

Queensland stock route network management strategy

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Department of Environment and Resource Management

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Acronyms

ALL	All stakeholders, including interested persons
DCS	Department of Community Safety
DERM	Department of Environment and Resource Management
DEEDI	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
DTMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NRM	natural resource management
SRN	stock route network
SRMU	Stock Route Management Unit

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 of 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 on 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
To enhance and maintain the integrity of the stock routes and reserves.	Investigate rationalisation of network areas and infrastructure that are no longer required. Implement policies that maintain its integrity as a network.
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.	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.
To effectively plan for SRN management within a strategic framework.	Implement SRN local government management plans or other management initiatives. Identify and maintain links with related plans.
To acquire and manage expertise, physical resources and revenue for SRN management.	Evaluate actual costs of managing the SRN. Allocate resources to priorities. Provide SRN management training to raise capacity.
To support management through legislation and policy.	Develop policies and procedures to support day-to-day management procedures.

Goal 2: Enhanced approaches to management can be achieved 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
To provide accessible information regarding the natural resources and values of the stock route network.	Develop and implement processes to capture, collect, document and disseminate information on natural resources and values of the stock route network.
To provide accessible information regarding land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes.	<p>Develop processes to capture, collect, document and disseminate information on land capability, degradation potential and threatening processes.</p> <p>Implement existing departmental strategies to protect cultural, environmental and other significant areas.</p> <p>Implement existing departmental restoration strategies.</p>
To protect conservation values impacted upon by stock route activities.	<p>Identify conservation values and impacts caused by stock route activities.</p> <p>Develop strategies, best management practices and on-ground action to protect conservation values impacted upon by stock route activities.</p>
To monitor and evaluate natural resources and values associated with the SRN.	<p>Provide information regarding monitoring techniques.</p> <p>Provide training and education regarding monitoring land condition and trends.</p> <p>Review status of SRN values.</p>
To improve management of stock route activities to better protect and enhance the natural resources and values of the SRN.	<p>Develop best management practices, standards and guidelines for on-ground management.</p> <p>Provide training and education.</p>
To enhance and maintain stock route infrastructure to the State standard.	<p>Introduce best practice for construction, maintenance and management.</p> <p>Prioritise needs.</p> <p>Carry out inspections and provide reports.</p>
To manage the SRN in a manner that provides for safe use by livestock, managers, users and the community.	<p>Introduce hazard management program.</p> <p>Develop contamination notification protocols.</p> <p>Develop signage protocols.</p> <p>Raise awareness of legislative safety provisions.</p>
To provide accessible information on physical assets and operations.	<p>Make information available to stakeholders.</p> <p>Establish networks to share information.</p> <p>Update stock route database.</p> <p>Provide and maintain mapping.</p>
To identify compliance requirements for use of the SRN.	<p>Compile an inventory of issues.</p> <p>Implement compliance initiatives prior to enforcement.</p> <p>Implement initiatives to enforce compliance on identified issues.</p>
To apply enforcement provisions to support desired management outcomes for the SRN.	<p>Provide enforcement training and guidelines.</p> <p>Establish an enforcement officer network.</p> <p>Take actions to enforce legislation.</p>

Goal 3: Improved commitment

Objectives	Summary of key strategic actions
To raise awareness of the value of the SRN within the community, industry and government.	Identify community values associated with the SRN. Develop a communication strategy to improve awareness.
To increase community commitment to preserving the value of the SRN.	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 2014.

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 Environment and Resource Management (DERM), 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 DERM to prepare a state strategy to direct and coordinate management of the SRN.

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 SRN. 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.

- 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 SRN and are managed as part of the network.

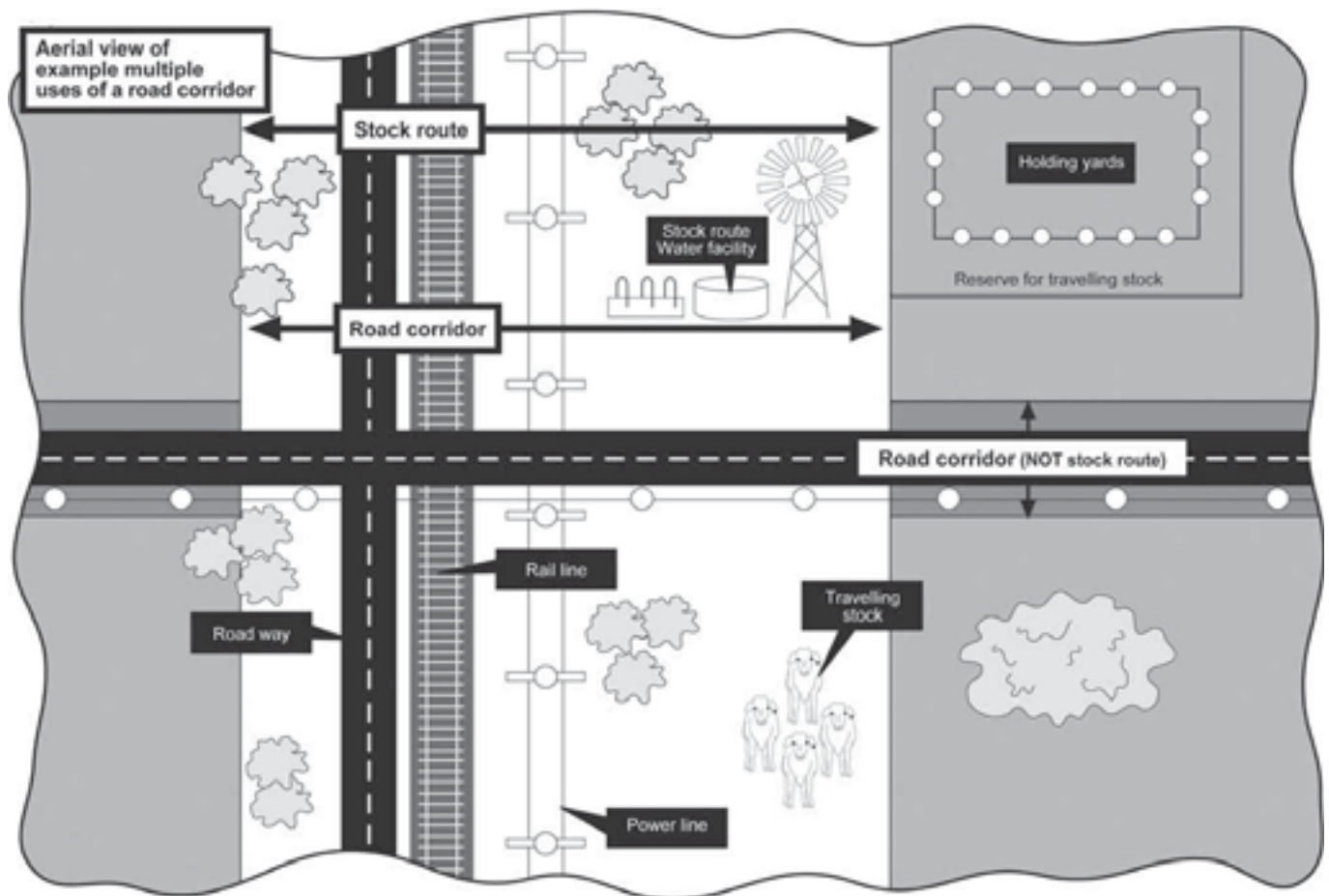
1.1. Background

What is the stock route network?

The SRN 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.

In Queensland, a stock route is not a separate parcel of land but a term used to describe a road or route that is:

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 SRN is for travelling stock—i.e. droving stock on foot.. 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 SRN, 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 the department 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 or stock movements where a permit was not required or obtained.

Today, the SRN 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 SRN (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 SRN 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 as:

- values associated with the land
- 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 SRN 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 a conflict between uses.

Stakeholders

The SRN'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, DERM, DTMR, DEEDI,—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 Community Safety (DCS), conservation groups and the general public. The Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Council, which is an advisory council to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy 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 DERM 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 SRN 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 SRN 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 SRN management.

Management

The SRN 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

SRN 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 SRN 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 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 SRN 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 SRN management in Queensland.

2.2. Scope of the strategy

The strategy deals with stock route activities on the multiple-use land making up the SRN. 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 SRN activities and the impacts those activities have on other lawful uses of the land. Where other users impact on stock route activities, the strategy outlines mechanisms to communicate and coordinate with these other users, establishes opportunities to negotiate and recommends 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 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 was adopted to maximise ownership of the strategy by the whole of the community and those with particular network management responsibilities. The process was completed in 2006. 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
- DERM'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 original strategy was approved in 2007 and implemented by the nominated responsible agencies.

2.5. Strategy review process

A review of the strategy was conducted between December 2008 and January 2009 to assess the effectiveness of the strategies and actions against the Principles of Stock Route Management. The strategy was also reviewed against the requirements of the Act to ensure that document adhered with the legislative requirements.

The review demonstrated that the strategy is effective in achieving its goals through the identified strategies and actions and that it remains valid for directing the future

management actions of the SRN. At the conclusion of the review the strategy was approved until 2014 by the Acting Director General of DERM.

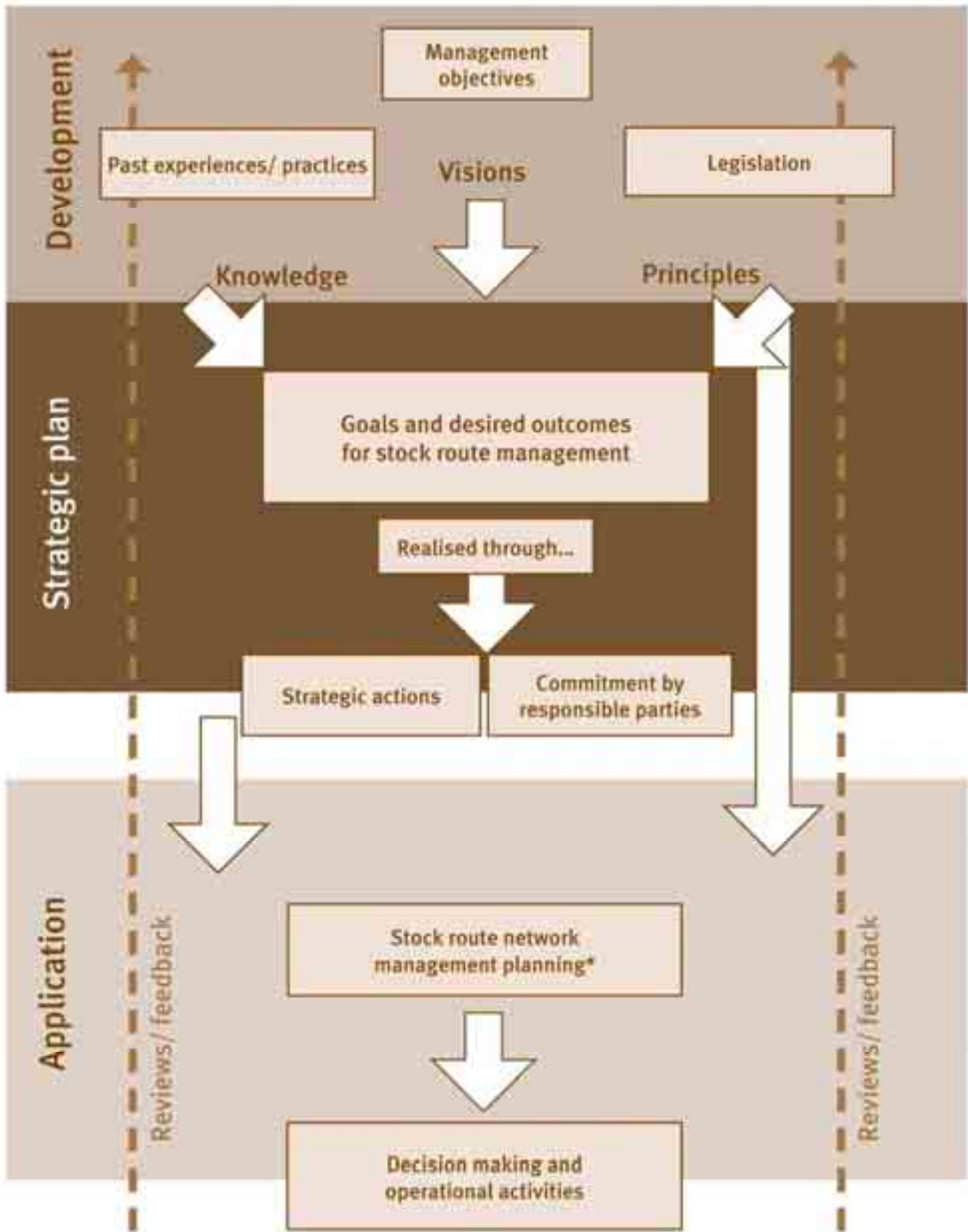
2.6. Strategy framework

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



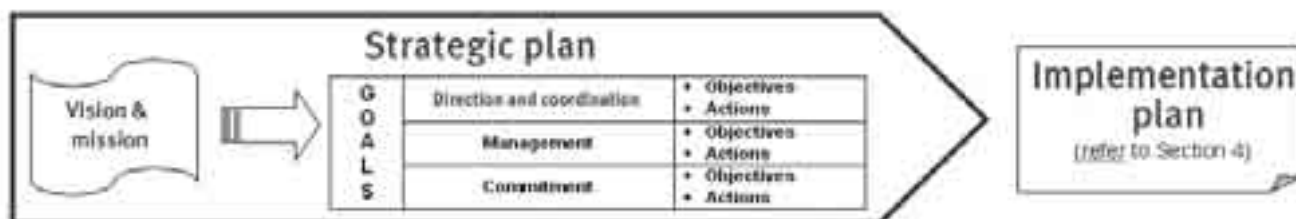
*As required by regulation, otherwise implemented via some other form of management initiative.

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 SRN strategy. The strategic plan is presented below in a series of tables.

Figure 3: Overview of the strategic plan



Vision

Queensland’s SRN 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 SRN.

Goals

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

Notes regarding tables

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 in bolded text indicates the lead agency responsible for implementing that strategic action. Unbolded 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, DERM and other state government agencies. However, local government and DERM 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, DERM 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 SRN management is enhanced and supported by all managers and users.

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 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 involved 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 SRN

The change in use of the SRN 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 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 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	SRMU	Other (including other agencies)
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 Queensland Government or other agencies on retention requirements. (Where applicable, include in local government 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 local government 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: DERM may develop policies that address road closure issues; DERM and DTMR 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 Queensland Government or other agencies on land acquisition requirements. (Where applicable, include in local government SRN management plans.)	As stated.	Queensland Government or other agencies, Industry and landholders to participate as required. Example: DTMR may provide information regarding land surplus to DTMR 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	SRMU	Other
1.2.1	All agencies and users to understand and accept their roles and responsibilities for SRN management.	ALL, as stated. Example: DERM and local government may consult DEEDI 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: DERM, LGAQ and DTMR may develop various MOUs outlining the roles and responsibilities of each with regard to administering and implementing legislation and policy.	Provide advice to DERM and other Queensland Government or other agencies on impacts and participate with DERM to develop recommendations for improvement.	As stated, in participation with local government, providing recommendations for improvement.	Other users/ managers (e.g. DTMR) to investigate options to improve coordination and minimise impacts, and implement recommendations where practical.

Objective 1.3 Planning

To effectively plan for SRN management within a strategic framework.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	SRMU	Other
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 local government and assess local government plans in accordance with Act.	ALL to consider draft plan and provide comment. DTMR 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.	DTMR 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 local government plans.	Promote to all and incorporate into relevant NRM plans.	Queensland Government and other agencies 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.	<p>ALL, as stated.</p> <p>Examples: Both a local government pest management plan and a local government SRN 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.</p> <p>Similarly, local governments should ensure that local government planning schemes and SRN management plans (if required) are consistent and identify the links to each other.</p>		
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.	Industry to encourage property management planning. Landholders, as stated.
1.3.6	To assist in the development and implementation of plans that address SRN management.	Ensure adequate support and resources are provided for preparing and implementing plans.	As stated.	Queensland Government and other agencies 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	SRMU	Other
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.	DTMR to participate in relation to relevant State-controlled roads.
1.4.4	Identify and capitalise on opportunities for sharing resources.	As stated.	As stated.	DTMR 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 local government training).	As stated (internal DERM, Queensland Government and other agencies and local government training). Example: Develop training programs identifying needs according to competency required, and provide as needed.	

Objective 1.5 Legislative support

To support management through legislation and policy.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	SRMU	Other
1.5.1	Respond to identified gaps through policy (where appropriate) or other approved processes in order to meet management needs.	Provide advice to DERM or other Queensland Government or other agencies (as appropriate) on gaps. Develop policies and procedures applicable to local SRN management.	As stated.	Queensland Government or other agencies, 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 SRN 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 a great deal of 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.

DERM and local governments 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. DERM will develop guidelines 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	SRMU	Other
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 Queensland Government and other agencies 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 DERM.	As stated.	Provide relevant information to DERM.

***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	SRMU	Other
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 Queensland Government and other agencies 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 DERM.	As stated.	Provide relevant information to DERM.
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 local government SRN management plans, operating procedures, etc.	As stated.	ALL to participate and provide advice as appropriate (e.g. DERM, 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 Queensland Government and other agencies to align strategies with other legislation etc.	ALL to implement, where required, involving the responsible party in the restoration. Queensland Government and other agencies to provide advice.

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	SRMU	Other
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 local government SRN management plans.	Provide information to local governments on biodiversity/conservation values and impacts.	DERM to collect and utilise information on biodiversity/conservation values and 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 local governments.	DERM 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	SRMU	Other
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 Queensland Government and other agencies to 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 local government SRN management plans (where applicable).	Collate data collected by local governments 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 broader natural resource management issues will also contribute to better protection and enhancement of natural resources and the 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 SRN, 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. DCS 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	SRMU	Other
2.5.1	Develop, document and disseminate best management practices including standards and guidelines for on-ground management.	As stated, incorporating into local government SRN management plans, manuals, operating procedures, etc.	As stated, develop process in partnership with other Queensland Government and other agencies and local governments.	Other Queensland Government and other agencies 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 Queensland Government and other agencies and industry 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	SRMU	Other
2.6.1	Determine and prioritise stock route infrastructure requirements.	Identify local priorities. Where applicable, include in local government 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 Queensland Government and other agencies 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 local government 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	SRMU	Other
2.7.1	<p>Develop and implement a program for managing hazards within the SRN.</p> <p>Example: A program may be based on process of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 risk (d) implementing control measures (e) monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the measures. 	<p>As stated, liaising with others with interests/activities occurring on the land.</p> <p>(Where applicable, include in local government SRN management plans.)</p>	<p>Initiate development of a program and implement as required.</p>	<p>ALL participate during development and implement as required.</p>
2.7.2	<p>Develop notification protocols that minimise contamination risks (chemical and disease) within the SRN.</p>	<p>Develop in partnership with Queensland Government and other agencies .</p> <p>(Where applicable, include in local government SRN management plans.)</p>	<p>Develop in partnership with local government and DEEDI.</p>	<p>DEEDI to provide advice regarding animal health and agricultural chemical issues.</p>
2.7.3	<p>Develop protocols for the use of signage to enhance safety.</p>	<p>Develop in partnership with Queensland Government and other agencies .</p> <p>(Where applicable, include in local government SRN management plans.)</p>	<p>Develop in partnership with local governments and DTMR.</p>	<p>DTMR to provide advice on requirements for State-controlled roads.</p> <p>ALL to be aware of and comply with signage.</p>
2.7.4	<p>Collate legislative safety provisions associated with network usage and distribute to stock route users and motorists (where practical).</p>		<p>As stated.</p> <p>Example: Distribution may be in the form of signs, local FM radio announcements, or information provided at local tourist information centres.</p>	

Objective 2.8 Information

To provide accessible information on physical assets and operations.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	SRMU	Other
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: Queensland Government and other agencies develop a general state-wide information package, which local governments may add to for local circumstances.	Participate in development and ensure information is available to staff and public.	Develop with input from local governments and other Queensland Government and other agencies ; provide information packages to local governments for wider distribution.	Queensland Government and other agencies to provide advice, where appropriate (e.g. DTMR 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 Queensland Government and other agencies of any changes to mapping.	As stated.	

Effective compliance strategies to support management

Compliance can be achieved in many ways, including through 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 and use joint opportunities to address non-compliance.

Local government has the primary responsibility for implementing 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	SRMU	Other
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 Queensland Government and other agencies regarding needs and powers required.	As stated.	Industry 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 local governments.	

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	SRMU	Other
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.

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 SRN 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 SRN 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 SRN within the community, industry and government.

Action no.	Strategic action	Roles/responsibilities for implementation		
		Local government	SRMU	Other
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	SRMU	Other
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 SRN management plans and liaise with local tourism operators, historical societies etc. during disposal of infrastructure.	As stated.	Suggest methods and programs to local governments.	
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 DERM.	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 SRN 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 SRN 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 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 SRN management plan and the state strategy

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

* Or other local government standards/guidelines.

4.2. To plan or not to plan?

Under the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Regulation 2003 (the regulation), only certain local governments are required to prepare SRN 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.

4.3. Respective roles and responsibilities

Department of Environment and Resource Management

- DERM will play a key coordination role in implementing the strategy by:
- providing support and guidance to local government
- building capacity within local government and DERM staff to fulfil their responsibilities in the administration and management of the SRN
- 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 DERM on implementation of assigned responsibilities
- provide general feedback on SRN management issues to DERM 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 DERM on implementation of assigned responsibilities
- provide general feedback on SRN management issues to DERM to guide future strategic planning exercises.

4.4. Implementation

This document does not list actions in an order of priority or commit to set timelines for implementation. However, upon commencement of the renewed strategy, a timeline for implementation will be developed in partnership with all responsible agencies. The following actions in Table 1 have been identified as ongoing management actions that will be undertaken multiple times during the term of the strategy, for example training programs and asset management planning.

Table 1: Ongoing management actions

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 SRN
- 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 is subject to a four-year cycle of review enabling outcomes of the review to contribute to the local government SRN planning process, which is also required every four years. The Department of Environment and Resource Management 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 SRN 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 underutilised 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.