

MOREE PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL PROMOTING IMPROVED ACCESS THROUGH THE IAP

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AT A GLANCE MOREE PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL...

- Has been very proactive in approving AB-Triple and B-Triple routes to provide vital access to industrial areas, grain receival facilities and cotton gins.
- Is responsible for a network comprising 233km of Regional Roads, 2,638km of local roads, 47 concrete bridges, five timber bridges and one steel truss bridge.
- Recognises the local economy relies so heavily on agriculture, and is conscious of the needs of industry.
- The New South Wales Government's policy regarding AB-Triple and B-Triple access is straightforward – enrolment in the IAP is a condition of access for transport operators, regardless of whether they are operating at General Mass Limits (GML), Concessional Mass Limits (CML) or Higher Mass Limits (HML).

ABOUT MOREE PLAINS SHIRE COUNCIL

Moree Plains Shire is one of the largest councils in New South Wales and home to approximately 13,400 residents.

Smaller communities include Mungindi, Boggabilla, Garah and Pallamallawa, with the original artesian baths within the Great Artesian Basin below Moree earning the region the reputation as the 'spa capital' of Australia.

Local rural industries including beef, sheep, wool, pecan nuts, cotton, wheat and other grains are underpinned by the black soil plains which surround Moree.

ROAD TRANSPORT LINKS

Moree is located on the Newell Highway approximately 480km from Brisbane and 630 km from Sydney, with a direct connection to Brisbane and Melbourne. Access to Sydney is via the Newell, Kamilaroi and New England Highways and the M1 Motorway.

The Gwydir Highway runs east-west from Grafton to the junction of the Castlereagh Highway near Walgett and passes through Moree, which is also the southern terminus of the Carnarvon Highway running north to Rolleston in central Queensland.

DEVELOPING INDUSTRIAL LAND

Moree Plains Shire Council has been very proactive in approving AB-Triple and B-Triple routes to provide vital access to industrial areas, grain receival facilities and cotton gins.

AB-Triple and B-Triple access requirements are considered as part of any new industrial subdivision development.

THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

Moree Plains Shire Council is responsible for a network comprising 233km of Regional Roads, 2,638km of local roads, 47 concrete bridges, a steel truss bridge and five timber bridges.

Providing all weather access is a key issue facing the Council.

According to Ian Dinham, Director Engineering Services, Moree Plains Shire Council adopts a hierarchical approach to the management of its road assets.

MODULAR B-TRIPLE ACCESS

Mr Dinham welcomed developments by the New South Wales Government after the New South Wales Minister for Roads and Freight, the Hon Duncan Gay MLC, announced plans to expand the Modular B-Triple network on 31 July 2013, followed by a joint announcement on 11 December 2013 by Minister Gay and the Minister for Western New South Wales, the Hon Kevin Humphries MP.

IAP What's In It For Me?

“Modular B-Triples are a safer, more efficient alternative to the A-Double Type 1 Road Trains, which are currently allowed on this part of the Newell Highway and on most parts of the Moree Plains Shire road network,” said Mr Dinham.

“This represents a significant extension of the Modular B-Triple network.”



“It means Modular B-Triples can access Moree from southern, central and western Queensland, the Port of Brisbane, southern New South Wales via the Newell Highway and Inverell, and western New South Wales via the Gwydir Highway.”

“It will also provide direct benefits to farmers in the Moree district.”

The operation of Modular B-Triples on the Newell Highway and Moree Plains Shire roads east of the highway is underpinned by access conditions including accreditation under the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS) maintenance module, road friendly suspension and enrolment in the Intelligent Access Program (IAP).

“The 90km/h speed limit – which is already in place for Modular B-Triples and road trains in this part of New South Wales – applies to these vehicles when travelling on or east of the Newell Highway,” said Mr Dinham.

“Council supports Minister Gay’s statement that the IAP ensures route compliance and provides the community and governments with the confidence that the right vehicles are travelling on the right roads.”

WORKING WITH TRANSPORT OPERATORS

“The Council has received plenty of interest from transport operators wanting AB-Triple and B-Triple access to local roads, including access for AB-Triples,” said Mr Dinham.

“Council has adopted an open, consultative process aimed at ensuring it acquired a very sound understanding of industry’s needs.”

“We adopted a thorough and cautious approach to route assessment in the knowledge that Council faces financial

constraints, whilst maintaining responsibility of an extensive road network – much of which is susceptible to damage by excessively laden vehicles.”

“Given that the Moree Plains economy relies so heavily on agriculture, Council must be conscious of the needs of industry.”

“Our grain growers, cotton growers and other farmers are amongst the most efficient producers within their respective industries in Australia. It is not surprising that they want to ensure access to markets at the lowest possible transport cost in order to protect their well-earned reputation as efficient, reliable producers,” said Mr Dinham.

UNDERSTANDING THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

It was vital that Council acquired an understanding of the IAP, as an essential element in assessing applications for AB-Triple and B-Triple route access.

“From a Council perspective, the New South Wales Government’s policy regarding AB-Triple and B-Triple access is straightforward – enrolment in the IAP is a condition of access for transport operators, regardless of whether they are operating at General Mass Limits (GML), Concessional Mass Limits (CML) or Higher Mass Limits (HML).”



“Council was advised that transport operators must be enrolled in the IAP, by using only IAP Service Providers certified by Transport Certification Australia (TCA).”

“These policy settings and regulatory frameworks gave Council a high degree of assurance that heavy vehicles enrolled in the IAP would comply with route access conditions,” said Mr Dinham.

HML ACCESS FOR AB-TRIPLE AND B-TRIPLE COMBINATIONS

Moree Council has granted HML access for AB-Triples and B-Triples on the following routes:

- Goondiwindi and the Queensland Modular AB-Triple and B-Triple network via the Newell Highway
- Narrabri via the Newell Highway. Access is not possible on or south of the bridge over the Namoi River at Narrabri
- Mungindi and the Queensland Modular AB-Triple and B-Triple network via the Carnarvon Highway.

Access is also possible for AB-Triples and B-Triples operating at GML from Moree to Grawin Creek on the Gwydir Highway, 8.83 kilometres east of Collarenebri and 36.5 metre AB-Triples and B-Triples on:

- Warialda-Goondiwindi Road from the Bruxner Highway at Wearne to the Moree Plains Shire Council/Gwydir Shire Council boundary north of North Star
- Penny's Road via the Newell Highway from Bellata to the grain receival facility at Moree
- Bruxner Highway from the Newell Highway, Boggabilla to the Moree Plains Shire Council/Gwydir Shire Council boundary north of North Star.

GML AB-TRIPLE ACCESS

Mr Dinham said that Council took a holistic approach to AB-Triple access, based on the premise that access should be provided to the whole network unless there were sound engineering or safety related reasons not to do so.

“Council assumed that because Modular B-Triples and A-Double road trains used most of its regional and local road network, these roads should be suitable for AB-Triples without the need for detailed route assessment.”

Mr Dinham said this led Council to advise the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) that it had approved GML and CML access for AB-Triples operating and on all local and regional roads within Council's boundaries, except where a road was nominated as being unsuitable either for its full length or because of the presence of another structure such as bridge or rail level crossing.

GML B-TRIPLE ACCESS

Moree Council has granted HML access for B-Triples on the following routes:

- Boggabilla to the Moree Plains/Gwydir Shire Council boundary via Bruxner Highway and North Star Road.
- Moree to BP Service Centre at Inverell, 300 metres east of Jardine Road via the Gwydir Highway.
- Gunnedah Regional saleyards via Narrabri via the Kamilaroi Highway.

GML MODULAR B-TRIPLE ACCESS

Moree Council has granted GML for Modular B-Triples on all approved Road Train routes in Moree Plains Shire, with the IAP required for all vehicles running on or east of the Newell Highway.



B-TRIPLES:

- Are up to 36.5 metres long
- Comprise three tri-axle trailers in addition to the prime mover with a single steer axle and a tandem drive axle group
- May operate at HML at up to 90.5 tonnes GVM
- Must be enrolled in the IAP
- May be decoupled to operate as a compliant 25/26m B-Double irrespective of which trailer is removed.

MODULAR B-TRIPLES:

- Are up to 36.5 metres long
- Comprise three tri-axle trailers in addition to the prime mover with a single steer axle and a tandem drive axle group
- Have a king pin to rear dimension measured from the king pin of the first trailer to the rear of the combination no greater than 29.6m
- May operate at CML at up to 84.5 tonnes GVM
- Must be enrolled in the IAP
- May be decoupled to operate as a compliant 25/26m B-Double irrespective of which trailer is removed
- Prime movers in B-Triple combinations must meet the following requirements:
 - Have an engine with a maximum power output of not less than 500hp (373kw).
 - Be rated by the manufacturer for a startability of 10% and a gradeability of 12%.
 - Be capable of maintaining a minimum speed of 70km/h on a 1% grade at a Gross Combination Mass rating of 84.5 tonnes.

Other operating conditions apply related to warning signs, speed limits and operating as a B-Double.

PRODUCTIVITY, EFFICIENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

The provision of access for Modular B-Triples and Double Road Trains on State, Regional and local roads within the boundaries of Moree Plains Shire enables transport operators to operate more efficiently and productively and to achieve reduced emissions levels and fuel consumption on a tonne-kilometre basis.

"This has benefits for the local community, especially farmers, and has only been possible because of the IAP and Council's ongoing commitment to improving freight productive in the Shire," Mr Dinham said.

"The IAP provides Council with the assurance that transport operators enrolled in the IAP only operate on approved routes," Mr Dinham said.



The information contained in this case study is intended to convey the experiences of the transport operator/s concerned. The benefits of IAP mentioned in this case study may not be true for all transport operators. Transport operators should consider the appropriateness of IAP to their business operations, objectives and circumstances before enrolling in IAP.

Information in this case study has been provided by Moree Plains Shire Council.