

NSW Farm Gate Access Risk Assessment - Pilot

Terms of Reference

Transport for NSW | May 2019

The purpose of the Farm Gate Access – Pilot

These Terms of Reference are designed to create the scope, membership, objective and review of the Farm Gate Access Pilot (the Pilot). The Terms of Reference are to guarantee that the approach to the Pilot is consistent and effective by those participating in the pilot and to take responsibility for the business issues associated with the pilot.

1.0 The overview of the NSW Farm Gate Access Pilot

The NSW Network Connectivity Sub-Committee (NCSC) identified access for vehicles that are 4.6 metres high or travelling a Higher Mass Limits (HML) to be a significant barrier to network connectivity. Industry also identified a barrier to access for higher productivity vehicles on low volume, low risk roads.

This project is aimed at facilitating greater access approvals for heavy vehicles travelling on low volume roads, for occasional tasks - specifically accessing the farm gate. This project complements other work being undertaken to develop regional freight networks.

The aim is to develop an approach that road managers can implement to enable assessment of routes to be undertaken by third parties in order to approve freight movements on roads carrying low traffic volumes. The primary focus will be access for 4.6 metre high vehicles and those operating at HML, although the different issues raised by these two movements will ultimately be treated separately.

Through this project a model will be developed that can be utilised by local councils to enable a risk assessment to be undertaken of routes by landowners (farmers), third parties or transport operators which will then inform the access consent request decision by local council as road manager. It is noted that local councils have a responsibility under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) to approve or decline access requests as road manager. This project does not seek to alter this responsibility; but aims to provide a mechanism to support councils identify, assess and manage transport risk when making decisions as a road manager.

To test the model, ten local councils with diverse Higher Productivity Vehicle access, geography, topography and population are invited to participate in the pilot. These councils will form an alliance with the working group and provide feedback on the framework before it is delivered across NSW.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities for Farm Gate Access Pilot

The membership of the Farm Gate Access Pilot is limited to the members of the project working group and the local councils that have been invited to serve as pilot participants.

Should any of the nominated members need to change or rescind their roles, the representative should make initial contact with the Freight Branch to discuss any new arrangements.

Each member is expected to:

- Demonstrate a genuine interest, be committed to, and actively involved in the initiative and its outcomes.
- Be an advocate for the project and its outcomes.
- Work collaboratively to balance priorities and resources.
- Consider and resolve ideas and issues raised.
- Have a broad understanding of project management issues and the approach being adopted.
- Report on project progress.
- Contribute toward the pilot's evaluation.

3.0 Confidentiality

Public statements or media related to this project will require written and prior approval from the Principal Manager or their delegate.

Members must not disclose official information or documents acquired as a consequence of membership in the Pilot, other than as required by law or when the member has been given proper authority to do so.

4.0 Participation

By accepting and participating in the Pilot, each member are agreeing to carry out the functions of the Pilot described in the Terms of Reference which may include but is not limited to attendance at meetings, ongoing contact with Transport for NSW and the project team, actively contribute to/ participate in the Pilot and promoting the Farm Gate Access Project, feedback/ survey etc.

Meetings for the Farm Gate Access Project shall be created by or on behalf of the Freight Branch. At least a fortnights advanced notice will prior to each meeting.

In the event of extenuating circumstances arising, meetings may occur with less notification and arrangements made for members who cannot attend in person, such as dial in or video conferencing.

Attendance for these meetings to be conducted must be of a minimum of 75 per cent for the meeting to continue and go ahead. If this cannot be reached, the timing for the meeting will be modified until the meeting can be conducted.

5.0 Timing of Pilot

The Pilot should be implemented for a period of up to 12 months, with an option to cease the trial prior if the Pilot has achieved the goals set out by the Project Management Plan.

Once the Pilot period has ceased, a lessons learned workshop will be held to improve the framework before making the final decision to introduce this concept across NSW.

6.0 Transport for NSW involvement

Any costs of participation in the Pilot will be borne directly by the participating party incurring those costs.

Transport for NSW has developed a Community Stakeholder Engagement Plan and will cover the cost associated with outcomes from this Plan.

Remedial work management agreement must be entered into between the council Road Manager and the Proponent for reimbursement of remediation work either in part or in full, dependent upon the users of the route, caused by the access that has been granted.

7.0 Review and survey of Pilot

To gauge the effectiveness of the Pilot, a series of qualitative and quantitative performance indicators will be developed and collected from participating council areas. Baseline data will be collected ahead of the Pilot and compared to data received over the Pilot period (at six months, nine months, 12 months- dependent on the final length of the Pilot). Methods of gathering feedback and demonstrating success of the Pilot include:

- Participant survey targeting local council, the assessor and proponent and collect opinions on the projects practicality and effectiveness, efficiency, satisfaction of the framework (procedure/

checklist/ practitioners guide), how is the Pilot is being conducted (paper/ application/ web based) and what improvements or modifications can be made to the Pilot.

- Reviewing participation figures and usage statistics such as changes to the number of access requests, access approvals and uptake of area wide approvals in local council areas.
- Analysis of what routes have been given access to become “part of the road network” and the ratio of access to non-access for that vehicle type.
- Whether the project encouraged any changes to internal systems such as the adoption of RAVRAT or other tools that the local council did not use prior to the Pilot
- Whether participation in the Pilot encouraged further acceptance to other schemes or increased local council’s understanding of schemes, which could be used in their region, that were not used prior to the Pilot.

This research will be analysed and presented in the form of a Findings Report following each review.

All measures will be endorsed by the working group before being carried out.