

# Environmental Management Policy and Strategy

● 2002 - 2007

Main Roads



Queensland Government  
Department of Main Roads

This Environmental Management Policy and Strategy was prepared by the Planning, Design and Environment Division of Road System and Engineering. It provides a summary of the major environmental issues facing Main Roads strategies in the future.

Any comments should be forwarded to:

Executive Director (Planning, Design and Environment)

Main Roads  
GPO Box 1412  
BRISBANE Q 4001

or phone (07) 3834 2011

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## ***From the General-Manager Road System and Engineering***

Main Roads is the steward of 34 000 kilometres of State-controlled roads which is approximately 20% of the State's total road network. The State-controlled road network carries 80% of Queensland's traffic and represents the State's largest single physical asset with a replacement value of approximately \$25 billion. Main Roads' mission is to plan, deliver and manage a road system that improves livability of communities, affords safe travel conditions for all road users, supports economic development in a cost effective way, reduces transport costs for industry and promotes ecologically sustainable transport solutions.

The environment plays an ever-increasing role in Main Roads vision which is:

**A road system that enhances the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Queensland's communities.**

This is Main Roads' second Environmental Management Policy and Strategy (EMP&S). It builds on the department's commitment to environmental management and conservation and reconfirms the environment as one of our highest corporate priorities. The first EMP&S developed the foundations for systematic environmental management. This resulted in:

- Capacity building as demonstrated by a five-fold increase in professional environmental staff employed in all districts, regions and other Divisions between 1990 and 2001;
- Increase in environmental awareness of all staff;
- Identification of core environmental services to assist in decision-making for road network planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation;
- Preparation and implementation of a package of environmental manuals, specifications, data bases and reporting processes which form the support system for environmental advice; and
- Relationship-building with both internal and external stakeholders.

Changes in environmental legislation, community expectations, international trends and Main Roads' capabilities in environmental performance necessitated the review of the first EMP&S. From an environmental perspective, we have made significant progress. The culture of Main Roads is adopting and adapting to the new environmental agenda within a continual improvement framework. At every level we are being asked to take into account concerns that are wider than the roads themselves.

The way forward for Main Roads is to build on the environmental experience and processes that have been established and to continually monitor and improve our environmental practices.

I am sure that the implementation of this Policy and Strategy will maintain Main Roads' role as a leader in the integrated environmental management of transport corridors.

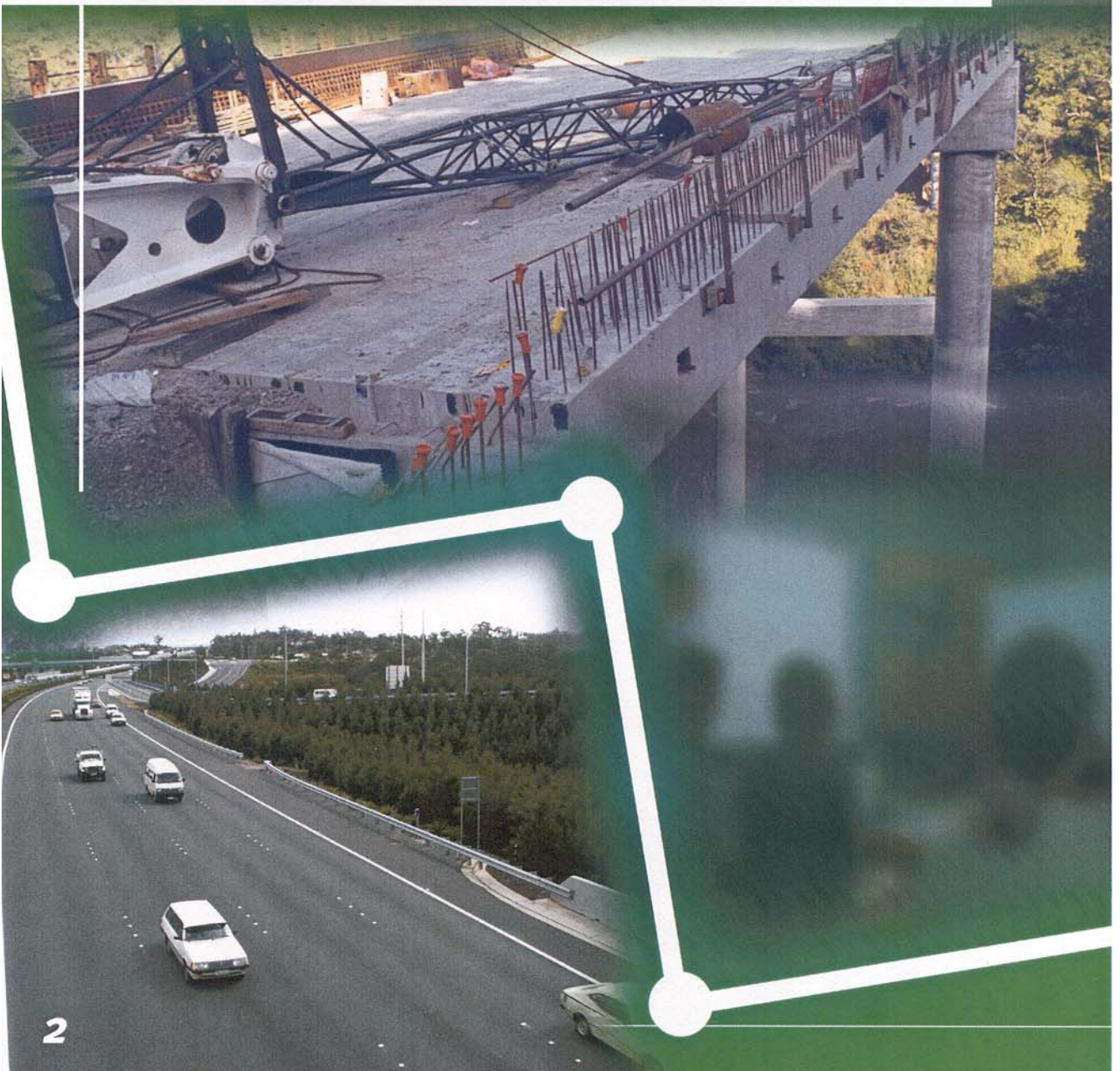


Ron Gordon  
General Manager (Road System and Engineering)

*From the General-Manager Road System and Engineering*



# *Policy*



# Statement

**M**ain Roads manages the road network for State-controlled roads, including National Highways, within Queensland. This is done in a manner consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development to meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations.

Our objective is to manage Main Roads' impacts on natural, human and built environments to strive for environmental excellence. To achieve this we are committed to continuous improvement in our environmental performance through:

1. Developing and implementing management systems and integrating within management practices;
2. Monitoring, reviewing and reporting on environmental performance;
3. Providing appropriate environmental resources;
4. Delivering awareness and training;
5. Developing and implementing good environmental practices; and
6. Responding to the needs of the community and other stakeholders.

In delivering these commitments, we will incorporate environmental aspects into the business planning process and develop and deliver relevant actions.

This policy commits and involves all Main Roads employees.



Steve Golding  
Director-General



# *Strategic*

*The environment is the surroundings in which an organisation operates, including water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, air, humans and their interrelation.*





# Focus

## Main Roads Commitment

The department's *Roads Connecting Queenslanders* document provides the strategic long-term direction for the Queensland road system and Main Roads. The EMP&S was developed in accordance with the Main Roads environmental outcome:

### Environmental management to support environmental conservation

This outcome should be viewed in terms of other Main Roads outcomes for developing a road system that meets community needs.

Main Roads' environmental outcome highlights its commitment to the principles of ecologically sustainable development that involve:

- Maintaining ecological processes;
- Protecting biodiversity;
- Improving equity within and between generations; and
- Improving individual and community well-being and welfare.

*Roads Connecting Queenslanders* also recognises the need to be environmental managers of road projects. This ensures that Main Roads aligns closely with the state government's policy, priorities and outcomes, and those of its stakeholders.

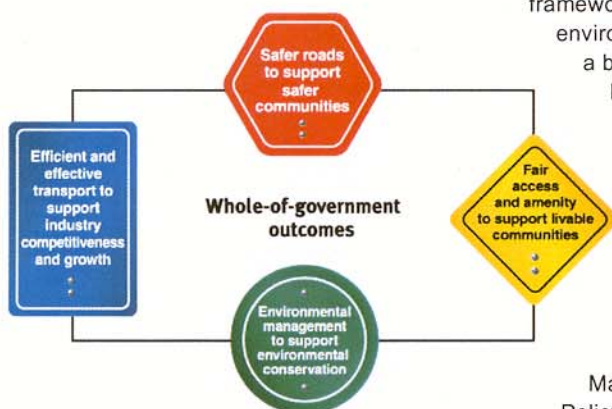
## The Purpose of the Environmental Management Policy and Strategy

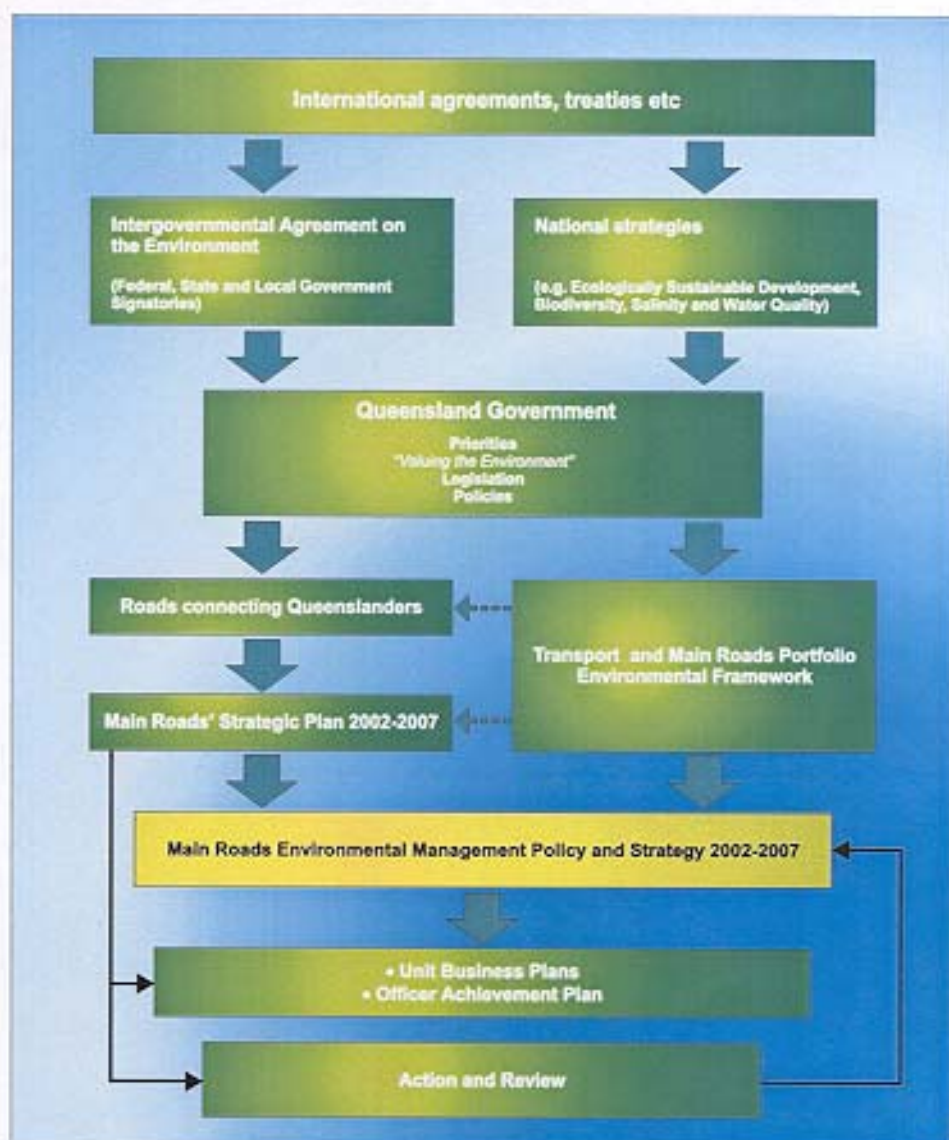
Main Roads Environmental Management Policy and Strategy (EMP&S) sets the framework for the department's future environmental performance and provides a basis for reporting on progress. It has a 5 year lifespan which correlates with the key Main Roads documents *Roads Connecting Queenslanders* and *Strategic Plan 2002-2007*.

The EMP&S also provides a means to action Main Roads components of the Transport and Main Roads Portfolio Environmental Policy Position and Action Plan (to be developed in 2002).

The department's environmental policy and the commitments within it have been developed to address Main Roads strategic environmental responsibilities as outlined in *Roads Connecting Queenslanders*, *Strategic Plan 2002-2007* and the Transport and Main Roads Portfolio Environmental Policy Position and Action Plan.

Main Roads EMP&S is also related to numerous other initiatives. The figure on page 6 outlines these relationships.





Development of the EMP&S included:

- Review of the previous EMP&S against Main Roads activities;
- Substantial consultation (with both internal and external stakeholders);
- Benchmarking of the previous EMP&S against similar documents from other State and International road authorities; and
- Semi-qualitative risk analysis on each of the issues identified to prioritise and determine the likelihood and consequence of environmental impacts resulting from Main Roads activities.

The EMP&S addresses the significant environmental issues relevant to providing ecologically sustainable roads<sup>1</sup>. These significant issues relate to:

- Erosion and sediment control;
- Fauna management;
- Vegetation management;
- Water quality;
- Road traffic noise;
- Pest management;
- Waste management; and
- Cultural heritage.

<sup>1</sup> Ecologically sustainable roads are defined as road corridors that support community transport needs while maintaining or improving natural ecosystem processes, natural habitat features and landscape stability over time.



These issues and their impacts result from the planning, designing, constructing, operating and maintaining road infrastructure and the associated road reserve.

In order to provide a realistic and achievable framework that focuses on the significant impacts, issues that do not require an immediate commitment by Main Roads are not addressed in the EMP&S.

Apart from *Roads Connecting Queenslanders, Strategic Plan 2002-2007* and the EMP&S, Main Roads has a number of other specific policies covering environmental issues such as:

- Clearing within road boundaries;
- Roadside conservation;
- Fire threat management;
- Declared plants (noxious weeds);
- Roadside landscaping;
- Awareness signage for significant environmental areas; and
- Public consultation.

### Main Roads Structure

In order to ensure efficiency in the delivery of road infrastructure and management of the road reserve, Main Roads has separated the functions of 'owner/purchaser' of the road network from the 'provider' of transport construction and maintenance and associated services.

Both the owner and provider have responsibilities under this EMP&S and these have been highlighted in the actions within the *Strategies and Actions* section starting on page 14.



## Case Study

Up to 10 animal impacts per night have been recorded on the Landsborough Highway just east of Barcaldine. As a result, 3 kilometres of guideposts have been fitted with reflectors to assess their ability to deter animals from crossing roads at night. These reflectors are designed to shield the lights from passing traffic back onto the roadsides to alert the wildlife to danger and discourage them from crossing at that time.





# *The Environmental*





# Challenge

The challenges for the progression of the environmental policy and environmental management as a whole for Main Roads are:

- Working within the competing multiple use of corridors (e.g. electricity, water and gas suppliers);
- Balancing the competing demands and processes associated with Main Roads business;
- Competition for the scarce resource that Main Roads has stewardship over (e.g. working with community groups for vegetation conservation or koala fodder);
- Effectively working with a large variety of stakeholders;
- Providing adequate technical support and resources for environmental management;
- Maintaining the cultural change in relation to environmental management within the department; and
- Integrating environmental management into products, services and business capability.

These issues are implicitly addressed via the strategies in the *Strategies and Actions* section starting on page 14.

## Environmental Issues and Their Priority

In *Roads Connecting Queenslanders*, Main Roads has made a commitment to provide environmental management to support environmental conservation by focusing on:

- **Minimising land degradation;**
- **Maintaining biodiversity;**
- **Managing the road system and societal impacts;**
- **Resource conservation; and**
- **Working in a whole of government way.**

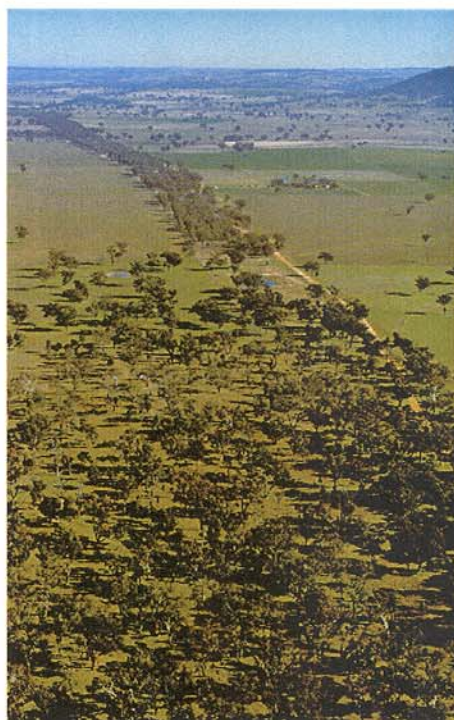
The strategies, outlined on pages 14 - 17, are aimed at fulfilling these commitments. These are the high and medium priority issues for Main Roads to address between 2002 and 2007.

## Our Environmental Commitments

*Roads Connecting Queenslanders* and the *Strategic Plan 2002-2007* identify the department's services and products provided

to the community, industry and government. These are:

- **Road System** — the integration between state, interstate, regional and local land-use and infrastructure within a network-wide context to support Main Roads outcomes;
- **Road Corridor** — the provision, preservation and management of road corridors and reserves for better safety, multi-modal transport usage and environmental solutions of the road system;
- **Road Operation** — the maximisation of operational efficiency within corridors and the road system to improve infrastructure capacity and service to users;
- **Road Project** — delivery of a program of projects aligned to system-wide, corridor and operation decisions to achieve road outcomes and stakeholder needs; and
- **Business Capability** — maximising business capability to improve project, operation, corridor and system-wide activities to enable achievement of future direction.

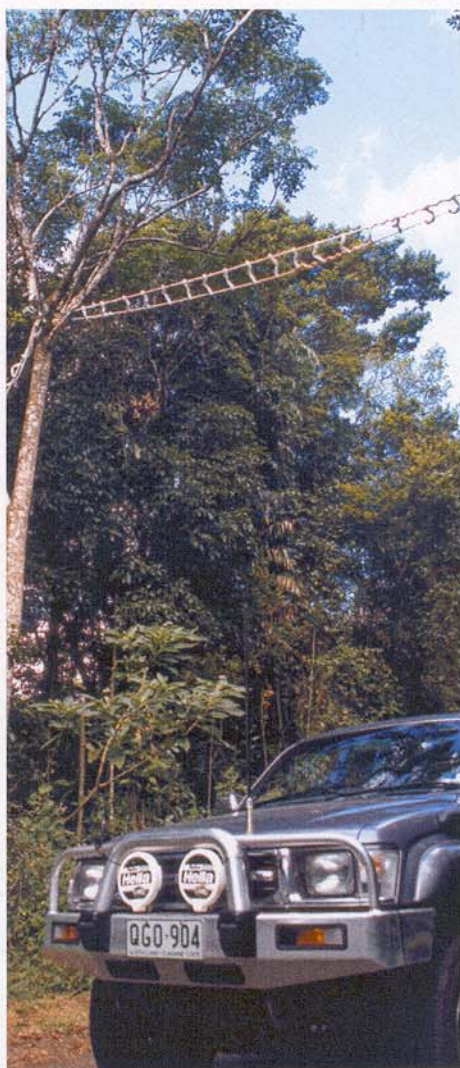




This policy and strategy addresses the environmental requirements of these services and products. The six commitments identified in the Environmental Policy are:

## ① Developing and implementing management systems and integrating within management practices

Actions developed to meet this strategy are aimed at recognising the complex interdependencies between the road system and the surrounding environment<sup>2</sup>. This will be achieved by ensuring that environmental management issues are addressed within departmental systems, by working with stakeholders, by maintaining or improving environmental values within state controlled roads and by exceeding legislative compliance through the implementation of best practice environmental performance.



## ② Monitoring, reviewing and reporting on environmental performance

This strategy aims to provide the environmental basis for assessing the effectiveness of road investment in meeting the government's social, economic and environmental outcomes<sup>3</sup>. The actions are directed at ensuring that appropriate processes are in place to effectively report and measure performance outcomes.

## ③ Providing appropriate environmental resources

The actions outlined under this strategy are aimed at providing the resources to deliver the departmental direction of being a leader in environmental management of road corridors and a leader in technical excellence<sup>4</sup>. Processes will be established to ensure sufficient and appropriate staff are dedicated to environmental management. Actions will also ensure that environmental costings are included at the program and project level.

## ④ Delivering awareness and training

Actions have been developed to ensure that Main Roads staff have relevant environmental skills to meet the departmental objectives to strengthen capability and learning and to improve corporate performance and conformance<sup>5</sup>.

## ⑤ Developing and implementing good environmental practices

The government is committed to optimising environmental outcomes. Main Roads, as custodian of an extensive road and reserve system, acknowledges the significant environmental aspects, values and issues reflected in Commonwealth and state government legislation and policy<sup>6</sup>. The strategies developed to achieve this objective are aimed at meeting these departmental responsibilities.

## ⑥ Responding to the needs of the community

Main Roads accepts that the development, maintenance and operation of infrastructure can change the amenity and quality of life of local communities. It recognises that encouraging community and stakeholder collaboration in decision-making is an important step towards achieving community livability<sup>7</sup>.



The strategies to achieve this objective include, working effectively with the community, publicly reporting on environmental performance and respecting and conserving cultural and natural heritage.

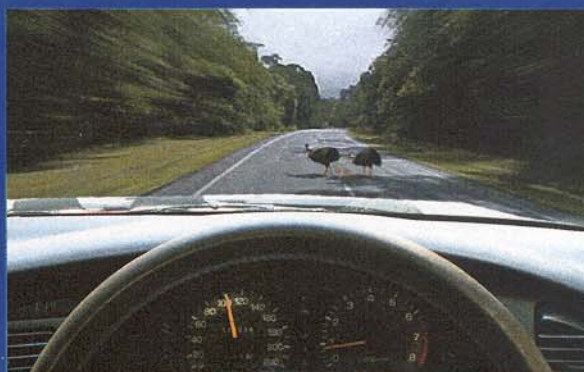
These commitments address Main Roads significant environmental issues as identified on page 6. A semi-qualitative risk analysis of these issues was conducted through consultation with internal and external stakeholders. The prioritised issues outlined in the following table were subsequently developed.

- <sup>2</sup> *Responding to Stakeholder Expectations and the Challenges* — Roads Connecting Queenslanders
- <sup>3</sup> *Evaluating and Reporting on Success* — Roads Connecting Queenslanders
- <sup>4</sup> *Organisational Direction* — Main Roads Strategic Plan 2002-2007
- <sup>5</sup> *Organisational Capability* — Main Roads Strategic Plan 2002-2007
- <sup>6</sup> *Environmental Management to Support Environmental Conservation* - Roads Connecting Queenslanders
- <sup>7</sup> *Basic Access and Amenity Support Livable Communities* - Roads Connecting Queenslanders

Short Term Priorities	Medium to Long Term Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Vegetation Management</li> <li>■ Fauna Management</li> <li>■ Pest Management</li> <li>■ Water Quality</li> <li>■ Road Traffic Noise</li> <li>■ Erosion and Sediment Control</li> <li>■ Waste Management</li> <li>■ Cultural Heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Contaminated Land</li> <li>■ Noise from Road Construction and Maintenance</li> <li>■ Road Runoff</li> <li>■ Air Quality</li> <li>■ Visual Amenity</li> <li>■ Energy Use and Resource Efficiency</li> </ul>

## Case Study

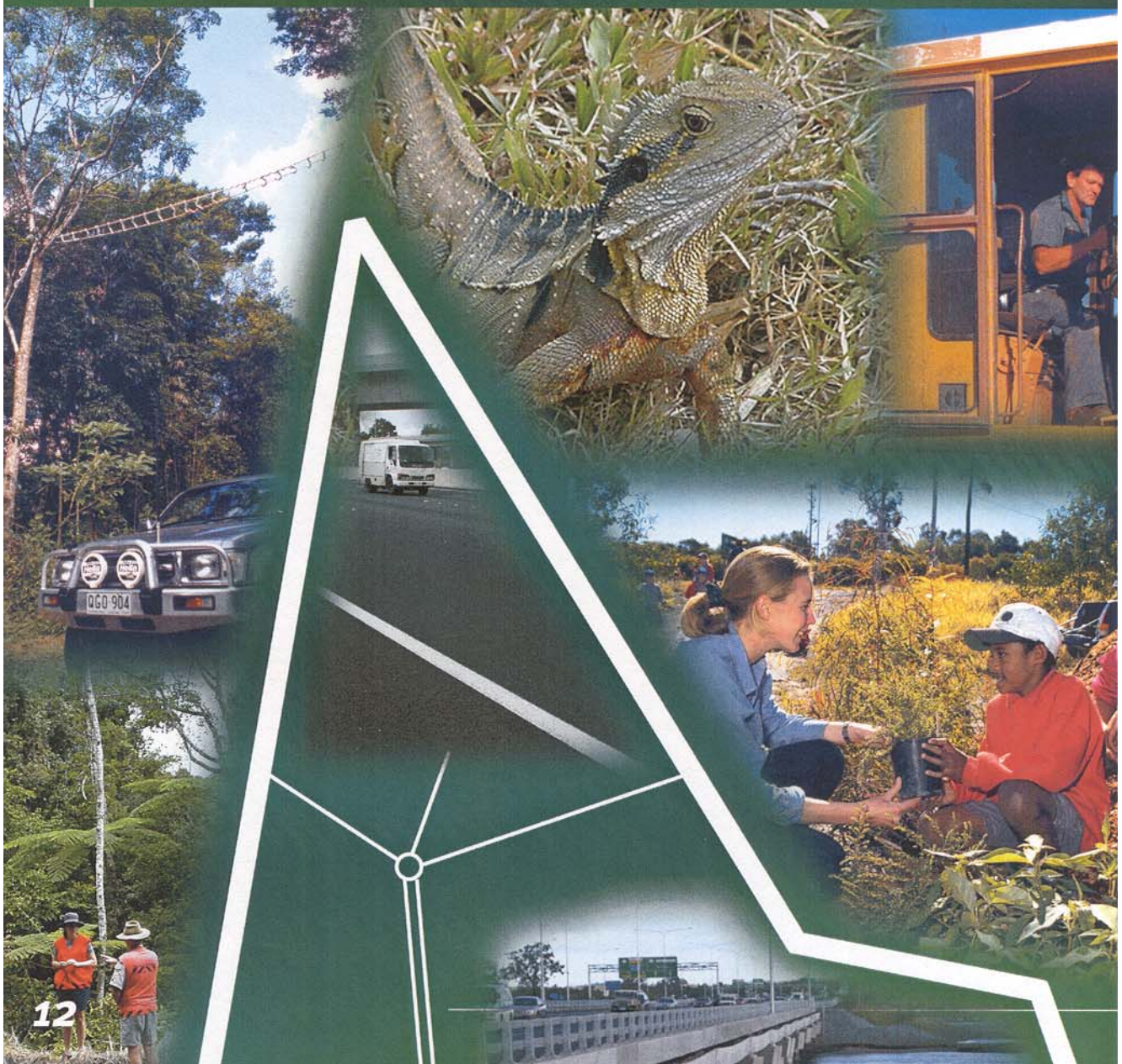
The Southern Cassowary is an endangered species. The upgrade of roads in the Mission Beach area lead to growing community concern about the impact of the existing and future roads on this species. About 40 cassowaries have been killed on Mission Beach roads since 1989 and 59



adult cassowaries are currently estimated to remain in the Mission Beach area. Research work on cassowary habitat, home range and crossing points was undertaken and road crossing points were mapped. Risk reduction strategies were then designed including warning signs, speed reductions and rumble strips. Extensive community consultation was undertaken to address concerns on matters of conservation and vehicle movement and on-going monitoring is measuring program success.



# Implementation





# Process

The figure on page 6 shows how the EMP&S feeds into the business plans of the respective Business Units and consequently into individual officer's Achievement Plans. Main Roads Business Units will review the EMP&S on an annual basis and incorporate the relevant strategies into their business plans via a risk assessment process. These plans will include actions addressing each of the relevant strategies from the EMP&S. These actions should detail activities, responsibilities, timing, costing and a review process.

The EMP&S will also be reviewed from an operational perspective on an annual basis to determine:

- Appropriateness;
- Implementation successes and issues;
- Implementation progress and reporting to Senior Management;
- Awareness/communication issues; and
- Other issues that may have arisen.

This review will be co-ordinated by Main Roads Road System and Engineering and Strategic Policy and Development groups.

The actions in the following section are colour coded to correlate with the priorities on page 11. Definitions of acronyms used throughout the strategies can be found in the definitions table on page 17.

Responsibility for the development and implementation of the various strategies is also identified. Where responsibility is assigned to more than one group, **the lead sector is identified as the first group**. A number of strategies require either direct involvement or co-operation of other internal and external stakeholders. The lead sector for each strategy will therefore develop the appropriate consultative processes necessary to engage these stakeholders and develop appropriate action plans.

## Case Study

The native grassland communities of the Darling Downs are highly significant ecological communities and support many rare and endangered species. These communities are predominantly contained in the road reserve.

Through both its construction and maintenance activities Main Roads often has to clear small areas of these communities. Environmental advice work has concentrated on assessing areas to be disturbed and field trials to improve rehabilitation and management and minimise losses.



## STRATEGY 1

### Commitments 1 and 2: Developing and Implementing Management Systems and Monitoring, Reviewing and Reporting on Environmental Performance

#### Performance Measures:

- Number of system documents developed and/or reviewed on an annual basis.
- Percentage of business and achievement plans that reflect policy and strategy requirements as a comparison to previous year.
- Environmental progress reported against targets

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Target
1.1 Integration of environmental management into total road system decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review integrated planning, road system planning, investment planning and risk management policies, guidelines and procedures to incorporate environmental management.</li> <li>b. Review road corridor preservation, road corridor utilisation and road corridor management policies, guidelines and procedures to incorporate environmental management.</li> <li>c. Review user information, traffic flow optimisation, asset optimisation and road safety policies, guidelines and procedures to incorporate environmental management.</li> <li>d. Review delivery of road program, performance of road projects, industry capability and cultural heritage and reconciliation with indigenous communities policies, guidelines and procedures to incorporate environmental management.</li> <li>e. Review leadership development, knowledge management, corporate performance, support functions and enhancing internal and external stakeholder relationships policies, guidelines and procedures to incorporate environmental management.</li> </ul>	RS&E SP&D FBS CO	<p>All reviews complete and implementation paper developed by Dec 2003.</p> <p>Incorporation of environmental management on-going, following reviews.</p>
1.2 Departmental systems (including standards, guidelines, manuals, procedures, etc.) that enhance Main Roads environmental performance continually developed and utilised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Establish and implement system and project audit programs based on environmental risk management.</li> <li>b. Review and update standards, manuals, procedures, etc. as appropriate.</li> </ul>	RS&E SP&D FBS Districts Regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Systems developed and continually improved. 90% audits undertaken on an annual basis.</li> </ul>
1.3 Conservation or improvement of environmental values within and adjacent to State-controlled roads by developing and implementing management systems at the local level to address issues such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• minimising adverse impacts on flora, fauna, soil, water and dependent ecosystems;</li> <li>• managing road traffic noise; and</li> <li>• managing pest species.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Specific issues identified in this objective addressed within management systems.</li> <li>b. Continual improvement in addressing issues identified within this objective.</li> </ul>	Districts RS&E Regions RoadTek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Issues identified in 1.3 addressed in 90% of management systems by Dec 2004.</li> </ul>
1.4 An efficient and effective environmental performance reporting process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review the environmental reporting framework and implement recommendations.</li> <li>b. Business Units to use environmental reports as a management tool.</li> <li>c. Main Roads environmental performance assessed against the EMP&amp;S.</li> </ul>	RS&E Districts Regions RoadTek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Dec 2003</li> <li>b. Dec 2004</li> <li>c. Annually starting June 2003.</li> </ul>
1.5 Streamlined process for obtaining permits and licences from statutory authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop and implement an action plan for identifying relevant legislation, responsible agency and Main Roads responsible officer.</li> </ul>	RS&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. June 2005</li> </ul>
1.6 Legislative requirements addressed in construction and maintenance processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contract documents reviewed to determine opportunities for improved processes.</li> <li>b. Contract documents amended in accordance with assessment findings from 1.6 a.</li> </ul>	RS&E Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. June 2004</li> <li>b. June 2005</li> </ul>



## STRATEGY 2

### Commitments 3 and 4: Providing Appropriate Environmental Resources and Delivering Awareness and Training

#### Performance Measures:

- Workforce planning indicates an appropriate number and distribution of staff dedicated to environmental management.
- Sufficient financial resources to ensure compliance with environmental responsibilities.
- All staff provided with appropriate awareness and training.

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Target
2.1 Appropriate number and distribution of skilled staff dedicated to environmental management.	a. Develop and implement environmental graduate program that provides an appropriate number, skill mix and distribution of staff. b. Review environmental workload and ensure sufficient number of qualified and experienced staff to service appropriately.	RS&E Districts Regions RoadTek	a. Nov 2003 b. Dec 2004
2.2 Continually improving staff environmental capability and accountability.	a. Recruitment aligned to skill requirements identified through workforce planning process. b. Environmental staff rotated through various business functions in accordance with a local program. c. Develop and implement Environmental Career Working Group. d. Environmental responsibilities detailed in relevant Position Descriptions and Achievement Plans e. Policy and strategies reflected in business and achievement plans.	Human Resources RS&E Districts Regions RoadTek	a. June 2005 b. 80% of programs implemented by June 2005. c. Dec 2003 d. Director level and above by June 2004, Manager level by Dec 2004, others by June 2005. e. 80% achievement by June 2003.
2.3 Staff with relevant environmental skills	a. Identify generic training needs and address training requirements. b. Environmental awareness training specific to Main Roads activities for appropriate non-environmental staff. c. Engineering awareness training specific to Main Roads activities for environmental staff.	Regions Districts RoadTek RS&E	a. June 2004 and then on-going. b. June 2003 and then on-going. c. June 2003 and then on-going.
2.4 Adequate financial resources for environmental management.	a. Environmental conservation/enhancement projects on the Roads Implementation Program. b. Scheme costings to include environmental components. c. Develop a revised methodology for project evaluation which includes externality costs. d. Ensure environmental issues are incorporated into Business Planning and budgeting process	Districts RS&E	a. Improvement on a comparative basis. b. Commence June 2006 c. 80% of RIP projects include environmental externality costs by June 2006. d. 90% of business plan budgets include environmental issues by June 2004.



## STRATEGY 3

## Commitment 5: Developing and Implementing Good Environmental Practice

## Performance Measures:

- Provision of documentation that outlines a clear, consistent, concise and streamlined direction for environmental management.
- Continual improvement in on-site environmental performance.

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Target
3.1 A clear, consistent, concise and streamlined direction for environmental management for Main Roads.	a. In partnership with others, coordinate strategic land use planning to meet road transport demand. b. Improve environmental management components of planning, design, construction and maintenance contracts. c. Develop and implement a Strategic Waste Management Plan (i.e. Policy and Implementation Plan). d. Review EMP&S	Districts Regions RS&E SP&D	b. June 2003 and then on-going. c. Dec 2003 d. Operational review annually, starting Dec 2003. Strategic review and update June 2006.
3.2 Contribution to the development and implementation of good roads environmental practice.	a. In partnership with others, monitor new environmental initiatives relevant to environmental management of road corridors and networks. b. Develop and implement a 5 year rolling R&D plan. c. Consider compensatory habitat issues. d. Continue the development and implementation of the Road Corridor Environmental Assessment (RCEA) e. Identify and implement appropriate management strategies and processes for threatened and high conservation ecological species and communities. f. In partnership with others, manage plant and animal pests within the road reserve. g. Minimise noise impacts from the use of State controlled roads and from construction and maintenance activities. h. Protect waterbodies with high conservation values from spills, heavy metals and hydrocarbons. i. In partnership with others, undertake activities to ensure minimal detrimental impacts to air quality. j. In partnership with others, contribute toward the attainment of National and State Greenhouse Response strategies. k. Develop more efficient uses of hydrocarbons (e.g. bitumen, diesel, petrol), metals and other natural resources used in construction and maintenance projects. l. Minimise water and land contamination associated with road run off. m. Enhance the visual amenity associated with road construction and maintenance projects. n. Ensure traffic management strategies incorporate environmental management considerations.	RS&E SP&D Districts Regions RoadTek	b. Plan developed by June 2003 c. Issues paper complete by June 2002. d. On-going e. Strategies developed by June 2005 n. 80% of traffic management strategies with environmental component by June 2005.
3.3 Continually improve "on-site" environmental performance.	a. Ensure Main Roads and contractors employ sound environmental management practices on construction and maintenance projects. b. Minimise soil erosion and the transportation of sediment into water bodies from Main Roads activities.	Districts RoadTek RS&E	
3.4 Establish internal and external relationships to achieve the environmental commitments and strategies.	a. Increase awareness of Main Roads environmental management processes and practices and foster effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders. b. Identify and respond appropriately to stakeholder issues. c. Continue to develop effective working relationships with other statutory bodies. d. Continue effective information exchange through the use of Environmental Reference Groups at the State and regional level.	Regions Districts RS&E	



## STRATEGY 4

### Commitment 6: Responding to the Needs of the Community and Other Stakeholders

#### Performance Measures:

- Undertake Public Environmental Reporting
- Effective working relationships with stakeholders

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Target
4.1 Work effectively with stakeholders.	a. Develop and facilitate a State-wide stakeholder reference group to discuss departmental initiatives, actions and progress. b. Develop and implement methods to ensure local relevant stakeholder groups are informed of and can participate in Main Roads environmental activities.	RS&E Districts Regions	a. Group developed and first meeting held by June 2005. b. Dec 2005
4.2 Report environmental performance to the public.	a. Main Roads environmental performance reported to Cabinet and the community.	RS&E	a. First report by Dec 2003
4.3 Respect and conserve cultural heritage.	a. In partnership with others, minimise the impacts of State controlled roads on areas and issues of cultural significance.	RS&E SP&D Districts RoadTek Regions	a. On-going

## Definitions of Acronyms

Following is a list of acronyms used throughout the strategies

<b>EMP&amp;S</b>	Environmental Management Policy and Strategy
<b>FBS</b>	Finance and Business Services
<b>RCEA</b>	Road Corridor Environmental Assessment
<b>RIP</b>	Roads Implementation Program
<b>RS&amp;E</b>	Road System and Engineering section of Main Roads
<b>SP&amp;D</b>	Strategic Policy and Development section of Main Roads