



NEWSLETTER

4th Quarter 2006 Edition

INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND SECTION INC

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

What an exciting period of time we are currently experiencing in the world of transportation. The immediate future is looking very busy for traffic engineers, transport planners and public transport professionals across most geographic areas in our region of Australia and New Zealand as well as the rest of the world.

In Melbourne the release of the Meeting Our Transport Challenges (MOTC) document as part of the Transport and Liveability Statement has set out major challenges to the DoI and VicRoads for the foreseeable future. The MOTC has 'something for everyone' with major projects across the board amounting to over \$10 billion of transport related works. The identified projects include all modes in the public transport sector with key strategies designed to improve utilisation and effectiveness of the public transport services across Melbourne.

Similarly in the roads and highways sector, the M1 project is the new 'biggest thing in town' in highways and involves a cooperative venture between VicRoads and Transurban for the upgrading of nearly 100km of the Monash Freeway – MCL – West Gate Freeway sections of the M1 across the full width of the Melbourne metropolitan area.

These major projects see the teams at Department of Infrastructure, VicRoads and Transurban actively

restructuring and planning for the major task ahead over the coming years.

In Queensland the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan puts the MOTC in the shadow with around \$25 billion of infrastructure works being set out for planning and implementation over the next 10-15 years. These include major road, rail and other projects.

At the federal level DOTARS is proceeding with a number of major AusLink Corridor Studies across the country. These studies assess the future infrastructure needs across key commercial corridors throughout Australia.

Our friends over in New Zealand have also been active with the ALPURT B2 project north of Auckland, the first major Alliance project in New Zealand progressing well. Recent activity is now progressing the planning for the implementation of the Waterview Connection and the completion of the Western Ring Road. There is also consideration being given to major improvements to the Auckland public transport system including possible underground rail systems in the CBD area.

We all have exciting and busy times ahead. Best wishes for making your mark on the future of the urban framework in your city.

The final preparations for the 2006 ITEANZ President's Dinner are underway and will be released shortly. Look forward to seeing you there.

The new ITEANZ website has now gone live. Please check it out at www.iteanz.org.au.

ITEANZ AWARDS

Larry Dondanville was the catalyst for the formation of the Australian (later to include New Zealand) Section when he worked in Australia in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Although, he returned to the United States many years ago, Larry is still an enthusiastic supporter of the Section and of ITE and was honoured to receive his award for contribution to the ANZ Section from Andrew O'Brien (representing the Australia and New Zealand Section) at the Annual Meeting & Exhibit in Milwaukie during August.



Larry Dondanville (left) is congratulated on his award for Contribution to ITEANZ Section by International President Richard Roma.



ITEANZ DINNER – NEW ZEALAND

IPENZ Transportation Group Conference 2006 - Back to the Future

This year's annual dinner for ITEANZ members and guests in New Zealand will take place on the Monday night (9 October) of the IPENZ Transportation Group Workshop and Conference to be held from October 8 to 10, 2006 at the Rydges Lakeland Resort in Queenstown.

Date: Monday October 9, 2006

Venue: The 19th Restaurant on Steamers Wharf, Queenstown, New Zealand.

Time: Please meet at 6.45pm for drinks and dinner at 7.30pm.

Please note that this is at your own expense. To register for the dinner please see the staff at the Information Desk at the conference.

UNUSUAL TRAFFIC TREATMENT

Following her attendance (and paper presentation) at the Milwaukee ITE conference in August 2006 Deborah Donald and her husband Steve toured British Columbia and the Rockies in Canada. Never one to

miss a photo opportunity Deborah took these photos of a unique switchback arrangement on a side road off Highway 1 (approximately 10km west of Lake Louise) on the way to Takakkaw Falls in Yoho National Park.



Signage indicating the novel traffic arrangements for large vehicles

As indicated on the sign, any vehicle over 7 metres in length driving along the road is required to drive along the first road segment in a forward direction and then REVERSE along the next segment before driving along the last switchback segment again in a forward direction. This unique arrangement avoids having to provide the wide turning room needed by large vehicles. Deborah and Steve watched in amazement as the manoeuvre was undertaken by a large tourist coach. The road is quite a busy one, but all traffic has to stop to allow passage for larger vehicles.



1. Bus using the holding bay provided at each switch back to commence its reverse ascent



2. Bus begins the reverse movement



4. Bus reaches switch back and reverses into receiving bay.



3. Bus travels backwards up the right (correct) side of the road.



5. Bus continues up the next section of road, now moving forwards.

As an interesting aside, old photos displayed near the Falls shows that tourist buses have been reversing up the middle road segment since the 1920's!

U.K. ROAD SIGNAGE CHAOS

335 road signs in eight-mile stretch

(Extract from an article originally published in the Evening Standard newspaper in London, UK – sent in by Chris Dack)

Country roads are being ruined by the 'clutter' of confusing road-signs and traffic calming measures that are putting lives at risk, experts have warned.

It is bringing a 'nightmare' of urban sprawl to once delightful villages. Motoring groups and environmental campaigners have joined forces to urge the Government to rid rural lanes of unnecessary signs, speed-bumps, and other 'street furniture' that takes drivers' attention off the road.

The spread of signs is also proving an eyesore to country lovers by filling once idyllic rural roads with masses of painted warnings, chicanes, bumps, and 'build-outs' that are completely out of keeping with their surroundings.

Now the RAC Foundation and the Campaign for the



Protection of Rural England are demanding councils carry out 'clutter audits' of the road- signs in their area – and remove those which are unnecessary, dangerous or simply an eyesore.

An unofficial audit by the CPRE revealed that a seven mile stretch of the rural B3006 in Hampshire, which passes through an area of outstanding natural beauty and the designated South Downs National Park, has an astonishing 335 signs - an average of 48 per mile. This includes 207 safety signs (such as 'bend ahead'), 44 directional signs, 11 brown tourist signs, 18 blue cycle signs, 18 commercial signs for hotels or attractions, and 30 road-edge reflector poles.

Campaigners have also highlighted 'before and after' images along the Clanfield Road, at Bampton in Oxfordshire, and a T-junction near Canterbury where signs now spoil the view.

RAC Foundation executive director Edmund King highlighted the problem at a conference on road signs hosted at Loughborough University by the Institution of Highway Incorporated Engineers. Mr King said: "Signs that are clear, concise, relevant, reliable and timely can improve safety and reduce the number of drivers that get lost each day."

"But a clutter of contradictory signs not only detract from the beauty of the countryside, they lead to confusion that can result in collisions."

Mr King also attacked "appalling and dangerous" traffic calming schemes - from built-out pinch-points to chicanes. "These are both a visual eyesore and highly questionable in terms of road safety."



A sample of the over-signage of rural roadways

Mr King said that if traffic calming is judged necessary, traffic planners should turn to something more in

keeping with the countryside heritage, and fit traditional cattle grids. "This would be an effective way of slowing down traffic without ruining the visual environment of small villages."

CPRE chief executive Shaun Spiers said: 'People simply aren't prepared to put up with our countryside being blighted for no good reason. 'Local authorities should think again about putting up unnecessary road signs and keep our countryside from becoming a nightmare of garish signs.'

Campaigners want the Government to follow the lead of the Scottish Executive in producing clear guidance about signs and road-bumps in rural areas.

Studies in the US suggest that up to 30 per cent of accidents have 'driver distraction' as a factor - and that in 1 in 3 cases this is from distractions outside the car. Drivers are already struggling with the clutter of road signs in urban areas. One of the most notorious spots has been on a busy junction of the A3 in New Malden, South West London, where drivers have had to contend with 19 different road signs giving 10 different instructions.

Research indicates that since the modern system of signage was introduced in 1968, the number of signs in the Highway Code has increased by 44 per cent.



FROM OUR MEMBERS

Would you do this? – Part 3

By Chris Dack



Scene: Cross road at a busy arterial road on the outskirts of a country town.

Would you: Place a cross road warning sign on the approach to a give way controlled intersection? Place an increased speed limit on the approach to a Stop sign at an intersection?

ISSUE 1: This intersection is controlled by a Give Way sign, clearly seen in this view. The other approach is controlled by a Stop sign due to sight distance constraints. The speed zone on the arterial road is 60 km/h, and on the minor leg it is 50 km/h (more of this later).

Australian Standard AS 1742.2 — 1994, Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Part 2: Traffic Control Devices for General Use, Clause 2.9.2.2 clearly indicates that the Cross Road warning sign is not to be used for side road approaches to a controlled intersection. Many intersections fall into this category, yet have Cross Road warning signs inappropriately located as shown in the photograph. The VicRoads Traffic Engineering Manual, Volume 2, Signs and Markings, Clause 9.4.3 confirms this guidance.

ISSUE 2: A 50 km/h speed limit sign is placed on the back of the cross road warning sign in this photograph. One the other side of the arterial road intersection, 50 km/h speed limit signs can also be seen. However, not seen in this view, there are 60 km/h speed limit signs on the back of the 50 km/h signs. This means that the speed limit approaching the point where the photograph was taken is, in sequence, 50 km/h up the street, then 60 km/h from the speed limit sign through the stop situation and across the arterial road, then back to 50 km/h from the new speed zone sign onwards.

The purpose of this strange situation is to inform drivers that the speed limit on the arterial road is 60 km/h. However, Road Rules Victoria indicates that the speed zone ends at the next speed limit sign on the road. The road in this instance is the road crossing the arterial road, hence the increased limit as signed does not apply to the arterial road.

LESSONS: On approaching an intersection, it is appropriate to ensure that the correct warning sign is being used for the situation. For speed zoning, it is not appropriate to sign the side road speed zone on approaching the side road by changing the limit on the continuing road. Note that this also applies at a tee intersection, where a speed limit placed immediately before the end of the non-continuing road actually ends at the intersection. It is always correct to sign the speed zone on the road to which it applies.

Would you do this? – Part 4

By Chris Dack



Scene: Exit roadway from a school property onto an arterial road.



Would you: Use a variant of a regulatory sign that is not permitted to be used?

ISSUE: Under the Victorian Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations 1999, a number of signs were listed in Schedule 3 Traffic Control Devices that are not to be erected or installed after the commencement of the road rules, with reference to Regulation 302. The sign in question is a No Entry sign of the old type, with a red circle with a letter slot, with the words NO ENTRY underneath in black text.

In this instance, a planning requirement was that No Entry signs were to be placed to prevent the entry of vehicles at a point of egress. The road construction company appears to have not understood that these signs are legal signs under the Road Rules Victoria, and has arranged for signs that they felt were generally similar to the Australian Standard signs. While the difference is probably minimal (the approved signs have NO ENTRY on white within the red circle), the difficulty becomes that some signs may not have the legal impact that is required. For example, if the road on which the sign applies was in a higher speed situation on a one-way carriageway, with perhaps limited sight distance, the consequences of placing an incorrect sign could be quite disastrous.

LESSON: It is appropriate to ensure that the correct regulatory sign is being used, and that the design meets the regulatory requirements.

NEW VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT PLANNING INITIATIVE

Local Area Access Program

The Victorian State Government's Local Area Access Program (LAAP) initiative will provide grants for local governments to deliver small scale projects in their municipality in conjunction with other relevant organisations. Funding has been provided for the program as part of Meeting our Transport Challenges, the Victorian Government's transport and liveability statement.

The aim of the LAAP is to demonstrate the benefits of undertaking an integrated approach to improving access within local areas - particularly for walking, cycling and public transport environments. Funded projects are likely to focus on:

- Provision or improvement of links to activity centres, other major destinations and the public transport network.
- Infrastructure works to overcome local obstacles or discontinuities (both physical and perceived) that impede cycling, walking or access to public transport.
- Other improvements to walking and cycling networks that encourage their use.

Furthermore, by monitoring the usage, effectiveness and community acceptance of the demonstration projects, a greater understanding of local access

initiatives and their relevance to other Victorian communities will be obtained.

(www.doi.vic.gov.au/DOI/Internet/planningprojects.nsf and click on "Local Access Area Program" for more information)

NEW PUBLICATION

Transport Futures: A Walking and Cycling Renaissance

The next phase of the New Zealand Government's 10-year strategy for walking and cycling, *Getting there -on foot by cycle* is underway with the release of a strategic implementation plan for 2006-2009.

The Ministry of Transport led the development of the plan, partnering with Land Transport New Zealand, Transit New Zealand, walking and cycling advocacy groups, local government and other national agencies such as the Ministry of Health, and the New Zealand Police.

The plan sets out ten new national initiatives that will be introduced over the next three years. Land Transport NZ will be leading the management and delivery of seven of the ten initiatives and will progress them through inter-agency working groups.

New initiatives include:



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- the development of an information centre that will bring together walking and cycling-related research and best practice;
- a series of council-led model transport communities that integrate walking and cycling as core part of the transport system;
- work to strengthen walking and cycling user groups and;
- an increase in advice and support to assist communities to develop walk and cycle friendly towns and cities.

The *Getting there – on foot, by cycle Strategic Implementation Plan 2006-2009* can be found at www.transport.govt.nz/ along with the Strategy *Getting there – on foot, by cycle*.

BIRTHS, DEATHS & MARRIAGES

Births - Amanda Halley and her husband Andrew (an ITE ANZ member who works for GHD in Hobart, Tasmania) had a baby boy (Lachlan James Halley) on 15th September, weighing 8lb 5oz. Mother and baby are both well.