



Information Paper and Invitation for Submissions

May 2004

NSW Road Classification Review

1. What is the NSW Road Classification Review

The process of classifying roads is a mechanism used by the State Government to assist in the effective allocation of State Government road funds, and the allocation of road management responsibility between State and local government jurisdictions.

It identifies which roads are to be managed and funded by the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) because of their state arterial significance, and which Council managed roads are of sufficient regional significance to be eligible to receive state funding assistance grants towards their management.

A review of road classifications provides an opportunity to make adjustments at the network margins to ensure an up to date network that meets the social and economic needs of the community and industry, within the available levels of funding.

Councils and the RTA Regions are invited to make submissions proposing changes to the make up of the State and Regional Road networks.

2. Current Road Network and Management Arrangements

The RTA and Councils in NSW identify roads via a three tier hierarchy of State, Regional and Local Roads:

- State Roads are those roads with the greatest arterial significance to the State's commerce and industry. The Government funds and, through the RTA, manages State Roads and is accountable for the outcomes on these roads.
- Councils are accountable for Regional and Local Roads. The Government, through the RTA, contributes substantial funding assistance towards Councils' management of Regional Roads because of their sub arterial function as council managed roads of regional significance to industry and the community.
- Local roads provide for local access and circulation and are the responsibility of Councils with only limited funding assistance from the State Government.

This framework for managing and funding roads is as agreed between the State Government, the Local Government Association of NSW and the Shires Association of NSW following a detailed negotiation over the period from 1988 to 1995. That process included extensive road classification adjustments.

The existing State and Regional Roads are shown on the enclosed maps. More commentary is provided on road management arrangements in Appendix 2.

3. Functional Road Classification

The identification of State and Regional Roads is based on road function. Functional classification is the process by which roads are grouped into classes or systems according to their function or the character of the service they are intended to provide. Individual roads do not serve travel independently in any major way. Rather most travel involves movement through a network of roads. It becomes necessary then to encourage this travel to move within the network in a logical and efficient manner. Functional classification helps this process by defining the part that any particular road should play in serving the flow of trips through the network.

Functional classification can be used as a basis for allocating jurisdictional responsibility for roads. The primary, long distance, high traffic routes have strategic importance for the wider economy and by their nature are more expensive to construct and maintain. Central Governments acknowledge this by taking responsibility for the high order roads while lower order roads remain under responsibility of local councils.

The development of a strongly differentiated hierarchy of roads on a functional basis is essential to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency in the spending of road funds by the differing jurisdictions, support appropriate traffic management regimes and efficient traffic flow and promote road safety.

A generic hierarchy comprises freeways, primary arterial roads, secondary or sub arterial roads, collector roads and local access roads. The NSW, State, Regional and Local Road administrative system of road classification forms a hierarchy, which generally aligns to the model hierarchy as follows:

State Roads	Freeways and Primary Arterials
Regional Roads	Secondary or sub arterials
Local Roads	Collector and local access roads.

In addition, there are roads for which the State Government may take responsibility because the road serves a special purpose or function rather than because of its general arterial function. eg a major tourist access road within a National Park.

There are wide variations in the characteristics and magnitude of service provided by each of these basic functional categories and the way in which road authorities may chose to manage roads within these groups. Some general characteristics are discussed in Appendix 3. Consideration of these characteristics help determine the appropriate classification of a road.

4. Minister's Announcement

The Minister for Roads announced the classification review at the Shires Conference in June 2003.

Key points were that the review would:

- Be conducted by a panel with Local Government and RTA experience
- Reflect changes in the usage and importance of roads arising from changes in population and industry, and the construction of new roads
- Allow Councils to make a case for particular reclassifications
- Focus mainly on reclassifications between Regional Roads and Local Road Roads, but it may also identify some shifts between Regional Roads and State Roads, and
- Total funding for Regional Roads would remain about the same.

5. Panel Membership

The Government appointed three member Panel has extensive knowledge and experience in the areas of roads and local government. The Panel is:

Mr Mike Montgomery	Panel Chairman. Immediate Past President, NSW Shires Association; Councillor, Moree Plains Shire Council and President, Australian Local Government Association
Mr Steve Carmichael	President, NSW Division, Institution of Public Works Engineers Australia, and retired local government Engineering Services Director
Mr Lew Laing	Regional Manager, RTA Western Region.

6. Review Objective

The objective of the review is to identify additions to, and deletions from, the State and Regional Road network to ensure that the network is meeting the needs of the community and industry, within the available levels of funding.

The changes would take account of changes in the road's state or regional functional significance and importance, arising from changes in landuse, economic activity, population distribution, and the construction of new roads, and the resulting growth and change in traffic generation and distribution,

7. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference given to the Review Panel are:

Identify and recommend changes in road classification to assist in the effective allocation of available road funding and road management responsibilities so as to contribute to the best possible economic and social benefits to the community from the road network.

The review is to be undertaken within the current management and funding framework for State, Regional and Local Road and is to include:

- Classification criteria for urban and rural State and Regional Roads
- Identification and assessment of candidate roads for reclassification against the criteria
- The appropriateness of the urban/rural boundary
- A balanced distribution of road network density commensurate with the varying levels of economic activity across the State
- Prioritisation of recommended changes
- Process is to be consultative
- Distributive impacts of changes on Councils.

8. Related Issues outside the Scope of this Review

8.1 Funding Quantum

The scope of the review does not include consideration of any change in the overall quantum of funding for Regional and State Roads.

However, the review Panel will identify any distributional impacts of changes in road classification based on current funding levels and include this advice in its recommendations. The existing funding principles for Regional Roads will continue. This includes the provision of funding assistance via formula based block grants, specific grants under the REPAIR Program, and the Regional Roads Timber Bridge Program to commence in July 2006. Any changes in classification will be reflected in changed block grants as determined under the existing block grant formula.

8.2 Roads Act Review.

There are a number of issues relating to road classification and responsibility, which are proposed to be dealt with under a separate process to review the Roads Act 1993. These include:

- Changes to the Act to reflect the current State, Regional and Local Road framework, to replace the current legal classes of State Highway, Main Road and Secondary Road
- Clarification of the boundaries between RTA and council responsibilities on State Roads, including responsibility for various elements and activities in the road reserve.

These issues are outside the scope of the Road Classification Review.

8.3 Grain Lines Review.

A separate review of restricted country rail lines ("Grain Lines Review") has been conducted into the future of some country railway lines and associated changes in grain handling, storage and shipment. Membership of this Review Committee comprised State transport agencies, Local Government Associations, the Grain Handling and transport industry and farmers.

The road classification review is a separate process and issues raised by the Grains Line Review are outside the scope of the Road Classification Review.

8.4 Development Issues.

The Review does not include consideration of future potential road development or desirable road standards. The proposed changes in road classification are to be justifiable on the basis of current or committed usage at current service levels, not on the basis of potential usage if substantial investment was made.

9. Previous Reviews

In 1989 the then classified network comprising Freeways, State Highways, Main Roads, Secondary Roads and Tourist Roads was split into two broad management categories known as State and Regional Roads. This followed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Minister for Roads and Local Government. The aim of the split was to focus RTA on greater control of an expanded network of State Roads and rationalise administrative overlap with Councils in relation to the funding of other roads, including introduction of a Block Grant agreement covering Regional Roads.

Significant changes were made to road classifications in the former RTA Sydney Western Region in 1991 and in the former RTA Sydney Central Region in 1993. These reviews increased the Sydney network by over 50% (or over 1,000 km) with a net increase of 150 km of State Roads and 800 km of Regional Roads, when compared with the 1989 network.

A review of the rural network was initiated in 1993 and implemented in 1995 resulting in the net reduction in State and Regional Roads of around 2% or 750km.

A Sydney review was undertaken in 1995 using consultants Connell Wagner but no changes were implemented arising out of this study.

Prior to these reviews, the last major review of the NSW road network classification was in 1948.

10. Road Classification Criteria

The classification of roads will be based on road function and will be independent of funding.

The classification criteria for State and Regional Roads are attached at Appendix 1.

Interpretation of the criteria should recognise the wide variation in density of population and economic activity both across NSW and within the metropolitan area.

11. Consultative Process with Councils

The Panel met with Regional Consultative Groups of Councils during October – November to outline the Review Process and seek initial comments from Councils.

Councils are invited to make submissions regarding road classification (see section 14).

The Panel will assess the applications against the criteria and may undertake consultations as needed.

The Panel will then make an interim report available to Councils prioritizing proposed changes.

Councils and the RTA will have the opportunity to comment on the interim proposals.

The Panel will consider of these comments and undertake further discussions with individual and Council groups as needed.

The Panel will provide a dispute resolution process if required.

The Panel will then submit a recommended set of changes to the Minister for his consideration. This advice will include distributive impacts.

12. Timetable

May 04	Invite submissions
August 04	Closing date for submissions
Sep – Oct 04	Analysis of submissions
November 04	Panel issues preliminary findings
February 05	Panel initiates second round of meetings
May 05	Closing date for final submissions
July 05	Final recommendation to Minister.

13. Frequently Asked Questions

Councils raised a number of issues and questions at the initial round of consultations held with Council groups in October – November last year. Key issues are summarised in Appendix 4.

14. Invitation to Make Submissions-

The Panel invites Councils and RTA Regions to make submissions regarding road classification. The closing date for submissions is 31 August 2004.

The Panel welcomes joint submissions from Council groups.

15. Guidelines for Submissions

Submissions should detail:

- The characteristics of the road
- The functions served, and
- Demonstrate how the road meets the criteria for roads to be upgraded in classification or how the road no longer meets the criteria for roads to be downgraded in classification.

15.1 Characteristics of the road

- Name and number of road
- A location map clearly showing the route, and its relationship with freight and other traffic generators
- Total length of road, sealed and unsealed length, and length within each Council's area.
- Description of start and end points
- General description of the road's physical characteristics – pavement width, vertical and horizontal alignment, shoulders, pavement type and age, number of lanes, presence absence of shoulders
- Traffic flow information – AADT counts and or estimates, number and percentage of heavy vehicles, historical data for at least five years
- Minimum traffic count and its location
- The legal weight and design speed of the road and any weight or speed limits and dimensional constraints for heavy vehicles
- Vulnerability of the route to natural hazards and any possible consequences related to closure of the road
- Any environmental issues associated with the existing route

- Any social and/or cultural constraints
- How the road's overall standard compares with that of adjoining State or Regional Roads
- What enhancement, if any, of the road is required to cater for current usage.
- Views of adjoining Councils where the roads cross boundaries.

15.2 Functions served by the road

The following information, where relevant and available, should be provided:

- The role of the road in the regional context
- The main functions served by the route
- Main towns served by the road and their population
- Main services provided by the towns
- Main industries and traffic generators served
- How the road fits into any regional transport plan
- Origins and destinations including traffic generators, freight movement
- Size of traffic generators eg port tonnages
- Industrial, agricultural, forestry areas – main types and location of economic activities, the tonnages transported by road and their value if available. Likely continued activity levels or growth should be provided
- Tourist attractions, routes – annual numbers of visitors, origin of visitors, extent of associated commercial activities, proportion of cars and buses
- Intermodal facilities served including type of freight, main road-based origins/destinations, “usual” main routes used to transport freight to or from the intermodal facility
- Split between road based and other transport modes where applicable.
- Composition of the traffic (indication of the proportion of traffic between local, interregional, heavy commercial vehicles, tourist traffic etc).

15.3 How does the road meet the criteria?

The submission should demonstrate how the road meets the road classification criteria, or how it no longer meets criteria, including,

- How the route serves as a functionally important connecting route
- How the route fulfils the criteria of being the most convenient efficient and safe route for through traffic.

Submissions may include roads within the local or regional area that might be proposed as tradeoffs given that the review is to be neutral overall.

15.4 Parallel or alternative routes

In rural areas, parallel routes are to be avoided but there may be cases where two routes serving the same two locations may be justified because they meet very different traffic needs. If proposals would result in parallel routes, then the submission should indicate for the two routes:

- The differing nature of the functions performed
- Traffic counts, origin and destination information and traffic composition
- Travel times for different vehicle types
- Safety issues
- Speed, weight and dimensional restrictions
- Closure consequences and vulnerability to natural hazards (eg flooding, slips)

- Any other relevant issues (eg congestion, community concerns, environmental issues).

15.5 Urban routes

Submissions relating to urban routes should also describe how any proposed route would contribute to the efficient traffic management on the State and Regional network in the urban area, and should also including comment on congestion, traffic flow, variations in flows throughout the day as well as impacts on amenity and on traffic flow on the adjoining State and Regional Roads.

Proposals for parallel routes in urban areas should demonstrate how a supplementary route functions as a traffic relief route, including comment on the amount and type of traffic, congestion, amenity and vehicle dimension issues.

15.6 Proposed State Roads

If the road is being proposed as a State Road, additional information is required as follows

- Description of the structure of the road including geometry, number of lanes, presence/absence of shoulders, pavement age
- Current maintenance regime and costs
- Information on incidence and severity of road crashes and any other safety related issues.

16. Where to send Submissions

Two paper copies, including maps, plus an electronic copy (either CD or email) should be forwarded by the closing date of 31 August 2004.

Electronic documents should be a MS Word or PDF file format.

Send paper copies to:

Road Classification Review Panel
Road Network Infrastructure Directorate
Roads and Traffic Authority
Box K198
Haymarket NSW 1238

Send electronic copies to:

Road_Review_Panel@rta.nsw.gov.au

17. Contacts

General enquiries may be directed to:

Steve Baker
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Appendix 1

Road Classification Guidelines

These guidelines provide Criteria for the selection of State and Regional Roads.

The guidelines are descriptive only. More detailed Criteria are not appropriate nor necessary because:

- There are wide variations in population density, landuse, topography, growth rates etc across NSW
- There is no absolutely rigorous method for classifying roads at the interface between classes.

State Roads

(For the purpose of these guidelines, National Highways will be considered part of the State Road network. The National Highway network is selected by the Federal Government in consultation with the State and Local Government. National Highways comprise the principal connections between Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane.)

It is envisaged that the State Road network will be managed in a way that the roads will generally exhibit the following characteristics:

- Form a critical network link - closure to through traffic is not an option
- Priority to safety and efficiency of through traffic movement
- High flows of general traffic over long distances and high capacity relative to surrounding roads
- Continuous and regularly spaced in relation to traffic generating density
- Access to property and on street parking restricted as far as practicable
- Access available to all general access vehicle types as far as practicable.

Definition

The State Road network (including the National Highways) is formed by the primary network of principal traffic carrying and linking routes for the movement of people and goods within the urban centres of Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and Central Coast, and throughout the State.

Criteria

A road may be a State Road if its primary function meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. **Links major commercial, industrial and residential areas and distribution centres and ports within the Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and Central Coast urban centres**

- Urban centres as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and
- Primary through traffic route carrying significant volumes of traffic, or
- Major public transport corridor, or
- Major freight corridors, or
- Connection between major rural arterials and major ports, freight terminals and distribution centres, or
- Significant and essential supplementary route for through traffic parallel to a primary route as defined by the above, in critical, strategic locations only.

2a. **Links major NSW towns with Sydney, Newcastle, Central Coast and Wollongong**

2b. **Links these major NSW towns with each other where there is significant interaction.**

- Major towns population generally in the range 10,000 to 100,000 but may include slightly smaller centres which provide a wide range of commercial, community and administrative functions to an extensive hinterland and
- Primary route exhibiting best operational features and an intention to manage as the major route, and
- Significant economic and social interaction exhibited:
- Generally minimum AADT greater than 1000, or at least greater than 500 and growing at a faster rate than on surrounding roads.
- May include cross border links to interstate major centres.

3. **Links major regions throughout the State with each other**

- Provides a long distance connection between regions not already provided for in the network defined by the above criteria or "missing links" that complete long distance connections between the network already defined by the above, and
- Sustains a high flow of general traffic (generally AADT greater than 500) over long distances (100km), or
- Significant long distance freight or coach route.
- May include cross border links to interstate regions.

Regional Roads

Definition:

Regional Roads comprise the secondary network which together with State Roads provide for travel between smaller towns and districts and perform a sub arterial function within major urban centres.

Criteria:

A road may be a Regional Road if its primary function meets at least one of the following Criteria:

- **Links** smaller towns with the State Road network
- **Connects** smaller towns with each other
- **Performs** a sub arterial function in major urban centres by:
 - **Supplementing** the State Road network for significant intra-urban flows
 - **Providing** access for significant flows to other commercial and industrial centres
- **Provides** access from the State Road network to major recreation and tourist areas of State significance
- **Provides** a town or suburban centre relief route for significant flows of through traffic, especially freight vehicles
- **Provides** access for significant flows of freight vehicles to major rural intermodal interchanges and urban distribution areas.

Additional Tests for Regional Roads

The following tests can be applied to help consider whether the road should be a Regional Road.

Potentially a Regional Road if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Forms the main regional link between population centres either directly or form part of the main route joining such centres
- Forms the main regional link between secondary suburban either directly or form part of the main route joining such centres
- Provides necessary connectivity between State Roads in urban areas
- Joins smaller service towns to their higher order economic and social regional centre
- Has significance for more than one Local Government Area
- If not otherwise connecting centres, functions as a collector road to a service town serving an extensive catchment area
- Carries a steady to increasing traffic volume with some potential for future growth
- Is an important route for significant flows of freight vehicles especially relative short haul farm to market/ transport intermodal interchanges
- Provides access for secondary flows of urban public transport to major transport interchanges
- Carries a minimum AADT that is similar to surrounding main roads
- Is a main route performing the functions of closed railway line
- Provides a relief route for significant flows of through traffic, especially for heavy vehicles wishing to bypass a busy town or suburban centre.

Potentially NOT a Regional Road if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Closely parallels a State Road or another Regional Road which performs a similar function. Thus in rural areas where capacity is not a problem, arguments that a road relieves an existing declared road normally are not valid
- Carries a non substantial, steady to declining traffic volume with little prospect for future growth
- Is a short spur road wholly within one LGA
- Is a short spur road to a local tourist feature (as distinct from a tourist area of regional significance)
- Is a short spur road to a low throughput wharf, railway or other facility which is of local rather than regional significance
- Functions more as a local access road and acts as a minor collector serving a small catchment area with volumes steadily decreasing along the length of the road
- Overservices an area where landuse has become less intensive and products have reduced time sensitivity (eg dairying) and rural populations have fallen
- Has no significant development requirements in the foreseeable future.

Guideline Examples for Regional Roads

- Two rural roads connect two important centres. The longer route has half the traffic of the shorter route. The shorter route is the main link between the centres. The shorter road should be the Regional Road and the longer road should be a Local Road.
- A rural road provides access to the abutting agricultural land but is not a direct link between important towns. The traffic is mainly related to abutting land. The road does not function as an arterial and should not be a regional road.

- Two roads connect major rural service towns. The shorter route carries significant commercial traffic volume. The longer route also provides access to several important towns but carries a less commercial vehicle content. Both roads are arterials and should be State Roads and Regional Roads respectively.
- Spur roads to coastal towns -roads to centres containing major industry or administrative facilities or carrying traffic with high economic value could be considered Regional Roads. Roads carrying mainly light traffic to small dormitory areas or small holiday centres with permanent populations less than around 2000 should be generally considered as local roads. Distance of the centre from the arterial road will be a factor. Short distances are associated with short trip duration and length thus reinforcing the local nature of the road. Where the distance to the coastal centre from the arterial is long and greater than the distance along the main bypassing arterial road to the next important centre, the connecting road may become more significant in its own right and could be considered arterial.
- Low order service centres with populations less than 2000, containing no major industry or administrative facilities and not otherwise on a State or Regional Road are viewed as local traffic generators and hence links from these centres to a bypassing arterial road will be considered as Local Roads.
- Roads in country towns – Roads selected as State or Regional Roads in country towns with populations less than 15,000 will usually be continuations of arterial routes connecting neighbouring towns. However the question of the desired future for town shopping streets which are also the main arterial and bypassing routes especially for heavy vehicles must be considered.

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Commentary on Criteria for Urban Areas

This Commentary is intended for use as a supporting guide in interpreting the Criteria for Classification of State and Regional Roads in Urban Areas where the classification may not be clear cut. The Commentary is based on a study conducted by Connell Wagner P/L in 1995 for the RTA in consultation with councils in the RTA's Sydney Region.

It is NOT intended that this Commentary take the place of those Criteria as the final determination of the classification of a road is based on an assessment of the road's overall functions and not on the application of numerical "warrants".

Consideration should also be given to the special circumstances which arise for roads on the Urban Fringe which may have characteristics of rural roads and could be considered under Rural Criteria.

Road Functions.

The Connell Wagner study identified five principle functions of the classified road network.

1. "Goods and Services" describes the movement of goods and services including freight, government, business to business and business to consumer travel.
2. "Mobility" describes the movement of individuals including both drivers and passengers for the journey to and from work, for social and recreational travel.
3. "Public Transport" describes the use of public roads by buses, light rail and other public transport modes.
4. "Tourism" describes the use of roads to access tourist and recreational facilities.
5. "Community" describes the use of roads by the public for access to private property, as pedestrian space and parts of precincts that are dominated by residential, recreational and retail uses.

The relative importance of the above functions (in decreasing order from the top of each column) as identified by the Connell Wagner Study were:

STATE	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Goods & Services	Mobility	Community
Mobility	Goods & Services	Mobility
Public Transport	Public Transport	Public Transport
Tourism	Community	Tourism
Community	Tourism	Goods & Services

Definitions - The Connell Wagner study used the following definitions:

State Roads - those **arterial** roads which:

- provide for vital or major movements of goods and services, people and public transport
- are essential to network performance and
- provide those functions to centres of regional economic or social significance and which
- are central to overriding State Government responsibilities.

Regional Roads - those **sub-arterial** roads which:

- provide for medium level movements of people, goods and services and public transport
- support and link State Roads and
- provide those functions to centres of local economic or social significance.

Local Roads – those **other roads** whose primary purpose is:

- to provide for local circulation and access to property
- to provide connection to the State and Regional Roads and
- to support the living environment in which they are located.

The table below gives further guidance by quantifying the spread of the five (5) major functions identified above for each road classification. As indicated above the numerical values are not intended to be used to determine a warrant for each classification.

Function/ Criteria	STATE	REGIONAL	LOCAL
Goods and Services			
	Between ports & terminals	From State Roads to ports & terminals	N/A
	Serving Primary CBD and Secondary (Regional) industrial & commercial centres	Serving Regional, Industrial and commercial centres	Serving local or neighbourhood facilities
Indicative Heavy vehicle Volume	> 1,500 hvpd	500-1,500 hvpd	< 500 hvpd
Mobility			
General			
Indicative AADT (vpd)	> 25,000	15,000– 25,000	< 15,000
	Essential, External connections to communities >10,000	Essential, External connections to communities >2,000	Other roads
Network Connectivity	Principal Links	Secondary Links	Other
Indicative Journey to work Trip km (2hr) (trip km)	> 100,000	10,000-100,000	< 10,000
Indicative AM Peak (2hr) (veh/hr)	> 1,000	500-1,000	< 500
	Major or Essential Route	Supports State Road	Access to State or Regional Rd
Public Transport			
	Major Routes	Feeder Services	Local Pick Ups
Indicative Route Length	> 10 kms	5-10kms	< 5kms
Indicative Buses/peak hr	> 15/hr	5-15/hr	Other
Indicative Daily Services	> 150	> 50	Other
Tourism / Recreation Travel			
	Access to Major Tourist Regions	Access to Major Attractions	Access to Minor Attractions
	National Parks	Regional Parks	Other
Indicative Spectator capacity	Major Sport Venue >20,000	Regional Sport Venue > 10,000	Other
Community			
Traffic generation (veh/day)	Inter-urban, Inter Community >10,000	Intraregional Inter-community >2,000	Intra Community Precinct >2,000

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Appendix 2

Current NSW Road Management Arrangements

Road management in NSW provides for three categories of road: State, Regional and Local.

State Roads

- Comprise about 17,600 km of major arterial links throughout the state and within major urban areas
- Responsibility of the RTA to fund and determine priorities and capitalised as an RTA asset
- Includes roads classified under the Roads Act 1993 as Freeways, State Highways and important Main Roads
- About 3,100 km are designated as National Highways funded by the Federal Government which also funds some specific works on Federally designated Roads of National Importance
- State Roads are maintained under contracts. RTA Road Services maintain about 50% of State Roads, Councils maintain about 45%. Private contractors maintain about 5%
- While, councils are the owners and roads authority for State Roads other than Freeways. The RTA exercises roads authority functions to the extent necessary for the functioning of the road as a State Road. Councils generally retain responsibility for the road reserve and footpaths.

Regional Roads

- Comprise about 18,400 km of routes of secondary importance between State Roads and Local Roads
- Responsibility of Councils to fund, determine priorities and carry out works and capitalised as a council asset
- Include roads classified under the Roads Act 1993 as Secondary Roads and the less significant Main Roads plus many roads not classified under the Roads Act.
- Eligible for funding assistance from the State Government in recognition of their relative importance. This funding assistance includes an identified Regional Road funding pool
- Each council receives a formula based Block Grant for use according to Council's priorities. The formula takes into account length and traffic, and, in the country, timber bridges. The grant also includes a formula determined component towards the cost of traffic facilities on both Regional and Local Roads
- From 2000/01 the Block Grant payment includes an "ex 3X3" component which provides an equivalent level of funding to that which each Council received under the former 3X3 Council Determined Program. Councils can apply these funds to Regional Roads according to their priorities
- Councils can access a 50% contribution for specific works under the REPAIR Program. Projects are prioritised by consultative committees of local councils
- From 2006/07, a new, seven year, Regional Road Timber Bridge Program will provide 50% contribution towards the cost of upgrading all Council managed timber bridges on Regional Roads.

Local Roads

- Comprise the remaining 142,900 km of Council controlled roads which provide for local circulation and access
- Responsibility of Councils to fund, determine priorities and carry out works
- The State Government provides only limited assistance under special programs eg Urban Bus Routes.

Federal Road funding to Councils

- The Federal Government has a long standing role in providing road funding to councils. It provides annual financial assistance grants to councils that include a significant identified roads component based on local road length and population. In 2000, the Federal Government introduced the Roads to Recovery Program to provide additional road funds to councils. Councils have discretion to use their Federal funds for works on any category of road.

The State Government provides additional funding to councils including:

- **Road Safety and Traffic Management** – specific grants for safety and traffic works on Regional and Local Roads. Where projects are initiated by councils, including development and implementation of council bicycle plans, funding is available on a dollar for dollar basis. Projects initiated by the State are funded 100%.

- **Traffic Route Lighting Subsidy Scheme** – which subsidises Councils for providing street lighting to a higher than normal level on important traffic routes.
- **Natural Disasters** – restoration funding for Regional and Local Roads damaged in declared events.

The RTA is also responsible for:

- 188 State Asset Bridges and ferries on Regional and Local Roads. These assets historically have been managed by the State in view of their significance
- About 2,900 km of Regional and Local Roads in the unincorporated area of NSW where there is no Council.

There are other roads in NSW which are the responsibility of agencies other than Councils and the RTA. These include crown roads (responsibility of the Minister for Lands), and roads managed by State Forests, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Sydney Foreshore Authority.

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Appendix 3

Road Functional Characteristics

There are wide variations in the characteristics and magnitude of service provided by each of the basic functional categories of roads, and in the way in which road authorities may choose to manage roads within these groups. Some general characteristics are:

1. Travel patterns

Roads of higher classification should cater for statewide and regional traffic movements over relatively long distances. Lower order classifications should cater for local traffic movements over shorter distances and access to abutting property including the access leg to property for long distance trips.

2. Connectivity

The road network functions more effectively if it is connected in a hierarchical fashion. That is, roads should be desirably connected to other roads with the same or similar functions.

3. Through commercial traffic

Long distance commercial vehicle operation should desirably occur on roads of higher classification and be discouraged on local roads.

4. Relative traffic usage

Roads of higher classification being the principal routes between traffic generating centres should have higher traffic usage relative to roads of a lower traffic usage in that region, taking account of urban and rural differences.

5. Frontage access

Direct access from adjoining properties to roads of higher classification should desirably be limited in recognition of their through traffic function and for traffic safety and flow reasons. Due to historical development some major roads in urban areas, may not currently exhibit this characteristic. Planning policies may nevertheless be directed toward this goal in the longer term.

6. Side road connections

Roads of higher classification should have limited side road connections. They may be grade separated or be controlled at grade by traffic lights. Lower classes of road may be controlled at grade by regulatory signs, or Local Area Traffic Management devices.

7. Route capacity

Roads of a higher classification may tend to be higher capacity routes with relatively higher operating speeds and traffic volumes, and with additional capacity to facilitate traffic flow such as climbing and passing lanes, and intersection turn bays. Lower classes may tend to have lower capacities with lower operating speeds and traffic volumes.

8. Travel speed

Roads of higher classification with their emphasis on long distance travel, should also tend to have relatively higher travel speeds.

9. Pedestrian/cyclist provision

Roads of higher classification should desirably provide for separate pedestrian/cyclist facilities, while lower classes of roads may not have any special provision for cyclists.

10. Parking

Roads of higher classification should desirably prohibit parking, and provide for clearway conditions while lower classes of road may provide for kerbside parking.

11. Cross section type

Roads of higher classification should desirably be divided 4-6 lane roads, ranging through to 2 lane undivided for lower classes of road. This criterion is related to route capacity as well as manoeuvrability of heavy vehicles.

12. Bus routes

Roads of higher classification should cater for major bus movements including express buses. Lower classes of road should cater more for local bus operations.

13. Vehicle priority

Roads of higher classification are likely to provide priority capacity for particular uses by way of bus lanes, truck lanes or transit lanes. Lower road classes would generally provide for mixed traffic.

14. Network spacing

The spacing of roads in the hierarchy will normally relate directly the density of economic activity occurring in the area. Roads of higher classification will be spaced more widely apart than the lower road classes.

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Appendix 4

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are positive benefits and outcomes expected from the review?

The Panel expects only marginal net change to the road network, given that the 1995 review was quite extensive and resolved many long standing classification issues. The philosophy underlying road classification is that State Government funds are directed towards the most important roads. The benefits of the review therefore are expected to be that the states funding is targeted at the most important network of roads of State and Regional significance and therefore maximises benefits to the community and industry. At the local level however, there are likely to be winners and losers and that is why the Government has established an independent process. The Panel's task is an equitable distribution of the network based on function. Given that the overall funding level is outside the scope, the review will result in a more effective allocation of resources by a redistribution of available funding to the most appropriate sets of roads.

2. What will be the impact on the overall level of funding for councils?

In announcing the Review at the Shires Conference, the Minister indicated that total funding for Regional Roads will remain "about the same". The overall level of funding is outside the Panel's terms of reference and will be a matter for the Government. However, the terms of reference do require the Panel to identify funding impacts on individual councils of any change in road classification.

3. Can proposals relating to State Roads be made or is the review only looking at Regional Roads?

The review will consider both State and Regional roads but the focus will be on Regional Roads. Of the total length of roads that changed classification in the 1995 rural review, around 15% involved State Roads.

4. Can proposals be made to reverse classification changes made in 1995?

Any road may be put forward for consideration, providing a supporting case is made.

5. Is there any target level of reductions or increases in the network and what is the impact on funding?

The Panel has no preconceived target other than it is expected that there will be marginal net change. The actual changes will depend on the final assessment of potential additions and deletions on their merits. The Panel understands that there are a number of potential additions that councils will seek. The Panel will also be looking to identify roads that no longer meet the criteria. If there is a net increase in length of Regional Road then, in the absence of additional funds, the existing funding will be spread more thinly. A consequence will be that a council that has no change in its road network may receive some reduction in its funding.

6. Will a road receive more funds if a road moves from Regional to State

Not necessarily. Each State Road competes with all other State Roads on a priority basis across the state. A low priority State Road may receive less funding than a high priority Regional Road that is given high priority by council.

7. What will be the impact on single invitation maintenance contracts where reclassification involves a State Road?

Where a road is reclassified from State Road and council maintains the road under SIMC, the road would be withdrawn from the contract, and council would receive additional funding under the Regional Road block grant formula. This may be more or less than what the road is currently receiving via the SIMC.

Where a road is reclassified to State Road, maintenance of the road under a SIMC would be negotiated with a suitable service provider.

8. Are councils expected to defend their existing networks?

Councils are advised to justify their existing network

Even if a Council does not propose any change in its network, it is advised to make a submission justifying its current network, particularly any roads that may be considered marginal. There is a possibility that the classification of roads in one council area could be challenged by other councils or the RTA. Depending on the overall level of potential changes, the Panel may also need to look at balancing the network across a wider Region and the State, including deletions not proposed by councils or the RTA.

Once the Panel has released its initial report on potential changes, councils will have a further opportunity to comment on any changes proposed within their area.

9. How will the Panel determine which roads to recommend for reclassification?

The Panel will consider council and RTA submissions and assess the case for each road against the classification criteria. The Panel will also take account of processes that involve councils in other ways. This will depend on how councils want to participate in the process. Some councils wishing to add roads may propose a swap of another road to be deleted. This second road might be in the same councils area or a nearby councils' area.

10. Will any classification changes be put in place prior to the outcome of the Review in 2005?

That will be a matter for the RTA and Government. Project specific changes where immediate and obvious adjustment to classifications is necessary following completion of new road construction will continue to be made.

Any other general changes in classification sought by councils in recent years should be resubmitted under the current review process.

11. Will council be required to collectively consider proposals as occurred in the previous rural review?

The criteria recognise the variations in levels of activity across the State and the need to balance that. Local evaluation can help in this process and the Panel will consider both peer review and discussions with individual councils to help resolve this. The Panel will be happy to take feedback on how best to enable councils to input as groups. However, in the end, it is the Panel that is required to make a recommendation to the Government. Some councils may wish to discuss a coordinated regional view before making their submissions.

In making a final resolution, the Panel is required to balance needs across the State. There may be need for local evaluation and the Panel request local council groups to provide a common view to the Panel.

12. Will traffic counts and seasonal freight flows be taken in to account?

There are no absolute traffic criteria. The classification process recognises the variations in levels of economic activity and traffic across the state such that the most functionally important roads in the west carry relatively low volumes compared with roads that are local in function and carry significantly higher flows in densely populated areas.

Traffic usage is only one of many factors to consider. For example, it is not just a question of absolute numbers but also the type of traffic and function, its origin and destination, its volume relative to surrounding roads, and the size of traffic generating activities in the area.

In regard to seasonal flows, the Panel will not make any decision in isolation and will discuss these with councils and RTA Regional Managers to gain an understanding of the nature of the flows and their fluctuations throughout the State and will consider the relativity of these flows against the more stable flows on established routes.

13. How will the growth in some areas of the State be balanced against other areas where there has been less growth?

The Panel is required to balance the distribution. In assessing new roads regard will be had for the extent and type of roads classified in other comparable areas. The Panel may seek group input and peer review to resolve some of these issues. A number of additional spur roads to coastal towns were included as Regional Roads as a result of the last review. This overcame a backlog of demand built up over many years during which the network had not been reviewed.

14. Will there be transition in implementation any financial changes arising from reclassifications as occurred following the 1995 Review?

Transitional arrangements are outside the Panel's brief and would be a matter for the Government. The Panel's brief requires it to identify potential impacts and prioritise proposals. The Panel acknowledges that some transitional

arrangement would be a sensible approach and it is understood that the 1995 transitional arrangements were well received.

15. Will the Block Grant formula change as a result of reclassifications?

The formula will not change as a result of the classification review. Any changes in classification will be reflected in changed block grant amounts as determined by the formula. Any review of the structure of the formula is a matter for the Government.

16. What will be the process for making the final determinations?

The Panel will publish its initial proposals and then take comments and discuss these further with affected councils, individually and on a group basis as needed.

The Panel will then make a final report recommending changes for the Government's consideration.

17. Will there be an appeals process?

The process provides for an appeals process if necessary. Any such process has yet to be determined. One option is that the Panel's second report will provide for appeals.

18. Why does the Panel appear to have a "rural" flavour?

The Government has chosen the Panel members for their individual experience and knowledge of roads and local government issues and their ability to work through the issues with Local Government. The Panel will, as necessary, consult with and take advice from individual councils, council groups and the RTA throughout the State.

19. What account will be taken of the Grain Lines Review

The Grain Lines Review is outside the Panel's brief. The Panel can only deal with any road classification issues which might arise from the Review. Councils are free to highlight the issues and potential impacts in their submissions. The Panel may or may not be in a position to take those into account. Furthermore, the implementation of either review will be a matter for the Government, so it is up to councils to foreshadow potential impacts.

20. Auslink is proposing a funding category of Roads of Regional Significance. Is there any attempt to correlate with these roads, and how might this impact?

Until the Federal Government announces its Auslink package, the concept of Roads of Regional Significance remains blurred. The Panel's view is that in NSW the Regional Roads are Roads of Regional Significance. Councils may wish to flag in their submissions what they see as Roads of Regional Significance under Auslink but do not meet Regional Road criteria. It may be that some Roads of Regional Significance are already State Roads.

21. What is the impact of council amalgamations?

The classification of roads is not impacted by amalgamations. The timing of the review process however, takes into account the timing of council elections. The closing date for submissions has been set to late August 2004 to allow new councils elected in the 2004 elections to have input into the submissions.

The elections and amalgamations may be disruptive and the Panel will remain flexible to try to accommodate this. The Panel will consider requests for extra time if there are particular concerns about the timing of the elections and the closing date for submissions. However, the closing date in such cases will not be extended indefinitely. If council is not proposing any changes, then the timing should not be a major issue.

22. Should councils seek public comments on proposed road classification changes?

The Panel is inviting submissions from councils and the RTA. Seeking of any public comment would be a matter for councils.

23. Regarding the Regional Road Timber Bridge Program (RRTBP), what will happen to a timber bridge if the road changes classification?

It is expected that where a Regional Road containing an eligible timber bridge becomes a Local Road, that bridge would remain eligible for assistance under the RRTBP. If a road containing a timber bridge moves from Local to Regional Road, there is no commitment to fund the bridge under the RRTBP.

24. There is an issue of other agencies such as State Forests using council roads. Will the Review consider the issue of having other agencies such as State Forests contributing to the roads they use?

This is outside the scope of the review. Councils are able to submit roads on the basis of their timber haulage for consideration by the Panel. It is understood that a number of councils are seeking contributions from other agencies that make use of council roads. The Roads Minister has said on a number of occasions that it is a matter for the other agencies using council roads to be making contributions to councils.

25. Will the Panel take into account amenity issues on urban roads.

The Panel's role is to assess roads on the basis of their functional importance taking account of council submissions and advice from council groups. How individual State or Regional Roads are managed to deal with amenity issues such as traffic noise is a matter for road management guidelines. For example, it is expected that State Roads and Regional Roads will, generally, be available to all general access heavy vehicles.

26. Will roads being reclassified be brought up to standard before they are reclassified?

This will be a matter for the implementation process. It is not expected that there will be any requirement for councils to bring roads up to standard before they are reclassified upwards nor for the RTA to bring a road up to a standard before it is reclassified downwards.

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