

Dear Alex

Thank you for your email to Mike Baldwin seeking an update on the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) weed control programs. Mike has forwarded your email to me for response in accordance with our internal communications process, as the questions you have raised are outside his area of supervision, which is the developed parkland.

As Mark Webb would most likely have explained to you when you met with him, the BGPA is required under legislation (BGPA Act 1998) to conserve native biological diversity on its managed lands, which requires selective removal of introduced species by physical and chemical means on an ongoing basis. In the bushland, weed control forms part of our ecological restoration programs as endorsed in each park's management plan. The BGPA endeavours to minimise the use of chemicals in Kings Park and Bold Park and has been trialling the use of organic products in the past couple of years as a substitute in both bushland areas and in the parkland. Unfortunately, these have had limited success in the control of many weeds but we are continuing to use one organic product on an ongoing basis as well as trial alternatives whenever the opportunity arises.

Herbicides are generally used where there is no viable alternative for weed management in order to conserve native biodiversity and maintain the high presentation standards expected by the community. It would be fair to say that over the years, the amount of herbicide use in Kings Park has reduced and the methods of application have been significantly refined to improve public safety and reduce staff and public exposure to them. Improved horticultural practices have enabled us to minimise herbicide use in gardens and parkland in particular, and pesticide use in public areas has been reduced to occasional applications of pest oil and the use of fungicide when all other methods of management and control have been exhausted.

In relation to your questions about herbicide spraying on the escarpment, I advise that some areas on the escarpment have been sprayed this year during June and July. The main herbicide used was Fusilade (mostly in the burnt area), Slasher (the organic product that controls broadleaf weeds), and some Glyphosate. Our contractors used the red dye and our own staff use a blue dye that is not as obvious as the red dye and breaks down more quickly. As you would appreciate, it is not possible to eliminate weeds in a single herbicide application, so follow up treatments are required from year to year in combination with replanting with native species to reduce weed cover in bushland and promote native plant growth. While I cannot provide the extent of detailed information you have requested about herbicide and pesticide use, I can advise that the main chemicals used in Kings Park and Bold Park bushland are Fusilade for veld grass control, Glyphosate and Metsulphuron in spot application for control of weeds such as bulbs and pelargonium.

I would like to assure you that the BGPA treats its use of chemicals very seriously and has strict internal procedures in place to manage their application and storage to ensure a high degree of public and staff safety. Although in some instances it is not possible to use alternative measures and still achieve appropriate outcomes for biodiversity conservation and park presentation, the BGPA will continue to seek and trial alternatives on an ongoing basis.

I trust the above information has addressed your enquiry.

Regards
Lesley

Lesley Hammersley
Acting Director, Horticulture & Conservation

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From: Alex Jones [mailto:alx_jones@yahoo.com.au]
Sent: Thursday, 12 August 2010 10:25 AM
To: Mike Baldwin
Cc: Wayne Monks; acejane@bigpond.com
Subject: WEEDS

Dear Mike,

Just an update on the weed control measures in Kings Park, if you wouldn't mind.

We had a brief meeting with the CEO, Mark Webb, in 2007 and were told that the aim was to reduce the amount of herbicide used but that it was necessary to control the weeds, so...

- Have you been able to reduce the amount of herbicides or has the weed problem become worse since then?
- Could you please advise if any herbicide has been used on the escarpment this year and whether it is the same as the herbicide used last year? If so, when was the escarpment sprayed?
(There is no pink dye visible this year even though there are signs of herbicide/steam use.)
- Also, what are the names of all the herbicides /pesticides used in Kings Park and Bold Park and approximately how much of each is used per year?

Much appreciated and kind regards,

Alex Jones
www.saveoutrees.net