

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**REGULATORY SIMPLIFICATION PLAN  
2009-2013**

**ABRIDGED PLAN**

## DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### REVIEWS OF LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Initiative	Purpose/Objective	Review Period	Targeted Implementation Date
Transfer of Water Authority Functions to Local Government or some other appropriate arrangement	<p>Under the <i>Water Act 2000</i>, there are 52 water authorities established to provide agricultural drainage, stock and domestic water supplies or irrigation services in declared water authority areas.</p> <p>The Webbe-Weller Review of Queensland Government Boards, Committees and Statutory Authorities recommended the abolition of these water authorities and transfer of their responsibilities to local governments. To implement the Queensland Government's response to this review, DERM is working closely with water authorities and local governments to determine the most appropriate structure and transfer arrangements.</p> <p>While there will be short term costs associated with the transfers, savings will be made across government in the long term. The appointment process will no longer require Governor-in-Council approval which is time consuming and administratively very costly. Administrative oversight and reporting for these bodies will also be considerably reduced. The bodies will be more responsive to their clients with speedier and more streamlined appointments.</p>	April 2009–2011	30 June 2011
Review of the Vegetation Management Framework	<p>A review of the current vegetation management framework has proposed amendments to the legislative framework that will ensure efficient, client focused vegetation management services.</p> <p>The reforms will deliver on Government commitments under the Blueprint for the Bush to improve the administration of the vegetation management framework.</p> <p>Reduction in compliance burden requirements, such as reduced assessment time delays in development approvals will save time and money and improve certainty for business. This reform will also deliver more efficient client focussed processes, improved products and services for landlords and consumers.</p>	2008–2009	Late 2009

<p>Land and Water Management Plan Review</p>	<p>The Land and Water Management Plan Review will review the legislative requirements for the approval of Land and Water Management Plans under the <i>Water Act 2000</i>, with a proposed view to move from a predominantly irrigation water trading trigger to an irrigation water use risk management approach.</p> <p>This review will provide better protection to the land from the possible degrading effects of irrigation water use by focussing on all relevant irrigation water users and using a risk based approach that will simplify compliance while mitigating known risks.</p>	<p>2009–2010</p>	<p>Mid 2010</p>
<p>Stock Route Review</p>	<p>As a result of the review, DERM will separate the stock route management provisions from the <i>Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002</i> and Regulation and incorporate policy reforms to improve management and use of the stock route network.</p> <p>The introduction of grazing authorities issued and managed by Local Governments will provide increased security for landholders grazing the stock route and will replace permits to occupy for grazing purposes issued by the State Government under the <i>Land Act 1994</i> over the stock route network and rural roads. The clarified management and use responsibilities will assist in improving the relationship between users and strengthen local government’s ability to apply and enforce the regulations.</p> <p>Furthermore, this reform will contribute to conserving the natural values of biodiversity and cultural heritage through a proposed framework for the protection of areas of significance.</p>	<p>2007–2009</p>	<p>Mid 2010</p>

<p>Reforestation Projects under an Australian Government emissions trading scheme</p>	<p>This reform will facilitate the participation of Queensland landholders in reforestation projects under the Australian Government’s proposed emissions trading scheme and voluntary offset carbon market through facilitating landholders to establish reforestation projects. Through this reform, State lessees may be eligible to apply to the Australian Government to establish reforestation projects using regrowth vegetation.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be significant financial benefits for business from being able to deal in carbon credits from reforestation in Queensland, as well as benefits to Queensland businesses generating income from participation in reforestation projects.</p>	<p>2009</p>	<p>Mid 2010 (dependent on Cth emission trading scheme)</p>
<p>Valuations Reform</p>	<p>Valuations Reform will introduce a range of streamlining measures to improve the valuation processes and grievance procedures for landowners and State and local Governments.</p> <p>The proposed reforms will substantially improve Queensland’s current valuation system, providing more certainty for local governments about when a valuation will be made and will benefit all users of the valuation system by the provision of a more evidence-based foundation for more accurate land value determination.</p> <p>The streamlining of grievance procedures will substantially modernise the valuation system, providing for a more robust decision making process, reduced costs and more prompt resolution of objections.</p>	<p>2008–2009</p>	<p>2010-12</p>
<p>Draft State Planning Policy (Coastal Protection)</p>	<p>The draft State Planning Policy (Coastal Protection) proposes a framework to allow for the proactive identification of areas suited to maritime development and to direct suitable development into these areas.</p> <p>The reforms will streamline and clarify development assessment processes in maritime development areas in the future. It is anticipated that there will be time and cost savings for proponents and Government due to reduced assessment effort.</p>	<p>2008–2010</p>	<p>2010</p>
<p>Extension of Third Party Auditing and Assessment Functions</p>	<p>The proposed regulatory changes to amend the <i>Environment Protection Act 1994</i> will formalise and extend third party auditing and assessment functions for certain assessment and approval processes.</p> <p>These regulatory changes will increase certainty and flexibility for business through faster approval times and costs savings and will introduce simplified overall assessment process for Government. There are likely to be potential time and cost savings for business and reduced administration costs for Government.</p>	<p>2009–2011</p>	<p>2012</p>

<p>Environmental Protection and Conservation Legislation Reform</p>	<p>DERM propose to make amendments to a number of Acts including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i></li> <li>- <i>Forestry Act 1959</i></li> <li>- <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i></li> <li>- <i>Queensland Heritage Act 1992</i></li> <li>- <i>Recreation Areas Managements Act 2006</i></li> </ul> <p>Anticipated benefits of these amendments include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- streamlined referral procedures and timeframes for deciding an application for authority for mining activities following referral to the Land Court, through amendments to the Environmental Protection Act</li> <li>- sufficient deterrence of offences, through updating of penalties and provisions to ensure consistency with equivalent provisions applying to protected areas</li> <li>- harmonisation of notification provisions and approval of draft management plans to ensure consistency with related legislation, through standardisation of notification provisions e.g. making plans available on the web site to reduce administrative processes and requirements to provide public information</li> <li>- simplified processes for entries on the State Heritage Register and streamlined notification requirements for decisions of the Heritage Council</li> <li>- savings for industry and government by removing the requirement for people to obtain commercial activity permits for commercial filming by 1-2 people where no structures are involved.</li> </ul>	<p>2009</p>	<p>Mid 2010</p>
<p>Reducing green tape for business – Climate Q initiative</p>	<p>The proposed review aims to explore opportunities to streamline regulations covering energy, water and pollutants and to increase the uptake of resource efficiency measures that lower greenhouse gas emissions and save industry money. It also seeks to maximise regulatory linkages to existing government incentives schemes such as the SmartEnergy Savings Fund to help businesses take up cost effective and resource saving measures.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will be cost savings for industry through reduced compliance costs, as well as reduced production costs from more efficient energy and water uses and improved waste disposal practices.</p>	<p>2010–2012</p>	<p>2013</p>
<p>Coastal Protection and Management Reform</p>	<p>It is proposed to put forward amendments to the <i>Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995</i> to simplify the process for declaring a coastal management district, reduce the current extent of coastal zone, and clarify activities that do not need a grant of right to the material (i.e. a resource allocation).</p> <p>The removal of the requirement for a resource allocation is anticipated to reduce approval times for</p>	<p>2008–2010</p>	<p>2010</p>

	<p>industry through the removal of an approval requirement for non-commercial activity and reduce reporting requirements for industry. In addition, amendment of the definition of coastal zone and declaration of coast management districts will increase efficiency for business and community through improved clarity about legal obligations.</p>		
<p>South East Queensland Water Reform – Stage II</p>	<p>The second stage of this reform builds on the stage one reforms which commenced the process of consolidation of ownership of water assets and the integration of water and wastewater services across SEQ.</p> <p>When complete, the reforms to SEQ’s water market will significantly simplify the way in which water is managed in the region, by reducing the number of organisations involved in managing SEQ water supply from 21 to seven specialist entities.</p> <p>This stage involves the establishment of three vertically integrated distribution/retail entities for the SEQ region. The 10 SEQ local governments’ water and wastewater assets and functions will transfer to these Distributor-retailer entities. From July 2010, these entities will purchase treated water from the Water Grid Manager, sell and deliver water to customers, collect sewage and deliver it to treatment plants, and treat and dispose of the sewage.</p> <p>Stage II will also establish the relevant regulatory frameworks for the SEQ water industry, including the introduction of a regulatory pricing regime, and a Customer Code providing for guaranteed service standards. These regulatory changes are intended to improve existing arrangements, without introducing additional regulation or imposing new regulatory compliance obligations upon the broader community.</p> <p>The Distributor-retailer entities will be required to undertake long-term infrastructure planning ensuring customer demands and future growth are able to be met. The entities will have a key role in assessing water and wastewater aspects of future development.</p> <p>These reforms are anticipated to provide more transparent and effective frameworks for economic regulation and pricing to influence efficient demand outcomes, and planning and development regulation to promote economic efficiency and total water cycle management at a regional and local level. It is expected that the reformed institutional arrangements will provide long-term benefits to the Queensland community in a number of important aspects – long-term water security, regionally consistent service standards, enhanced customer services, equity in water pricing, economies of scale within the newly integrated entities, and improved asset management.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Various</p>

<p>Indigenous Land Acts Review</p>	<p>The review of the <i>Aboriginal Land Act 1991</i> and <i>Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991</i>, being undertaken by DERM proposes to advance several significant proposals and address a number of technical and corporate governance issues that have been raised in relation to land trusts.</p> <p>It is anticipated that proposed amendments to land trust corporate governance requirements will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve the ability for government and business to deal with them e.g. in relation to the building of infrastructure and commercial interactions.</li> <li>• benefit local communities through more efficient processes for granting of leases under the Acts by a land trust and</li> <li>• reduce the burden of certain compliance requirements, thus enabling a land trust to function more effectively and efficiently.</li> </ul> <p>It is also proposed that the trustee of land granted under the Acts can now be an existing corporate body, for example a body established under Commonwealth legislation rather than requiring the establishment of a land trust under the Acts.</p> <p>This will reduce the complexity of interacting with and undertaking business in certain Indigenous communities that may be brought about by having multiple corporate bodies that have responsibility in relation to land or business dealings.</p>	<p>2007–2010</p>	<p>2010</p>
<p>Marine Park Permissions Reform</p>	<p>DERM propose to integrate development approvals (for aquaculture, reclamation, dredging, drainage, boat ramps, jetties, pontoons, marinas, pipelines, undersea cables etc) under marine park legislation with the Integrated Development Assessment System under the <i>Sustainable Planning Act 1997</i> (SPA).</p> <p>This proposal will remove the current requirement for marine park permissions where a development approval is also required under the SPA and, in some cases, the removal of the requirement to assess low impact activities.</p> <p>As a result, there will be savings in reduced assessment and renewals of marine park permissions for low impact activities, and some activities currently requiring a permit could become self-assessable or qualify for compliance assessment, leading to time and cost savings for business and community requiring marine park permissions.</p>	<p>2008–2010</p>	<p>2010</p>

Streamlining of DERM legislation under Blueprint for the Bush (One Plan)	<p>DERM is identifying opportunities to simplify regulatory processes for rural landholders, while maintaining the policy intent of legislation. This process will deliver on the government's One Plan commitment made as part of the Blueprint for the Bush initiative in 2006.</p> <p>The proposed reforms will provide alternative pathways for landholders to meet their existing regulatory requirements. Opportunities include more effective use of stewardship agreements, recognition of more holistic property management systems, as well as accreditation of local area or sub-catchment plans addressing regulated land management issues.</p> <p>It is anticipated that these changes will reduce regulatory burden for some landholders, provide savings in reduced assessment times and decrease the number of individual or separate approvals required for low risk activities.</p>	2009–2010	2011
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### **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS**

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Purpose/Objective</b>	<b>Review Period</b>	<b>Targeted Implementation Date</b>
Electronic Access for Registry Lodgement	<p>The Electronic Access for Registry Lodgement (EARL) project is a strategic initiative moving towards an eBusiness environment and electronic service delivery. EARL aims to fundamentally change and improve business practices within government and industry by facilitating electronic access to survey information cycles.</p> <p>All stakeholders will benefit through much more efficient processes for exchanging survey information, decreasing the manual and double handling of data and increased opportunity to utilise digital data for other applications.</p>	2009–2011	October 2011
National Electronic Conveyancing System (COAG)	<p>The COAG National Electronic Conveyancing System project will streamline the processes for settling property transactions through the introduction of a single electronic system for completing real property transactions and lodging land title dealings for registrations in Australia.</p> <p>It will facilitate the conduct and settlement of property and title transactions in a digital environment through a single national system across all jurisdictions. This system will cover electronic settlement of property transactions, electronic lodgement of instruments with State and Territory land registries and the finalisation of real property duty and tax obligations.</p>	ongoing	December 2011
SEQ Water Demand Management	Reporting by businesses with a Water Efficiency Management Plan (WEMP) (those businesses that use more than 10 megalitres of water per annum and nurseries, turf farms and cooling	February/March 2009	April 2009

	<p>towers) was reduced from quarterly to annual.</p> <p>SEQ water restrictions were stepped back from drought restrictions to Permanent Water Conservation Measures (PWCM). PWCM are the new out-of-drought, low level water restrictions that support ongoing structural and operational water efficiency measures and encourage the continuation of behavioural changes that enabled residents of South East Queensland (SEQ) to reduce average demand to below 140 litres per person per day during the Millennium Drought.</p> <p>The Allowable Limit as a trigger for household water use to be reviewed under the Residential Excessive Water Users Compliance Program increased from 1,000 litres per day to 1,200 litres per day.</p> <p>All PWCM restrictions and demand management and efficiency programs will undergo review in the period 2010-2011 to ascertain the ongoing effectiveness and cost/benefit.</p>	<p>2008–2009</p> <p>2008–2009</p> <p>2010–2011</p>	<p>December 2009.</p> <p>December 2009</p> <p>Various</p>
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**PROCUREMENT PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

Initiative	Purpose/Objective	Review Period	Targeted Implementation Date
The Provision of Surveying Services	<p>DERM has implemented a Standing Offer Arrangement for the Provision of Cadastral, Engineering and Geodetic Surveying Services across the State.</p> <p>Contracts have been let to a number of suppliers to carry out work for the department's Indigenous Communities Land Boundary Framework Improvement Project.</p> <p>The establishment of the Standing Offer Arrangement for these services has simplified the administrative process required for each engagement whilst ensuring that the services provided are deemed capable by internal experts, thus reducing timeframes and minimising risk. Other government departments are considering utilising the agreement.</p> <p>Benefits of this procurement process for industry include a significant reduction in administrative workload; enhanced opportunity within the agency and access to additional government departments; simplified and consistent quoting and engagement process; cost reductions and consistent contractual obligations.</p>		August 2009
Adoption of Standard Terms and Conditions in the Procurement of Goods and Services	<p>In choosing to adopt the whole-of-government standard terms and conditions in the procurement of goods and services, DERM will eliminate Procurement Unit labour hours currently spent in maintaining the accuracy of these documents and their conformance with legislation.</p> <p>This will provide suppliers with a 'one-stop' location for terms and conditions and reduced legal costs as it eliminates the need to review a plethora of contractual clauses.</p>	2009–2010	2010