

Eton Range Realignment Project

Peak Downs Highway – Fauna Sensitive Infrastructure Monitoring

About the monitoring

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has constructed fauna sensitive infrastructure at priority locations along the Peak Downs Highway. The project was a result of [research](#) that identified road corridor 'hotspots' for koala strikes and recommended the installation of fauna exclusion fencing. The fencing is designed to prevent koalas and other native fauna from entering the highway, and, instead funnels them through existing structures such as large culverts or bridges.

A two-year monitoring program has been completed at two of the locations, Denison Creek and Stockyard Creek, where fauna exclusion fencing has been installed. Monitoring occurred in 2019 and 2020 during breeding periods when koalas are known to be most active.



Pictured: Koala utilising the Denison Creek fauna underpass (Source: Aurecon)

Monitoring regime

The monitoring study used sand plots, camera traps, incidental sighting records and scats to detect the movement of koalas and other wildlife in the vicinity of the underpasses. The aim was to determine whether the fauna fencing was effective in providing safe passage under the highway. It also reviewed the effectiveness of the infrastructure in minimising koala strikes within these areas.

Successful crossings of koalas occurred at the Denison Creek underpass. Based on the data, in excess of 80 crossings are expected each breeding season at Denison Creek

Koala activity was also observed at the nearby Stockyard Creek underpass.

Overall, the infrastructure was shown to be effective at funnelling koalas away from the road towards the safety of the underpass. It was also determined the infrastructure assisted in preventing or reducing koala deaths.

Usage by other fauna was also recorded. In excess of 12 fauna types were noted. The most prevalent were macropods such as kangaroos and wallabies, as well as possums, goannas, echidnas, birds, and snakes.

Future works

The monitoring results highlight the importance of fauna sensitive road infrastructure at known wildlife hotspots. TMR continues to work with stakeholders to reduce the impact of road infrastructure on local koala populations. This work includes:

- further monitoring of fauna sensitive infrastructure
- construction of more fauna exclusion fencing at priority locations
- installation of additional road signage to alert drivers of koala movements
- planting of fodder trees for use by local wildlife carers.

TMR installed a dedicated fauna underpass and fauna exclusion fencing at the Eton Range. Monitoring of this infrastructure is underway to determine its effectiveness in providing safe passage and usage. This project utilises sand plots and camera traps. Monitoring of the underpass will be undertaken in the 2020 and 2021 koala breeding seasons.



Pictured: Eton Range fauna underpass (Source: TMR)

For more information please visit the Eton Range Realignment Project [page](#).



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Queensland Government