



**NEWSLETTER**    **December 2011**    **South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc.**

# Port Kembla forges ahead



*Port Kembla's planned Outer Harbour development. The current shoreline is shown by the yellow dotted line, with the first stage to the left under construction. Artist's impression courtesy Port Kembla Port Corporation.*

Delegates at SEATS' recent meeting were delighted to see Port Kembla's expansion and increasing diversification first-hand. Its trade base now includes general and break-bulk cargoes, containers and motor vehicle imports. It is now Australia's largest vehicle importing hub.

Work on the first stage of Port Kembla's Outer Harbour expansion is well underway with completion due mid 2012. This includes reclamation of seven hectares to accommodate new port customers plus construction of two berths (a bulk berth and a container berth). Completion of the Outer Harbour will be staged over 25-30 years to meet customers' needs.

Rail has been given a high priority in the Port's future transport needs. Port Kembla Port Corporation (PKPC) Chairman Dom Figliomeni told delegates a rail simulation model has been developed to better understand the capacity and capability of the existing rail network serving the

Port. PKPC has since received the modeling software developed by the University of Wollongong's SMART Infrastructure Facility and CSIRO.

The project examined the supply chain of bulk products (such as steel, grain and coal), how the existing rail network could support future port expansion, identified potential bottlenecks and how these might be resolved.

On the long proposed rail link connecting the Main North South Line directly to Port Kembla via Dombarton, Prime Minister Julia Gillard recently announced \$25.5m to progress it to the 'shovel ready' stage with detailed design work, a construction timetable and cost estimates.

She said the link would give the coal mining sector more direct access to the rapidly expanding Port, and made more sense today than when shelved in 1988. Although she said the project could be included in the next 'Nation Building Program', construction is far from certain.

## Stronger IA submissions

Sound advice on preparing submissions to Infrastructure Australia (IA) came from Mende Gorgievski, GHD Strategy and Economics Principal Consultant.

He outlined IA's role in expanding and improving Australia's economic infrastructure and the challenges it faces in evaluating projects, viz. demand for project funding exceeds funds available.

He told delegates submissions need to be rigorous and adhere to the explicit and detailed IA guidelines to be seriously considered for funding. He said many in the past have been ad hoc in the way they have been justified and analysed.

Preparing submissions is a seven stage process and he detailed what each stage requires:

1. Goal Definition;
2. Problem Identification;
3. Problem Assessment;
4. Problem Analysis;

He gave some valuable pointers particularly on improving the last three stages which is where some submissions have particular difficulties.

5. Options Generation;
6. Options Assessment;
7. Solution Prioritisation.

Mr Gorgievski's advice will be used to update and improve SEATS' Priority Project template to ensure information on each of its priority projects meets IA standards.

His presentation is on SEATS website.

## Infrastructure key to growth

Major infrastructure projects are the key to stimulating investment and economic development, said Wollongong City Council Business Development Manager Brenden Logue.

He said the key projects in the Illawarra that will support future growth are the:

- National Broadband Network;
- Maldon Dombarton rail link between the Main North South line and Port Kembla;
- Expansion of Port Kembla harbour;
- Extension of the F6 into Sydney.

He told SEATS delegates last month that Wollongong City Council established Advantage Wollongong brand three years ago in partnership with Trade and Investment NSW as a peak body to attract investment and jobs to the area. It brought together all levels of government and the business community in a coordinated effort to boost Wollongong's economy.

He said with NSW Government assistance, they have already attracted 35 new businesses and brought 1,310 new jobs to the area.

## SEATS Chairman speaks...

This newsletter highlights many presentations from our productive November meeting hosted by Wollongong City Council. It was wonderful to be welcomed by their recently elected Lord Mayor Cr Gordon.

GHD's Mende Gorgievski gave us some timely information for writing



submissions to Infrastructure Australia. One outcome is we will be further refining and updating SEATS' project template. We first prepared the template after Sir Rod Eddington wrote a useful critique on the first round of IA submissions; it's now obvious that needs further work.

This year has been a very busy one for SEATS. We introduced Advocacy Committees in each state, and we've seen some of our priority projects funded by both Victorian and NSW governments. Their budgets also remind us there is still much work to be done by SEATS and its member organisations.

Two of our priority projects have progressed further than originally anticipated. The Victorian Government has agreed to part fund the Cross Border Heavy Vehicle Freight Study, and we're hoping for similar funding from the NSW Government. We also hope the Beyond Nerriga Study will be funded after our productive meeting with NSW Roads Minister Duncan Gay.

Next year will be exciting for SEATS as we consolidate some of our initiatives. This will be by talking with the right people in government to ensure they're aware of our future transport infrastructure needs and the need for funding provisions in future budgets.

I thank everyone who worked so hard to ensure 2011 was successful for SEATS. I wish you a very happy Christmas and hope 2012 is a good year for you.

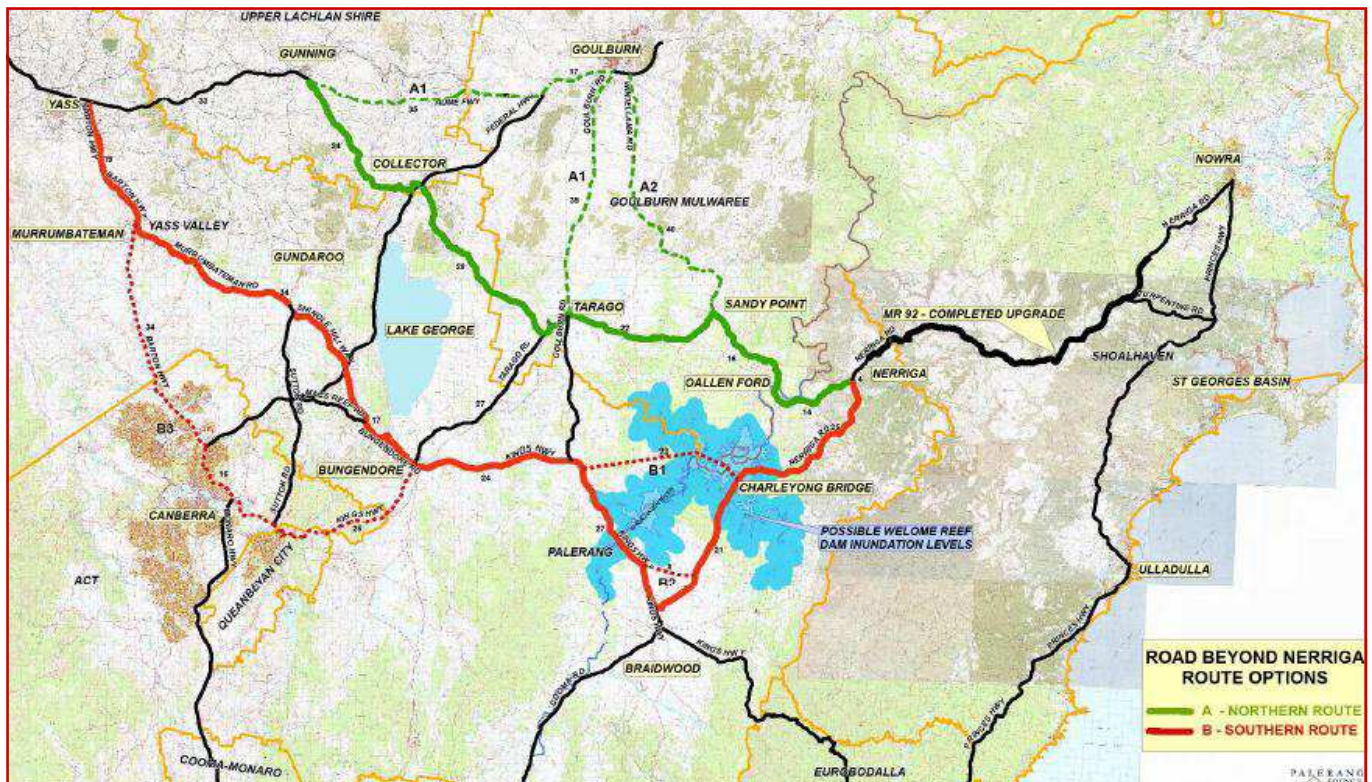
*Cr Sue Whelan  
Chairman*

## SEATS overhauls Strategic Network

SEATS' key document, 'Strategic Network – creating economic development by improving transport networks in South Eastern Australia' (on SEATS website), is being overhauled by a sub-committee and brought up to date.

Everyone is asked to please check through it and advise the Executive Officer of any changes before Christmas. A subcommittee will meet the day before the next SEATS meeting to finalise changes.

# Minister hears 'beyond Nerriga'



Some possible route options to link the Princes Highway near Nowra with the inland freight network.

Now NSW's Main Road 92 has been upgraded between Nowra and Nerriga on the southern tablelands, a study is needed to determine the best freight routes on from Nerriga to complete the freight network linking Nowra and NSW's south coast with inland highway corridors.

Representatives of five councils affected by the 'Beyond Nerriga' project met NSW Roads Minister Duncan Gay in Sydney on 10 November. They outlined the need for this study, estimated to cost \$300,000, and asked the Minister for funding assistance. They are now eagerly awaiting the Minister's response.

The study would evaluate factors influencing the ultimate route, determine the preferred route as well as outlining a possible program for its staged construction.

The 10-year \$95m upgrade from the Princes Highway on NSW's south coast to Nerriga was completed in December 2010 but only goes part way towards achieving the vision for a more direct B-double capable freight network.

Several routes are possible west of Nerriga (see map) using the Kings, Monaro, Federal or Barton Highways to link to the Hume Highway, all with varying capabilities and characteristics.

Facilities along these routes have different freight requirements, such as freight intermodals at Tarago, Goulburn and Canberra Airport; Port Kembla; the Goulburn regional supermarket distribution centre; various quarries; Canberra Air-

port (freight and passengers); the Woodlawn Bio-reactor; Goulburn Regional Saleyards; and military establishments at Nowra, Jervis Bay, Bungendore and Canberra.

Improvements to the freight network would also benefit tourism.

This project, a SEATS priority project for some years, is now firmly on the agenda.

## Cross border HV freight study

SEATS is waiting to hear if the NSW Government will match the Victorian Government's pledged \$25,000 towards the much needed Cross Border Heavy Vehicles Roads Study. SEATS will contribute about \$18,000 with member organizations an additional \$8,000.

This study will:

- identify limitations to transport of timber and other freight between Victoria and NSW that is impeding regional economic development;
- determine how to overcome these limitations;
- identify regionally sustainable infrastructure projects to improve both intrastate and interstate route problems.

No funds will be coming from the Federal Government which recognises the need for this study but believes it is a state responsibility.

# Council manages landslide risk



Wollongong City Council has a program of remediating sites identified as highly susceptible to landslides or rockfalls to reduce risk to its infrastructure. Courtesy WCC.

Most councils are forced into high cost reactionary or emergency responses to landslides or rockfalls that affect assets in their care, said Wollongong City Council's Senior Geotechnical Engineer Peter Tobin.

He told SEATS delegates last month that Wollongong has adopted a more pro-active approach to minimise such events.

He said the trigger for landslides or rockfalls is often intense rain storms or prolonged periods of above average rainfall. Typically they do not qualify for Disaster Relief and Recovery funding. Internal funding then has to be sourced at the expense of other planned projects.

Hillsides will always be sus-

ceptible to some form of slope instability, but Mr Tobin said the geography of the Wollongong area and its moist on-shore weather patterns make it particularly prone to such events. Council now tries to reduce the risk to its infrastructure through programmed remediation of more problematic sites. It:

- keeps landslide database;
- identifies its assets susceptible to slope instability;
- quantifies and prioritizes the risk to these assets;
- Develops management plans to remediate high risk sites;
- Works done as budgets allow.

He said there can still be surprises from extreme weather and on slopes with no previous history necessitating an emergency response.

Mr Tobin warned that as consent authorities Councils could be liable to litigation should an unstable slope affect a development it has approved. Councils need to identify susceptible land, and any DA on that land needs to be supported with professional advice. That advice should then be reviewed against information known to Council.

His presentation 'The Cost of Landslide Remediation' is on SEATS' website.

## What is SEATS?

South East Transport Strategy (SEATS) aims to stimulate and facilitate investment in transport and infrastructure in south eastern NSW, eastern Victoria and the ACT. Its 47 members represent councils, industry and other organisations from Wollongong to Dandenong.

### New SEATS members

SEATS members at the meeting at Wollongong welcomed new members Gippsland Ports and SEROC.

### Timber roads funding

Bombala Council has applied to Regional Development Australia on behalf of softwood processor Tasco for \$7-\$8m funding particularly for timber road infrastructure. This would support the mill's current \$70m expansion and the next stage of its expansion plans.

### Check new website

Check SEATS revamped website [www.seats.org.au](http://www.seats.org.au). We welcome any ideas for further improvements.

## SEATS meetings

**16-17 February** : Hosted by Wellington Shire Council at Sale, Vic.

**17-18 May**: Hosted by Yass Valley Council at Yass, NSW.

**16-17 August**: Hosted by VicRoads at Wantirna, Vic.

**15-16 November**: Hosted by Cooma-Monaro Shire Council at Cooma.

**2013**

**February**: to be determined.

**May**: Hosted by Eurobodalla Shire Council at Batemans Bay, NSW.

## SEATS supports HSR

SEATS supports the preferred route for High Speed Rail (HSR) as identified in the recent feasibility study. The route between Sydney and Melbourne via Goulburn, Yass, Canberra, and Albury will benefit many in SEATS' region.

SEATS Wollongong meeting recommended this becomes a SEATS priority project. It also recommended the Federal Government continue with various HSR studies and consequential work.

## SEATS Executive

Chairman Cr Sue Whelan (Queanbeyan City Council), Deputy Chairman Cr Jeanette Harding (South Gippsland), Sec/ Treas David Byrne (Cooma-Monaro).

**Victorian representatives:** Gordon Charles (East Gippsland), Cr Graeme Middlemiss (Latrobe City), Cr John Duscher (Bass Coast)

**NSW representatives:** Cr Bob Stewart (Bombala Shire), Greg Pullen (Shoalhaven City) and Warren Sharpe (Eurobodalla).