

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT: NOW FOR THE HARD PART

The Australian Road Forum (ARF) has welcomed the Federal Government's \$20 billion commitment to the Building Australia Fund, announced in the May Budget.

ARF is also pleased to see that the Rudd Government remains committed to the \$22.3 billion AusLink 2 funding package announced in the 2007 Budget.

But with so much money on the table, the ARF says it's now critical that the right decisions are made about how it's spent.

"The immediate challenge for Infrastructure Australia (IA) is to ensure that the investment opportunities identified for funding are those that generate optimum economic benefits for Australia," says ARF President, Ray Fisher.

"At the same time, the road industry looks to IA to commit to a steady pipeline of work that will provide surety for the industry to forward plan and deliver the necessary resources to undertake these projects.

"Such a pipeline will be an important trigger for private and public investment in the skills that we so desperately need in this country.

"Any investment in infrastructure should go hand in hand with a serious commitment to investing in the whole range of skills to do with roads and road transport. This includes smart information technology, skilling for drivers and operators, and a more skilled and capable engineering industry.

"ARF is committed to working closely with the Rudd Government, its agencies and various state and local counterparts, to make the most of this wonderful opportunity to provide a land infrastructure network that will secure our future economic and social needs.



Ray Fisher...critical that the right decisions are made on infrastructure spending.

BOARD SEES GATEWAY PROGRESS CLOSE UP



Queensland Motorways hosted a visit by members of the ARF Board in February to inspect progress on the massive Gateway upgrade project in Brisbane. Board members are pictured at the Eagle Farm precast yard producing the concrete elements for the second Gateway Bridge, currently under construction by the Leighton Abigroup Joint Venture.

Like to find out MORE about ARF?

- Visit our website – www.roads.org.au or
- Call the Executive Director, Ian Webb, on (03) 9821 5255.

THE TOP PEOPLE COME BECAUSE THE TOP PEOPLE COME

One of the ARF's key roles is to facilitate opportunities for industry and government decision-makers to meet and talk.

Aside from major industry events like the six monthly Forums and the annual Roads Summit – each of which attract representatives from upwards of 70 or 80 organisations – the ARF hosts regular, members-only Boardroom lunches and dinners around Australia.

These exclusive functions provide an opportunity for 10 or 12 member representatives at a time to sit around the table with a Minister or Department head and discuss issues in a frank environment.

In the past 18 months, the ARF has organised and hosted such lunches and dinners with senior industry figures including:

- Eric Roozendaal, NSW Roads Minister
- Tim Pallas, Victorian Minister for Roads and Ports
- Warren Pitt, Qld Minister for Main Roads
- Howard Ronaldson, Secretary of the Victorian Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development
- Alan Tesch, Director-General of Qld Main Roads
- Menno Hennevel, Commissioner for Main Roads WA
- Jim Hallion, Chief Executive of the SA Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (and recent appointee to the Council of Infrastructure Australia)

In addition to these exclusive Boardroom functions, the ARF has also held larger lunch events with:

- Wal King, Chief Executive of Leighton Holdings
- Patrick Conlon, SA Minister for Roads
- Dr Ken Michael AC, Governor of WA and former Commissioner of Main Roads
- Gary Liddle, Chief Executive of VicRoads
- Martin Ferguson (at the time



The top people....just some of the participants at the last Forum meeting, held in Sydney in April.

Shadow Minister for Transport and Roads)

- Les Wielinga, Chief Executive of the NSW RTA

The next major ARF lunch is planned for Melbourne on August 5,

and will feature guest speaker Justin Madden, Victorian Minister for Planning.

New events are being planned by ARF all the time, so it pays to keep an eye on the website – www.roads.org.au

ARF LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

The ARF is moving to change its name to Roads Australia as it looks to play a more prominent role in roads policy development on the national stage.

An Extraordinary General Meeting was convened in Sydney in June to consider the name change.

ARF Chief Executive, Ian Webb, says the new name would better reflect the organisation's status as the national peak road transport stakeholder group.

"Australia is entering a critical phase in the development and renewal of our road infrastructure, and the ARF is well positioned to represent the road industry in the national debate," he says.



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"Our existing identity has served us well through the incredible period of membership expansion we've undergone in the past four years. Our new identity will launch us into the future as the industry peak body."

Mr Webb reiterated that the organisation would continue to do the things it does best, such as its six monthly Forums and regular member luncheons with Ministers and Department heads.