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BIOSECURITY- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS | JULY 2025



MANAGING BIOSECURITY

We understand that biosecurity is a priority for our communities in Central Queensland.

These Frequently Asked Questions have been developed to provide landholders with information about Powerlink's systems and processes for managing biosecurity risk, including avoiding the spread of weeds.

Why is it important to manage biosecurity?

Powerlink owns, builds, operates and maintains the high voltage electricity transmission network in Queensland. To build and maintain this critical infrastructure, our workers and contractors are required to access properties and transmission line easements in vehicles and machinery, and travel between various locations.

We understand that biosecurity risks can severely impact Queensland's agriculture industry, environment, livestock and livelihoods. We take biosecurity seriously and have processes in place to avoid spreading weeds, pathogens and diseases between properties or introducing new biosecurity material from outside the local bioregion.

What is the 'general biosecurity obligation'?

Powerlink has a responsibility to minimise the risk of our activities introducing pest animals, weeds and animal and plant diseases, on private or public land. The *Biosecurity Act 2014* requires everyone to minimise risks associated with invasive plants and animals under their control. This is called a 'general biosecurity obligation'. Powerlink complies with the *Biosecurity Act* and takes action to ensure our activities do not introduce or spread weeds, pathogens and diseases.

What is Powerlink's approach to vehicle wash downs?

We understand that prevention is better than cure. One of the first lines of defence in preventing biosecurity threats from entering and spreading on properties is washing down all vehicles and machinery.

Powerlink conducts regular wash downs to reduce the risk of spreading weeds, as well as soilborne pests and diseases. We have dedicated wash down facilities across our transmission network. Our people and contractors are trained to know when and how to conduct vehicle wash downs and comply with the following:

- key personnel complete the national standard training, 'Inspect and clean machinery, tools and equipment to preserve biosecurity' (AHC BIO203), on projects or locations where there is a high biosecurity risk
- comply with the Queensland Government inspection and wash down procedures.
- only carry out wash downs at designated locations.
- complete a Biosecurity Declaration Form after completing a wash down.
- Wash down records are kept with vehicles and machinery. Landholders can inspect these records on request when we enter a property. With advance notice, we can provide a copy of these records.

What other measures do we take to minimise exposure to weeds?

We take preventative measures to minimise exposure to weeds, such as:

- discussions with landholders to understand biosecurity matters within properties
- avoiding travel through areas heavily affected by biosecurity matter
- visiting clean areas first, before travelling to affected areas
- strategically planning site visits, including using multiple vehicles to ensure clean vehicles
- staying on roads and designated access tracks in work areas
- obtaining weed and seed declarations on any fill material brought onto a property
- developing biosecurity zones, with landholder agreement, for the construction phase of projects
- daily onsite toolbox meetings to discuss biosecurity requirements during construction
- construction of temporary and/or permanent washdown sites for projects.

How does Powerlink work with landholders to manage biosecurity risk?

Powerlink will work with landholders to identify biosecurity risks on each property. We discuss biosecurity and weed management with landholders during our initial meetings. This helps us understand any biosecurity risks and develop appropriate management measures to avoid spreading weeds, diseases and pathogens.

We value our longterm, working relationships with landholders, and maintain communication about biosecurity from the planning phase through to construction, operation and maintenance. Our Land Access Protocol provides information on the standards and commitments we adhere to when accessing properties, including for biosecurity management. You can view information on the Land Access Protocol on our Powerlink website at www.powerlink.com.au/brochures/landaccessprotocol.

How does the Land Access Protocol address biosecurity?

Powerlink's Land Access Protocol contains our principles and standards for land access and conditions we will follow throughout the lifecycle of our infrastructure (planning, construction, and operations and maintenance). Our guiding principles state that we will take all reasonable actions to meet our General Biosecurity Obligations, to ensure our activities do not spread or introduce biosecurity matter.

Will property specific requests be accommodated?

We have developed mandatory controls that must be applied to activities where biosecurity risks are identified. Additionally, there is opportunity for property specific information, rules and entry conditions agreed between Powerlink and landholders. This is covered under Schedule 4 of the Land Access Protocol.

This may include coming to an agreement on biosecurity arrangements for when Powerlink or our contractors access your property. Any property specific requests will be assessed to determine if they are reasonable, practicable and risk based. Reasonable requirements that meet the principles of the General Biosecurity Obligations will be implemented in addition to Powerlink's mandated controls.

Landholders are encouraged to contact their nominated Powerlink representative regarding biosecurity management requirements.

How does Powerlink consider biosecurity at every project stage?

Transmission projects have multiple levels of governance for managing biosecurity risks. A Biosecurity Management Plan is developed early and is part of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). The EMP outlines

Powerlink's key controls (e.g. biosecurity protocols and vegetation management strategies) to minimise the spread of biosecurity material as part of our activities.

The EMP is submitted to the Minister responsible for planning as part of project approvals and is subject to formal public consultation. Once approved, the EMP feeds into the Health, Safety and Environment Specification for contractors, to ensure onsite workers are aware of obligations and commitments.

For ongoing easement access and maintenance, biosecurity requirements are documented in an Environmental Works Plan (EWP). The EWP is the main tool for identifying biosecurity risks at Powerlink sites on a property. It is developed in consultation with each landholder and displays all known biosecurity considerations for a location, and any access requirements or constraints.

Powerlink employees and contractors are made aware of biosecurity risks and are provided maps and training to ensure they understand procedures and obligations for site visits.

Figure 1 below shows how biosecurity is considered at every stage.



Figure 1 Biosecurity at every stage

Will weed surveys be undertaken?

Prior to construction, Powerlink undertakes weed surveys to identify weeds on and near areas to be accessed during construction. This information is used to develop projectspecific biosecurity requirements for the construction phase.

Surveys are also conducted at the end of construction, after the first wet season, to identify any impacts of construction activities on weeds. Any changes are managed in consultation with landholders. Information from the postconstruction survey feeds into strategies for managing biosecurity risks during ongoing maintenance works.



FURTHER INFORMATION

For enquiries about Powerlink and our biosecurity practices, please call 1800 635 369 (Monday to Friday, 7.30am – 5pm) and ask for Landholder Relations or email LandholderRelations@powerlink.com.au.

If you would like to know more about how to control and manage the spread of weeds within Queensland, contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 13 25 23.

About Powerlink Queensland

Powerlink Queensland is a Government Owned Corporation that owns, develops, operates and maintains the transmission network in Queensland. We connect Queenslanders to a worldclass energy future, providing electricity to more than five million Queenslanders and 253,000 businesses.

We are also responsible for connecting largescale renewable energy developments, including wind and solar, and providing electricity to large industrial customers in the rail, mining and LNG sectors. Find out more about Powerlink, visit powerlink.com.au or scan the QR code.

