

Information Bulletin

Drought assistance package

The Department of Transport and Main Roads provides a drought assistance package for eligible registered operators of vehicles.

This package is offered in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Queensland Police Service.

Items included in the package are:

1. **Multi-combination drought permits**
2. **Increase to the maximum loaded dimensions of baled or rolled hay or straw**
3. **An additional registration pay term of 3 months and exemption from surcharge for a 3 or 6 month registration pay term**
4. **Exemption from an administrative fee for late payment of registration**
5. **Waiving of certificate of inspection fees**
6. **Seasonal registration vehicles can have dormant period extended to two years**
7. **Cancellation and re-registration of vehicles**
8. **Fodder transport with primary producer concession**
9. **Farm plate concession vehicles able to cart water for up to 80 km**
10. **Stock grazing on declared road reserves**

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries provides information on the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (DRAS) drought recovery assistance. Information is also available on their website at www.daf.qld.gov.au/environment/drought or by phoning 13 25 23.

Eligibility

Primary producers are eligible for drought assistance if their property has been drought declared by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

There are two categories of drought declared properties:

- individual droughted property declarations
- regional council/shire declaration.

To establish eligibility, a primary producer must either:

- produce an Individual Drought Property Approval, certified by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- or
- where regional council/shires have been drought declared, produce documentary evidence of their Property or National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) tag, indicating their:
 - shire code
 - property number
 - location or address of the drought declared property.

This assistance does not apply to a conditionally registered vehicle or a vehicle with distance and road use limits imposed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Item 1. Multi-combination drought permits

A multi-combination drought permit allows multi-combination vehicles carrying eligible livestock or fodder to or from declared drought areas, access to certain lower classification or non-road train routes.

For example, type 2 road trains may travel on type 1 routes, and type 1 road trains on certain routes other than road train routes.

Any routes approved will be subject to road capabilities and escort requirements determined by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Queensland Police Service.

The operator needs the permit only if the operator of a multi-combination vehicle wishes to access a drought declared property or shire by a route that they cannot otherwise access. (That is, a route that

is not approved in the Multi-combination Routes in Queensland maps

<http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/business-industry/Heavy-vehicles/Multi-combinationvehicles/Maps.aspx>).

This is primarily for the movement of drought affected livestock to or from a place of agistment, sale or for the transport of fodder to drought affected areas or properties.

Any transport operator or primary producer who is responsible for the movement of eligible livestock to or from their original property for agistment, or to another location for sale or slaughter, or moving fodder to their property may apply for a permit.

Applications for a multi-combination drought permit are processed through the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR). The NHVR offers a tailored service for those who need help or support using the NHVR Portal and they will provide assistance in setting up an account as well as step by-step support for submitting applications. Applicants can call 1300 MYNHVR (1300 696 487) during business hours for this service.

The permit will include recommendations, restrictions and/or escort provisions after verification of eligibility.

Please note: eligible persons may still apply for a multi-combination drought permit up to 12 months after the drought declaration for their property or shire has been revoked. There may be a fee for escort vehicles if they are required as a condition of the permit.

Item 2. Increase to the maximum loaded dimensions of baled or rolled hay or straw

The National Class 3 Drought Assistance Dimension Exemption Notice is available to increase the maximum loaded dimensions of baled or rolled hay or straw for transport operators and graziers in drought affected areas.

The Drought Assistance Notice provides width and height dimension exemptions to heavy vehicles

carrying specified baled and rolled commodities to drought affected areas.

The following vehicles are eligible to operate under the Drought Assistance Notice:

- a heavy rigid vehicle up to 12.5m in length
- a rigid truck and dog trailer
- a prime mover and semi-trailer combination up to 19m in length
- a prime mover and low loader combination up to 19m in length
- a B-double
- a road train.

Under the Drought Assistance Notice, an eligible vehicle that already has either general access, or restricted access under a Gazette notice, may operate up to the following dimensions:

- 2.83m in width
- 4.6m in height.

Note: The vehicle must already have access to be able to benefit from this notice and must comply with the conditions of that notice.

Operators can find these notices on the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) website (www.nhvr.gov.au).

Item 3. An additional registration pay term of 3 months and exemption from surcharge for a 3 or 6 month registration pay term

A registered operator who has a vehicle registered with a purpose of use of private or farm may apply for a 3 month registration term at a Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centre.

Alternatively, you may wish to pay your registration for the available 6 month reduced registration term option and apply to have the surcharge for this registration term exempted.

Application must be made at the time you are either registering or renewing a vehicle's registration. Although there is no application form to complete for access to this package, you are required to meet the eligibility requirements detailed above.

If approved, you may receive **Item 3** for a maximum period of one year from either:

- the date the vehicle is registered (new application)
- or
- the first day of the new registration renewal term (which is the day after the expiry day of the vehicle's registration).

During this time, the surcharge for the reduced registration term of 3 or 6 months will be exempted. Compulsory Third Party insurance (CTP) will be for the same period and the CTP surcharge will still apply.

At the end of this period, if your area or property is still drought declared, you can reapply for the reduced registration term.

This option will be available to a registered operator receiving the reduced registration term during the drought declaration for a period up to one year after the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries revoked the drought declaration.

Item 4. Exemption from an administrative fee for late payment of registration

If the Department of Transport and Main Roads approves your application for the Drought Assistance Package, you will also be exempt from paying an administrative fee for late payment of registration fees.

Please note, this package does not authorise an unregistered vehicle to be used on a road until payment of registration fees is made.

Item 5. Waiving of certificate of inspection fees

Operators of eligible vehicles registered for primary production use and due for inspection may apply for a fee exemption by contacting the Services Booking Unit, Department of Transport and Main Roads on 13 23 90 prior to the inspection.

This item does not exempt vehicles from the requirement of inspection or the issue of a certificate of inspection.

The exemption only applies to a Department of Transport and Main Roads issued certificate of inspection fee and not to any fee payable to an Approved Inspection Station.

Item 6. Seasonal registration vehicles can have dormant period extended to two years

This item applies to a vehicle owned by a primary producer who has a vehicle with seasonal registration.

The registration may be deferred at the end of the registration term for a maximum period of 2 years. The registration may then be renewed at the end of that period.

The eligibility requirements detailed in the eligibility section also apply if you want to defer your vehicle's registration.

Item 7. Cancellation and re-registration of vehicles

You may cancel a vehicle's registration if registered under the Primary Producer's Concession Scheme until re-registration is required, for example, seasonal conditions favourable for planting.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads will recognise a previous certificate of inspection for the vehicle when processing an application for re-registration provided:

- the previous certificate expiry date is still current at the time of re-registration

- the re-registration is within 12 months of the previous cancellation
- the vehicle is re-registered in the same name
- the cancellation was for a vehicle in a drought declared area at the time of cancellation.

If the vehicle is eligible for seasonal registration, it may be a better option to leave it dormant.

Item 8. Fodder transport with primary producer concession

Vehicles registered under the Primary Producer Concession Scheme can be used for the transport of fodder on behalf of eligible drought declared primary producers, to or within a drought declared area provided that:

- only actual transportation costs for the fodder may be charged (not provided for reward or under a commercial arrangement)
- vehicles comply with legal axle loadings
- vehicles do not exceed the registered or manufacturer's capacity
- if fodder is transported from another state, the vehicle must comply with the requirements of each state that it may travel through.

This arrangement applies for a further 12 months from the date that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries revokes the drought declaration, provided the primary producer had their vehicle garaged at the address of the drought declared area or property at the time the area or property was drought declared.

Item 9. Farm plate concession vehicles able to cart water for up to 80 km

Farmers may use vehicles on the farm plate concession in drought declared areas to cart water for up to the current distances outlined in the Conditional Registration Zone Access Categories:

Zone 1: Coastal Location — maximum distance is 20 km

Zone 2: Western Location — maximum distance is 40 km

Zone 3: Far Western Location — maximum distance is 80 km

Zone map handouts are available from your local Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centre or agency authorised to conduct vehicle registration business.

You can also refer to the *Guideline for Conditionally Registered Vehicles, Form 17*.

Item 10. Stock grazing on declared road reserves

For permission to graze stock on a declared road reserve, provided sufficient stock control is present, farmers may contact:

- the Department of Transport and Main Roads District Office if it is a state-controlled road
- or
- the relevant local government if it is a local government road or a stock route.

If eligible, contact the local Queensland Police Service before moving stock, to seek advice on any road safety implications or precautions.