

ROADS AUSTRALIA

President's Report 2011

For each of the last seven years our President has reported membership growth, policy innovation and enhanced services to members. Progress has been beyond expectations in many areas. As your new President I am therefore pleased to report that in 2011 Roads Australia maintained the momentum.

Policy Development and Industry Representation

Unlike traditional lobbying bodies, Roads Australia seeks to engage policy makers in an open partnership. We wish to be direct and supportive participants in the policy making process. This promotes better-informed, consensus driven, bi-partisan decisions which are in the best interests of Australia.

During 2011 the membership and activity level of our Policy Chapters covering network reliability, sustainability, capacity and road funding and financing continued to expand and influence national policy. These Chapters are respectively chaired by Alan Tesch, John Pitt, Peter Walton and Tim Boyle and we all owe them our gratitude for their dedication and hard work, thank you gentlemen.

The most important policy initiative for the year was the formation by Roads Australia of a national policy network on Transport Funding and Pricing. The network has been established under the auspices of the Funding and Financing Chapter and follows two successful workshops that I hosted earlier in the year in Melbourne and Sydney. I chaired the first steering committee meeting on the 13th October and at that meeting industry supported our nomination of John Gardiner as the first independent chair. It will be launched publicly in the new year.

The initiative to establish the new network is significant for three reasons:

- It brings together a swathe of national industry associations, government agencies and major corporations to address a common policy objective. They comprise institutions which have never before combined in this way in our industry. This goes to the heart of Roads Australia's mission.
- The policy objective itself is also of critical national importance. The current approach to funding and pricing our transport network no longer meets the national need in terms of efficient, effective, long-term transport infrastructure planning and delivery. We need a better and fairer system – to ensure infrastructure is adequately funded, that

spending decisions realise the best returns, and that assets are used more effectively.

- In advancing the case for reform Roads Australia is also aware of the compelling need for an integrated transport network. We are seeking to work closely at a policy level across the transport system. We are also pleased to see that this awareness is also reflected in the work of policy makers. We congratulate the Government of New South Wales on the creation of Transport for New South Wales and Infrastructure New South Wales during the last year. These are milestone initiatives.

As our policy work has expanded so too have our resources. This year we welcomed our first full-time Policy Director, Donna Findlay.

Services to Members

Our membership now stands at 78, up from 75 last year.

Networking is one of the most important benefits of RA membership. During the last financial year attendance and event activity significantly exceeded previous levels. 3327 industry participants attended RA events - the previous best was in 2009 with 2175 attendees – a 33% increase. Attendance was spread over 43 events, compared with 35 events in 2010 and 38 events in 2009.

Event turnover now accounts for about 50% of RA turnover, notwithstanding the rapid rise in membership over the last five years. This has made it possible for RA to hold more small events, exclusive to members, free of charge to members. These are filled on a first come first served basis notified by email. Our lunch in October with Michael Bushby was fully subscribed within an hour and a quarter.

Our Forum meetings this year were held in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. They were generously sponsored by VicRoads, LMA and GHD. The annual Summit was sponsored by AECOM, ARRB, Hyder, Leighton Contractors, SKM and Clayton Utz. The John Shaw dinner was sponsored once again by Parsons Brinckerhoff. Other events during the year were sponsored by Abigroup, AECOM, ARRB Group, Aurecon, Baulderstone, Boral, Cut and Fill, DTEI, Fulton Hogan, Hyder, Leighton, Parsons Brinckerhoff, pitt&sherry, RACT, RTA NSW, SKM and Thiess. We thank them for their support for the industry.

Our Events Director, Rachael Rooney, is once again to be congratulated for her remarkable achievement in leading the events program. Sarah Hendy does an outstanding job managing the events on the ground and of course running the administration of RA.

RA's fortnightly news update, RA Insider, now has almost 4000 subscribers – up from 2600 two years ago. It has become the leading vehicle for management communication within our industry. RA receives valuable

support from Leighton to provide it as a service to industry. Our Communications Director, Mark Bowmer, edits the Insider with the appreciation of a vast industry community of readers.

During the year Roads Australia negotiated membership of the International Road Federation (IRF) as an additional service to members free of charge for 18 months. This will provide our members with access to IRF's valuable knowledge base. As President I also had the honour to serve on the World Executive Board of IRF and to represent RA and join Minister Albanese and seven other RA members at the World Roads Congress in Mexico.

Acknowledgments

We congratulate Greg Hallam PSM on receiving the John Shaw medal in 2011. This year we also introduce a new medal – the Roads Australia Award for Technical Achievement. We hope that it will come to signify the same level of achievement in the technical field that the John Shaw Medal has established in terms of broader industry contribution. The winner will be announced at the Annual Lunch on 1 December.

On your behalf I thank the two vice presidents Tim Boyle and Ken Mathers and all my fellow Board members for the commitment and wisdom they bring to RA. I particularly thank Michael Bushby who retires from the Board at this AGM and Neil Doyle who completes his service, earlier as Vice-President and more recently as the Board's policy adviser.

On your and the board's behalf I would also like to congratulate our CEO Ian Webb on a fantastic list of achievements for 2011 and for committing to another five years with RA.

Finally I would like as always to express the Board's and my own appreciation to our members whose enthusiasm for Roads Australia and involvement in its activities is a constant reward to the Board and our dedicated staff.

David Stuart-Watt, President

3 November 2011