

# Drought Relief Heavy Vehicle Access Program

## Guidelines for councils | September 2018

### NSW Drought Relief Package

The NSW Government has introduced more than \$1 billion to support farmers and their families through worsening drought conditions, with an additional \$15 million committed for road maintenance activities to support increased heavy vehicle access. Roads and Maritime Services has set up a program to administer the funds and is welcoming applications from councils who meet the criteria set out in these guidelines.

### Drought Relief Heavy Vehicle Access Program

The Drought Relief Heavy Vehicle Access Program has been established to contribute to the cost of maintenance and minor improvements on council roads and roadsides, where those improvements will contribute to heavy vehicle access, in support of the drought relief freight task.

#### Eligibility for funding

NSW councils can submit an application for funding for proactive or reactive works and/or treatments for improved heavy vehicle access in support of the drought relief freight task.

Funding approval will be merit based and limited to a maximum of \$300,000 per council for all projects.

**Proactive submissions** may be made in instances where access is yet to be approved and specific or preventative work on substandard roads is required and can be delivered urgently in order to safely permit access for restricted access vehicles carrying drought related freight.

**Reactive submissions** may be made in instances where substandard roads and roadsides are required to be made good as the result of introducing or increasing the frequency of restricted access vehicle movements carrying drought related freight which has brought forward the need for maintenance activities.

Supporting information will be required, including evidence that:

- Damage has or will be caused as a result of increased volumes of drought related road freight.
- Permits have been approved for restricted access vehicles carrying drought related freight.
- Safety and efficiency is improved by allowing approved vehicle types to use the road instead of the existing access.
- The work will provide safe and reliable driving conditions for drought assistance vehicles consistent with the classification of the road, meet a reasonable standard, and keep the road in a safe and trafficable condition.

#### Program criteria

Criteria have been developed to provide applicants with details about how the application will be assessed and ensure consistency, transparency and fairness in the evaluation process.

The total funding available per council is \$300,000 and supporting evidence will be required to demonstrate:

- Applicant and funding recipient is a NSW local government council.
- The work will support access by restricted access vehicles carrying drought related freight.
- Road safety is considered and maintained or improved as a result of the work.
- The project will support improved productivity for road freight.
- The route forms a strategic freight link rather than a terminating local road or provides relief to other parts of the local road network.
- Improved access to longer, wider, higher and/or heavier vehicles is granted under permit.
- An itemised estimate in the approved template is provided and is assessed as fair and reasonable.
- Council's ability to deliver the project as a priority, with the project to be completed within 50 days.

## Eligible work

Funding will be considered for, but not limited to:

- Shoulder repairs and improvements such as widening to address edge-break and edge drop-off. May be sealed or unsealed.
- Heavy patching.
- Seals that contribute to minimising long term maintenance costs.
- Pavement rehabilitation.
- Grading of unsealed roads to reduce roughness and rutting.
- Tree trimming to improve access for 4.6 metre high vehicles.
- Installing infrastructure monitoring equipment and/or facilities.
- Signage.

## Submitting an application for funding

Applications for funding are to be submitted by email to Roads and Maritime at [roadfreight@rms.nsw.gov.au](mailto:roadfreight@rms.nsw.gov.au) and include, at a minimum, a completed copy of the Drought Relief Heavy Vehicle Access Program application form and any additional and relevant supporting evidence.

Applicants will receive advice on whether the application is successful within 28 days from the date of submission.

For further information on the program, please contact your Roads and Maritime Services [regional office](#).

## Evaluation panel

The evaluation panel (the panel) consists of three members and includes two representatives from Roads and Maritime and one representative from LGNSW.

The panel is responsible for assessing each application against the weighted eligibility criteria, completing the requirements of the evaluation tool and making a recommendation on funding approval. Panel members will meet at least once a month, subject to the receipt of new submissions.

The Program Manager will notify applicants of the outcome of their application. Unsuccessful applicants may revise their application and resubmit.

## Evaluating submissions

The panel will use the information contained in the application to assess eligibility for funding. Projects will be selected on a merit basis with a focus on the level of benefit, project scope, cost and how soon the project can be delivered. Suitability for funding will be calculated using the weighted criteria method built into the evaluation tool.

## Administering funds

Roads and Maritime will contribute the total project cost submitted in council's proposal from the committed \$15 million until the allocation is exhausted. A total funding cap per council of \$300,000 applies. Subject to the council funding cap, a cap per submission has not been designated, the cost to carry out the work for the benefit to heavy vehicle access will be considered in the assessment.

Funds will be administered to NSW councils by Roads and Maritime in accordance with the Arrangements with Councils for Road Management website<sup>1</sup>, the agreed scope and cost prepared in the submission. Any residual expenditure will be returned to Roads and Maritime and reallocated to another project.

From the date of Roads and Maritime providing written funding confirmation, work is to be:

- Started within 30 days; and
- Completed within 50 days.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Work not started or completed within the prescribed timeframes may have funding withdrawn. Withdrawal of funding will be notified in writing.

Funds will be made available once the submission has been approved. A final inspection certificate is to be completed by participating councils, verified by the local Roads and Maritime regional representative and sent to the Program Manager.

## Attachments

### Drought Relief Heavy Vehicle Access Program

- Application form including estimate template

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/partners-suppliers/lgr/arrangements-councils/index.html>