FOREWORD

Lake Illawarra has suffered from the effects of population growth over the past 200 years due to increased pollutant and sediment loads from catchment clearing, farming, urbanisation and industry. The condition of the lake became so degraded in the 1970s and 1980s, as evidenced by frequent large macroalgal blooms, that the NSW Government decided that a small focussed body be formed to manage the lake.

In 1988, the Lake Illawarra Authority (LIA) was established under the LIA Act 1987 to improve the environment of Lake Illawarra, its foreshores and environs. The Authority consists of 10 part time members appointed by the Minister, made up of 5 community representatives, one of which is appointed chairperson and a representative from each of Wollongong and Shellharbour City Councils, the Southern Rivers Catchment Management Authority, the Department of Primary Industries and the former Department of Environment and Climate Change.

The NSW Government allocates funds to the LIA under the Estuary Management Program to carry out lake restoration. Wollongong and Shellharbour City Councils provide matching funds. Works are carried out on a 50 State:50 Council basis within each relevant local government area. The LIA has also been successful over the years in obtaining Commonwealth Government funding for specific projects under a range of programs.

The LIA has undertaken significant works in and around the lake targeting a range of issues including works to safeguard and restore the ecology and biodiversity of the lake, water quality improvements, sedimentation controls, recreational amenities and programs that enhance tourism. Works have included the removal of macroalgae and seagrass wrack, construction of stormwater controls and wetlands, dredging of sediment from bays, stabilisation of the lake entrance channel, construction of jetties, boat ramps, shared pathways and public amenities as well as works to enhance lake and foreshore habitats.

The State of Catchment 2010 Estuary and Coastal Lakes report defined the condition of Lake Illawarra as very good despite being subject to high pressures from the catchment such as nutrient and sediment inputs, area of cleared land and high population density. The report provides scientific evidence that the hard work of the LIA over the past 23 years is having an effect. The report however also warned that the lake faces a very high risk and that recent water quality improvements could be reversed if future foreshore developments were not carefully managed.

With increased population density proposed in the western parts of the lake catchment the need for the LIA to continue with its restoration and maintenance programs will be greater than ever to ensure the condition of the lake remains very good.

This document details many of the achievements of the LIA for the period 1988 to 2011.

Doug Prosser
Chairman

Brian Dooley
Executive Officer
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## Attachments

- Map of Lake Illawarra
- Summary of Lake Illawarra Authority projects
Typical Projects

**Griffins Bay / Kully Bay and Joes Bay ($7.2 million)**

Some 300,000m$^3$ of sediment has been dredged from Griffins Bay to improve water circulation and boating activities. Dredged material was placed along the shoreline of King St and Northcliffe Drive creating an additional 15ha of foreshore land to the 15ha that already existed.

A large portion of the work was undertaken by young unemployed people under the Commonwealth’s Jobskills Program with supervision provided by the Authority. This work included the construction of a wharf and promenade, car park and pedestrian/cycle shared accessway along the waters edge of the King St foreshore.

A major wetland covering some 2.5ha has been constructed in Kully Bay to treat stormwater flows from 5 drains discharging from the Warrawong CBD and overflows from the adjoining sewer pump station. The wetland was constructed in partnership with Sydney Water. The wetland also provides significant bird habitat. In addition, gross pollutant traps have been constructed on other drains in the locality to help prevent litter and rubbish from reaching the lake.

The Authority has acquired portions of Crown land and Wollongong City Council land fringing the area reclaimed following dredging works. The Authority plans to develop the King St foreshore as a major parkland area and minor tourism development that could raise revenue for the Authority to continue its restoration program.

In addition the public amenity of the area has been significantly improved through the refurbishment of the toilet block on Kully Bay oval, the construction of a jetty and viewing platform along the waters edge of the Northcliffe Drive foreshore as well as 2 car parks, an AFL oval, 2 kilometres of shareway, shelter sheds and seats, landscaped areas and an equal access children’s playground.

On the northern foreshore, adjoining Northcliffe Drive a combined amenities/education centre has been constructed. The building was built by making extreme use of the Commonwealth’s Work for the Dole Program and through resources provided by the local TAFE. The downstairs floor provides public amenities (toilets/showers/canteen) and the upstairs floor provides the facilities for a significant education facility. The building was officially opened by the Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly MP on 5 May 2010. The Authority has entered into a licence with Futureworld to occupy and utilise the first floor education centre to promote awareness of the lake issues such as climate change mitigation and sustainable energy sources.
The improvements to the area have attracted strong community support. As part of Olympic Landcare 2000, the Authority hosted a site near the AFL oval and the wetland. The project attracted some 500 people and involved planting 5,000 native tree and wetland species.

The area has also attracted interest from outside the Illawarra region. As part of the 19th Australian Scout Jamboree held in January 2001 the Authority provided Scouts Australia with a site on the Northcliffe Drive foreshore as a base for sailing activity on Griffins Bay.

Two buildings have been constructed on a portion of the foreshore land. The Illawarra Rowing Centre was originally constructed in 2000 and was upgraded by Wollongong City Council in 2010. The centre is now licensed to a number of organisations including NSW Rowing, Illawarra Canoe Club, Dragon Boats and Five Islands Outrigger Canoe Club. The Department of Defence facility was constructed in 1999 and is home to the Illawarra Naval and Air Cadets.

The boat ramp near the Illawarra Yacht Club has been improved by the construction of a wave break jetty and 2 pontoons for use by the public and the club. The club contributed funds towards the project. A new lifting hoist has been installed on one of the pontoons to assist people with a disability access the waterway.

The King Street and Northcliffe Drive foreshore areas are maintained on an annual basis.
Lake Heights ($1.0 million)
Repairs have been undertaken to restore the former Merinda Wharf and adjoining shoreline area from bank erosion. The Merinda was a cruise vessel which operated on the lake for many years.

Historic Dixs Wharf was restored in 1989 but due to significant undermining of the block platform was rebuilt in 1999. A shareway has been constructed from the former Merinda site to Hooka Point. The shareway has been protected at a number of locations by gabion baskets.

Dixs Wharf after initial restoration
Old Merinda wharf site

A water quality control pond has been constructed on the drain immediately to the west of the Illawarra Yacht Club to treat stormwater runoff before discharging to the lake.

A recreational park has been created overlooking the lake, named in the honour of Eugene Von Guerard a renowned landscape painter of the mid 1800s. The park includes landscaped beds, a shelter shed, pathway, car park and drainage improvements. The park was opened by the former Member for Wollongong, Colin Markham MP.

Former Member for Wollongong Colin Markham MP at the opening of Von Guerard Park
Shelter shed and view over lake from Von Guerard Park

Tuggerah Bay / Wollamai Point / Berkeley Boatharbour ($1.3 million)
The Authority has provided support to the Budjong Creek Landcare Group in rehabilitating Wollamai Point. Work has involved extensive weed removal and replanting of native trees and shrubs. A jetty and boatramp has been constructed and improvements undertaken in and around Berkeley Boatharbour including dredging of the navigation channels and construction of a shelter shed. The Authority has entered into a long term lease for use of the fish retail outlet/kiosk in Berkeley Boatharbour. The kiosk was upgraded by the operator in 2009.

A major wetland covering 2.5ha has been constructed at the mouth of Budjong Creek to treat stormwater flows from the sub-catchment and overflows from the adjoining sewer pump station. The wetland was constructed in partnership with Sydney Water. The wetland also provides significant bird habitat.

An area of Tuggerah Bay to the west of the wetland has been dredged. Some 30,000m³ of material was removed from the bay and used to reprofile the adjacent reserve. A jetty has been constructed looking out toward Gooseberry Island.
A self flushing toilet has been provided on the foreshore reserve and wetland filters have been placed on a number of small drains which discharge across the reserve into Tuggerah Bay. A small playground has been erected and car park as well as shelter sheds on the Holborn Park reserve.

**Hooka Point / Hooka Creek (1.1 million)**

Improvements have been carried out on Hooka Point to create a recreational park. Work has involved weed removal, bush regeneration, construction of a 1.2km shareway, provision of picnic tables and seats, shelter sheds and a bird viewing tower. A footbridge and platform have also been constructed on Hooka Creek.
As part of a community project titled “Hooka Park Place of Healing” the Authority constructed a timber boardwalk and shareway, landscaped areas and provided sandstone blocks for seating and interpretative signage. The park was opened by the Hon. Craig Knowles MP in December 2004.

Work has been undertaken to restore riparian habitat along a 1km section of Hooka Creek. The project was undertaken in partnership with the Southern Rivers CMA. Some 15,000 native trees and shrubs have been planted over a 5.5ha area. Additional works are in progress to link public access to the site from Hooka Point as well as water quality improvements.

Koonawarra Bay (2.6 million)
Some 50,000m$^3$ of sediment was removed from the bay fronting Lakeside Drive in 1989. Material was placed along the reserve creating an additional 5ha of foreshore land. The reserve has been landscaped and car parking provided as well as a pathway, children's playground and picnic shelters.
The former Illawarra Motor Boat Club site has been restored. Work involved the demolition of concrete blocks, construction of a rock retaining wall, pathway, landscaping and provision of shelters, seats and lighting. A new wave break jetty has been constructed at the Kanahooka Boat Ramp to improve launching and retrieval of water craft during adverse weather conditions.

A shareway has partly been constructed along the southern foreshore of the bay and a gross pollutant/sediment trap has been constructed on Barrons Creek. Roadside works have been undertaken along Lakeside Drive to reduce stormwater runoff across the reserve.

**Mullet Creek / Purrah Bay ($0.5 million)**

A jetty and 1km shareway has been constructed on the foreshore adjacent to Purrah Bay. Weeds have been removed from the foreshore and areas of salt marsh protected by vehicle barriers.

A water quality control pond has been constructed to treat runoff from the adjacent sub-division.

A car park and playground have been constructed at the entry to the park and a wharf has been constructed on Mullet Creek for fishing, launching and mooring of small water craft.

**Yallah Bay (former Tallawarra Power station site) ($0.8 million)**

As part of the sale of the Tallawarra Power Station site, 2.5km of foreshore (including existing amenities) was transferred to the Authority’s ownership as well as 250ha of lake bed.
The Authority has refurbished the amenities building and undertaken minor improvements to part of the foreshore strip including the provision of shelter sheds and a children’s playground (funded by TRUenergy). Works are proposed to improve boating facilities at the site and link public access to the southern side of Koonawarra Bay.

The Authority has prepared a Landscape Master Plan for the foreshore strip. Riparian improvement work has been carried out along the 2.5 km foreshore strip including the removal of 2.5ha of weeds and planning of up to 30,000 new trees and shrubs. The project was undertaken in partnership with the SRCMA. The foreshore area will act as a buffer to the future development proposed on the adjoining land by TRUenergy.

A new boat ramp, car park and jetty has been constructed to improve boating and waterway access.

**Yallah Bay Boating Facility**

**Haywards Bay / Macquarie Rivulet ($1.0 million)**

A 1.5km arboretum (plantation of trees and shrubs) including shareway and picnic tables has been constructed along the southern shoreline of Macquarie Rivulet. The work was undertaken by participants under the Commonwealth’s LEAP program and specialist contractors with supervision provided by the Authority.
Improvements have been undertaken to the foreshore at Darcy Dunster Reserve including bank stabilisation, a car park, provision of shelters, refurbishment of the toilet block and construction of a shareway linking to the arboretum. The work was undertaken by participants under the Commonwealth’s ‘Work for the Dole’ program and specialist contractors under the supervision of the Authority.

The Authority has negotiated the transfer of 81ha of prime waterfront land along the northern side of Macquarie Rivulet and Haywards Bay from the Winten Property Group. The land includes flood prone land and portions of SEPP 14 wetlands near the mouth of the rivulet. The land is to be transferred to the LIA at the conclusion of the Haywards Bay subdivision or 31 December 2010, whichever occurs first.

**Koona Bay ($0.6 million)**
A small section of the bay has been dredged to remove sediment from near the mouth of Horsley Creek. Improvements have been carried out to Wilson Memorial Park for recreational activities. A shareway has been constructed along part of the foreshore of the bay between Wilson memorial park and Kanahooka St. Future work is planned to provide continuous public access between Horsley Creek and Albion Creek.

**Burroo Bay ($0.2 million)**
A jetty has been constructed for fishing and to assist with the launching and retrieval of water craft in the bay. A timber platform has also been provided for sailing craft. A timber retaining wall has been constructed to reduce erosion in front of the Oak Flats Sailing Club building. The car park has been resealed with gravel and vehicle barriers erected.

A shareway has been constructed linking Central Park to Skiway Park including a small timber bridge across Oakey Creek. Ooze has been removed from the shoreline of Hennegar Bay / Karoo Bay and the mouth of Oakey Creek.

Gross pollutant traps have been installed on a number of drains discharging from the Oak Flats area to capture rubbish and litter. GPTs have been installed at Central Park, Skiway Park (2 off) and on Oakey Creek. Shelters, bar-b-que facilities and a children’s playground have been constructed at Central Park.

**Mt Warrigal / Boonerah Point / Whyjuck Bay (0.4 million)**
Improvements have been carried out on Boonerah Point for recreational purposes including jetty, car park, picnic tables and landscaping.

A sediment trap and trash rack have been constructed on the drain at Konrads Rd.

Part of Davies Bay has been dredged and a boat ramp, car park and jetty have been constructed at Skiway Park.

A sediment trap has been constructed on the storm water drain at Madigan Avenue.
A major wetland covering over 1ha has been constructed on Howard Fowles Oval to treat storm water runoff from the Lake Illawarra / Warilla shopping area.

**Entrance area / Windang Island / Reddall Reserve / Windang Foreshore Park ($11.6 million)**

A southern and northern breakwater, including southern training wall connecting to Windang Island, have been built to keep the entrance open more often than in the past to improve tidal flushing of the lake and fish and prawn migration. As part of the works, major channel dredging was undertaken with material disposed of to the northern and southern ends of Warilla Beach. Material placed at the northern end of the beach was used to reform the sand dune tombolo and material placed at the southern end was used to renourish the beach and provide added buffer to some 50 houses along Little Lake Crescent from the affects of major ocean storms. A shallow swimming area has been created near the entrance.

Work has been undertaken to improve the recreational use of Reddall Reserve. Work has included the formalisation of 4 car parks, construction of a boat ramp, landscaping, provision of picnic shelters and BBQs, children's playground, shareways and lighting. Stormwater controls have been constructed on 6 drains crossing the reserve to capture rubbish from runoff before entering the lake.

A floating pontoon to improve boating and waterway access and fish cleaning table have been installed near the boat ramp.
Improvements are being carried out to the Reddall Reserve Kiosk including the provision of a shade structure with a view to calling for expressions of interest to operate the facility.

Improvements have been carried out to the Windang Wharf / Boat Ramp and Windang Foreshore Park (Pine Tree Park). A self flushing toilet has been installed at the boat ramp car park and a children's playground erected on the park. Additional car parking has been provided to the park and a timber boardwalk has been erected along the waters edge to improve access to the channel area.

A timber retaining wall and foreshore improvements have also been undertaken at Judbooley Park.

Stepped access has been provided to Windang Island and an Aboriginal midden fenced and sign posted. Extensive areas of Bitou bush have been removed from the Island's plateau and drainage provided to reduce erosion.

**Windang Peninsula ($2.6 million)**

A recreational park has been created along Windang Peninsula promoting Aboriginal culture and heritage of the lake district and surrounding areas. The park covers some 500m in length and includes feature mounds resembling a traditional Koori camp site, planting of native trees and shrubs, picnic tables and seats, a car park, timber boardwalk and gravel pathways as well as stormwater improvements. Extensive interpretive material is provided within the park to assist understanding of the significance of Aboriginal culture in the area. A team of local Aboriginal workers employed on a job training program organised by the Authority completed the project.

Prior to work commencing, the area was extensively covered by dense growth of lantana and other weeds as well as dumped builders' refuse.

A bird hide, viewing platforms and bird roosting posts have been erected along the shoreline.
Improvements have been carried out at Purry Burry Point including a jetty, car park and vehicle manoeuvring area. A gravel bike track suitable for use by children of all ages has been constructed on the reserve as well as a 200m long timber boardwalk near Nicolle Rd.

**Stormwater Controls ($3.2 million)**
A range of stormwater controls have been placed on 40 of the 100 major drains entering the lake eg wetlands, water quality control ponds, gross pollutant traps, sediment traps to treat pollutants and nutrients as well as measures to enhance and protect riparian vegetation.

Major gross pollutant traps have been constructed at Central Park, Kully Bay, Brooks Ck, Oakey Ck and Mt Warrigal to treat stormwater runoff and capture litter and rubbish from CBD areas.

**Algal Harvesting ($1.3 million)**
Some 25,000 tonnes of macroalgae has been removed from the near shore shallows of the lake to remove nutrients and improve aquatic habitat areas. Work has been undertaken by contract using specialised floating equipment.

This equates to the removal of some 54 tonnes of nitrogen and 3 tonnes of phosphorus from the lake.
**Foreshore Clean Up / Maintenance ($2.3 million)**
Some 50,000 tonnes of decomposing organic wrack has been removed from the lake shoreline as well as thousands of tonnes of rubbish / litter, vehicles, car and truck tyres, shopping trolleys etc.

Some 100 hectares of foreshore parklands is maintained on an annual basis as required.

**Shareway Maintenance ($1.0 million)**
There is some 27km of shareways around the lake (60% of the perimeter of the Lake) for pedestrians and cyclists. Minor repairs are undertaken on an as needed basis.

**Jetties / Wharves/ Platform / Boardwalk Maintenance ($0.3 million)**
There are 10 jetties/wharves, 6 platforms and 1km of boardwalks that require ongoing repairs and maintenance. Work is carried out on an as needed basis.

**Monitoring and Studies ($1.8 million)**
About 90 technical reports have been completed including environmental assessments, feasibility studies, options reports and geotechnical investigations.

A Management Study & Plan has been prepared detailing actions and strategies needed to bring about long term improvements to the lake and foreshores. This document forms the basis of the Authority’s ongoing works program.

A Flood Study for the foreshore areas of the lake has been completed and a Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is in preparation. The latter report includes an assessment of the impacts of climate change ie sea level rise and increased rainfall.

A report has been completed examining disabled access to existing foreshore structures. A detailed hydrographic survey of the lake has been completed.

Water quality in the lake is monitored continuously at 3 sites in the lake, Cudgeree Bay, Koonawarra Bay and the entrance. Basic WQ parameters are recorded (water level, pH, DO, Temp and Salinity). A detailed water quality monitoring program of 10 sites in the lake was undertaken between 1996 and 2001 focusing on nutrient compounds.

A further 3 others are monitored on a monthly basis, Griffins Bay, Kanahooka and Back Channel for nutrients and turbidity. The entrance swimming lagoon is regularly monitored (6 days) for bacteria levels (faecal coliforms and enterococcus).

A whole of lake study of seagrass areas were completed in 2000 and 2008. The Authority intend repeating the study transects on a frequent basis to determine trends in seagrass growth. The 2008 results show seagrass area is in good condition and expanding.

A Condition / Health Assessment of the lake was completed in 2010. The report assessed a number of performance indicators and concluded the lake was in a fair to good condition.
**Miscellaneous ($2.7 million)**
Administration, accounting management, property management and land matters (leases and licences) are attended to on an annual basis.

Two properties were purchased along Judbooley Parade, Windang to re-establish continuous public foreshore access on the perimeter of the lake between Windang Bridge and Oaklands Village.

![7 Judbooley Pde, Windang](image1)

![17 Judbooley Pde, Windang](image2)

A Plan of Management and Landscape Master Plan for the Judbooley Parade foreshore precinct area has been prepared.

It is proposed to demolish the dwelling at 7 Judbooley Parade and redevelop 17 Judbooley Parade into a boat hire and kiosk facility.

**Communications and Education ($0.4 million)**
The Authority provides information to schools, TAFE and university students and the community on activities and environmental issues concerning the lake. The Authority has produced numerous brochures, newsletters and publications about the lake. The Authority’s website [www.lia.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lia.nsw.gov.au) contains information about the Authority and its operations. The website is updated as required.

**Annual Reporting ($0.2 million)**
The Authority’s financial year commences on 1 July.

Each year, the Authority produces an Annual Report on its activities and operations.

The annual reports are tabled before both Houses of Parliament.

**“Lake Illawarra – An Ongoing History”**
A major publication detailing the history of Lake Illawarra, entitled “Lake Illawarra – An Ongoing History” was published in 2005.
Map of Lake Illawarra

Aerial view of Lake Illawarra showing current geographical place names, (photo courtesy of AAM HATCH P/L 5 April 2001)
**SUMMARY OF LAKE ILLAWARRA AUTHORITY PROJECTS**

### Development Works

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<td>Improved lake water quality through the construction of 3 large wetlands (Budjong, Warrawong and Warilla) and the placement of controls on 40 of the 100 major stormwater drains entering the lake to treat pollutants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved lake water quality, fish habitat and boating access through the dredging of some 1,000,000m³ of bed sediments and collection / removal of 25,000 tonnes of macroalgae to increase water circulation and distribution of seagrass meadows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved foreshore access and reduction in offensive odour through the removal of 50,000 tonnes of decaying seagrass wrack around the 38km of lake shoreline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved lake amenity through the removal of 45,000 tonnes of rubbish and litter from the lake including dumped motor vehicles, hundreds of car and truck tyres, numerous shopping trolleys, thousands of plastic bags and bottles, needle syringes and flood debris.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved terrestrial habitat for wildlife through the removal of 30ha of weeds such as lantana, bitou bush and Norfolk Island Hibiscus and the re-establishment of native vegetation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement and protection of 10km of shoreline riparian vegetation including 400m of Mullet Creek bank as part of the Reed Park Stormwater Reuse Scheme and maintenance of 50ha of parkland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilisation of the entrance of the lake and creation of a shallow swimming area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved access to Windang Island.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| Improved infrastructure for passive and active recreation including:  
  - 20km of shareways  
  - 1km of boardwalk  
  - numerous BBQs, shelter sheds, seats and tables  
  - 9 car parks  
  - 10 jetties, 1 wharf and 3 pontoons, 5 viewing platforms  
  - 2 equal access playgrounds |
| Upgraded 7 boat launching ramps. |
| Constructed an amenities building and education study centre at Warrawong. |
### SUMMARY OF LAKE ILLAWARRA AUTHORITY PROJECTS

#### Other Activities

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prepared whole of lake hydrosurvey.</td>
<td>![Hydrosurvey Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquired 2 properties off Judbooley Parade, Windang to improve public access and amenity.</td>
<td>![Property Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted Trusteeship of the Crown Reserves at Cudgeree Island and Windang Island.</td>
<td>![Island Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiated the transfer of 2.5km of shoreline and 250ha of the bed of the lake to the Authority as part of the sale of the Tallawarra Power Station.</td>
<td>![Shoreline Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiated the transfer of 81ha of foreshore land adjacent to Haywards Bay to the Authority.</td>
<td>![Bay Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisted in the publication of the book titled “Lake Illawarra – An Ongoing History”.</td>
<td>![Book Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage numerous leases and licenses for recreational and commercial activities.</td>
<td>![Lease Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restored community amenities at Kully Bay and the former Tallawarra P/S site.</td>
<td>![Community Image]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided training and employment opportunities for many hundreds of unemployed and unskilled youth through programs such as LEAP, Jobskills, Training for Aboriginals, Green Corps and Work for the Dole.</td>
<td>![Training Image]</td>
</tr>
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