



The Committee Manager  
Standing Committee on Public Works  
Parliament House,  
Macquarie Street,  
Sydney, NSW 2000

Dear Ms James,

**Subject: Sports Ground Management in NSW**

The Department of Natural Resources implements the Local Government Salinity Initiative (LGSI), Action 6.2 of the NSW Salinity Strategy. This program aims to increase awareness of urban salinity processes and impacts in order to allow local government to make informed decisions regarding management options. One aspect of this program involves open space management.

Water quality, vegetation, soil structure, roads, parking areas, buildings and other above ground and below ground infrastructure associated with sportsgrounds may be adversely affected by salinity. While management of these sites may influence salinity processes and thus salinity impacts on and off site. The attached booklet

Ryan, M and McGhie, S., 2004 Local Government Salinity Initiative - Waterwise Parks and Gardens, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, Sydney, NSW.

provides more detail on both of these aspects. This and other booklets in the Local Government Salinity Initiative series such as Building in Saline Environments are available at [http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/salinity/solutions/solutions\\_urban.htm](http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/salinity/solutions/solutions_urban.htm)

It is also worth considering that as dual use open space drainage areas become even more common, open space will increasingly be located in areas with a higher salinity hazard. Thus there will be increasing demand for repair and maintenance resources, capital funds and the level of salinity skills required by the management teams of these areas. Surface and subsurface drainage works, salt tolerant grasses, careful fertiliser and irrigation management may all be necessary to maintain the grassed components of sporting facilities in salty and or high watertable areas. While use of salt tolerant building materials and methods may be required to avoid shortened lifespan of other elements of these facilities.

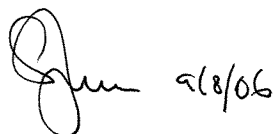
Take for example the extension of the Showground arena in Wagga Wagga. This initially involved extensive soil removal to level the new inner arena. This lowered the land surface within 2m of the watertable and several attempts to regrass the area failed. Grass cover was re-established after the retro fit of a subsurface drainage network. Collected water is pumped to a custom built evaporation basin as it is too salty to discharge to a water course. At a similar point in the landscape the football field at the old Teacher's College has been abandoned due to salt impacts on the vegetation and soil structure.

In nearby Junee a salt scald on a soccer pitch has been revegetated with salt tolerant grasses following treatment of the site with a scarifier, clean top soil, gypsum and mulch. The actively growing vegetation is now suitable for recreation and is helping to utilise some of the excess groundwater which has been causing damage to nearby roads and buildings.

While the Department's LGSi program may assist local government's ability to manage salinity pressures, undertake and plan appropriate salinity maintenance of sportsgrounds this is not the primary focus of the program. Nor does the program address salinity issues with other sportsground owners.

Should you have any further enquiries, please contact Sian McGhie of the Urban Salinity Division on 02 4729 8135.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Dunn', followed by the date '2/8/06' written in a similar cursive style.

Steve Dunn  
A/DIRECTOR GENERAL