



Department of Planning,
Lands and Heritage



August 2024

Pastoral Lands Board

Management Plan Guideline

Acknowledgement of Country

The Pastoral Lands Board acknowledges Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of Western Australia. We pay our respects to the Ancestors and Elders, both past and present, and the ongoing connection between people, land, waters and community. We acknowledge those who continue to share knowledge, their traditions and culture to support our journey for reconciliation. In particular, we recognise land and cultural heritage as places that hold great significance for Aboriginal people.

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INTRODUCTION

The Pastoral Lands Board (PLB) is committed to good land management outcomes on pastoral leases across Western Australia. The PLB holds the view that profitable pastoralism and ecologically sustainable pastoralism are inextricably linked and, as a result, good land management and good economic performance go hand in hand. In particular, the PLB's approach is that working cooperatively with pastoral lessees and government will achieve improved land management outcomes.

The PLB acknowledges that pastoral lessees are the primary land managers of the pastoral estate and wants to work collaboratively with the lessees so they can achieve their economic goals while managing the land effectively.

Pastoral lessees should implement good practice land management methods to manage the land and permitted stock under the lease to its best advantage as a pastoral property. Where the land and permitted stock are not being managed appropriately to the satisfaction of the PLB, in accordance section 108A of the *Land Administration Act 1997* (LAA) the PLB may require the lessee to submit a Management Plan to address a land condition or lease management issue.

OBJECTIVE

- To establish a clear guideline on how to prepare a Management Plan.
- To assist pastoral lessees in producing a Management Plan.

WHAT THIS GUIDELINE CONTAINS

- Definition of the term “Management Plan”.
- An explanation of the need for a Management Plan.
- A list of the PLB's minimum requirements for a Management Plan, including a list of guiding documents required to complete the plan.
- Information on who to contact for assistance in developing the plan, including sources of financial and technical advice.
- A template Management Plan and checklist are provided with this Guideline, outlining the minimum standard of information expected.
- Additional prompts for specific land management issues, including fencing, water point use and distribution, livestock management, revegetation, soil management and/or earthworks, and declared animal and/or plant control.

Definitions: Development Plan and Management Plan

Prior to the amendments to the LAA through the proclamation of the *Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Act 2023* on 10 August 2023, section 107 of the LAA enabled the PLB to require a pastoral lessee to submit a Development Plan if it was of the opinion that the reasonable development of the land under the lease for pastoral purposes required improvements to be made.

As a result of the amendments, the Development Plan was replaced with a Management Plan. Unlike a Development Plan, a Management Plan is not limited to pastoral infrastructure but can address a broad range of management issues. For that reason, in many situations a Management Plan is a more appropriate mechanism for the PLB to resolve management issues.

IMPORTANT: Pastoral lessees with a current, approved Development Plan in place prior to 10 August 2023, are still required to implement the Development Plan to the satisfaction of the PLB.

For the purposes of this Guideline, and for clarity across the suite of PLB policies and guidelines, a **'Management Plan'** is a plan the PLB may direct a pastoral lessee to submit under section 108A of the LAA where the PLB is not satisfied the lessee is managing the land under the lease or permitted stock in accordance with Part 7 of the LAA or has contravened any condition of the pastoral lease.

The PLB may give a written direction to a lessee to submit a Management Plan by a specified date, in relation to any of the following matters listed in section 108A(2) of the LAA:

- the improvement of the condition of land under the lease
- the implementation of specified pastoral and environmental management practices
- any monitoring and assessment of the condition of land under the lease the lessee is directed to undertake
- the control of any declared pest, in accordance with the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*
- the remediation and management of soil erosion
- the construction, repair and maintenance of improvements
- the management of permitted stock on the land.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage may also request a pastoral lessee utilise the Management Plan template to obtain information for a specific matter or to address an issue, separate from section 108A(2) of the LAA. An example is when a pastoral lessee applies to the Minister for Lands to seek consent to transfer a pastoral lease and the information in the template is relevant and assists with decision-making processes.

A further example of when a Management Plan may be requested, is to address an issue identified by the Commissioner of Soil and Land Conservation. The issues and information received in a soil conservation notice is expected to be clearly articulated in the Management Plan.

Need for a Management Plan

This Guideline and the associated template provide information on what is expected of a pastoral lessee when submitting a Management Plan.

Management Plans will be submitted as a result of a PLB direction. The decision to require a Management Plan will likely arise from the compliance processes associated with PLB policies, including the [Pastoral Lease Stocking Policy](#) and the [PLB Rangeland Management Compliance Policy](#). Under section 108A of the LAA, the PLB has the authority to require a pastoral lessee to develop, submit, and implement a **Management Plan**:

- (1) If the PLB is not satisfied that the pastoral lessee is managing the land under the pastoral lease or permitted stock on that land, in accordance with the LAA; or
- (2) If the lessee has contravened any condition of the pastoral lease that relates to the management of the land or the management of permitted stock under the pastoral lease.

Of particular relevance are the pastoral lessee's obligations outlined in Part 7 of the LAA, which include (but are not limited to) the following:

- ensuring all improvements on a pastoral lease are maintained and kept in good condition to the satisfaction of the PLB
- at all times managing and working the land under the pastoral lease to its best advantage as a pastoral property to the satisfaction of the PLB
- using methods of best pastoral and environmental management practice, appropriate to where the land is situated, for the management of permitted stock and the management, conservation and regeneration of the pasture for grazing

- maintaining indigenous pasture and other vegetation on the land to the satisfaction of the PLB.

If the PLB has directed the lessee to submit a Management Plan, it must be submitted by the date specified by the PLB. Pastoral lessees are encouraged to utilise the template attached to this Guideline, and to ensure the Management Plan meets the minimum requirements (completing all fields in the template).

MINIMUM CONSIDERATIONS

What to include in a Management Plan

If the PLB issues a directive for a Management Plan, the lessee must address the specific issues identified in that directive in their Management Plan. In general terms:

- Simple or smaller-scale issues will require a relatively short Management Plan, while more complex, ongoing issues will require a longer, more detailed document. The level of detail and information supplied in the Management Plan should reflect the complexity, nature and scale of the issue(s) identified in the directive.
- A Management Plan should contain sufficient detail for the PLB to understand the lessee's proposed course of action to remedy identified issues on the land under lease. Maps highlighting current and planned infrastructure development are recommended, where possible. This data may then be provided to the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) for the purposes of updating station maps. Copies of new station maps will be provided to lessees upon request.
- Management Plans may serve multiple purposes. Consequently, plans prepared by a third party for a different purpose, such as Ecologically Sustainable Rangeland Management or Ecosystem Management Understanding Plans, may be acceptable for the PLB's purposes, provided they address the issues identified in the relevant directive of the PLB.

The attached template should be used as a guide to the types of issues that should be covered in a Management Plan, and the level of detail required.

For further guidance on what should be included, see Chapter 3 of the PLB's [Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines](#). This also provides information on best-practice pastoral land management techniques and actions, which may assist the lessee in drafting the Management Plan by providing up-to-date information and links to resources.

Guiding documents

To complete a Management Plan required by the PLB, a lessee will need:

- the PLB directive that states the specific issue(s) and timeframe for the matter to be addressed
- the most recent Rangeland Condition Assessment and other reports noted in the PLB directive as necessary
- the Management Plan Template
- a copy of the station map, including land systems if available (if required, contact DPIRD)
- the [Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines](#), which provide an up-to-date summary of current best-practice land management techniques and actions
- long-range climate outlooks, and historical rainfall data (approximately the past five years - [Bureau of Meteorology](#)).

Information required in a Management Plan

It is the pastoral lessee's responsibility to provide enough information and a clear description of the planned action(s) to respond to a PLB directive under section 108A(2) of the LAA and to accurately describe lease characteristics and the management of the lease.

A template for a Management Plan is included with this Guideline. The template provides guidance on the minimum requirements and level of detail the PLB expects a Management Plan to contain.

There are nine parts to the Management Plan Template.

Part 1 – Station details – contains the minimum general information and the current situation for a pastoral lease required for a Management Plan (including stock numbers and carrying capacity).

Part 2 – Identified compliance issues – the directive from the PLB, including the specific issue and requested timeframe should be clearly articulated in this section, and supporting evidence provided (such as a map depicting the location in relation to the pastoral lease).

Part 3 – Land management and planning – Pastoral lessees are encouraged to refer to chapter 3 of the Good Pastoral Management Guidelines when completing this section of the Management Plan.

Part 4 – Infrastructure – Pastoral lessees are encouraged to refer to chapter 4 of the Good Pastoral Management Guidelines when completing this section of the Management Plan. Supporting evidence is encouraged, depicting the location of all infrastructure relevant to this section.

Part 5 – Grazing management – Pastoral lessees are encouraged to refer to chapter 5 of the Good Pastoral Management Guidelines when completing this section of the Management Plan.

Part 6 – Fire, weeds and feral animals – Pastoral lessees are encouraged to refer to chapter 6 of the Good Pastoral Management Guidelines when completing this section of the Management Plan.

Part 7 – Regenerating and rehabilitating degraded areas – Pastoral lessees are encouraged to refer to chapter 7 of the Good Pastoral Management Guidelines when completing this section of the Management Plan.

Part 8 – Ancillary activities – Include information pertaining to any ancillary activities being undertaken (or proposed to be undertaken) on the pastoral lease which may include activities carried out under an approved permit (horticulture, tourism, etc.), carbon farming activities, and contracting work.

Part 9 – Supplementary Information – Should there be additional supporting documentation or relevant information that may assist in addressing the issue in the PLB directive that is not specifically mentioned, pastoral lessees are encouraged to include this. Pastoral lessees should also identify any consultation undertaken when preparing the Management Plan in this section.

IMPORTANT: Management Plans must adequately respond to the specific issue(s) identified in a PLB directive. The template attached to this Guideline has been designed to assist lessees in formulating a response. All parts of the template should be completed by the pastoral lessee.

A Management Plan must be submitted by the date specified in the PLB direction. Once submitted the PLB may approve the Management Plan or require the lessee to make specified amendments to the Management Plan and resubmit it to the PLB. If the PLB require amendments to be made, a new Management Plan template should be completed and submitted (unless otherwise directed by the PLB).

When considering the need for, the content of, or compliance with a Management Plan, the PLB may seek the advice of relevant Government agencies with expertise in the specific issue(s) to ensure the Management Plan has been thoroughly assessed and considered.

IMPLEMENTATION OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN

Pastoral lessees are required to implement the Management Plan once approved by the PLB. The pastoral lessee is obligated to report to the PLB on implementation in accordance with the Management Plan itself and/or as directed by the PLB.

A Management Plan should outline the manner and timeframes associated with these reporting requirements.

Should a Management Plan approved by the PLB include a commitment by the lessee to reduce stock numbers in order to improve the condition of the land or address land management issues, the PLB may, at its discretion, advise the Minister for Lands recommending that the rent should be reduced in proportion to the reduction in permitted stock.

If a pastoral lessee fails to comply with the Management Plan provisions under sections 108A and 108B of the LAA, the PLB may issue a default notice in accordance with section 129 of the LAA, and the lessee must comply with the notice. Failure to comply with the default notice could result in a fine, the forfeiture of the pastoral lease, or both.

QUESTIONS AND FURTHER INFORMATION ON PREPARING A MANAGEMENT PLAN

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

Pastoral Lease Management and Compliance team

Phone 08 6552 4574 or email LeaseManagement@dplh.wa.gov.au

SOURCES OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND RELATED FINANCIAL ADVICE

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Contact details for local district offices are available on DPIRD's website: Office locations | Agriculture and Food (www.agric.wa.gov.au/office-locations/) or by calling 1300 374 731 (Perth office).

Association of Australian Agricultural Consultants (WA)

The use of pastoral (plus agricultural and horticultural) consultants is beneficial well beyond station and livestock management planning. Information on the range of consultants available in Western Australia can be found on the Association of Australian Agricultural Consultants (WA) website: <http://www.aacwa.com.au/> or by calling 08 9284 6278.

Rural West

Provides a free, confidential, mobile, independent financial counselling service to regional small businesses and all primary production enterprises in WA. Freecall number 1800 612 004 or via website: Rural West – Regain Focus Create Solutions (www.ruralwest.com.au)

PROMPTS FOR LAND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

This section is to be read in conjunction with the [Good Pastoral Land Management Guidelines](#)

Stock management

Stock exclusion and/or reduction

- Where a Rangeland Condition Assessment identifies issues across the pastoral lease, rather than specific issue areas, and the recommendation is to reduce stock across the land in the pastoral lease, how will stock numbers be determined?
 - For example, using current carrying capacity methodology, or assessing the feed on offer (FOO), and how will the lessee respond to seasonal conditions (both adverse and positive)?
- If specific areas are identified as problematic, are stock to be excluded from an issue area? If so, how many and state the date from which they will be excluded and for how long (specify commencement and completion date).
- Is the fencing in the area capable of excluding grazing animals (including feral animals)? If not, how will this be addressed by either fencing improvements (detail these) or grazing management measures (detail these)?
- What is planned for the stock that are excluded? If they are being moved, state where on the pastoral lease they will be moved to (e.g. paddock or water point names) and state how this other area will be monitored and managed to handle increased stock numbers without decline in rangeland condition.

- If stock are not excluded from the issue area, will stock numbers be reduced instead? If so, what number of stock will be removed, how many cattle units/dry sheep equivalent will remain, and what type of stock are they?
- If stock numbers are intended to be reduced, what method will be used to achieve this (muster/self-mustering or trap yards, etc.)?
 - Self-mustering or trap yards are an efficient and cheap method (once constructed) of managing stock numbers around a water point as the exit gate can be locked and stock collected for transport or animal husbandry purposes. Upfront costs for construction may be high, but may save on mustering costs longer term.
- What information will be used to identify when stock may be reintroduced to the issue area and what is the intended date for this to occur?
- When and for how long will the reduced number of stock be run (specify commencement and completion date) and what will indicate that a return to higher stock numbers may be possible?

Grazing system

- Is some form of grazing system to be applied? If so, details should be provided of the system, the date it is to begin and whether the system will be used temporarily (specify commencement and completion date) or permanently?
- If the grazing system involves some form of rotational grazing, identify the areas to be used in the grazing system, the number of stock involved and the livestock introduction and removal dates for each area that will be used. Please state how this other area will be managed to handle increased stock numbers without decline in rangeland condition.

- Please identify how fodder levels across the pastoral lease will be managed, based on the relevant grazing system. This is important to land condition and also to measure grazing pressure and stock turnoff goals for the pastoral lease.

Total stock numbers

- What were the overall stock numbers in the last Annual Return submitted? What date was this?
- How many stock are estimated to be on the pastoral lease at the date of the Management Plan commencement?
- How many stock are proposed to be on the pastoral lease once the plan has been implemented?

Water point use and distribution

- For the issue area, describe the existing water point infrastructure, age and its condition at each site.
- Are water points to be shut down? If so, indicate which ones, what date they will be closed and for how long (or what information will be used to determine when to open them up again)?
- If water points are to be moved, on what date will they be moved? Indicate on a map to where they will be moved and, where possible, provide GPS coordinates.
- If new water points are to be established, on what date will they be operational? Show their exact position on a section of your station map and, where possible, provide GPS coordinates.
- What type(s) of water points are to be installed (source / walk-in dams, bores with tanks and troughs, etc.)?
- Is the move of the water point permanent or if not, on what date will the temporary water point be closed?
- Indicate the numbers of stock to be supported on each water point.

Fencing

- For the issue area, describe the current fencing condition, the distance of sections that have any stock control issues and the description of those issues.
- Is new fencing or repair/replacement of existing fencing proposed?
- What type of fencing will be installed (cattle/sheep/exclusion)?
- How does the positioning of new fencing relate to land system boundaries or type of country?
- Exactly where will it be erected? (Specify location and length of fencing and show the proposed location on a section of the lease map and, where possible, provide GPS coordinates.)
- When will it be erected? (Specify commencement and completion date.)

Declared animal and/or plant control

- Are declared (feral) animals or plants present in the issue area? If so, what type, how many and at what date was this recorded?
- What management steps are proposed to deal with this declared animal and/or plant? Will this work be undertaken in conjunction with the relevant Regional Biosecurity Group?
- Please outline a program to manage declared (feral) animals and/or plants, including what months these actions will be implemented and completed.

Revegetation, soil management and/or earthworks

- Will some form of rehabilitation work be carried out on specific areas of the pastoral lease (e.g. replanting; control of gully erosion, fence line or track erosion, etc.)? If yes, they should be identified on a station map.

- If so, describe the work to be done, where it is to be carried out and by what date(s) (please note stages of work and completion timelines if this is relevant).
- If earthworks are planned, state how these will be designed and built and any State or local government approvals have been obtained to undertake these, such as:
 - clearing permits under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (these may be needed, so it is recommended to check with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER))
 - permit to interfere with the bed or banks of a watercourse under the *Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914* (also DWER)
 - any possible local government planning approvals
 - consideration of registered aboriginal cultural heritage and any approval requirements under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (view the [Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Inquiry System \(ACHIS\)](#) or contact [Aboriginal Heritage](#), Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage for further assistance).
- Has external advice on these planned works been sought? If so, from whom or what organisation? Why was this advice source selected?