministerial approval

These proposed changes have required consultation at the ministerial level noting the Secretary is the decision maker for the department.

3. Employee communication strategy

The communication plan will include:

- Individual meetings with each of the impacted employees before the proposed changes are announced and
- A team meeting with the impacted employees after the proposed changes are announced
- Provision of a key business contact and HR Business Partner to provide ongoing channels of communication post announcement.

4. Support services

Specific information about support services that will be provided to affected employees includes:

Superannuation Advice

- <https://aware.com.au/member/contact-aware-super> (Call 1300 650 873 Monday to Friday 8:00am to 7:00pm)
- <https://www.statesuper.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/advice>
- <https://www.statesuper.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/contact-us>

Employee Assistance Program & Counselling Services

- TELUS Health: <https://environmentnswgov.sharepoint.com/sites/Regional-Safety/SitePages/benestar-mycoach.aspx>
- <https://www.telushealth.com>

Australian Tax Office

- www.ato.gov.au

Services Australia

- <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au> or your local Office

MyGov

- <https://my.gov.au> to check on your MyGov account

People contact

- Sharon Farquhar – HR Business Partner – 0448 864 632 Sharon.farquhar@dpird.nsw.gov.au

5. Consultation

Discussions will be held with relevant unions regarding the Draft Change Management Plan once the plan is approved.

6. Workforce planning needs and impact on services and functions.

Relevant laboratory operations will be moved to the Wagga Wagga AgEnviro Labs in a step-by-step process.

7. Proposed changes to organisational structure

It is proposed that 8 ongoing roles and 2 temporary roles will be delimited.

Ongoing Roles						
Title	Role ID	Classification	Grade	Location	Role Status	Role FTE
Technical Officer	50032600	Technical Officer	G1-3	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Technical Officer	50025625	Technical Officer	G1-3	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Technical Officer	50020189	Technical Officer	G1-3	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Technical Officer	50020187	Technical Officer	G1-3	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Customer Service Officer	50032601	Clerk General Scale	Level 13	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Technical Officer	50034281	Technical Officer	G1-3	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Senior Analytical Services Officer	50031696	Clerk	9/10	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Chemist	50026328	Professional Officer	GR 2	Wollongbar	Ongoing	-1.0
Temporary Roles						
Title	Role ID	Classification	Grade	Location	Role Status	Role FTE
Administrative Support Officer	51000246	Clerk	GR 3/4	Wollongbar	Temporary	-1.0
Technical Assistant	51000241	Technical Assistant	GR 1-3	Wollongbar	Temporary	-1.0
Total FTE						-10.0 FTE

8. Proposed means for filling roles

Placement Policy for Filling Roles in the New Structure

Step	Details
Step 1 (Direct appointment within CMP)	<p>Impacted ongoing employees will be considered for all newly created at grade roles within the Change Management Plan (CMP).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where appropriate, employees may be directly assigned to suitable roles at their current classification and grade.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An internal Expression of Interest (EOI) process will be conducted for roles with no direct match. If the number of eligible employees exceeds the number of available roles, a merit-based selection process will be undertaken.
Step 2 (DPIRD Mobility)	<p>Remaining unfilled roles from Step 1 will be made available to ongoing employees impacted by another finalised DPIRD CMP.</p> <p>An EOI process and, if necessary, a merit-based selection process will be undertaken.</p>
Step 3 (Sector-wide Mobility)	Any unfilled vacancies from Step 1 and 2 will be posted for sector-wide job matching through the <u>Workforce Mobility Placement Program</u> . The WMP team will match suitable employees from all departments and agencies in NSW public sector.
Step 4 (External)	Remaining roles will be advertised externally and filled through a merit-based selection process.

Additional Notes:

- For Steps 1 & 2, the selection process includes:
 - A written EOI
 - An interview with at least two panel members (gender-balanced, with at least one member external to the area)
- For Step 4, standard external recruitment processes apply.

9. Workforce Mobility Placement (WMP) Program

Impacted employees not placed in the new structure, or matched to another role elsewhere in the department, will be referred to the Workforce Mobility Placement (WMP) Program and managed in accordance with the NSW Government Workforce Mobility Placement Policy.

10. Proposed voluntary redundancy program

If the impacted employees are not matched to a role at the end of the 8-week placement process period under the WMP Program, or no further matches have been made before the 8-week period expires, the department will initiate the process for requesting concurrent approvals to commence redundancy/redeployment programs.

Voluntary Redundancies will be offered to excess employees as per Managing Excess Employees Policy (June 2011). Voluntary redundancy payments will include:

- four weeks' notice or payment in lieu, plus
- for employees aged 45 years and over with five or more years of completed service, an additional one weeks' notice or payment in lieu, plus
- a severance payment at the rate of three weeks per year of continuous service with a maximum of 39 weeks, with pro-rata payments for incomplete years of service to be on a quarterly basis
- the benefit allowable as a contributor to a retirement fund, plus
- pro rata annual leave loading for leave accumulated at the date of termination, plus
- the following incentive payments based on years of service as outlined below:

Length of service	Additional payment
Less than one year	Two weeks' pay
One year and less than two years	Four weeks' pay
Two years and less than three years	Six weeks' pay
Three or more years	Eight weeks' pay

11. Impact of the restructure on EEO groups

The impact of the restructure on EEO groups has been considered and any additional support services (such as job skills training, flexible working arrangements, workplace adjustments etc) to assist with redeployment or the transition to the new structure will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

12. Impact of the restructure on employees with special needs

The impact of the restructure on employees with special needs has been considered and any additional support services (such as job skills training, flexible working arrangements, workplace adjustments etc) to assist with redeployment or the transition to the new structure will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

13. Impact on rural communities

There is no impact on rural or regional LGA's where the population is less than 5,000.

14. Management of impacted employees

The People division will provide a designated case manager to support the impacted employees. Employees will be declared excess if they have been unsuccessful in the mobility process.

15. Management of temporary employees

There are 2 temporary employees who are impacted, and support has been considered as part of this draft CMP.

16. Proposed timeline for implementation

Action	Week beginning
Union notification	28 July 2025
Consultations with employees and relevant union/s	28 July 2025
Employees informed – Draft CMP	29 July 2025
Employees informed – Final CMP	25 August 2025
Internal placement process	25 August 2025
New roles sent for sector-wide mobility matching under the WMP Program	8 September 2025
Workforce Mobility Program	8 September 2025
New roles advertised externally	15 September 2025
External recruitment finalised	October 2025
Employees declared excess and VR offers	31 October 2025