



Local Road Hierarchy Submission

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Introduction

The Local Government Association welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Local Road Hierarchy proposed by the Local Government Division and recommended by the Auditor-General's report. Councils are largely supportive of the introduction of a state-wide standard for road hierarchies. A properly designed road hierarchy will assist Local Government and the public to better understand and share expectations around service levels.

General Comments

This submission has been developed following consultation and collaboration with the Association's 28 member councils. In the event that any council has made a direct submission to the Local Government Division in relation to this matter, any omission in this submission of comments that councils have made directly should not be viewed as a lack of support by the Association for that specific issue.

Councils have indicated that the overall classification structure proposed is generally appropriate and provides for a logical separation of road classes based on functionality. There are however, a number of questions and concerns that have been raised within the sector, and these are outlined below.

Overall intention of the proposed hierarchy

It is not clear whether the hierarchy is intended to reflect the existing or desired state. For example, if traffic on an access road is anticipated to grow as a result of development, should it be upgraded to a feeder road before or after the development occurs?

It is also not clear whether a road needs to meet one, some or all of the conditions to be placed at a particular point on the hierarchy. For example, if an urban road has <1,500 vpd, but has centrelines on blind corners, is this a collector, feeder or access road?

Some member councils have suggested that the proposed road hierarchy may be appropriate for asset management purposes, but it is not appropriate for using in a traffic and transport project/study. This disparity should be further explored.

Separate state and local hierarchy

The creation of a separate hierarchy for state and local roads appears unnecessary and may create an added barrier to legibility of the road network. Launceston City Council provided an example where the Southern Outlet in Launceston is state owned, the Wellington St and Bathurst St couplet is council owned, and Goderich St is state owned. However, these roadways form a lineal route with similar traffic volumes and profiles that should most logically be given a uniform classification, e.g. arterial.

It has been suggested that a single taxonomy should be applied to all roads based on three categories: ownership (state, local or other/private); hierarchy (arterial, collector, etc.); and location (urban or rural). For example, Bathurst St would be: Local-Arterial-Urban.

If a different hierarchy is to be established for local roads, there should be instruction on where and how there is alignment and interface with the state hierarchy.

Urban/rural

The determination of whether a road is urban or rural would likely be more easily and accurately determined by the planning scheme. Land use zoning reflects the existing and expected future uses for the area, and is commonly used to define town boundaries. The definitions used by the Tasmania Grants Commission are not in common use and could generate results that are inconsistent with the planning scheme.

Carriageway form

One member council pointed out that it is not clear whether the number of lanes is in reference to traffic in one direction or both directions. However, it is assumed that it is in both directions; otherwise the criteria would not be met in many circumstances, e.g. urban collector.

Categories and classifications

The terminology and thresholds proposed for the various classifications differ slightly from those used by councils. In particular, councils identified that the traffic volumes stipulated in the Local Road Hierarchy are significantly higher than those used by councils.

In addition, it must be pointed out that there is very little or no traffic data for a large portion of roads within the State. Using the traffic volume of the road as one of the main criterions in classifying the roads will also require that the classification for each road be reviewed from time to time and amended if the traffic volumes have changed.

Even if the distinction between state and local roads is to be maintained, the taxonomies proposed are overly complicated. Table 1 on the following page provides a condensed version of the proposed taxonomies along with comments and suggested changes.

Table 1: proposed and alternative categories and classifications

TAO Report				LGAT response	
	Table 11	Tables 12 & 13		Suggested	Comment
	Category	Parent	Child	Category or Classification	
					'Parent' and 'child' classification is an unnecessary level of complication for this taxonomy. It creates a disjoint between the taxonomy used in Table 11 and that used in Tables 12 and 13 of the TAO report. For example, level 8 has three different categories and/or classifications across different tables: street, collector, or feeder. There should be a single category (or classification) that is common to all descriptions of the hierarchy.
6	Local Arterial	Local Arterial	Arterial	Arterial	
7	Local Collector	Collector	Collector	Collector	
8	Local Street	Collector	Feeder	Feeder	'Street' should not be used as a classification at any point as it creates confusion. 'Street' is a common suffix for road names that are often likely to be categorised lower in the hierarchy than this point.
9	Local Access	Local Access	Local Access	Access	
10	Local Minor	Other	Minor	Minor	
11	Other roads	Other	Roads	Other or Private	If this category is to apply only to non-council owned roads, then this could be explicit in the name.
12	Road Reserves	Other	Road Reserve	Unmade	'Road Reserve' should not be used as a classification as it has a common meaning applicable to all roads.

Urban AADTs

The proposed AADTs for urban roads do not match the functions and descriptions provided in a number of cases, and are likely to generate a distribution across the hierarchy that is at odds with the general concept of the hierarchy.

Case Study: Launceston City Council has provided a detailed response to LGAT in relation to the proposed local road hierarchy. Tables 2 and 3 below. Table 3 shows the likely distribution of LCC maintained roads. It shows that minor roads (intended for lanes, no-through-roads, etc.) would account for over a quarter of the network, which seems at odds with the function and description. Conversely, there would be substantially fewer feeder roads than collector roads.

Table 2 also shows the likely distribution for an alternative set of AADT thresholds. This provides a distribution pattern that is more closely aligned with what would be expected from the functions and descriptions.

Table 2: Proposed and alternative urban AADT thresholds for LCC maintained roads

Proposed hierarchy	Proposed AADT urban thresholds	Distribution	Alternative AADT urban thresholds	Distribution
Arterial	>10,000	9%	>10,000	9%
Collector	2,500–10,000	18%	2,500–10,000	18%
Feeder	1,500–2,500	5%	1,000–2,500	18%
Access	100–1,500	41%	50–1,000	42%
Minor	<100	26%	<50	14%

Alignment of the Local Road Hierarchy with LGAT standard drawings

It is considered logical that there should be uniformity between the Local Road Hierarchy and the Standard Engineering Drawings which are currently administered by LGAT and the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) (Tasmania Division). This should be a topic for further discussion should the Local Road Hierarchy be implemented.

In particular with respect to rural roads, the two taxonomies should be able to be aligned relatively easily (see Table 3 below). However, there is a misalignment between the AADT volumes set for different standards of roads. It would be unfortunate not to have the same AADT levels associated with what are equivalent hierarchies.

These AADT levels were designed to provide a level of distribution across the hierarchy that aligned with what would be expected from the functions and descriptions.

Table 3: Comparison of rural AADT thresholds

Proposed rural local road hierarchy	AADT	LGAT standard drawing equivalent (R01 & R02)	AADT
6. Rural Arterial	> 1,500	S5	> 2,000
7. Rural Collector	500 - 1,000 (1,500?)	S4	300 - 2,000
8. Rural Feeder	200 - 500	S3	100 - 300
9. Rural Local Access	< 200	S2	30 - 100
10. Other Minor	< 50	S1	< 30

Contact Details

If you have any further queries in relation to this submission, please feel free to contact Melanie Brown, Senior Policy Officer, on 03 6233 5961 or at melanie.brown@lgat.tas.gov.au .