

REPORT OF THE SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE DIVISION

Providing solutions for
soil conservation and
land rehabilitation



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- SCS quality management system obtained external accreditation by benchmark, at four locations, during the year. The formal accreditation assists the division in bidding for external consultancy works with a range of major clients.
- Marketing literature and tender presentation were reviewed and updated during the year to improve tender submission documentation. Local government clients were targeted with presentations. Field days at Henty, Mudgee, Orange and Agquip (Gunnedah) were attended to promote Lands services and local operations.
- NSW Premier's Public Sector Award commendation in Environment and Natural Resources received for project management and construction of the Tingha Sewerage Scheme pond system in northern NSW.

- Major environmental rehabilitation consultancies and conservation earthworks undertaken for clients during the year included:
 - Department of Education and Training - design and project management of school ground rehabilitation works at 24 schools.
 - Shoalhaven City Council – Narrawallee and Lake Tabourie Foreshore Stabilisation Works including rock revetment, revegetation and pedestrian access.
 - Sydney Catchment Authority – eight projects including fire trail maintenance and repairs at Warragamba and Metropolitan catchments and riverbank protection works Riverlea, Braidwood.
 - Department of Primary Industries, Mineral Resources – rehabilitation of 18 derelict mine sites across NSW.
 - Summervale Aboriginal Community Sewerage Scheme earthworks,

subcontracted to Ledonne Constructions for Department of Commerce.

- Design and construction of two large irrigation storage dams for Mr J Cornish, Tooryburn Stud, Gresford.
- Conservation and rehabilitation earthworks to East Boggabri, Namoi, Werris Creek and Drayton coal mines, Northern Tablelands and Hunter region.

KEY ISSUES

Works operation continues to experience excessive fleet repair costs due to the ageing fleet. Consult operations continue to provide a substantial stream of income for the division and showed a strong increase in sales for the year. Approval of four new staff positions in the unit will assist the divisions overall financial position.

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

Works income at \$7.3 million (down 7.5% on the budgeted \$7.9 million), was again impacted by the ongoing widespread drought conditions. Chargeable plant hours were down again on the previous year at 930 hours per unit and significantly below the annual target of 1300 hours (down 29%). Operational units remained at 39 bulldozers and two excavators. With Lands' increased responsibility to maintain fire trails and asset protection zones an excavator mounted, and 4WD tractor mounted, mulching attachments were purchased for provision of services. Approximately 23,375 hectares of land was treated with conservation earthworks including broadacre banks/waterways dams and sediment detention structures.

Consult income for the year at \$7.7million was below budgeted income of \$8.5million (down 9%) and was set on the assumption of five extra consult staff. More importantly, Consult sales totalled \$10million (up by 53% on 2004/05), an outstanding result for existing staff resources, and provides a solid work load to commence the new year. The unit successfully bid for a number of preferred contractor and project tenders including work for Defence, Transgrid, Mineral Resources and the Department of Commerce. Commonwealth funded environmental programs also provided a number of project opportunities through CMAs in the Murray, Lachland and Central West areas to undertake works for rural landholders. With the large consult demand evident, approval was obtained to establish four new consult staff positions at Wollongong, Orange, Nowra and Newcastle late in the financial year.

Hunter Valley flood mitigation works, Great North Walking Track and dam foreshore programs were completed during the year to the value of \$2.57 million. River operation teams were successful during the year in sourcing additional works to ensure full operational costs were met. Negotiations on foreshore land management came to a conclusion with State Water's decision to move to full lease arrangements for their future management. This will bring an end to many years of involvement by SCS in these foreshores when current arrangements terminate in December 2007.

Sales by Customer Group

Customers	Works (sales \$000)		Consult (sales \$000)		Operations (sales \$000)		Total 2005/06
	2004/05	2005/06	2004/05	2005/06	2004/05	2005/06	
Landholders	5,019	4,382	88	156	826	937	5,475
State Government	550	742	4,826	7,676	1,854	2,070	10,488
Local Government	139	262	847	1,001	44	73	1,336
Corporate	973	1,056	778	1,149	-	-	2,205
Other	163	48	13	25	-	1	74
Total	6,845	6,490	6,553	10,007	2,724	3,082	19,579