

Access to private property for road project investigation



Transport
Roads & Maritime
Services

MAY 2014

Roads and Maritime Services staff or contractors may need to enter private property to carry out field investigations as part of road project development. This fact sheet provides information about the process.

Background

Roads and Maritime staff or contractors may need to carry out field investigations for the development of road route options, concept designs, environmental and other investigations necessary to plan a road project.

Access may be required to private properties on or near a proposed route. All property owners are notified if access to a property is required, usually by letter. The letter also includes a consent form so that the following can be noted in advance:

- Any conditions of entry to the property
- Preferred method of contact with the property owner

- Any restrictions on entry to specific areas of the property
- How much notice is required before the teams enter the site.

Notification letters are sent to the legal owner of the property only. If tenants are on the property, owners should agree with the tenant what date and time access to the property will occur.

Field investigation teams always carry identification. Property owners or tenants have the right to ask to see this identification. Cars entering a property should also have identification.



Surveyor carrying out field investigations

Field investigation activities

Field investigations allow Roads and Maritime to collect information to plan road projects.

Investigations may include surveying, noise monitoring, geotechnical investigations, flora and fauna studies or a review of heritage issues including indigenous cultural significance.

A Review of Environmental Factors or an Environmental Management Plan will be prepared for the investigations if required.

Work may include:

- Vehicles entering a property and teams setting up equipment
- Recording measurements and other survey data
- Using vehicle mounted survey equipment
- Placing temporary survey pegs or permanent concrete survey markers
- Trimming vegetation to establish a line of vision between survey points
- Establishing traffic control arrangements if the work is taking place near a road.

Some investigations may require soil to be moved or vegetation trimmed to clear a path for vehicles and equipment to access the site.

The field investigation team is required to restore the site as close to its original condition as possible. Bore holes will be filled in with bored material or cement based grout. If soil is washed out of a bore hole or it is not full, please contact Roads and Maritime as soon as possible.

Every effort is made to prevent the spread of noxious weeds or plant diseases. Preventive measures include washing vehicle wheels and team members' boots, keeping cars on sealed roads and checking for mud on boots and tyres.

If you have specific concerns, contact Roads and Maritime or its contractor so appropriate steps can be taken. You can do this by calling the telephone number provided in the letter requesting access.

Noise monitoring

- Inspecting a property to identify if it may be a noise sensitive location
- Installing noise monitoring equipment at sites to check readings at particular times.

Geotechnical investigations

- Detailed mapping and photography of the ground
- Drilling small boreholes which may involve vehicle mounted drilling rigs. Rock may be taken away for analysis or spread across the drilling site
- Installing water monitoring at selected boreholes. Access will be required to check instrument readings
- Borehole imaging which involves lowering a camera into drilled holes to record geological changes
- Hand drilling to extract soil material from a depth of one to two metres
- Digging test pits using backhoes or excavators to examine soil type. Test pits are filled in after the soil characteristics have been recorded
- Seismic testing which involves digging shallow boreholes for low charge detonations which send seismic waves through the ground. The seismic waves are then recorded and analysed.
- Tests using a truck mounted rig to push a cone into the ground to measure the resistance of different materials
- Installing traffic control arrangements if the work is taking place near a road.

Flora and fauna studies

- Staff on site to record the flora and fauna
- Installing equipment to record samples such as animal noises. Fauna studies are carried out at night as required.

Review of heritage issues

- Site investigations by staff to record heritage features. Representatives of the local Aboriginal community and/or the Local Aboriginal Land Council will often accompany project staff examining indigenous cultural heritage issues.
- Observing and recording the features of specific sites
- Sampling and excavation of specific sites.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I receive a request for access, does that mean my property is going to be affected by a project?

No, it does not necessarily mean your property will be affected. Roads and Maritime may seek access to gather information which can inform the design and development of possible options.

Do I have to lock up my animals?

If you have a dog, cattle, horses or other animals which may be disturbed by the field investigations, please advise Roads and Maritime or its contractor so arrangements can be made to avoid or minimise any disturbance to the animals or staff and contractors. Call the number provided in the access request letter.

Can I accompany the field team?

Where feasible, you are welcome to accompany the field team during its investigations noting work health and safety regulations must be followed. You will need to advise the site supervisor before the visit.

If safety equipment such as a hard hat is necessary it will be provided for you. The site supervisor will accompany you at all times to ensure your safety. Field investigations can take several hours.

Can the field team answer my questions about the project?

Any questions about the project should be put to the project manager, the project information line or the contact number in the access request letter.

Can I ask Roads and Maritime to use one site instead of another on my property?

Sites are chosen for specific reasons. For example, vegetation in an area may include threatened fauna. Roads and Maritime will negotiate with landowners about sites as often as possible.

Will you tell me when you have been to my property?

At the end of a field investigation visit, a project information card should be left in your mailbox or near the front door setting out

- the type of field investigation
- the time the field investigation team arrived and left
- a Freecall information line

If the property does not have a mailbox, please call the telephone number provided in the letter you have received requesting property access.

Will compensation be paid for any damage caused to my property?

Every effort is made to avoid damaging property but should it occur Roads and Maritime will pay for any loss or damage arising from the entry of its staff or contractors.

Can I refuse access?

Roads and Maritime staff negotiate with property owners to gain approval for access to carry out field investigations. However, should an agreement not be reached Roads and Maritime does have power under the *Roads Act 1993* (NSW) to enter properties for the purpose of carrying out investigations.

Under the *Surveying & Spatial Information Act 2002*, Registered Land Surveyors and their assistants also have the authority to enter property for survey purposes. They must provide you with the necessary notice.

To contact Roads and Maritime

Call the telephone number provided on any correspondence or business card you may have received or call **132213** to contact your nearest Roads and Maritime Services office.