

MINISTER FOR ROADS

OVERVIEW

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Budget 2005-06 \$m</i>	<i>Budget 2006-07 \$m</i>	<i>Variation %</i>
Roads and Traffic Authority			
Total Expenses	2,308.4	2,350.8	1.8
Capital Expenditure	1,191.3	1,594.9	33.9
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ROADS AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY

The NSW Roads and Traffic Authority's (RTA) focus is to deliver a safe, sustainable and efficient road transport system. It achieves this by managing, maintaining and developing the road network, regulating road use and educating users.

The Roads and Traffic Authority is a New South Wales statutory authority established in 1989 under the *Transport Administration Act 1988*.

RESULTS AND SERVICES

Since 1995, there are an extra one million vehicles on our roads and an extra 600,000 drivers. There are 4.4 million licensed drivers in New South Wales and the RTA is responsible for managing 20,738 kilometres of roads across the State.

The RTA is committed to delivering the following results:

- ◆ A road transport system which provides reliable and efficient access between commercial, residential and recreational locations.
- ◆ Safer road user behaviour, vehicles and road environment.
- ◆ Minimising impacts on the natural, cultural and built environments.

Key services provided by the RTA to contribute to these results include:

- ◆ planning, designing, scheduling and organising the development of road and bridge works;
- ◆ managing the road network through a program of maintenance and reconstruction works;
- ◆ implementing initiatives to increase safe road use behaviour including licensing and registration; and
- ◆ improving road network performance through traffic control systems, managing incidents and route management strategies.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Total operating expenses for the RTA in 2005-06 are estimated at \$2,260 million. Capital expenditure in 2005-06, including asset acquisitions, is projected to be \$1,359 million with the total Capital and Maintenance Program projected at \$2,420 million.

Expenditure under the M4/M5 Cashback Scheme to reimburse tolls paid is expected to be \$83 million in 2005-06.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Western Sydney

The north-west is one of Sydney's fastest growing regions. The key projects designed to improve traffic flows are: the implementation of the Sydney Orbital route and associated projects; the continued upgrade of Old Windsor Road and Windsor Road; the North West Transitway; and the upgrade of Cowpasture Road and Camden Valley Way in south-western Sydney.

The \$420 million upgrade of Windsor Road is the largest urban arterial road program undertaken by any state government. It is approximately 28 kilometres in length with upgrades to both Windsor and Old Windsor Roads to provide four lanes between Parramatta and McGraths Hill, together with a high-level Windsor flood evacuation route across South Creek.

The upgrade will reduce traffic congestion and cut travel times from Sydney's North-West to the city and Parramatta, as well as providing a safer road environment for all road users. The flood evacuation route will give Windsor residents additional time to evacuate to safety in the event of a major flood.

The Sydney Orbital Network

The Sydney Orbital network will be completed in 2006-07 at a cost of \$6,000 million, including \$3,300 million of privately funded projects. The Orbital Motorway Strategy is improving road links between key business and residential areas. The Orbital Network connects residents across Sydney to key locations including the city and the airport.

The 40 kilometre Westlink M7 links the M2 at West Baulkham Hills, the M4 at Eastern Creek and the M5/Hume Highway at Prestons.

Westlink M7 bypasses 48 sets of traffic lights, allowing a journey from south of Liverpool to Pennant Hills in less than 30 minutes.

The Westlink M7 is estimated to remove 60,000 vehicles per day, including 10,000 heavy vehicles, off the existing Western Sydney road network.

The Lane Cove Tunnel will be a 3.6 km long twin-tunnel between the M2 and the Gore Hill Freeway. The tunnel will complete the Sydney Orbital Motorway connecting the north-west with the CBD. The project also includes the widening of the Gore Hill Freeway to three lanes in each direction.

Pacific Highway

The major program of upgrading the Pacific Highway is continuing between Hexham and the Queensland border. The NSW Government has contributed \$1,660 million or 72 per cent to the \$2,320 million, ten year Pacific Highway program.

In the next three years, the New South Wales and Commonwealth Governments are providing additional funding, with the Pacific Highway upgrading given a \$1,280 million funding boost – this includes the recent New South Wales commitment to an additional \$160 million, matched by the Commonwealth Government.

Hume Highway

The RTA will commence the accelerated program to duplicate the Hume Highway, south of Sturt Highway to Albury in 2006-07.

Maintenance Strategy

The RTA gives priority to managing its road network as a long-term renewable asset to ensure reliability, safety and retained value. The RTA's maintenance strategy focuses on ensuring timely intervention to minimise whole-of-life costs and ensure the ongoing serviceability of its roads. The continual renewal of road and bridge assets is also necessary to ensure structural capacity, safety and sustainability of the asset to meet road user needs. In managing the road network the RTA also looks to minimise inconvenience to road users resulting from maintenance works and incidents on the road network.

Integrated Transport

The focus of bus priority measures will be to support the operation of an identified network of strategic bus corridors in Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle and the Central Coast, in partnership with the reform of bus services being implemented by the Ministry of Transport. Implementation includes new bus lanes, intersection improvements, responsive priority for buses at traffic signals, bus lane enforcement camera systems and bus only Transitways.

The Government has allocated \$170 million in 2006-07 for bus priority measures. This is made up of \$45 million (including an additional \$30 million provided in 2006-07) for strategic bus corridors and \$125 million for the North West Transitway.

Substantial progress on construction of the North West Transitway will continue in 2006-07. When completed in 2007, the Transitway will be in operation between Parramatta and Rouse Hill and Blacktown and Parklea.

Electronic tolling

Electronic tolling is available on all tollways, and tags issued for each system can be used on any Australian tollway. New tollways such as the Lane Cove Tunnel, Westlink M7 and the Cross City Tunnel will operate without cash tollbooths to improve traffic flow on Sydney's Orbital Motorway network.

Railway Level Crossings

The Government will continue its accelerated four year program of railway level crossing improvements. Funding of \$14 million has been committed over the past three years and a further \$7 million will be committed in 2006-07.

Road Safety

Road Safety continues to be a priority issue and the RTA is working in partnership with State agencies, including the NSW Police. Emphasis will be maintained on initiatives to address issues such as speed, fatigue, drink and drug driving, occupant protection, school and youth programs, pedestrians, the police-enhanced enforcement program, motorcyclist and cyclist safety and safety, improvements to the road environment.

The RTA will be addressing a wide range of initiatives for improving the safety, efficiency and compliance of heavy vehicles. These include:

- ◆ implementation of chain of responsibility and speed deeming legislation;
- ◆ enforcement of road use and vehicle requirements and occupational safety;
- ◆ introduction of higher mass limits; and
- ◆ heavy vehicle driver/industry consultation.

Customer Service

There will be a continued focus on providing a more flexible customer service environment through an increasing number of services being available via both the RTA's Call Centre and online service myRTA.com. Customers will be provided with better access to RTA services. This will include further expansion of the e-Safety Check Scheme. The RTA is also providing flexibility in its services so that customers have access to services such as through the internet and the Call Centre. Fundamental to this will be simplified procedures for customers and the use of new technologies.

The Government continues its campaign to combat identity fraud with proof of identity initiatives reducing the risk of fraudulent driver licences. These include systems and processes to enhance customer identification and enrolment procedures and a proof of identity unit.

2006-07 BUDGET

The NSW Government is delivering a record roads budget in 2006-07 of \$3,298 million. The key highlights of the budget include:

- ◆ road safety, licensing and vehicle management strategies;
- ◆ transport management;
- ◆ continuation of the M4/M5 cashback scheme;
- ◆ road maintenance program; and
- ◆ major infrastructure projects in Sydney, regional and rural New South Wales.

Total Expenses

The RTA's total expenditure is estimated at \$2,351 million in 2006-07.

Capital Expenditure

The total Roads Program capital expenditure is estimated at \$1,692 million.

The NSW Government has contributed \$1,660 million to the ten year \$2,320 million Pacific Highway Upgrade Program, with the Commonwealth Government contributing \$660 million. The ten year milestone is reached at the end of June 2006.

Through agreement under the AusLink program, the New South Wales and Commonwealth Governments will each contribute up to \$640 million to further upgrade the Pacific Highway over the next three years – this includes the recent New South Wales commitment to an additional \$160 million, matched by the Commonwealth Government.

Funding in 2006-07 for major works on the Pacific Highway will include:

- ◆ \$100 million to complete the Brunswick Heads to Yelgun project;
- ◆ \$115 million to commence the Bonville Bypass and Karuah to Bulahdelah (sections two and three); and
- ◆ \$20 million to commence pre-loading earthworks for the Ballina Bypass.

The NSW Government will invest \$300 million in 2006-07 in north-western and south-western Sydney roads. Funding for key projects in progress include:

- ◆ \$125 million for the North West Transitway to link Parramatta, Rouse Hill and Blacktown;
- ◆ \$113 million for the widening of Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road between Parramatta and Windsor, linking north-western Sydney to the Sydney Orbital Motorway network and for a Windsor flood evacuation route over South Creek;
- ◆ \$7.5 million for grade separation of the intersection of Old Windsor Road and Norwest Boulevard at Bella Vista; and
- ◆ \$15 million to commence works for the extension of Narellan Road to the Northern Road.

The NSW Government has also committed funds to other major road works within Sydney including:

- ◆ commencement of the widening of The Spit Bridge (\$11 million in 2006-07);
- ◆ commencement of the duplication of Alford's Point Bridge (\$9 million in 2006-07);
- ◆ bus priority works on strategic bus corridors between Liverpool and Bankstown, Parramatta and Sydney CBD, and Castle Hill and Sydney CBD;
- ◆ pedestrian overbridges at Yagoona and Blakehurst; and
- ◆ intersection improvements at Camden Valley Way and Raby Road, Catherine Field.

The 12-year \$460 million program to upgrade the Penrith to Orange route will continue and include:

- ◆ \$6.5 million in 2006-07 to widen the Great Western Highway to four lanes with divided carriageways between Leura and Katoomba; and
- ◆ \$9.5 million in 2006-07 for the Woodford to Hazelbrook upgrade.

In the Hunter and Central Coast major road works to be funded in 2006-07 include:

- ◆ \$9 million to widen Five Islands Road from Booragul to Speers Point;
- ◆ \$6 million to widen Nelson Bay Rd;
- ◆ \$6 million for a new bridge crossing of the Hunter River at Maitland;
- ◆ \$5 million for a new replacement bridge at Tourle St;
- ◆ \$22 million to widen the Pacific Highway between Tuggerah and Wyong and at Ourimbah;
- ◆ \$20 million to widen The Entrance Road, from Terrigal Drive to Carlton Road and from Ocean View Drive to Tumby Road; and
- ◆ other intersection and pedestrian facilities improvements on The Entrance Road, through Long Jetty and the Pacific Highway, Hexham.

In the Illawarra, South Coast and Southern Highlands the capital works program includes funding:

- ◆ the Government's ten year \$380 million Princes Highway upgrade, by commencing the dual carriageway from Oak Flats to Dunmore (\$8.2 million in 2006-07);
- ◆ the upgrade of Main Road 92 between Nowra and Nerriga (\$22 million in 2006-07);
- ◆ the Wollongong Northern Distributor extension (\$15 million in 2006-07);
- ◆ new ramps at Kiama to/from the Kiama bypass (\$5 million in 2006-07); and
- ◆ a new bridge on the Princes Highway at Pambula (\$7.5 million in 2006-07).

Funding in 2006-07 for work on the AusLink National Network, jointly funded by the New South Wales and the Commonwealth Governments, include:

- ◆ \$40 million for widening the F3 Freeway to six lanes between Mt Colah and Cowan;
- ◆ \$10 million for widening the northbound carriageway of the F5 Hume Highway to four lanes between Brooks Rd and Camden Valley Way at Ingleburn;

- ◆ \$30 million for the Coolac Bypass and the Sheahans Bridge duplication on the Hume Highway;
- ◆ \$135 million for the Albury-Wodonga Hume Freeway Project;
- ◆ \$15 million for the Halcombe Hill realignment on the New England Highway;
- ◆ \$10 million for commencement of Weakleys Drive interchange on the New England Highway;
- ◆ \$10 million for pre-construction works for the F3 to Branxton link; and
- ◆ \$18 million for the Moree Bypass and continuation of Bogan to Coobang realignment on the Newell Highway.

Under the maintenance program, \$145 million is to be spent on capital improvements associated with existing assets. Key areas of expenditure will include:

- ◆ strengthening and widening bridges, including:
 - Morpeth, Kelly's Gully near Warialda and Coombing Creek on the mid Western Highway; and
 - Junction Bridge at Tumut and Croobyar Creek on the Princes Highway.

Road Safety

Key highlights from the Road Safety, Licensing and Vehicle Management 2006-07 program (total expenses estimated at \$446 million) include:

- ◆ campaigns focusing on fatigue, speed, drink driving and motorcycle safety;
- ◆ a focus on heavy vehicle safety and compliance with the implementation of chain of responsibility and speed deeming legislation;
- ◆ improving freight efficiency and compliance through the implementation of higher mass limits and Intelligent Access Program;
- ◆ enhancing the NSW safety around schools program and School Education Program;
- ◆ continuing the State's engineering crash reduction program, including \$11.8 million of road safety projects on the Princes Highway;

- ◆ undertaking research into vehicle safety through the RTA Crash Lab at a cost of \$5.5 million;
- ◆ working in partnership with NSW Police through the enhanced enforcement program;
- ◆ increasing the availability of online services; and
- ◆ continuing to work with other agencies to combat identity fraud.

Traffic Management

The Transport Management Centre is a state-of-the-art facility which will receive an additional \$44 million in 2006-07 for traffic management operations, including monitoring traffic systems, managing incidents and events, and providing information to road users.

More than 700 closed-circuit television cameras monitor the Sydney CBD, the approaches to Sydney and 800 kilometres of the Pacific Highway to ensure that traffic flows. In addition, cameras are used to increase safety with:

- ◆ 13 bus lane cameras;
- ◆ 27 SafeTCams;
- ◆ 102 Standard Fixed Speed Cameras; and
- ◆ 14 School Zone Cameras.

M4/M5 Cashback

The M4/M5 Cashback Scheme payments will continue with total program costs estimated at \$92 million in 2006-07. This is an estimated increase of \$9 million on 2005-06.

Road Maintenance

Maintenance of the existing road network is a key priority, with an estimated \$745 million to be spent in 2006-07 compared to an estimated \$662 million in 2005-06. Some key elements of this expenditure include:

- ◆ maintenance, resurfacing, patching and rehabilitation of road pavements including rest areas, slopes stability, and drainage improvements;
- ◆ maintenance, rehabilitation and painting of bridges; and

- ◆ widening and reconstructing road pavements, for example:
 - Gwydir Highway at Gravesend;
 - Nacka Nacka Creek on the Snowy Mountains Highway; and
 - Tabrabucca on the Castlereagh Highway.