

# Travelling Stock Reserve Drought Frequently asked questions

Local Land Services

August 2018

## Why have Travelling Stock Reserves been closed?

No Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs) in NSW are currently closed. Some Local Land Services (LLS) regions have introduced 'destination only' conditions on walking stock to conserve pasture which is limited due to lack of forage and water on some drift ways if the welfare of the stock or land degradation is a concern. Any restrictions put in place to manage current pressures on TSRs will be lifted when pasture and forage has recovered.

The TSR network was formed to facilitate the movement of livestock from a point of origin to a point of destination, rather than as an alternate feed source. 'Destination only' conditions require travelling stock to have a genuine point of destination that is able to receive them, and move a minimum distance each day. This reduces grazing pressure on the available pasture and helps ensure the TSR resource remains available to producers needing to use it. Destination only does not restrict local routine stock movements between properties.

## Have the TSRs been grazed heavily recently?

There has been increased demand for access to the TSRs due to seasonal conditions across NSW, which has increased grazing pressure. Many of the TSRs have reached critical groundcover levels and continued grazing would result in soil erosion and land degradation as well as impact on livestock welfare.

## Do stock owners have to elect a destination? Why?

Stock owners have to elect a destination to use the TSR network which was formed to facilitate the movement of livestock from a point of origin to a point of destination. Stock owners and drovers work together with LLS rangers to ensure the permit conditions are met.

## Who monitors the condition of TSRs?

TSRs are monitored by professional and experienced LLS TSR rangers across the state. The rangers are trained to undertake groundcover assessments.

## When might the restrictions on TSRs be lifted??

Restrictions will be lifted after sufficient rainfall and pasture has had time to re-establish.

## How is TSR management funded by LLS?

TSRs are funded by income generated by grazing permits, supplemented by periodic investment from a number of sources. Local Land Services is not funded to provide public good services, such as biodiversity outcomes or recreational opportunities.



The number of long term grazing leases across the state could decline if Local Land Services was funded to provide public good outcomes from the TSRs it manages. As it stands, LLS needs the income generated from long term grazing leases to help fund the costs of management.

Despite funding limitations, the TSRs have been well managed and cared for over the long term.

## **Does LLS support conservation grazing on TSRs to improve biodiversity?**

Properly managed grazing can be, and is used to improve the biodiversity of the TSRs. LLS regularly use grazing as a conservation tool to graze down introduced grass species.

## **Is LLS making it hard for people to take stock out on TSRs?**

No. The NSW Government and LLS is committed to a viable and connected TSR network for drovers and graziers. Information on different permits and the conditions of each are available through from your nearest LLS office or on our website. Our Customer Service and TSR team can help to explain the terms if you need assistance.

Like farming land, it's important to note TSRs are not immune to drought and LLS must continue to manage them in accordance with those conditions to allow for a quick recovery when conditions improve.

## **How does the LLS determine who can and who can't use TSRs and when?**

Travelling stock reserves were established in the 1800's to facilitate the movement of stock to markets. While a key network of reserves connecting New South Wales with Queensland and Victoria continues to be used for droving purposes, they are now also widely used and valued for other public benefits, including biodiversity conservation, Aboriginal cultural heritage and fodder relief for farmers during drought, floods and fire.

Travelling stock reserves are Crown lands of state significance. The underlying principle is that they should be managed in the best public interest for the people of New South Wales.

There are multiple users of the stock reserves including drovers, farmers, recreational users and Aboriginal communities. Local Land Services is currently working closely with representatives from all these user groups of TSRs to discuss and develop optimal management solutions for TSRs across NSW.

As part of the review into the use of TSRs, LLS is working closely with each of these groups to determine a balanced approach to their management.

As societal expectations have changed significantly over the last 100 years, contemporary TSR management needs to reflect what the community now holds as important. A fundamental requirement is that stock use must cause no long term or irreparable harm to any other use or value.

Permits for grazing the Travelling Stock Reserves are allocated as requests come in based on feed availability at the time.

Animal welfare is also a concern. Stock are graded based on their body condition and if that condition falls below minimum standards, stock need to be removed from the road and TSR network.

The reserves are a public asset and need to be managed for their long term sustainability, assessments are made based on the risk that stock access pose to each area. Risks include potential erosion from loss of ground cover, weed spread and disease movement as well risk to other road users.

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