



Guideline

Prescribed burns within the state-controlled road corridor

Agreed process – Transport and Main Roads and Queensland Fire Department

February 2026

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Feedback

Please send your feedback regarding this document to: tmr.techdocs@tmr.qld.gov.au

Document sign off

The following agencies have approved this document.

	Department of Transport and Main Roads	Queensland Fire Department
The following officers have endorsed this document.		
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Queensland Fire Department (QFD) incorporating Queensland Fire and Rescue (QFR), and Rural Fire Service Queensland (RFSQ) is responsible for fire prevention, response and control across the State.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads manages Queensland's State-Controlled Road (SCR) corridor, which is over 33,000km in length. Transport and Main Roads has an obligation to manage fire risk on the lands it owns and ensure compliance with fire safety requirements under the *Fire Services Act 1990*.

The SCR corridor plays a vital role in bushfire management across the landscape. The SCR network is a significant and extensive firebreak, providing low and fuel-free corridors for bushfire prevention and response activities. Additionally, the Queensland state road network provides access and egress to bushfire impacted communities and facilitates supplies and resource management during recovery operations.

There is also a need to undertake fuel load management activities across the SCR corridor to help manage the likelihood of a bushfire ignition on, and/or spreading through and/or off the SCR corridor. These activities include:

- slashing and mowing
- constructing firebreaks
- grazing
- herbicide application
- trimming and pruning
- clearing, and
- prescribed burning.

This document focuses on prescribed burning only. Prescribed burning is also referred to as planned burning, hazard reduction burning, controlled burning, prescription fire, fuel reduction burning, planned fire and/or prescription burning. It is defined as the controlled application of fire under specified environmental conditions to a predetermined area and at the time, intensity and rate of spread required to attain planned resource management objectives ([Australian Disaster Resilience Glossary](#)).

For the purposes of this document, cultural burning is also included under the blanket term of prescribed burning.

RFSQ may assist with conducting a significant number of prescribed burns within the SCR corridor.

Approval to access the SCR corridor to conduct any prescribed burn is required from Transport and Main Roads. Approval to light fire is also required from the Commissioner, QFD pursuant to the *Fire Services Act 1990*.

1.2 Purpose

When a prescribed burn is being conducted within the SCR corridor there are different persons / agents who can request and/or conduct the burn. The process differs slightly depending on the party conducting the burn.

This document provides clarity on the process for obtaining approval from:

- Transport and Main Roads to conduct a prescribed burn within the SCR corridor, and
- QFD to light the fire.

It is the applicant's responsibility to identify any additional approvals required from other agencies.

This document has been developed jointly between Transport and Main Roads and QFD.

2 Permits

2.1 From Transport and Main Roads

Approval from Transport and Main Roads is required under Section 50 of the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994* for a third party to undertake an activity or to locate, construct, maintain, upgrade or operate a structure or thing within the boundaries of the State-Controlled Road (also known as the SCR corridor or road reserve).

Approval is provided through the issuing of a [Road Corridor Permit](#) (RCP). Conditions may be included as part of the approval. Transport and Main Roads [Permits for Access to the Road and Corridor](#) system, allows third parties to request online authorisation to access the SCR corridor and undertake activities and install infrastructure in the corridor.

Conducting a prescribed burn within the SCR corridor by either an adjacent landowner or the QFD / RFSQ is identified as one of the activities that requires an RCP from Transport and Main Roads.

To apply for an RCP for a prescribed burn, the following documents must be provided to Transport and Main Roads during the application process. The RCP application cannot progress until this documentation is provided:

1. A detailed plan which should include:
 - a. Location details:
 - i. a Map
 - ii. adjoining Lot / Plan details
 - iii. GPS coordinates, and
 - iv. intended extent of the burn.
 - b. Details of personnel to be present at the burn (number, names, agencies).
 - c. Details of equipment / appliances to be present at the burn (number, type).
 - d. What control measures will be placed (i.e. control lines, signage, traffic control), and
 - e. Details on fuel assessment (outline methodology used to assess fuel load and bushfire risk).
2. A Deed of Indemnity (DoI) to indemnify the department from any loss, damage or expense incurred as a result of the structure or activity. If the third party is a Queensland Government body (e.g., QFD / RFSQ), they are to include an exemption statement in place of a deed of indemnity. Templates for the DoI are located on the [RCP](#) webpage (linked above), and
3. A certificate of currency for public liability insurance (minimum \$20M public liability) is also required. If the third party is a Queensland Government body (e.g., QFD / RFSQ), they can either upload the Queensland Government Insurance Fund (QGIF) certificate or a document which includes a statement that the applicant is a Queensland Government body and insurance is provided through the QGIF.

RCP applicants should note that once submitted an RCP application can take up to 4 weeks to be processed. Allowing sufficient time for Transport and Main Roads to assess and process RCP applications should be considered in burn planning involving the SCR.

There are several factors that Transport and Main Roads considers prior to approving an RCP for access to the SCR corridor for a prescribed burn. These include:

- Impact on roads, roadside infrastructure and assets, such as damage to signage and utilities.
- Disruption to traffic through smoke hazard and visibility issues, and through roadside staging and vehicle movement (closing lanes of traffic, or the entire road).
- Impact on vulnerable flora and fauna in the road reserve.
- Impact on vulnerable cultural heritage matters, and
- Impact on other permit holders, third parties and Transport and Main Roads staff and contractors acting in the SCR and reserve.

RCPs can be issued for varied periods of time depending on the circumstances – therefore applicants are encouraged to apply for an RCP well in advance of the planned date / period for the prescribed burn.

A [Traffic Control Permit](#) (TCP) may also be required prior to commencement of the activity if the activity interferes with the safe and efficient operation of the road network. The requirement for a TCP will be identified by Transport and Main Roads while reviewing the RCP application and applicant notified accordingly. The TCP helps to ensure that:

- Work is conducted safely with due care shown to both works and all road users.
- Transport and Main Roads assets are protected.
- The times at which the activity is to be performed causes minimal disruption to traffic flow, and
- All traffic control activities are conducted in accordance with the latest version of the [Queensland Guide to Temporary Traffic Management](#).

Other fuel load management activities identified in Section 1.1, may also require approval from Transport and Main Roads and it is recommended that a third party wanting to carry out these activities contact the relevant [regional roads office](#) for advice.

2.2 From QFD

Section 145 of the *Fire Services Act 1990*, which is administered by QFD, makes it illegal to light a fire that is not authorised by the Act, a notification, or a [Permit to Light Fire](#) (PTL) issued under the *Fire Services Act 1990*. Section 145C of the Act allows a person to apply to the commissioner for a PTL a fire on any land. Where an agent acting on behalf of Transport and Main Roads is conducting a prescribed burn within the SCR corridor, that Agent must apply for the PTL. The length of time a PTL can be issued will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the QFD authorised delegate.

A PTL may be subject to conditions required to mitigate risk(s) of nuisance to people, property or the environment. A PTL can be revoked at the discretion of the Commissioner (or authorised delegate) including where environmental or operational conditions change. Considerations in approving a PTL include:

- Fire Danger weather and forecasts – e.g., where there is a total fire ban in place or likelihood of extreme fire weather.
- Risk or nuisance to other people, property, or the environment, and
- If the authorised delegate believes that appropriate safety measures will be achieved.

Note that Section 145C allows for any person to apply to the commissioner for a PTL to light a fire on any land. If RFSQ is conducting a burn within the SCR, in the absence of an authorisation of fires by the Commissioner, a PTL will need to be obtained from the Commissioner or authorised delegate, subject to any conditions specified in the authorisation or PTL.

3 Planning a prescribed burn within the SCR corridor

Any prescribed burning in the SCR corridor should be identified and planned for as early as possible to allow for processing timeframes, and required authorisations to be obtained, including any required notifications and/or communications between adjoining landholders, Transport and Main Roads and/or QFD.

The Queensland Bushfire Plan establishes Bushfire Management Committees. These committees are chaired by QFD and comprised of all major stakeholders involved in the mitigation and response to bushfires in a locality. Transport and Main Roads is a member of these groups where the locality includes SCR.

Transport and Main Roads encourages external agency stakeholders who wish to conduct a burn in the SCR corridor, to contact the local Bushfire Management Committee so that collaborative and cross-tenure planning can be facilitated through the committee. If a stakeholder is not involved in the Bushfire Management Committee (e.g., a private landholder adjoining the SCR corridor), it is recommended that the stakeholder consult with both Transport and Main Roads (through the local regional roads office) and the local QFD Rural Fire Brigade.

4 Transport and Main Roads support for a prescribed burn within the SCR corridor

Transport and Main Roads may be able to provide support for a prescribed burn conducted within the SCR corridor where an adjacent landholder or QFD are conducting the burn. Support that is available from Transport and Main Roads is determined on a case-by-case basis by the local Transport and Main Roads office.

5 Prescribed burn scenarios

When a prescribed burn is being conducted within the SCR corridor, there are different persons / agents who can conduct the burn, with the process differing slightly for each scenario:

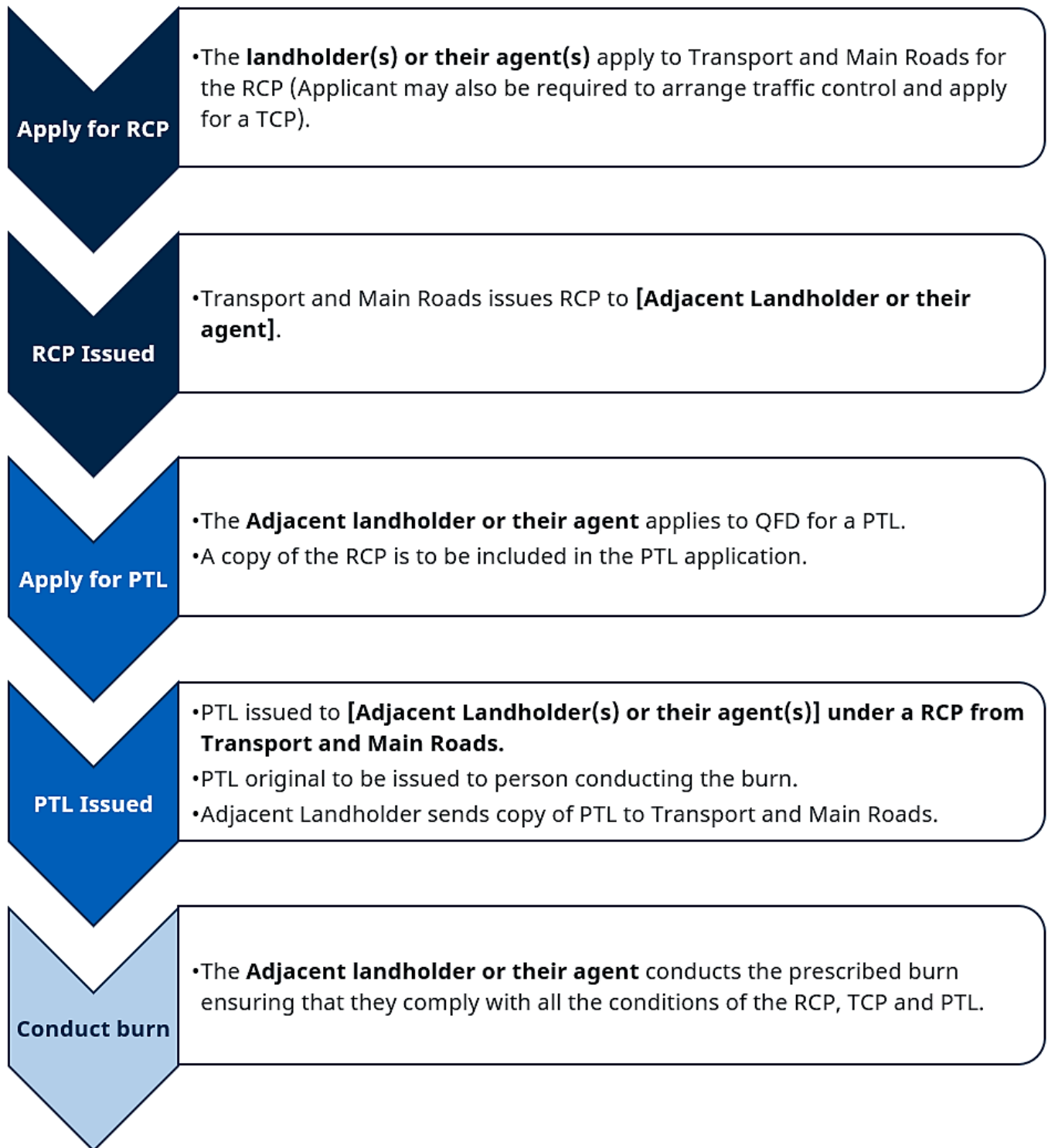
1. Adjacent landholder(s) or their appointed agent(s) (other than QFD) are conducting the prescribed burn. Adjacent landholders may be private or corporate landholders, or other government agencies (e.g., local government, SEQ Water, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service), or
2. QFD conducting the prescribed burn on behalf of an adjacent landholder(s), acting independently, or on behalf of Transport and Main Roads, or
3. Transport and Main Roads directly engages a contractor under contract (including RoadTek) to conduct the prescribed burn in the SCR corridor with or without QFD assistance.

The following sections outline the process for each of these scenarios.

5.1 Adjacent landholder conducts prescribed burn

In Scenario 1 (Figure 5.1), a landholder adjacent to the SCR is requesting to conduct a prescribed burn in the SCR corridor, and either the landholder(s) or their appointed agent(s) (other than QFD) are responsible for conducting the prescribed burn within the SCR corridor.

Figure 5.1 – Scenario 1: Adjacent landholder conducts prescribed burn



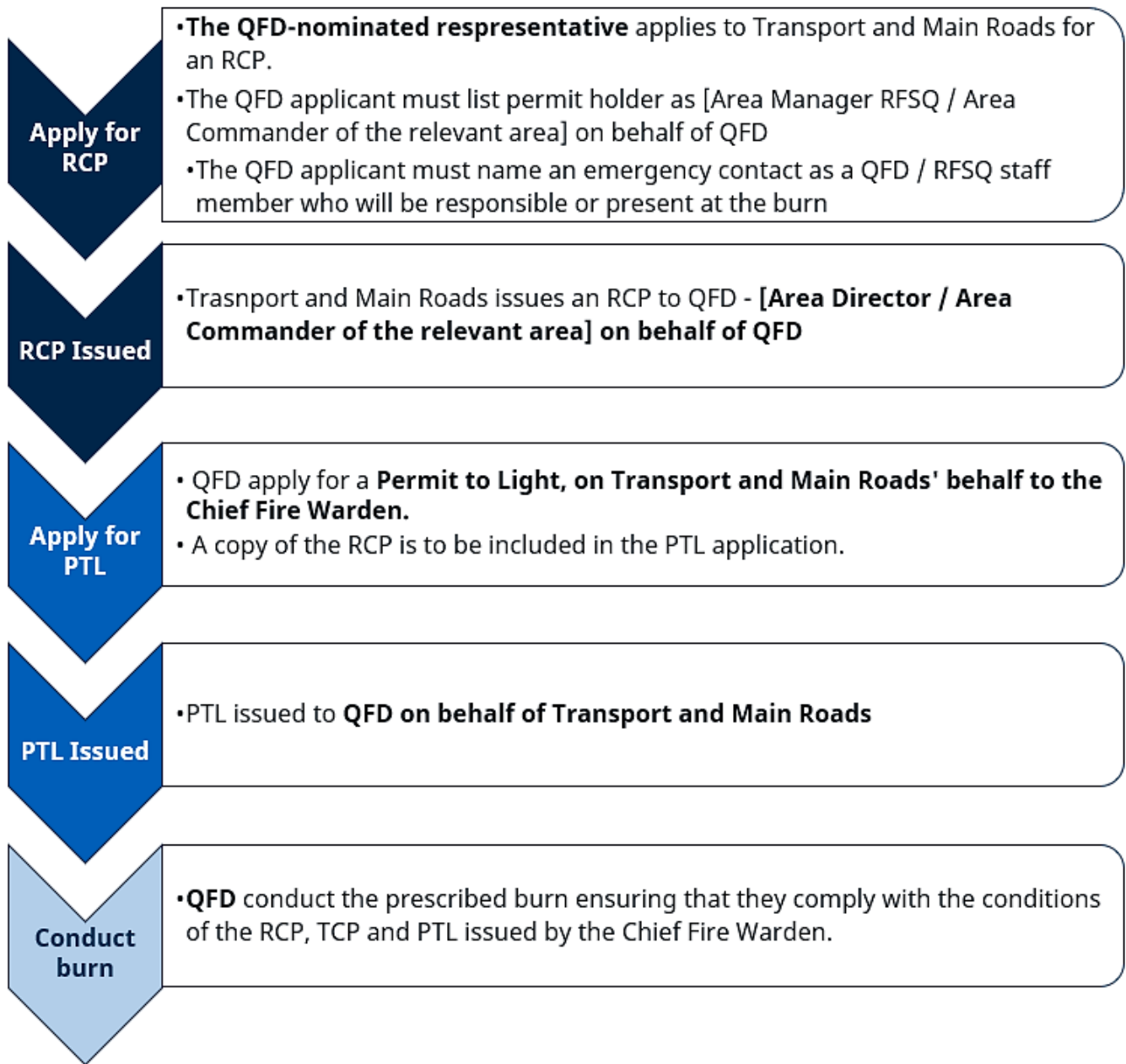
5.2 QFD / RFSQ conducts prescribed burn

In Scenario 2 (Figure 5.2), QFD is responsible for conducting the prescribed burn within the SCR corridor on behalf of an adjacent landholder(s), acting independently, or on behalf of Transport and Main Roads.

QFD / RFSQ nominated representatives include:

- Area Manager RFSQ (AM)
- Area Commander (AC)
- Bushfire Mitigation Officer (BMO)
- Chief Fire Warden
- Manager Bushfire Mitigation

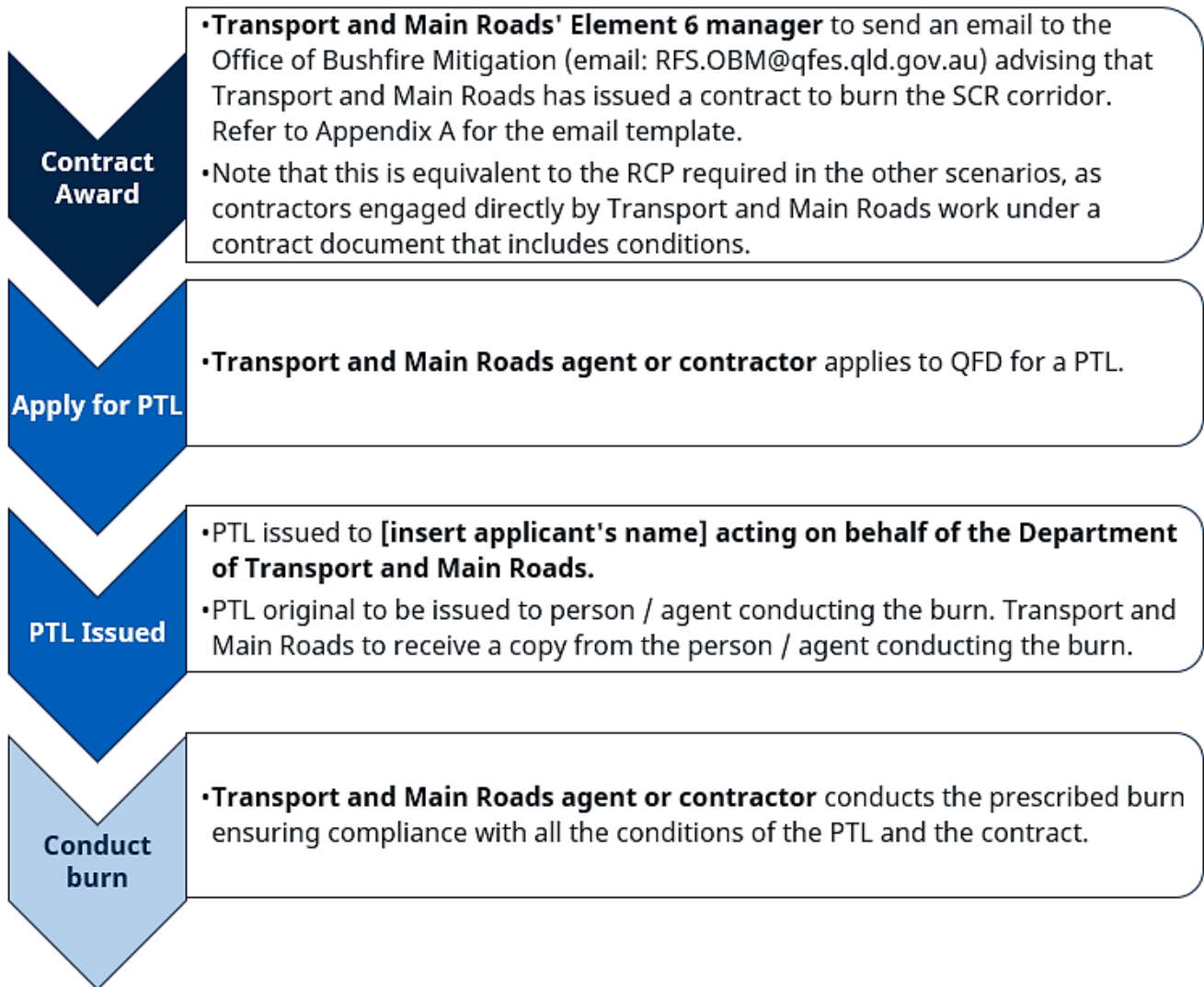
Figure 5.2 – Scenario 2: QFD conducts prescribed burn



5.3 Transport and Main Roads conducts prescribed burn

In Scenario 3 (Figure 5.3), Transport and Main Roads engages an agent (other than QFD) under contract (including RoadTek) to conduct the prescribed burn within the SCR corridor.

Figure 5.3 – Scenario 3: Transport and Main Roads engages an agent (other than QFD) to conduct prescribed burn



Appendix A: Email template

The following is an email template for advising the Office of Bushfire Mitigation (email: RFSQ.OBM@qfes.qld.gov.au) that the Department of Transport and Main Roads has issued a contract to conduct a prescribed burn within the SRC corridor. The email must be sent when the contract is first issued.

Email 1 – Transport and Main Roads engages an agent (other than QFD) to conduct prescribed burn

To Office of Bushfire Mitigation

Please be advised that the Department of Transport and Main Roads has issued a contract to conduct a prescribed burn within the state controlled road corridor. Details of this activity are:

Contractor Name: *[insert contractor name]*

Location of Work: *[insert details identifying the location of the burn]*

Timing of Work: *[insert details of when the burn is to occur]*

The Contractor will shortly be applying to you for a Permit to Light to conduct the prescribed burn of the state controlled road identified above. It should be considered that this application is made on behalf of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Any resulting Permit to Light should be issued to the applicant on behalf of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. Please ensure that the original Permit to Light is issued to the applicant. The applicant must then provide a copy of the Permit to Light to Transport and Main Roads, via email to the contract manager.

Kind regards,

[insert signature block]

