

MEMORANDUM

**Subject: Report on Austroads Safety Task Force Meeting & Workshop,
July 9th & 10th – Perth, Australia**

Purpose

To report on the bi-annual Austroads Task Force meeting and the subsequent workshop to determine future research needs.

Background

The Road Safety Task Force is a committee made up of a safety representative from all the Austroads partners plus other key stakeholders such as National Transport Commission (Aust) and ARRB. Its primary role is to guide/determine the direction of road safety research in Australasia. I represent Transit New Zealand on this Task Force, taking over from Dr Dennis Davis in 2005.

1. Task Force Meeting 9/7/07: Chaired by Phil Allen, South Australia

a) Technical Research (ARRB projects)

- Austroads Road Safety Series: Four parts have been completed, two parts are in draft and the final three parts have been scoped and will be prepared in 2007/08.
- Road Safety Engineering Risk Assessment project: Stage 5 has been completed. Final Stage 6 to be undertaken in 2007/08. Meeting to be held in September to discuss this project.
- Several other projects have been largely completed including Audit of Rest Areas against national guidelines.

b) Strategic Research (MUARC and others)

- A number of small research projects have been completed including another volume of the Road Safety Handbook.
- One project in particular, the “Balance Between Harm Reduction and Mobility in Setting Speed Limits” is struggling through difficulty in finding appropriate local authorities to trial the scheme although some progress may be being made in and around Perth.

c) PIARC Technical Report

- Phil Allen tabled his report on progress in regards to the Safety Audit and Safety Inspection Guidelines. These are now largely complete. These are aimed primarily at third world developing countries.
- A human factors guideline document has also been prepared.
- In future PIARC will have two safety task force groups: one focussing on infrastructure and the other on driver behaviour.

d) Knowledge Sharing

- It is important that research data is disseminated. In future all research proposals must have a knowledge sharing plan as part of the proposal.
- ARRB are undertaking road shows throughout Australia and New Zealand to disseminate their research findings. (Footnote: The New Zealand road shows were well advertised and attended in 3 New Zealand cities during August 2007)

e) OECD Committee Report

Iain Cameron, Western Australia, gave a verbal report.

Three pieces of work have been largely completed –

- Speed management
- Young drivers
- Achieving ambitious road safety targets (to be published by end of year)

f) Austroads Network Programme Manager Presentation by John Erceg

- There needs to be closer collaboration between Network Operations & Safety Task Forces.
- There is a lot of work going on in the field of co-operative vehicle/highway systems worldwide including Vehicle Infrastructure Integration (VII) in the USA, and Co-operative Vehicle Infrastructure Systems (CVIS) in Europe. These are an interface between the road and the vehicle for operation, including safety, such as minimum space between vehicles, speed limit messages etc. By say 2010-2012 there could be widescale launches of such systems within manufactured vehicles. Australia is protecting the 5.85 GHz to 5.95 GHz communications bandwidths for this purpose. (Not sure what New Zealand is doing in this regard.)

g) Intelligent Speed Adaptation System

- Main Roads (WA) demonstrated their trial ISA units. This is essentially a dashmounted PDA or LED unit in the vehicle, connected to an underdash black box GPS unit via blue tooth technology that receives and displays the speed limit the vehicle is operating in. When that speed limit is exceeded a warning beep and message is sent to the driver. Western Australia have purchased 50 such units and are targeting 6 month trials by selected, influencing groups such as politician and doctors for 6 month trials.
 - This is an interesting development and helpful with the range and variability in speed limits we now seem to be getting.
 - However it did take considerable effort to have all Perth's speed limits accurately mapped and entered into the GPS unit.
 - I believe that this is likely to be overtaken by the VII and CVIS programmes discussed in f) above.

2. Strategic Planning Meeting for Future Road Safety Research Needs (10/7/07)

Austrorads have an annual budget of around \$8 million. Approximately \$1.7-1.8M is typically allocated to the Road Safety area. Over the last 5 years a large proportion of this has been assigned to the Road Safety Engineering Risk Assessment Project (ARRB) however this is in its final year.

We need to determine the research needs for the next few years beyond that. Desirably we need a top down driven programme with some reasonably large scale projects as opposed to a programme of small projects developed bottom-up by research agencies.

A workshop to brainstorm future research needs was professionally facilitated by Mr Ron Kemp.

Projects need to align with the Austrorads Safety System approach and themes of network safety, road users, vehicle and infrastructure interaction and maintaining the Austrorads Guides.

Many good ideas were promoted, discussed and prioritised.

These are now being collated by Phil Allen and Jerome Claessen (WA) and will be discussed at a meeting later this year.