

7. Freight Movement



Features of the Mackay urban area impacting on freight movement include a traditional local sugar industry, a major port servicing local industries, the Central Queensland mining and grain industries and a growing regional centre which services a large hinterland and coastal area.

The freight transportation network in the study area consists of state-controlled roads managed by the Department of Main Roads, local roads controlled by Mackay City Council, heavy rail network controlled by Queensland Rail and the cane railway network controlled by Mackay Sugar Co-operative Association Ltd (MSCAL).

The sugar industry is the largest industry in the region and exported 1.3 million tonnes of raw sugar through the Mackay port in 1997/8 from the four local mills around Mackay (Marian, Pleystowe, Racecourse and Farleigh) and mills in Sarina (Plane Creek) and Proserpine. This represented 28% of Queensland raw sugar production in 1997/98. Transport of sugar cane from the farms to the mills is largely by cane railway (97%), supplemented by road transport. Transport of raw sugar to the port is by road and QR services. A sugar refinery at Racecourse uses road transport for raw sugar from the port and direct from Pleystowe Mill, and for refined product to the port. A possible refinery at Farleigh would add extra movements of road vehicles because of out-of-season transfers back from the port. In addition, a conveyor transfers raw sugar from Racecourse Mill to the adjacent refinery. Outside the crushing season (June - November), raw sugar is trucked to and from the bulk sugar terminal at the port to the refinery.

There are large movements of molasses and ethanol in the Mackay urban area (currently 24-25 trips per day for molasses to the port). It is expected that it will increase to 40-50 trips per day to the port from the three or four local mills and 12 trips per day from Sarina. Ethanol is railed daily to the port from the Sarina distillery.

Sorghum and wheat from the grain belt surrounding the Clermont area to the west

and south-west of Mackay are transported locally by road to grain silos where they are then railed to the Mackay Port for export.

Mining products are not handled at the Mackay Port, but it services imports of equipment and fuels for the industry. Freight is transported by either road or rail to the mines. Fuel imports through the port also service the Mackay urban area and include aircraft fuels for the Mackay Airport.

Slaughter cattle are trucked to Borthwicks Abattoir at Bakers Creek south of Mackay from the west via the Peak Downs Highway. Manufactured products are transported across the city and exported through the harbour as chilled or frozen product.

Other comparatively minor products that are either imported or exported are sulphuric acid, bulk fertiliser, iron concentrates, scrap metal and general cargo.

General freight to Mackay is predominantly by road transport. The major part of the retail product used in Mackay comes from the south by road and is dispersed through the area, again by road.

Freight projections for the Mackay urban area indicate that the quantity of freight from the mining, sugar and grain industries is expected to grow, with growth in general freight in line with population projections.

While playing an important role in supporting and attracting local industry, the movement of freight through the region by road also has the potential to adversely impact residential amenity and traffic operations in the more built-up parts of the region. Similarly, the movement of hazardous goods within and through the region needs to be carefully managed. Operation of heavy vehicles in and around the urban area is currently causing some level of community concern. As new heavy industry occurs, the impact of heavy vehicles on noise levels, air quality and perceived safety is expected to be such that freight movements should desirably be contained on roads specifically planned for the movement of freight.

Key issues considered in the development of the freight actions include:

- current use of Mangrove Road and River Street in the CBD by freight vehicles;
- noise and amenity for residents and other road users as a result of heavy vehicle movement;
- impact of the cane industry using local authority roads for haul routes for cut cane;
- maximising efficient operation of the seaport and airport;
- modal interchanges for some commodities (eg. sugar);
- development of a user-preferred road network for freight transport;
- potential use of the multi-modal freight corridor (MMFC) between the port and the Bruce Highway for road transport;
- development of freight routes that can provide for high productivity vehicles such as B-Doubles; and
- investigation of potential mechanisms in the Mackay City Planning Scheme to protect the multi-modal freight corridor between the port and the Bruce Highway.

FREIGHT ROAD NETWORK

There is an existing road network predominately used for freight movements in the Mackay Area. Major components are:

- the north-south movements from the Bruce Highway and Paget to and from the port; and
- the east-west movements from the Bruce Highway on the north side of Mackay to the port.

The majority of freight movements use the Ron Camm Bridge, although some sugar and grain movements occur across the Forgan Bridge. Currently the major route used by industry for movements from South Mackay and Paget to the Mackay port is via Nebo Road, across Ron Camm Bridge, Sams Road, Malcomson Street and Harbour Road. The freight industry has indicated that the current route should be retained for as long as possible.

A north-south multi-modal freight corridor that would also serve as a bypass of Mackay has been considered as an alternative route to Nebo Road and Ron Camm Bridge for freight movements. However, the low volumes of freight that would actually use such a route, especially

COMMENTS RAISED IN CONSULTATION

Major issues arising from public and stakeholder consultation during the MAITS study to date included:

- traffic noise and impacts on residents' amenity as a result of heavy vehicles on Mackay roads;
- lack of obvious heavy vehicle routes;
- the need to segregate heavy traffic from commuter traffic;
- the need for suitable bypasses for heavy vehicles;
- the need for a direct access route for heavy vehicles to mining districts from Paget;
- the need to restrict heavy vehicle movement through the CBD and residential areas;
- the need for continued access to district roads by cane harvesters and haul-out equipment; and
- the impact of cane haulage on local roads and traffic.



7. Freight Movement (continued)



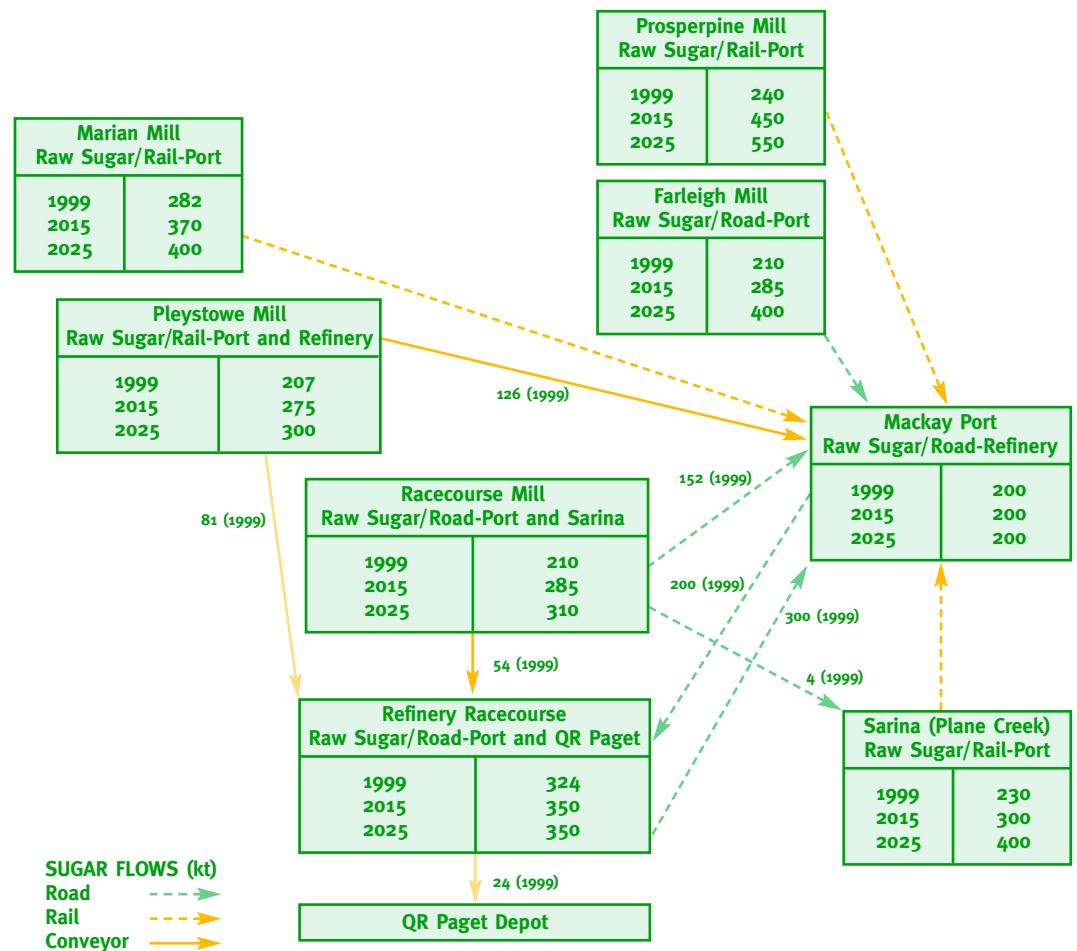
if constructed in stages, mean that such a concept is unrealistic and not recommended for further investigation in the scope of this plan.

Considering the results from the technical study and consultation, the strategy recommended is:

- Upgrade critical sections of the existing freight route at Sams Road, Malcomson Street and Harbour Road to the port, in the short/medium term to cater for heavy vehicle movements. Malcomson Street should be upgraded to a higher standard four-lane facility as the main east-west freight corridor for the short to medium term.

- The multi-modal freight corridor is the preferred freight route to the Mackay port in the long term. The state government will retain the corridor land for the section of the multi-modal freight corridor between the Mackay port and Bucasia Road. The preservation of the corridor west of Bucasia Road to the Bruce Highway will be included as part of the Mackay City Council Planning Scheme to protect the corridor from encroaching development.

PROJECTED RAW AND REFINED SUGAR MOVEMENTS



ACTION PLAN: FREIGHT MOVEMENT

ACTION	TIMING	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES
Fr1 Form a joint agency/industry committee to further investigate modal transport issues associated with the transport of sugar cane and other commodities.	Short term	QT (Lead), MCC, DMR, MSCAL, QR, MPA, Cane Growers, Transport Operators
Fr2 Develop the B-Doubles network to provide efficient freight access for trade and industry – review current B-Doubles routes to identify gaps and problems.	Short term	QT (Lead) DMR, MCC
Fr3 Undertake a review of the transport requirements including B-Doubles, over-dimension, dangerous and hazardous goods routes within Mackay industrial areas and connection to the port, railhead, highways and other manufacturing centres.	Short term	QT (Lead), DMR, MPA, MCC
Fr4 Undertake detailed urban road planning study to investigate upgrading of Malcolmson Street/Evans Avenue to provide medium-term road access to the Port of Mackay. <i>(Refer Rd5 & Rd6).</i>	Short term	DMR (Lead), MCC
Fr5 Rehabilitate Harbour Road pavement to maintain continued high standard access to the Port of Mackay. <i>(Refer Rd7).</i>	Ongoing	DMR (Lead), MCC
Fr6 Preserve long-term road access to the port of Mackay, including the future multi-modal freight corridor. <i>(Refer Rd5, Rd6 & Rd7).</i>	Short term	DMR (Lead), MPA, MCC, QT, QR, DNR&M
Fr7 Form a local agency/ industry committee to address the impacts of haulage, for example, cane from farms to sidings, including ongoing monitoring of effects.	Short term	QT (Lead), MSCAL, DMR, MCC
Fr8 Undertake detailed investigations into the provision of alternative freight routes around the greater Mackay urban area to address the impacts of through transport of freight. <i>(Refer Rd4).</i>	Long term	QT (Lead), DMR, DLG&P, MCC
Fr9 Assess the implications of trial use of B-Doubles for quarry product transport.	Short term	QT (Lead), DMR, MCC

7. Freight Movement (continued)

CAPITAL PROGRAM: FREIGHT MOVEMENT

DESCRIPTION OF WORK	LEAD AGENCY	ORDER OF COST	TIMING (TERM)	FUNDING STATUS
CFr1 Undertake a freight transport study to assess future infrastructure and route requirements for heavy vehicles (B-Double, over-dimension, dangerous and hazardous goods) in the Mackay area.	QT	\$60,000	Short	Funded
CFr2 Undertake detailed urban road planning study to investigate upgrading of Malcomson Street/Evans Avenue to provide medium-term road access to the port of Mackay.	DMR	Refer CRd2	Short	Funded
CFr3 Rehabilitate Harbour Road pavement to maintain continued high standard access to the Port of Mackay.	DMR	\$4.5M	Short	Funded
CFr4 Undertake a detailed investigation into the provision of long-term road access to the Port of Mackay.	QT	TBD	Long	Unfunded
CFr5 Undertake detailed investigations into the provision of alternative freight routes around the greater Mackay urban area to address the impacts of through transport of freight.	QT	Refer CRd 3	Long	Unfunded

