

OCTOBER 2013

Welcome to the first newsletter designed to help strengthen customer engagement between Roads and Maritime Services and local councils in Northern NSW. It is my expectation this newsletter will help circulate information and improve understanding of processes within the region. I encourage readers to give feedback and suggest topics for future publications.


John Alexander, Regional Manager

Regional consultative groups



During May 2013 Roads and Maritime hosted two consultative workshops, one at Armidale and the other at Grafton. The workshops aimed to develop relationships with key local government and Roads and Maritime staff. The two workshops were well represented with 22 councils attending.

Open forums were held and generated healthy discussion on a number of topics. Several actions have arisen from the workshops and we will progressively update councils as actions are completed.

An evaluation of the workshops will consider the frequency and format of future meetings. Future discussions will be held with General Managers and Directors to determine the level of participation from each council.

Key outcomes from the workshops included to:

- Find opportunities to work together to discuss issues common with local councils. Already there have been several meetings with individual councils to discuss their issues.
- Develop a quarterly newsletter to keep councils informed on issues and key contacts.

- Establish a Regional Consultative Freight group.

Copies of the presentations are available by emailing the A/Business Manager, Sonia George at sonia.george@rms.nsw.gov.au

Regional maintenance delivery

Delivery of road maintenance in regional areas needs to be enhanced. Roads and Maritime is looking at ways to improve both internal and Road Maintenance Council Contracts (RMCC) delivery.



While the current RMCC contract arrangements have been extended to June 2014 there is still need for interim efficiencies and improvements.

A RMCC steering committee has been re-established and a working group formed to assist future design. RMCCs account for \$170m in State Government outlays annually.

These contracts are essentially not for profit arrangements that reimburse councils' costs. The RMCC has a high administrative overhead for Roads and Maritime having to deal with 79 suppliers.

The NSW Commission of Audit Final Report (May 2012) recommended Roads and Maritime work with councils to investigate and report back to Government on potential opportunities to enhance the operation of RMCCs including transitioning to relational or alliance contract for Roads and Maritime, and bundling a number of adjacent councils under single road maintenance contracts.

Maintenance responsibilities

Roads and Maritime, IPWEA (NSW) and Local Government NSW are undertaking a project to clarify asset maintenance responsibilities within State Road corridors. Within overarching principles of safety and efficiency, key issues are likely to include:

- Ensuring solutions are applicable.
- Efficient use of labour, plant and other materials.
- Relevance of maintenance task to traffic safety.
- Simple and practical implementation across a range of settings.
- Criteria for exceptions to state-wide position.

An external consultant, Opus, has been contracted to provide recommendations on guiding principles and potential demarcation (informed by literature review and targeted consultations). Recommendations will be considered by NSW and local government peak bodies, and subject to further consultation.

The aim is to provide for most efficient and effective split of maintenance tasks on State Road corridors. Any financial consequences are to be considered as part of implementation and prior to roll out.

Incident management



The role local government plays in managing traffic associated with planned and unplanned incidents on State roads across the region is critical to Roads and Maritime.

Issues that Roads and Maritime is mindful of include the:

- Timeliness and resourcing of the responses by traffic management authorities.
- Availability of appropriate detour routes.

- Impact of diverted traffic on alternative routes, including work sites and communities along those alternative routes.
- Liaison between road authorities during incidents where a road is managed by more than one authority.

Councils can discuss incident management issues with Roads and Maritime by:

- Contacting Northern Region Traffic Operations Manager on 0266401300.
- Raising issues at the Local or Regional Emergency Management Committees.
- Involvement through regular incident management debriefs, that may be arranged by Council, Roads and Maritime or Emergency Services.

Work health and safety

Roads and Maritime has four key principles as part of its WHS Strategic plan for 2013-2017:

1. Our **duty of care** extends to all we may influence or affect by our business or undertaking.
2. **Risk management** is key to our safety performance. We value sharing and exchanging information that enables us to manage WHS risk and make considered, informed decisions.
3. Together with industry we will **consult, cooperate and coordinate** to ensure all safety risks are managed while conducting Roads and Maritime business.
4. Our duty is to eliminate risks wherever **reasonably practicable** to do so. If we can't eliminate, we will take the necessary steps to minimise them. Cost is a low priority when fulfilling this duty.

Policy statement indicates safety is a core value of Roads and Maritime. It is a priority we've outlined to our staff, customers, business partners and stakeholders in our Customer Charter. Safety encompasses everything we do and is inherent in the three key areas Roads and Maritime aspires to excel in:

- Customer focus.
- Efficiency and effectiveness.
- Impact and reputation.

Roads and Maritime acknowledges our duty of care to ensure the health and safety of workers

engaged or influenced by us. This duty of care extends throughout our sphere of influence to our industry partners, our customers and others who are impacted by our undertakings.

Roads and Maritime is actively encouraging councils to give feedback in the development of its Strategic Plan and WHS policy statement.

Councils can contact Stephen Barton on email Stephen.barton@Roads and Maritime.nsw.gov.au to provide feedback.

Local Traffic Committees



Under current NSW legislation, local councils have certain powers for installing, removing and changing traffic control devices and other general powers in certain circumstances to control traffic, such as road works. However, legislative power to authorise the installation of, removal or change to a traffic control device, lies with Roads and Maritime.

In order to establish a system that reflects local management decisions, Roads and Maritime had previously used its power to delegate the authorisation of most traffic control devices on council roads to the council involved. An exception to this delegation was the power to authorise traffic signals and transit lanes.

However, an examination of the roles and responsibilities of LTCs has raised the question as to whether they remain the most effective method of managing traffic control issues on council managed roads. In addition, given the recent review of the *NSW Road Management Arrangements*, it is timely to examine the methods of delegation of powers to councils with respect to the principles embodied in these arrangements.

As a result, Roads and Maritime has started an investigation into the operation and effectiveness of LTCs. Roads and Maritime has engaged a consultant to undertake a preliminary investigation into current legislation and procedures covering delegations to local councils. This will include discussion with LTC stakeholders.

The consultant will present a final report outlining current arrangements, highlighting issues and recommending potential options for future arrangements.

This report will then be used to develop a discussion paper for wider consultation. Representatives from Local Government NSW have been invited to participate in the investigation process.

Councils can contact Ian Shanahan on 66402869 or email ian.shanahan@rms.nsw.gov.au.

Natural disaster arrangements



NSW Commission of Audit Report ('the Schott report') recommended natural disaster funding arrangements for roads are simplified; and examination of burden on Roads and Maritime budget and non-State Road costs.

Roads and Maritime, IPWEA (NSW) and Local Government NSW are overseeing a review of current Roads and Maritime natural disaster arrangements for roads with a focus on the administrative processes. Key issues for the Roads and Maritime review likely to include:

- Potential for resilience ('betterment') works to deliver greater value for money.
- 'Essential public asset' criteria (including compatibility with network approach).
- Responsibility and accountability for risk management.
- Processing enhancements.

Consultants GHD are providing independent recommendations informed by literature review and targeted consultation.

Recommendations will be subject to consultation with Local Government peak bodies and submitted to government for consideration.

Speed zoning guidelines

The *NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines* have been developed to provide a state-wide point of reference to ensure consistent application of speed limits throughout NSW and make roads and the roadside environment safer for all users. The purpose of the document is to guide the review and installation of speed limits to:

- Ensure that speed limits and speed zones are set to balance road safety with mobility needs.
- Ensure an appropriate balance of speed zones which are sensitive to changes in conditions along the length of a road without excessive numbers of changes.
- Ensure council and community views are considered in speed zone management.
- Identify and investigate aspects of speed zone policy to ensure they are practical and balance mobility, road safety and community concerns.
- For each speed zone review Roads and Maritime will contact council's officer and they will be invited to assist in the initial site inspection.



A copy of the guidelines can be found at:

www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/downloads/nsw_szg_dl1.html

Land use planning

All emails for land use and development assessment should be sent to: development.northern@rms.nsw.gov.au or call 02 66401362.

Roads and Maritime staff who manage individual council areas are:

Michael Baldwin for:

Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed.

Matt Adams for:

Armidale Dumaresq, Bellingen, Glen Innes, Severn, Gunnedah, Guyra, Gwydir, Inverell, Kempsey, Liverpool Plains, Nambucca, Port Macquarie Hastings, Tamworth, Tenterfield, Uralla and Walcha.

Road safety funding applications and guidelines

Councils are reminded projects nominated in the Nation Building Program can be considered for the State program, that is, projects that do not meet minimum three casualty crashes.

Councils don't have to wait until June/July to nominate projects, nominations can be forwarded anytime to Roads and Maritime regional office for consideration.

Black Spot time line	Annual cycle
Calling federal black spot nominations for financial year	June each year
Federal black spot nominations for FY13/14 close.	Third Friday June each year
State black spot nominations for FY13/14 close	1 October each year
Final consolidated version of the nominations submitted to panel	November each year
NSW Black Spot Consultative Panel meeting	First two weeks of February each year
Nomination submitted to Infrastructure for approval	After panel meeting (one to two weeks)
Advise received from Infrastructure	After submission to Infrastructure
Councils and Regions informed of status of their nominations	As soon as advise provided by Infrastructure

Contacts - Northern NSW

Roads and Maritime website, Doing business:

www.rms.nsw.gov.au/doingbusinesswithus/index.html

Council staff can also contact the regional switchboard on 02 6640 1300 or 131 782 for:

Regional Manager
Financial Services
Land Use planning
Local Government relations
Natural Disasters
Road Safety Traffic
RMCC
Speed zoning
Works Authorisation Deeds
Work Health & Safety

John Alexander
Sandra Dahl
Tony Donohoe
Janine Clark
Doug Brown
Monica Sirol
John Howell
Ian Shanahan
Brendan Rounds
Tony Norton

RMS 13.424

Every journey matters