



CHINESE 'ROADS MIRACLE' TO BE REVEALED AT NOVEMBER ARF FORUM

A delegation from the Chinese Department of Highways will be guests of honour at the next ARF Forum, to be held in Brisbane in November.

The delegation has accepted an invitation to attend as part of an exchange program which saw an ARF delegation hosted by the Chinese in November last year.

ARF Chief Executive, Ian Webb, says the visiting delegation will update Forum participants on the Chinese "roads miracle".

"We saw for ourselves last November the incredible scale and pace of road planning and construction in China," Mr Webb says.

"Across the country there are 1.93 million kilometres of road, including 41,000 km of expressway.

"The Chinese Government's ambitious goal is to expand the road network into every community by 2010, necessitating the construction of a further 400,000 km of roadway (including 63,000 km of expressway).

"The November Forum presentation will give participants a fascinating insight into how this is being achieved."

Held twice a year, the ARF Forum brings together CEO's and senior executives from both the public and private sectors for a "state of the nation report" on major road projects and policy issues.

The November Forum will be of particular interest to Queensland road industry stakeholders, with Main Roads Director-General, Alan Tesch, delivering an overview of the State's roads program and senior Departmental staff on hand to network with participants.



The Chinese 'roads miracle'... construction on the old Silk Road.

The meeting will also include a state-by-state overview of road projects by road authority CEOs and senior executives; BIS Shrapnel's regular and much anticipated report on the economic outlook for the industry; and a presentation from Booz Allen Hamilton on the international experience on road pricing.

Mr Webb says that apart from being an important source of industry news and a platform for policy debate, the Forum meeting creates significant networking opportunities.

"ARF's membership embraces all facets of the industry - from state and federal road authorities through to road constructors, operators, engineering consultants, materials and machinery suppliers and road user groups," Mr Webb said.

"We recently passed a membership milestone with the signing up of our 50th member, which again underlines why the Federal Government recognises the ARF as the peak national body of road transport stakeholders.

"Anyone who has an interest in roads or road transport - either at the national or local level - should be at this key gathering of industry decision-makers."

The date for the November Forum was still being finalised at the time of going to press. However, full details will be available soon at the ARF website, www.roads.org.au



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.

ARF'S SUCCESS RECOGNISED WITH INTERNATIONAL AWARD

The Australian Road Forum has won a prestigious International Road Federation (IRF) Global Road Achievement Award for 2007.

ARF's award in the Advocacy and Lobbying category recognises the significant success the organisation has had in strategically reforming and rebuilding its membership over the last three years.

ARF today has more than 50 members representing all key sectors of the industry, and is recognised by the Federal Government as the national peak body of road transport stakeholders.

Underscoring that status, last year alone nearly 1200 participants from 140 organisations attended ARF lunches, forums and workshops around the country.

ARF Chief Executive, Ian Webb, says the Award is a wonderful recognition of the role the organisation has played in providing a platform for industry and government to discuss major issues in a bipartisan way.

"As its name suggests, the ARF is a forum that brings together the major players from both private and public sectors to encourage dialogue and achieve a common understanding about the issues that affect the industry as a whole," Mr Webb says.

"Our fundamental, driving purpose is to champion the interest of this vital national asset, our road transport system."

ARF's achievement isn't the only success for Australia in the 2007

Awards. ARF member, Maunsell, has also won a Global Achievement Award in the Design category for its work on the Westlink M7 project, in Sydney.

Started by the IRF in 2000, the Global Road Achievement Awards seek to honor and recognise road projects throughout the world that demonstrate excellence and innovation.

Since the inception of the Awards, nearly 50 projects from two dozen countries have been recognised for their contributions in the advancement of road development worldwide. Past winners include the Queensland Department of Main Roads.

ARF's Global Road Achievement Award will be accepted on behalf of the organisation at the IRF Conference in Florida in October.

ARF WELCOMES CONNECTEAST AND AAPA ON BOARD

ConnectEast and the Australian Asphalt Pavement Association (AAPA) are the latest organisations to join ARF's growing membership of road industry stakeholders.

ConnectEast is the owner and operator of Australia's largest road project, Melbourne's EastLink tollway, due to open in 2008, while AAPA is a non-profit organisation which promotes the economic use of asphalt and bitumen bound products based on sound technical and commercial grounds.

In the space of two and a half years, ConnectEast has grown to become a top 150 ASX-listed company, managing the delivery of the EastLink project.

ConnectEast now has more than 80 staff and this will increase next year to around 300 people to manage the day-to-day operations and customer service requirements for the 39 km tollway.



The future headquarters of ConnectEast along with the operations centre is in Ringwood, with staff expected to gradually move in over the coming months. ConnectEast's current home at Pinewood Shopping Centre, Mount Waverley will remain the base for customer service operations.

Since its formation in 1969, AAPA has maintained as its major objective the dissemination of technical knowledge aimed at continuing improvement in asphalt technology.

AAPA members include virtually all manufacturers of asphalt and other bitumen bound products, as well as state road authorities, local government, paving consultants,



material suppliers, plant and machinery manufacturers, paving and sealing contractors and individuals interested in asphalt technology.

Integral to AAPA is its training activities, with the AAPA Training Centre regarded as Australia's foremost provider of quality training courses on all aspects of asphalt and bituminous surfacing.

The Training Centre presents a program of around 90 courses each year in all capital cities and many regional centres, in addition to customised courses for member companies and local government.

AAPA is currently planning for its 2007 Pavements Industry Conference, to be held in Sydney from October 21-24.

AUSTRALIAN ROAD INDUSTRY URGED TO HEED CLIMATE CHANGE WARNING

The Australian road construction industry was given a stark warning of the likely impacts of climate change at this year's ARF National Roads Summit.

Susan Harris, Director - Environment with Hyder Consulting, used the Summit in June to unveil a new modelling tool developed by Hyder called Alcyone, which maps the impact of projected sea level rises at any given geographic location.

She also outlined a strategy for 'future proofing' Australian roads - with the central message that road and infrastructure owners need to plan now for a one metre rise in sea levels, plus storm surge, over the next 100 years.

Mrs Harris told Summit participants the science of climate change was 'pretty solid' in finding that greenhouse gas emissions - resulting predominantly from human activity - were responsible for an increase in global temperatures over the last century.

The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment report noted that earth's mean temperature at the surface increased by 0.6 per cent over the 20th century.

The report also noted that emissions of greenhouse gases as a result of human activity - mostly from fossil fuel use and land clearance - had increased significantly over the past 250 years.

Since the release of the IPCC report, new studies on the scale of the arctic ice melt and the increasing level of greenhouse gas emissions in the last 15 years (especially within the last five) have painted an even grimmer picture of the likely impacts of global warming.

Australian roads at risk

Mrs Harris said Australia's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, according to the IPCC report, were high.

This in turn would have significant implications for road design and construction, particularly in terms of

the rate of pavement deterioration - predicted to increase by +17 per cent over the next 50 years - and flooding due to sea level rise.

The IPCC report predicted sea levels to rise by about one metre over the next 100 years, she said.

However, other observers suggested it could be as high as seven metres, and a worst case scenario was a 12 metre rise over 200 years.

Mrs Harris used the new Alcyone modelling tool to graphically illustrate what those sea level rise scenarios would mean for a number of coast cities and landmark sites in NSW.

The modelling tool, which integrates with Google Earth, allows the user to input a specific time scale - say, 100 years - and an ice melt scenario. The resulting sea-level rise and flooding effects can then be mapped over a satellite image of a specific site, such as Sydney Airport, the port of Newcastle, or the immediate environs of the Sydney Opera House.

For example, Alcyone showed that a three metre rise in the sea level would put most of Sydney airport under water.

Don't panic, plan

Mrs Harris said while the picture she painted was alarming, it should not be construed as alarmist.

"If we stick to the fundamental good engineering design principles that have served us well since Roman times, it is possible to deal with these issues," she said.

It's important to have a robust risk assessment strategy in place, and to focus in the first instance on the high priority areas.

"In particular, the one-metre sea level rise needs to be dealt with in design right now."

'Future proofing' our roads

Mrs Harris outlined a long-term, three-pronged strategy for 'future proofing' Australian roads from the impacts of climate change - map, mitigate and adapt.

The first stage was to precisely map the extent of possible flooding and other impacts, such as salination and pavement deterioration, and then to plan the appropriate remediation works according to priority.

The second stage was to mitigate the risk by investigating new road building materials, relocatable structures and alternate routes, and - where necessary - start relocating at-risk communities.

The third stage was to adapt - relocate low-lying parts of towns and cities, factor climate change into land use planning, and choose and construct new routes for at-threat road infrastructure.

Mrs Harris forecast that the impact of climate change on road planners and owners in the immediate term - 2007 to 2020 - would be more maintenance and repairs resulting from storm events and more flood-proofing of existing roads.

She said the broad message to the road industry in Australia was to proceed with caution, and to review work programs in line with the latest climate change science every three to five years.

For more information on Alcyone, contact Susan Harris at Hyder, email susan.harris@hyderconsulting.com