

# AUSTRALIA RURAL ROAD GROUP NEWSLETTER NO.1 APRIL 2011



**OUR OBJECTIVES, as adopted at ARRG's inaugural meeting in June 2010, are as follows:**

To secure new, on-going Government funding for the local rural road network, which is essential to support sustainable agriculture production for Australia;

To collate and disseminate data that will assist agriculturally productive Local Government areas in Australia to obtain funding for their local rural roads networks;

To work cooperatively with both industry and community bodies that recognise and support the importance of the local road network to the Australian economy and lifestyle.

TO DATE the ARRG has been very successful in raising the awareness of the urgent need for a better national rural road network. The ARRG has been extremely active in promoting the need for additional funding on our rural local road network.

## ***GOING NOWHERE* REPORT**

One of the Group's first tasks was to engage a Consultant, Mr Luke Fraser of Juturna Consulting, to prepare a position Report on the state of Australia's rural road network. This Report, entitled ***Going Nowhere*** was recently released. The Report can be downloaded by [\*\*\*clicking on this link.\*\*\*](#)

The Report outlines that money must be invested in local rural roads as a remedy to the rural local road crisis. This network – around 80% of Australia's total road length - is of course significantly under funded. This under funding lessens rural industry productivity by degrees and undermines road safety levels for rural communities; it also raises serious intergenerational equity issues: if the Federal Government does not look to address the decay of this network, future generations will be left with an even graver infrastructure burden to face in the decades ahead.

The report offers a real structural solution to this problem that requires comparatively little investment to implement: we advocate mandatory local government road asset reporting that once and for all would bring the true nature of the national local road condition and its funding gap to light, so that efficient investment decisions can begin to be made nationally to recover the situation.





## PREPRESENTATIONS AT CONFERENCES AND TO GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

This position Report has been used as the basis for representations made to the appropriate State and Federal Government Bodies in seeking additional local road network funding. The Group has made presentations at a range of conferences and made direct representations to a number of State and Federal Government Ministers and Senior Bureaucrats, including The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP (Minister for Infrastructure and Transport), The Hon. Simon Crean MP, (Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, Minister for the Arts), Mr Michael Deegan, Infrastructure Coordinator, Infrastructure Australia and The Hon Andrew Stoner MP, Shadow NSW Minister for Roads, Member for Oxley, Tony Windsor, Federal Member for New England and The Hon Richard Torbay, NSW State Member for Northern Tablelands.

## ARRG SPONSORSHIP PACK

The ARRG has also prepared a Sponsorship Pack. This Pack can be downloaded by [clicking on this link](#) (pdf 1.7MB) The Sponsorship Pack together with the *Going Nowhere* Report have been sent to many transport, freight, individual farmer federations, CWA, caravan, motorhome, campervan,

veterinary associations, rural livestock and grain agents, automobile clubs, roadside assistance bodies, supermarket chains, rural marketing groups, industry representative bodies etc.

## FEDERAL BUDGET SUBMISSION

As well the ARRG has submitted a 2011-2012 budget submission to the Federal Government. This request the Group believes is reasonable and will begin the process of redressing the many past years of under-investment in rural local roads. View the submission by [clicking on this link](#) (pdf 1.9MB)

## MEMBERSHIP EXTENDED

Initially the ARRG focused on the rural areas that were highly productive with over \$100 million of agricultural production in any one year. This smaller group of Councils was designed to give a focus to our cause and to highlight the economic importance of the rural local road network but as the Group has researched the issues involved the social importance of our rural road network added a wider dimension. Good quality rural local roads also play a vital role in the social wellbeing of the community allowing safe access to schools and travel in general. Therefore membership has now been extended to all rural local government bodies throughout Australia.



## UPCOMING FORUMS

The ARRГ will be conducting a Forum for its members in the near future in both NSW and Victoria with other Forums planned for Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia. Depending upon the level of interest, forums may also be held in Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

## VICTORIAN FORUM

**WHERE:** Wimmera Events Centre,  
37 Field Days Road,  
LONGERENONG via

HORSHAM 3400

**WHEN:** Friday 6th May 2011

**TIME:** 10.30am to 4.30pm

### ACCEPTANCES

before 2nd May to: Rhonda Deigan  
Phone: 03 5232 9458  
Rhonda.Deigan@colacotway.vic.gov.au

This forum will be the first ARRГ conference. The conference will be opened by the Victorian Minister for Transport, The Hon Terry Mulder MP.

### The draft program is:

10:30 – 11:00am	Registration
11:00 – 11:10am	Welcome and Housekeeping
11:10 – 11:30am	Official opening by Minister Terry Mulder
11:30 – 11:45am	John Coulton, ARRГ Chair
11:45 – 12:45pm	Luke Fraser, Juturna Consulting: Going Nowhere
12:45 – 1: 45pm	Lunch and Networking
1:45 – 2:15pm	Presentation - Case Study – Neil Allen / Adam Lehmann
2:15 – 2:45pm	Colac Otway Shire
2:45 – 3:15pm	TBA Presentation
3:15 – 3:45pm	TBA Presentation
	Discussion / Question Time
3:45pm	Cuppa and Networking
4:30pm	Close



## GWYDIR FORUM

**WHERE:** The Roxy Complex  
Maitland Street  
Bingara NSW

**WHEN:** Tuesday 7th June 2011

**TIME:** 2pm followed by a  
dinner

As a consequence of the ARRG meeting with Mr Michael Deegan, Infrastructure Coordinator of Infrastructure Australia, he has agreed to meet with local land owners and relevant industry

representatives from South East Queensland; New England and North West Region of New South Wales on Tuesday 7th June at the Roxy Theatre, Bingara.

For more details contact John Coulton, ARRG Chair or Max Eastcott, ARRG Secretary.

This will be a great opportunity for attendees to discuss issues directly with Mr Deegan and the General Manager of Policy, Infrastructure Australia, Mr John Austen.

Further information will be sent out in the next few weeks.

## FUTURE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

If your Council has a particular case study that you would like to share please **email** the details.



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