Harvest Mass Management Scheme

2016-17 Harvest Period Report

October 2017
INTRODUCTION

The Harvest Mass Management Scheme (HMMS) is designed to support compliance with statutory mass limits whilst providing a level of flexibility for paddock loading, support road infrastructure protection and sustainability, promote safe transportation of grain and improve loading control practices during harvest season.

HMMS was developed to cater for loading difficulties due to no weighing facilities and the natural variation of grain density. HMMS provides up to a 10 per cent mass tolerance when transporting grain from a paddock to a registered grain receiver ('bin').

HMMS excludes ‘bin to bin’ or ‘bin to port’ grain transfers. HMMS participants are expected to aim for statutory mass limits when loading their vehicles from a paddock.

The special access arrangements implemented for the 2016-17 harvest remain in place for the 2017-18 harvest period and are still under review. However, these access arrangements are not guaranteed to remain in place for the 2018-19 harvest and road owners are encouraged to submit roads for assessment prior to the harvest season commencing.

Main Roads gathered feedback from stakeholders, industry associations and peak bodies in relation to the implementation and practicality of HMMS. The feedback was gathered through online questionnaires.

This report outlines the key results from data submitted to HVS from the registered grain receivers during 1 September 2016 – 28 February 2017 harvest and key themes from the questionnaire.

The data for this period shows a significant increase in total deliveries and the associated tonnage delivered as a result of the bumper harvest. The percentage of deliveries exceeding the HMMS limits remains comparable to previously years but slightly increased from last year.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF HMMS

The HMMS seeks to provide an efficient avenue for the agricultural industry to move their harvest from paddock to grain receiver.

The primary objectives of the HMMS are to:

- Ensure compliance with statutory heavy vehicle mass limits;
- Provide a level of flexibility to recognise difficulties associated with loading grain off a paddock;
- Ensure the safe transportation of grain across the road network; and
- Promote road infrastructure protection and sustainability.
KEY RESULTS FROM THE 2016-17 HARVEST

The data provided to Main Roads from Cooperative Bulk Handling (CBH) and Bunge Limited indicated the 2016-17 harvest produced the largest crop in WA’s history, with more than 16.89 million tonnes delivered.

The key results of the harvest are as follows:

- 151 grain receival sites across two registered grain receivers, received a total of 362,360 deliveries, carried out by 5,083 HMMS registered vehicles.

- Average tonnage delivered per vehicle is 46.61 tonnes which is on a steady incline since the 2012-13 harvest.

- 35 per cent of all loads (127,816 deliveries) presented to the grain receivers during the 2016-17 harvest were within statutory mass limits (SML), which was slightly down from 36.7 per cent the previous year.

- 0.45 per cent of all deliveries resulted in loads being forfeited or rejected. This equated to 1,616 vehicle deliveries exceeding the tolerance by a total of 848 tonnes. The percentage has been on a steady decline over the past seven years.

- 869 deliveries or 0.24 per cent of all loads delivered exceeded the HMMS tolerance of 10 per cent.

- 20.47 per cent of all loads delivered exceeded the statutory mass limits by more than 5 per cent; demonstrating operators continue to deploy loading practices which are not in line with the intent of HMMS. This percentage remains consistent with the average over the past seven years.

- 6.27 per cent of all loads delivered exceeded statutory mass limits on gross mass by more than seven per cent. Statistical information relating to individual axle loadings were not available from the grain receivers, therefore the axle group overloads could be more significant.

- The most common vehicle configuration was a prime mover, semi trailer towing a dog trailer (RAV Network 3 vehicle combination) which delivered 34 per cent (12,112) of the harvest transport task.

- The Kwinana Zone (encompassing the area between Wubin, Southern Cross and Kulin) consisting of 85 receival sites, received 51 per cent of CBH total deliveries, whilst the Esperance site received the highest number of individual visits with 16,705 equating to six per cent of tonnage delivered.

- The forfeited grain raised $220,000 for nine charitable organisations, bringing the total donations to over a million dollars since 2011.

- RAV Network 2 comprises 74 per cent of the Wheatbelt Region local roads (30,228 kms).

- The RAV Networks increased by 6 per cent or 250 roads on average over the previous two years. RAV Network 4 experienced the greatest expansion with an additional 1,110 roads added to the network equating to an addition 7,100 kms of access.
KEY THEMES FROM HMMS REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

As part of the review process, Main Roads gathered feedback from stakeholders in relation to the implementation and practicality of HMMS in relation to the changes implemented in September 2016. The feedback was gathered utilising online questionnaires.

The HMMS online questionnaire was distributed to key internal and external stakeholders including transport industry bodies and associations, Western Australia Local Government Association (WALGA), Main Roads Regional Network Managers/Regional Managers and HVS branches.

The following key themes emerged from the online questionnaires:

- 79 per cent of all respondents believe the Scheme provides an efficient avenue for the agricultural industry to move their harvest from paddock to grain receiver.

- Not all participants understand their safety roles and responsibilities under HMMS, particularly in relation to the 2016-17 access arrangements on roads which are currently not approved for RAV network access.

- 16 per cent of operators obtained their information regarding the 2016 amendments to the Scheme directly from Main Roads, whilst 41 per cent relied on fellow operators, farmers and industry associations and a further 38 per cent received their information from the registered grain receiver. This highlights an opportunity for Main Roads to work with industry and operators to improve communications.

- Less than 2 per cent of respondents understood all the requirements to be a participant of the Scheme, especially relating to the special access arrangements. 30 per cent were unclear with the registration requirements and thought they had to register with Main Roads to participate in HMMS.

- Road asset managers expressed concerns regarding RAV access arrangements implemented for the 2016-17 harvest period.

- The HMMS tolerance and current access arrangements are causing a level of frustration amongst some transport operators who have made significant monetary investments in new equipment and technology and support the removal of the Scheme and adoption of AMMS for all grain cartage.

- Local governments expressed concerns regarding the amended access arrangements and would have preferred to
see the unapproved access capped to RAV Network 4, to limit the potential damage to their network and ensure road safety for all. A greater commitment by Main Roads is sought to monitor compliance.

- A number of Scheme participants advise that some registered receival sites do not fully understand their weighing obligations, with empty trailers being included in mass calculations which caused frustration.

- There is a perception, amongst some Scheme participants, they can abuse the conditions of the Scheme. Particularly, loading in excess of statutory mass whilst travelling on any road, with any vehicle combination.

- There is a desire amongst HMMS participants to explore expanding the Scheme to include other bulk products such as fertiliser and lime, whilst maintaining the same tolerances.

- Participants acknowledged the introduction of the Accredited Mass Management Scheme (AMMS) has recognised a variety of loading control methods that are capable of being used when loading from a paddock and provide greater efficiencies than HMMS.

**CONCLUSION**

The harvest data results demonstrate a strong level of compliance by scheme participants in aiming for statutory mass limits which remains constant over previous seasons.

However, some operators are still continuing to use the HMMS as a concessional loading scheme, specifically targeting the range between five per cent and 10 per cent tolerances. These deficient loading practices are not in line with the intent of HMMS.

The percentage of deliveries exceeding HMMS limits is the lowest since HMMS commenced and has seen a steady decline over the past seven years.

Main Roads will continue to undertake annual reviews and evaluations of performance data supplied by grain receivers, to ascertain the effectiveness and level of compliance of the Scheme.
The reviews allow HVS to address issues of non-compliance and take appropriate action for any suspected misuse of the Scheme to ensure road infrastructure protection and sustainability.

Main Roads has made no changes to HMMS for the 2017-18 harvest season. However, any proposed changes resulting from the 2016-17 HMMS review will be implemented prior to the commencement of the 2018-19 harvest season.