



Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



April 2020

Frequently asked questions

Changes to construction hours during Coronavirus outbreak

What changes have been made to standard operating hours for construction projects?

The NSW Government has introduced new rules allowing construction sites to operate on weekends and public holidays between 7am and 6pm.

What does this change mean for the Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade?

This means the approved construction hours for the Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade are now Monday to Sunday between 7am and 6pm, including public holidays.

Prior to this change, the approved construction hours for the Woolgoolga to Ballina upgrade were Monday to Friday between 7am and 6pm and on Saturday between 8am and 5pm.

In areas where residents live more than 200 metres from the work, extended work hours are allowed between 6am and 7am and 6pm and 7pm from Monday to Friday.

Why has the NSW Government extended approved construction hours?

The NSW Government has extended construction hours to weekends and public holidays to support the industry during the Coronavirus outbreak.

The changes have been made to facilitate social distancing and support the health and wellbeing of workers.

How will impacts be managed?

We appreciate extending construction hours to weekends and public holidays may cause disruption for the community, especially as more people are staying in and working from home.

The Woolgoolga to Ballina project team will continue follow strict environmental conditions relating to noise, vibration and dust management to minimise impacts where possible.

The team will continue to be available on email at W2B@pacificcomplete.com.au and via the project hotline on 1800 778 900 should the community have any concerns.

How were the changes made?

The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* was amended on 24 March to allow the government to override normal planning controls during COVID-19.

This order is known as the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (COVID-19 Development Infrastructure Construction Work days) Order 2020*

How long will these extended hours be in place?

These temporary changes may be in place for up to six months.

Will there still be out of hours work now construction hours have been extended?

Additional out of hours work may still be required. There are several technical reasons why work is required outside approved construction hours including:

- **Safety** – making it safer for motorists and workers when we are building over and next to roads by reducing interactions between these two groups.
- **Weather** – concrete cannot be poured during rain or hot weather. In hot weather the concrete needs to be poured as early as possible so that it can start to cure before the heat of the day.
- **Weather** – some work required to lay asphalt cannot be carried out when it is raining or there are high winds. During periods of high winds at the top of the bridge location, asphalt needs to be laid in the early morning and evening when wind speeds are generally less.
- **Quality** – when pouring concrete for pavement and culverts, it must be done in a single pour to ensure quality and integrity. To manage the curing process, saw cutters are used to cut the pavement. The timing of cutting depends on the moisture level of the concrete and varies from about four to 24 hours after concrete is poured. The saw cutting itself only takes about 30 minutes to complete.
- **Quality** – before laying asphalt, the bridge deck must be spray sealed which then needs to be rolled for two days. The final surface has to be laid in one run between expansion joints on the bridge for a better quality product with a smoother surface for motorists.
- **Traffic** – building next to, over and on existing roads, means traffic may be stopped or reduced to one lane while work is carried out
- **Environment** – when rainfall has occurred, sediment basins (temporary ponds to catch water from the construction site) require maintenance and draining to ensure they meet the relevant environmental approvals. These need to be emptied of water, via a pump, within five days of rainfall. When rainfall has not occurred for extended periods of time work may be carried out to suppress dust.

This work will continue to be carried out in line with existing approval and community notification processes.

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