

Business Plan Achievement Report

1st Quarter 2022-2023

1 July to 30 September 2022

Eastern District



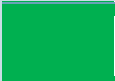


About

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's [Business Plan for 2022-23](#) sets out the programs, and component sub-programs or work activities for 2021-2022, which are funded and delivered by the Board to achieve the goals and vision of the [2021-2026 Eyre Peninsula Regional Landscape Plan](#).

This *Business Plan Achievement Report* provides an update on delivery of all our Board-funded programs in the Eastern District during the last quarter. It includes reporting on the following for each sub-program:

- Program highlights;
- Local government engagement;
- Communications and community engagement undertaken; and
- Upcoming priorities for the next quarter.

Each sub-program is assigned a status, based on its current progress.

	On track to deliver key programs.		On track to deliver most programs. May be some delays.		Unlikely to deliver some program elements
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For projects in the City Council of Whyalla and District Councils of Kimba, Franklin Harbour and Cleve areas, further details of our work and programs can be found on the [Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board website](#) or by contacting **Tim Breuer** (*Team Leader, Landscape Operations - Eastern District*) on 0488 000 481.

Note: For updates about delivery, in the Eastern District, of Regional Projects such as the [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) and the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the *Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region*.

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Water

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAAs)</i>	
Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAAs) , including providing support for WAA enquiries, processing WAA permit applications and ensuring compliance with WAA policies and permits	

Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAA)

Water Affecting Activities (WAA) are activities and works that can impact on the health and condition of water resources, water dependent ecosystems and other water users. Under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019, an approved permit is required to undertake a Water Affecting Activity.

*Information for those planning to undertake a Water Affecting Activity is available in the factsheet [Permits - Water Affecting Activities](#). Our Water Resources Assessment Officer and other staff are always available to advise and help with WAA enquires. They also administer and process WAA permit applications and ensure compliance with WAA policies and permits. For updates on WAA related work across the region please refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**.*

Program highlights this period

- Training was provided to Eastern District staff around assessing Water Affecting Activities and dealing with WAA permit applications. With the Eastern District having relatively low rainfall it is really important to keep up the training and capacity building work as WAA permit applications can be few and far between in the district and having the ability to assess these permit applications in a consistent, timely and thorough manner is very important. A big thanks to the EP Landscape Board Water Resources Assessment Officer for taking the time to visit the district and offer support to the local landscape officers.

Sustainable agriculture

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Reducing the risk of land degradation to protect the region's valuable soils</i>	
Delivering district level sustainable agriculture services , including: Monitoring and managing land management compliance	
Providing support to build awareness of the importance of erosion protection and improvement of land management practices	
Delivering Stage 2 of the Overcoming the Rising Degradation of Mallee Seeps on Eastern Eyre Peninsula Project	

*For updates on our [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) and [Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator \(RALF\)](#) services, please refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**.*

More information about our sustainable agriculture program, as well as useful information and resources for land managers can be found [here](#).

Delivering district level sustainable agriculture services

Program highlights this period

- Despite a dry July period rainfall has been average to well above average.
- Maximum temperatures have been below average while minimum temperatures have been around average to above average.
- Surface cover levels across the Eastern District are high and mostly adequate for erosion protection as would be expected for this time of year.
- Crop and pasture growth is well above average in most areas with above average yield potential. Warmer temperatures later in the quarter have accelerated plant growth.
- Livestock are in good to excellent condition and most farmers have plenty of feed on hand.
- With good grazing management the likelihood of erosion occurring during the drier, warmer months prior to seeding next year should be very low.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Cleve landscape officers performed water quality testing of water samples for local farmers. Samples collected from farm dams or bores are assessed for their salinity concentration. This information aids farmers in identifying constraints for livestock production. The results, and some limited interpretations of the results, are provided to landholders to assist them with on-farm decision making. These services are provided free to the community and landholders.
- One of our Cleve landscape officers attended the Wharminda Sticky Beak Day. This opportunity allowed networking and building rapport with local farmers. It was also a capacity building opportunity for the officer, building soils knowledge, new cereal variety knowledge, machinery knowledge and herbicide efficacy knowledge.



Photo 1: Magnificent crops in the Buckleboo district

Overcoming the Rising Degradation of Mallee Seeps on Eastern Eyre Peninsula Project – Stage 2

Following completion of the first phase of the Australian Government funded [Overcoming the Rising Degradation of Mallee Seeps on Eastern Eyre Peninsula](#) Project, a second stage of the project, which will run to 30 June 2023, is now being funded by the EP Landscape Board through their Severe Weather Recovery Fund. Land managers are increasingly identifying Mallee seeps as a growing land degradation issue on the EP. Mallee seeps severely change pH and the chemical composition of soil, forcing areas of paddocks out of production. The extension of this project will continue to build understanding of, demonstrate, and share knowledge and experience of suitable practical treatments that can be applied by land managers in line with best practice sustainable agriculture to reduce the effects of saline seeps on the EP. Further work will include continued monitoring and on-ground works at six existing trial sites; delivery of a Mallee seeps workshop for training industry personnel; and production of two further Mallee seeps videos about treatment methods.

Program highlights this period

- The Mallee seeps project will continue for another 12 months. The \$20,000 12-month project has been funded by the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board as an extension to a two-year project funded by the Australian Government which concluded in June 2022. The initial two years of the project, which was trialling keys to management options and restoring Mallee seeps on Eyre Peninsula farms, produced some great outcomes with regard to identifying and managing Mallee seeps on Eyre Peninsula.

The aims of the project extension are to fully restore the demonstration sites developed under the initial project, and to also realise the impact of January's high rainfall event. The extension allows us to continue to monitor and implement on-ground actions at the trial sites, which will hopefully see the sites rehabilitated to the desired level. Continuing the project will also mean that we have a full monitoring data set for each of the six trial sites, including data from the high rainfall event in January that affected large areas of Eastern Eyre Peninsula.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- There was a media release, interview and social media about the extension of the project ([Spencer Gulf Nightly News story](#) (7:28 min. mark), MagicFM [online news](#); [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).



Photo 2:
Dr Chris McDonough collects data from a piezometer at one of the trial sites on Eastern EP

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Dr Chris McDonough will undertake site visits in November to assess progress of rehabilitation, collect monitoring data and evaluate the need for further on ground works at the six trial sites. Farmers will have the opportunity to pick Chris’s brain and seek further options for current trial sites and potentially for other emerging seep sites around EP.
- Filming will occur for another two Mallee seep videos to accompany the four completed videos (available [here](#)) and will also compliment the recently completed “[decision tree](#)”, a self help tool developed to assist farmers with identifying an appropriate treatment for mallee seeps.

Pest plants and animals, and impact-causing native species

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Supporting landowners to control prioritised pest plants and animals</i>	
Implementing regional pest management plans for priority pest plants and animals	Green
Supporting landowners with their pest control responsibilities, including weed identification, best practice control advice and property planning assistance	Green
Delivering targeted pest animal baiting programs and weed control campaigns, monitoring, permitting and compliance works	Green
<i>Collaborating to reduce threats from impact-causing native species</i>	
Assisting landowners to connect with relevant authorities and providing information about impact-causing native species and control options	Green
Cataloguing current and emerging impact-causing native species, their impacts and extent	Green
Collaborating to reduce threats from impact-causing native species	Green

For updates about pest plant and animal, and impact-causing native species control activities implemented in the Eastern District as part of the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**. Updates on development of our regional pest and impact-causing natives management plans can be found in the same report.

Program highlights this period

Pest plants

Survey 123 and Field Maps Data collection apps

- The introduction of Survey 123 and Field Maps applications took place in June and has changed the way the Board collects pest data. Both applications have proven to simplify the process and improve productivity. We look forward to utilising these tools going forward.

Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) roadside surveys and Annual Action Plans

- Survey work as well as opportunistic control of smaller patches of Boneseed has been conducted recently to



Photo 3: Landscape officer surveying roadside vegetation for Boneseed

develop a greater understanding of Boneseed distribution and growth habits in the district. The Eastern Eyre District has a relatively small number of isolated infestations meaning, unlike many of our other priority weeds, the opportunity for eradication of the pest is plausible.

- Voluntary Compliance in this space will be a focus, following up on the data that is captured through survey work and adjacent roadside control.

African Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*)

- Roadside survey and control of African Boxthorn was conducted along the Birdseye Highway between Cleve and Cowell. Control was done using a combination of granular herbicide and the cut and swab method. This was carried out as part of the implementation of the Eastern District African Boxthorn Action Plan developed last year. We will follow up on these works early in 2023 with further focus on various Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) highways, including the Lincoln Highway and further control works in the Five Cross Road area around Arno Bay.
- Landscape officers will be contacting landowners in due course seeking voluntary compliance with respect to the control of African Boxthorn on their properties in key priority areas identified in the *Easter District African Boxthorn Action Plan*.

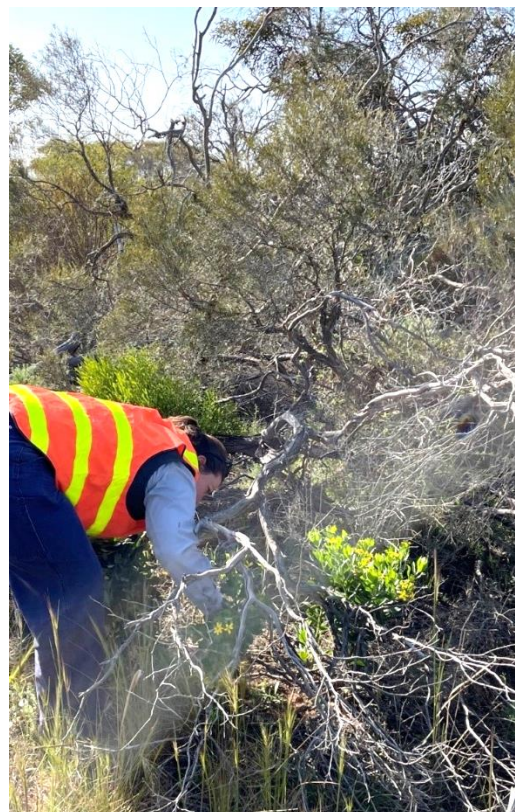


Photo 4: Landscape officer treating outlier roadside infestation of Boneseed

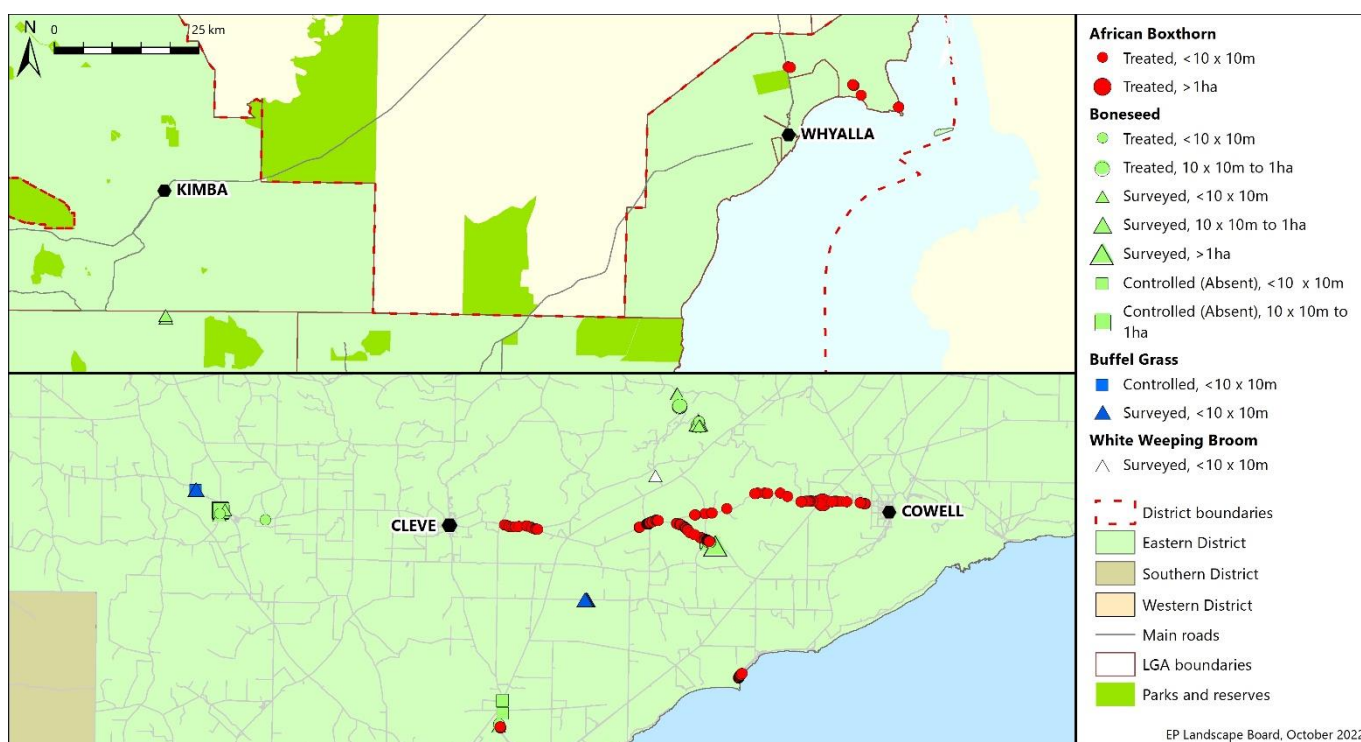


Figure 1: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 July to 30 September 2022

Note: "Controlled" indicates sites where infestations have previously occurred, were controlled and have now been found to be absent. Sites are revisited to check efficacy of control and recorded as "absent" where pest plant have not recurred. This indicates success of our control programs.

White Weeping Broom (*Retama raetam*)

- Opportunistic survey work has resulted in a new detection of White Weeping Broom on the roadside. There have been very few detections of this weed in the Eastern District and as such we are keen to eradicate this weed. It is intended that the weed will be treated by the cut and swab method using a chainsaw and Vigilant 2 herbicide.

Communications and community engagement for this period

Opuntia

- We have a new [web page](#) providing information on Opuntoid Cactus control, and the use of *Dactylopius* or cochineal for biocontrol of these species. A spring release of these biocontrol insects was planned. A call was put out to landholders with Opuntoid Cacti infestations to please contact the Board so they could potentially participate in this release ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).

Pest animals

Vertebrate pest management training

- A Cleve landscape officer attended a Vertebrate Pest Management training course, and now has a level 2 1080 qualification, certifying them to use 1080 poison in the manufacture of meat baits for wild dogs, foxes, and feral pigs and oat baits for rabbits. Having an additional landscape officer with this certification will support our delivery around our pest control priorities, as they will be able to manufacture 1080 baits for landholders. The course also covered integrated strategies for the best management of pest species, and the Cleve landscape officers are now able to extend this information to landholders and work towards optimal integrated pest management plans.

Feral Deer (*Cervus spp.*)

- Survey work has been conducted at various locations in the Eastern district to develop an understanding of the distribution and behaviour of satellite Feral Deer populations. This includes the deployment of trail cameras at water points and other likely locations where Deer populations may occur. This will be ongoing work informing the development of a plan for control of Feral Deer and gaining an overall better understanding of the distribution of the pest in the landscape.

We strongly encourage anyone to report sightings, signs or destruction of feral deer to any of our landscape officers, and/or on [DeerScan](#).



Photo 5: Landscape officer uses Survey123 App to record the location of White Weeping Broom



Photo 6: At a Vertebrate Pest Management Course, one of our landscape officers learning to use Canid Pest Ejector for fox and wild dog control

Feral Deer (Buckleboo Deer Eradication Project)

The Buckleboo Deer Eradication Project aims to eradicate a feral deer satellite population from 8,500 ha around mixed farming properties at Buckleboo. The project commenced in late 2021 and will run through to 2023. The project is part of a multi-agency program with funding from the EP Landscape Board, the Limestone Coast Landscape Board through their SA Government Landscape Priority Fund project “[Stopping the Spread of Feral Deer](#)”, the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) Deer Control National Program fund, Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA), and in-kind contributions from National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) and SA Arid Lands Landscape Board.

- Feral Deer pose a threat to agriculture and to native vegetation and animals and as such control and potential eradication of satellite populations is considered a high priority for the EP Landscape Board.
- Following an initial Deer cull around Buckleboo monitoring has continued, with new detections of feral deer being found around one month after the cull. This monitoring provides crucial intelligence and will provide the basis for developing a plan for a follow up ground shooting operation in the area, using thermal detection technologies.
- Even though the initial Deer cull didn’t eradicate deer from the area, eradication of Feral Deer is considered highly feasible in the Buckleboo district and with current numbers appearing to be low, eradication is the aim of this project. Working closely with the farmers in the area has enabled landscape officers to build a picture of Feral Deer movements and numbers in the area. This information and cooperation from local farmers has been greatly appreciated and has been critical to the success of the project so far. We look forward to continuing this work and bringing locals along for the journey.
- We strongly encourage anyone to report sightings, signs or destruction of feral deer to any of our landscape officers, and/or on [DeerScan](#). This is especially important if you see deer moving into areas where you don’t usually see them.



Photo 7: Fresh deer tracks found on a dam, any information including deer sign should be reported to EPLB Landscape Officers.



Photo 8: A large buck detected on trail camera in the Buckleboo District. Note the twig stuck in the antlers, this may indicate the animal has been rubbing on a tree.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Follow up control of this Buckleboo satellite deer population.
- Ongoing monitoring of this population.

Biodiversity

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Protecting and restoring prioritised coastal habitats</i>	
Supporting community to undertake coastal management works in line with the Coastal Action Plan	
<i>Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems</i>	
Supporting community and landholders to improve the health and condition of threatened ecological communities, native vegetation and threatened species	
Implementation of the biodiversity monitoring program	
Collaboration with partners to source funding for landscape-scale projects in priority ecosystems. Specific projects underway include:	
Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot	

For updates about delivery of our landscape-scale and region-wide biodiversity projects and programs, including activities in the Eastern District, refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**. This report includes information on:

- the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#);
- *Blue Carbon*
- the *Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) pilot*;
- the *Biodiversity Credit Exchange Program*;
- *Eyes on Eyre*;
- the *Biodiversity Monitoring Program*;
- the *Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot*;
- and others.

Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems

Program highlights this period

Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot

This is the [second pilot](#) which is part of the [Agriculture Stewardship Package](#) being delivered by the Australian Government. It aims to improve existing native vegetation on farms and is trialling mechanisms to pay participating farmers to manage and enhance significant remnant native vegetation on-farm, through activities such as installing fencing to exclude grazing, carrying out weeding, pest control and replanting. EP Landscape Board is supporting the delivery of this project. Following completion of the application stage, Board staff will be providing support to landholders for initial project delivery.

- Seventeen applicants from the Eyre Peninsula, including applications from the Eastern District, have been successful, and are commencing implementing their ERV projects. Most of these applicants were supported by EP Landscape Board through the application process.

Community

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Community at the centre and actively engaged in landscape management</i>	
Supporting Aboriginal and community groups, Local Government, farming groups and schools to progress natural resource activities through the provision of the Grassroots Grants program	

*This section provides information about the delivery and acquittal of Grassroots Grants in the Eastern District, and support provided by Board staff to grant applicants. For updates about the [Grassroots Grants](#) application process, successful applicants the award of Grants, and overall management of the Grassroots Grants program, refer to the **Grassroots Grants program** section in the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**.*

Landscape staff provide ongoing support for the delivery of Grassroots Grants projects. Some of the works completed on these projects during the last quarter are outlined below.

2021-2022 Grassroots Grants

Two projects funded through the Board's 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants program are still being completed in the Eastern District (Table 1).

Table 1: EP Landscape Board Grassroots Grants - 2021-22 projects still being completed in the Eastern District

	Project Title	Organisation	Status
1	Point Lowly and Santos Escape Road - Irrigation and vegetation protection projects	Whyalla City Council	Completed
2	Restoring Eyre Peninsula (EP) Blue Gum woodlands and managing saline soils.	MR & AC Hannemann	Not complete

Point Lowly and Santos Escape Road – Irrigation and vegetation protection projects

Whyalla City Council

The aim of this Whyalla City Council project is to improve the amenity and native vegetation at Point Lowly Campground, through provision of drip irrigation to tree plantings, installation of fencing to protect native vegetation, signage and ripping of informal tracks.

Program highlights this period

- The Point lowly project has been successfully completed with the installation of vegetation barriers at three campsites along the SANTOS escape road. Managing impacts of visitors on the native vegetation is especially important in low rainfall areas as regrowth is slow and many species are very susceptible to disturbance. Protecting remnant vegetation is much better than trying to revegetate in arid areas and the works which formalise campgrounds work well for the public and create a much more visually pleasing appearance for camping areas.
- Irrigation has been installed for revegetation carried out previously at Point Lowly which should help the trees which have been planted to thrive in the harsh conditions at Point Lowly. Eucalypts and Dry land tea trees were planted and are doing well so the irrigation will help to keep them alive through summer.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Continuing to work closely with Whyalla City Council on the Northern coastline masterplan working group.



Photo 9:
Campground vegetation barriers installed by Whyalla City Council



Photo 10:
Campground vegetation barriers installed by Whyalla City Council



Photo 11:
Revegetation after drip irrigation has been installed



Photo 12:
Landscape officer assessing the health of revegetation work at Point Lowly

Restoring Eyre Peninsula (EP) Blue Gum woodlands and managing saline soil

MR & AC Hannemann

This project aims to aid recovery of 300 EP Blue Gums planted as part of ongoing works to re-establish EP Blue Gum woodlands. Under this project a variety of EP Blue Gum community natives, including salt tolerant species will be planted to enhance biodiversity and combat salinity in the woodland.

Program highlights this period

- All plants and seeds have been acquired and are ready for planting but unfortunately due to the unforeseen amount of rain that we have received it has made access to the paddock somewhat difficult. EP Blue Gum occurs in areas that can naturally be quite wet and as such this project location has been very hard to access without causing damage to the paddock and to equipment required for planting tubestock and for direct seeding.

As soon as the paddock becomes accessible the project plantings will commence. The long term outlook is for above average rainfall for October – December and possibly further into summer so once planted there is a good chance of success with the plantings.

2022-2023 Grassroots Grants and Storm Recovery Grants

A single application was received for and is being funded through the 2022-23 Grassroots and Storm Recovery Grants round (Table 2).

Table 2: EP Landscape Board Grassroots and Storm Recovery Grants - 2022-23 successful applicants in the Eastern District

	Project Title	Organisation	Status
1	Storm Recovery Grant - Spray equipment purchase	Karinya Ag	Commencing Completion expected during the second quarter 2022-2023

Storm Recovery Grant – Spray equipment purchase

Karinya Ag

The grant is to assist with a program to control weeds across farming businesses which have seen increased weed emergence and spread since the January 2022 extreme rainfall event. The grant will be used to purchase extra spot spraying equipment which will supplement existing weed control activities.

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