



Other JP&RS initiatives across the state have included:

- coordinated road data collection and analysis across Main Roads regions and local governments
- coordination of the procurement of NetRisk road network assessments from the ARRB Group for multiple RRG members
- investigations into joint reseal programs across RRG members.

The next 12 months will see a renewed and extended interest in JP&RS.

#### **Asset management**

The promotion of sound asset management systems and practices has been a top priority of the Roads Alliance since formation. Effective regional and state-wide stewardship of the LRRS network requires consistent road data inputs and outputs across all RRGs. While some progress has been made in this challenging area, opportunities for further improvement remain.

In order to simplify and streamline the acquisition of asset management tools and expertise, the Roads Alliance Board and the LGAQ commissioned Local Buy to conduct tenders for the supply of asset management systems and for

the provision of asset management consultancy services. A key criterion was compatibility with the data each road owner is expected to collect for the LRRS. The responses were evaluated by two committees of experts representing many local governments and Main Roads. All approved systems address all asset classes, meet current financial reporting requirements and integrate with local government financial systems.

The tenders were completed in February 2008 and have resulted in a panel of eight approved suppliers of asset management systems and eighteen providers of asset management consultancy services. Local governments are now able to select from either panel of suppliers without having to tender in their own right. The ability to choose from these pre-qualified vendors will simplify the uptake of asset management systems and practices that are compatible with the Roads Alliance Hub. As a further incentive, local governments may use their share of the Alliance's capability funding when purchasing systems or services from the selected vendors.

### Capability development

The Roads Alliance seeks to build RRG and member capability as road managers through the provision of increased training and improved systems that meet local and regional needs.

Up to 5% of the \$14 million additional TIDS funds provided under the Alliance is available to RRGs to assist with capability enhancement. This provision is an optional allocation subject to the determination of each RRG. State-wide, this provides up to \$700,000 per annum to improve capability. If these funds are not utilised within the given financial year, they are reinvested in road projects and not carried over for capability improvement.

Additionally there is \$1 million per annum ongoing available to RRGs for capability enhancement through application to the Alliance Board. This funding is usually provided on a matching basis; 50% Main Roads and 50% local government.

The Roads Alliance Board continued to provide funding to some RRGs during the 2007-08 financial year. However, due to transitional arrangements and local government work loads, the Board did not require RRGs to develop capability plans for this period.

“To ensure sustainability, all councils need to work proactively on asset management and in an environment where resources are scarce, we need to share our resources and expertise. The Far North Queensland RRG have initiated the Regional Asset Management Strategy to help improve asset management and will implement policies and training within councils over the next 12 months.”

**Cr Peter Scott**, FNQRRG Chair

Capability development will be a key focus for RRGs going forward. In the coming year, the RAPT will work with RRGs to ensure that revised Capability Improvement Plans are put in place. These plans will clearly reflect the capability challenges and opportunities for each RRG and will set out how these challenges will be addressed. They are intended to be pro-active planning documents which set out developmental milestones and activities to assist individual RRGs move forward. These plans will be important in assisting the Alliance target financial and training support state-wide for regional needs.

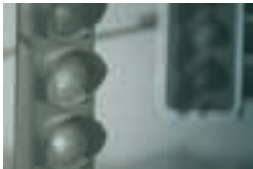
Funding will be available to help newly formed and re-established RRGs to maintain and build capability in a range of areas including:

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

To access these funds RRGs are required to apply to the Roads Alliance Board. Applications should primarily focus on capability development initiatives that have potential for state-wide implementation. All RRG members have been advised of the guidelines for funding and are encouraged to apply. The Roads Alliance Board will consider RRG Capability Plans in late 2008.

**Below right:**

*Roads Alliance workshop*



“The provision of the capability funding has been a welcome incentive to improve many capabilities essential to the efficient management of local government assets and supporting construction and maintenance programmes.

Significant, tangible benefits are now flowing from the application of this targeted funding. For example, the Eastern Downs RRG Technical Committee has improved capability in Bridge Inspection. This has enabled the implementation of a consistent and responsible approach to both an inspection and maintenance program across the region’s bridge network.”

**Chris Rubie**, Chair Eastern Downs RRG Technical Committee



### Building strong relationships

Whilst the Roads Alliance is fundamentally about roads, it is as much about relationships and their importance to achieving outcomes of mutual benefit.

During the amalgamation process, local government and Main Roads remained committed to the Roads Alliance. Although the operations of many groups were temporarily slowed during this period, many RRGs continued to meet, engage in joint decision making and ultimately produce their five-year regional works program for the LRRS network.

The Roads Alliance has created strong relationships at many levels. The Roads Alliance Board consists of senior executives from Main Roads and LGAQ, RRGs include Main Roads Regional Directors and Mayors, and Technical Committees comprise technical managers and officers from Main Roads and local governments.

During 2007-08 these relationships were strengthened through engagement and collaboration at the LGAQ Annual Conference, RRG Assembly, Local Government Symposium, Roads Alliance Board meetings, regular RRG and Technical Committee Meetings and most recently through the Roads Alliance workshops with Board members Neil Doyle and Greg Hallam.

These relationships continue to exist due to trust, respect for one another's opinion, a commitment to truthful dialogue and a realisation that working in collaboration provides better outcomes for all involved.

The Roads Alliance will continue to promote these values between local governments, Main Roads and the LGAQ, especially in the deliberations that are to come about expanding the Roads Alliance to encompass new institutional arrangements.

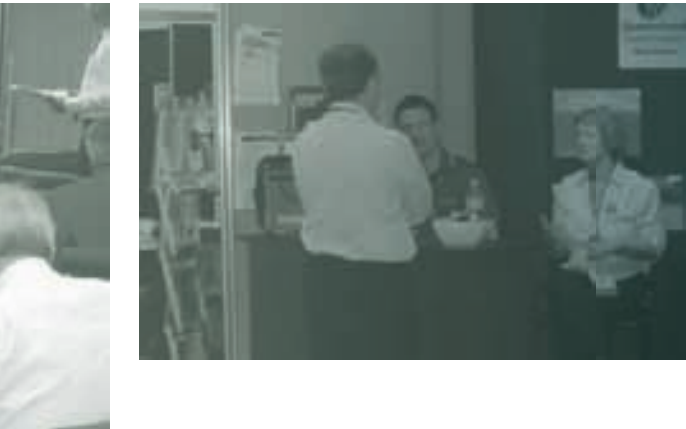
The election of new mayors and councillors in March 2008 provided a fresh opportunity for the Roads Alliance to strengthen existing relationships and build new ones. Irrespective of what direction the Roads Alliance takes in the future, the importance that Main Roads and LGAQ places on this partnership remains unchanged.

**“The basis of building a good relationship is good communication. Listening to and understanding the views of all people involved is critical.”**

**Eric Denham** – Regional Director Central West Region/Barcaldine District Office

**Left:**

*Local Government Annual Conference– Roads Alliance Booth*





OVERVIEW

# Regional Road Groups





### Review of Regional Road Group boundaries

Local Government Reform and the March 2008 local government elections prompted the first major state-wide review of RRG boundaries since the establishment of the Alliance in 2002. Newly elected mayors provided advice to the Roads Alliance Board on preferred RRG membership during May. Preferences will be reviewed and the Board will confirm RRG membership shortly into the 2008-09 financial year.

The review of RRGs presents an opportunity to establish new governance structures and to make any necessary or desired changes to RRG constitutions. These boundary and administrative changes should ensure an ongoing collaborative and coordinated approach to road management and investment which continues to be the central aim of the Roads Alliance.

### Regional Road Group role

A fundamental principle of the Roads Alliance is the transfer of decision making power to RRGs. This has increased local government's influence over key decisions and the allocation of Main Roads' money.

This transfer of authority empowers local leaders to make decisions on where to target available roads funding, how to improve purchasing and resource sharing, manage local employment needs, and develop road management and delivery capability to meet regional and local needs. RRGs also have the options of altering the proposed Main Roads program on state-controlled LRRS and diverting a share of state government dollars to council owned LRRS.

RRGs are responsible for:

- identifying and managing the LRRS in their region
- adopting practices including prioritisation methodologies to determine regional investment priorities and hence projects for input into a five-year works program
- asset management of the LRRS (including structures)
- adopting JP&RS initiatives
- reviewing and planning for improved capability.

These responsibilities are detailed in table 1 which identifies annual RRG milestones.