



Queensland stock route network management strategy

2006–2009

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Foreword

The stock routes and associated reserves of Queensland's stock route network continue to provide pastoralists with a means to move stock on hoof around the state's main pastoral districts, as an alternative to trucking and other contemporary methods.

The stock routes and reserves for travelling stock share the same land as certain road corridors and reserves. As a result, the stock route network also shares the attributes of that land, including being generally less intensely developed than adjoining lands, and may provide a representation of the plants and animals of the area's natural bioregions. These lands are also known to contain culturally significant sites. The stock route network continues to co-exist with other transport, public utility and community uses of the public road network.

Stakeholder groups strongly support the retention of a network of roads and other land for the traditional use of moving stock on hoof. They also see the retention of the network as a means of protecting the land's associated conservation, recreational, cultural, heritage and tourism values. This is a direct result of changing community attitudes in Australia relating to the sustainable use and conservation of public lands.

The Queensland Government is committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to conserve and sustainably manage the stock route network.

Management of the stock route network is regulated under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. This Act enables state and local governments to share management

responsibilities, with local government being responsible for the day-to-day management, and the Department of Natural Resources and Water, as the custodian of the land, providing support, guidance and strategic directions for management.

The Queensland Stock Route Network Management Strategy is one means through which the state provides its guidance and strategic direction. As an integral part of the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, the strategy provides a framework for effective stock route management that encourages increased stakeholder awareness of and commitment to their responsibilities, and emphasises planning to improve resource management and use.

The strategy has been developed with the assistance of local governments, industry and community organisations and through consultation with the general public with the release of a draft strategy for public comment.

The strategy will provide users, managers, other stakeholders and the general public with a shared vision and a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities and intended directions for the management and use of the Queensland stock route network.

Hon. Craig Wallace

Minister for Natural Resources and Water and
Minister assisting the Premier in North Queensland

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Acronyms

ALL	All stakeholders, including interested persons
DES	Department of Emergency Services
DMR	Department of Main Roads
DPI&F	Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (Queensland)
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
IND	industry
LG	local government
LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NRM	natural resource management
NRW	Department of Natural Resources and Water
SG	Queensland Government or relevant agencies
SRN	stock route network

Summary

The vision of the Queensland Stock Route Network Management Strategy is:

Queensland's stock route network is valued by the community as an important use of public lands, in recognition of its positive contribution to the state's pastoral industry and economy.

The mission is:

Stock route activities are managed sustainably, to better protect and enhance the land's natural resources and inherent values as well as other uses of the roads and reserves making up the stock route network.

The primary focus of the strategy is to coordinate multiple uses and multiple stakeholders. Since the stock route network (SRN) is primarily used for the purpose of travelling stock, the primary stakeholders to this strategy are those managing travelling stock

(namely, state and local government) and those actually using the network to move stock. The SRN is also used for recreational, conservation, cultural heritage and utility purposes. Additional stakeholders therefore include local community groups and individuals, traditional owners and Indigenous groups, utility companies and landowners.

The main challenge of coordinating the multiple uses of the SRN is to do so with limited resources. The strategy aims to identify priorities and minimise the duplication of on-ground management actions and infrastructure to balance the competing demands of stakeholders to the SRN.

The focus of the Queensland stock route network strategy is contained within a strategic plan, which details the priorities and intentions for management of SRN. These are summarised as follows.

Strategic plan in summary

Goal 1: To enhance strategic direction and coordination

Objectives	Summary of key strategic actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enhance and maintain the integrity of the stock routes and reserves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate rationalisation of network areas and infrastructure that are no longer required. Implement policies that maintain its integrity as a network.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve coordination between activities that occur on the land by ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of SRN managers are understood and accepted by all parties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage awareness, acceptance and promotion of the roles and responsibilities of SRN managers. Communicate SRN needs to other users of the land making up the network.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To effectively plan for stock route network management within a strategic framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement SRN local government management plans, or other management initiatives. Identify and maintain links with related plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To acquire and manage expertise, physical resources and revenue for SRN management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate actual costs of managing the SRN. Allocate resources to priorities. Provide SRN management training to raise capacity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support management through legislation and policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policies and procedures to support day-to-day management procedures.

Goal 2: Enhanced approaches to management, through:

- understanding and protecting natural resources and values
- effective day-to-day management
- effective compliance strategies to support management

Objectives	Summary of key strategic actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide accessible information regarding the natural resources and values of the stock route network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement processes to capture, collect, document and disseminate information on natural resources and values of the stock route network.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide accessible information regarding land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop processes to capture, collect, document and disseminate information on land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes. • Implement existing departmental strategies to protect cultural, environmental and other significant areas. • Implement existing departmental restoration strategies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect conservation values impacted upon by stock route activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify conservation values and impacts caused by stock route activities. • Develop strategies, best management practices and on-ground action to protect conservation values impacted upon by stock route activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor and evaluate natural resources and values associated with the stock route network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information regarding monitoring techniques. • Provide training and education regarding monitoring land condition and trends. • Review status of SRN values.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve management of stock route activities to better protect and enhance the natural resources and values of the stock route network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop best management practices, standards and guidelines for on-ground management. • Provide training and education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance and maintain stock route infrastructure to the state standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce best practice for construction, maintenance and management. • Prioritise needs. • Carry out inspections and provide reports.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To manage the stock route network in a manner that provides for safe use by livestock, managers, users and the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce hazard management program. • Develop contamination notification protocols. • Develop signage protocols. • Raise awareness of legislative safety provisions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide accessible information on physical assets and operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information available to stakeholders. • Establish networks to share information. • Update stock route database. • Provide and maintain mapping.

- To identify compliance requirements for use of the stock route network.
- To apply enforcement provisions to support desired management outcomes for the stock route network.
- Compile an inventory of issues.
- Implement compliance initiatives prior to enforcement.
- Implement initiatives to enforce compliance on identified issues.
- Provide enforcement training and guidelines.
- Establish an enforcement officer network.
- Take actions to enforce legislation.

Goal 3: Improved commitment

Objectives	Summary of key strategic actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To raise awareness of the value of the stock route network within the community, industry and government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community values associated with the stock route network. • Develop a communication strategy to improve awareness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase community commitment to preserving the value of the stock route network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement programs to involve the community. • Implement programs to foster community ownership and commitment.

The strategy primarily coordinates existing activities undertaken by state government agencies and local governments. As such, current funding sources (including revenue raised through stock route fees) and other resources are expected to be sufficient to implement strategic actions.

However, under the program for managing hazards within the SRN, the strategy sets out to identify any potential hazards before determining the best approach to minimising these hazards. It is unclear if resources to implement these management approaches will be available during the life of this strategy. Additional funding may be required if other resources (e.g. time and capacity of staff) are to implement the actions before 2009.

The success of this strategy depends on its effective integration with local government stock route network management planning and the effective implementation of strategic actions in local areas.

1. Introduction

Approximately 72 000 kilometres (2.6 million hectares) of Queensland's road network are declared as stock routes. These routes, together with associated reserves for travelling stock, make up the Queensland stock route network (SRN). There are many facilities for travelling stock use associated with the SRN, including over 700 operational watering points, as well as numerous bridges, crossings, loading ramps, holding yards and fencing. The value of land is estimated at \$260 million and the replacement cost of infrastructure is approximately \$40 million.

The relevant roads and reserves that make up the stock route network represent a range of natural resources, embodying cultural heritage, recreational, environmental, biodiversity and economic values. Stock route activities such as travel and agistment of stock, and construction, operation and maintenance of stock route facilities may pose threats to these resources and values. The strategy aims to manage and minimise any such threat.

Management of the SRN is shared between the state government and local governments, with local government being responsible for its day-to-day management, and the Department of Natural Resources and Water (NRW), as the custodian of the land, providing support, guidance and strategic directions for management.

The Queensland Stock Route Network Management Strategy has been prepared under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*. Section 98 of the Act requires the chief executive (of NRW) to prepare a state strategy to direct and coordinate management of the stock route network.

The strategy is one means through which the state provides strategic guidance for day-to-day managers. It is a tool to link legislative principles for managing the network and on-ground activities with decision making—to ensure actions are coordinated, consistent, and in line with agreed visions and goals for managing the SRN.

The focus of this strategy is the management of stock route activities on stock routes and reserves for travelling stock. Other activities may also occur on the public lands that make up the SRN, such as installing utilities (power lines, pipelines, telecommunications), clearing vegetation for constructing roadways, apiary sites, issuing leases and permits, or other activities. These activities may also impact on the land's resources and values.

However, the strategy does not attempt to manage other activities that occur on or within the same land as the stock route network. Rather, it seeks to minimise the impact that stock route activities may have on the land's other uses and values and, conversely, the impact other uses have on stock route activities.

1.1 Background

What is the stock route network?

The Queensland stock route network is the network of stock routes and reserves for travelling stock in the state.

The term 'stock route' describes a particular use of part of the state's road network. That is, in Queensland, a stock route is not a separate parcel of land but a term used to describe a road or route that is:

- declared under a regulation to be a stock route
- ordinarily used for moving stock on foot.

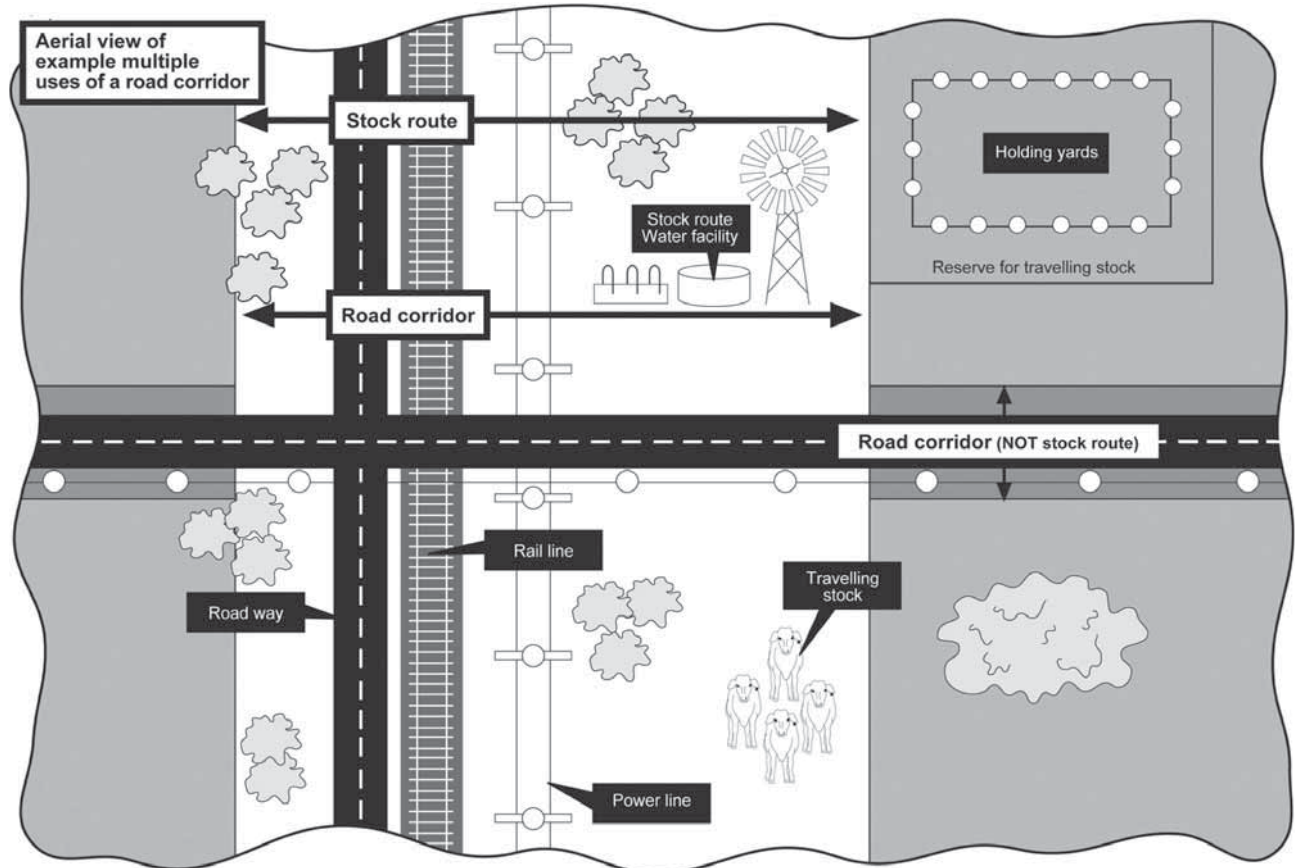
A road that is a stock route may also be used for other purposes. That is, apart from being a stock route, a road may also be used as a transport corridor for vehicles or a communication and utility infrastructure corridor for phone, power and gas lines. It may also be an area of land with rich biodiversity. Refer to Figure 1.

'Road' in this document refers to the road corridor—i.e. the area of land dedicated as road, not just the strip of land upon which the carriageway (bitumen) runs. Roads vary in width and commonly those roads declared as stock routes may be much wider (e.g. 800 metres) than roads used mainly for access purposes (e.g. 60 metres).

A 'reserve for travelling stock' is a reserve under the *Land Act 1994* that may be used for travelling stock purposes (e.g. camping and water reserves, stock trucking reserves). These reserves are included in the 22 000 plus parcels of land throughout Queensland that have been set aside for a particular public or community purpose.

Every reserve has a primary purpose for which that land can be used. Reserves for travelling stock may have a primary purpose (e.g. camping and watering stock) but they may also be used in other ways that are a compatible secondary use. Reserves for travelling stock contribute great value to the stock route network and are managed as part of the network.

Figure 1: Illustrated example of a stock route and the various uses of the land



Purpose of the stock route network

The primary purpose of the stock route network is for travelling stock—i.e. driving stock on foot. Although there are other uses of the SRN, such as short-term agistment, entering into watering agreements with private landholders, and the construction and maintenance of stock route facilities. Decision making and management are targeted towards meeting the demands of travelling stock. For example, agistment can only be permitted where there is more pasture than is needed for the use of travelling stock.

The *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* confirms this approach through its general purpose of providing for the management of the stock route network, and recognising that the network has multiple uses with the primary purpose being for travelling stock (refer to section 98 (2)(a)).

History of route development

The evolution of the stock route network within Queensland correlates with early colonial exploration and the ensuing pastoral occupation of lands.

Pastoralists drove stock into newly discovered grazing lands along corridors that, by necessity, followed river systems and Indigenous trade routes and trails. These watercourses and routes provided the only supplies of water that were relatively reliable.

The establishment of markets in the south and east provided an outlet for Queensland’s developing beef industry, requiring the return movement of stock from the north. During the surveying of pastoral lands from the 1860s to the 1890s, these established routes were recognised and excluded from selections and dedicated as ‘road’.

The construction of the three main railway lines west from Brisbane, Rockhampton and Townsville between 1865 and 1908 resulted in the further establishment of stock routes to act as feeders to the railheads of Charleville, Cunnamulla, Longreach, Hughenden, Winton and Cloncurry.

However, movement up to the late 1880s still relied heavily on seasonal conditions and natural water. From this time, campaigns began to have artificial water points installed along well used stock routes. Such development still continues today.

Decline in use

The decline in stock route use began in the 1950s with the advent of motorised transport following the Second World War. Use declined further in the 1960s with the introduction of road improvement schemes, such as the Commonwealth/State Beef Roads Scheme, that made the transport of stock by vehicle a more convenient and efficient way to meet the demands of the pastoral industry.

Drought relief

However, despite the decline in use and the transportation and fodder incentives offered during significant drought events since the 1960s, the network continues to provide short-term relief to pastoralists whilst they initiate longer term drought management strategies, such as arranging travel to market, non-droughted areas or private agistment in other parts of the state. During the 1995 drought, the network provided relief to about 120 000 head of cattle and 500 000 sheep.

Continuing use

At present, the network continues to provide an economical alternative to road and rail transport. An analysis of fees and costs of management conducted by NRW in January 2000 indicated that the cost of walking cattle and sheep was approximately 62% and 53% respectively of the cost of sending these livestock by road or rail at that time. Given rises in fuel and transport costs since then, these percentages are likely to be even lower in 2006.

Approximately 1.424 million head of cattle and 2.847 million sheep used the SRN between 1988 and 1997. These numbers do not include those animals using the SRN for short movements exempt under legislation; nor do they incorporate stock movements where a permit was not required or obtained.

Today, the stock route network is predominantly used by large pastoral companies to move large mobs of cattle between various holdings throughout the state, and on to nearby markets. Additionally, with drought continuing in many parts of the state, the network continues to provide pastoralists with opportunities to walk stock to non-droughted areas or implement long-term drought management strategies.

Retention and alienation of network areas

Demand for some traditional-type uses of the network still exists, albeit at a less extensive scale. Pastoral companies continue to use the SRN to move stock between properties for the financial and management benefits the network provides, such as reducing costs, saving pasture and educating stock. In addition, the network sees increases in use during times of drought when pastoralists move stock onto the 'long paddock', seeking pasture. This ongoing demand indicates a need to retain a core network of routes and reserves that can be used:

- as part of ongoing property and animal management strategies
- as a network capable of providing assistance to pastoralists implementing self-reliant strategies (such as walking stock from droughted to non-droughted parts of the state).

Though the network offers these significant advantages to industry and provides a land corridor that accommodates the travelling public, public utilities and communication services, there remains pressure from various interest groups to alienate or dispose of components.

Alienation occurs when parts of the stock route network (e.g. reserves for travelling stock) become isolated or difficult to reach by travelling stock. It can occur when:

- a section of road that is a stock route is closed
- a route becomes inaccessible due to fencing, locked gates or overgrazing
- behaviours and attitudes of adjoining landholders and communities dissuade drovers from travelling through an area.

Leases or permits to occupy may be granted over a reserve for travelling stock or part of a stock route. In these circumstances, conditions are placed on the lease or permit to protect the access rights of travelling stock. However, drovers encounter difficulties where there is a lack of compliance with lease or permit conditions. Additionally, unauthorised occupation of land adjoining or making up the network may have similar impacts upon drovers. As a result of any such pressures, parts of the network may become isolated or alienated if drovers find alternative routes.

The alienation of these lands, and the differing management requirements applied to them, can significantly impact on the integrity of the stock route network and the land manager's ability to provide consistent and equitable management for all users of the network. This is a challenge faced by stock route managers.

Multiple values of the stock route network

A wide variety of values are associated with the SRN. For this document's purpose, they can be identified at different levels: (1) values associated with the land, and (2) values uniquely associated with the SRN and stock route activities.

Values associated with the land

Values associated with the land that makes up the SRN include:

- economic values associated with the high pastoral productivity of the land to meet the needs of travelling stock, as well as economic benefits to rural communities through having corridors of land to transport goods and services to and from these communities
- environmental values associated with rich biodiversity, riparian areas and aesthetics, as well as value as a corridor linking areas of natural vegetation, which allows for wildlife movement across the landscape
- cultural values associated with Indigenous trade routes and sites of archaeological and cultural significance
- social values associated with use of the land for purposes other than stock route activities such as horse riding or recreational fishing, providing access corridors linking isolated areas of the state, and benefiting rural communities with utilities and other services.

Stock route managers must address any potential impacts on the values associated with the land that may be caused by stock route activities. However, as there are many other users of the same land, it is not the role of stock route managers to manage all values associated with the land simply because it is a stock route. Managers of other uses or activities also have responsibility in dealing with their impacts on those values.

Values associated with the SRN and stock route activities

Additionally, there are values that are unique to the SRN and stock route activities, including:

- cultural and historical values associated with SRN activities such as sites of stock route facilities; family and personal connections to certain stock routes for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples; and intrinsic cultural values associated with the simple existence of the stock route network and its linkage to exploration and settlement of Queensland
- economic values associated with providing employment to drovers and providing more economical alternatives for moving stock
- environmental values associated with the benefits to the environment from walking stock as opposed to trucking or transporting by rail (e.g. reduced emissions)
- social values associated with employment opportunities in the droving and pastoral industries as well as local governments.

It is the role of stock route managers to primarily deal with potential impacts on values uniquely associated with stock route activities. Potential impacts to these values may be caused by other users of the land. It is also the role of stock route managers to work with other users to minimise these impacts.

Multiple managers of the land

Stock routes are just one function of certain road corridors, and reserves for travelling stock may also be used for other purposes. This presents certain challenges to managers of the network, who must consider the multiple uses of its land.

The management of each use of the network's land tends to be governed by its own legislation and related policies. Each use also tends to have its own manager. For example, utility companies are specifically concerned with the construction and operation of utility infrastructure that exists within the road corridor (such as powerlines), while each local government (or the state in the case of main roads) manages the construction, operation and maintenance of the roadway, or carriageway. Meanwhile, environmental and natural resource management agencies may be involved with managing certain environmental aspects of the road network (such as vegetation clearing and pest management).

These layers of management may compete with or affect other management approaches, which can constrain the effective management of each use.

The situation is not so complicated in the case of reserves for travelling stock, as the land is reserved for a specific purpose, such as camping and/or watering stock. However, management responsibilities can be complicated when individuals are granted tenure to use the land. In this case, management is shared between local government, as custodian of the land, and the lessee or permittee. In addition, there are other activities or uses that are known to occur on some reserves, such as fishing and bird watching, which are not entirely consistent with the purpose of the reserve and may result in conflict between uses.

Stakeholders

The stock route network's stakeholders include those managing travelling stock and those actually using the network to move stock.

There are also groups that are considered stakeholders because stock route activities may directly affect their activities. These include:

- state government departments and agencies—for example, NRW, Department of Main Roads (DMR), Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)—that have a role in the management of:
 - the stock route network
 - land tenure
 - land, soil, water, vegetation and pests
 - state-controlled roads
 - environmental management
- local government in its management of:
 - the stock route network
 - land tenure (as trustees)
 - local roads
 - pests
 - industry, including stock owners and drovers
 - landholders adjoining the SRN
- others affected by travelling stock, including:
 - utility companies
 - recreational users
 - local community groups or individuals
 - traditional owners and Indigenous groups.

However, there is a broader group of interested parties or persons that may not necessarily be directly affected by stock route activities yet have an interest in the network's management, existence and use, and so are considered part of the SRN community.

These include the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ), industry peak bodies (such as AgForce), Department of Emergency Services (DES), conservation groups and the general public. The Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Council, which is an advisory council to the Minister of Natural Resources and Water regarding SRN issues, is also an interested party.

Stakeholders and other interested parties will be involved in implementing the strategic plan set out in Section 3 (i.e. both groups are included in references to 'ALL' in the strategic plan). However, their level of involvement will depend on their level of 'interest' in the particular issue.

1.2 Challenges

Significant challenges face stakeholders to ensure that the SRN is managed efficiently and sustainably within Queensland. In order to enhance the management of the SRN the following six focus areas have been identified for improvement:

- awareness and knowledge of the inherent values associated with the SRN
- skills and knowledge to ensure sustainable SRN management
- acceptance of management responsibility by stakeholders
- coordination and better planned approaches to SRN management and use
- application of enforcement actions and other mechanisms to achieve compliance
- resources for all levels of management.

1.3 Future management of the SRN

Local government continues to be responsible for the day-to-day management of the SRN. However, under previous management arrangements, local government has, to a degree, relied on NRW in fulfilling its responsibilities. It is envisaged that management partnerships between state and local government will be enhanced through building capacity within local government and by the state providing clearer goals for management through robust legislation and associated guidelines.

With the increasing pressures associated with managing the SRN, it has become paramount for managers to focus available resources on identified priorities and minimise duplication in on-ground management actions and infrastructure. Aligning available resources with identified goals for the future of the network is a key component of local government stock route management planning.

In allocating available resources, there is obvious desire to improve the capacity and competency of those directly involved in stock route management activities. However, to achieve improvement in the overall efficiency and effectiveness of management practices, there also needs to be improvement in the capacity, competency and awareness of users of the network, of rural communities, and of those who manage other activities occurring on the land. Raising awareness, education, consultation and collaborative management arrangements will all contribute towards building this capacity.

Ultimately, the future of the stock route network depends on industry, management agencies and the wider community recognising and valuing the importance of the network and the efforts of state and local government to consistently improve the management of this valuable resource.

1.4 Legislative principles

The strategy is based upon a set of fundamental principles of stock route network management as prescribed by the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*.

Public awareness

Public awareness and knowledge of the network's multiple uses, environmental values and cultural values must be raised to increase the capacity and willingness of individuals to protect the network.

Commitment

Effective management of the stock route network requires a long-term commitment by the community to management of the network.

Consultation and partnership

Consultation and partnership arrangements between local communities, industry groups, state government agencies and local governments must be established to achieve a collaborative approach to stock route network management.

Management

The stock route network is to be managed:

- to ensure it remains available for public use
- to maintain and improve the network's natural resources and travelling stock facilities for use by travelling stock and for other purposes.

Payment for use

A person who benefits from using the network must pay a reasonable amount for its use.

Planning

Stock route network management must be consistent at local, regional and state levels to ensure resources for managing the network are used to target management priorities.

Monitoring and evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation of the network's natural resources and travelling stock facilities are necessary to improve stock route network management practices.

2. About the strategy

2.1 Purpose of the strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to establish a framework for the sustainable management of stock route activities that considers the economic, environmental, social and cultural values attached to the land and associated with the stock route network.

The state strategy provides:

- clear direction to all parties involved in managing the network
- clear objectives and priorities
- a framework for allocating available resources.

All stakeholders have been involved in the strategy development process, resulting in:

- recognition of stakeholder priorities
- increased awareness and commitment of stakeholders
- community support of the strategy.

The strategy links legislation with planning, on-ground management activities, and decision making (refer to figures 2 and 4). It reflects the intent of legislation, is considerate of historical experiences and future directions for SRN management, and provides the means through which on-ground management activities can be targeted to address established priorities.

The strategy encourages planning so that on-ground managers can develop a clear picture of the physical, environmental, cultural and economic attributes the stock route network brings to its area. Using this picture, managers are able to establish specific priorities for their area, allocate resources, and develop action plans to realise their goals.

Moreover, the strategy is not intended as a reference tool to be shelved until its scheduled review. Rather, it has been prepared to assist managers on a regular basis to set priorities, develop work plans, and reinforce the intended directions for stock route network management in Queensland.

2.2 Scope of the strategy

The strategy deals with stock route activities on the multiple-use land making up the stock route network. It deals with use of this land through strategic management, resource allocation and planning for stock route activities. As such, the strategy is one of use-management.

The strategy encompasses all stock routes, reserves for travelling stock, and stock route infrastructure within the SRN (e.g. watering facilities, holding yards, ramps and stock bridges). It is aimed at managing the network throughout all local government areas with an emphasis on those areas where there are significant stock movements.

The scope of the strategy extends to:

- providing strategic direction to managers and users of the network regarding the intended future for stock route management in Queensland
- ensuring stock route activities are carried out in a manner that ensures coordination within and between agencies responsible for managing stock route issues, as well as with other users of the land
- providing a framework for managing the movement of travelling stock and ensuring adequate infrastructure and resources are available to facilitate this activity
- managing the impacts and threats of travelling and agisted stock on natural resources and values inherent in the land
- nurturing community support of the SRN and stock route activities through awareness and building a sense of ownership.

Legislation, strategies and policies applicable to stock route management relate only to the management of stock route network activities and the impacts those activities have on other lawful uses of the land. Where other users impact on stock route activities, the strategy sets out mechanisms to communicate and coordinate with these other users, and establishes opportunities to negotiate and recommend actions to minimise the impacts on travelling stock.

However, it is up to the managers of the other uses, and the users themselves, to take action. For example, the strategy does not set construction standards for roads, or set out when and how another user needs to notify stock route managers when conducting work that will affect travelling stock. Similarly, the strategy does not manage recreational uses such as bike and horse riding or birdwatching (where no specific management regime is in place for those activities).

2.3 Relationship to other management regimes

The land that makes up the stock route network is used in numerous ways, and many of those uses are managed under other plans, strategies and codes of conduct as well as the common law. In order to be

most effective, the Queensland Stock Route Network Management Strategy needs to:

- link with other plans and strategies that address the various uses of the land within the common land corridor or reserve
- integrate with natural resource management as a whole.

However, because approaches to management change, strategies, plans and legislation will change over time. While the strategy reflects current approaches to management, it also establishes a need to build and maintain links with other management agencies in recognition of this ongoing change.

State stock route managers are working with the managers of the other uses of the road corridor to examine the integrated management of the land, including how SRN management links to the other uses (such as state-controlled roads and land under permit or lease). State stock route managers will continue to be involved in this process to resolve the issues and reduce impacts on and from stock route activities.

2.4 Process of developing the strategy

A consultative and participative approach to developing this strategy has been adopted to maximise ownership of the strategy by the whole of the community and those with particular network management responsibilities. This involved using the Stock Route Advisory Committee—an advisory group to the former Rural Lands Protection Board (now the Land Protection Council)—as a reference panel, and organising workshops of state and local government, community and industry representatives at Barcaldine, Winton, Roma and Brisbane.

In addition to these workshops an extensive survey was carried out to identify issues of concern to stakeholders and examine general directions for addressing each issue. This survey involved:

- recreation organisations
- local government mayors, chief executives and stock route supervisors
- NRW's district and operations managers and land protection officers
- other state government departments.

A review of current practice in other states was undertaken. This focused particularly on the results of reviews of the travelling stock reserves in New South Wales.

The resultant draft strategy was then released for public consultation.

Twenty-four submissions were received from a diverse range of interest groups, including local government, conservation agencies, Indigenous representative bodies, and many recreation interest groups. All submissions were considered in relation to the intent of the strategy. In response to the submissions, the intent and scope of the strategy were clarified and other amendments made to improve the document.

The strategy was also updated to reflect the concerns and issues identified by local government following the passing and subsequent enactment of the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, as well as the results of discussions with other state agencies.

Amendments were particularly made to the purpose and scope of the draft strategy to clarify its role to manage stock route activities (as a use of the land), and not to manage all issues and activities that occur on the land making up the SRN.

The finalised Queensland Stock Route Network Management Strategy was approved in 2007 and will be implemented by the nominated responsible agencies.

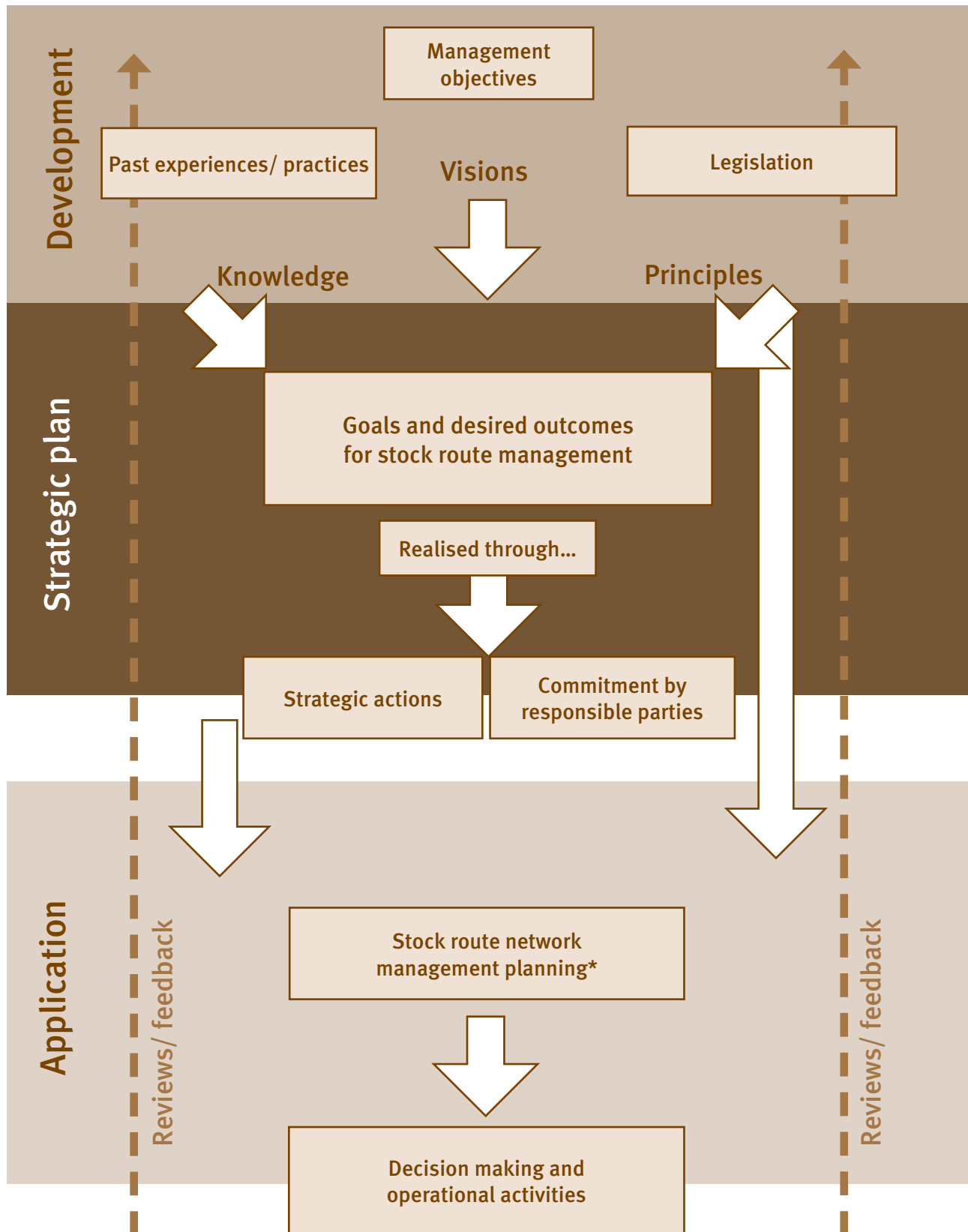
2.5 Strategy framework

The legislative principles set out in the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002* provide the overriding intent of legislation and direction for the goals and outcomes of the strategy.

The strategy has been developed through integrating the legislative principles, knowledge acquired from past experiences and practices, and future directions and visions for stock route management. This information, along with influences and guidance from associated plans, forms the basis of the strategic plan. Goals and objectives identified in the strategic plan will be realised through a series of strategic actions that are assigned to responsible parties for implementation. This process is illustrated in Figure 2.

Through this process, the framework is intended to provide a clear link between strategic actions that occur on-ground and the overriding legislative principles.

Figure 2: Strategy framework



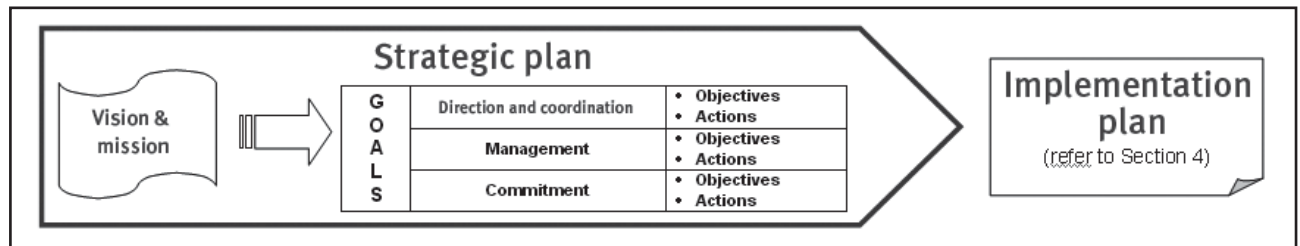
*As required by regulation, otherwise implemented via some other form of management initiative.

3. Strategic plan

Structure

The strategic plan outlines the goals, objectives, strategic actions and responsible parties necessary to realise the vision and mission of the Queensland stock route network strategy. The strategic plan is presented below in a series of tables.

Figure 3: Overview of the strategic plan



Vision

Queensland’s stock route network is valued by the community as an important use of public lands in recognition of its positive contribution to the state’s pastoral industry and economy.

Mission

Stock route activities are managed sustainably to better protect and enhance the land’s natural resources and inherent values as well as other uses of the roads and reserves making up the stock route network.

Goals

1. Enhanced strategic direction and coordination
2. Enhanced approaches to management
3. Increased commitment

Notes regarding tables

A list of acronyms used in the following tables is located at the front of this strategy.

References to ‘ALL’ in the tables include both the relevant stakeholders, as outlined in Section 1.1, as well as other interested persons who make up the broader SRN community. The level of involvement or responsibility for implementation will depend on their level of ‘interest’ in the particular issue.

Roles/responsibilities being in bolded text indicates the lead agency responsible for implementing that strategic action. No bolded text indicates that the responsibility for ensuring implementation is shared between agencies, groups and the community. However, the level of responsibility may not be equally shared.

For example, strategic action 2.4.1 indicates shared responsibility between local government, NRW and other state government agencies. However, local government and NRW have a greater responsibility to ensure the action is implemented. Other agencies are only required to provide advice upon request.

Similarly, local government has a lead role in the documentation of the best management practices in local government stock route network management plans. However, NRW is required to be involved in the development stages and has a responsibility to ensure that practices are consistent throughout the state.

The internal order of goals, objectives and strategic actions does not indicate priority or level of importance.

Goal 1: Enhanced strategic direction and coordination

Desired outcome: Strategic direction, coordination and resourcing of stock route network management is enhanced and supported by all managers and users.

Introduction

Diverse uses of roads

A wide range of government agencies, industry, utility and community groups may authorise or undertake activities on roads. Roads that are declared as stock routes or reserves for travelling stock may also be used for other activities, apart from the movement of stock. For example, the land may be used as a public thoroughfare or for the construction, use and maintenance of roadways, telephone, electricity and other public utility infrastructure. It may also be used for beekeeping, grazing, recreation or tourism, or managed for its biodiversity and cultural value.

Each of the various agencies responsible for managing these activities has a defined role in the management of the land making up the SRN. As a result, effective management of the land may be impaired by the disparate interests of its managers.

Coordination of network management

SRN management needs to be coordinated, planned, implemented and monitored at the most appropriate level, which may be local, regional or state depending on the scale of the activities involved. However, regardless of the level of government responsible, effective stock route management in Queensland requires not only a considered coordination of activities but a full understanding of their impacts on each other and of the natural resource values of the SRN. Moreover, there needs to be a willingness to consult all stakeholders in areas of operational management.

Resourcing issues

The agencies responsible require resourcing for effective planning, goal setting and coordination. Such resourcing includes staffing, time, financial support and training on an ongoing basis to ensure that overall objectives are met. Agencies

need to communicate with each other in order to determine the appropriate levels and timing of resources required.

The managers of stock route activities have opportunities to generate revenue to invest in resources and to enhance administration. These opportunities need to be investigated and, where necessary, approved so that benefits can be realised. However, opportunities for raising revenue must only be implemented when the economic benefit does not adversely affect other values (e.g. cultural or environmental values). Additionally, there needs to be a clearer understanding of the actual costs associated with the management of the network, to ensure better allocation and coordination of resources.

Changing usage of the stock route network

The change in use of the stock route network over time has presented challenges to management. Many of the state's recognised routes and reserves are now redundant and managers have responded by allowing alternative uses of areas seldom or no longer used by walking stock. This has been done through granting leases, giving approvals to graze stock, and closing roads to incorporate them into adjoining lands. Additionally, managers of stock route facilities are forced to meet increasing costs for maintaining infrastructure, when the beneficiaries are often private interests.

Rationalisation of the extent of the network and its facilities is one option that may better reflect modern-day usage. However, rationalisation decisions must also consider, for example, what appears to be an increase in walking stock on foot due to rising fuel costs.

The strategic direction for the future management of the network must ensure adequate balance between the costs and benefits. Before making a decision to rationalise the extent of the network, there first needs to be an assessment of the benefits that accrue from retention (both directly and indirectly) and the actual costs of management.

Objective 1.1 Rationalisation, retention and acquisition

To enhance and maintain the integrity of stock routes and reserves.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation (Lead responsible agency in bold)		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SG)
1.1.1	Investigate rationalisation of the SRN to address redundancy or resourcing issues and, where necessary, develop processes to determine the extent of such rationalisation.	Provide advice and recommendations to SG on retention requirements. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	As stated.	
1.1.2	Investigate rationalisation of stock route infrastructure and, where necessary, develop and implement processes to dispose of redundant infrastructure.	Identify infrastructure surplus to travelling stock needs. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	As stated.	
1.1.3	Develop and implement policies that maintain a connected network of roads, routes and reserves.	ALL, as stated. Example: NRW may develop policies that address road closure issues; NRW and DMR may enter into an MOU regarding activities on state-controlled roads.		
1.1.4	Develop and implement policies that enhance and maintain the functionality of the SRN.	ALL, as stated.		
1.1.5	Identify and implement land acquisition requirements to address critical problems. Example: A stock route may need to be moved to mitigate against known 'black spots' for traffic safety or to protect rare or threatened species that cannot be managed alongside stock route activities.	Provide advice and recommendations to SG on land acquisition requirements. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	As stated	Other SG, IND and landholders to participate as required. Example: DMR may provide information regarding land surplus to DMR requirements.

Objective 1.2 Roles, responsibilities and coordinated efforts

To improve coordination between activities that occur on the land by ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of stock route managers are understood and accepted by all parties.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SG)
1.2.1	All agencies and users to understand and accept their roles and responsibilities for SRN management.	ALL, as stated. Example: NRW and LG may consult DPI&F to develop understanding of responsibilities under the National Livestock Identification Scheme to ensure biosecurity issues relating to stock route activities are addressed.		
1.2.2	Disseminate and promote the roles and responsibilities of SRN managers to all agencies and users of the land.	ALL to disseminate and promote within own agency or organisation.		
1.2.3	Communicate stock route management needs to other users and/or managers of the multiple use corridor (road) to improve coordination between activities and minimise impacts. Examples: NRW, LGAQ and DMR may develop various memorandums of understanding (MOUs) outlining the roles and responsibilities of each with regard to administering and implementing legislation and policy.	Provide advice to NRW and other SG on impacts and participate with NRW to develop recommendations for improvement.	As stated, in participation with LG, providing recommendations for improvement.	Other users/managers (e.g. DMR) to investigate options to improve coordination and minimise impacts, and implement recommendations where practical.

Objective 1.3 Planning

To effectively plan for stock route network management within a strategic framework.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SG)
1.3.1	Develop and implement SRN local government management plans, where required by legislation.	Prepare and implement plan for its area.	Provide developmental and implementation support to LG and assess LG plans in accordance with Act.	ALL to consider draft plan and provide comment. DMR to provide advice on appropriate management on relevant state-controlled roads.
1.3.2	Develop and implement management initiatives in other local government areas.	Prepare and implement initiatives for its area. Example: Best management practice policies and guidelines.	Promote voluntary management initiatives and provide developmental and implementation support.	DMR to participate and provide advice on appropriate management on relevant state-controlled roads.
1.3.3	Include SRN issues in regional natural resource management, catchment, biodiversity, utility and other relevant plans.	Incorporate SRN issues during preparation or review of relevant LG plans.	Promote to all and incorporate into relevant NRM plans.	SG to incorporate SRN issues during preparation or review of relevant plans.
1.3.4	Ensure two-way links across all planning activities are identified and maintained.	ALL, as stated. Examples: Both a local government pest management plan and a local government stock route network management plan may address pest management on stock routes; the detail regarding strategies and actions may be fully described only in one, but both should include links to the other. Similarly, LGs should ensure that local government planning schemes and SRN management plans (if required) are consistent and identify the links to each other.		
1.3.5	Include SRN management in property management planning for those properties with access to sections of the network.	Promote property resource management planning to local landholders and participate in plan development.	Promote property resource management plans that encompass SRN issues.	IND to encourage property management planning. Landholders, as stated.
1.3.6	To assist in the development and implementation of plans that address stock route network management.	Ensure adequate support and resources are provided for preparing and implementing plans.	As stated.	SG to provide support to local government working group, if requested.

Objective 1.4 Resources

To acquire and manage expertise, physical resources and revenue for stock route network management.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SG)
1.4.1	Develop clear understanding and evaluate actual costs of managing the SRN. Example: Costs incurred by other agencies providing information or support to stock route managers (outside of normal service delivery requirements) may also be considered in an evaluation of costs.	Provide information on costs.	As stated.	
1.4.2	In the context of priorities, allocate resources for SRN management.	As stated.	As stated.	
1.4.3	Evaluate and capitalise on revenue and in-kind opportunities to support SRN management. Examples of opportunities may include landholder maintenance of SRN facilities, and LG revenue raising through harvesting excess pasture or improved agistment regimes.	As stated.	As stated.	DMR to participate in relation to relevant state-controlled roads.
1.4.4	Identify and capitalise on opportunities for sharing resources.	As stated.	As stated.	DMR to participate in relation to relevant state-controlled roads.
1.4.5	Build capacity of staff involved in SRN management, through training. Examples: Relevant areas to implement training include SRN legislation, compliance/enforcement, natural resource management, monitoring and evaluation.	As stated (internal LG training).	As stated (internal NRW, SG and LG training). Example: Develop training programs identifying needs according to competency required, and provide as needed to target that level.	

Objective 1.5 Legislative support

To support management through legislation and policy.

Action No.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SG)
1.5.1	Respond to identified gaps through policy (where appropriate) or other approved processes in order to meet management needs.	Provide advice to NRW or other SG (as appropriate) on gaps. Develop policies and procedures applicable to local SRN management.	As stated.	Other SG, as stated.

Goal 2: Enhanced approaches to management through understanding and protecting natural resources and values, effective day-to-day management, and effective compliance strategies to support management

Desired outcome: The stock route network is managed sustainably and effectively, and used lawfully.

Understanding and protecting natural resources and values

The stock routes and reserves that make up the network embody a range of natural resources and values, including cultural heritage, recreational, environmental, biodiversity and economic values. Stock route activities may pose threats to these resources and values. The other activities that may also occur on these lands, such as installing utilities (power lines, pipelines, telecommunications), clearing vegetation for constructing roadways, apiary sites, and issuing leases and permits or other activities, may also impact on resources and values. However, this goal relates to minimising potential impacts on natural resources and values by managing stock route activities.

Stock route activities—for example, overgrazing, trampling or disturbing sites of cultural significance, vegetation clearing and disturbance associated with

building stock route facilities—may have an adverse impact on natural resources and cultural heritage values. To protect natural resources and values, stock route managers need information on the extent and condition of the natural resources, biodiversity and areas or items of cultural heritage value, as well as information regarding threatening processes, land capability, best practice management and monitoring. This would enable appropriate management practices to be developed.

Although much information is available, it needs to be compiled and made readily available in a format that is useful to managers. Information that must be collected for other planning or management requirements (e.g. local government planning schemes) should be accessible for stock route purposes, where appropriate to do so. New or updated information also needs to be made available.

The Department of Natural Resources and Water, the Environmental Protection Agency and local government have agreed principles on managing threats to biodiversity. It is recognised that many roads that may be used for stock route purposes may contain significant environmental values.

In order to protect these values, the best available information must be accessible to stock route managers to allow areas of biodiversity and conservation significance to be identified.

Reducing the impacts of stock route activities on these values is also required. NRW will develop guidelines, in consultation with EPA, to assist stock route managers in achieving these outcomes.

Objective 2.1 Inventory of natural resources and values

To provide accessible information regarding the natural resources and values of the stock route network.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.1.1	Develop and implement processes to collect, record and disseminate* available information relating to natural resources and values of the SRN.	Participate in developing a process and advise SG of information requirements.	Develop process as stated in partnership with other custodial agencies.	Participate in developing a process.
2.1.2	Capture, collate and disseminate* new or updated information relating to natural resources and values of the SRN as it becomes available.	Provide relevant information to NRW.	As stated.	Provide relevant information to NRW.

* Note: The form and degree to which information is disseminated is to be appropriate for the particular type of information. For example, it may not be appropriate to widely promote information on specific sites of significant cultural value. Guidance on dealing with information is to be obtained from the information source, or other relevant agencies.

Objective 2.2 Natural resource capability

To provide accessible information regarding land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.2.1	Develop and implement processes to collect, record and disseminate available information relating to land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes.	Participate in developing a process and advise SG of information requirements.	Implement as stated in partnership with other custodial agencies.	Participate in developing a process.
2.2.2	Capture, collate and disseminate new or updated information relating to land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes as it becomes available.	Provide relevant information to NRW.	As stated.	Provide relevant information to NRW.
2.2.3	Implement existing departmental strategies to protect cultural, environmental and other significant areas within the SRN that are impacted upon by stock route activities. Example: Weed and other pest management may contribute towards protection.	As stated, incorporating into LG SRN management plans, operating procedures, etc.	As stated.	ALL to participate and provide advice as appropriate (e.g. EPA, traditional owners etc.).
2.2.4	Develop and implement restoration strategies for the SRN, as necessary, where it is damaged by inappropriate practices and activities or by other activities conducted on the land.	As stated.	As stated, liaising with other SG to align strategies with other legislation etc.	ALL to implement, where required, particularly involving the responsible party in the restoration; other SG to contribute through advice, recommendations etc.

Objective 2.3 Protecting conservation values

To protect conservation values impacted upon by stock route activities.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.3.1	Identify conservation values of the SRN and potential or current impacts caused by stock route activities.	Collect information and determine possible impacts on biodiversity/conservation values caused by stock route activities, including information in LG SRN management plans.	Provide information to LGs on biodiversity/conservation values and impacts.	EPA assist NRW with information on biodiversity/conservation values and with minimising impacts on these values.
2.3.2	Develop strategies, best management practices, guidelines and on-ground actions to protect conservation values where impacted upon by stock route activities.	As stated.	Provide advice and support to LGs.	EPA to provide comments on draft strategies and guidelines.

Objective 2.4 Monitoring and evaluation

To monitor and evaluate natural resources and values associated with the stock route network.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.4.1	Disseminate information on monitoring techniques to SRN managers.		As stated.	
2.4.2	Develop and implement effective training and education programs in monitoring and evaluation of land condition and trend.	As stated.	As stated.	Other SG provide advice, expertise and assistance in delivering training as required.
2.4.3	Implement monitoring and evaluate the status of natural resources and values over time.	As stated, incorporating activities into LG SRN management plans (where applicable).	Collate data collected by LGs to assist policy development and other management activities/decisions.	

Effective day-to-day management

The effectiveness of this strategy depends on the day-to-day management of the SRN. SRN managers should build on these approaches to maintain a best practice approach to management, using knowledge from both positive and negative management experiences, along with information from other areas of natural resource management. Such information is invaluable to day-to-day managers as it facilitates the best possible use of available resources.

Knowledge of the broader natural resources management issues will also contribute to better protection and enhancement of the natural resources and values associated with the network. For example, pumping water from a watercourse to nearby troughing rather than allowing travelling stock to water at a natural waterhole may help preserve the physical integrity of the watercourse as well as protect the recreational, environmental and other values associated with the watercourse.

Due to the multiple use nature of the stock route network, safety is an important issue that needs to be addressed at both a strategic and operational level. Safety on the network and its facilities can be enhanced with the provision of signage, promotional activities, legislative provisions, and the identification and removal of hazards. Better communication

with other agencies (e.g. DES regarding fire risk management and access requirements for emergency vehicles) can improve stock route safety programs. In addition, the siting of facilities needs to accommodate other corridor users and values to ensure that both the travelling public and stock are safe within the SRN environment.

With so many individual local governments responsible for day-to-day management of the SRN, there is scope for different approaches to management to be applied across the state. Forming networks between day-to-day managers to share information is one way of benefiting from individual successes and failures, as well as providing a forum to supply valuable feedback to legislators and policymakers.

As new information and alternative management regimes are made available to day-to-day managers, it is vital that these managers have the capacity to understand and implement new ideas effectively. The state has a responsibility to ensure day-to-day managers have access to training and education programs to build the capacity of on-ground staff and decision makers. It is also important that on-ground staff are given the time and other resources required to attend training sessions.

Objective 2.5 Knowledge, management and restoration

To improve management of stock route activities to better protect and enhance the natural resources and values of the stock route network.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.5.1	Develop, document and disseminate best management practices including standards and guidelines for on-ground management.	As stated, incorporating into LG SRN management plans, manuals, operating procedures, etc.	As stated, develop process in partnership with other SG agencies and LG.	Other SG to participate and provide advice on best practice as appropriate.
2.5.2	Develop and implement effective training and education programs in natural resource management to achieve sustainable use.	As stated, ensuring staff have resources and support to attend.	As stated.	Other SG and IND to participate where possible or desired.

Objective 2.6 Stock route infrastructure

To enhance and maintain stock route infrastructure to the state standard.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.6.1	Determine and prioritise stock route infrastructure requirements.	Identify local priorities. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	Identify strategic priorities.	
2.6.2	Identify, promote and implement best practice in the construction, maintenance and management of stock route infrastructure.	Participate in developing best practice and implement as stated.	Identify and promote best practice.	Other SG to participate and provide advice on best practice as appropriate.
2.6.3	Inspect and report on SRN infrastructure.	Implement inspection and reporting procedures. Example: An annual stocktake could be part of a LG SRN management plan.	Provide reporting framework.	

Objective 2.7 Safety

To manage the stock route network in a manner that provides for safe use by livestock, managers, users and the community.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.7.1	Develop and implement a program for managing hazards within the SRN. Example: A program may be based on process of (a) identifying hazards, (b) assessing risks that may result because of the hazards, (c) deciding on control measures to prevent or minimise the level of the risks, (d) implementing control measures, and (e) monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the measures.	As stated, liaising with others with interests/activities occurring on the land. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	Initiate development of a program and implement as required.	ALL participate during development and implement as required.
2.7.2	Develop notification protocols that minimise contamination risks (chemical and disease) within the SRN.	Develop in partnership with SG. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	Develop in partnership with LG and DPI&F.	DPI&F to provide advice regarding animal health and agricultural chemical issues.
2.7.3	Develop protocols for the use of signage to enhance safety.	Develop in partnership with SG. (Where applicable, include in LG SRN management plans.)	Develop in partnership with LG and DMR.	DMR to provide advice on requirements for state-controlled roads. ALL to be aware of and comply with signage.
2.7.4	Collate legislative safety provisions associated with network usage and distribute to stock route users and motorists (where practical).		As stated. Example: Distribution may be in the form of signs, local FM radio announcements, or information provided at local tourist information centres.	

Objective 2.8 Information

To provide accessible information on physical assets and operations.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.8.1	Develop and disseminate information on operational matters such as appropriate use of the SRN, use and requirements for signs, and current condition of routes and facilities. Example: SG develops a general state-wide information package, which LG may add to for local circumstances.	Participate in development and ensure information is available to staff and public.	Develop with input from LGs and other SG; provide information packages to LGs for wider distribution.	Other SG to provide advice, where appropriate (e.g. DMR regarding signs).
2.8.2	Establish and participate in networks to share information on operational matters between day-to-day managers.	As stated.	Support and participate in network.	
2.8.3	Complete and maintain a stock route database and provide information in an appropriate manner.	Provide relevant information to ensure accuracy and currency of database.	As stated.	
2.8.4	Provide and maintain accurate maps of the SRN.	Advise SG of any changes to mapping.	As stated.	

Effective compliance strategies to support management

Compliance can be achieved in many ways, including using enforcement. Though compliance issues vary throughout the state, common issues include unauthorised grazing or harvesting of pasture; contravention of permit conditions, including failure of users to comply with travelling rates; damage to stock route facilities; and wasting water.

This strategy seeks voluntary compliance with legislation, with a capability to take appropriate action where non-compliance occurs. It aims to increase voluntary compliance through a range of strategies and decrease non-compliance through enforcement.

Effective enforcement also requires a commitment to support personnel undertaking enforcement activities, including the provision of adequate training. Officers need to be encouraged to form networks to use joint opportunities to address non-compliance.

Local government has the primary responsibility to implement compliance actions. Adequate training, support and clear definition of responsibilities provided by the state government will ensure compliance initiatives can be implemented and applied consistently across the state.

Promoting greater awareness within industry and the wider community as well as using incentives to encourage and reward compliance have proved successful in achieving compliance in other areas of natural resource management. Along with extension, planning, surveys and audits, the strategy aims to use such initiatives to achieve greater levels of voluntary compliance.

Objective 2.9 Compliance needs

To identify compliance requirements for use of the stock route network.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for Implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.9.1	Compile an inventory of compliance issues.	Participate in development of inventory.	As stated.	
2.9.2	Determine compliance needs and gaps in enforcement powers, as necessary.	Provide advice to SG regarding needs and powers required.	As stated.	IND to adhere to protocols.
2.9.3	Apply appropriate alternative compliance initiatives. Example: Rewards or incentives, improved awareness of responsibilities and laws, audits etc.	As stated.	Provide advice and support to LGs.	

Objective 2.10 Enforcement implementation

To apply enforcement provisions to support desired management outcomes for the stock route network.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
2.10.1	Appoint authorised officers to enforce legislation related to SRN management.	As stated.	As stated, where appropriate.	
2.10.2	Provide training and guidelines for undertaking enforcement.	Ensure staff receive appropriate training and apply guidelines as required.	As stated.	
2.10.3	Establish a network to support authorised officers.	Participate in network.	As stated, and provide support.	
2.10.4	Implement enforcement where users of the SRN have not met their responsibilities.	As stated.	As stated, where required.	

Goal 3: Improved commitment

Desired outcome: The community, including management authorities, is committed to the retention and wise use of the stock route network.

Introduction

Need for commitment from the whole community

This strategy highlights the need for all levels of government to understand and accept their roles and responsibilities for managing the stock route network. However, to benefit the network, a greater level of commitment to supporting the efforts of managers is required by the stock route network community as a whole. Community in this sense includes managers (state and local governments) and users (stock owners and drivers), as well as interested representative bodies, rural communities and the general public. Each has a role to nurture and maintain commitment within their relevant spheres.

Range of values represented

The stock route network is valued to varying degrees across government and the rest of the community. In some sectors, the network simply represents economic value as a pasture resource. In others, it is recognised for its environmental and cultural values as a repository of significant ecological areas, plants, animals and cultural heritage sites. It is also seen as valuable because of the social and economic benefits derived from its use as a transport corridor and its provision of resources for industries such as beekeeping and grazing.

Decline in integrity

Stock route activities continue to be affected by land management policies and practices, increasing competing interests, and the requirement for better road, electricity and telecommunication infrastructure. This has resulted in a decline in the network's integrity through alienation of routes and reserves and narrowing of routes, which lead to increased risks to stock.

Fostering a sense of ownership

The solutions for local and state governments lie in fostering a sense of ownership of the resource within the SRN community, forming partnerships with local communities, and encouraging the wider community to support the SRN—by considering other values and views in the decision-making process. This will assist government to make decisions in the best long-term interests of all stakeholders.

For example, a community that feels strongly about the historical significance or potential use of a stock route or facility that is currently rarely used by travelling stock may influence government to retain the route or facility for the benefit of the community. Alternatively, rather than disposing of an unused or inoperable facility, local historical societies, tourism operators (e.g. pioneer villages) or local businesses may be interested in acquiring items such as windmills to add to their displays, at the same time promoting the stock route network within the community.

Objective 3.1 Community awareness

To raise awareness of the value of the stock route network within the community, industry and government.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SGs)
3.1.1	Identify general community values associated with the SRN.	As stated.	As stated.	ALL to participate to identify values.
3.1.2	Develop and implement a communication strategy to improve awareness of all values associated with the SRN.		As stated.	

Objective 3.2 Community commitment

To increase community commitment to preserving the value of the stock route network.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	NRW	Other (including other SG)
3.2.1	Develop and implement programs to involve the SRN community in management and decision making. Examples: Include community representatives during preparation and review of stock route network management plans; and liaise with local tourism operators, historical societies etc. during disposal of infrastructure.	As stated.	Suggest methods and programs to LGs.	
3.2.2	Develop and implement programs to foster community ownership and commitment to preserving the values of the SRN.	As stated, in partnership with NRW.	As stated.	ALL to participate during implementation of programs.

4. Implementation plan

4.1 Implementing the strategy

It is a core aim that the strategy will be implemented primarily through stock route network management planning and common day-to-day activities. That is, many of the strategic actions will be delivered through collating and disseminating information; consulting with stakeholders to draft and implement local government stock route network management plans; and carrying out common day-to-day activities such as permitting. The realisation of the strategy's aims at an operational level creates a solid link between policy and legislative principles and on-ground operational activities.

In this way, operational activities and decisions made by local government will clearly contribute towards the implementation of both their local plans and the state strategy. Figure 4 demonstrates how an operational activity can also achieve strategic and planning goals.

In local government areas where plans are not required, the strategy's implementation will be achieved through direct application of strategic actions and policies adopted by state and local governments, as well as through sound decision making based upon the intent and directions of the strategy.

Strategic actions may be implemented once or many times, as needed.

Figure 4: How local government operational activities can implement both a local government stock route network management plan and the state strategy

Act	Legislative principle: management The stock route network must be managed to ensure it remains available for public use, and to maintain and improve the network's natural resources.
	Legislative provision: Section 160 A local government must manage and conserve pasture on the stock route network in its area to ensure, as far as practicable, an adequate supply of pasture for travelling stock.
Strategy	Strategic goal 2: Enhanced approaches to management through understanding and protecting natural resources and values, effective day-to-day management, and effective compliance strategies to support management. The stock route network is managed sustainably and effectively, and used lawfully.
	Strategic objective 2.5: Knowledge, management and restoration To improve management of stock route activities to better protect and enhance the natural resources and values of the stock route network.
	Strategic action 2.5.1: Best management practices Develop, document and disseminate best management practices including standards and guidelines for on-ground management.
(Example) Local government stock route network management plan*	Policy: Protecting pasture resources Pasture will only be made available to travelling and agisted stock above the set residuals required to maintain or improve land and pasture condition.
	Application of policy: Pasture budgeting At the beginning of the travelling stock 'season', local government stock route staff assess land condition, identify areas in need of improvement, determine pasture residual to be left on SRN, and determine annual pasture budget.
Day-to-day activities	Assessing applications Upon receipt of new applications to travel stock, local government stock route staff determine the amount of pasture above the set residual remaining in the pasture budget and assess against the amount required by travelling mob.
	Field observations: Pasture availability A grass fire in an area reduces pasture availability. Local government stock route staff adjust pasture budget accordingly.

* Or other local government standards/guidelines.

4.2 To plan or not to plan?

Under regulation, only certain local governments are required to prepare stock route network management plans.* However, even without a plan, there are certain legislative obligations that all local governments must fulfil, whether through a formal plan or through some other form of management.

These obligations include, but are not limited to, considering pasture availability when assessing permit applications (to ensure sustainable use of the resource) and ensuring that travelling stock facilities are maintained for regular use.

All local governments that deal with stock route activities should have documented policies or plans that will assist them to fulfil their obligations, both strategic and legislative, and make proper decisions for managing the SRN.

* That is, those local governments whose boundaries contain part of the core part of the network, which experiences the greatest stock movement.

4.3 Respective roles and responsibilities

Department of Natural Resources and Water

NRW will play a key coordination role in implementing the strategy by:

- providing support and guidance to local government
- building capacity within local government and NRW staff to fulfil their responsibilities in the administration and management of the stock route network
- liaising with other state government agencies to ensure stock route management issues are adequately addressed from a whole-of-government perspective
- raising awareness of stock route management issues within natural resource management agencies and the wider community
- implementing the strategy as per the responsibilities assigned in the strategic plan
- developing a communication plan that outlines the communication required to implement strategic actions
- conducting reviews of the strategy in terms of its effectiveness in fulfilling the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the strategy
- providing reports to involved parties regarding the outcomes of strategy reviews.

Local government

Local government will undertake to:

- implement the strategy as per responsibilities assigned in the strategic plan
- build capacity within local government so that assigned strategic actions can be implemented
- provide regular (at least annual) feedback to NRW on implementation of assigned responsibilities
- provide general feedback on SRN management issues to NRW to guide future strategic planning exercises.

Others (such as industry, other state government agencies, community)

Other responsible agencies will undertake to:

- implement the strategy as per responsibilities assigned in the strategic plan
- provide regular (at least annual) feedback to NRW on implementation of assigned responsibilities
- provide general feedback on SRN management issues to NRW to guide future strategic planning exercises.

4.4 Staged implementation

This document does not list actions in an order of priority or commit to set timelines for implementation, apart from its overall commitment to have this strategy fully implemented by 2009. However, upon commencement of this strategy, a timeline for implementation will be developed in partnership with all responsible agencies, with assigned tasks for implementation at the earliest opportunity.

The strategy requires a staged implementation process, and certain strategic actions in Section 3 of this strategy need to be implemented first to enable other actions to be undertaken. The following actions have been identified for implementation in stage one (though actions such as training programs may be implemented several times throughout the strategy's life).

Table 1: Actions to be implemented in stage one

Action no.	Strategic action	Examples of other actions enabled
1.4.1	Develop clear understanding and evaluate actual costs of managing the SRN.	1.4.2
1.4.5	Build capacity of staff involved in SRN management, through training.	1.2.2, 1.3.1, 1.3.2
1.5.1	Respond to identified gaps through policy (where appropriate) or other approved processes in order to meet management needs.	1.2.1, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3, 1.3.4, 1.3.5
2.1.1	Develop and implement processes to collect, record and disseminate available information relating to natural resources and values of the SRN.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.2.1	Develop and implement processes to collect, record and disseminate available information relating to land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.4.1	Disseminate information on monitoring techniques to SRN managers.	2.4.3
2.4.3	Implement monitoring and evaluate the status of natural resources and values over time.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.5.1	Develop, document and distribute best management practices including standards and guidelines for on-ground management.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.5.2	Develop and implement effective training and education programs in natural resource management to achieve sustainable use.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.6.1	Determine and prioritise stock route infrastructure requirements.	1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.4.2
2.6.2	Identify, promote and implement best practice in the construction, maintenance and management of stock route infrastructure.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.7.1	Develop and implement a program for managing hazards within the SRN.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.8.4	Provide and maintain accurate maps of the SRN.	1.3.1, 1.3.2
2.9.2	Determine compliance needs and gaps in enforcement powers, if necessary.	2.8.3, 2.9.1
3.1.1	Identify general community values associated with the SRN.	3.1.2, 3.2.2

4.5 Opportunities and constraints

The implementation of this strategy will give rise to a range of opportunities and constraints. However, the impact of the constraints should not deter responsible agencies from implementing the strategy—the benefits derived from the opportunities it provides will more than compensate for any negative impacts.

Opportunities

The strategy will engender:

- wider recognition of the value of the stock route network
- a more coordinated approach to resolving conflicting land uses
- greater support for implementation of best practice measures
- optimal use of resources
- improved integration with broader natural resource management objectives and programs.

Constraints

The strategy may be limited by the following:

- competing priorities, responsibilities, resources and needs of various stakeholders
- level of commitment from stakeholders
- geographic extent of the network
- uncoordinated delivery of legislation and policy.

4.6 Review, monitoring and evaluation

This strategy will be subject to a four-year cycle of review enabling outcomes of the review to contribute to the local government stock route network planning process, which is also required every four years. The Department of Natural Resources and Water will monitor implementation of the strategy, with input from local government, industry and the wider SRN community. Monitoring will include review of all individual strategic actions included in the strategic plan.

The effectiveness of the strategy will be measured through the performance targets outlined in Table 2. In most cases, baseline information will need to be determined before ongoing measurement can be done. It is envisaged that this baseline will be established in the early implementation of the strategy. Subsequently, ongoing reviews and evaluation against the targets will be compared to this information.

Due to the strong links between the strategy and local government stock route network management planning, the outcomes of annual reviews of local government plans will contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of the overarching strategy.

Table 2: Monitoring and evaluation criteria

Performance target	Baseline established through:	Ongoing measurement through:
Acceptance and support by SRN managers of the strategy itself through comments regarding usefulness, clarity, format and content.	Initial feedback regarding strategy.	Positive feedback and fewer queries regarding issues addressed in the strategy.
Improved coordination between management agencies, including managers having better understanding of their impacts on stock route activities and minimising these.	Identifying possible stakeholders or activities that may affect, or be affected by, stock route activities, and quantifying numbers of incidents currently occurring.	A decline in incidents and issues that arise due to lack of coordination.
Increased capacity of all SRN managers to manage the network	Evaluating the current capacity of SRN managers and areas requiring improvement.	The number and type of training programs provided and attendance details; number of incidents or unactioned issues due to lack of capacity (including financial resources); and number of routes and facilities that are in good condition and are supported by adequate resources.
The effectiveness of local government stock route management planning or other management initiatives aimed at implementing this strategy.	Use of criteria or targets set out in each individual plan or management initiative.	Use of criteria or targets set out in each individual plan or management initiative.
Improvement in, or no loss of, resource condition.	Information collected in early implementation of strategic plan actions regarding assessment of natural resource condition (e.g. 2.4.3).	Implementation of strategic plan actions regarding day-to-day management (e.g. 2.5.1, measuring results against baseline data.
Retention of valuable stock routes and facilities or rationalisation of under-utilised assets.	Local government plans identifying most valuable stock routes and facilities and possible assets for rationalisation.	Evidence that travelling mobs can continue to use the network to move throughout Queensland.
A decrease in offences for misuse of the SRN through enforcement activities.	Information collected in early implementation of strategic plan actions regarding inventories of compliance issues (e.g. 2.9.1).	Comparison of numbers and types of offences occurring against baseline data.
An increase in voluntary compliance through improved public awareness of their responsibilities and conditions of use.	Information collected in early implementation of strategic plan actions regarding inventories of compliance issues (e.g. 2.9.1) and improved community awareness (e.g. 3.2.2).	Comparison of numbers and types of offences occurring against baseline data.
An increase in public awareness of the values of the SRN and the roles of managing agencies.	Information collected in early implementation of strategic plan actions regarding inventories of values (e.g. 3.1.1) and communication strategies (e.g. 3.1.2).	Surveys of SRN community awareness; number of information packages available to public; fewer incidents/queries due to lack of understanding of values or management roles.

