

# THE ROADS AND TRANSPORT ALLIANCE


Progress Report 2012/13







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The Alliance acknowledges the assistance provided by the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and the Wide Bay Burnett and Northern SEQ Regional Roads and Transport Groups.

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# Celebrating 10 Years of the Roads Alliance

## Key milestones along the way

2012 marked the official 10 year anniversary of the Roads Alliance. Much activity has been undertaken in this time. A sincere thanks to all those involved past and present who have made the Alliance what it is today.

*"Local Government in Queensland and the Main Roads Department have a long history of trust and close co-operation. Even though we have not always agreed, it is worth acknowledging the relationship as a demonstration of the LGAQ's desire to represent the issues of its members and the desire of successive state governments to achieve mutually beneficial solutions. I believe it is from this solid foundation that LGAQ can draw confidence to pursue the proposed alliance" – LGAQ President Cr Noel Playford in an address to the South West Queensland Local Government Association – July 2001 (Roma)*

Pilot Groups established to formulate framework for:

The Roads Alliance Vision

Establishing Regional Road Groups (RRGs)

Asset Management Project Prioritisation

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed to formally establish the Roads Alliance

Roads Alliance Board established

RRGs established and Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS) identified

LGAQ and the Department of Main Roads (DMR) commence discussions on forming a regional roads alliance

Memorandum of Understanding signed to investigate the merits of a 'Roads Alliance' in Queensland

LGAQ and DMR sponsor study tour to Western Australia to evaluate their regional road group arrangements

Nov 2000

Jul 2001

Aug 2001

Dec 2001

Aug 2002

Oct 2002

Dec 2002/Jan 2003

Jun 2007

Roads Alliance invited to address UN Conference on Intergovernmental Collaboration (Vienna)

May 2008

Review of RRG boundaries following council amalgamations

Jun 2008

Alternative business models for road works delivery initiated and piloted in key regions across the State

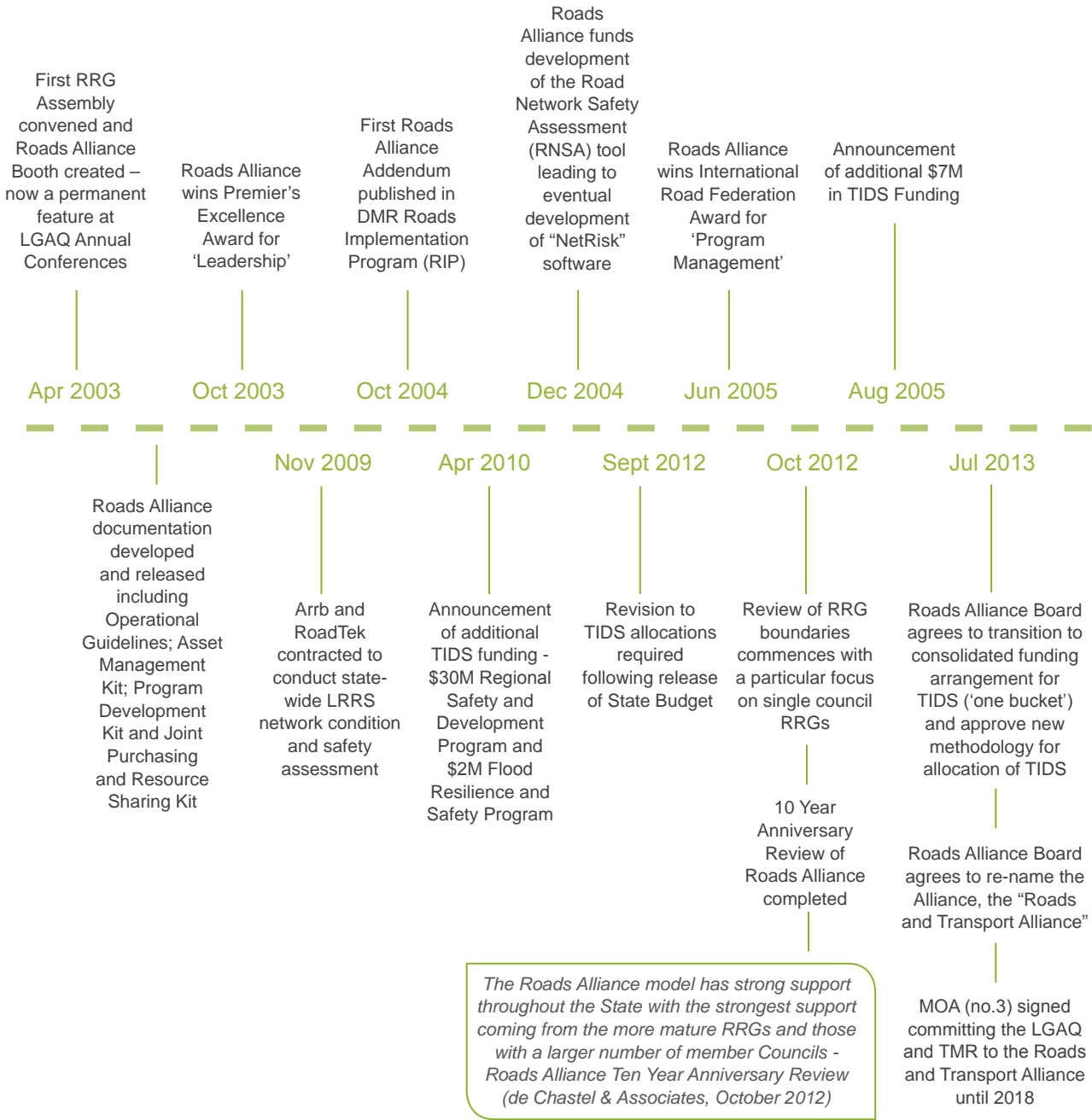
Sept 2008

MOA (no.2) signed committing the LGAQ and DMR to the Roads Alliance until 2013

Aug 2009

RRG Capability Improvement Strategy released requiring Capability Agreements from all RRGs





## 1. Foreword

As all levels of government strive for best value outcomes from funding, the Roads Alliance is testament to the benefits of working together. This successful partnership between State and local governments continues to achieve results across Queensland, and further afield, has been highlighted in the report “Future Directions for NSW Local Government – Twenty Essential Steps” as a model worthy of replicating.

The past year has been shaped by tightening budgets and funding reallocations but also innovative approaches in response to having to do more with less. We acknowledge the efforts of Regional Road Groups in adjusting to the funding changes, and in many cases, reprioritising projects to optimise delivery and expenditure targets.

**Continually evolving the Alliance to ensure it remains relevant has been a key feature of 2012–13.**

Agreement to move to a consolidated ‘one-bucket’ funding model for the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) will give more flexibility, autonomy and decision making power to Regional Roads and Transport Groups in the future. It reflects the maturing relationship between local governments and the Department and more than ever before provides confidence for all stakeholders to act regionally.

Importantly, the official renaming of the Roads Alliance to the Roads and Transport Alliance signals the beginning of a broadening agenda of cooperation between State and local governments on road and transport infrastructure planning, funding and delivery. The Queensland Government is committed to supporting a four pillar economy, empowering Local Government and governing for growth. It is timely for the Alliance to identify with these strategic policies and utilise the partnership structures as an enabler of economic growth and employment.

Against this backdrop, in July, we renewed our commitment to working in partnership with the signing of the Roads and Transport Alliance Memorandum of Agreement 2013 to 2018 - the third such Agreement since the Alliance formally commenced in 2002.



*Greg Hallam and Neil Scales discuss future Alliance initiatives at a recent Board meeting.*

Whilst the positive and maturing collaboration between State and local governments is a defining aspect of the Alliance, we can also proudly lay claim to the fact that the Alliance is a major contributor to improved capacity and capability in areas such as program development and management, asset management, joint purchasing and resource sharing and road safety. Certainly our focus for the future remains on enhancing performance with proactive and regionally focused initiatives.

We commend the 2012 -13 Roads Alliance Annual Progress Report to you and sincerely thank Queensland Local Government elected members, professional officers and Departmental staff for your ongoing energy, drive and enthusiasm for the Alliance partnership.

Greg Hallam PSM  
Chief Executive Officer

Neil Scales  
Director General

Local Government  
Association of Queensland

Department of Transport  
and Main Roads

## 2. Highlighting Key Initiatives – One Bucket and Road Asset Valuation

2012-13 brought the most significant funding reform of the Roads Alliance since its inception in 2002 with the shift to a consolidated 'one bucket' for TIDS funding.

Under the State Government's mandate to reduce red tape and empower Local Government, the distribution of TIDS funding as a single annual allocation consolidated three former sub-programs, broadening the scope for transport infrastructure project eligibility and providing greater autonomy to both local governments and TMR regions in making regionally-based investment decisions.

Extensive consultation throughout the year proposed and considered changes to associated business processes, program flexibility and how the decision making authority of RRGs could be enhanced.

The integration of former TIDS sub-programs Cycleways and SafeST, and removal of their application, assessment and allocation processes, will provide RRGs the flexibility to decide where they will get the 'best bang for their buck' across transport infrastructure types in their region.

**“Having too many small programs funded and distributed via the RRG results in less flexibility for the RRGs in achieving transport solutions for the region and also increases the amount of paperwork i.e. the number of returns required for each individual program”**

**Roads Alliance Ten Year Anniversary Review (de Chastel & Associates, October 2012).**

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- The construction or upgrade of LRRS and other state-controlled and local government-controlled roads;
- The development of local government on-road cycle facilities, off-road cycleways, shared paths and crossing provisions;
- The provision/upgrade of safe school travel road and transport infrastructure;
- Enhancing the safety and accessibility of regional/remote airports, including the construction or upgrading of runways, aprons and taxiways, fencing, airport lighting and ancillary works; and
- Improving RRG capability in transport infrastructure stewardship.

**To reflect the broadened scope of the 'one bucket' consolidation, the Roads Alliance Board agreed to re-name the "Roads Alliance" to the "Roads and Transport Alliance" and "Regional Road Group" to "Regional Roads and Transport Group".**

In providing TIDS as 'one bucket' of funding, the Alliance Board is encouraging RRTGs to adopt a more strategic approach to regional transport infrastructure planning and developing works programs based on regional priorities rather than infrastructure types. RRTG program development processes and timeframes will also align with TMR's program development cycle to reduce the administrative burden associated with the former sub-programs.

Having more flexibility and authority over TIDS funding empowers RRTGs to better manage and invest funding with a measure of certainty in the coming years, and demonstrates their capacity to effectively manage any future increases in funding.

Another key initiative of the Roads Alliance has been the continued progress of the Roads Asset Valuation Project (RAVP).

This project is working on extending the TMR methodology for valuing roads and making it applicable to local roads. This project is particularly important as Local Government road valuations provide key information for asset management and reporting requirements. Due to the cost and time involved in preparing valuations, using an effective and consistent methodology will provide substantial savings to councils.



In the last 12 months, the project has undertaken substantial research and consultation through a close working partnership with TMR's Road Asset Management team, a purpose-convened Expert Panel comprised of local government accountants, asset managers and engineers who provide guidance on technical matters, and consultation with RRGs and councils, directly and through forums across Queensland.

To date the project has defined and drafted specifications for local roads and produced a set of unit rates. These are currently being trialled with a number of councils across the State to see how the new methodology and application of standardised rates will affect road asset valuations.

The Queensland Audit Office (QAO) and State Valuation Service, both of which provide observers who attend Expert Panel meetings are strong supporters of the RAVP.



*Jim Groves - Executive Director, Strategic Policy (TMR) addresses participants at the 'One Bucket' workshop in April 2012.*

**The RAVP has also been recognised during the Transport, Housing and Local Government Parliamentary Committee hearings on the QAO Report on Local Government (August 2013) as a leading example of the collaborative effort being placed on improving road asset management.**

The capability offered by the methodology will allow councils to:

- Assign unit rates and residual values to individual road segments on the local network;
- Review and assign useful lives to individual road segments on the local network;
- Calculate remaining useful life for components of each road segment on the local network based on age/condition; and
- Undertake valuation calculations for each road segment on the network using unit rates, residual values, useful lives and remaining useful life estimates.



## 3. Regional Road Groups in Focus

### 3.1 Wide Bay Burnett Regional Road Group

A key priority for the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Road Group (WBBRRG) during 2012/13 was the need to deal with a revised funding envelope and its consequential impact on the Group's program of works. Whilst priorities were strongly debated across members, an agreed outcome was eventually reached at the RRG level – laying testament to the relationships and trust that has been developed over many years between members.

Whilst the WBBRRG has typically performed well with respect to TIDS expenditure, this issue was also a key focus for the group, acknowledging the desire to reach a 100% expenditure target. Pleasingly this goal was achieved for the first time despite the pressure on councils' resources to respond to flood works across the region. It is hoped this will position the Group well into the future to receive any additional TIDS funding that may become available through Alliance facilitated arrangements.

From funding to road safety, it is also worth highlighting the development of the WBBRRG's Regional Road Safety Strategy, which has been partly funded with a grant from the State-wide Capability Development Fund. It is understood that this will be the first time a group of local governments have developed a single Regional Road Safety Strategy. While the Strategy will have regional objectives, the diversity of the region is also recognised and individual 'action plans' will be developed for each local government area. To June 2013, the consultant has undertaken initial consultation with individual stake-holders as well as sourced and analysed crash data. The WBBRRG is now moving to hold sub-regional meetings to determine the appropriate 'Regional Strategies' before then moving to local workshops for the individual action plans. It is anticipated that the Regional Road Safety Strategy will be finalised in early 2014.

The RRG was also involved in the Alliance Board sponsored State-wide Capability Development Fund project to source bridge asset management resources for local governments. In the end, three member councils have acquired the software, participated in regional training on its use and are undertaking the population of the model to allow more rigor into their bridge asset management program. A fourth member is effectively using a bureau service from the software



*Geramanbulyan Bridge Upgrade.*

suppliers and the fifth had earlier acquired another software package. Hence, in the past 18 months, bridge asset management has moved from paper copies of bridge inspection reports to developing a system that retains records which can be interrogated to assist provide asset management information and further, assist with planning the maintenance needs of the asset group.

The WBBRRG has continued to keep active with the core principles of the Alliance in terms of looking for and taking advantage of opportunities for joint purchasing and resource sharing (e.g. the regional termite treatment panel of providers contract); maintenance of LRRS schedules; and consideration of greater utilisation of asset data e.g. NetRisk data.

In line with Alliance requirements, the RRG continues to utilise the Capability Agreement and Action Plan to focus its activities and this document recently underwent its annual review.

As stated above the Wide Bay Burnett Region was hit with catastrophic floods on Australia Day this year – on top of previous events in 2010 and 2011. It is important to recognise and give credit to the members of the WBBRRG and its Technical Committee who remained committed to progressing key Alliance projects whilst also tirelessly responding to and dealing with an extensive flood restoration program.

### 3.2 Northern SEQ Regional Road Group

Disasters had a significant impact on the operation of the Northern SEQ Regional Road Group (RRG) in 2012/13. Whilst Somerset Regional Council was arguably worst hit, it did not prevent Cr Dan Hall or Andrew Johnson agreeing to be the Group's office bearers - RRG and Technical Committee Chairs respectively.

Whilst on this theme, it is important to note the contribution of Cr Ted Hungerford from Sunshine Coast Regional Council who has chaired the Northern SEQ RRG for many years. Thanks also should be noted for the record to Sunshine Coast Regional council staff for their exemplary efforts on the management of the group over several years.

In recognition of the tight fiscal environment, the RRG maintained a close focus on its TIDS expenditure throughout the year resulting in 100% expenditure being achieved.

Despite the difficulties sometimes associated with joint purchasing and resource sharing the Group did make a concerted effort to provide benefits to its members by arranging and hosting training sessions on traffic count systems and software as well as NetRisk.

Additionally, Somerset Regional Council joined with other councils across the State in the Alliance Board sponsored State-wide Capability Development Fund project to source bridge asset management resources for local governments. As well as accessing a software system, Somerset Regional Council also had specialists undertake a number of Level 2 bridge inspections whilst also taking the opportunity to train council personnel to do the inspections in the future.

The Northern SEQ RRG has continued to undertake core Roads Alliance functions guided by its Capability Plan. In light of the de-amalgamation process currently underway on the Sunshine Coast, the Group has agreed to hold off progressing some matters until a representative from the new Noosa Council is available - which hopefully will be achieved by mid-2014.



*Toogoolawah Biarra Road.*



## 4. Supporting State-wide Capability Improvements

Each year TIDS funding is made available through the State-wide Capability Development Fund (SCDF) for capability improvement projects that align to core Roads Alliance functions and are likely to have state-wide application or deliver benefit to more than one RRG.

Over the past 12 months, the Roads Alliance has contributed over \$2M to improve RRG capability through the SCDF.

### State-wide Capability Development Fund Projects 2012-13

Project Name	Project Description	RRG	Total Project Cost
<b>Extension of Regional Procurement Coordinator</b>	Far North Queensland received \$138,823 to extend their Regional Procurement Coordinator employment contract for two years over 2011-12 to 2012-13, which was first funded in 2010-11.	Far North Queensland	\$277,646
<b>Technical Coordinator Services</b>	South West received \$75,000 to fund their Technical Coordinator role over three years to bring the group up to best practice, which is in line with the recommendations from their internal review in 2011-12.	South West	\$150,000
<b>Pavement Deterioration Research Project - Stage 3</b>	Southern received \$222,134 for Stage 3 of the Pavement Deterioration Research Project with funding provided over three years (2011-12 to 2013-14).	Southern	\$1,569,996
<b>Regional Transport &amp; Freight Plan</b>	Outback received \$69,855 to develop a Central West Queensland Regional Transport & Freight Plan to address the transport and freight challenges in the region.	Outback	\$139,710
<b>Regional Road Safety Strategy &amp; Action Plan</b>	Wide Bay Burnett received \$48,125 to develop a Regional Road Safety Strategy & Action Plan, which will be the first road safety strategy developed by an RRG that covers multiple separate council areas. This strategy will allow them to implement actions at a regional level with local action plans.	Wide Bay / Burnett	\$140,000
<b>Level 1 MapInfo Professional Workshop</b>	Outback received \$19,500 for 11 people to attend a training workshop for MapInfo Professional to create maps and analyse their data in a spatial context.	Outback	\$39,000
<b>IPWEA Training Course - Road Safety Audits</b>	Far North Queensland received \$12,960 for 15 people to attend an IPWEA training course on Road Safety Audits and Investigation & Treatment of Road Crash Locations.	Far North Queensland	\$25,920
<b>IPWEAQ Training Course - Erosion &amp; Sediment Control</b>	North West Queensland received \$11,688 for 25 people to attend an IPWEAQ training course on erosion and sediment control.	North West Queensland	\$23,376
<b>IPWEA Training Course - Infrastructure Financial Management</b>	Outback received \$11,500 for 15 people to attend an IPWEA training course on infrastructure financial management.	Outback	\$23,000
			<b>\$2,388,648</b>

**Other projects that expended SCDF allocations in 2012-13 (but were approved in previous years)**

Project Name	Project Description	RRG	2012-13 Expenditure
<b>TMR and LG Road Asset Valuations Projects</b>	Extending the TMR approach to road valuations to the local government road network.	Statewide	\$499,027
<b>Bridge Asset Management for RRGs</b>	Funding provided for bridge asset management initiatives as identified by individual RRGs.	Statewide	\$436,615
<b>Operationalisation of NetRisk</b>	ARRB was engaged to deliver a program of works to assist RRGs with NetRisk, including the state wide mapping of NetRisk data and training in road safety management.	Statewide	\$185,537
<b>Road Safety Interactive Mapping Tool</b>	The Road Safety Partnership Team developed a mapping tool to assist with the identification and prioritisation of road safety problems.	Statewide	\$111,864
<b>LGAQ Administration of the Roads Alliance</b>	Ongoing annual allocation to the LGAQ for participation in the Roads Alliance.	Statewide	\$160,000
			<b>\$1,393,043</b>



*Rickertt Road, Redland City.*



## 4.1 Funding support for Southern Regional Road Group

The Southern Regional Road Group (Southern RRG) has been heavily involved in building member capability in better understanding pavement performance and using Alliance Statewide Capability Development Funding to support Stages 2 and 3 of the 'Research and Development Program in Road Management Technology' since 2008.

### The Collaboration

The research study, led by Griffith University in collaboration with Southern RRG and TMR, into long term pavement performance is in its third stage after successful management and completion of Stages 1 and 2.

The initial stage of this research collaboration had a broader scope, with Gold Coast, Caloundra, Ipswich, Logan and Redland City Councils and Caboolture Shire Council, all participating.

### The Study

The first stage focused on monitoring the long-term pavement performance (LTPP) of selected road sections with different traffic conditions (such as volumes), construction type and pavement age. It found that environment and climate conditions, traffic volumes and pavement structures are key factors influencing pavement deterioration.

Stage 2 of the LTPP study (2008-2011) established pavement deterioration factors that enhance the model prediction of road management systems. Using improved deterioration factors, road asset owners can use this information to optimise future maintenance programs from available budgets.

The current stage of research is now underway, with the objective to develop a structural deterioration model for thin flexible pavements in Queensland.

### The Benefits

The first two stages of the research study have advanced the knowledge and understanding of the long-term effects, including environment and climate conditions, on pavement deterioration. The outcomes of the study to date have significantly impacted on the planning and management for both maintenance and rehabilitation of road pavements.

It will assist road managers of both TMR and local governments to optimise future works programs and identify cost effective strategies to maximise the conditions of the road network for any given budget.

## Recognition

The research program has been so successful that outcomes have been presented at a number of conferences and it has received national recognition. Councils across Queensland and New South Wales have expressed interest in duplicating the study on their road assets.

The research project has won a number of awards, including the 2011 Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia, Queensland Innovation Award. It was also recognized in the 2012 National Awards for Local Governments with Commendation in the Category of 'Asset and Financial Management'.

The early Stage 3 findings have been published in the International Journal for Pavement Research and Technology and the paper was presented in the 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Road & Airfield Pavement Technology in July 2013.

The Alliance is proud to have contributed to this innovative research through subsidising the participation of Southern RRG members. Congratulations to those involved for the broad recognition of results already received.



*Recognition for the project team.*



*Ongoing presentations on progress.*

## 4.2 Road Safety

In response to growing interest from members in improving road safety, the Roads Alliance extended support in 2012-13 to build on previous safety initiatives and introduce new ways to build the road safety capability of Local Government.

Using the LRRS network data collected in previous years through the NetRisk program, the Alliance engaged ARRB to conduct state-wide workshops focussing on RRG-specific results and case studies to assess safety deficiencies and develop potential safety interventions for inclusion in regional works programs.

During 2012-13, councils across Queensland were also able to access funding support from the Roads Alliance to undertake Road Safety Audits (RSA) on their LRRS network.

A RSA is a formal examination of a future road or traffic project or an existing road undertaken during preconstruction, construction and post construction in which an independent, qualified team reports on the project's crash potential and safety performance.

Through the Alliance, RRGs have been able to:

- Use Roads Alliance TIDS to claim up to 50% of the cost to undertake RSAs, for projects from their works program or for an existing road, particularly where this is recommended from a NetRisk assessment;
- Determine as a Group, a percentage of TIDS to be allocated to RSAs, whether annually or on an individual project basis; and
- Apply for Statewide Capability Development Funding for staff to undertake RSA training.

In the past year several staff in Far North Queensland RRG have completed RSA training and Toowoomba Regional Council (Eastern Downs RRG) have appointed their own Road Safety Officer who is qualified to undertake RSAs.

The Roads Alliance Board encourages RRGs to continue using Roads Alliance TIDS for RSAs on projects identified in their works programs and apply for State-wide Capability Development Funding for safety projects or initiatives including to train a regional resource/s who can undertake RSAs for RRG members.

## 4.3 Bridge Asset Management

The focus on Bridge Asset Management during 2012-13 arose from RRG interest in improving their management of bridge stock, and providing a stronger basis to manage heavy freight tasks. Approximately \$450,000 has been invested in bridge asset management across the State through the SCDF, with a number of RRGs working together to expand their knowledge and in the process share resources.

The Roads Alliance Board received seven applications for State-wide Capability Development Funding from 12 RRGs. A joint submission was received from Wide Bay Burnett, Scenic Valleys, North West Queensland, Far North Queensland, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Banana, and Northern SEQ.

The Roads Alliance investment in bridge asset management supported:

- The purchase of bridge asset management software systems by 13 councils;
- 61 council officers undertaking Level 1 inspection training;
- 34 council officers undertaking Level 2 inspection training;
- Level 2 bridge inspections on 132 bridges and culverts; and
- Level 3 bridge inspections on two bridges, with a number of bridges prioritised for inspections in the near future.

Training council staff across the state has enabled them to begin undertaking their own bridge inspections and collate this information in a bridge asset management system tailored for their council. Neighbouring councils also benefit by having bridge inspectors located nearby to conduct inspections and share technical knowledge.

It was commendable to see so many RRGs working together to do joint training. Outback and South West RRGs completed training in Charleville together, while Banana, Rockhampton, Gladstone and CHIRRP organised training as a region. This not only ensured consistency in knowledge and understanding, but the joint delivery of training also realised significant cost benefits for all participating councils.





## 5. Out and About with the Roads Alliance Project Team

The Governance Framework for the Roads Alliance identifies the need for a joint Roads Alliance Project Team (RAPT) between LGAQ and TMR in order to provide day to day operational support for the Alliance.

More specifically the team's activities focus on:

1. Providing advice and support to the Roads Alliance Board. For example, preparation of briefing notes, status reports on TIDS expenditure levels and general feedback on RRG progress.
2. Facilitating the implementation of Roads Alliance strategies and objectives. For example, developing methodologies for the allocation of TIDS funding, constructing frameworks and contractual arrangements for initiatives such as NetRisk data capture and the Roads Alliance Asset Valuation Project.
3. Embedding Roads Alliance objectives throughout TMR and local governments. For example, by encouraging councils to use Alliance sponsored arrangements to improve asset management practices and using RRG structures as a forum to discuss other road and transport related issues.
4. Supporting RRGs in implementing Roads Alliance strategies and broader Roads Alliance objectives. For example, assisting RRGs with applications for State-wide Capability Development Funding, facilitating resolution of disputes where they arise and providing advice and copies of documentation when required.



Team members are assigned as either 'lead' or 'support' points of contact across Queensland's 19 RRGs.

As such, team members frequently criss-cross the State attending RRG or Technical Committee meetings, resulting in many hours spent on the road (literally), in the sky or at airports.

However, its not all work, as occasionally, pending flight schedules, there's time for RAPT members to see the local tourist attractions or even take some annual leave.

The RAPT, through it's many iterations has been in place since the establishment of the Roads Alliance and signals the ongoing and strong commitment from both TMR and LGAQ towards the operations of the Roads Alliance and the provision of ongoing support to RRGs.

Current RAPT members consist of:

TMR	LGAQ
<b>Michelle Connolly</b> - Director (Intergovernmental Relations) Strategic Policy	<b>Simone Talbot</b> – Manager Advocacy, Infrastructure, Economics and Regional Development
<b>Zac Murphy</b> – Manager (Local Governmental Relations) Strategic Policy	<b>Roland McMillan</b> – Principal Advisor, Economics and Finance
<b>Susan Barlow</b> - Principal Technical Advisor (Local Government Relations) Strategic Policy	<b>Suzanne Lawless</b> – Principal Advisor, Infrastructure and Resources
<b>Jo Lencz</b> - Principal Advisor (Local Government Relations) Strategic Policy	<b>Ross Kirkman</b> – Senior Advisor, Infrastructure
<b>Alana MacGregor</b> - A/Principal Advisor (Local Government Relations) Strategic Policy	<b>Tony Appleyard</b> – Senior Advisor, Roads and Transport
<b>Jill Barry</b> - Principal Advisor (Local Government Relations) Strategic Policy	
<b>Sasha Phillips</b> - Advisor (Local Government Relations) Strategic Policy	

*Project team members Simone Talbot (far left) and Michelle Connolly (far right) with Outback RRG Chair Cr Rick Britton (Boulia), Outback RRG Technical Committee Chair David Timms (Winton), Outback RRG Technical Committee Deputy Chair John Roworth (Longreach) and Outback RRG Bureau Service Provider Jill Williams (Opus) at a recent meeting.*

