

Report to the Annual General Meeting: 7 August 2015

Research and Guidelines Steering Group

The Research and Guidelines Steering Group has provided administrative and research support to the working groups, pursued a number of initiatives for greater guidance on specific issues, and coordinated sector responses on matters of common interest.

Research Areas

Mobility Scooters

Members have identified the increasing use of these as an issue for road and pedestrian infrastructure design. We are looking at a workshop on the issue or a presentation to a Forum and Gary Clark (Tasman) and Michael Harrison (Dunedin) have expressed interest in joining a working group on the issue.

Glyphosate resistance

The RCA Forum has supported this research project and the third and final contribution has now been paid. The next meeting of the project steering group is on 18 August. The implications of the classification of glyphosate as probably carcinogenic by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in March 2015 will be discussed at that meeting.

Safe System Roads for Local Government

Aaron Champion has represented the RCA Forum on Austroads project ST1769 *Safe System Roads for Local Government* and is presenting a report on the project to the Forum.

Sector Challenges for topics for 2016 Research Programme

These are a few of the challenges that have been identified where members want to see research:

- Appropriate road user charging for electric vehicles
- Better coordination between central and local government planning cycles to recognise lead-in times for long term planning
- Identifying and providing the assets needed by an aging population
- Ensuring that peer bands recognise the wide differences in climate, rainfall, geology and topography across NZ, perhaps by having regional peer bands for local authorities
- Identifying optimal local mixtures of aggregate (and recycled material as appropriate) for local conditions in order to deliver a consistent performance
- Establishing tangible, reliable and readily-comparable condition-assessment parameters for unsealed roads
- Ensuring that adequate investment occurs in rural roading infrastructure to meet the economic potential and growth strategy of primary industries reliant on that infrastructure
- Identify the optimal rural road sign reflectivity appropriate for modern vehicle headlights to ensure safe rural driving practices

Register of member's interests

The success of the working groups clearly indicates that members are willing to become involved where they have an interest in the issue. It would facilitate identifying who might be interested in joining a working group if we already knew which members had an interest in an issue. A form able to be completed and sent to RGG has been added to the Forum website.

NZUAG and RCA Forum representation

Peter Dodge of Wellington City was the RCA Forum representative on the NZUAG Board, but has retired and been replaced by Brett North for the remainder of this term. We would prefer to see a South Island and rural member take his place in November.

Active Modes Infrastructure Group

Trials for new markings for cycle lanes and shared lanes were undertaken during 2014. Results are expected to inform changes to the RUR being proposed later this year. The group completed its original task, but identified a wider range of issues surrounding the design and provision of infrastructure for cycling and walking, and agreed to broaden its scope.

The context in which this is taking place has changed completely, however, and AMIG is now a technical reference group for a project to provide national cycling design guidelines. Although several panels or committees have been active around cycling, AMIG is the group representing the infrastructure asset managers and providing guidance for the design of infrastructure for cycling and walking. It provides a forum for solutions to technical challenges in providing infrastructure. It will present reports to the Forum and the Trafanz Conference.

Low Volume Roads-Funding Heavy Vehicle Impacts Group

A national workshop in August 2014 reviewed the current funding basis for meeting accelerated pavement consumption by heavy vehicles. The Forum endorsed a working group on the issue. The working group has looked first at forestry, as an area where substantial research is already available, and is building on that research to inform national guidelines able to support consistent and robust arguments for greater contributions to maintain rural road infrastructure essential to primary industries. The group has engaged with forestry sector representatives to find transparent and equitable solutions. It will present a report to the Forum.

Level Crossings Working Group

Brett Williams presented to the Forum in Auckland on 8 August 2014 and John Skilton of Kiwirail presented to the May 2015 Forum on the group's activities.

Stock Effluent Working Group

NSEWG completed its task and closed last year. A national radio advertising campaign was undertaken in May and feedback suggests this was effective. The regional stock effluent committees have asked for a meeting of the "national stock effluent committee". No other body has replaced the RCA Forum working group at a national level. RGG also continues to receive complaints from the general public about stock effluent spilled on roads, which is seen as a significant safety issue by motorcyclists.

Animal waste is specifically exempted from being part of a load by the RUR. This exemption means S15 of the RMA cannot apply and has led to tanks that have successfully contained waste from animals being transported then being emptied along the road with impunity. Is it time to present a case for repeal of the exemption as part of the review of the RUR?