

QUEENSLAND'S VISION OUTLINED AT RECENT FORUM



Full house....the Brisbane Forum attracted some 150 road industry executives.

Participants at Roads Australia's September Forum in Brisbane were given a first-hand ministerial briefing on the role Main Roads is playing in helping to deliver the State Government's bold, long-term vision for Queensland.

Some 150 road industry leaders attended the Forum at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Forum speakers included the Director-General of Queensland Main Roads, Alan Tesch, and Main Roads Minister, Warren Pitt.

In his lunch address, Mr Pitt told attendees that Main Roads had a key role to play in helping to realise the Queensland Government's recently announced vision for the state for the next 10 years and beyond – Towards Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland.

He said the Department's record infrastructure program - \$16.2 billion between 2008-09 and 2012-13 – would contribute significantly to the strength of Queensland and its economy.

"Projects currently underway – such as the Ipswich Motorway upgrade, the Centenary Highway extension, the Gateway Motorway Upgrade and projects on the Sunshine Motorway – cater for both current and future growth," Mr Pitt said.

"One of the government's key strategic priorities is managing the impact of urban traffic growth.

"Of course, work in this area results not only in improved travel time reliability but also in reduced carbon emissions and improved lifestyles for commuters."

Mr Pitt also stressed the emphasis both he and the Department placed on the need to engage closely with stakeholders.



Participants at RA's Brisbane Forum, held in September....(foreground from left) Peter Walton, GM, Major Projects & Technical Services Group, Abigroup Contractors; Roads Australia President, Ray Fisher; David Stuart-Watt, Director – Licensing, Registration & Freight, Roads & Traffic Authority NSW; and (side-on) Tim Boyle, Chief Operating Officer - Global, Sinclair Knight Merz.

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



Queensland Main Roads Minister, Warren Pitt...committed to engaging with industry stakeholders to deliver the State's road infrastructure.

"With a roads program that has more than tripled over the last decade, Main Roads is well aware that it cannot undertake the task of delivering Queensland's road infrastructure by itself," he said.

"Relationships and links with key industry stakeholders help the department build capacity and...deliver road infrastructure more efficiently.

"Main Roads continues to refine the way it goes about its business through developing capabilities in alternative contracting methods – most notably alliancing and Early Contractor Involvement (ECI).

"Where alternative methods are seen to deliver the best results, Main Roads will use them."

Other speakers at the Brisbane Forum included Damon Roast from BIS Shrapnel, who delivered an economic outlook for the roads industry; and Michael Roth from the RACQ and Ian Bennetts from Brisbane City Council, who each provided key stakeholder perspectives.



Director-General of Queensland Main Roads, Alan Tesch, addresses Forum participants.

RA POLICY CHAPTERS FORGE AHEAD

Roads Australia's policy chapters on capacity, sustainability and congestion, successfully launched earlier this year, have attracted 95 members from most of RA's member companies.

Recently appointed Policy Director, Christine Keyes, says there will be a busy schedule of exclusive events for policy chapter members in 2009.

"In the next year Roads Australia will provide its members with the opportunity to work 'inside the tent' on policy development with governments and industry groups across the nation," she says.

"Roads Australia is working with road authorities to develop focus groups to allow industry input into policies, while they are being developed.

"The first of these workshops, to be hosted by the RTA in December, is already booked out."

In addition, Roads Australia will facilitate meetings with state and Federal



Christine Keyes, RA's new Policy Director.

government transport and roads ministers to discuss RA's policy agenda. Members in each state will have the opportunity to take part in these delegations.

Lunch meetings will also be organised for each policy chapter, featuring top quality local and international experts as guest speakers, in an accessible and relaxed environment.

Christine Keyes has worked in the roads and transport sector for 13 years, at the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA), Olympic Roads and Transport Authority (ORTA) and as a consultant. She rejoins Roads Australia as the Policy Director after working for RA as the first Media Director in 2006.

For more information on Roads Australia's policy chapters, contact Christine Keyes on 0405 249425 or christine@roads.org.au.

IRF FELLOWSHIP AN EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCE, SAYS GAVIN



Recently returned IRF Fellow, Gavin Soward (second from right), is congratulated by Director-General of Queensland Main Roads, Alan Tesch; Queensland Main Roads Minister, Warren Pitt; and Roads Australia President, Ray Fisher.

Australia's first International Road Federation (IRF) Fellow in 20 years, Gavin Soward, has recently returned from 12 months study in the United States.

Gavin, Principal Engineer, Road Surfacing with the Queensland Department of Main Roads, used his IRF Fellowship grant to undertake a Masters of Business (MBA) at the University of Florida.

The IRF Fellowship program provides study grants to engineers and other transportation professionals from around the world, with the aim of supporting the future generations charged with managing our road networks.

Gavin was nominated for his Fellowship by Roads Australia (the IRF's representative in Australia) and Queensland Main Roads. He describes the experience of studying in the United States as 'exceptional'.

"I chose the MBA program because it offered me the opportunity to broaden

my experiences away from engineering and be lectured by some of the best finance, organisational behavior, and marketing lecturer's from across the US," Gavin says.

"The MBA was extremely well organised and professional, and extremely challenging.

"Apart from the professionalism, what struck me most was the support the university had from it's Alumni. Successful Alumni would regularly drop in to discuss a range of business issues.

"In fact, during a finance lecture Mason Hawkins, a self-made billionaire who has being described as the Warren Buffet of mutual funds, flew in from Memphis for the day to talk to us about value investing."

In addition to his MBA studies, Gavin also participated in the IRF Executive Leadership program in Washington. The program consists of training seminars and meetings with US road industry leaders.

The 2008 Fellowship program included 24 Fellows from 19 countries and provided meeting opportunities with the US Federal Highway Administration, AASHTO, the World Bank, the Transportation Road Research Board, and a number of large consulting firms.

Gavin says a recurring theme in these meetings was road safety.

"Annually the US loses around 42,000 lives on their roads," he says.

"More staggering is the international statistic - with an estimated 1.2 million road deaths worldwide per annum.

"It was heartening to hear speakers from around the world point to Australia and New Zealand as leading the way in road safety. This is comforting but obviously we need to do more."

At Roads Australia's September Forum in Brisbane, Gavin publicly thanked the IRF, Roads Australia and Queensland Main Roads for their support of his Fellowship.

PREMIER BRUMBY WELCOMES ABIGROUP'S TRAINING COMMITMENT

Victorian Premier John Brumby has applauded Abigroup's commitment to industry training at the official opening of the company's new Learning and Operations Facility at Truganina in October.

"What Abigroup is doing here with its training and operations facility is a great example of leadership for the construction industry right across Australia," Mr Brumby told guests.

Not only does the new facility align with the Victorian Government's focus on increasing skill-based training, it also puts Abigroup in an enviable position and prepares it for the Australian Government's planned investment in infrastructure.

The facility is hailed by the company as unique in that it offers employees the ability to undertake formal training - in areas from civil construction to mining - and combine it with practical experience, all in the one place.

It's also a direct way of combating the crippling skills shortage that is seriously affecting the Australian construction industry.



Premier Brumby at the opening of Abigroup's new Learning and Operations Facility.... 'a great example of leadership for the construction industry...'



Abigroup Managing Director, Peter Brecht, looks on as Premier John Brumby tries out a simulator at the new Facility.

Abigroup's Southern Region General Manager, Rod Watson, warned that the whole industry would grind to a halt "...if we don't do something to address the skills shortage."

The Abigroup Learning and Operations Facility aims to train upwards of 1,000 people in its first year of operation. Currently, 35-45 employees are undertaking training each week, with plans to expand the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) courses around Australia.

The \$4 million facility was built and will be managed by Abigroup Contractors. The location of the facility is deliberate, maximising the growth of Melbourne's western industrial corridor and is in close proximity to existing Abigroup projects.

It is also well placed to take advantage of the outcomes of the anticipated report by Sir Rod Eddington that looks at Melbourne's western suburbs as a way to ease congestion in the city.