

AUSTRALIA RURAL ROAD GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO.2

MAY 2011



FORUM TO DISCUSS RURAL ROADS

An invitation is extended to all to a meeting in Bingara with Infrastructure Australia representatives, Mr Michael Deegan (Infrastructure Co-ordinator) and Mr John Austen (General Manager of Policy) which will discuss the importance of recognising rural local roads as an important component of our Nation's infrastructure.

The representatives of Infrastructure Australia will be touring the Moree Plains, and Gwydir Shires' areas, on the morning of Tuesday, 7th June giving them a first hand view of the challenges facing our rural communities due to insufficient investment in our local road infrastructure.

Following this tour, will be an open forum meeting at the Roxy Theatre, Maitland Street, Bingara. This meeting will allow attendees the opportunity

to put forward their stories, and illustrate how the deteriorating road network is directly impacting upon them, their shires, their families and businesses.

Details:

Where: Roxy Theatre, Maitland Street, Bingara
When: Tuesday 7th June 2011

Program:

1.00pm	Meet, greet and lunch
2.00pm	Open forum meeting with representatives
3.30pm	Afternoon tea
4.00pm	Open forum meeting continued
6.00pm	Courtyard barbecue dinner
7.30pm	Mr Michael Deegan, Infrastructure Co-ordinator Presentation and Questions & Answers session

If you would like to attend the meeting in Bingara please contact Kellie Gill at Gwydir Shire Council on 0267 242 021 or kgill@gwydir.nsw.gov.au.





ARTICLE COURTESY OF THE COLAC HERALD

Page 4 – The Colac Herald, Monday, May 9, 2011

Rural roads campaign has positive impacts

Rural Australia took an important step closer to more equitable roads funding on Friday.

About 30 council representatives from across Australia converged on Horsham for a meeting of the Australian Rural Roads Group, where Transport and Roads Minister Terry Mulder highlighted key aspects of the State Budget, which included \$160 million over four years for country roads and bridges.

Friday's meeting brought together likeminded coun-



MAYORAL MATTERS
Colac Otway Shire Mayor Brian Crook

cils which each produce more than \$100 million of agricultural product per year.

The Australian Rural Roads Lobby Group, of which Colac Otway Shire councillor Lyn Russell is a founding member, nominally represents 114 councils nationwide

which together produce \$18 billion in agricultural product annually – almost half of Australia's total output.

People travelled from as far as Gwydir, Griffith, Hindmarsh, Tatiara and Naracoorte councils, as well as all corners of Victoria for the meeting.

These councils are calling for state and federal governments to deliver a fairer funding model for roads, one that considers a road's productivity and value to the Australian economy.

Those at Friday's meeting recognised that we all share a similar challenge, which is large rural road networks and comparatively small ratepayer bases, with a limited ability to fund roads up to required standards.

Take Colac Otway Shire for example.

We have 1100 kilometres of unsealed and 550 kilometres of sealed roads to maintain, with a value of \$157.3 million.

We also have a \$152-million bridge network.

Colac Otway Shire Council, together with other members of the AARG, cannot expect our ratepayers to continue paying higher rates to keep up with our decaying road network.

Government funding for rural roads is not a subsidy – it is an investment which gives our nation a significant economic return.

Friday's meeting strengthened the ARRГ's resolve to seek reform on behalf of all rural communities, whose industries could be made more productive, and whose communities could be made safer by an improved approach to rural road investment.

[Click on this link to download a larger version of this report](#)

NSW ROADS CONGRESS

This week, representatives from the ARRГ attended the NSW Roads Congress which is organised by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (NSW Division). At this Congress, Chair John Coulton made a presentation about the ARRГ and our progress to date. These meetings are greatly raising the profile of the ARRГ, and strengthening funding opportunities and initiatives.

AUSTRALIAN RURAL ROAD GROUP INC

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