



SEATS provides highly co-ordinated and influential advocacy for the development of transport infrastructure in the South Eastern Australia region that supports economic development and the prosperity of its constituents.

# SEATS

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## **SEATS REPORT – May 2015**

The quarterly meeting of SEATS was held on the 21st and 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 2015 at The Rex, 150 Northbourne Avenue, Braddon ( Canberra)

The meeting was attended by between 35 and 40 delegates each day and was proudly hosted by GHD. SEATS members and guests were warmly welcomed by GHD Operating Centre Manager Jo Metcalfe who acknowledged their support of the important work done by SEATS across the Region and encouraged all visitors to enjoy the amenity of the Canberra area.

The Chair of SEATS, Cr Jeanette Harding, thanked GHD for their impressive organization of this meeting and thanked all delegates for their attendance.

### **Proposed Constitutional Change**

The Executive considered and supported a proposed change to the Constitution to stipulate a 2 year term for both the Chair and Deputy Chair and these appointments to alternate between States/Territories. A notice of motion will be circulated at least 28 days prior to the AGM in August 2015 so this proposed change can be discussed and voted on at the AGM.

### **Meeting Dates and Venues**

The next meeting will be hosted by Baw Baw Shire on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2015. Baw Baw Shire Mayor Debbie Brown and Phil Cantillion outlined the proposed arrangements for the August meeting and invitations and information of interest about the Shire were provided in a special package addressed to each SEATS member, which was much appreciated.

#### **Meeting dates clarified:**

It was pointed out that the correct confirmed date for the November 2015 Meeting hosted by Goulburn Mulwaree at Goulburn is **November 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>**.

At present there has been no expression of interest in hosting the **February 2016** meeting in Victoria or the **August 2016** meeting also to be held in Victoria. Please consider hosting these meetings and contact me so they can be locked into the calendar. The corrected date also for the 2016 November meeting hosted by Bega Valley Council is **November 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>**. Please also consider hosting future meetings in 2017.

A discussion considering the costs of hosting and attending the SEATS meetings raised by Goulburn Mulwaree Council agreed that there be no change to the current arrangements, that

drinks were not expected to be paid for by the hosts and as the hosting of meetings was rotational, smaller Councils were encouraged to work together, seek some sponsorship for parts of the meeting as some have done in the past and to work with State Authorities to host these events. The discussion whilst appreciative of the costs also highlighted the economic community benefit of hosting these events. The Executive also considered the need to optimize the time spent at the meeting and content of the agenda to get the most value for the attendees and respective Councils. Would half yearly meetings be an option to reduce costs and did there need to be a site visit?

### **Newsletter**

The important newsletter of SEATS will continue to be edited and produced by Laurelle Pacey and will be distributed to all SEATS member organisations and politicians across the Region. It will be posted on the Website and you are encouraged to provide copies to other members of your organisations and businesses. It provides SEATS with an excellent opportunity of highlighting and promoting the work it does, developing stronger links and relationships to improve regional transport infrastructure networks and economic development and providing information to assist members in the preparation of funding submissions and identifying programs where transport infrastructure may be improved.

### **Retirement of SEATS Treasurer Gordon Charles**

After delivering his final Financial Report before retirement at the end of June, Gordon was thanked for his outstanding service, advice, guidance and leadership in his role as treasurer of SEATS since 2013. He received a small gift, a Certificate of Appreciation and he and wife Helen were wished a happy and healthy retirement. A letter from Chris Vardon OAM was also read and presented to Gordon, much to his delight, and he in turn thanked Cr Sue Whelan OAM, Chris Vardon OAM, Chair Cr Jeanette Harding and Acting Treasurer Mark Burnett. Mark from East Gippsland Shire will continue in this acting role from the 1<sup>st</sup> July until the AGM in August when the position of Treasurer can be filled. The Financial Report and approved 2015/16 Budget will be circulated with the meeting minutes shortly.

The Executive approved the attendance of the Executive officer at the IPWEA NSW Local Roads Congress in Sydney on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. The keynote speakers include Minister Duncan Gay and Warren Sharpe OAM President IPWEA. It was noted also that Warren has been invited to present at the Victorian Local Government Forum in Victoria later in May. Warren also outlined an opportunity for SEATS to be involved in a pilot arrangement with the Australian Local government Association for strategic Roads to Recovery component and it would require 3 NSW projects from Councils that have a high benefit cost ratio. This opportunity could give SEATS good leverage for future projects but the time frame was extremely short.

### **Elections in NSW and By-Election in Victoria**

The Executive Officer outlined the changes in both States and will follow up with a personal contact shortly to renew relationships with these elected representatives on behalf of SEATS. He is compiling a contact list with help from Bob Wenger and Sue Whelan OAM.

### **Website**

The website continues to be upgraded for SEATS by Phil Barnes at WebTech101. It is moving into a platform where it can be more easily maintained and used. It has taken more time than expected with a close review of older material and errors are being rectified but will soon be up and running with an interactive question feature. It will be a great asset to SEATS when completed and a great way to celebrate success and promote the work of SEATS.

## **Network Strategy**

Ralf Kastan outlined the progress of the Network Strategy document and will co-ordinate with the Executive Officer and Laurelle Pacey to edit and improve the presentation of the document. The question was raised about how the strategies between NSW and Victoria were linked? Ralf advised that the network strategy lists other strategies and industry based strategies and links these to the Federal, State and Territory and local industry strategies which are all available on the website.

## **Discussion: How can members be more involved in SEATS.**

**There was a wide discussion and members were asked to contact the Executive Officer with their further ideas and suggestions. The SWAT Analysis of August 2014 was provided for information.**

### **Some of the items discussed were:**

- With the 20 year anniversary of the SEATS partnership it would be a great opportunity to celebrate and promote to a wider audience.
- NSW Councils going through major reform so SEATS needs to provide a refresher on the services it can provide.
- Need to have more projects for SEATS as well as celebrating past successes.
- More attention needed on main arterial roads related to tourism areas.
- Knowledge of politicians within the whole SEATS region and getting information out to Councils is important.
- Identify those peak bodies that work in the same areas as SEATS and campaign to raise our profile and comment where appropriate.
- Offer membership to RDA groups for lobbying-some attendance has been noted in Illawarra region
- Need to get correspondence out and re-establish our relationship with the bodies that have been removed from SEATS to encourage attendance at our meetings in the future.
- How does SEATS continue to demonstrate proven added value in our regions in particular urban regions?
- Important for wider community to have SEATS information disseminated to State and Federal governments in answering questions.
- The need for Councils to raise projects to be considered and supported as Priority Projects. Several of the projects on our list are completed, under construction or need to be reviewed. Executive Officer to contact all SEATS members regarding the need for new projects.

## **Reports to SEATS Meeting**

Reports, which are attached, were received from Harvey Dinelli, VicRoads and the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources and David Wilson from RMS. These have been circulated and will also form part of the SEATS meeting report to members. They will also appear on the SEATS Website shortly. These reports are vital in understanding the direction of Government and the investment in network improvements. Maintenance, planning and progress in the delivery of significant projects across our Region. The meeting noted its appreciation of the detailed reports received. A query was raised if Victoria has a program like NSW that attends to bridge repair and replacement and consideration be given to further bypasses.

## **Regional Projects**

The Executive Officer highlighted the following Regional project announcements:

- \$70M Gocup Road

- Port of Eden Geotech investigation completed- 10M approval plan
  - Dignams Creek bridge replacement and moving intersection and overtaking lane
  - Blackspot projects in NSW funding
  - Canberra Airport 2014 Masterplan signed off in January 2015
  - Shire of South Gippsland- Federal Award for Freight Safety Strategy, resulting in significant reduction in deaths and serious injury
  - Milestone announcement regarding duplication between Traralgon and Sale- \$260 M which will improve road safety, cut travel times and improve freight efficiency to boost key industries such as dairy, timber and paper.
  - \$10M for the new Gippsland Logistics project
  - \$9.9M for Tyers Road Bridge and significant investment in the Cranbourne-Pakenham line
  - Continuation of the Roads To Recovery Program
  - Funding for Bridge Renewal and Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity
- Several of these announcements are also covered in other reports.**

### **Site Visit to Majura Parkway and Cotter Dam.**

GHD were heavily involved as design partners in both projects, Majura Parkway delivered by Fulton Hogan and the Enlarged Cotter Dam delivered by Bulk Water Alliance.

Majura Parkway(ACT)- this is a current project due to be completed by mid 2016. It is a large road infrastructure project which will create long term economic, social and environmental benefits for the ACT. The project will deliver 11.5 km of dual carriageway(100kph) linking Monaro Highway with the Federal Highway. When completed the new Parkway will improve traffic flow through the ACT and improve access to the national and regional freight route and Canberra Airport.

The section we travelled on was only opened a few hours earlier so we got a first- hand look at this project.

#### **Some key construction elements of interest included:**

- extensive services work in shared trenches for communications and electrical relocations.
- installation of kangaroo and rabbit proof fencing to ensure motorist safety.
- three major interchanges and upgrading of two busy intersections.
- 10 bridges, a combination of underpasses and overpasses and a twin bridge over Morshead Drive and Molongo River.

#### **Highlights of the project include:**

- comprehensive traffic management strategy( including works undertaken overnight) to minimize the impacts of construction on road users.
- “Zero Harm” safety regime on site.
- high level environmental practices to manage the capture, treatment and discharge of all site water, dealing with endangered animal species, the provision of wildlife friendly features to facilitate the movement of animals and conserve sensitive habitat areas and the reuse of cleared material to offset the impact of vegetation clearing.

Other features of the project have been the management of community issues, including the engagement with local government and key stakeholders and innovation in design and construction to allow for a more streamlined and elegant appearance of bridges and reduced maintenance requirements.

The second part of the tour took us to the **Cotter Dam Project**, delivered by the Bulk Water Alliance, which involved the construction of a new roller compacted concrete dam, approximately 150m downstream of the existing Cotter Dam, in addition to the construction of two clay core rockfill embankment dams and various associated works (

including some very impressive community facilities). The capacity of the Cotter Reservoirs has risen from 4 GL to 78GL, representing a 35% increase in total reservoir capacity for the ACT Region and delivering water security in the face of drought, bush fire and growth demand.

**Dinner Guest Speaker Duncan Edghill**, ACT Government, spoke about the Capital Metro Project and Facilitating Development in the ACT. This light rail system which will service Canberra is currently in the procurement stages and the initial line is planned to link the northern suburb of Gungahlin to the city centre, a 12km line. It is an important part of the ACT Government's vision to deliver a sustainable, creative city. It will begin construction in 2016 and the Light Rail Master Plan is already looking at future stages. It will be a Private, Public Partnership and will provide the people of Canberra with greater choice in transport and change the entrance to this great city.. The Business case has been prepared and released in full. Duncan outlined some of the challenges and lessons learnt in this project. One major challenge has been the development of the right team to deliver the project. Finding the balance in people, skills. Knowledge and aptitude. Other challenges have included getting the Governance right with processes and approvals, consulting frequently with all stakeholders, listening to the market, being innovative and clear on what was wanted and being transparent and resilient. It is a Canberra Project but also an important Regional Project. It is funded by the ACT Government, the first project to be approved under a Government Act.

**Presentation from Farshad Ibrahimi, GHD Melbourne- Global Service Line Manager who spoke about "Asset Productivity for Infrastructure Business" His presentation is attached**

Provided comment around the role of Asset Management and Asset Productivity with a synopsis of two recent industry case studies. He spoke about the Asset Management Value Chain. The basis was a move to a long term strategic improvement rather than a short term fix. He has had extensive experience in Australian and overseas business including AustRoads, Brisbane Airport Corp, Centro Rail in the UK, Heathrow Airport, Manila Water, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in the USA.

**Presentation from Andrew Jagers Executive Director: Infrastructure Investment Division, Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Australian Government.**

**Andrew talked about Infrastructure Investment: Perspectives and Reform.**

## Introduction

- ❖ The current Infrastructure Investment Programme represents the largest infrastructure investment by a Commonwealth Government in Australia's history, with over \$50 billion committed.
- ❖ However, even with an investment of this extent, funding Australia's infrastructure needs going forward remains a challenge.
- ❖ Investment in infrastructure is necessary to assist in the transition to a non-mining economy.

## Infrastructure Investment Programme

- ❖ The 2015-2016 Budget takes a steady-hand approach when it comes to infrastructure, predominately focusing the continued delivery of the Government's Infrastructure Investment Programme, announced in the 2014 Budget.
- ❖ The Department is delivering the Infrastructure Investment Programme successfully, with 90 projects already completed, a further 88 under way, and 96 in planning.
- ❖ There have been a number of important announcements, including:
  - the announcements of the 51 projects approved for \$212 million worth of funding under Round One of the National Stronger Regions Fund;
  - more than \$400 million in targeted support for farmers and communities impacted by drought, including \$35 million for shovel-ready local infrastructure and employment projects;
  - the new \$45 million Stronger Communities Programme for small community infrastructure projects;
  - \$100 million for Improving Northern Cattle Supply Chains;
  - the \$5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility for providing concessional loans to major infrastructure projects in Northern Australia.
- ❖ There will also be an additional \$350 million for Roads to Recovery in 2015-16, to allow local governments to address key issues in their regional transport networks.

## South Eastern Australia

- ❖ There are a number of important projects underway across the South Eastern Australia region.
- ❖ In November 2014, the Australian Government committed a further \$70 million towards the duplication of the Princes Highway East between Traralgon and Sale, which has been identified by SEATS as priority transport corridor.
- ❖ In the ACT, we are working with the Territory government to deliver the Majura Parkway upgrade. Once completed, this project will provide an improved freight link for vehicles travelling between Sydney, western NSW, the Monaro region and the Act.
- ❖ There are also a number of a smaller, high benefit projects across the region, such as the Sand Road grade separation at Longwarry, which will significantly improve safety and speed for highway users.
- ❖ I would expect to see more commitments from the Government towards infrastructure projects across Australia over the next 12 months, leading up to the 2016-17 Budget.

## Targeted investment in an era of fiscal constraint

- ❖ It is important to recognise that all governments in Australia are facing tight fiscal constraints.
- ❖ That is why the Australian Government targets its limited investment funds towards projects which will best drive economic development in our regions and urban centres.
- ❖ One of the best ways to achieve value for money is to identify and target lower-cost investments which deliver outsized returns.
- ❖ This is why the targeted local investment programmes delivered by my Division, such as the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programme and the Bridges Renewal Programme are particularly important.
- ❖ These programmes can address bottlenecks and stress points in the transport network, delivering improvements to freight networks and passenger movements.

## Investment policy and reform

- ❖ There are three key policy areas that we need to get right in infrastructure investment:
  - we need to ensure that our planning and project selection processes are consistent and evidence based;
  - we need to control costs and ensure that we are delivering value for taxpayers' money; and
  - we need to identify how we can best encourage private sector investment, so we can better leverage government spending and provide more infrastructure at a lower cost to the taxpayer.
- ❖ The Department has worked to include these goals in the current Infrastructure Investment Programme, and we are looking beyond this Budget to work to ensure that these goals are fundamental to future infrastructure investment programmes.
- ❖ We are working to improve planning by encouraging all levels of government to take an integrated, long-term approach to planning for future infrastructure needs.
- ❖ There are a number of initiatives being undertaken to improve cost control, including:
  - the first steps towards the establishment of robust cost benchmarking framework for infrastructure projects; and
  - improvements to the cost estimation frameworks for jurisdictions, including through the use of probabilistic cost estimation.
- ❖ The Government has also committed to considering alternative mechanisms of funding and financing infrastructure, where appropriate.
- ❖ In the long run, there is a need to explore alternative mechanisms for funding and managing investment in road infrastructure.

- Road usage charging has been flagged by multiple reviews as a key reform needed to improve the economic infrastructure of Australia's national infrastructure.
- While the technological means to undertake this may exist today, this is a complex issues that demands careful consideration and collaboration with government, industry and the wider public.

At the moment, the Department is working with the states and territories and local government on a series of initial measures for heavy vehicle road reform.

### **Reports from Members**

At the next meeting, to make the minute taking easier and ensure accuracy, forms will be provided for members to provide their reports.

#### **Mike Dowd Wollongong City Council**

- \*Supporting RMS to University Wollongong bus interchange \$1.5m cooperative project.
- \* West Dapto Urban land release.
- \*Bypass West Dapto a win for flood management. Agreed to update arterial standards
- \*M1 upgrade through to Sydney-approached for review to work with RDA. Now have access to poles and wires program information.

#### **Greg Pullen Shoalhaven City Council**

- \*Budgets should now have been adopted.
- \*Freight Corridor Princes Highway \$8m with Shoalhaven contributing \$700k
- \*Not sure why didn't receive funding under BCR.

#### **Gordon Charles and Mark Burnett East Gippsland Shire**

- \*VicRoads Audit –Natural Disaster Relief projected \$2.2 of \$9m
- \* Thanks to VicRoads for three sets of road widenings.
- \* Bosworth Road replacement, not sure if project is going ahead

#### **Cr Bob Wenger Wellington Shire Council**

\*WDA-Wellington, Latrobe and Gippsland \$11m for roads.\$20m into Traralgon-Sale

#### **Cr Neil Burnside Eurobodalla Shire Council**

- \*Upgrades to Kings Highway
- \*Link Road-design work-north Batemans Bay, being finalized, timing dependent on RMS.
- \* Kings Highway-Misty Mountain, Nelligen upgrade.

\*South Coast access to Eurobodalla via Princes Highway non existent. Realignment of link Road.

### **Cr Sue Whelan OAM and Phil Hansen Queanbeyan City Council**

\*Thanks to GHD for hosting meeting.

\*Ellerton Drive project \$50 m funding approved from State/Federal government and to be approved from Council. Critical to improvements of areas in Queanbeyan-Googong and Tralee.

\*Cross-border road links-importance of discussions with ACT departments.

### **Ron Collins NRMA**

\*Princes Highway number 1 priority

\* Noted the retirement of Allan Evans after 10 years, replaced by Kate Lundy. Expects to visit the coastal region in the future.

### **Geoff Hill Latrobe City Council**

\*\$10m Gippsland Logistics precinct- details still to be worked out.

### **Cr Paul Cockram Palerang Shire Council**

\*Kings Highway of high importance, active ACT involvement in SEATS needed.

### **Cr Bob Kirk Goulburn-Mulwaree Council**

\*Successful government grant funding.

\*Work on the planned new concrete Lansdowne Bridge over the Mulwaree River at Goulburn still hasn't commenced, \$4m from each State.

\*Received \$410k Federal funding to construct another roundabout and other improvements in Goulburn

\* Received \$60k from State government to complete a bridge audit over LGA.

\* Work on Shoalhaven River bridge crossing at Oallen is progressing and expected to be completed mid to late June.

\* Various works being done on local roads around Marulan, north of Goulburn. Large growth in industry is impacting on the road network.

### **Cr Martin Hughes Cooma-Monaro Shire Council**

\*Currently not members but is hopeful of rejoining in August

\* Infrastructure \$5m grant for dam at Nimmitabel

SRSC grant from RDA \$7.2m for upgrading regional Jindabyne airfield applied for with a letter of support from SEATS with funding to be advised in August. Seeking additional \$15m for realignment and extension.

\*Perisher under sale to Vale Resorts for redevelopment.

\*Lack of suitable transport is notable in the area and options submitted have been unsuccessful.

\* a number of wildlife carcasses on the roads recently so take care when travelling to the area.

### **Cr Jeanette Harding and Ken Fraser South Gippsland Shire Council.**

\*Leongatha Heavy Vehicle Alternate Route-final detailed design has been released and construction to commence in late 2015.

\* South Gippsland Highway Black Spur section-working with VicRoads on the business case with around \$40m proposed cost.

\*Bridges renewal program funding-received for a rural bridge at Allambee Estate which will assist logging and cattle trucks.

\*Notable growth in dairy sector is impacting on freight movement.

### **Cr Debbie Brown and Phil Cantillon Baw Baw Shire Council**

\*Budgets made available to capital works have trebled with a key commitment to reducing depreciation and enabling more works across the Shire especially in the more remote areas of the Shire. Large capital works programs are expected over the next 2-3 years.

\*Road corridors going ahead thanks to SEATs support.

\*Renewal program includes \$1m in Bridge strengthening .

### **Other Business**

1. Please review comments raised in the discussion about how members can be more involved in the work of SEATS and provide some feedback to the Executive Officer.
2. The Executive Officer will seek to invite the Foundation Chair and Committee to the celebration of 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday of SEATS.
3. Martin Hughes from Cooma-Monaro Shire was acknowledged for his attendance as an observer.
4. Chair Cr Jeanette Harding expressed her appreciation of the work done by GHD in organizing and hosting the meeting in Canberra. In particular Donna Robinson, Andy Beldom, Stuart Clark, Jo Metcalfe, Daniel Tallos, and Farshad Ibrahim from GHD and presenters Andrew Jaggars and Duncan Edghill.
5. In wishing everyone a safe journey home Chair Jeanette Harding reminded all members that the **next meeting will be the AGM to be held in Victoria on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015 at Lardner Park, Warragul and hosted by Baw Baw Shire Council.**

**The Meeting closed at 12 noon.**



