

AUSTRALIAN ROAD FORUM

President's Report 2005/6

Last year I reported that ARF had been officially established as the new national peak body for road transport stakeholders. Since then ARF has made great progress in meeting the responsibilities associated with this.

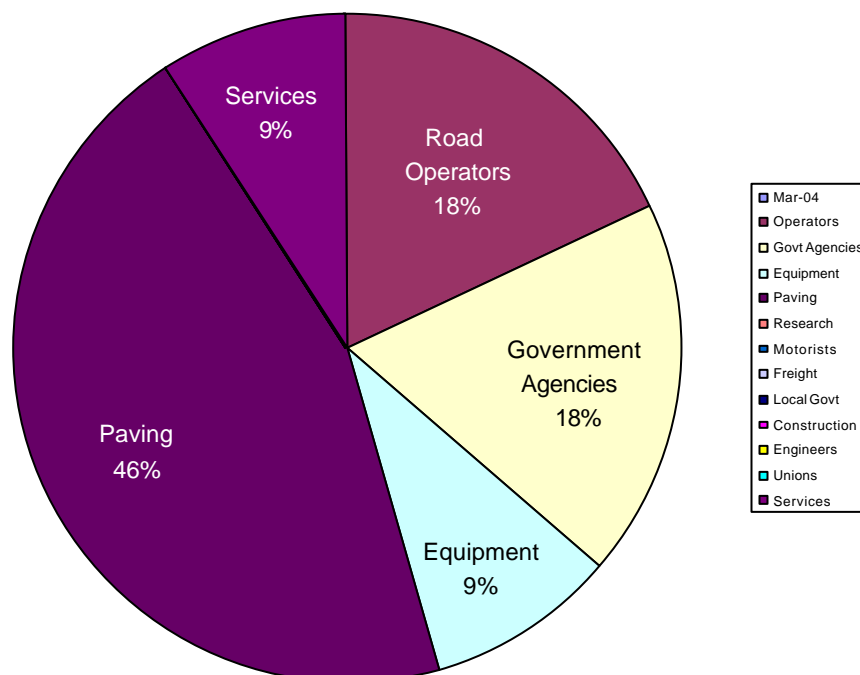
The ARF's membership, activity levels and financial position have become much stronger. This reflects and sustains a much more diverse and significant range of activity than was possible even a year ago.

Membership

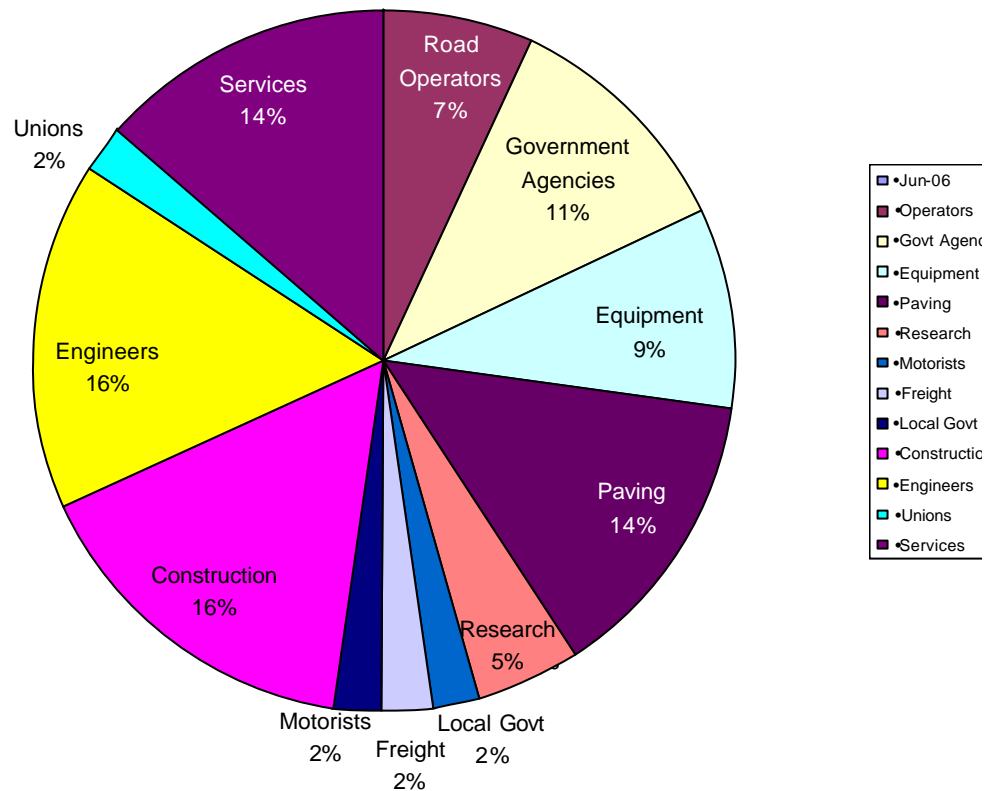
At last year's AGM I reported that our membership had grown from 24 to 33. This year membership grew to 43 and, at the time of writing this report, membership now stands at 48. Hard to believe we began three years ago with 11 members.

ARF's greatest contribution to the industry is that it enables participants to communicate across the whole sector. The diversity of ARF's membership is therefore very important. The following tables illustrate progress:

MEMBER BALANCE MARCH 2004



MEMBER BALANCE JUNE 2006



It is clear from these tables that ARF has substantially met the challenge of covering the field in a single college of industry leaders. We now need to do some fine tuning, especially in strengthening representation from the freight sector.

Policy Development and Industry Representation

ARF was actively consulted by Government during the year and we responded in accordance with clearly defined policy objectives. Meetings were held with the Federal Minister and Shadow Minister, with State Ministers and road agency heads across Australia. In particular ARF was invited to contribute to the NSW Government enquiry into the CCT and to stakeholder consultations in relation to AusLink.

In June ARF appointed a Media Director to develop our policy and communication capacity. I am sure we will have more to report on this area next year.

Forum Meetings

Consistent with its role as the industry's umbrella body, ARF instituted regular meetings of the "Forum" as a college of industry leaders. Forum meetings

were convened in September in Sydney and in Melbourne in March. These meetings will henceforth be held every six months and are limited to ARF members and their invited guests. Both meetings were booked to capacity and received very strong feedback. They are at the heart of what ARF is about and among the key advantages of membership.

Other Activities

A key function of ARF is to provide quality networking activities and opportunities for exchange of information on topics relevant to the industry.

ARF further expanded its industry lunches and workshops during the year. 1,185 industry members attended ARF events, compared with 838 in 2004/5. Our speakers included State and Federal Ministers, shadow ministers and road agency heads.

International Activity

ARF was also active internationally. As ARF President I had the honour to continue to serve on the World Executive Board of the International Road Federation. This month an ARF delegation returned from a significant mission to China, on which I will report in detail next year.

Board and Management

During 2005/6 the Board expanded from a “working group” to a full fledged Board of nine members drawn from a cross section of our membership sectors. Three active sub-committees were established covering Audit, Policy and Nominations.

As its first task, the Board developed detailed and measurable performance objectives for ARF, covering all significant areas of activity. I congratulate my colleagues and ARF’s management that our objectives for 2005/6 were exceeded in almost every area by year end.

Acknowledgements

Board Members gave generously of their time and industry knowledge. Ed Sandrejko joined Neil Doyle as our two Vice-Presidents. Michael Bresnahan, David Stuart-Watt and David Young continued to provide great support to the Board from the previous year, and we welcomed Tim Boyle, David Havercroft and Bob Sieffert. It will not be possible for Bob to continue into 2007 and I thank him for the great strategic insights he brought to our work. All other Board members will join us again in 2007 and I thank them for their continuing commitment and contribution.

ARF's events in 2005/6 were sponsored by Abigroup, ARRB Group, Boral, Connell Wagner, Main Roads WA, MIG, Pioneer Road Services and Queensland Main Roads. Our lunch after today's AGM is being sponsored by Transfield Services. On behalf of ARF I thank these members for the particular support they have given us over the last year.

I would also like to acknowledge the chief executives of our state and federal road authorities for the support which they give to ARF.

A number of important people have helped ARF behind the scenes. Sarah Hendy, supported by Rachael Rooney, does a marvelous job in organizing our events. Our previous John Shaw medalists give support to ARF in many way which most members seldom see. ARF receives generous help from Roads magazine who produce our reports to industry in each issue.

Finally I would like to express the Board's and my own appreciation to the members at large who have given us such support and encouragement in developing a national organisation for the industry in the space of three years.

Ray Fisher
President
28 November 2006