

HUB DEVELOPMENT

In 2006-07 the RAPT worked to finalise the development of the Roads Alliance Hub.

The Roads Alliance Board initiated the development of the Hub to improve the quality and consistency of road data in Queensland. The primary aim of the Hub is to aggregate common data relating to the LRRS using consistent definitions and systems outputs. The outputs of the Hub will provide immense benefit to both local governments and the state.

As part of finalising the development of the Hub, testing was undertaken utilising Main Roads LRRS datasets. A workshop planned for July 2007 will involve the Eastern Downs, SunRoc and Far North Queensland RRGs testing the capabilities of the Hub using data extracts from their respective asset management systems.

The Hub rollout will be staged with RRGs brought online in a systematic manner. The RAPT will be working closely with RRG members throughout the implementation period to ensure their asset management system is fully operational, their data is accurate and they are able to effectively and efficiently upload to the Hub. At this stage, it is envisaged that the Hub rollout will commence in April 2008.



BUILDING RRG CAPABILITY



ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL CAPABILITY FUNDING FOR RRGs

This year RRGs developed Capability Improvement Plans, which identified:

- + current capability status
- + benchmarks
- + proposed targets
- + gaps in capability
- + capability challenges
- + processes and timeframes to improve RRG capability
- + anticipated costs to achieve increased capability.

The Roads Alliance Board reviewed the capability plans developed by RRGs. The Board was pleased all groups used the exercise as an opportunity to review progress achieved to date, and to identify future improvement opportunities addressing regional requirements. The need for improvements state-wide was acknowledged.

All RRGs identified the direction and methodologies their groups intend to use to improve capability, outcomes and benefits for the RRG.

As a result of the proficient work demonstrated in the capability plans, the Roads Alliance Board decided to endorse a number of individual funding allocations to RRGs (up to a combined total of \$295,000) to build their capabilities over the next two financial years, on the agreement that the council match this amount.

This allocation is available to RRGs to maintain and build capability in a range of areas including:

- + administration and communication
- + asset management
- + program development and project prioritisation
- + increased resource sharing arrangements
- + increased joint purchasing opportunities
- + improved administrative outcomes for RRGs and Technical Committees.

The RAPT will review the current structure and implementation of the Capability Improvement Plans in 2007-08 and will look to RRGs for their input on potential improvements. All RRGs will also be requested to review the currency of their Capability Improvement Plans and summarise where capability improvement outcomes were achieved through to August 2008.

ONGOING TIDS CAPABILITY FUNDING

A key objective of the Roads Alliance is to improve the road management capability of Main Roads and councils. The Roads Alliance seeks to help RRGs and their members to enhance their capacity as road managers through the provision of increased training and improved systems that meet local and regional needs.

To support this objective the Alliance Board approved RRG use of up to 5% of their Base Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) allocations for capability enhancement. Capability funding was also provided in 2006-07 to RRGs from the Roads Alliance Board for state-wide initiatives such as Bridge Inspection training and NetRISK training.

LOOKING FORWARD

SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

On 17 April 2007, the Queensland Government announced the development of a seven member commission to undertake a state-wide review of local government boundaries ahead of elections on 15 March 2008.

The Commission's findings are to be presented to the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport by 1 August 2007, at which point it is understood that the recommendations will also be made public. It is envisaged however that the full impacts upon existing RRGs and resulting opportunities or risks, cannot be fully appreciated until Parliament approves the new council arrangements and legislative provisions by September 2007.

The RAPT recognises that councils will experience varying degrees of uncertainty throughout the remainder of 2007 and into 2008, and will provide support and assistance to groups throughout this transitional period.

A key priority for the RAPT is to reaffirm the Roads Alliance (including RRG compositions) throughout the state, facilitate the ongoing progress of Roads Alliance initiatives and extend our support for initiatives that may facilitate a smoother transition once the composition of RRGs has been decided.

The following priorities, as established by the Board, will continue to be progressed to support RRGs, albeit with some adjustment:

- + support for eligible JP&RS initiatives
- + advertisement of Asset Management Preferred Suppliers tender in August 2007
- + a road safety strategy
- + reconfiguration of the Roads Alliance Hub to accommodate the LG Reform outcomes, which will be progressively rolled out to RRGs in 2008
- + NetRISK training offered state-wide
- + the complexity of TIDS funding with the objective of simplifying the process
- + provision of DVR software to RRGs in 2007-08
- + enhancement of Roads Alliance online communications via a new look website with better functionality
- + capability support to RRGs through a committed training program and individual assessment of new capability applications
- + updating of the Program Development Tool to align with LG Reform outcomes in 2008
- + further development and engagement with RRGs on new business models to enhance how local government and Main Roads work together.

While some of the planned activities and initiatives have been impacted by the LG Reform process, the majority of Roads Alliance activities can continue to be delivered by RRGs as usual throughout the transition period. The RAPT will work with RRGs to address the following matters during this transitional period:

- + the formulation of next years RIP
- + continuation of existing RRG initiatives
- + road safety assessment
- + asset management capability
- + efficiency gains through initiatives such as JP&RS.

The Roads Alliance Board and the RAPT will be working throughout the transition period to identify strategic responses to the changing environment for the Roads Alliance. Wherever possible the Board and RAPT will maintain business as usual and continue to pursue significant initiatives. The focus for RRGs will need to be managing current commitments while looking towards potential future opportunities.

The RAPT is aware that there may be little or no change for some RRGs and it is equally important that they are assisted in the continued pursuit of their priorities. It will be vitally important that the Roads Alliance continues to deliver on its commitments and demonstrate that it adds value.

This promises to be a challenging year for all involved with the Roads Alliance. Main Roads and the LGAQ remain steadfastly committed to the principles and objectives of the Roads Alliance, and equally committed to working with and assisting RRGs during this period.

Following the extension of the 2002 Alliance MOA, Main Roads and LGAQ's continued commitment to the Alliance will be formalised with the joint development of a new Alliance Memorandum of Understanding. It is anticipated the new MOU will be executed prior to August 2008 and will strengthen the existing Alliance and, where possible, extend innovative opportunities available to both parties to meet their respective needs.