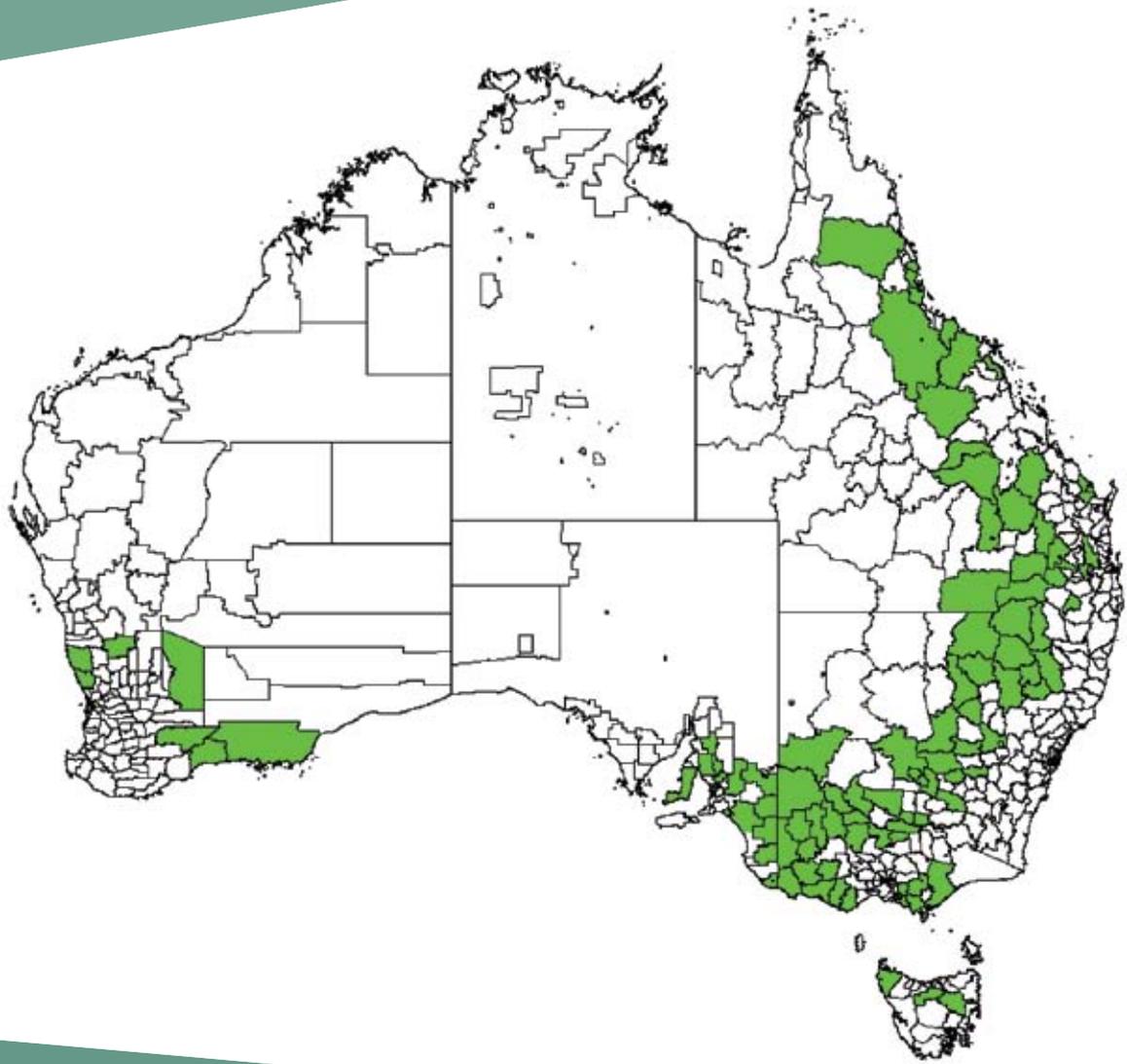




Can you help us get food and fibre to
Australian families and across the globe?

ARRG SPONSORS PACK



At the moment the weakest link
is the local rural road servicing the farm.

Australia Rural Road Group Inc

Who are we?

Council's from the nation's most productive rural areas have banded together and formed the Australia Rural Roads Group Inc (ARRG).

Together the nominal ARRG membership produced \$17.9 billion in gross value agricultural output in 2006 – 48% of Australia's total agricultural production.

The ARRG is an alliance of productive rural local governments seeking genuine reform to rural local road infrastructure.

The Chair of the Australia Rural Roads Group Cr John Coulton launched the Groups' position report recently, *Going Nowhere*, on the state of Australia's rural road network,

'Our members produce the bulk of the prime beef, lamb, pork, poultry, grains, fruit, fresh water fish, vegetables, dairy products consumed in Australia. Without doubt we produce the best agricultural products in the world and these high quality, fresh ingredients are grown ready for our tables'.

The farmers need all weather access roads so that they can shift their produce to markets ready for our plates. The 'food chain' of getting produce to the consumer is only as strong as the weakest link. At the moment the weakest link is the local rural road servicing the farm.

The map opposite shows the local government areas which make up the nominal membership of the ARRG. Each of these rural local government areas produced over \$100 million in annual agricultural product. All rely heavily on the state of their local roads for their ongoing productivity.



How has the problem come about, and how big is it?

The first kilometres of the 'produce journey' are from the farm to the connecting major arterial roads. These roads are local roads. Local roads are the responsibility of local government.

Historically, the expectations of local government services have grown. Local government is no longer simply: roads, rates and rubbish.

Higher levels of government have divested themselves of many services and functions; handing these responsibilities to local governments, most often without also providing the ongoing funding streams to meet these tasks.

This obviously places greater pressure on local government to continue to provide their existing and ever growing services.

Compounding this problem, is the fact that the more productive the land, the greater the cost to build a serviceable road due to soil types and the lack of good quality building material within easy access.

Funding roads is even harder when there are no ratepayers. Many local governments are responsible for maintenance of road networks in 'non rateable' areas, such as national parks.

It is estimated that the funding gap between what local government have available and what is needed is at least \$2.8 billion per annum*. This gap is staggering and will only continue to widen if left unaddressed.

*Based on ARRG extrapolation of detailed NSW-wide LGA road asset assessments in the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia's Road Asset Benchmarking Project (sample size > 20% of all LGAs nationwide)

Without significant intervention to improve the current structural arrangements, the productivity of Australia's local roads will continue to deteriorate, funding gaps will widen, road safety outcomes on local roads will continue to worsen, rural freight prices will rise and gradually, these road networks will start to make many rural communities unviable.



How can your organisation assist and help make a real difference?

Rather than just a corporate '*sponsorship*' arrangement, a long term partnership with the ARRG will benefit your entire organisation, and the wider Australian community.

Your organisation's staff and clients will be motivated and proud of their involvement because they will be directly ensuring that high quality Australian produce is delivered from the paddock to the family dinner plate, or export market, in the fastest and most effective manner.

The ARRG would welcome:

- **a financial contribution;**
- **pro bono work including research, media promotion, advice and system set out; or**
- **your organisation's assistance in raising awareness of the problem and the importance of the '*paddock to the plate*' concept.**

For your support you will have the privilege of displaying the ARRG logo on letterhead, website, circulars and any promotional packaging.

Your logo will also be incorporated onto the ARRG website, circulars, prominent display at ARRG functions and promotional packaging.

At all ARRG meetings and conferences your support will be acknowledged.

Your support and association with the ARRG will greatly enhance your image as a good corporate citizen and will directly benefit Australian families.



Why should your organisation support the ARRG?

The safety of road users

Rural Australia relies on the quality of their local roads not only to move their products efficiently, but also the people themselves safely. The road network provides social connectedness and day to day amenity. Rural communities could be made safer by an improved approach to rural local road investment.

Rural local roads are also being used more and more by travelling grey nomads, visitors and tourists. People want to discover outback Australia; however these drivers are not experienced in dealing with low quality roads. The ever deteriorating roads, coupled with long distance fatigue and wildlife hazards are contributing greatly to accidents.

Higher quality roads will promote safer driving and better accident survivability. According to research of the Monash Uni. Accident Research Centre: -

- **constructing roundabouts at rural intersections would reduce accidents by 70-80%; and**
- **removing roadside obstacles (trees, poles) reduces rural casualty accidents by 68%**

Investing in roads is an investment in productivity

Insufficient rural road investment has forced road authorities to limit the weight of transport and freight vehicles, to preserve a degraded road asset from further damage. This directly affects productivity, efficiencies and best practices.

Efficient investments in economic infrastructure like roads 'act just like technological progress...lower input costs mean lower total costs, which mean larger markets and further cost reductions'.



Strategic, logistic, accounting and management systems

Good asset management principles are not applied uniformly to roads nationally. The ARRG has established five key reforms for the better: THE ROAD AHEAD:

- 1. Mandate 10-year asset management plans for local governments**
- 2. Retain current local road funding programs as baseline**
- 3. Establish an Independent National Road Portfolio Manager**
- 4. Establish a National Rural Local Road Productivity Fund**
- 5. Build management skills and research capacity in roads**

Adopting some form of professional infrastructure asset management plan linked to an over-arching council financial plan is the best way for local government to better understand and manage road infrastructure

How will your financial contribution be used?

Every dollar received as sponsorship is allocated to the promotion of the aims of the ARRG:

- To secure new on-going Government funding for the local rural road network which is required to support sustainable agriculture production for our Nation. This will support National Food & Fibre security given our projected population growth demands;
- To collate and disseminate data that will assist the agriculturally productive Local Government areas in Australia to obtain funding for their local rural roads networks; and
- To work cooperatively with industry and community bodies that recognises and supports the importance of the local road network to the Australian economy and lifestyle.





Australian Rural Road Group Inc

An initiative of Gwydir Shire and Moree Plains Shire Councils GSC ABN 11 635 419 850

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AUSTRALIAN RURAL ROADS – DRIVING OUR FUTURE