

Proposed New Management Structure for Central Otago Roads

Transit New Zealand (Transit), Central Otago District Council (CODC), Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) are investigating the potential viability of a joint structure for the management of roads within the Central Otago region. The purpose of the investigation is to see what gains and improvements can be extracted through a concerted approach to the management of the road network in the region.

Currently the State Highways are managed by Transit, and all local roads are managed by the respective council, CODC or QLDC, in effect having three road controlling authorities working independently in the region.

The basic principle of the proposal is that the administration of all roads, local roads and State Highways, within the boundaries of CODC and QLDC, and the implementation of their respective maintenance and improvement projects, is managed by one joint management unit, centrally located in the region, which would report to a board of members appointed by the three respective organisations CODC, QLDC and Transit.

Similar joint management models have been set up with other local road controlling authorities and Transit (Marlborough Roads and Bay Roads). What is unique about this particular proposal is that there are three parties, Transit and two local authorities. The management structure and lines of reporting is likely to be proposed with some variances to previously implemented joint management models in order to suit local conditions and requirements.

Simply put, this initiative between the three parties is for the purpose of improving effectiveness and efficiency and to deploy more skilful long-term management of the roads in the region, ultimately giving better service to the road users.

REAAA Low Volume Roads Workshop

The Third Low Volume Roads workshop, and the first run with the involvement of REAAA was held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Christchurch on July 17 and 18 this year.

The theme was "Protecting The Critical Infrastructure" and we were very pleased with 138 registered participants, including 75 from REAAA Institutional member organisations. Jim Hopkins, Master of Ceremonies, was a great asset for the workshops and the report back sessions.

George Giummarra, Principal Consultant Engineer - Local Roads with ARRB was the first key note speaker and he presented some of the key findings from the 8th International Low Volume Roads Conference held in Reno, Nevada in June 2003. Four New Zealanders, including Meritec Study award winner Ian Marshall (Southland District), also attended this conference and took the opportunity to have a study tour of the USA after the Conference.

All papers and copies of the presentations are available on the Low Volume Roads pages of the REAAA website. Feel free to have a look and download any of these papers that may be of assistance.

The three parties are very well aligned with regards to their respective objectives and set up a joint team under a Heads of Agreement to produce a Feasibility Report. This report was completed at the end of September. The report was presented to the respective councils, CODC and QLDC, in November and it was approved to be released for public consultation under the Local Government Act. This consultation process is currently underway with public meetings around the region, and submissions are due at the end of January 2004. Simultaneously an extensive consultation process is being undertaken with the industry and other major stakeholders. This is feeding useful information into the investigation. Also being undertaken is modelling of the various contracting strategies and the structure of the management unit.

The feasibility study identifies that there are both risks and opportunities in adopting the proposed combined approach to the management of the roads in the region. The opportunities are quite significant in the savings that can be made through economy of scale and contracting forms, but these will need to be balanced against the risks and how these could be managed.

Once the public consultation is completed, a final report will be presented to the TLA's councils and Transit's Authority early next year. It is expected a decision whether to proceed through to the operational stage of this proposal, or to retain a status quo in the management of roads in the region, will be made by in March or April 2004.

A combined network would represent 1350km of sealed roads and 1750km of unsealed roads totalling 3100km, the second largest roading management entity behind Southland District Council (4900km) and annual expenditure of around \$20 million.

If you have any inquiries about the workshop or would like to be added to the contact list for the 2005 event then please contact Neil Bennett at neil.bennett@transfund.govt.nz

Contribution and enquires

This newsletter is published for the benefit of members. Contributions can be sent to the secretary at the address below. Enquires about the chapter may be directed to the Chairman.

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Newsletter of the ROAD ENGINEERING ASSOCIATION OF ASIA AND AUSTRALASIA NEW ZEALAND CHAPTER



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Roadshow August/September 2003

This year's roadshow once again was held at five centres, Commencing at Dunedin then on to Christchurch, Wellington, Taupo and finishing in Auckland. Attendance was similar to the previous year with a total of 164

The Subjects covered are listed below:

- Roadside vegetation with Natives, presented by Landcare Research Staff
- Skid Resistance - An Australian Perspective presented by Dr John Oliver (ARRB)

- Freeflow Alliancing Presentation on the Grafton Gully motorway project in Auckland presented by members of the Freeflow team. (All centres except Auckland)
- Methods of Procurement- presented by Peter Spies TNZ and Kel Mcbeth Works Infrastructure
- Local topics.

Good feedback was received, everyone appreciating the opportunity to listen to a wide range of subjects that are relevant to the roading industry and catch up with others over the meal breaks.

Technical Paper Competition 2003

The REAAA New Zealand Chapter promotes a technical paper competition each year to encourage members to prepare papers that would be suitable for publishing in the NZ Chapter newsletter, the REAAA journal and could also be presented at events such as the REAAA NZ Chapter Road Show.

There are two categories open for submission;

Papers on 'innovation'

Papers on 'the practical application of research'

A prize of up to \$3000 is awarded to the best paper in each category, which goes toward travel and attendance expenses at a conference. A condition of entry must be that papers can be published in either the REAAA NZ Chapter newsletter or the REAAA journal.

The 2003 Technical Paper Competition closing date was 31 October 2003. The review panel were very pleased with what they received, although this year no award was given under the 'innovation' category.

The award for papers on 'the practical application of research' was given to Dr Bryan Pidwerbesky, Group Technical Manager, Fulton Hogan Ltd and David Alabaster, Pavements Engineer, Transit New Zealand who co-wrote a paper titled *New Zealand's Performance Specifications for Design and Construction of Unbound Granular Pavements*.

The following is an abstract from the winning paper.

Traditional specifications for pavement materials and construction are recipe based and somewhat restrictive, so performance based contracts are being progressively introduced in New Zealand to provide contractors with an opportunity to be innovative and to assume greater responsibility (and risk) for road construction projects. A

performance based specification for structural design and construction of thin-surfaced flexible unbound granular pavements, including surfacing, was introduced as a provisional document in 2000, to foster innovation in using marginal and non-conforming materials that give similar performance to standard basecourse and sub-base materials. Another objective is to preserve prime quality aggregates, so that road construction is achieved in a sustainable manner that mitigates any adverse environmental effects.

Two projects completed under this performance-based specification are described as case studies, including both the innovations and how research was put into practice. The paper includes the respective views of the contractor and highway authority as to the experiences gained from the two projects described in the paper, and the benefits of performance based specifications. It is intended to provide an insight into the process so that other road authorities might also adopt performance-based specifications for road construction, to allow best use of local resource to achieve the required pavement performance.

We are now accepting submissions for the 2004 REAAA NZ Chapter Technical Paper Competition. The closing date for which is 30 September 2004.

Papers can be submitted by mail or email to the details below:

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Road Share Ushers in a New Era in Civic Co-operation

There is nothing that infuriates motorists, pedestrians and utility providers more than the incessant digging up of the streets in our towns and cities.

No sooner has one operator dug up a street, and then a different company comes along and digs it up again. Drivers and pedestrian are driven to increasing levels of road rage as they face constant disruption to their day. Pristine main routes begin to look like patchwork quilts as contractors reinstate the road with little forward planning, and driven by time, resulting in substandard outcomes.

Utility providers and consumers are also frustrated when damage by third parties to the pipes and lines in the road disrupts services causing considerable cost, not to mention inconvenience to businesses and households alike.

All this may soon be a thing of the past as the New Zealand Utilities Advisory Group's (NZUAG) *Road Share* projects come on stream.

NZUAG was formed nearly two years ago to look at issues related to utilities working in the road corridor. This voluntary forum of network utility service providers, territorial authorities, Transit and industry bodies seeks solutions that optimise use of the road corridor.

The outcome has been the development of a number of projects that have produced best practice guidelines and tools for all aspects of road corridor management. These collectively aim to deliver compliance, competence and credibility. In other words, a more cost-effective and efficient outcome.

The guidelines will be tied together by a Partnership Agreement that sets out

the rights and responsibilities of utilities working in the road. The group hopes that road controlling authorities and utility companies throughout New Zealand will sign the agreements in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration to achieve an efficient and well managed roading network.

Tim Davin, Chairman of NZUAG, is confident that all stakeholders will come to the table, sign the agreements and become part of Road Share.

"We have devised a framework within which utility services and road controlling authorities can come together in a partnership that will make a real difference to the management of utilities in the road across New Zealand," he says.

"For the first time local government, network utility providers and contractors will have access to national guidelines that will provide consistent standards for working in the road," he said.

One of the first projects to be completed under the Road Share banner is a new handbook SNZ HB 2002: 2003 *Code of practice for working in the road* recently published by Standards New Zealand (SNZ). SNZ developed the handbook in association with NZUAG and key stakeholders.

The new code of practice, outlined in the handbook, will encourage a co-ordinated approach and a quality outcome, which at the same time aims to be fair and equitable to all stakeholders. The document focuses on co-ordinating the technical operation of utilities in the road corridor and includes reference to excavation, backfill, surface reinstatement, materials, quality assurance, safety of works, traffic

management and the management of the environmental effects of construction.

The Code of Practice, when it is implemented, will provide all utility providers with a set of principles that ultimately will help protect all the stakeholders' interests and assets.

Other projects grouped under the Road Share banner include:

- ▲ the National Certificate in Road Opening developed by Infratrains, formally the New Zealand Contracting ITO. The aim of this qualification is to ensure all contractors working in the road are competent to do so.
- ▲ the development of Resource Management Guidelines that will provide a model set of district plan objectives and rules for management of network utilities in the road corridor. These guidelines address the amenity values in the district plans. By promoting consistency in all district plans they hope to minimise the local differences.
- ▲ the development of a best practice guide for lifeline utilities, produced by the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management to ensure utilities have robust contingency and continuity plans in the event of a civil defence emergency.
- ▲ the development of a GIS Streetworks portal where the location of utility infrastructure information can be accessed.

Road Share will be launched next March 2004.

Land Transport Management Bill Passed

The Land Transport Management Bill which has been the subject of much debate throughout the year passed its final reading on 6th November 2003.

The legislation is aimed at ensuring greater consistency in the long term planning of land transport and transport infrastructure, and recognises the different modes that make up the sector. It also provides new mechanisms for funding of roads.

The key feature of the new legislation is that it embeds the New Zealand Transport Strategy (released December 2002) into land transport funding and management decision making processes. The NZTS objectives are used as important criteria for decision makers to take into account. Key criteria are to:

- ◆ Assist economic development;
- ◆ Assist safety and personal security;
- ◆ Improve access and mobility;
- ◆ Protect and promote public health;
- ◆ Ensure environmental sustainability

During the development of the legislation significant concerns were raised about the objectives, and in particular the lack of explicit focus on developing an efficient and effective land transport network. These concepts now appear in the Purpose clause of the Act and must be taken into account when assessing project proposals for funding.

The Local Government Act 2002 put in place a radically different approach to decision making which enabled democratic local decision making by, and on behalf of communities so that they could promote their social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being. Significant consultation provisions are now required for Council's to develop their Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP). These processes have been mirrored in the new land transport legislation, thus imposing many of the Financial and Asset Management planning processes onto other transport agencies such as Transit and Transfund. While there is explicit provision to avoid duplication, there will be significant work required by all transport agencies to allow them to efficiently manage the consultation processes required for development of future programmes.

The new legislation also provides the generic framework for tolling which is now permissible on new roads and bridges, provided there is significant community support for the project. There is also a degree of flexibility in the Act to allow for different arrangements including the provision for an "early conditional approval" by the Minister prior to tenders for a toll project being called.

Private Public Partnerships (PPPs) are arrangements where the private sector and public agencies get together to bring forward projects that are difficult to fund under the existing funding arrangements. The Bill now contains more flexible funding options, including lease arrangements and other mechanisms.

Regional transport planning has been addressed by emphasizing the strategic focus of Regional Land Transport Strategies, clarifying the relationship between the various planning agencies involved. It also provides for Regional Councils to own and operate public transport services and infrastructure, which was specifically excluded by the previous legislation.

The legislation also modifies the purpose of the competitive pricing procedures under which a number of agencies procure services. While the existing procurement procedures will continue in the mean time, new procedures are to be developed with the objective "obtaining the best value for money", while also having regard to the purpose of the Act.

In summary, the new legislation will mean that robust Asset Management Plans will need to be prepared to support the consultation and subsequent decision making on forward programmes of work and levels of service. The challenge will be in the development and execution of efficient planning and consultation processes and the ability to blend these with the strategic objectives set out in the legislation and the policy documents of individual transport agencies.

The final legislation is expected to be available in published form in early December.

Chairman's Note

2003 has been a good year for the New Zealand Chapter with a number of things we can look back on and be proud of. In terms of technology exchange we ran the Low Volume Roads Workshop and our Annual Roadshow - presenting new ideas, the results of research and some practical experiences to more than 350 people. We also ran our inaugural technical paper competition and are very pleased to have been able to make one award.

We have also managed to grow our membership by concentrating on gaining new institutional and corporate members. We are now approaching the same size as the Australian chapter.

More significantly for next year and the future our survey of members highlighted a number of areas for us to concentrate on to provide more value to members. As a result, next year we will be conducting more regional workshops and sessions as well as the roadshow, newsletters and the website. Please support these activities and let us know how we can help you in other ways.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Mike Rudge
Chairman NZ Chapter