

Stock Underpass Program

A program to support improved farm and road safety and increased farm productivity across the livestock sector

Program Guidelines May 2018



**Tasmanian
Government**

1. Background

Funding of \$750,000 was allocated in the 2017-18 State Budget over two years for the Stock Underpass Program, which will allow farmers to access funds as a contribution to the overall cost of installing an underpass. Minister Courtney relaunched the program on 28 May 2018 by announcing that the program will now provide Grants up to one third (33%) of the cost of construction of an underpass, up to a maximum grant of \$80,000 and that, as part of Taking Agriculture to the Next Level Policy, an additional \$600,000 has been made available out to 2021-2022.

These Guidelines have been developed with input from Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, DairyTas, the Department of State Growth and the Local Government Association of Tasmania.

2. Program Objective

The objective of the SUP is to reduce the incidence of stock crossing on public roads. This will assist farming operations to improve efficiency and productivity and will also improve road and farm safety for the public, farm workers and stock.

3. Program Eligibility

To be eligible for financial assistance from the SUP the applicant must:

- a. be the owner of a property which operates farming livestock and on which the underpass will be established (note that the business operations may be undertaken by a sharefarmer)
- b. have an Australian Business Number and be registered for GST
- c. secure the necessary works permits and/or development application approval needed to undertake the activity, noting approval may be required from the Department of State Growth and/or Local Council depending on ownership of the road where the underpass will be constructed
- d. demonstrate capacity to fund the balance of costs associated with the work
- e. commit to maintaining the underpass structure on completion of the construction
- f. undertake to complete the works within 12 months of approval of the grant
- g. commit to having the construction work undertaken by a pre-qualified contractor, who has achieved pre-qualification in accordance with the National Pre-Qualification System.

4. Selection Criteria

Eligible applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. The demonstrated need for the stock underpass to either improve farm efficiency and productivity and/or improve road and farm safety. Factors to be considered include:
 - a. number of stock - current and forecast if relevant (i.e. if expansion is planned)
 - b. frequency of stock crossing (e.g. twice daily, daily, x times per week)
 - c. time spent crossing cattle per week
 - d. number of staff required to assist with stock crossing
 - e. estimated weekly traffic volume (refer to the Department of State Growth or your local Council)
 - f. existing road surface
 - g. line of sight or visibility issues for motorists with current cattle crossings
 - h. history of accidents or near misses involving livestock/staff/road users over the last five years
 - i. anticipated benefit to your business
2. Proposed commencement and completion dates
3. An understanding of the type and design of the stock underpass construction for the specific location and the requirements of the road network owner and the local Council (if different parties). Note that standard drawings have been developed by Tasmanian Government as a resource and are available from the Department of State Growth free of charge. Using these is not compulsory.

5. Eligible Expenditure

The SUP provides reimbursement of up to one third (33%) of approved expenses for the construction of underpass to a maximum grant of \$80 000 plus GST per underpass.

Activities will only be supported if it can be clearly demonstrated that the activity is directly linked to the construction of the underpass.

As a **guide** the following expense items are eligible:

- a. Purchase of materials and services for construction of the underpass
- b. Costs of works permits and applications for works to be commenced and completed to necessary Australian Standards
- c. Costs of special design drawings where standard ones do not apply or are not used (note availability of standard drawings available from Department of State Growth)

Note: Equipment used during construction which can be retained as plant and equipment is not eligible. Retrospective construction expenditure is not eligible.

6. Application Process

For an application to be approved, it must be submitted and assessed before the construction activity takes place.

Steps in the process are as follows:

1. An enterprise assesses the need for stock underpass and consults with the Department of State Growth, if it is to cross a state owned road, or the Local Council, if it is a council owned road.
2. The applicant requests quotes for construction of the underpass.
3. The applicant completes an application form and submits it to AgriGrowth Tasmania (DPIPWE) together with the construction quote and preliminary advice from the road network owner.
4. The application will be assessed and the applicant will be advised of the outcome in writing.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their application with AgriGrowth Tasmania prior to submitting.

7. Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant deed with the Crown and will need to submit the following for the payment claim to be processed:

- Satisfactory proof of costs incurred and work completed to necessary standards (with original receipt document to be sighted upon request)
- Proof of sign-off of work as being compliant with all necessary construction standards
- Tax invoice

8. Taxation and Financial Implications of Grant Funding

Grants under the SUP attract GST. Payment amounts will be increased to compensate for the amount of GST payable.

The receipt of funding from this program may be treated as income by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

While grants are typically treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, how they are treated will depend on the grantee's particular circumstances.

It is strongly recommended that applicants consider seeking independent advice about the possible tax implications for receiving a grant under the SUP from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, prior to submitting an application.

9. Confidentiality

The relevant parties will use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging their respective functions under the Program Guidelines. The Department may use information received in applications and during the performance of the SUP for reporting and evaluation purposes.

10. Publicity of Grant Assistance

The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment disburses public funds and is therefore accountable for the distribution of those funds. As part of the accountability process, the Department may publicise the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, the purpose of the financial assistance.

11. Right to Information

Information provided to the Department of Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment may be subject to disclosure in accordance with the **Right to Information Act 2009**.

12. Personal Information Protection

Personal Information will be managed in accordance with the **Personal Information Protection Act 2004**. This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it related, on request to the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment. A fee for this service may be charged.

13. Enquiries and Contact Details

Any enquiries on the SUP should be directed to:

Anna Ingham, AgriGrowth Tasmania
Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environments
E: Anna.Ingham@dpipwe.tas.gov.au
Telephone: (03) 6165 3138

For enquiries relating to State Roads contact:

Vincent Tang, Manager Bridge Assets
Department of State Growth
E: Vincent.Tang@stategrowth.tas.gov.au
Telephone: (03) 6166 3431

For enquiries relating to local Government road networks and requirements contact your local Council:

http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/local_government_directory

A list of Pre-Qualified Contractors is available at:

http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/road/contractor/contract_tenders