

Balonne Shire Stock Route Management Plan

2026-2031



Executive summary

The Balonne Shire Stock Route Management Plan 2026-2031 details how Council will manage its stock route network in accordance with the *Stock Route Management Act 2002* and clearly identify the approach to compliance and enforcement on the stock route network so that its values are maintained.

The stock route network provides connectivity and access for travelling stock across Queensland, and covers over 72,000 km of roads, reserves, and corridors. The Balonne Local Government Area joins the largest and most active stock route networks in Queensland, providing connectivity to five neighbouring local government areas in Queensland and connectivity to New South Wales.

In addition to stock traveling and grazing, the stock route network is valued for its environmental and cultural heritage values, recreational activities, and tourism.

The Stock Route Management Plan 2026-2031 sets the priorities and commitment of Balonne Shire Council and provides direction for stock route users and the community to implement effective and strategic management of the network in the region.

The Balonne Shire Stock Route Management Plan 2026-2031 was adopted by Balonne Shire Council on [date].

Glossary, acronyms and abbreviations

Act	Stock Route Management Act 2002
BAC	Biosecurity Advisory Committee
BSC	Balonne Shire Council
Council	Balonne Shire Council
DETSI	Queensland Department of Environment, Tourism Science and Innovation
DNRM	Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development
DPI	Department of Primary Industries
LGA	Local Government Area
LGAQ	Local Government Association Queensland
LPA	Livestock Production Assurance
LPO	Land Protection Officer with the Queensland Department of Natural Resources Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development
NLIS	National Livestock Identification System
NRM	Natural resource management
NVD	National Vendor Declaration
ROC	Regional Organisation of Councils
SRN	Stock Route Network
SRMS	Stock Route Management System
SRS	Council Stock Route Supervisor
TMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads
WH&S	Workplace Health & Safety

Front Cover Image by Malcolm Ross.

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1 Introduction

The stock route network is a system of roads and reserves that are designated primarily for the purpose of travelling stock. Infrastructure supporting the needs of travelling stock is constructed on the network and consists of facilities such as night yards, crossings, fencing, water facilities and yards. The Queensland stock route network consists of approximately 72,000 kilometres (2.6 million hectares), and 1,455 kilometres within the Balonne Shire.

The stock route network is governed by the *Stock Route Management Act 2002* (the Act) and requires local governments prescribed under the *Stock Route Regulation 2003* (the Regulation) to establish a stock route management plan for the management of stock routes in their respective local government areas.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Balonne Shire Stock Route Management Plan (the plan) is to guide rural lands officers to manage the network in accordance with the Act and to clearly identify Council's approach to compliance and enforcement on the stock route network so that its values are maintained.

Implementation of the plan will lead to improvements in services to stakeholders, greater accountability by Council and more efficient use of available resources.

1.2 Scope

The plan deals with the management priorities of the network within the Balonne local government area over the five year plan timeframe, and identifies how Council will engage with the community and neighbouring councils in the management of the network.

1.3 Objectives

The overriding direction for the objectives of the plan are provided by the principles of stock route network management, as detailed in Section 97 of the Act. These principles are:

Principle	Description
Public awareness	Public awareness and knowledge of the network's multiple uses, environmental values and cultural values must be raised to increase the capacity and willingness of individuals to protect the network.
Commitment	Effective management of the stock route network requires a long term commitment by the community to management of the network.
Consultation and partnership	Consultation and partnership arrangements between local communities, industry groups, State government agencies and local governments must be established to achieve a collaborative approach to stock route network management.
Management	The stock route network is to be managed— a. to ensure it remains available for public use; and b. to maintain and improve the network's natural resources and travelling stock facilities for use by travelling stock and for other purposes.
Payment for use	A person who benefits from using the network must pay a reasonable amount for its use.
Planning	Stock route network management must be consistent at local, regional and State levels to ensure resources for managing the network are used to target management priorities.

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

The principles provide a foundation for the objectives of the plan, which reflect the context of the network in the Balonne local government area. The goals and objectives of the plan are:

Goals	Objectives
Goal 1: There is a common understanding of the purpose, extent and attributes of the stock route network to enable its effective management and use.	1.1. The extent and attributes of the declared stock route network are identified and mapped.
	1.2. The purpose of the stock route network is known and communicated.
	1.3. A viable stock route network is maintained with no significant loss of the existing stock route network.
Goal 2: There is accountable administration and use of the stock route network.	2.1. Roles and responsibilities are known, understood and communicated.
	2.2. Resource allocation is reasonable and appropriate to maintain a viable stock route network.
	2.3. Effective processes are used to administer and manage the stock route network.
	2.4. Local government are supported to administer and manage the stock route network.
Goal 3: Facilities, infrastructure and systems support and improve administration and use of the network within a resource constrained environment.	3.1. Maintain an effective Stock Route Management System.
Goal 4: Natural resources on the stock route network are sustainably managed.	4.1. Grazing activities are managed to ensure pasture for travelling stock, and to sustain long-term use of the stock route network.
	4.2. Environmental values are known and managed.
Goal 5: Safety is a key factor in the use of stock routes.	5.1. Stock routes are used safely by all users, including motorists.
Goal 6: Culturally appropriate management of cultural values.	6.1. Identify areas containing cultural values.

1.4 Plan preparation

This plan has been developed in consideration with the Act, the Regulation and the current *Queensland Stock Route Network Management Strategy* (the Strategy) and will operate in conjunction with Council's Corporate and Operational Plans, other relevant State and regional plans and natural resource management legislation.

The plan operates as a practical extension to the visionary statements and goals set out in the Strategy and the principles (see Section 1.3) provided for in the Act.

The Plan was developed with significant input from the Environmental Services team. The consultation process with the community and external stakeholders included:

- [number] community consultation sessions attended by landholders, drovers, community groups and other industry representatives.
- Council's Biosecurity Advisory Committee and Indigenous Advisory Committee.
- Consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including Department of Transport and Main Roads, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Natural Resources Mines, Manufacturing and Regional and Rural Development, [insert other].

The draft Plan was available for public comment on the Balonne Shire Council Website for the required 28 days, from the [insert dates]. This was advertised through social media and on the radio. The plan will remain current until June 2031.

The plan was adopted by Balonne Shire Council at the meeting on [insert date].

1.5 Delivery

The Balonne Shire Council Stock Route Management Plan 2026-31 strategically aligns to the Corporate Plan and is delivered through existing mechanisms including Council's projects and programs, policies, and annual operational plans and budgets. Council partners with community, land managers, government agencies, and industry organisations to lead and deliver the priorities in this Plan.

Balonne Shire Council applies to the Department of Natural Resources for funding to undertake capital maintenance activities on the network. Council prepares an annual budget based on the priority maintenance requirements.

Strategies and actions for each financial year will be reviewed for their effectiveness by 1 April each year and any shortfalls in the completion of its strategies will be amended.

Council will monitor and report progress made against the goals on an annual basis to the community.

2 Stock Route Network Overview

2.1 Area

In the Balonne local government area, there is approximately 1,455 kilometres of stock routes, comprising of primary, secondary and tertiary routes, as well as various reserves (Appendix 1).

2.2 Users

The use of the stock route network in the Balonne local government area has varied seasonally with grazing permits granted for pasture management in addition to travelling permits.

Stock movement - Local property owners within Balonne Shire use the SRN to move stock by hoof from one property to another. Local committees use the SRN to walk cattle to and from camp draft grounds for use in camp drafts and other horse / cattle sporting competitions and events. The SRN is sometimes used for moving stock from other pastoral properties, feedlots backgrounding properties, markets (such as the Roma Saleyards) from within and outside of the Shire both in Queensland and interstate. The SRN has played a significant role in times of drought, fire and flood providing relief fodder and access to secure, well-watered facilities.

Negotiated Stock Routes - There are five stock routes covering 305 kilometres in Balonne Shire classed as negotiated (last stock recorded on these routes were in 1995). These are all unfenced and are generally inactive because of the relatively few watering points located along these routes. Because these routes are unfenced neighbouring landholders often have access to, and use, these areas for grazing and watering purposes.

Town Commons - There are six Town Commons within Balonne Shire located at St. George, Bollon, Hebel, Dirranbandi, Mungindi and Thallon. Only one of these Town Commons (Dirranbandi) is situated on the Stock Route Network.

In addition to the use of the stock route network for travelling and agistment purposes, the stock route network in the Balonne local government area has a range of additional uses, including:

- Grazing – travelling and agistment
- Recreation – fishing, camping, 4WD, boating, swimming, bushwalking, bird watching
- Riding – horse riding, motorbikes and bicycles
- Education – schools, clubs, community
- Cultural – historical and cultural heritage
- Tourism and events
- Other – firewood collection, apiculture

2.3 Values

As required by the Act and the Strategy, Council is required to preserve the multi-use values of the network. Within the Balonne local government area, the network provides the following values:

- Pastoral

- Cultural heritage
- Environmental and biodiversity
- Natural resources
- Recreation
- Transport and movement
- Utilities and public infrastructure
- Amenity

Regard for these values have been considered in the development of the management activities are listed in the Implementation plan. Effectiveness of management activities at the protection of the network's values will be considered at the annual review periods, and if necessary, amended to ensure that the network's values are protected.

2.4 Facilities

The list of facilities that support the network and its operation are identified in Appendix 2. Facilities are required to be maintained by Council so that the network's primary purpose of stock travel can be achieved.

2.5 Management considerations

A number of pressures exist that affect the operation of the network and must be managed. These include pressures on the values of the network as well as pressures on the network itself.

- Grazing pressure
- Competition for pasture between landholders, travelling stock and wildlife
- Pest plants and animals and disease
- Droughts and access to water
- Ensuring road safety for vehicles and stock use
- Lack of resourcing for the construction and maintenance of necessary infrastructure
- Responsibility for weed eradication, security of tenure and competition for pasture in areas under a 'permit to occupy'
- Vegetation thickening
- Fire

Balonne Shire Council employs officers to protect the values and manage pressures to the SRN. The officers attend to taskings; control of pest weed and animals, regular inspection and maintenance of assets program, and the management of drovers and stock, and compliance issues. They conduct a regular inspection and maintenance program targeting the key values and pressures on the Network.

2.5.1 Grazing management

Pasture on the network can be impacted by overgrazing from drovers, grazing permit holders and feral animals. Overgrazing of stock reduces the supply of pasture and may result in insufficient pasture in areas. Council must manage and conserve pasture on the network in its

area to ensure, as far as practicable, an adequate supply of pasture is available for travelling stock.

Grazing land condition along the stock route varies, however pasture is deemed to be in reasonably good condition, with only a few small areas projected as being in fair condition. Significant seasonal variation occurs due to fire, drought and floods. Condition can be impacted due to weed infestations, soil degradation (e.g. road works / graded roads), compaction by stock and vehicles around some watering points, thickening of vegetation or natural erosion. These are routinely addressed as part of council's regular inspection and maintenance program.

2.5.2 Vegetation

Vegetation cover along the stock route network provides important environmental and aesthetic functions, as well as shade for stock and other values for users of the network. Thickening and encroachment of certain vegetation may however impact the likelihood of sufficient pasture along the network, as well as creating obstructions to travelling stock.

Thickening of vegetation in some areas reduces the grazing potential of the SRN for travelling and agisted stock. It also restricts the movement of stock and forces stock onto roadways, which in turn can cause hazards for motorists, stock, and drovers alike. These are routinely addressed as part of council's regular inspection and maintenance program.

2.5.3 Obstructing movement of stock

There are a number of reasons for stock movement to become restricted along the network or force stock onto roadways. The encroachment of vegetation, detailed in Section 2.5.2, may also restrict stock movement along the network or force stock onto roadways. Other reasons include flooding or waterways, fire, hazards, fences, other objects, biosecurity, road incidents, and other exclusion zones. Monitoring the condition of the stock route network and controlling the movement of stock is an important aspect of Council's role and involves working in collaboration with neighbouring shires and other stakeholders.

2.5.4 Waterways

Major riparian areas within the SRN in Balonne Shire include the Balonne, Moonie, Culgoa and Maranoa Rivers. Other watercourses are Paterson, Wallam, Mungallala, Neabul, Briarie and Teelba Creeks. There is a variety of wetland types found within the SRN, including lagoons, swamps and gilgais. Riparian areas and wetlands are important for wildlife and maintaining the health of the landscape. Seasonal flooding may obstruct movement of stock on the SRN, and in such cases alternative routes are identified.

2.5.5 Significant areas

The SRN within Balonne Shire contains many examples of culturally significant sites. These include sites of European historic interest such as tracks used by early explorers, camps, old townships and settlements. Council maintains a register of Heritage listed places within Balonne Shire obtained from the DETSI / Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Sites of significance to Aboriginal people exist within the SRN. They include sites with evidence of occupation such as stone scatters, scarred trees and rock wells. Known sites are managed to avoid impact from use of the SRN.

2.5.6 Fire

Fire plays an important role in rejuvenating native vegetation communities and can play a role in woody weed control. Fire also presents a significant risk to the condition and use of the SRN, impact to significant areas, as well as safety concerns. Fire is increasing being used as a management tool within the SRN. Council has fire risk and management plans developed in conjunction with the Rural Fire Brigade and implementing as part of the annual program.

2.5.7 Pest plants and animals

The spread of pest plants and animals can be directly associated with the use of the stock route and can be hazardous to stock, human health, degrade natural ecosystems and reduce biodiversity, placing increased pressure on the values of the SRN. These are routinely addressed as part of council's regular inspection and maintenance program.

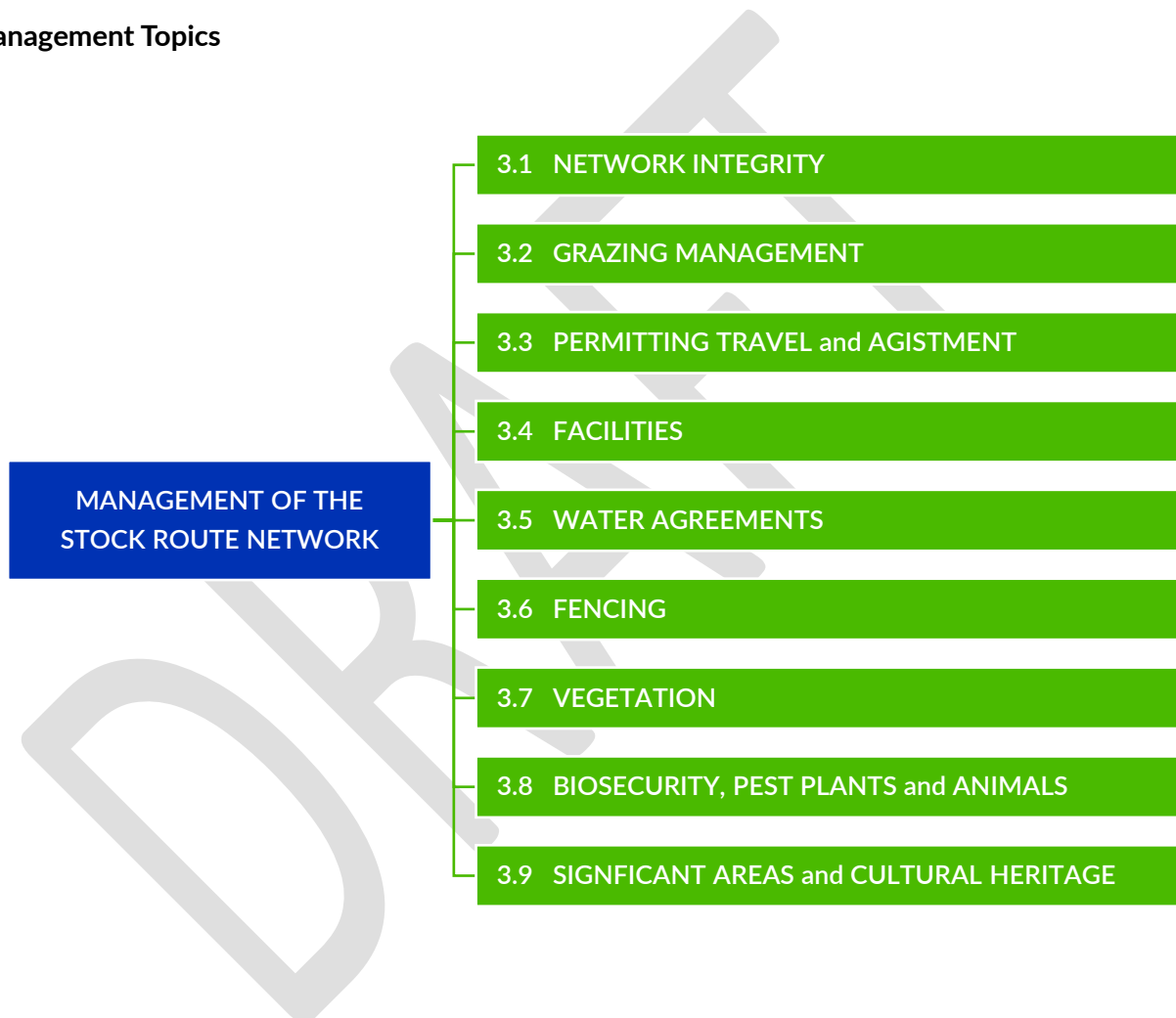
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3 Management of the Network

The stock route network needs to be actively managed to protect its values, ensure its effective operation, and to maintain the condition of its natural assets and infrastructure. The range of pressures affecting the condition, access and public use of the network also must be managed.

The *Stock Route Management Act 2002*, and *Stock Route Management Regulation 2023* governs the management of the stock route and assigns responsibilities to Balonne Shire Council. The following outlines how Balonne Shire Council will execute its responsibilities and approach to management of the network within its local government area.

Management Topics



3.1 Network Integrity

Balonne Shire Council has responsibilities to maintain the integrity of the stock route network by preserving land corridor connections for stock to have unobstructed travel through the Balonne and adjoining local government areas.

NETWORK INTEGRITY	
Goal	The SRN's integrity as a State corridor is maintained and enhanced so that unimpeded travel can occur through Balonne and adjoining Shires.
Objectives	5.1. Stock routes are used safely by all users, including motorists.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balonne Shire Council and adjoining Council's stock route management approaches ensure unimpeded travel between Shires. Number of complaints received regarding impediments to travel on the SRN within Balonne Shire.
Management Approach	Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge the Memorandum of Understanding between the LGAQ and DNRM. Engage with adjoining Councils to collaborate towards consistent management approaches to cross boundary management issues.
	Rationalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain all current stock routes for their multi-use values. Periodically review the suitability and classification of routes and reserves for their intended purpose.
	Removal of Impediments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage users and managers of the SRN to notify Council of the types and location of impediments to travelling stock on the network and where appropriate order removal of such impediments through working with landholder groups, issuing notices to landholders (if required), and incorporating tasks into Council staff work plans.
Compliance Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management and removal of impediments and hazards compliance is prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. Priority matters for compliance include location of fencing, maintenance of fencing, grids and gates, water facility access, unpermitted use, noxious or hazardous weeds.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and communicate cross boundary management issues for drovers and users, such as stock numbers, type of stock, stock route network connectivity, water facility location. Undertake management and maintenance activities as required to remove impediments.

3.2 Grazing management

Balonne Shire Council must manage and conserve pasture on the network to ensure, as far as practicable, an adequate supply of pasture is available for travelling stock. Sufficient pasture supply is assessed and monitored by local government officers and informs permit assessment decisions.

GRAZING MANAGEMENT	
Goal	The grazing impacts of travelling and agisted stock on the land condition of the SRN within Balonne Shire is minimised and grazing resources are available for future use.
Objectives	4.1. Grazing activities are managed to ensure pasture for travelling stock, and to sustain long-term use of the stock route network.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of change or decline in land condition in annual assessments. Number of permits declined due to inadequate supply of pasture.
Management Approach	Pasture condition and management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best management practices are applied according to land type. Appropriate residual pasture levels are applied for the stock route network and inform decisions over permit applications. Land and pasture management and permit decisions consider land condition. Appropriate management of areas determined to have excess pasture and fuel load will be managed by a) advertising short-term agistment, b) fire breaks and burning, and c) dispose of by non-commercial means. For areas subject to regular management, Council will maintain a register of identified lots, management strategies and fees.
	Travelling Stock <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasture on the stock route network will be managed to ensure adequate supply for travelling stock, as far as practical, by a) restricting the number of agistment stock on the stock route network, b) compliance of Permits to Occupy and lease conditions, and c) fire management. Refer to BSC Policy on Travelling Stock within Reserves and Stock Routes.
	Agistment of Stock on Reserves and Stock Routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agistment is only considered when the pasture available exceeds 'reasonable' needs of travelling stock, as determined using current usage figures. A pasture assessment must be undertaken to determine to what extent the stock route contains more pasture than is required for travelling stock. Refer to BSC Policy on Agistment of Stock within Reserves and Stock Routes.
Compliance Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow compliance procedures where grazing is occurring on the stock route without a permit. Enforce compliance to Permits to Occupy or lease conditions to maintain sufficient pasture for travelling stock.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasture assessments are undertaken by appropriately trained and nominated council officers. For primary stock routes and reserves, the preference is for long term permits/leases not to be granted in order to maintain pasture on the primary network.

3.3 Permitting travel and agistment

Balonne Shire Council has the responsibility of controlling and maintaining the stock route network for travelling stock, including issuing of permits for travelling stock and grazing of stock on the stock routes, reserves for travelling stock, roads, and other land under local government control. Council also has a role in compliance of Permits to Occupy and providing recommendations for new permit and lease applications issued by the State Government.

The conditions of permits and leases aim to ensure the integrity of the network and condition of resources is maintained. Conditions are informed by assessment and monitoring of the networks' resources and use and management for long term sustainability and productivity of the network for future public use.

In issuing stock route agistment permits Council's intention is for landowners to have equal access to the stock route network in difficult times, while providing opportunity for pasture recovery that ensures sustainable ongoing use of the network.

PERMITTING TRAVEL AND AGISTMENT	
Goal	The conditions of permits to travel and/or agist stock on the SRN ensure the sustainability of resources within the SRN to ensure it remains productive and available for public use into the future and that the process for assessing, issuing and reviewing permits is efficient.
Objectives	2.3. Effective processes are used to administer and manage the stock route network. 3.1. Maintain an effective Stock Route Management System. 4.1. Grazing activities are managed to ensure pasture for travelling stock, and to sustain long-term use of the stock route network.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of complaints about permits to travel and/or agist stock and associated conditions. • Number of travel permits issued and the total lengths travelled. • Number of grazing permits issued and the total days and number of stock.
Management Approach	<p>Application form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application forms are designed to ensure that, in most instances, Balonne Shire has sufficient information to make an appropriate decision. <p>Approving permits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit application forms, issued by the State agency, need to be completed in full and satisfy requirements as set out in the Act, to provide Council with the information required to make an appropriate decision. • Requirements, conditions, or assessment criteria derived from this plan, or associated policies, strategies, or plans, will be considered when assessing applications. • Applications will be assessed within 5 working days of its receipt. • Travelling Stock Permits to be approved by Council's Stock Route Supervisor and Agistment Permits to be approved by Council. • Policies for Stock Route Agistment Permits and Stock Route Travel Permits form criteria upon which applications will be assessed and are to be part of the conditions associated with the relevant permit. • Where permit applications overlap State controlled lands, confer with Department of Transport and Main Roads regarding conditions and local considerations.

PERMITTING TRAVEL AND AGISTMENT	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permit holders are responsible for ensuring they are compliant to permit conditions, including biosecurity matter declarations and NLIS transfer and NVD records. • Council maintains appropriate accreditations for the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS), Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) and National Vendor Declaration (NVD). • Refer to BSC Policy on Agistment of Stock within Reserves and Stock Routes and Policy on Travelling Stock within Reserves and Stock Routes.
	<p>Permit allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock Route Travel and Agistment permits will be assessed and allocated on a first in first served basis.
	<p>Permit monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balonne Shire Council can appoint nominated persons to muster stock on relevant land within the local government area to monitor compliance with a stock route travel or agistment permit, under section 155 of the Act.
Compliance Priorities	<p>Grazing without a permit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all stock route areas to check appropriate permits for use are in place, prioritising primary stock routes. • Follow compliance procedures where landowners are found grazing stock on the stock route without a relevant permit. Appropriate responses may include a) fencing to restrict stock access, or b) put in place an appropriate permit or tenure. • Fencing is the preferred course of action for areas of the primary stock route that are grazed without a permit. • Refer to BSC Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
	<p>Other unlawful use of the stock route</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all stock route areas to identify areas of adjoining land use encroachment or other unlawful use of the stock route. • Follow compliance procedures towards a resolution of identified issues. • Refer to BSC Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
	<p>All Permits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake compliance checks and respond to reported issues. • Follow compliance procedures towards a resolution of identified issues. • Make available information to clearly communicate requirements and local considerations for compliance. • The review of permits and compliance is prioritised for the primary stock routes and current usage. • Refer to BSC Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users of the stock route network are responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate permits in place and are compliant to conditions. • Balonne Shire Council will make available information regarding requirements and local considerations for permit applications and compliance.

3.4 Facilities

Watering facilities are provided at regular intervals for travelling stock, along with other supporting facilities for the movement of stock through the network.

The Balonne stock route network comprises of 82 facilities and managed assets that are currently in working order or needing repairs. These include:

- 22 bores, 16 dams and 42 natural waterholes
- 45 tanks, pumping units and troughs
- 1 holding yards

FACILITIES	
Goal	Travelling stock can access well-maintained water supplies at regular intervals along primary routes of the SRN within Balonne Shire.
Objectives	2.2. Resource allocation is reasonable and appropriate to maintain a viable stock route network.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities are in serviceable condition on primary stock routes. • The watering points on primary routes are at a maximum of 10km intervals. Facilities on secondary routes may be considered in special cases.
Management Approach	Facility condition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the condition of all stock route facilities on an annual basis. • Facility maintenance and construction needs are to be annually prioritised based on use, with priorities included in Council's annual works program. • Establish a five year infrastructure requirement plan. • Balonne Shire Council applies to the Department of Natural Resources for funding to undertake capital maintenance activities and works on the network. • Any new infrastructure must meet the Stock Route Network Water Facility minimum standards.
	Water facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water facilities are placed along primary and secondary stock routes and water is supplied for travelling stock where required. • Water facilities are inspected prior to travelling stock arriving. • Travelling stock always receive priority water supply, unless otherwise stated in a Water Agreement. • Preference in water agreement negotiations is for the landowner party to maintain water facilities on secondary and tertiary stock routes. • Water facilities under Water Agreements must meet offtake specifications to ensure sufficient water is available for travelling stock when required.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and improvement activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace aging infrastructure, including galvanised piping with poly pipe as facilities are upgraded. - Desilting of earth dams. - Vegetation maintenance and fencing around all water infrastructure. • Accurate records of all facilities to be maintained by Council, including location, infrastructure, condition, and upgrades or maintenance required and undertaken.

3.5 Water agreements

Water Agreements enable landowners to access water from a stock route facility for stock or domestic purposes. Agreements also enable water to be supplied to a stock route facility or provide direct access to a landowner's private facility to meet the needs of travelling stock.

Balonne Shire Council maintains a register of Water Agreements using the Stock Route Management System (SRMS). In this plan, Balonne Shire Council is focusing on compliance and ensuring appropriate Water Agreements are in place for all water users.

WATER AGREEMENTS	
Goal	The supply and taking of water are formalised to manage and sustainably meet the needs of travelling stock and other people with rights to the water.
Objectives	<p>2.2. Resource allocation is reasonable and appropriate to maintain a viable stock route network.</p> <p>2.3. Effective processes are used to administer and manage the stock route network.</p> <p>3.1. Maintain an effective Stock Route Management System.</p>
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of times water was unavailable at water facilities for permitted travelling stock. • Water Agreements for supply are in place, where applicable, for all facilities. • Water Agreements and fees for the taking of water are in place.
Management Approach	<p>Permitted use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landowners taking water from stock route facilities are responsible for ensuring they have an appropriate Water Agreement in place and are compliant to conditions. • Water Agreements are reviewed, and parties are contacted to ensure they are aware of compliance and condition requirements, prioritised for primary stock routes and usage.
	<p>Water agreements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking of water from a council facility under a Water Agreement may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – piping water from the facility to the landowner's property, – watering stock at the facility, only where a landowner holds a lease or permit for grazing the land adjacent to the facility. • Fees may be waived or reduced if the landowner negotiates to undertake regular maintenance of the facility in the Water Agreement. • Landowner responsibility for the maintenance of water facilities is the preferred option for facilities on secondary and tertiary stock routes.
Compliance Priorities	<p>Taking of water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow compliance procedures where landowners are found taking water from a stock route facility without a relevant agreement. Appropriate responses may include a) putting in place a Water Agreement, or b) restricting use of the facility.
	<p>All agreements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Water Agreements are reviewed to check appropriate agreements for taking of water are in place and current. • Undertake compliance checks and respond to reported issues.

WATER AGREEMENTS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make available information to clearly communicate requirements for compliance.• Priority matters for compliance include appropriate agreements in place and details current, offtake water is within agreed volumes, water supply is available, and maintenance responsibilities met.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accurate records and register of all Water Agreements to be maintained by Council.• Collaborate with the Department of Natural Resources where relevant regarding Water Agreement conditions and compliance, and new applications.• Agreement assessments and conditions are informed by water availability and usage, and other management strategies in this plan.• Fees as set by the Stock Route Regulations are collected.

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3.6 Fencing

Fencing is an important aspect of managing the integrity and continuity of the stock route to be fully available for travelling stock and management of adjoining land use. Four pieces of legislation govern fences, gates, and grids on state-controlled land, namely the *Stock Route Management Act 2002*, *Local Government Act 2009*, *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*, and *Land Act 1994*.

This section relates to fences on the boundary of land adjoining the network. Fencing is required to prevent landowner's stock entering a part of the network and to restrict travelling stock access to private land. There may also be animal welfare and biosecurity risks in the absence or poor maintenance of fencing.

Landowners are responsible for the construction and maintenance of boundary fencing. Council may give notice for landowners to build or maintain fences for the purposes of managing stock access.

FENCING	
Goal	The network integrity of the stock route network and infrastructure is fit for purpose so that travelling stock have unobstructed travel.
Objectives	4.1. Grazing activities are managed to ensure pasture for travelling stock, and to sustain long-term use of the stock route network. 5.1. Stock routes are used safely by all users, including motorists.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of incidents from unlawful use of the stock route. Number of permits declined due to inadequate supply of pasture.
Management Approach	<p>Fencing condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the condition of fencing, prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. Encourage users of the stock route network and the public to notify Council of fencing in poor condition and the location. Landowners are responsible for maintaining boundary fencing in a stock-proof condition. Work with landowners for the appropriate maintenance of boundary fencing. Appropriate management of fencing that is not stock proof or causing safety hazards are a) landowner undertakes required maintenance, b) fencing is removed, c) fencing is replaced. Balonne Shire Council will make available information to landowners to clearly communicate requirements for compliance. <p>New fencing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the location of fencing and identify needs for new boundary fencing to manage stock movement or access to the stock route, prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. Work with landowners where new boundary fencing is required, under appropriate authorisations. Promote the installation of Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing (WDEF) along SRN corridors, targeting current gaps. Landowners must contact Balonne Shire Council prior to erection of any new boundary fencing of the stock route to ensure it meets the required standards and erected in the correct location.

FENCING	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New fencing infrastructure must meet the Stock Route Network Fencing minimum standards.
	<p>Stock access to unfenced stock routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the stock route network to identify areas where landowner's stock has access to an unfenced area of the stock route without an appropriate permit or tenure, prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. • Work with landowners to appropriately manage stock access to the stock route. • Appropriate management of stock access to unfenced areas of stock route include a) stock access is restricted, b) fencing is erected, c) permits or tenure in place. • Refer to BSC Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
	<p>Unauthorised fencing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit the stock route network to identify unauthorised fences, gates or grids, prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. • Work with landowners for the appropriate location and specifications of fences, gates and grids. • Appropriate management of fencing that is found to be unlawful are a) fencing is removed, b) fencing is relocated, c) permits or tenure in place. • Balonne Shire Council will make available information to landowners to clearly communicate requirements for compliance.
Compliance Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all stock route areas to check appropriate maintenance of boundary fencing. • Review all stock route areas to check fencing, gates and grids are lawful. • Follow compliance procedures towards a resolution of the identified issues. • Make available information to clearly communicate requirements for compliance. • The review of fencing condition, location and compliance is prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. • Grazing without a permit – see permitting travel and agistment. • Refer to BSC Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake inspections of fencing and identify maintenance requirements prioritised based on use and safety. • Accurate records of fencing should be kept, including location, infrastructure, condition, and maintenance required or undertaken. • Review use records to inform priorities.

3.7 Vegetation

Vegetation cover along the stock route network provides important environmental and aesthetic functions, as well as shade for stock and other values for users of the network. Thickening and encroachment of certain vegetation may however impact the likelihood of sufficient pasture along the network, as well as creating obstructions to travelling stock.

Native vegetation may be cleared on the stock route network for specific purposes, which may or may not require authorisation or approval. It is the responsibility of Balonne Shire Council or the respective landowner to ensure compliance to relevant legislation.

VEGETATION	
Goal	The SRN's integrity and values are maintained and enhanced to ensure the sustainability of resources within the SRN and unimpeded travel can occur.
Objectives	4.2. Environmental values are known and managed. 5.1. Stock routes are used safely by all users, including motorists.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of complaints received regarding impediments to travel on the SRN within Balonne Shire.
Management Approach	Vegetation condition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit the condition of vegetation to identify areas of thickening and impediments to stock and vehicle access, or impacts to pasture, prioritised for primary stock routes and current usage. Encourage users of the stock route network and the public to notify Council of the types and location of vegetation impediments to movement of travelling stock. Where access impediments arise, Council is to advise of suitable stock movement in collaboration with the drover. Work with landowners or stakeholders for the appropriate management of vegetation. Appropriate management of vegetation thickening are a) exclude stock access, b) manage stock movement, including alternative routes and agistment, c) vegetation thinning strategies using fire, d) vegetation thinning using selective clearing methods, d) clear access roads for stock and vehicles. Priority areas for management programs with vegetation thickening include areas with declared weeds.
	Vegetation clearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearing of vegetation on the stock route area may be necessary for road infrastructure, fencing, maintaining or constructing infrastructure including yards or water facilities, removing invasive plants, or fire management. Thinning of vegetation may be necessary to remove impediment to the movement of travelling stock. Balonne Shire Council and landowners must comply to legislation for clearing native vegetation. Balonne Shire Council will make available information to landowners to clearly communicate requirements for compliance.
	Exempt Clearing Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist in the construction and maintenance of Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing (WDEF) along SRN corridors, Council is enacting the eight (8) metre

VEGETATION	
	<p>external vegetation clearance exemption provided for under the <i>Planning Regulation 2017 (Qld)</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All clearing undertaken under this exemption must be conducted by Council, or their representatives, and in accordance with the Balonne Shire Wild Dog Exclusion Fence Vegetation Clearance Policy and associated procedures. • Clearing exemption provides for the ability to maintain and protect Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing that requires adequate clearance for installing, maintaining, patrolling, and protection from falling trees, and fire damage. • “Exempt Clearing Work” under the Queensland Vegetation Management Framework, allows eight (8) metre vegetation clearance off farm boundaries for Wild Dog Exclusion Fencing for the purpose of “Clearing necessary to maintain infrastructure, including buildings, structures, fences, roads and watering points”. Clearing that is external to the boundary is to have the approval of the landowner or delegated manager. • Refer to BSC Policy - Balonne Shire Wild Dog Exclusion Fence Vegetation Clearance Policy.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake inspections of vegetation to identify priority areas to implement management programs, including a) clearing fence lines for fire breaks, weed control access, b) planned burns to control declared weeds, manage thickening, and reduce fuel loads, and c) clearing access tracks to allow drovers access and keep stock off roads for safety. • Engage with local stakeholders, including fire brigades, adjoining landowners and Traditional Owners in planning and control activities. • Prepare a fire management plan to manage fire risk and use of fire as a management tool. • Undertake cultural heritage surveys to inform management as required. • Review use records to inform priorities. • Obtain appropriate approvals for all vegetation clearing activities.

3.8 Biosecurity, pest plants and animals

Balonne Shire Council Biosecurity Management Plan 2026-2031 details Council's priorities and course of action to manage the impact of pest plants and animals within the region. This plan applies to management of the stock route network and roles and responsibilities of stakeholders.

Biosecurity risks for the stock route integrity and use include disease, weed and pest introduction and spread, animal exposure to contaminants, animal access to waste contaminants and restricted animal material, carcass exposure, access to effluent, people exposure to stock and animals, and preparedness to respond to risk occurrence.

BIOSECURITY, PEST PLANTS AND ANIMALS	
Goal	Minimise the spread and introduction of pests and disease by stock (and associated vehicles) using the SRN and minimise the impacts that pests may have to stock using the SRN.
Objectives	4.1. Grazing activities are managed to ensure pasture for travelling stock, and to sustain long-term use of the stock route network. 4.2. Environmental values are known and managed. 5.1. Stock routes are used safely by all users, including motorists.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of pest plant and animal species present on the SRN. • Number of stock poisonings on the SRN suspected to be from pest plants. • Number of stock losses on the SRN suspected to be from pest animals. • Number of disease reports or findings suspected to have originated from stock using the SRN.
Management Approach	Biosecurity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the establishment of new pest plants and animals and minimise the spread of current priority pest plants and animals. • High value areas and high risk areas are managed for biosecurity risks. • All users of the stock route network have general biosecurity obligations. Permit holders are responsible for ensuring they are compliant to permit conditions, including biosecurity matter declarations and NLIS transfer and NVD records. • Biosecurity is the responsibility of landholders when the SRN is under Permit to Occupy or fenced into the landholder's property.
	Prevention of biosecurity risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and manage for biosecurity risks associated with use and access to the stock route network, including from travelling stock, stray stock, feral animals, wildlife, people, vehicles, equipment, carcass, materials, Restricted Animal Material, effluent, or feed. • Identify and manage disease and safety risks associated with people in contact with livestock and pest animals. • Identify and manage stock exposure risk to contaminants. • Manage damage to infrastructure from pests or wildlife.
	Biosecurity, pest plant and animal management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage landowners to participate in wild dog and feral animal control programs. • Council conducts appropriate control of priority weeds on the stock route.

BIOSECURITY, PEST PLANTS AND ANIMALS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council coordinates control activities with landowners and provide support where possible. • All stock route users practice appropriate hygiene measures to prevent spread of biosecurity matter. • Exclusion fencing of high risk areas and appropriate stock exclusion boundary fencing. • Appropriate management is determined by the Balonne Shire Council Biosecurity Management Plan 2026-2031.
<p>Compliance Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure biosecurity requirements are met before permits are issued and stock are transported onto the network. • Follow compliance procedures towards a resolution of identified issues. • Make available information to clearly communicate requirements and local considerations for compliance.
<p>Management Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council maintains capacity to manage stock routes, road reserves, town reserves and public lands. • Council preparedness to detect, report or respond to new endemic or emergency disease, pest plant or animal. • Liaise with Biosecurity Queensland to meet animal welfare and general biosecurity obligations, and follow instruction as required during an event. • Surveillance and monitoring of stock routes against biosecurity management objectives. • Coordinate planning and management activities with stakeholders. • Hygiene measures in place to prevent the spread of biosecurity matter. • Exclusion fencing of high risk areas, including all town water treatment and waste facilities. • Public awareness of appropriate disposal of food waste, especially in reserves. • Appropriate carcass disposal. • Water trough inspections and maintenance. • People likely to be exposed to animals apply safety, PPE, and hygiene practices, and vaccination where possible. • Avoid use of chemicals on the stock route and observe withholding periods after chemical use, and explicitly avoid use of flupropanate herbicide on the stock route.

3.9 Significant areas and cultural heritage

The Balonne Region is home to a spectacular range flora, and fauna, rivers and wetlands and landscape diversity. Aboriginal people of the Balonne region maintain traditional connection to country, which encompass many significant sites, such as camp sites, burial sites, battle sites, waterholes and wells, artefact sites and other historically important places.

Cultural heritage places, flora, fauna, and their habitats are susceptible to Council activities on the stock routes, including maintenance and construction works on roads, facilities maintenance and works, fire use and prevention activities, installation and maintenance of utility services, and other stock route management activities. Stock access, recreation, and tourist activities, as well as pest plants and animals, can also impact the preservation of significant areas and cultural heritage areas. Council has a duty of care to provide effective recognition, protection, and conservation of indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage.

SIGNIFICANT AREAS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE	
Goal	To minimise the impacts of travelling stock and/or agisted stock and use of the SRN, on areas of significance and cultural heritage values on the SRN.
Objectives	4.2. Environmental values are known and managed. 5.1. Stock routes are used safely by all users, including motorists.
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of incidents that impact significant areas of cultural heritage values.
Management Approach	<p>Significant areas condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the stock route network to maintain or improve current condition of flora, fauna, habitats, and waterways, or other areas identified as significant. Manage impacts to the condition and values of significant areas, such as erosion, clearing, fire, stock, pest plants and animals, waste, contaminants, and vandalism. Encourage the public and users of the stock route network to notify Council of areas of significance. Identify and document the values, stakeholders, and assess site specific management requirements. Work with landowners and stakeholders for the appropriate management of significant areas. Appropriate management of significant areas are a) exclude or manage stock access, b) exclusion fencing, c) signage and interpretative information, d) site specific management of risks or impacts. <p>Cultural heritage condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the stock route network to maintain current condition and avoid impact to areas identified as having cultural heritage significance. Prior to any activity involving site or ground disturbance at sites that may have cultural heritage value, plan and assess the activity and site appropriately to ensure appropriate duty of care. Manage impacts to the condition and values of cultural heritage, such as erosion, clearing, fire, stock, weeds and pests, waste, contaminants, and vandalism, in collaboration with local Aboriginal people. Undertake the appropriate process to identify, report and register cultural heritage significant places and where necessary a management plan is developed.

SIGNIFICANT AREAS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with Traditional Owners and stakeholders for the appropriate management of cultural heritage areas, including fire management on the stock route network.• Appropriate management of cultural heritage areas may include a) exclude or manage stock access, b) exclusion fencing, c) signage and interpretative information, d) site specific management of risks or impacts.
Management Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Undertake inspections of areas identified as significant.• Engage with local Aboriginal people, stakeholders and adjoining landowners in planning and management activities.• Consider legislative requirements and consult with relevant Departments where appropriate.• Consider significant area and cultural heritage management when conducting other maintenance and works on the stock route and maintain mapping to inform decisions.• Staff awareness and understanding of cultural heritage management processes and site management requirements and are appropriately trained.• Make available information to stock route users, landowners, and the public to clearly communicate requirements for site management.

4 Compliance Framework

Balonne Shire Council is responsible for managing non-compliances on the network. Balonne Shire Council has in place a compliance policy, and associated assessment and compliance procedures, specifically for stock route management. The compliance approach adopted for this plan involves awareness and education, informal and formal warnings, and pursuing appropriate enforcement action, depending on the severity of the offence. The compliance framework is consistent with the principles of public awareness, management, and payment for use.

To achieve compliance, Council will generally undertake the following course of action:

1. An Authorised Person appointed by Balonne Shire Council will clarify with the offender their obligations under the Act, specify the breach of compliance, and negotiate with the offender for them to undertake the necessary action set out in the Act, along with any additional conditions imposed by Balonne Shire Council.
2. Provide a verbal warning.
3. Provide a written warning.
4. Undertake appropriate actions, including legal action, to enforce compliance.

Balonne Shire Council reference documents include:

1. Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure
2. Stock Route Monitoring and Compliance Plan

The compliance priorities and desired outcomes for this plan cycle focus on the following matters, with priority given for primary stock routes and informed by current usage.

COMPLIANCE PRIORITY	DESIRED OUTCOME
Contravening a condition of a stock route agistment or travel permit (S.173).	Compliance to permit conditions.
Grazing stock without a permit or permission given under another Act (S.174).	All stock grazing on the stock route network are grazing under a current permit.
Overgrazing on the stock route network (S.161).	Compliance to Permit to Occupy and lease conditions to maintain sufficient pasture on the stock route for travelling stock.
Maintenance of water facilities under Water Agreements (S.163).	Compliance to Water Agreements conditions to maintain water facilities where required.
Obstructing the movement of travelling stock on the SRN (S.179).	Travelling stock have unobstructed access to the SRN.
Maintenance of boundary fencing (S.152).	Compliance to the Act for landowners to maintain boundary fencing in a stock proof condition.
Fencing not maintained in stock proof condition causing impediments to stock movement (S.152).	Removal of fencing that is not maintained in a stock proof condition and is causing hazards to stock and integrity of the stock route network.

COMPLIANCE PRIORITY	DESIRED OUTCOME
Unlawful fencing or encroachment causing impediments to stock movement (S.179).	Removal of unlawful fencing or other impediments located in the stock route network, or other appropriate measures to allow unrestricted stock movement.
Biosecurity risk.	All permit holders and users of the stock route network are compliant to general biosecurity obligations and permit conditions.

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5 Risk and Safety Management

A number of risk factors exist on the network, of which Council is required to undertake appropriate management activities to minimise any risk to travelling stock, drovers, surrounding landholders and the community. Risk and safety management is critical to ensure consistency with the principles of public awareness, consultation and partnerships, and monitoring and evaluation.

The below table records identified risks and hazards in the network and highlights Council's strategies for management and mitigation. Actions are included in the Implementation Plan.

RISK ASSESSMENT	MITIGATION STRATEGIES
Identified need for risk assessment process to be updated.	Risk assessment and identification of mitigation strategies as part of audit and assessment process, as per section 6.1 Implementation.
Surplus pasture forming increased fuel loads around towns may present high fire risks to residential areas.	Management of surplus pasture and fuel loads as per section 2.5.1 Grazing management, and address in the fire management plan.
Drover fatigue.	Allow for rest days, as per section 3.3 Permits.
Road safety risks relating to Travel Permits on Highways, where road users are not noticing droving signs and not slowing down.	Investigate permanent signs with flashing lights when drovers are using for Highways with a high number of Travel Permits. Compliance to signage in high risk areas.
Permits to Occupy or leases on stock routes without appropriate gates for travelling stock to access permitted area, forcing travelling stock onto formed roads.	Permit to Occupy compliance procedures, as per section 3.3 Permits.
Road safety risks relating to unrestricted stock access without a permit to formed roads.	Compliance procedures for grazing without a permit and fencing, as per section 3.3 Permits and 3.6 Fencing.
Unsafe access to water facilities on public roads and reserves, for example open concrete tanks, open dams, crossing roads for water.	Identify potential hazards during audit and assessment processes and address in the facility management plan, as per section 3.4 Facilities.
Rail corridor fencing in poor condition, causing unsafe access for people and stock to stock route, fencing material being dragged into the stock route and potentially onto roads by travelling stock.	Work with neighbouring Councils and Department of Transport and Main Roads, seeking to replace or remove the fences that are in poor condition, as per section 3.6 Fencing.
Vegetation thickening of stock routes forcing travelling stock onto the formed road.	Management of vegetation thickening and access as per section 3.7 Vegetation.
Biosecurity and safety risks associated with animal access to hazard areas or materials on the stock route, due to unmaintained or absence of fencing.	Maintain fencing, identify and manage hazard areas and exposure risks, surveillance, hygiene practices, and other strategies, as per 3.8 Pest and disease management.
Staff and public contact with livestock and pest animals.	Identify and manage disease and safety risks, as per 3.8 Pest and disease management.

6 Implementation

Council is committed to achieving a system of stock route management that is both viable and equitable to all the stakeholders within the Balonne local government area. The plan will be implemented by council staff, when and where required. When Council does not have the resources to complete a task, contractors may be hired to complete the task.

Council is committed to maintaining the network to improve and sustainably manage its use as a valuable resource and provide for compatible alternative uses, whilst providing a safe and well managed environment for all potential and prospective users. This supports the delivery of the principles of commitment, management, and planning.

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6.1 Implementation plan

6.1.1 Network integrity

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Adequately resource activities and actions required to ensure the integrity of the SRN.	Review the current role of the SRS in line with labour resources required to effectively manage the SRN within Balonne Shire.	BSC	High	Annual
	Identify and develop partnerships with other organizations / groups to help manage the SRN network.	BSC	Medium	On-going
	Identify additional funding sources.	BSC	Medium	On-going
Ensure SRN users and adjoining Shires are aware of rules and policies associated with its use within Balonne Shire.	In conjunction with Shire Councils responsible for managing the SRN within Queensland develop an extension package, which outlines the policies and rules associated with using the SRN within each Shire, and distribute this to drivers, travelling stock owners, Councils and others.	DNRM	High	On-going
	Participate in regional meetings to improve the consistency of policies and actions associated with managing the SRN between Shires.	SRS, BSC, LPO	High	On-going
Ensure permits to occupy and lease agreements for lands associated with the SRN are consistent with goals of this plan.	Review the conditions of State and local Council policies and agreements associated with permits to occupy and leasing land on the SRN and amend as appropriate to maintain or improve the integrity of the SRN (consider shorter lease terms, monitoring and compliance requirements and penalties).	DNRM BSC	High	On-going
	With other Shire Councils negotiate for the development of management agreements between landowners using unfenced inactive stock routes and DNRM and recommend appropriate policies to be included in the agreements to maintain the integrity of the SRN.	BSC	High	On-going
	Seek endorsement from DNRM and neighbouring Councils to not reissue permits to occupy on primary routes.	DNRM BSC	High	On-going
Remove impediments along the SRN	Continue to identify and actively encourage users of the SRN to report impediments to travelling stock. Organise the removal of impediments, as appropriate.	SRS	High	On-going
Provide travelling stock continual access to primary, secondary, and negotiated stock routes.	Work with neighbouring Shire Councils to ensure travelling stock have continual access to primary, secondary, and negotiated stock routes, except in extreme adverse conditions (e.g. flood, very severe droughts).	SRS	High	On-going
	Work with DNRM and TMR to ensure travelling stock have sufficient access through vegetation to minimise travelling on highway carriageways	BSC, DNRM, TMR	High	On-going

6.1.2 Grazing management

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Continually improve staff grazing land management skills.	SRS attend a “Stock take” training program.	SRS	High	Annually
	SRS and relevant staff undertake relevant grazing land and fire management training.	SRS, EHO, BSC, LPO	Medium	On-going
Set residual pasture levels.	Set residual pasture levels, in consultation with DPI.	SRS, LPO	High	Biannually
Improve the land and pasture condition of the SRN with the aim of maintaining good pasture growth and feed for travelling stock.	Keep abreast of and adopt best management practices, as appropriate.	SRS	High	On-going
	Implement the <i>Balonne Shire Biosecurity Plan 2026-2031</i> .	BSC	High	On-going
	Develop/update a fire management plan for the SRN, in consultation with neighbouring landholders, government agencies, traditional owners, Emergency Services and natural resource groups.	BSC	Medium	2027
	Identify areas requiring depasturing, where applicable, publicly tender for agistment applications for these areas.	BSC, SRS LPO	Medium	On-going
	Investigate management options for erosion issues near L61.BLM1203: Wagaily and report back to Council.	SRS	High	2022
Supplement feeding does not adversely impact on the condition of the SRN.	Enforce policy and permit conditions regarding supplement feeding to avoid impact on the condition of the SRN.	BSC SRS	High	2022
Determine and monitor appropriate carrying capacities	Use the principles of Stocktake to identify areas within the SRN in which condition needs to be improved and implement management actions to improve condition.	SRS	Medium	On-going

6.1.3 Permitting travel and agistment

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Minimise supervision/resources.	Maintain tele-communications with drovers whilst travelling throughout shire.	BSC	High	As required
Market pricing.	In conjunction with other Shire Councils negotiate for fees collected at market value as set by oversight agency.	BSC	High	On-going
Ensure adequate resourcing.	Constant review of resources.	BSC	High	On-going
Maintain contemporary practices.	SRN staff liaise at all levels with counterparts in all government and non-government agencies to maintain relevant and contemporary practices and management of SRN.	BSC	Medium	On-going

6.1.4 Facilities management

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	By When
Maintain and improve current water facilities.	Continue to complete the "Stock Route Maintenance Activity Sheet" and use this sheet to report to Council.	SRS	High	On-going
	Continue to review and prioritise infrastructure needs on the SRN.	SRS	High	Annual
	Compile a standard infrastructure list for the SRN, including costs, as per the SRN asset management plan.	BSC DNRM	High	On-going
Landholder Water Agreement responsibilities upheld.	Update and reinforce Water Agreement conditions whereby the landholder is required to consult with Local Government and/or DNRM on major improvements or maintenance to be undertaken at facilities.	DNRM	Medium	On-going
Seek funding for infrastructure on the SRN.	Investigate funding sources to build and maintain relevant infrastructure on the SRN.	BSC	Medium	On-going

6.1.5 Water agreements management

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Water pricing reflect current market pricing structure.	Negotiate a market pricing structure for water agreements (based on current town or irrigation metered supply pricing) and increase fees in line with CPI.	ROC, LGAQ DNRM	High	On-going
Water agreements (including maintenance and monitoring responsibilities).	Review, negotiate and establish new water agreements for both supply and taking water from facilities, ensuring all relevant parties sign the agreement.	SRS DNRM	High	On-going

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
	In the case of taking water, agreements are to be limited to four years from the date of signing and is subject to review after that time.			
Continue to keep a register of all agreements.	Keep a file of all water agreements made within the SRN within Balonne Shire.	BSC	Medium	On-going

6.1.6 Significant area and cultural heritage management

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Maintain an inventory of significant areas.	Maintain an inventory of the location, extent and condition of significant areas within the SRN. Utilise and facilitate digitised information on stock route values, significant areas and condition for stock route management.	BSC,	Medium	On-going
Design and implement appropriate management options for significant areas.	Engage with stakeholders where appropriate and investigate and engage appropriate partners to implement management options for significant areas.	BSC Stakeholders	High	On-going
Continue to monitor condition of significant areas.	Determine on-going monitoring needs of significant areas and include in SRN patrols.	BSC	High	On-going
Increase capacity to consider significant areas within management plans.	Provide training to Stock Route Supervisor and other relevant Council staff on significant area identification and management.	DETSI LGAQ NRM	Medium	On-going
Raise awareness of significant values contained within the SRN.	Erect signage at the location of significant sites/areas, as appropriate.	BSC	Low	As required
	Notify the public and users of the network about specific actions that may be undertaken for significant area conservation through Council's web site.	BSC	Medium	As required

6.1.7 Pest and disease management

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Minimise the spread of pest plants and animals and disease.	Carry out treatment, monitoring and mapping in accordance with <i>Balonne Shire Biosecurity Plan 2026-2031</i> .	BSC	High	On-going
	Implement 'best practice' when using chemical for the control of pest plants and avoid impacts to significant areas.	SRS	High	On-going

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
	Determine the need for holding facilities / containment areas for stock to empty out and drop seeds at entry points into the Balonne Shire.	BSC	Medium	On-going
Increase the awareness of pest animals and plants within the Shire	Notify SRN permit holders the presence of pest plants within the permitted areas and advise of appropriate stock management strategies if requirement. Encourage SRN users to notify Council of any sightings of pest plants.	SRS	High	On-going
	Notify SRN permit holders of the potential risks from agricultural spray drift within relevant areas of the SRN.	SRS	High	On-going

6.1.8 Compliance

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Promote awareness of rules and policies associated with the use of the SRN.	Provide communication to landholders and other stock route users on the main offences, and how to bring historical breaches into compliance.	BSC	High	Annual
Develop enforcement partnerships with DNRM and adjoining Councils.	Through a regional working group involving neighbouring Shires and DNRM, identify, negotiate, and implement agreed options for carrying out enforcement.	Local Government Reference Group	High	On-going
Improve the capacity of Council to manage compliance issues.	Authorised person/s and other relevant Council staff to undertake compliance training.	DNRM SRS	High	On-going
Increase resources for undertaking compliance actions.	Negotiate with the DNRM and State government for increased resourcing for compliance actions.	BSC, ROC	Medium	On-going
Prioritise compliance actions.	Where resources are limited, Council will prioritise compliance to manage key offences and mitigate risks.	BSC	High	Annual
Rationalise compliance actions.	In partnerships with other Councils and LGAQ, negotiate with DNRM to give authorised persons the power to use / issue penalty notices (PINS) for minor offences under the Act, to minimize costs.	BSC, ROC LGAQ, DNRM	High	On-going
Recover costs from managing impacts caused by SRN users.	Implement fees and charges for works undertaken as part of the role of managing stock routes (including removing dead stock) and include a list of the fees and charges within the conditions of the permit.	BSC	High	On-going

6.1.9 Risks and safety management

Strategy	Action	Who	Priority	When
Identify physical hazards to stock, or by stock, along the SRN.	Undertake an annual risk and safety audit of all stock route facilities and report findings to Council for prioritisation of actions and inclusion in Annual Works Plan funding application.	SRS	High	On-going
	Encourage drovers to advise the Stock Routes Supervisor of any hazards they identify on the SRN.	SRS	High	On-going
Minimise and monitor potential hazards.	Implement the <i>Balonne Shire Biosecurity Plan 2026-2031</i> .	BSC	High	On-going
	Continue to monitor and reduce fire hazards, where practical. Depasture with grazing permits for hazard reduction where suitable. Conduct hazard reduction burns for high risk areas where suitable.	SRS	Medium	On-going
	Continue to monitor the SRN around the township of St George for potential risks resulting from small width of stock route.	SRS BSC	High	On-going
Implement permit conditions	Encourage drovers to adhere to stock route signage and other conditions as set out in the 'Stock Route Travel Permit Information Notice' and conditions of the travel or agistment permit.	SRS	High	On-going
Infrastructure to meet safety regulations	Continue to review and update minimum standards for SRN infrastructure to meet safety regulations.	DNRM	High	On-going
Workplace Health and Safety	Increase knowledge and understanding of WH&S requirements associated with managing the SRN through training and development.	SRS	High	As required

7 Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Legislation

This plan addresses Balonne Shire Council's assigned obligations and responsibilities within its local government area primarily under the *Stock Route Management Act 2002*. This plan has been prepared within the parameters of all relevant government legislation and policy, including those listed below.

Local Laws and Policies

Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2018
Local Law No. 3 (Community and Environmental Management) 2018
Subordinate Local Law No. 3 (Community and Environmental Management) 2018
Subordinate Local Law No. 1.16 (Gates and Grids) 2011
Local Law No.4 (local Government Controlled Areas Facilities and Roads) 2018
Subordinate Local Law No. 4 (Local Government Controlled Areas, Facilities and Roads) 2018
Balonne Shire Planning Scheme 2024
Procurement Policy 2025-26
Fees and Charges - Rural Services and Animals
Grids and Exclusion Fencing Policy (Ref 48323)
Stock Route Compliance Priority Policy and Compliance Procedure
Town Common Agistment Policy
Wild Dog Exclusion Fence Vegetation Clearance Policy (ID 530771) 2020

Queensland Legislation

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003
Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Queensland) Act 1994
Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966 and Regulation 1998
Animal Care and Protection Act 2001
Biosecurity Act 2014
Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988
Environmental Protection Act 1994
Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990
Land Act 1994
Land Title Act 1994
Local Government Act 2009
Medicines and Poisons (Poisons and Prohibited Substances) Regulation 2021
Nature Conservation Act 1992
Planning Act 2016
Public Health Act 2005
Queensland Heritage Act 1992
Soil Conservation Act 1986
Stock Route Management Act 2002
Stock Route Management Regulation 2023
Transport Infrastructure Act 1994
Vegetation Management Act 1999
Water Act 2000
Weapons Act 1990
Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011

7.2 Links To Balonne Shire Council Plans

The Stock Route Management Plan directly aligns to the Balonne Shire Council Corporate Plan, Biosecurity Plan, Local Plans, and informs the annual Operational Plan priorities and resourcing. The planning and delivery framework sets clear intentions with desired outcomes for the management of the stock route network in the Balonne local government area.

7.3 Links To Other Plans

The preparation and delivery of this plan further aligns to other local, regional, state, and national plans, strategies, and policies. The overarching principles, objectives, and management strategies of these plans have been adopted as best practice where relevant to achieve the shared desired outcomes.

7.4 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals, businesses, organisations, or agencies that have a stake in, or are affected by the Balonne Shire Council Stock Route Management Plan and its delivery.

Government

Department of Resources
 Department of Transport and Main Roads
 Department of Environment and Science
 Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
 Biosecurity Queensland
 Queensland Rail

Industry and Community

Landowners
 Drivers
 Stock route and reserve users
 Saleyard managers and users
 Industry organisations
 Public and private service providers
 Emergency Services
 Natural resource management organisations
 Community interest groups
 Traditional Owners

7.5 Roles and responsibilities

The State Government, Balonne Shire Council, stock route users and other stakeholders have responsibilities and other roles in the management of the stock route network. These are outlined below.

State Government	<p>The Department of Resources is the custodian of the land, providing support, guidance and strategic direction and management on a range of permits affecting Queensland's stock route network. The State Government is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing policy and legislative advice • operational guidelines • compliance support • reviewing decisions • managing asset maintenance • training local government stock route officers.
Balonne Shire Council	<p>Balonne Shire Council is responsible for managing the stock route network and to control the movement of travelling stock, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pasture management and network integrity • issuing permits for travelling stock and agistment • managing values and impacts • asset and facilities maintenance and capital works • compliance and responding to complaints

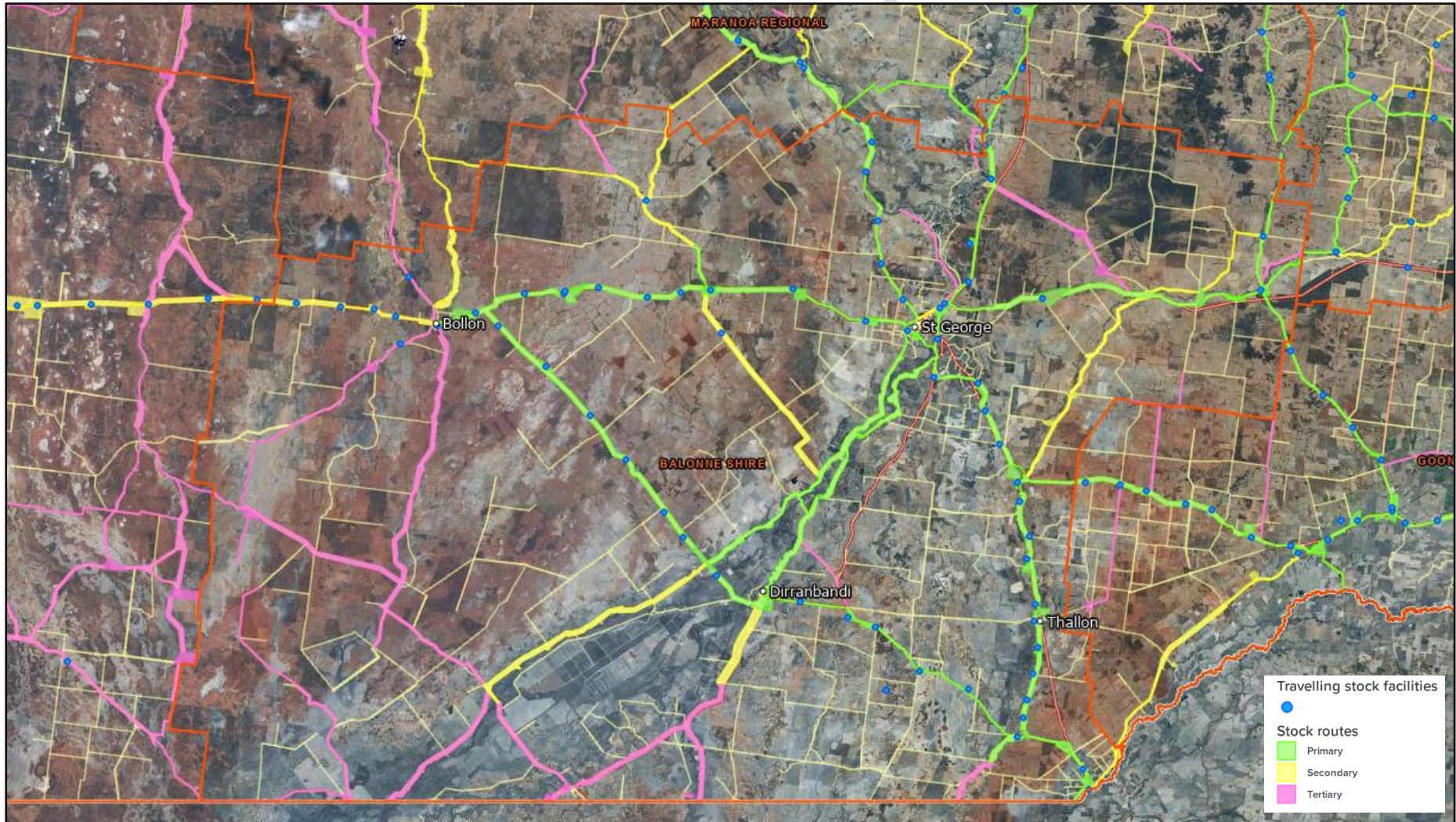
Neighbouring councils	Collaborate on matters affecting integrity and connectivity of the network and permits across shires.
Adjoining landowners	Landowners adjoining the stock route network have responsibilities including compliance to legislation and permit conditions relating to matters such as fencing, stock access, permitted grazing, pasture management, general biosecurity obligations, take of water, grids and gates, and any other use of the stock route network. Notify Council of any issues relating to the stock route network and cooperate with Council when required to do so.
Drovers and permit holders	Compliance to all permit conditions and legislative requirements.
All users and public	Compliance to legislative requirements, general biosecurity obligation, and maintain the values of the network. Notify Council of any issues relating to the stock route network and cooperate with Council when required to do so.
Industry	Contribute to regional planning processes and priorities, assist in shaping relevant policies, land manager engagement, leadership of best management practice, technical advice.

8 Appendices

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Appendix 1

Balonne Shire Stock Route Network Map



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Mapping of the Stock Routes is available on Queensland Globe <https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/access/stock-routes/maps>.

Appendix 2

Inventory of Stock Route Network Facilities

Route	Facility ID	Name	Local Name	Description	Other Comments
S054	D0001	Charlton BWA	West Drain	Piped bore line	SR Water Facility
S054	D0002	Charlton BWA	East Drain	Piped bore line	
S054	D0003	W/H Plains BWA	West Drain	Piped bore line	
S054	D0004	W/H Plains BWA	East Drain	Piped bore line	
S055	D0006	Mona BWA	Loop Mid Drain	Piped bore line	
S055	D0008	Mona BWA	East Drain	Piped bore line	
S055	D0009	Chippeway BWA		Piped bore line	
S055	D0010	Maroungle BWA	West Drain	Piped bore line	
S055	D0011	Maroungle BWA	East Drain	Piped bore line	
P005	D0012	Myall Plains BWA		Piped bore line	Capped
S062	D0013	Mona BWA		Piped bore line	
S062	D0014	Mona Private	Northwest Drain	Piped bore line	
S062	D0016	Mona Private	Southeast Drain	Piped bore line	
S062	D0019	Bullindgie Private	South Drain	Piped bore line	
S062	D0021	Ingie BWA	South Drain	Piped bore line	
S062	D0022	Yamburgan Private		Piped bore line	
S062	D0023	Dunwinnie Private	West Drain	Piped bore line	
S062	D0026	Dunwinnie		Piped bore line	
S062	D0028	Bullawarrie Private	Drain	Piped bore line	
S716	D0029	Cashmere1		Piped bore line	
S716	D0030	Cashmere2		Piped bore line	
S054	N0001	Paterson CK		Natural waterhole	
S054	N0002	Mungalalla CK		Natural waterhole	
S054	N0003	Wallam CK		Natural waterhole	
S055	N0004	Balonne R		Natural waterhole	
P005	N0005	Balonne R		Natural waterhole	
P005	N0007	Balonne R	Mia Bend	Natural waterhole	
P005	N0009	Balonne R	Union Camp HY	Natural waterhole	
P005	N0010	Balonne R		Natural waterhole	
P005	N0011	Balonne R		Natural waterhole	
P005	N0012	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P005	N0013	Moonie R	Nindigully HY	Natural waterhole	
P006	N0014	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0015	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0016	Moonie R	HY	Natural waterhole	
P006	N0017	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0018	Moonie R	Thallon	Natural waterhole	
P006	N0019	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0020	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0021	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0022	Moonie R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0023	Moonie R	Dareel	Natural waterhole	

Route	Facility ID	Name	Local Name	Description	Other Comments
P006	N0024	Little Weir R		Natural waterhole	
P006	N0025	McIntyre R		Natural waterhole	
S062	N0026	Culgoa R		Natural waterhole	
S062	N0027	Balonne Minor R	Dirranbandi	Natural waterhole	
S063	N0028	Kooroon		Natural waterhole	
M626	N0029	Alton East		Natural waterhole	
S055	W0166	65 MILE		SR water facility	From a capped bore & piped to tank and troughs
S055	W0254	7 MILE		SR water facility	Dam
S055	W0351	Boolba		SR water facility	Dam
U619	W0363	Cypress		SR water facility	Dam
S055	W0545	Mona	6 Mile Reserve	SR water facility	From a capped bore & piped to tank and troughs
S062	W0546	Keebrah		SR water facility	Dam
S062	W0547	Diamond		SR water facility	Dam
S055	W1965	Boomerang		SR water facility	Dam
S055	W2071	Pipers	Crescent Vale	SR water facility	Dam
U632	W2151	Bull Holes		SR water facility	Dam
S062	W2159	Noondoo	Culbokie	SR water facility	Dam
S055	W2521	Mulga View		SR water facility	Sub-artesian bore with solar pump, tank and troughs
P005	W2558	Burgurrah	Strathbogie	SR water facility	Piped from Dam to tank and trough by solar pump
P005	W2592	Boombah 1		SR water facility	Dam
P005	W2628	Boombah 2		SR water facility	Dam
P005	W2629	Boombah 4		SR water facility	Dam
P005	W2642	Bindle		SR water facility	Tank and troughs
P005	W2691	Thuraggi		SR water facility	Dam
S716	W2730	Clear Water		SR water facility	Dam
S716	W2731	Galonga		SR water facility	Dam
S716	W2732	Horse CK		SR water facility	Dam
S716	W2733	The Glear		SR water facility	Dam
S716	W2734	Waigally		SR water facility	Dam
S062	W2832	Bullawarrie		SR water facility	From capped bore & piped to tank and troughs
S062	W2843	Glencoe		SR water facility	From capped bore & piped to tank and troughs
S055	W2844	Clonard		SR water facility	From capped bore & piped to tank and troughs
S055	W2846	Mourilyan		SR water facility	From capped bore & piped to tank and troughs

Route	Facility ID	Name	Local Name	Description	Other Comments
P005	W2836	Bandy Andy		SR Water Facility	Source bore to be capped and two tanks & troughs installed. Proposed for the Great Artesian Basin Bore Replacement Scheme.
P005	W2839	Balagna		SR Water Facility	As above
S062	W2842	Buffel Park		SR Water Facility	As above
S062	W2845	Ingie		Proposed/Under construction	As above
S055	W2849	Chippeway		SR Water Facility	As above
S055	W2850	Wondit		Proposed/Under construction	As above
S055	W2857	Mundalee		SR Water Facility	As above
SR054	W2894	Vincents Valley		SR Water Facility	Tanks & Troughs
SR570	W2890	Wild Horse		SR Water Facility	Tanks & Troughs