



## **MAINTENANCE OF PASTORAL ACCESS ROADS**

**POLICY**

# **MAINTENANCE OF PASTORAL ACCESS ROADS**

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**Owner:** Department of Transport

**Manager:** Transport Infrastructure Planning Division

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### Definitions

Single User Access Road is one that provides access only to one property, and is within the boundary of the property, and has no function of through road access to adjoining land.

### Background

This document has been prepared to:

- Clarify and formalise the Northern Territory Government's policy on provision and maintenance of access roads to pastoral properties; and
- to establish guidelines for pastoral roads (public roads in accordance with the definition of a road in the [Control of Roads Act](#)) that may be closed.

### Guidelines

#### Single User Access Roads

The preferred position of the Department of Transport is that single user accesses within the property will remain private.

#### Current Standard of Access

The current standard of road is based on performance criteria to allow access to road trains during the dry season period. Minimum geometric and drainage criteria for a formed road apply.

#### Variation to existing Public Road Status for Single User Roads

Where the opportunity arises, i.e.

1. if a pastoral lease is converted to another form of tenure; or
2. the pastoral leaseholder requests consideration for control of access (i.e. private access),

the future status of the single user access roads currently maintained by the Department shall be reviewed. The two options available are:

#### Option 1:

- Road to remain public;
- road reserve to be excised from the property; and
- road to be the management responsibility of the Government to a nominated point on the lease, generally the homestead or the principal cattle loading yards.

#### Option 2:

- Road to be left in (or incorporated back into) the property and having no public road status, (note: may require road closure under the [Control of Roads Act](#));

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- road to be maintained by the lessee / owner with an annual payment being made by the Government. This is to be based on the historic annual maintenance allocation for up to 10 years. After this, payments will cease and the lessee will have full management responsibility for the road. Alternatively, a single up-front payment calculated on the basis of 10 years projected expenditure discounted back to current year values can be calculated.

### Road Closures

For road closures (option 2 above), the costs involved in closing the road would be borne by the lessee and conditions relating to future needs to re-open as a public road (refer Reopening Closed Access) shall be included as a condition of negotiations.

### Change in Nominated Point

Where the Department approves a proposal to change the nominated point within a property, the owner shall construct the access road to the new nominated point to the current Department standard. The owner must also arrange the surrender of a formal road reserve (100m) over the new road. The options outlined above would be considered in consultation with the owner / lessee prior to approving any variation to the single user access road.

### New Single User Accesses

Where the Department approves the development and subsequent management of any single user road within the property as a public road for Public Road access, this single user access shall be constructed to current departmental standards and a 100-metre road reserve surrendered.

### Provision of All Weather Access to Depots

Where properties are being used as Depots for live cattle export and require all weather access, any request for upgrading of the access road needs to be assessed. The following should be undertaken:

1. An assessment of the possible options that could be used to upgrade the access:
  - a) Upgrading of access road to the loading yards;
  - b) Provision of a hardstand area, including any realignment of fencing, in proximity to the nearest major road.
2. An assessment by the Department of Business, with regards to the viability of the business and a Benefit Cost Analysis (i.e. \$'s cost of upgrading road against the \$'s benefit arising from any proposed upgrading of the access or provision of a hardstand) should be undertaken.
3. Develop a proposal which includes an appraisal of the above and a recommendation for approval. The recommendation should be forwarded to the Executive Director, Transport Infrastructure Planning Division who will arrange for approval or otherwise.

### Road Reserve

All pastoral access roads maintained by the Government shall be located within a 100 metre wide reserve excised from the lease. Where no road reserve exists over a public road, the road reserve will be established by acquisition or as a part of the lease rollover process.

### **Reopening Closed Access**

Once closed under the [Control of Roads Act](#), a road would only be established as a public road again if community needs dictate (e.g. tourism development or establishment of Aboriginal living areas). If this occurs, the affected section of the road would be deemed a multi-user road, and the responsibility for maintaining the road and road reserve would revert to the Government.

Under such circumstances, the Government shall be absolved from paying any acquisition costs associated with the road reserve.

### **Subdivision of Pastoral Leases**

Where pastoral property is subdivided, the sub divider will be responsible for design and construction of multi-user access roads, to the current standard of the Department, to provide physical and legal access to each block created by the subdivision. The sub divider shall also provide dedicated road reserves 100 metres wide for each of the accesses.

Single user accesses shall generally remain the responsibility of individual property owners.

### **Multi User Access Roads**

The current departmental standards shall comply with the Rural Subdivision Guidelines and shall reflect the nature of use of the road.