

All Clients

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Dear Clients,

Recently legislation has been enacted by the Queensland Government with regard to the clearing of vegetation. This change in legislation has made the gaining of a permit to clear land more difficult and in many cases unachievable. The result of these restrictions has had and will continue to have far reaching consequences for many Graziers to both the long term management of these areas, as well as the bottom line profitability of many grazing enterprises.

### **1) Legislation and PMAVS**

The Queensland Government has passed legislation to phase out broadscale clearing of remnant vegetation by December 2006. It is important that the actual implications of this new legislation are understood. Most importantly, legislation is continuing to change and it is a priority that Graziers take action now to provide certainty in the future. There is a need for Graziers to firstly understand timeframes of when legislation has changed for both Leasehold and Freehold land over the last 20 years. When this is understood each Grazier will then be able to determine what actions they need to take now, with regard to permits and mapping for development, to provide security in the future.

Crucial to this is the ability for Graziers to “lock in” areas under current legislation to protect against changes in the future. This process can be aided by the use of a Property Map of Assessable Vegetation or PMAV. A PMAV is an official map which is recognised by the Queensland Government and is used as an overlay of an RE (Regional Ecosystems) map which are now considered to be rarely accurate. A PMAV is also advantageous when applying for grant money through the “Enterprise Assistance” scheme.

### **2) “Enterprise Assistance” Scheme**

The Queensland Government is seeking to assist those affected by these changes in legislation, albeit in a limited way, by offering monetary supplements in the form of grants.

“Enterprise Assistance” grants of up to \$100,000 per farm business are offered by QRAA to any Grazier who has land which the NRM&W can confirm is situated in an area classed as being affected by the new regulations. **The Grazier does not have to have previously applied for a permit and been unsuccessful to apply for this grant.** However the land owner does need to present a project aimed at compensating for the loss which that Grazier has incurred due to the clearing restrictions. This project can consist of a single task or a number of smaller projects all aimed towards creating long term viability for the farm business.

These projects could include:

- introducing new farming systems or technology
- improving productivity through property developments
- value adding activities
- purchasing livestock or other inputs for development
- enhancing sustainable resource use and development
- restructuring debt and/or capital restructuring to improve the productivity and viability of your property
- restructuring partnerships and succession planning

Any successful applicants must be the actual owners of the property and must work actively both on the property and towards the specified project. It has also been stipulated that any applicants hoping to be successful in receiving grant money must have been the owners of the property before the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2003.

The process of applying begins by filling out the “Confirmation of Area of Land Affected” form to confirm that the land which is being applied for is classed as being in the affected area. In the event that the land is in the affected area, the applicant will then proceed to fill out a complete application. This application includes giving details of the project as well as a vegetation management plan and other personal and business details. Once this has been submitted it will then be up to QRAA to approve or decline the application.

Brennan Mayne Agribusiness has made it a priority to be abreast of the options available through this grant and the process involved in being successful in applying for this grant. Brennan Mayne Agribusiness is constantly in contact with QRAA and the NRM&W and is aware of the approaches to take with such applications which may result in greater success for the applicant. Consequently, any clients who may feel they are eligible for this grant and wish to enquire further are urged to contact our office to discuss their situation. I have already begun speaking with the local NRM&W Client Liaison Officer, Kari Paton, to ensure my understanding of the process and its regulations and implications is clear.

I look forward to speaking with you soon,

Regards,

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Brennan Mayne Agribusiness