



Welcome to the Austroads Newsletter.

Contributions for future newsletters are always welcome and should be emailed to austroads@austroads.com.au

Productivity Commission report

The Productivity Commission recently released a discussion draft report, *Road and Rail Freight Infrastructure Pricing*. The Commission considers that governmental action is needed to improve the performance of the economically important road and rail freight sectors. However, the Commission has not found compelling evidence to support claims that rail has been disadvantaged by subsidised provision of road infrastructure.

The Commission found that charges based on nation-wide road expenditure and average road use, may exceed the costs actually incurred by trucks on the main east-coast freight corridors. However, other factors confound a definitive assessment about the extent of any net subsidies to particular freight operators.

The Commission said that realising the potential benefits from more accurate road pricing would require major changes to the way roads are funded and provided. Possible institutional models are canvassed - including the independent Road Fund model employed overseas - but there are some challenging issues that would need to be overcome. The Commission has made no recommendations on institutional changes and is merely seeking feedback at this stage.

The Commission has invited submissions on its discussion draft and will hold public hearings prior to reporting to COAG by the end of the year. The report is available at <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiry/freight/draftreport/index.html>

ATC meeting

The Australian Transport Council (ATC) comprised of Australian, state and territory transport ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) met in Canberra on Friday 13 October 2006 to consider a range of important national transport issues. Road related issues considered included:

- Productivity commission inquiry into road and rail freight infrastructure pricing
- National road safety action plan 2007 – 2008
- Electronic stability control
- Heavy vehicle productivity reform
 - *Performance based standards for heavy vehicles*
 - *B-triple network*
 - *Expanded utilisation of quad-axle vehicles*
 - *Treatment of overloaded axles*
 - *Increased mass allowance for front axles*
- Heavy vehicle driver fatigue policy package

The communiqué from the ATC meeting is available at <http://www.atccouncil.gov.au/communique/atc24.aspx>

Development of a new strategic plan for Austroads

The current strategic plan is for three years and concludes in June 2007. Work has started on the development of a new strategic plan which will cover a five year period commencing in July 2007. Austroads Council considered a preliminary draft of the plan at its meeting in Adelaide on 20 October. It has been agreed that the strategic research priorities for the next five years will be asset management, capability, freight, network, registration and licensing, road safety and technology.

Objectives for each priority area are being developed with input from jurisdictions through task forces and review panels. Further development of the objectives and more detailed indications of the proposed work and alignment between program areas will be undertaken by program managers and the national office before the end of the year. New program managers will take over from January 2007 and they will also have an opportunity to have some input to a revised draft being considered by the Council meeting in March 2007.

New program management arrangements

Austrroads utilises the expertise of its member organisations to achieve its outcomes. This provides opportunities for the staff of member organisations to participate in the operation of Austrroads and the development and delivery of projects. It also encourages a collegiate, collaborative approach and facilitates learning, development, sharing and a high level of consistency across jurisdictions. The work to be undertaken in the strategic plan is divided into major areas called programs. The program structure aligns with the strategic priorities.

Program managers are responsible for the development and management of annual work programs of proposals that align with strategic objectives. Program managers also report to Council on the performance of each program. They work on Austrroads activities for a proportion of their time in conjunction with their responsibilities within their own organisations. Program management responsibilities are periodically rotated between member organisations to share the workload and expertise developed.

In conjunction with the development of the new strategic plan the Council has agreed on new program arrangements for the implementation of the plan. There will be six programs, each aligned to one of the strategic priorities. The programs and the organisation with the program management responsibility are as follows:

<i>Program</i>	<i>Responsible organisation</i>
Assets	VicRoads
Freight	RTA NSW
Network	MR WA
Registration and licensing	RTA NSW
Safety	DTEI SA
Technology	DMR Qld

The new program arrangements will come into operation from January 2007. It is expected that the responsible organisations will nominate their program managers within the next few weeks. The new program managers will be responsible for the delivery of the current work program and the development of projects for the 2007-08 work program for consideration at the March 2007 meeting. There will be a transition period in the lead up to the next Council meeting in which the incoming and the outgoing program managers will work together to ensure a smooth hand over of projects and administrative arrangements.

Although capability continues to be a strategic priority, there will not be a capability program. There will continue to be a Capability task force which will meet regularly and report to the Council. Peter Mitchem, currently the acting Deputy Chief Executive, VicRoads will chair the Capability task force from December 2006.

Agreement with NTC

Austrroads has signed a new agreement with the National Transport Commission (NTC). The agreement seeks to outline the working arrangements between the two organisations. It identifies three aspects of the relationship; research and implementation which are shared responsibilities and policy development which is seen as being mainly the responsibility of NTC. The new agreement is for three years and replaces a previous agreement which was about to conclude. The agreement was signed by the Austrroads Chairman, Menno Henneveld and the Executive Director of NTC, Nick Dimopoulos, at the Council meeting in Adelaide.

Agreement with ITS Australia

Council also approved an agreement between Austrroads and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Australia. Its main focus is on mutual support for activities and cooperation between the two organisations. It also formalises Austrroads as an avenue for presenting proposals and recommendations on ITS road transport matters from ITS Australia to SCOT and ATC.

Austroads AGM

Austroads held its Annual General Meeting in conjunction with the Council meeting in Adelaide. The AGM formally adopted the annual report and financial statements for 2005-06. The annual report is available as a download from the Austroads website at http://www.austroads.com.au/annual_report.html Hard copies can be obtained by contacting the Austroads office on 02 9264 7088.

New Publications

New guides:

- Guide to Pavement Technology Part 4D: Stabilised materials (AGPT04D/06)
- Guide to Road Safety Part 2: Road Safety Strategy and Evaluation (AGRS02/06)

New Research / Technical reports:

- Vehicle Fleet Mix and Practices for Improving the Level of service for Freight Vehicles (AP-R294/06)
- Austroads Test Methods: Summary for 2005-06 (AP-T48/06)
- Transducer for the Measurement of Horizontal Stresses at the Tyre Pavement Interface (AP-T49/06)
- The Asphaltene Content of Australian Bitumens – Part 1: Testing of Pre-1992 Samples (AP-T50/06)
- Review of AS 2008 from an Emulsion and PMB Manufacturing Perspective (AP-T51/06)
- Development of a Procedure to Chemically Characterise Bitumens using the Iatroscan (AP-T52/06)
- Asphalt Permeability (AP-T53/06)
- Proceedings: Austroads National Asphalt Workshop (AP-T54/06)
- CoreLok Evaluation (AP-T55/06)
- Commissioning a Cooper Wheel Tracking Device (AP-T56/06)
- Proficiency Exercise: Resilient Modulus (AP-T57/06)
- Wheeltracking Temperature Sensitivity and Repeatability Investigation (AP-T58/06)
- Development of an Asphalt Workability Index: Pilot Study (AP-T59/06)
- Automatic Vehicle Classification by Vehicle Length (AP-T60/06).
- Correlation of WIM Data with Classified Counts: An Initial Analysis (AP-T61/06)
- Update of the Austroads Sprayed Seal Design Method (AP-T68/06)
- Process for Setting Intervention Criteria and Allocating Budgets: Process Description and Application (AP-T69/06)
- Update of RUC Unit of Values to June 2005 (AP-T70/06)
- Report on Skid Resistance Test Device Trials 5 – 6 May 2005 (AP-T72/06)

To download these publications or for more information about them, please visit the Austroads publication website at <http://www.onlinepublications.austroads.com.au/script/home.asp>

Centre for Pavement Engineering Education (CPEE)

The Centre for Pavement Engineering Education (CPEE) is currently accepting applications for the **Graduate Certificate of Pavement Technology** and **Master of Pavement Technology** for study period 1, 2007. The courses are offered by distance education with no requirement for candidates to attend face-to-face sessions. This flexible mode of study includes examinations arranged at local centres and assignment work including academic assistance by mail, e-mail or telephone. More information about the courses can be found on the CPEE page at www.aapa.asn.au or by contacting Chris Farrelly at CPEE Level 2, 5 Wellington Street, Kew, Victoria 3101 Phone (03) 9853 3626 or e-mail chris@aapa.asn.au

Upcoming Events

22nd ARRB Group Conference

National Convention Centre, Canberra

29 October - 2 November 2006

www.arrb.com.au

For over 40 years ARRB Conferences have promoted and facilitated discussion of issues relevant to the transport industry, and new research being undertaken on the local and international scene. The Conferences are held every two years throughout Australasia, and involve delegates from the local region and across the globe. A broad range of road and transport issues will be addressed through invited speaker sessions, technical sessions and workshops.

12th REAAA Conference

Manila, Philippines

20-24 November 2006

www.reaaaconference.com.ph

The 12th Conference of the Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australasia will be held in Manila, Philippines. The theme of the conference is 'On the Road to the Future'. The conference will serve as a venue where road engineering experts share their technical knowledge and expertise. The conference program includes special sessions, workshops and technical presentations on topics relevant to Road Engineering and related professions.

Transport – The Next 50 Years

Christchurch, New Zealand

July 2007

www.transport07.co.nz

The theme will cover transport in the wider context as opposed to focusing only on land transport and will have a strategic and long-term focus. There will be plenary sessions for keynote speakers and three or four concurrent streams dealing with infrastructure funding, the future of transport, the land use planning-transport nexus, urban form, freight issues, public transport, modal shift and transport related social issues.

23rd World Road Congress

Palais des Congrès, Paris, France

17-21 September 2007

www.piarc.org/en/paris2007

The 23rd World Road Congress will provide a forum for professionals from all over the world in every facet of the development, management and operations of roads and road transport. The program includes technical sessions, exhibitions, special sessions, technical visits and social events where professionals from around the world will display and be on-hand to discuss solutions to road issues.

Austrroads will be coordinating an Australasian delegation to the World Road Congress. If you are interested in participating in the delegation please contact Murray Kidnie at Austrroads mkidnie@austrroads.com.au

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