

Policy Title: **Stock Route Management**
Policy No: **273**

Directorate: Strategy, Innovation & Assets
Responsible Officer: Environmental Services Manager

Adopted Date: General Meeting 07/11/2018
Review Date: 05/11/2021

VERSION	MEETING APPROVED	MEETING DATE	HISTORY
1	Standing Committee Meeting	05/10/2016	New Policy
2	General Meeting	07/11/2018	Revised Policy

Authorities: *Local Law No. 2 (Animal Management) 2011*
Stock Route Management Act 2002
Stock Route Management Regulation 2003
Biosecurity Act 2014
Local Government Act 2009

POLICY:

North Burnett Regional Council (NBRC) will meet community expectations to travel or graze livestock on stock routes and road reserves within the local government area. Applications made under the *Stock Route Management Act 2002* will be supported in the following circumstances:

- Available pasture resources are located at the area for the number of livestock and the period where the permit is sought.
- Applications for grazing are contiguous or adjacent to the applicant's land.
- Suitable provisions are available or made for watering livestock.
- Adequate measures are made for the safety of motorists using any gazetted roads.
- Appropriate care and supervision of animals, including measures to treat injured or sick livestock and to dispose of carcasses.
- Biosecurity risks are considered and appropriately managed.
- Livestock to be travelled from outside the local government area are to be spelled seven (7) to ten (10) days to minimise the risk of introducing new biosecurity threats.
- Areas to be travelled or grazed are free from Parthenium, Giant Rats Tail Grass and Mother of Millions.
- Evidence of appropriate insurance (i.e. Public Liability) for the travelling or grazing of livestock is provided.

- Areas to be travelled or grazed will not impact upon current or future infrastructure works.

Within the Auburn Tick Eradication Area (Appendix 1), NBRC recognises the efforts of that Association to manage ticks and African Love Grass. In regard to applications under the *Stock Route Management Act 2002* involving that area, Council will:

- Advise applicants of the Auburn Tick Eradication Area and seek their cooperation to respect their goals and objectives by fulfilling their general biosecurity obligation to manage ticks in that area.
- Actively inspect and treat African Love Grass along the road reserve for a period of twelve months following the completion of a travelling stock permit.
- Communicate to the Association of applications made involving the area.

Given the sensitivity of issues surrounding biosecurity and pasture availability especially during dry periods, Divisional Councillors and Mayor are to be advised of travelling stock applications made under the Act together with details of nominated routes.

While every reasonable administrative effort will be made to ensure risks associated with travelling or grazing livestock along stock routes and road reserves are effectively managed and mitigated wherever possible, Council accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage associated with these activities. The effective containment of livestock is solely the responsibility of the livestock's owner/s, along with any loss or damage associated with them (including interactions/incidents/accidents with motorists using a gazetted road) or the use of the stock route or road reserve.

INTRODUCTION:

Stock routes are an asset of the State managed by local government under the *Stock Route Management Act 2002* (the Act). By definition, a stock route may involve a road either under the control of Council or the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR). Applications involving a road under the control of TMR require their input and will usually involve conditions.

Council is limited in its authority to condition or refuse applications under the Act with the ability to appeal to the Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy for review. Refusal can however be based on the presence of invasive species or in the absence of sufficient pasture or water.

Livestock on a stock route or road without the necessary permit may also be considered wandering at large under *Local Law No.2 (Animal Management) 2011*. Infrastructure used for grazing and unlawfully placed on a road reserve is an offence under the *Local Government Act 2009* (s75). Remedial action by Council for non-compliance is available under either or all the aforesaid legislation dependent upon the circumstances.

Whilst NBRC is not legally mandated to have a "Stock Route Network Management Plan" under the Act (s105), this policy provides guidance for the administration and management of stock routes and road reserves by Council within the local government area.

The development of a transparent formalised policy will create consistency across the region and promote both awareness and delivery of the policy's objectives.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of NBRC's policy are to:

- Create a transparent formalised procedure that will create consistency across the region and promote both awareness and delivery of the strategy's objectives.
- Reduce incidents of wandering or straying livestock or unauthorised grazing.
- Promote and provide greater access to available grazing resources within both the stock routes and road reserves in the local government area.
- Ensure sufficient pasture resources are retained within stock routes and road reserves for:
 - anticipated travelling stock movements/frequency, and
 - emergency grazing fodder during times of declared drought.
- Reduce pasture resource wastage associated with a need to conduct "fire hazard reduction burns" for stock routes and road easements.
- Improve the quality of available pasture resources within stock routes and road reserves through managed grazing promoting new, more nutritious pasture growth.
- Ensure that biosecurity risks for both the livestock and land they are occupying/moving through are appropriately managed.
- Ensure that livestock owners utilising these pasture resources pay a reasonable amount for access to these resources.
- Help ensure that costs to Council for managing stock routes and road reserves are minimised or eliminated.
- Ensure that the safety, lives and property of motorists using gazetted roads are preserved.
- Ensure that welfare and supervision of livestock grazing within stock routes and road reserves is appropriate.
- Mitigate the spread of invasive species to ensure that the objectives of Council's Biosecurity Plan are observed.
- Ensure that travelling or grazing stock do not impact upon infrastructure work (e.g. road construction).

This policy and its strategy provides guidance for the management of stock routes and road reserves within the local government area. The supporting procedures relating to this policy are Doc ID's: 629471, 627888, 628079 & 665827.

This policy operates in conjunction with *Local Law No. 2 (Animal Management) 2011*, NBRC's Wandering Livestock Policy (Doc ID: 733532) and the *Local Government Act 2009 (s75)* Travelling or grazing of livestock without the required permit may also involve remedies in accordance with other legislation.

STRATEGY:

NBRC will support the travelling of livestock and grazing of stock routes and road reserves by permit issued under the Act, when the objectives of this policy can be achieved.

In assessing pasture resources, the applicant shall be required to pay the minimum prescribed fee for each applicable animal on a per head per week basis as per Schedule 2 of the *Stock Route Regulation 2003*.

NBRC shall inspect and assess proposed locations for travelling stock and grazing for:

- The presence of invasive weed pests and other biosecurity risks.
- The estimated average amount of pasture potentially available for stock. The average amount of available pasture for a location shall be maintained at approximately 1000 kg/ha for the purposes of potential travelling stock and/or for potential use during declared drought. These will be assessed using appropriate pasture photo standards. All pasture resources above this threshold can potentially be made available for permitted grazing. (Often land can accumulate available grass resources of around 2,500 kg/ha but could also hold up to around 4,000 kg/ha).
- Determining if the proposed location is able to support the proposed number and duration of grazing animals occupying the location, whilst still preserving the minimally required reserves of 1,000 kg/ha of potentially available pasture.
- Current and proposed infrastructure works.

Stock routes and road reserves may involve areas where livestock is confined by a system of fencing and cattle grids. In circumstances involving unfenced stock routes and roads, Council will condition travelling stock to be kept within 30m from the centre line of the road.

Biosecurity involving the incursion of new pest is of paramount concern. Travelling livestock with an origin outside the local government area should be spelled for seven (7) to ten (10) to minimise the risk.

Livestock owners shall be required to provide evidence of public liability insurance and to assume all responsibility associated with the travelling or grazing of livestock on the stock route or road reserve, including any losses or damage to:

- Themselves,
- Their livestock, and/or
- The safety, lives and property of vehicles and their occupants as a shared responsibility with the owner/operator of vehicles using gazetted roads at the location of livestock occupation/grazing.

Livestock owners shall also be required to provide, utilise and maintain effective containment for their animals and appropriate care and supervision of their animals (including stock watering). Appropriate warning signage is also to be provided.

Given the diversity of routes for travelling stock and level of property owner occupiers, it is not practicable to advise all residents of applications. In circumstances where travelling stock

traverses the Auburn Tick Eradication Area, Council will communicate with the Association and provide advisory information supplied by them to the applicant.

Council will periodically review travelling stock data and investigate candidate projects for candidate stock route infrastructure projects.

Appendix 1 – Auburn Tick Eradication Area

AUBURN TICK ERRADICATION ASSOCIATION INC.

ATEA Member Properties with relevant Stock Route Areas

