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## Pastoral Lands Reform Update November 2019

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Department of **Primary Industries  
and Regional Development**

Department of **Planning,  
Lands and Heritage**

*We're working for  
Western Australia.*

# Pastoral Lands Reform Update

November 2019



Image: Greg Snell

**Please note:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images or names of deceased persons.

## Reform proposals

Pastoral Lands Reform consists of a package of **legislative, regulatory and administrative** measures that focus on improving the land condition of the pastoral estate, fostering best-practice land management, and encouraging development and diversification.

The pastoral estate covers more than 860 000 square kilometres and is a significant asset to the State of Western Australia (WA).

It supports a pastoral industry, which over many years has contributed significantly to WA's economy. This industry also provides fire management, feral animal control and other environmental services to the State, and job opportunities for regional communities.

Many parts of the pastoral estate have significant cultural values for Aboriginal people, and emotional significance for the general public.

The prosperity of the pastoral industry is directly linked to the long-term productivity of the land, and therefore the sustainable management of its natural resources.

The ecological sustainability of the pastoral estate is not adequately protected by the current system of land monitoring and administration. Some parts of the pastoral estate suffer from historic degradation, limiting its ability to support profitable businesses and jobs.

To ensure that the potential of the pastoral estate to deliver positive environmental, economic and social outcomes is realised, it is essential that it is managed sustainably, for long-term outcomes.

For pastoralists, Pastoral Lands Reform offers improved security of tenure so they can invest with more confidence in the capital improvements required for better land management and non-pastoral activities.



## Land management

Enhanced land condition monitoring will deliver increased knowledge of the pastoral estate and support improved land condition through encouragement of best practices.

An integrated risk-based approach to land condition monitoring and compliance on the pastoral estate will be developed in partnership between Government, Pastoral Lands Board (PLB), the pastoral industry, Traditional Owners and other key stakeholders.

Over the next three years, Government will:

- develop regional land condition standards and good pastoral land management guidelines and policies
- design a **risk-based pastoral land management program** based on on-ground and satellite monitoring to inform the frequency and intensity of monitoring on individual leases
- work with industry to co-design and define best-practice for business and land management
- identify long-term resourcing requirements.

A voluntary, opt-in land management **accreditation system** will be co-designed by Government and the pastoral industry to encourage the use of best-practice pastoral land management activities.

Pastoralists who opt-in to the accreditation system will be able to formally demonstrate their good land management credentials.

Other measures to improve administration and management of the pastoral estate include:

- enhanced statutory enforcement powers for the PLB
- Minister for Environment to nominate a member with expertise in the field of flora, fauna or land conservation management for the PLB
- improved coordination with environmental and animal welfare legislation.

## Security of tenure

Improved security of tenure for pastoralists will minimise the uncertainty and risk associated with the capital investment required to enhance land management.

By opting-in to an accreditation system approved by Government, compliant pastoralists can access a **statutory right of lease renewal**.

In addition, pastoralists can apply to **increase lease terms to 50 years**, subject to native title.

The current lease renewal system will continue to apply for pastoralists who choose not to opt-in to an accreditation system.

## Development and diversification

Measures aimed at encouraging development and diversification on the pastoral estate will give pastoralists confidence to explore complementary income from sources other than livestock, further reducing the financial risk of investing in improved land management.

A **statutory right to transfer diversification permits** upon transfer of the lease, subject to compliance with permit conditions, will remove uncertainty in relation to capital investment in non-pastoral activities conducted under a diversification permit.

**Streamlining inter-agency approval processes** for permits will increase transparency and introduce options for fast-tracking where applicable.



## Consultation

A public consultation process will commence once the draft amendments to the *Land Administration Act 1997* have been completed.

Individuals and organisations will be able to respond to the draft Amendment Bill through a variety of methods including the DPIRD website, email, post and in-person at consultation forums to be held across the state in regional and metro areas.

## Conclusion

Pastoral Lands Reform focuses on the condition of the pastoral estate. The reform aims to encourage best-practice land management and more effective administration of the pastoral estate, as well as offering improved security of tenure to pastoralists so they can invest with greater confidence in land management and non-pastoral activities.

Pastoral Lands Reform will:

- provide **better performance information** for Government and pastoralists
- provide **clear standards for land condition**
- **encourage** good land management
- **support pastoralists** to demonstrate best-practice land management
- **reward** good practice.

The Government looks forward to engaging with the pastoral industry and other key stakeholders in developing the accreditation system and integrated approach for land condition monitoring and compliance over the next three years.

For information on Pastoral Lands Reform, please visit [drd.wa.gov.au/projects/PLR](http://drd.wa.gov.au/projects/PLR) or contact: [PLR@dpird.wa.gov.au](mailto:PLR@dpird.wa.gov.au)



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