Land tenure records

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Information about land tenure is found in the records created by the Surveyor General's Department, the Survey Office, the Office of the Chief Commissioner for Crown Lands, the Department of Lands and Works, the Lands Department, and subsequent names of the agency responsible for land records – the most recent is the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

Most records are arranged according to the form of tenure, and the Land Agent or Crown Lands Commissioner's district. Therefore, in order to use the records it is first necessary to determine the form of tenure such as pastoral lease, occupation license, selection, special lease or freehold. Also, be aware that the conditions of most forms of land tenure changed over time with changes to the relevant legislation.

Forms of land tenure are defined as follows -

- A *pastoral lease* is a large area of land rented for a fixed period of time from the Crown for pastoral purposes. Pastoral leases are sometimes referred to as runs, stations, blocks or pastoral holdings. The Crown retains the right to resume parts of the leasehold in certain circumstances. Tenancy is usually long term. Types of pastoral leases include preferential pastoral lease, development pastoral lease, prickly pear pastoral lease, stud pastoral lease and forest grazing lease. It was common for farmers to secure improvements on the pastoral property which were usually the homestead and other buildings from being taken over by the Crown at the expiration of the lease, by purchasing the property immediately surrounding the homestead. Therefore, pre-emptive purchases made under section 54 of the *Pastoral Leases Act, 1869* converted part of the lease to freehold title.

- An *occupation license* is a large area of land rented for a maximum of one year from the Crown for pastoral purposes. The license may be renewed yearly if the Crown does not require the land for other purposes. This form of tenure is similar to the pastoral lease except that it is for a short term and generally for smaller areas of land.

- A *land selection* is a small area of land rented from the Crown for agricultural or grazing purposes. Most types of selections are convertible, that is, they are designed to be converted to freehold tenure after a fixed number of years, provided the selector fulfils certain conditions such as residence by the selector or his bailiff on the land, improvement to a set value, and payment of an annual rent. There are various types of selections such as agricultural farm, grazing farm, grazing homestead, prickly pear or perpetual lease.

- A *special lease* of Crown Land may be granted for a fixed term for manufacturing, industrial, residential, business or recreational purposes.

- A *freehold title* is any piece of land purchased outright. A Deed of Grant is issued upon the first sale of a property. A Certificate of Title is issued upon any subsequent sale and transfer.

- A *freehold tenure* is a lease that converts to freehold if conditions are met, such as repaying money owed.

Some land tenure records prior to the separation from New South Wales in 1859 are also held at Queensland State Archives. However, the majority of land records for this period are at the State Records Authority of New South Wales. *New South Wales Government Gazettes* to 1859 and *Queensland Government Gazettes* from 1859 onwards contain details of all land tenure types. Lists of land sold and pastoral licences and leases issued to 1859 have been photocopied from the New South Wales Government Gazette and are available in the Public Search Room. For more information about land tenure listings in the *New South Wales Government Gazette*, you may want to contact the Museum of Lands Mapping and Surveying. The *Queensland Government Gazettes* are available on microfilm in the Public Search Room.

The main groups of land records held at Queensland State Archives are pastoral leases, occupation licenses, land selections, special leases, freehold title and freehold tenure. Refer to Brief guide 54, Land codes for land tenure codes and the main Queensland State Archives' series of records. The tables below give more detail about the main land records available at Queensland State Archives.

Pastoral leases

Further information in Search procedure 21, Pastoral leases.

Item ID 7656	Papers concerning the transfer of leases in the Moreton District, circa 1848–1869
Series ID 12035	Registers of demands made for leases to pastoral runs in the various Pastoral Districts, 1848–1870
Item ID 23386	Register of runs in the Pastoral District of Burke under the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*
Item ID 23387	Register of runs in the Pastoral District of Darling Downs under the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*
Item ID 23388	Register of runs in the Pastoral District of Kennedy under the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*
Item ID 23389	Register of runs in the Pastoral District of Moreton under the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*
Item ID 23390	Register of runs in the Pastoral District of Port Curtis under the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*
Item ID 23391	Register of runs in the Pastoral District of Wide Bay and Burnett under the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*
Item ID 23302	Index to registers of pastoral leases or runs, 1860–1869 LAN/N1
Item ID 23374	Index - pastoral leases or holdings - alphabetical register, 1863–1880 LAN/N2
Item ID 23377	Register of run lessees (Volume 1)
Item ID 23378	Register of run lessees (Volume 2)
Item ID 23379	Register of run lessees (Volume 3)
Item ID 23380	Register of run lessees (Volume 4)
Item ID 23381	Register of run lessees (Volume 5)
Item ID 23382	Register of run lessees (Volume 6)
Item ID 23383	Register of run lessees (Volume 7)
	The above registers of pastoral lessees (Volume 1–Volume 7) give application details, lease dates, area boundaries, consolidation of blocks, pre-emptive purchases and transfers for each pastoral lease. They are indexed by name of lessee in Item ID 23375, LAN/N3
Item ID 294889	Register sheets for runs Abbey Peak - Ayrshire Downs
Item ID 294890	Register sheets for runs Babbiloora - Blunder Park
Item ID 294891	Register sheets for runs Boah – Byroya
Item ID 294892	Register sheets for runs Cabbage Tree – Copesland
Item ID 294893	Register sheets for runs Corea – Dysart
Item ID 294894	Register sheets for runs Eaglefield - Funnell Junction

Item ID 294895	Register sheets for runs Gadara – Gyranda
Item ID 294896	Register sheets for runs Haddon – Justin
Item ID 294897	Register sheets for runs Kaampa – Kyra
Item ID 294898	Register sheets for runs Labona – Lythe
Item ID 294899	Register sheets for runs Maaland – Moonzie
Item ID 294900	Register sheets for runs Mooraberree – Myuna
Item ID 294901	Register sheets for runs Naibar – Owangowan
Item ID 294902	Register sheets for runs Packsaddle - Quita Creek
Item ID 294903	Register sheets for runs Racecourse Creek - Saxby Downs
Item ID 294904	Register sheets for runs Scardons Hill - Sypher Park
Item ID 294905	Register sheets for runs Table Mount – Troutbeck
Item ID 294906	Register sheets for runs Truno – Weymouth
Item ID 294907	Register sheets for runs Wharton Creek - Zig Zag Creek
Series ID 14000	Card index to non-current lessees of Crown Land, ca 1885–1993
Series ID 14031	Run files, 1850–1994

Occupation licenses

An occupation licence was a large area of land rented for a maximum of one year from the Crown for pastoral purposes, provided it was not subject to de-pasturing. Similar to the pastoral lease, this land tenure was short term and generally for a smaller area of land.

Further information in Brief Guide 37, Occupation licences.

Series ID 14008	Registers of occupation licenses, 1885–1980
Series ID 14005	Occupation license files, 1865–1994

Land selections

A selection is an area of land leased from the Crown for agricultural or grazing purposes, such as conditional, unconditional, grazing farm, agricultural farm, grazing homestead, prickly pear, sugar selections, soldier settler selections and perpetual lease selections.

Further information in Search procedure 3, Land selections.

Item ID 101539	Register of Lands Open for the purchase of selections, 1861–1867 (An index by purchaser's name is available in the Public Search Room)
Series ID 16150	Registers of Agricultural Reserve leases, 1866–1868. Indexed by Register of lands 1861-1868 on the QSA website, by name of Reserve in Item ID 101533, Register – leases, and by name of lessee in Series ID 16125, Index to Leases (there is a copy in Public Search room)
Item ID 76341	Register of applications made by lessees under the Agricultural Reserve provisions of the *Crown Lands Act 1860* to be allowed to come under the provisions of the *Crown Lands Alienation Act 1868*, 5 March 1868 - March 1869
Item ID 23651	Name index of selectors, 1868–1885
Series ID 13961	Registers of applications by selectors, 1868–1885 (indexed by LAN/P57 – a copy is in the Public Search Room
Series ID 13945	Registers of selections, 1868-1885 (arranged numerically within Lands Agents districts and indexed by Series ID 13961)
Item ID 24141	Index to registers of lessees of agricultural and grazing farms, Aug 1885–ca 1905
Item ID 22387	Register of offers for selections on Estates under *Agricultural Lands Purchase Act 1894*, 1894–1929 (indexed by name of vendor or estate)
Item ID 22395	Land Agent's District of Ipswich, selections in the Rosewood and Lake Clarendon Estates under the *Agricultural Land Purchase Act 1894*

Series ID 13955	Registers recording details of land selections 1885–1981 (arranged numerically within Lands Agents districts and indexed by LAN/P513–517)
Series ID 14000	Card index to non-current lessees of Crown Land, circa 1885–1993
Series ID 14050	Files on leased agricultural and grazing farms 1878–2005

Special leases

Special leases were granted for a wide variety of purposes including wharf sites, quarries, accommodation houses, guano, flour mills, sawmills, fishing stations.

Further information in Brief guide 38, Special leases.

Series ID 14016	Registers of special leases issued, 1868–1981. Volume 1 contains an incomplete index from 1868 to 1904.
Series ID 14000	Card index to non-current lessees of Crown Land, ca 1885 onwards
Series ID 18005	Special lease files 1860–1994
Series ID 18006	Special lease files, Theodore district

Freehold

Crown Land becomes freehold when the land is sold and the buyer issued with a Deed of Grant by the Governor in Council. Two separate series of Deeds of Grant were maintained for towns and country from 1860 to 1921. Series ID 47 and Series ID 46 consist of copies of original Deeds of Grant which is issued upon the first sale of Crown Land.

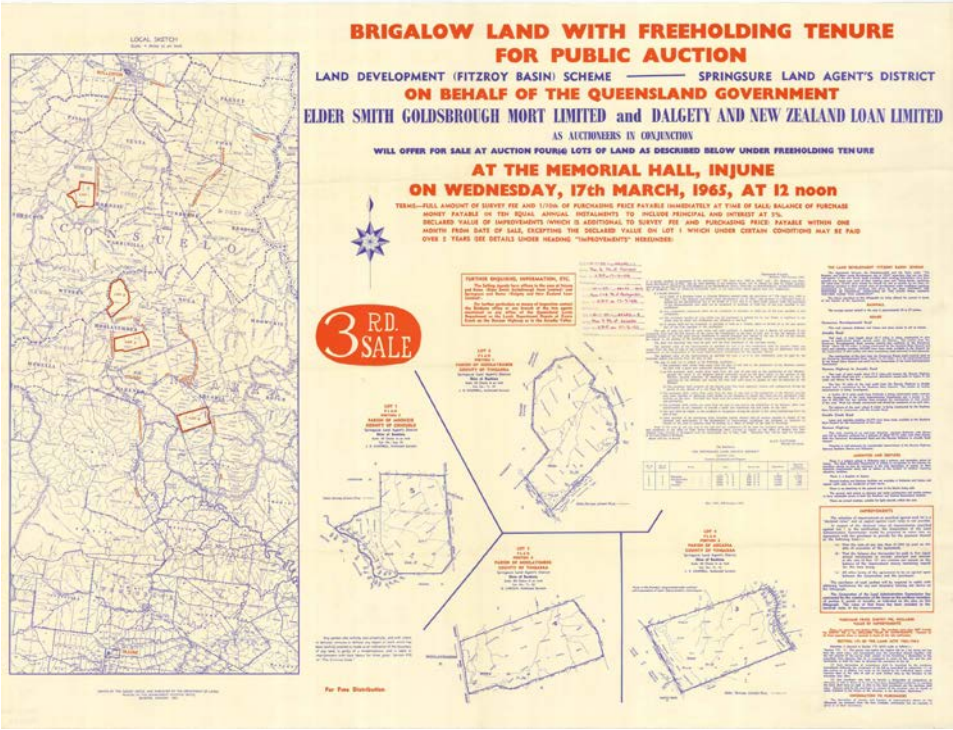
Further information in Search procedure 19, Deeds of Grant.

Series ID 47	Triplicate Deeds of Grant - Land purchase A registers, 1860–1991
Series ID 46	Triplicate Deeds of Grant - Town lot B registers, 1860–1921
Series ID 14026	Sales of Crown Land and special leases, 1859–1962. For the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries these lists include sales of perpetual leases.
Series ID 14038	Reports of sales of Crown Land, 1859–1915
Item ID 101517	Lists of land sold - colony of Queensland 1842–1859 (card index by purchaser's name in the Public Search Room)
Item ID 101547	Sale of land at Ipswich, Brisbane, Warwick, Drayton, Rockhampton, Dalby, Maryborough, Gayndah, Callandoon, Condamine, Gladstone 1849-1861
Series ID 10397	Indexes to Land Purchases 1860–1921
Series ID 10373	Registers of Land Purchase Deeds under Pre-Emptive Right 1860–1885
Series ID 9977	Registers of Sales of Crown Lands, Country Lands 1860–1959
Series ID 9963	Registers of Sales of Crown Lands, Town and Suburban Lands 1855–1959
Series ID 265	Card Index to Triplicate Deeds of Grants 1964–1978
Series ID 266	Card Index to Triplicate Deeds of Grant 1922–1965

Note: For subsequent transactions of properties, contact the Titles Registry in the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

Finding aids

Use ArchivesSearch (the Queensland State Archives catalogue) to search for public records. Image Queensland (part of ArchivesSearch) enables users to search and view digital copies of public records. The example below is a map of Brigalow land with freeholding tenure available for Public Auction, 17 March 1965.



Queensland State Archives, Digital Image ID 2810

There is a range of online indexes on the Queensland State Archives website. The land records indexes are:

- Land selections prior to 1884
- Mineral leases 1871-1940
- Miners rights 1874–1880
- Register of lands 1861-1868
- Register of land sold 1842-1859
- Register of lands sold 1849-1861
- Register of pastoral holdings 1863-1880

For researchers in the Public Search Room there are other useful finding aids.

Other information

For more information about land tenure under the *Land Act 1994*, consult the *Guide to land tenure* available on the Department of Natural Resources and Mines' website.