

LANDHOLDER RECOMMENDED GRID POLICY POSITION

ISSUE: Gladstone Regional Council's *Gates & Grids* – Review of Policy

DATE: February 2019

BACKGROUND:

In response to the Gladstone Regional Council's (Council) announcement of its intention to review its *Gates & Grids* policy ten land holders met to discuss their concerns on 8 February 2019.

These landholders represent a total of 77 grids on gazetted roads in the Gladstone Regional Council area.

There was recognition of the need for Council and landholders to have an agreed policy for grids and gates on gazetted roads, however they shared the following concerns:

- That the current policy was a back-doors attempt to get rid of unfenced roads – however this would create several issues including:
 - o Increased fire risk from fuel load,
 - o Lack of management of pasture and weeds on road easement,
 - o Compensation for the removal of the right of grazing on road easements.
- The move of insurance risk under public liability to landholders is unjustified and is unnecessarily ad hoc and risky particularly for small landholders and is better for consistency to be held by Council.
- There should be provision for shared responsibility and grids adjoining Government infrastructure such as Main Roads or Railway should be the responsibility of the Government entity

RECOMMENDED POLICY:

1. Landholders should be responsible to **identify** and record all grids with Council.
 - a. However, a registration fee should not be levied as substantial rates are already paid.
2. Landholders should be responsible for the **installation and maintenance** of grids to an agreed standard.
 - a. If a landholder does not rectify a substandard grid or negotiate an outcome with Council in a timely manner (suggest six (6) months timeframe) Council to have the right to rectify and invoice the landholder for the work.
3. **Ownership and insurance** to be responsibility of the Council due to the concerns above.
4. Council to be responsible for the **maintenance of the road leading** into the grid including the last 10m and drainage.
5. Landholders to **share responsibility for grids** on boundaries
6. **Government infrastructure entities** (e.g. Main Roads or Queensland Rail/Aurizon) to be solely responsible for grids that bound their easements/land. Any removal of these grids must only be done with the agreement of the neighbouring landholder.
7. **Access to gate** beside grid:
 - a. If a new gate/grid is being established landholder, the landholder to be responsible to ensure vehicles can access gate (formed road standard not required but removal of issues such as table drains, trees etc).
 - b. Established gates/grids – council to ensure access as part of annual maintenance (formed road standard not required but removal of issues such as table drains, trees etc).
8. If **Council damages** and or fills a grid during annual maintenance (e.g. by a grader) Council to be responsible to rectify.
9. If the **AADT on a road increases** due to other industry activity such as resources or tourism, that industry to be responsible to upgrade grids to meet a higher standard if required.
10. An **inspection regime** and standards to be developed in consultation with landholders.
11. Landholders to be able to access a 'vac truck' through Council to **clean out grids** – suggested to be timed with annual road maintenance.