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Submission on the Draft Austroads Temporary Traffic Management Training Framework and Prequalification Scheme

Dear Rachel

Roads Australia appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Austroads Temporary Traffic Management Training Framework and Prequalification Scheme.

By way of background, Roads Australia (RA) is the peak body for roads within an integrated transport system, representing an industry that contributes \$207 billion annually to the economy and supports 1.3 million jobs. RA brings industry, government, and communities together to lead the evolution of Australia's roads, integrated transport and mobility.

RA has established a Road Worker Safety Working Group with the objective of raising safety standards among traffic management/road workers.

The key driver of this initiative is the imperative to ensure the safety of road workers at a time of unprecedented transport infrastructure spending. There is a strong pipeline of roads activity underway, with BIS Oxford Economics estimating a total spend on roads, highways, and subdivisions of \$22.7 billion over the next five years.

As you would no doubt be aware, there are approximately 1,200 fatalities each year on Australian roads. Although no single reliable source of data exists about what proportion of these fatalities are road workers, it is clear from Safe Work Australia (*Work-related Traumatic Injury Fatalities 2017*), that road-related fatalities from the construction industry are disproportionately high, and as such, Safe Work Australia has identified this industry group as a priority area.

Among issues under consideration by the RWSWG are:

1. Procurement processes.
2. Pre-qualification requirements.
3. Industry Image.
4. Regulatory compliance and consequences of non-compliance.
5. Public awareness.

RA believes minimum standards and criteria as to what is expected from applicants for prequalification is an important part of the National Training Framework for Temporary Traffic Management.

RA proposes the agencies listed on table 1 of the Draft (or their 'external assessors') should assess any applicant, who would then have a qualification capable of being used in other participating jurisdictions.

Under this proposal, it is imperative that the common normative document used to grant an organisation prequalification clearly identifies eligibility criteria that are as objective as possible, such that there is confidence each assessing jurisdiction is making judgements on the same basis.

This would be met by the insurance and management systems prequalification criteria set out in Appendix C. However, some of the criteria are very vague, such as *'obligation as an employer'* and *'industrial relations'* under criteria 1.

Accordingly, RA recommends that at the very least the following amendments to the assessment criteria should be considered.

Under criteria 1:

- the organisation's ABN should be required;
- a full description of the operations of the organisation should be provided, together with the percentage of the business that is involved in temporary traffic management;
- whether the organisation, or a director of the organisation, is involved in any current civil or criminal proceedings;
- whether either the organisation, or a director of the organisation, has been subject to a finding of unsatisfactory performance in the provision of road management services by a Participating Agency in the previous five years;
- a full explanation as to precisely what information is being sought under the criteria of *'obligation as an employer'* and *'industrial relations'*, should be specified. In particular, the evidence requirements for *'industrial relations'* should also be specified in the guidelines and not the application form, as suggested in Table C1;
- the audited accounts of the organisation for the previous three financial years should be provided;
- the dot points *'organisation current and previous works experience'* and *'client referees'* should be removed, and the paragraph *commencing 'The Applicant must be able to demonstrate suitable temporary traffic management experience...'* appearing immediately underneath, should be converted into a dot point; and
- information relating to *'organisation management system including 3rd party certification of Quality Assurance and Occupational Health and Safety'* details appears to be in Table C1 of Appendix C and not Table B1. More generally, for consistency, either the description *'Occupational Health and Safety'* or the more modern *'Workplace Health and Safety'* should be used consistently in the document.

With respect to criteria 2, the nature of the experience and qualifications that should be met by the staff of an organisation involved in temporary traffic management, to be engaged in either in the implementation or the design context, should be indicated in the guidelines in a manner similar to that contained in table 2 to the guidelines for the *National Prequalification System for Civil (Road and Bridge) Construction* that are in force in NSW.¹

¹ <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/documents/business-industry/partners-and-suppliers/tenders-contracts/national-prequalification-system-for-civil-construction-contracts.pdf> Page 7

It is reemphasised that matters such as experience levels and qualifications should be common throughout all Australian jurisdictions, and not left to an individual agency given the national portability of the prequalification.² That is, given the portability of prequalification status, those performing particular functions should possess the same qualifications throughout the country.

The Draft also anticipates that participating agencies may use external assessors when determining whether applicants have the capability to deliver traffic management services.

RA recommends that the qualifications required for an organisation to be an external assessor should be specified in the Draft.

Finally, in section 6.3 (*Prequalification Status*) the second paragraph provides that if the matter is 'serious' a Participating Agency may issue a 'Show Cause' notice.

An example of a 'serious' issue would be being placed into voluntary administration. Given the nature of these guidelines, it is appropriate that an example of a 'serious' issue would also include unsatisfactory performance in the provision of traffic management services by the applicant.

While acknowledging that the paragraph is a template paragraph used in other prequalification documents published by Austroads, the addition of the above example should nevertheless be made.

Roads Australia remains ready to assist in the further refinement of the Draft document.

Should you wish to discuss this submission, I can be contacted on 0418 627 995 or michael@roads.org.au.

Yours sincerely



MICHAEL KILGARIFF
Chief Executive Officer

² https://austroads.com.au/publications/project-delivery/ap-c96-19/media/AP-C96-19_National_Prequalification_System_Requirements_Template_2019.pdf.