Devonport Road Network Strategy

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Following the endorsement of the Devonport Road Network Strategy (RNS) by Devonport City Council aldermen at their October 2009 Council Meeting, Council is leading Tasmania in preparing a comprehensive RNS that will provide a long-term vision for the use of Devonport’s road network to meet the needs of the community, business, tourism and industry.

The RNS has been developed through a rigorous process undertaken by the Traffic and Transport Planning Team at GHD in Tasmania. GHD worked closely with Council, key stakeholders and the community to prepare a practical yet innovative approach to address current road network issues, while providing a flexible framework that enables Council to proactively manage transport needs into the future.

Essentially, the RNS addresses a series of key issues identified through analysis of the existing road network and consultation with Council, key stakeholders and the community. The key issues revolve around seven themes including: the key access points into the municipality; traffic capacity; road safety; economic and regional development; mobility; parking; and road standards and maintenance.

Engaging with the community and other key stakeholders to identify these issues was considered very important to developing a strategy that local people could identify with and see the value of investing future resources in, to accomplish its implementation.

The key elements of the RNS are focused on redefining the local road network hierarchy and the provision of ten strategic directions to address current road network issues and provide a framework for action in the future. A notable feature of the RNS is an innovative approach to current traffic congestion and road safety issues in key locations. This issue has been addressed through the implementation of a ring road system, supported by road hierarchy modifications and improved traffic management arrangements.

Importantly, the RNS also facilitates on-going development in the areas of road safety and sustainable transport. This will be achieved through council leadership and encouraging an integrated approach to manage the dynamics between road infrastructure needs, changing community expectations in relation to transport, and use of advancements in technology. The RNS will be implemented through three-yearly Action Plans, which provide the short-term focus linked directly to Council’s Strategic Plan and annual budget.

Driver Training: Training programs are also available for experienced drivers including interactive scenario-based responsive driving programs. These venue-based driver education programs are conducted at our MST Training Facilities at Baskerville and Symmons Plains.

4WD Programs: Motor Safe Tasmania (MST) offers basic and advanced 4WD & recovery programs which are held over one to two days depending on client needs. Programs can lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

ATV Safety Programs: MST is now offering an ATV Safety Program. Conducted in a similar format to the 4WD programs at the Baskerville Training Facility, Programs can lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

OHS & Corporate Services: Corporate Services training program involves crash investigation, incident reviews, driver assessment, coaching, counselling and remedial training, needs analysis, vehicle familiarisations and eco-driving.

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Smarter Planning with New Map Portal

A new, interactive mapping portal, developed by the National Transport Commission (NTC), will detail the initial routes for higher productivity, or SMART trucks, to move across the country.

The SMART truck map portal, located on the NTC website, displays routes in every state and territory, allowing users to zoom as far in as street level to see exactly where the SMART trucks can go. The map details road network classification data, obtained from state and territory road agencies, which will be continually updated as the network for SMART trucks expands. The portal also has the potential for overlaying details about rest stops, weighbridges, refuelling areas and other truck related information in the future.

NTC Chief Executive, Nick Dimopoulos, said that local governments will have an important role in ensuring that the maps help achieve the NTC’s goal of a more productive and truly national transport system. “It is important that the maps also include local road routes to provide the ‘last mile’ access to truck destinations, and we encourage local governments to work closely with their local road agency to achieve this,” said Mr Dimopoulos.

“The launch of the new portal represents a huge step forward for transport efficiency and, as the network expands, will lead to more nationally consistent road network access,” he said.

Gaining access to the network still remains dependent on approval of the vehicle design by the Performance Based Standards PBS panel and permits issued by road authorities, including Local Government. The NTC is currently considering options for improving the access process for the PBS scheme in a Regulatory Impact Statement soon to be released for public comment.

To access the map portal, click on the PBS maps portal link on the NTC homepage at www.ntc.gov.au.
Councils Bounce Back from Car Theft

Car theft is costly, disruptive and frustrating, yet many car owners do not consider the inconvenience to work, family and social lives that having a vehicle stolen can cause.

In reality, the impact of this crime is widespread and its consequences are often felt at a local level, pushing up insurance premiums for all motorists. Seeing the potential of Local Government to help reduce the impact of vehicle theft, the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) launched Operation Bounce Back (OBB) in 2004.

The focus of OBB is to educate car owners about the risks and costs of car theft and counteract the environment of complacency that currently surrounds the issue, in areas where it is most needed. The program combines a public education campaign with the distribution of free immobiliser vouchers to residents who have been a victim of theft, as well as owners of older vehicles in the ‘at-risk’ category. OBB aims to personalise car theft and encourage the idea that prevention is a shared responsibility.

Six years ago, Glenorchy City Council and later, Clarence City Council opted to take part in the program to tackle vehicle theft in their areas. Today, both councils continue to promote OBB, with the positive outcomes of the initiative being strongly felt within the community. The municipalities have run a number of highly successful and innovative initiatives, which have resulted in a 50% decline in vehicle theft in the City of Glenorchy and Glenorchy City Council receiving three awards.

Working with WIN TV, Glenorchy and Clarence Councils developed a series of car theft prevention advertisements. A partnership with Village Cinemas has seen these ads aired to cinema goers for the past 12 months. Other successful initiatives have included: hosting a youth forum to gauge young people’s perceptions of vehicle theft and assist in developing program elements that are relevant and relatable to this ‘at-risk’ group; partnering with local radio station 7HO FM to run a number of car safe messages; and promoting the program at shopping centres and other community centres.

The NMVTRC’s Tackling Vehicle Crime: a Guide for Local Communities publication provides tips on operating successful vehicle theft prevention campaigns. For further information, log on to www.carsafe.com.au.
Who’s Des Tonight?

The West Tamar Community Road Safety Partnership recently launched a Who’s Des Tonight? program in Exeter. The program, announced by West Tamar Mayor, Barry Easther, is based on a model developed in Burnie.

Who’s Des Tonight? focuses on people planning ahead if they intend to drink. It also promotes mates looking after mates while enjoying a night out. A Designated Driver (DES) is a person who agrees not to drink any alcoholic beverages and to transport home safely those who are under the influence of alcohol. The nominated DES must transport at least one person who intends to drink alcohol to and from an official Who’s DES Tonight? venue.

Official DES venues can be hotels, motels, sporting clubs, restaurants or even community events. The DES can register at a designated space at the venue to receive unlimited free soft drink during their stay at the venue. Registered participants also have the opportunity to win some great prizes, such as a monthly petrol voucher.

For further information, contact Kerry McCormick at West Tamar Council on (03) 6383 6365, or David McIntee at DIER on (03) 6336 2115.

ABOVE RIGHT: Pictured at the Who’s Des Tonight? launch are (L-R) Ian Billings - Licensee of the Exeter Hotel, Heather Butler MP, West Tamar Mayor Barry Easther and David McIntee of DIER.

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Held in Tasmania for the first time, the annual Australian University Community Engagement Alliance Conference brings together university, community, government, business and not-for-profit representatives.

This year’s theme: Communities, Participation & Partnership will address key challenges faced by communities in increasing levels of participation in continuing education and addressing social equity. It provides an opportunity to improve individual knowledge and networks and to explore the challenges presented to us by the participation agenda. This makes it a must-attend event for local government representatives who already engage with, or wish to engage with, their university colleagues.

Key note speakers include:

- Professor Sarena Seifer, Founding Executive Director of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) and Adjunct Professor at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada
- Senator Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion
- Professor David Adams, Social Inclusion Commissioner for Tasmania
- Professor Scott Bowman, Vice Chancellor of Central Queensland University

Weekend workshops will also be conducted on 4th July. Workshops will cover such topics as: working with schools to increase regional participation; the “how to” of engagement; business community engagement; and community university partnerships for health.

For more information, or to register for this must-attend event visit the AUCEA website at www.aucea.org.au and click on the 2010 AUCEA National Conference link.
REV Program Gets Kentish Youth on the Road

A new Learner Driver Mentor Program (LDMP) to help young people gain their 50 hours of supervised learner driving experience was recently launched at Sheffield District High School by Heather Butler MP and motor racing identity, Jim Richards.

The program, Road Education Volunteers (REV), a first for the North-West region, helps eligible young people who have difficulty accessing an appropriate supervisor driver and/or a vehicle in which to learn to drive. REV is an initiative of the local Community Road Safety Partnership Committee and the Kentish Council. It is the tenth LDMP to be established in Tasmania and has uniquely incorporated elements of the Road Risk Reduction school education package as essential components of the program.

Several community organisations are supporting the program and the Motor Accidents Insurance Board has provided a substantial funding grant to ensure that REV gets off to a great start.

South Riana Log Truck Route Officially Opened

On 19 February, Burnie City Council welcomed the official opening of the South Riana Road Log Truck Heavy Vehicle Route. Council facilitated the $1.6 million project, a joint venture with the Central Coast Council.

The road upgrade was made possible through $960,000 in Federal Government funding through the Nation Building Program, plus contributions from both councils. Improvements to the route have significantly increased safety for all road users including log trucks, school buses and cars.

(L-R) Burnie Mayor Alvwyn Boyd, Member for Braddon Sid Sidebottom and Central Coast Deputy Mayor Jan Bonde at the official opening of the South Riana Road Log Truck Heavy Vehicle Route

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