

# **ROADS AUSTRALIA**

## **President's Report 2009**

It is less than 18 months since we changed our name to Roads Australia and set out to establish a new policy relationship with Government.

### **The Mission of Roads Australia**

Unlike traditional lobbying bodies, Roads Australia seeks to engage policy makers in an open partnership. We wish to be productive and supportive participants in the policy making process. RA members want to be involved before policy is announced – to work inside the tent. They believe that this will promote better-informed, consensus driven, bi-partisan decisions which are in the best interests of Australia.

This is a ground breaking vision. I am pleased to report that the response from our members and from policy makers has been swift and positive.

### **Policy Development and Industry Representation**

The membership and activity level of our Policy Chapters covering congestion, sustainability and capacity has continued to expand. Our chapters have held 16 events and workshops since my last report.

It is good to see the practical outcomes which have been achieved. A detailed list has been circulated to members as an attachment to this report – but here are some highlights:

- The NSW and Queensland Ministers for Roads each agreed to champion common pre-qualification across all states and the initiative was advanced at Austrroads.
- The RTA agreed to review the balance of small, medium and large projects in its program to ensure the mix reflects the capacity of contractors in NSW;
- The VicRoads Chief Executive used a Capacity Chapter Luncheon to announce that Victoria would move to four year programs.
- The eastern states agreed to publish a national list of projects over \$100M, to be coordinated by Roads Australia.

These results reflect a partnership between government and industry. I would specially like to acknowledge the positive approach adopted by Minister Wallace in Queensland, Ministers Daley and Campbell in NSW, Minister Pallas in Victoria, and Minister Conlon in South Australia who, together with their road agency CEO's, have supported policy collaboration with industry.

During the last year RA also made some new partners. We expanded our activities throughout Australia, with two ministerial lunches in Darwin and one in Hobart. These events were attended by Ministers Lawrie and McCarthy in Darwin and by Minister Sturges in Tasmania. I thank these ministers for the warm welcome they gave to RA.

### **A new priority – funding and financing**

Within the last year the difficulty in raising both government and private capital following the GFC has exposed shortcomings and anomalies in the way Australia's roads are funded and managed. The challenges include taxation and funds allocation mechanisms which also make other institutions and infrastructure dependent on road revenues.

This has prompted RA to recognise that the road maintenance and construction agenda facing Australia in the next generation cannot be fulfilled without a fundamental review of our traditional funding and financing strategies. Accordingly RA has established a Funding and Financing Chapter led by our Vice-President Tim Boyle to address these issues with Government. We are also fortunate in having assistance from Max Lay who will edit a major submission to policy makers next year. Our stakeholders will also include road users, notably the motorists and the freight sector.

### **Membership**

Our membership now stands at 65 – compared with 49 two years ago.

### **Services to Members**

Networking remains one of the most important benefits of RA membership.

RA's Forum meetings, the annual summit and industry events broke new records – 966 attendees in 2007, 1991 last year and in 2009 a total of 2250 people attended 38 events.

Our Forum meetings this year were held in Sydney and Brisbane, and were generously sponsored by VicRoads, SEITA and Queensland Motorways. The annual Summit was sponsored by ARRB, Hyder and SKM. The John Shaw dinner was sponsored by the Bilfinger Berger Group. At the dinner Nick Greiner presented Max Lay with the John Shaw medal. Other events during

the year were sponsored by Leighton, the RTA, Fulton Hogan, Clayton Utz, Baulderstone, SKM, AECOM, Reed, DTEI, VicRoads, KBR, Transurban, the RTA, QTMR, URS, BMD, Thiess, HMS Civils, Downer EDI, York, Aurecon, and Pitt and Sherry. We thank them for their support for the industry.

Our Member Services Director, Rachael Rooney, is once again to be congratulated for her remarkable achievement in leading the events program.

RA's fortnightly news update, RA Insider, now has 2600 subscribers and has become a leading vehicle for management communication. RA receives valuable support from Leighton in order to provide it as a service to industry. Our Media Director, Mark Bowmer, edits the Insider with the appreciation of a vast industry community of readers.

As President I had the honour to continue to serve on the World Executive Board of the International Road Federation (IRF).

### **Acknowledgments**

I thank my fellow Board members for the commitment and wisdom they bring to RA. Each of our Policy Chapters are also chaired by Board members who give additional time to advance the work of their chapters. I thank them all, and should particularly acknowledge Jo Moss from SKM and Phil Mumford from Queensland Motorways who completed their work as Chairs of the Sustainability and Congestion chapters during the course of the year.

Our long-standing Vice-President and a great champion of Roads Australia, Neil Doyle retired from the Board in September. Without him we would not be where we are today. Fortunately we will not lose Neil's continuing contribution – Neil now joins the RA team as Policy Adviser to the Board. Queensland Transport and Main Roads are to be congratulated on the funding support which they have given to this new position within Roads Australia.

Finally I would like as always to express the Board's and my own appreciation to our members whose enthusiasm for Roads Australia provides me and the Board with all the reward we need.

**Ray Fisher, President**

**4 December 2009**

The RA Policy scorecard – December 2009

POLICY OBJECTIVE	ACTION	POLICY CHAPTER
<b>Roads Australia is directly consulted by Governments on significant and reportable policy issues.</b>	Roads Australia was invited to make submissions to a number of inquiries in 2009, including the Senate Inquiry into Public Transport and the NTC Review.	<b>All</b>
	Roads Australia was invited to join the national industry advisory group by the National Transport Commission.	<b>All</b>
	RA was invited by the South Australian Minister for Transport to support the national debate on IAP legislation.	<b>All</b>
	The RTA agreed to review the balance of small, medium and large projects in its program.	<b>Capacity</b>
	The RTA has increased its communication with industry, providing regular briefings on upcoming projects.	<b>Capacity</b>
	The NSW and QLD Ministers for Roads each agreed to champion common pre-qualification across all states and the initiative was advanced at Austroads.	<b>Capacity</b>
	The RTA invited Roads Australia to facilitate a meeting between medium sized contractors and RTA.	<b>Capacity</b>

	VicRoads Chief Executive used a Capacity Chapter Luncheon in 2009 to announce that Victoria would move to four year programs.	<b>Capacity</b>
	The eastern states agreed to publish a national list of projects over \$100M, to be coordinated by Roads Australia.	<b>Capacity</b>
<b>Chapters in Sustainability, Capacity and Congestion are well supported by members.</b>	There have been 14 Roads Australia Policy Chapter events since December 2008, involving more than 300 people.	<b>All</b>
	The Capacity Chapter has met in each eastern state with senior road agency representatives to promote improved communication and cooperation. An event will be held prior to Christmas in South Australia.	<b>Capacity</b>
	The Congestion Chapter met in NSW, Queensland and Victoria in 2009. VicRoads Chief Executive Gary Liddle took over as Chapter Chair. In July, Phil Davies, Transport and Advisory, AECOM, became Deputy Chair.	<b>Congestion</b>
<b>Outcomes are widely and appropriately promoted</b>	Policy success was highlighted in a 6 pages Australian feature in the September 2009 issue of World Highway magazine.	<b>All</b>
	Policy achievements promoted in Roads Insider and Roads Magazine	<b>All</b>

<b>Roads Australia supports a range of solutions for efficient use of the road system, before adding capacity.</b>	A congestion management issues paper has been developed and is being circulated to government.	<b>Congestion</b>
	The Chapter is reviewing the management and co-ordination of road and utility works (including emergency powers)	<b>Congestion</b>
	The Chapter is working to optimise management of events and incidents (including the emergency services).	<b>Congestion</b>
	Roads Australia promotes use of public transport to all RA Policy events	<b>Congestion</b>
	Roads Australia is encouraging its members to introduce TravelSmart programs, to reduce congestion.	<b>Congestion</b>
<b>A new Chapter on Finance and Funding is established</b>	Four meetings of the Funding & Financing Chapter have taken place. Max Lay has agreed to conduct a review.	<b>Funding &amp; Financing</b>
<b>Evidence that specific recommendations coming out of groups are implemented</b>	The Sustainability Chapter has begun a process of meeting with road agency representatives, making the case for legal requirements for sustainability in road projects, to make a level playing field.	<b>Sustainability</b>
	Roads Australia has developed a contracts and procurement sub-group, led by Clayton Utz. Sustainability has been added to the	<b>All</b>

	charter of this group.	
	An industry sub-group has developed a paper on the benefits of long-term programs. This paper is being provided to governments to support RA's push for long term programs.	<b>Capacity</b>
	<p>The Sustainability Chapter is encouraging best practice in member companies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information sharing through website clearing house</li> <li>• Exploring an alliance with other industry groups (AGIC, ACA/CCF) on ratings system for road projects</li> </ul> <p>Organising events to share information between member companies</p>	<b>Sustainability</b>