



Dear Pastoralist,

It is my pleasure to update you on recent changes under the [2023 amendments to the Land Administration Act 1997](#) (LAA) relating to permits, lease extensions, proposed new standard conditions for pastoral leases, and changes to the Annual Return of Livestock and Improvements (Annual Return) process.

Pastoral Permits

The Pastoral Lands Board (PLB) has recently reviewed and approved a new [Permit Policy](#), which covers the existing application process, as well as an overview of the Board's new powers to renew, amend and transfer permits.

Previously, if a lessee wanted to renew an expiring permit, amend an existing permit, or transfer a permit with the pastoral lease, they were required to apply for a new permit even if there was no change of activity and it was being conducted in accordance with the permit conditions.

The amended legislation will allow the PLB to change or transfer existing permit at the lessee's request, providing administrative efficiencies, and greater security for lessees in expanding and diversifying activities on a pastoral lease.

Pastoral Lease Extensions

The PLB also reviewed and approved a new [Guideline for Pastoral Lease Extensions](#) in relation to extensions to existing pastoral leases.

The LAA now provides that lessees may apply to the Minister for Lands to extend the term of their lease to a maximum of 50 years, and provides two mechanisms:

- Extension of the existing lease term up to 50 years, whereby the existing lease conditions are retained; or
- Surrender and re-grant, whereby the Minister for Lands grants a new lease with new conditions and a term of up to 50 years, commencing on the re-grant date.

The Minister for Lands has full discretion as to whether or not to grant an extension, but must consult with the PLB. The Guideline for Pastoral Lease Extensions outlines which factors the PLB may consider in formulating its advice to the Minister, which may include information on the condition of the land under the lease and the land management record of the pastoral lessee. Information on addressing the requirements of the *Native Title Act 1993* for a pastoral lease extension is also provided.

It is important to note that applications for lease extensions and lease renewals are separate processes, which may in some cases run concurrently.

Proposed New Standard Conditions for Pastoral Leases

The 2023 amendments allow for standard terms and conditions to be prescribed in regulation under section 275(ga) of the LAA.

These prescribed terms and conditions will not affect current pastoral leases, but will be used upon the grant of a new pastoral lease, the renewal of an expiring lease and the extension of a pastoral lease under the surrender and re-grant mechanism.

The proposed standard pastoral lease conditions have been drafted with the intent of modernising the existing lease forms and ensuring consistency across the pastoral estate.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) has commenced a 12-month engagement process to ensure pastoral lessees, peak industry bodies, banks, finance providers, and insurance companies are given an opportunity to provide feedback on suggested changes.

Consultation has already commenced and is open for submissions until 16 December 2024. Further information including the proposed new standard pastoral lease conditions can be found by visiting <https://bit.ly/consultationNPL>.

Annual Return of Livestock and Improvements

As you are aware, the deadline for submitting the 2022-2023 Annual Return passed on 31 December 2023. This was the last Annual Return relating to stock numbers as at 30 June. Thank you for submitting the information.

Consultation with pastoral lessees in recent years identified that changing the date for stock numbers from the middle to the end of the calendar year will better align with pastoral business practices and provide more accurate and useful reporting of stock numbers to the PLB.

Going forward, Annual Returns will relate to stock numbers as at **31 December**, with completed forms to be submitted no later than **31 March** the following year.

To allow for the date change, the next Annual Return will encompass 18 months of information from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2024, and is **due on 31 March 2025**.

The information gathered via the Annual Return is a valuable resource to identify industry trends regarding stock numbers, diversification, and overall management across the pastoral estate.

For more information about:

- Pastoral permits and Annual Returns please contact the Pastoral Lease Management team by email at LeaseManagement@dplh.wa.gov.au
- Pastoral lease extensions, or to submit an application please contact proposals@dplh.wa.gov.au.

For all Pastoral Lands Board policies, guidelines, strategic documents, communiques and general information, please visit www.wa.gov.au/PLB-Documents.

For any queries relating to the documents on the PLB Documents webpage, please contact plb@plb.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Tim Shackleton
Chairperson
Pastoral Lands Board

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