



CORPORATE POLICY STATEMENT NO. 40

ROAD MANAGEMENT

May 2016

1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the policy are to:

- ensure that department-managed roads and associated road infrastructure are appropriately located, designed, constructed, inspected and maintained;
- provide for the designated access of all road users on department-managed roads;
- establish a risk management approach to the allocation of the department's limited resources for road management operations; and
- provide effective coordination, collaboration, integration and communication with other key stakeholders.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all roads and associated infrastructure on lands managed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife (the department) under the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984* (CALM Act). This policy does not apply to lands managed by the department under the *Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006*.

3. CONTEXT

The department, in partnership with the wider community, manages more than 28 million hectares of land, which is around 10 per cent of the land area of Western Australia. The department's role encompasses a diverse range of management responsibilities, including the provision and maintenance of roads and bridges.

Roads may affect the natural, cultural and aesthetic values of the land and may influence public use of CALM Act lands. Department-managed, local government and Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) roads located on or through CALM Act lands impinge either directly or indirectly on the cost of land management and the allocation of departmental resources.

The department is responsible for approximately 90,000 kilometres of roads and tracks. As at 1 July 2015, there are:

- 313 bridges; and
- 36,426 kilometres of roads assessed by the department as important or strategic. Of these strategic roads, there is an estimated 7000 kilometres of designated Type 1 roads (see Appendix 1) that are managed to provide access for the general public and are considered of high importance. This includes about 443 kilometres of sealed roads.

Roads on CALM Act lands provide access for a range of purposes including visitor use, bushfire protection and response, commercial operations (timber harvesting, tour operations, beekeeping, mining etc.), research and general public access including access to private property adjoining CALM Act lands. The standard and maintenance of these roads will vary according to their planned use. In the discharge of their duty-of-care responsibilities, road managers must be able to demonstrate the basis for determining road construction, inspection and maintenance priorities.

Roads have been constructed and are maintained on CALM Act lands by other organisations such as the Forest Products Commission (FPC), local governments and mining companies. While others may construct and maintain roads, as long as the road remains CALM Act land, the department retains the duty-of-care to ensure that the roads are appropriately designed, constructed and maintained unless a formal arrangement has been agreed between parties.

The principles of this policy will be applied to roads that are not on department-managed land but may be maintained by the department and are classified as such. This includes roads on unallocated Crown land, unmanaged reserves or former pastoral leases. Such roads remain owned by the organisation responsible for that land unless a formal arrangement has been agreed.

Other departmental corporate policies and guidelines relating to road management are:

- Corporate Policy Statement No. 3: Management of *Phytophthora* Disease.
- Corporate Policy Statement No. 18: Recreation, Tourism and Visitor Services.
- Corporate Policy Statement No. 19: Fire Management.
- Corporate Policy Statement No. 35: Conserving Threatened Species and Ecological Communities.
- Corporate Policy Statement No. 53: Visitor Risk Management.
- Corporate Guideline No. 4: Nomenclature.

4. LEGISLATION

4.1 CALM Act

The CALM Act makes provision in sections 33(3) and 33A for road works to be undertaken on lands managed under section 5(1) such as State forest, timber reserves, national parks, conservation parks and nature reserves, that are not covered by a management plan, under the 'necessary operations' and 'compatible operations' provisions. A management plan prepared under section 56, may provide strategies for road works to be undertaken. Section 89(2)(c) provides for permits (to take and contract the sale of forest produce on Crown land) to make roads. Part VII Control and eradication of forest diseases allows for restriction of road access and road closure.

4.2 Road Traffic Act 1974

The Road Traffic Act requires that a person who drives a motor vehicle on a road or place to which the public has access should exercise due care and attention and drive to the conditions in place. While the driver may have some responsibility in this regard, the road management authority should provide consistent design conditions or cautionary signposting to advise of a change in conditions so that users' safety is not compromised.

The Road Traffic Act establishes a statutory 'road authority' which means a local government or the Commissioner of Main Roads. Currently the department is not recognised as a statutory road authority but may be considered a road authority at common law.

4.3 Control of Vehicles (Off-road Areas) Act 1978

This Act controls the movement of off-road vehicles in nominated parts of the south-west of which two areas currently exist on departmental land.

4.4 Other legislation

There are powers in other legislation such as the *Mining Act 1978* and numerous water-related Acts that provide for the control of vehicle access.

The *Land Administration Act 1997*, Part 5, is the primary legislation dealing with creation, management and closure of roads.

The *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and the Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) regulations 2004 control the disturbance and clearing of native vegetation in Western Australia and exemptions apply to the roads and road corridors.

The *Civil Liability Act 2002* effected some changes to the area of law dealing with the liability of public authorities carrying out statutory functions. The enactment of a "policy defence" in section 5X of that Act provides that a decision made by a public body based on financial, economic, political or social factors or constraints cannot be used to support a finding of negligence. However, the department retains a duty-of-care under the *Occupiers Liability Act 1985*.

5. POLICY

The following policy elements will be supported by the department's Road Operational Guidelines (ROGs).

5.1 Road planning, design, construction and maintenance

Within available resources, the department will locate, design, construct, inspect, and maintain roads and associated infrastructure (including signage), to the extent possible, in order to:

- meet the access requirements for uses of the land set out in approved CALM Act management plans or other planning instruments (for example, interim management guidelines and necessary operations);
- meet the standards prescribed in Australian Standard 1742.1, Australian Standard 5100, Austroads 2009, MRWA and the department's ROGs; and
- minimise detrimental impacts of road operations on environmental values (flora, fauna, soil, water), cultural values and aesthetic values.

5.2 Apply risk management

The department will maintain a cycle of road user risk assessment and risk treatment and will establish an assurance program to confirm that this has been achieved. The road classification system is the primary tool for managing risk and determining maintenance priorities.

Risk assessment and the selection of risk treatments by the department will be undertaken as part of all decision-making in a manner consistent with Visitor Risk Management and the risk management process specified in the standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 *Risk management: Principles and Guidelines*.

Within available resources, the department will implement a road risk management process that will:

- identify and record road hazards through inspection and reporting programs;
- assess and rate the hazards (probability and consequences of an incident) to determine priorities for hazard mitigation or treatment; and
- develop road maintenance works programs that mitigate/treat the highest priority hazards and also meet the requirements of 5.1 above.

5.3 Road works programs

Within available resources, the department will develop and implement annual and rolling three-year works programs that are based on:

- the risk management process outlined in 5.2 above;
- works programs to meet the department's service requirements;
- periodic reviews of the road network including proposals for new roads, re-alignment/positioning and closure;
- development proposals contained in approved CALM Act management plans;
- information from the road asset management system; and
- budgets and other resources made available to the department.

5.4 Liaison with other road management authorities and other organisations

The department will liaise and, where necessary, develop inter-agency agreements with neighbouring landowners such as, MRWA, local government authorities, FPC and other organisations to:

- establish appropriate standards for department-managed roads;
- establish and delegate responsibility for the co-management of such roads;
- collaborate on issues of inspections, works program priorities, construction and maintenance standards, road closure/rehabilitation, and funding arrangements; and
- set environmental and other standards for construction and maintenance works undertaken by other authorities and organisations on roads that are located on or traverse department-managed lands.

5.5 Road management system

The department will develop, implement and maintain a road management system that will:

- be accessible by a range of users;
- store and analyse data collected to inform the status of department-managed road network;
- provide asset valuation outputs and data for exchange with other agencies;
- identify, prioritise and manage road hazards and other safety issues outlined in 5.2;
- assist works programming and budget preparation; and
- provide up-to-date road data for spatial information and maps for both internal and external users.

5.6 Road management training

The department will determine training requirements to ensure that the department's road management policies can be implemented consistently and effectively.

6. STANDARDS

The following standards apply to the department's road management:

6.1 Cautionary and regulatory signposting

Australian Standard 1742.1 – 2003, Manual of uniform traffic control devices, Part 1 provides guidelines and standards for use in road signposting. To meet legal requirements 'warning' signposting must meet Australian Standards criteria. 'Regulatory' signs are addressed and must be approved by MRWA and are enforceable under the Road Traffic Act.

6.2 Engineering standards

Austrroads 2009 Guide to Road Design Part 3, Geometric Design provides engineering standards and specifications used by road management agencies Australia-wide.

The Australian Road and Research Board (ARRB) Group publishes manuals on local sealed and unsealed roads with guidelines on the design, maintenance and construction of low volume roads typical of many department-managed roads. The *Local roads bridge management manual* provides guidelines on the management, condition assessment, and repair techniques for local bridges and guidelines for the economic evaluation of alternative rehabilitation of local bridges.

Australian Standard 5100 – 2004 – Bridge Design Standard provides engineering specifications for the design and load rating of bridges.

6.3 Road Operational Guidelines

The Road Operational Guidelines address the department's road management requirements and include road classification systems (see Appendix 1), design and maintenance standards, risk assessment procedures and codes of practice when undertaking road works or managing timber haulage operations.

6.4 Roadside conservation handbook

The Handbook of Environmental Practice for Road Construction and Maintenance Works (Road Conservation Committee 2010) addresses the management of soil and vegetation on verges adjacent to public roads and contains relevant guidance to departmental managers.

Further information and publications to assist with roadside conservation can be found on the Roadside Conservation Committee website at: <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/management/off-reserve-conservation/roadside-conservation/>

6.5 Risk management standards

The department's commitment and approach to road safety forms part of an organisational risk management framework comprising a systematic approach to the identification, analysis, evaluation and treatment of risks. The risk management process adopted by the department is derived from the Standards Australia standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 *Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines*.

Guidance in risk management for Western Australian Government agencies has been developed by RiskCover in the publication *WA Government Risk Management Guidelines 2011*.

7. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In order to achieve the objectives listed in section 1 and implement the policy elements listed in section 5, the department will adopt:

7.1 Responsibilities for road management

- The Parks and Visitor Services (PVS) Division will coordinate the development of the department's road management systems (including the database and guidance documents), provide advice and support to regional staff, facilitate staff training and liaise with other government agencies and stakeholders; and
- the Regional and Fire Management Services (RFMS) Division will be responsible for the delivery of other aspects of this policy.

7.2 Guidelines for road management

- PVS Division will develop and maintain a compendium of ROGs which will contain standards for road classification (see Appendix 1), geometric design, signage, risk assessment, priority setting for hazard mitigation, inspection procedures, environmental protection procedures and safety codes of practice;

- the ROGs will set the requirements for the department's road management and also for the road design, construction and maintenance undertaken by other parties on department-managed lands; and
- the ROGs will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

7.3 Road works programs

- RFMS will arrange for roads and associated infrastructure to be inspected by trained personnel at prescribed intervals or following specific incidents.
- RFMS will develop and submit annual and rolling three year works programs based on service requirements, road hazard mitigation, asset preservation and replacement, budgets and other resource constraints.

7.4 Review of the road network

The department's road network will be periodically reviewed as part of the road inspection and condition assessment program to identify any non-essential roads and tracks that can be closed and rehabilitated.

7.5 Road management system

The department will:

- develop and maintain a corporate road management system that can be accessed by a range of users;
- prepare and undertake an inventory and condition assessment of department-managed Strategic roads on a rolling five year program to maintain the currency of the road management system and forecast major works;
- develop and maintain data collection and record management protocols;
- analyse data collected to determine the status and provide maintenance and replacement recommendations for the department's road network; and
- share and integrate road asset data with road data of other agencies subject to satisfactory inter-agency agreements.

7.6 Road management training

PVS Division will facilitate training for staff, contractors and selected external agency representatives to ensure that they have the requisite skills and knowledge to implement road policies and ROGs consistently and effectively.

8. CUSTODIAN

Director Parks and Visitor Services.

9. PUBLICATION

This policy will be made available on the department's website and intranet.

10. KEY WORDS

Road classification, Strategic road, road type, road naming, bridges.

10. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed no later than May 2021.

11. DIRECTOR GENERAL APPROVAL

Approved by



Jim Sharp
DIRECTOR GENERAL

Effective date: 17 May 2016

Appendix 1

Associated road infrastructure means bridges, culverts, pipes, ramps, gates, guideposts, signs (advisory, directional and warning), road markings, wash-down facilities, and constructed surface water management structures within the road corridor.

Bridge refers to a structure having a clear opening in any span of greater than three metres measured between the faces of piers and / or abutments or structures of a lesser span with a deck supported on timber stringers, or large culverts (> 3 m² waterway area).

Department-managed road refers to those roads and/or vehicle tracks which are located on lands to which the CALM Act applies. The construction of a road does not extinguish the CALM Act land tenure. Department-managed roads are maintained by the department and may be used by department staff or by the public (unless closed under certain provisions of the CALM Act or regulations).

Other dedicated public roads may pass through department-managed land (e.g. the Chester Pass Road, maintained by Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA), which bisects the Stirling Range National Park). These dedicated public roads are excluded from this policy.

Roads on UCL and UMR are also not the responsibility of the department and are therefore excluded from this policy (except where such areas have been acquired and/or formerly transferred to the department or there is a formal arrangement in place between the department and organisation responsible for the land).

Designated road (Type 1) is a road that is strategically important to the department in relation to provision of general public access to scenic areas, major attractions, forestry activities, recreational areas and essential routes for rapid response for firefighting purposes. In general terms, designated roads are a high priority for funding to ensure they are maintained or upgraded to meet the required engineering and operational standards and are fit for the purpose required.

Local government authorities are responsible for managing roads vested or reserved in them.

Main Roads Western Australia (MRWA) controls main roads, vested or reserved in them, in Western Australia. The Commissioner for Main Roads has the legislative authority for authorising all signposting within MRWA road reserves, and for approving, irrespective of the managing authority, all regulatory road signs prior to installation.

MRWA also has the statutory authority to 'load post' (weight capacity that bridge can carry) all bridge structures, including department-managed bridges.

Operational road is a road used mainly for internal management purposes and access to the public is often restricted. These roads do not warrant significant maintenance expenditure. While some operational roads may be available for public use, suitable road conditions cannot be assured. It is unlikely that operational roads will be maintained unless a specific need arises and some may be permanently closed (relegated) and the alignment rehabilitated.

Relegated road is a department-managed road that is permanently closed and has been assessed as not being required for the department, public or industry purposes. They may exist as a result of previous management requirements, public access or industry operations.

Road corridor includes the road itself, and any area where work is undertaken as part of the construction, maintenance or management of the road.

Strategic road is used specifically for asset management purposes. Type 1, 2 or 3 roads are routinely maintained to remain trafficable and are accounted for in the department's road asset management system as strategic assets. Type 4 roads do not receive regular funding for the routine maintenance and they are not deemed strategic assets and may become relegated.

Temporary access road means a road/track of any standard that is constructed for use in a particular operation, but that is not required to be retained for department use at the completion of the operation, and, where appropriate, be rehabilitated.

Performance indicators

Implementation of this policy will be assessed on a five year cycle including the extent to which:

- designated roads are constructed and maintained according to the stated requirements of the department's ROGs and/or regional and CALM Act management plans;
- operational and temporary access roads are identified as closed and, where appropriate, rehabilitated;
- either inconsistent and unsafe conditions or the lack of appropriate signs, delineation devices and other information do not cause crashes and reported near-misses;
- road construction and maintenance programs do not adversely impact on threatened species and communities;
- road construction and maintenance programs do not adversely impact on cultural values specified in the purpose of the reserve;
- road construction and maintenance operations do not contribute to the introduction and/or spread of *Phytophthora* species;
- road construction and maintenance programs do not adversely impact on soil and water quality values and that surface water management is effective and soil erosion and sedimentation is minimised;
- roads and associated road infrastructure, built, upgraded, maintained or operated by other agencies on department-managed land are appropriately located, designed, constructed and maintained in a safe condition in accordance with the department's ROGs and other standards; and
- data showing the road classification, location and condition of all department-managed roads, bridges and associated road infrastructure are collected and maintained in a format suitable for access by nominated personnel. This is to include information relating to planning, the programming of periodic and routine maintenance, securing additional road funding and for asset valuation.