

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It is understandable that members of the public will bring problems to light from time to time - we process a large number of vehicle and licence transactions each day and many of these are quite complex.

The size of the task and the potential for problems is readily understood knowing that we handle 2.8 million registrations and transfer 825,000 vehicles each year; also, we have about 2.5 million licensed drivers.

We know from experience that frequently when people complain to the media, they fail to mention any personal responsibility they may have for delays in processing. This may include their failure to supply details requested by us, incomplete documents, lack of any payment or failure to pay within the prescribed period.

Once a complaint is taken to the media damage is done — regardless of any explanation following investigation.

We very rarely hear of any appreciation (nor should we expect to) from the millions of happy and satisfied RTA customers.

There have been a number of reasons for arrears in work including delays in filling vacancies, increases in extended leave, experienced staff transferring to regions, provision for rest periods in operating screen based equipment, delay in having the computerised transfer system operational, and the continued growth in regional transactions with need to double handle a range of transactions.

Overtime has been worked and specialist staff have been employed resulting in all processing being up to date by mid May. Procedures have been introduced so that trends in transactions are under constant review and staffing is maintained at the present increased level.

Following the resolution of a number of matters of concern to staff, the computerised transfer system is now operational, representing a most important step towards providing improved services.

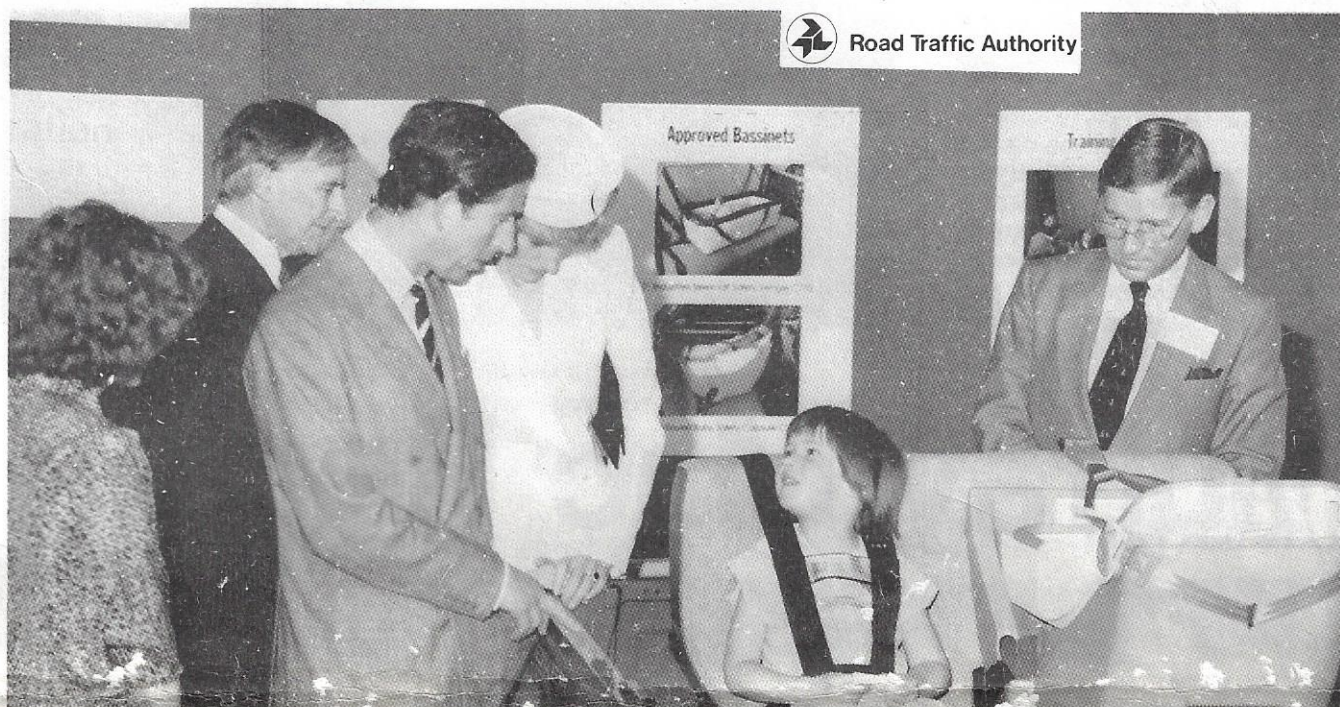
To deal with the problem of telephone callers having long waits we have installed additional queueing lines and have recorded information services being advertised in the media and directory listings. Telephone enquiry facilities have been operating on extended hours to meet demands.

An integrated enquiry centre to deal with telephone, correspondence and personal enquiries on vehicle registration and driver licence matters is being established as a high priority.

The drafting of a new Act to replace the Motor Car Act is in progress and expected changes will simplify a number of complex procedures that have evolved over time. This will assist the client and the Authority in processing transactions more speedily.



## Royal Parents Check Bassinets



Every parent of babies is interested in the bassinet loan scheme administered by the RTA. On their recent visit to Victoria, Prince Charles and Princess Diana proved no exception. They were photographed at the RTA stand at the Royal Children's Hospital during Child Accident Prevention week. A full story on the bassinet scheme is on page 7.

High volume document processors are to be installed later this year to improve the efficiency of remittance processing. An on-line cash receipting system is to be developed for use at all counters including decentralised offices.

Planning is well advanced for conversion of the Vehicle Register from the Government Computing Service (Burroughs) to the Authority's IBM system. This will allow functions such as new registrations now performed at Carlton to be undertaken at all offices and immediately entered on to the data base.

Information leaflets on vehicle registration, driver licensing and transfer matters are being prepared for release during 1986; these will be distributed from all offices and mailed with renewal notices.

We can be proud of our achievements and plans to improve service to the public. The Authority is highly responsive to the public need and will continue to modernise the systems which had remained unchanged for many years. The unqualified success of the bank payment system, the Vehicle Securities Register and the computerised/photographic driver licence system are scores on the board and other significant steps to complete modernisation of our operations will soon follow.



**Gerry Kelly Retires - see page 9**

**FERRET see page 10**

## march motor mania



Our photograph shows some of the volunteer staff who manned the RTA stand during the Motor Show at the Exhibition Building, on March. The stand cost \$15,000 and consisted of question and answer boxes on road law and light box displays of Authority functions. During the 11 days of the show over 1500 application forms were issued for custom plates.



# STRESS AT WORK

Experts in stress management believe that there are three main types of stress, especially in the workplace.

There is the normal stress of everyday living in a busy world. This kind of stress touches all of us at one time or another, and most of us can deal with it.

Sometimes however, stress develops beyond normal into one of two other kinds of stress, one called **eustress** (from the Greek prefix for 'well') and the other called **distress**.

Eustress helps us to achieve things, while distress prevents us from attaining what we otherwise could. Eustress shows itself in feelings of wellbeing, zest, excessive energy and acute perception. People in this condition can accomplish more work than they usually would.

This stage of eustress is addictive, bringing a high from the release into the bloodstream of a naturally occurring drug called epiphrene (more commonly known as adrenaline).

If this stage of eustress continues the person is soon exhausted from burning up immediate energy resources and starts to suffer from distress.

**Distress is a progressive problem and begins with tiredness, heart flutters, bowel, sleep and stomach disturbances, an inability to relax, or tiredness of the back or of the skull.**

It results in exhaustion, a pounding heart, high blood pressure, breathlessness, chronic stomach problems, tingling sensations or numbness in the hands or feet, and feelings of panic accompanied by trembling, shivering or sweating.

The physical symptoms are not the only indications of problems. People suffering from distress also act in ways that show their state.

Ask yourself these questions: Do I suffer from absenteeism? In other words, am I regularly excessively late for work, returning from breaks, or do I frequently take Mondays or Fridays off?

There is also 'on the job' absenteeism - am I frequently away from my work station, for instance taking long coffee breaks, toilet trips, or visits to the medical centre? Do I spend too much time on the phone?

A good way to assess this yourself is to ask 'would I pay somebody what I have earned today for what I have done today?'

There are other warning signs, such as finding yourself involved in traffic accidents or near misses on the way to work or at work. Are a danger to yourself or others? These can all be symptoms of stress.

Your performance may fluctuate wildly and you could find it difficult to concentrate, to follow instructions, to learn new tasks, or just take too much time to perform your duties. Ask yourself if you make too many mistakes or if others have to fill in for you.

Relationships can be indicators of stress - if you are involved in conflicts at home or at work, or over-react to real or imagined

criticism, this could be the result of stress.

These symptoms could be the result of tension even if you are unaware of it. There are a number of ways to deal with the problem, including management of yourself and your time, or through the use of relaxation techniques.

Depending on how severe your situation is, you could use these treatments either on your own or in a group. Relaxation, for instance, brings immediate benefits and can be quickly learnt.

Firstly, focus on your muscle tension and relax it. Close your eyes and slow yourself down for a few minutes by breathing deeply.

As you breath, try to rid yourself of the tension as if you were breathing it out until your whole body is at ease. Once you feel calm think of a pleasant relaxing scene and enjoy it. Then open your eyes and prepare to return to your day refreshed and ready.

**If you have any problems with stress, or think you may have, or are concerned about any health problem in general, contact Occupational Health Nurses Lyn Whelan or Margaret Dobson at Carlton Complex on 345 4583.**

## Murray Mac Retires

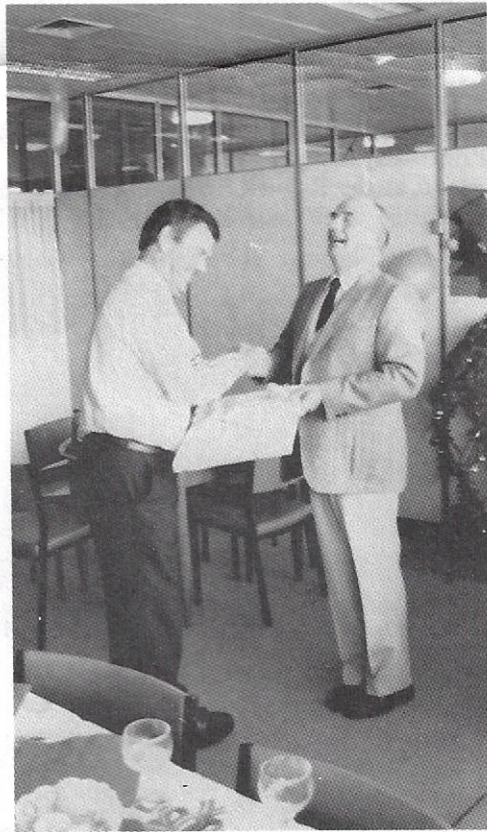
by Greg Buss

When Murray MacPherson retired from the Authority on Christmas Eve last year he also resigned as Treasurer of the RTA Credit Co-operative Ltd.

Murray first became involved with the Credit Union in 1970 when he was asked by the then Chairman of the Transport Regulation Board Mr Ben Kay to examine the feasibility of setting up a credit co-operative within the TRB.

The Co-operative was officially formed later in 1970 and Murray was appointed as Treasurer. He remained Treasurer until his retirement over 15 years later.

During that time he guided the Co-operative through its formative years to the million dollar organisation it is today.



Eric Howe saluting an obviously delighted Murray.

**In fact, shortly after Murray's retirement the Credit Union loaned its second millionth dollar!**

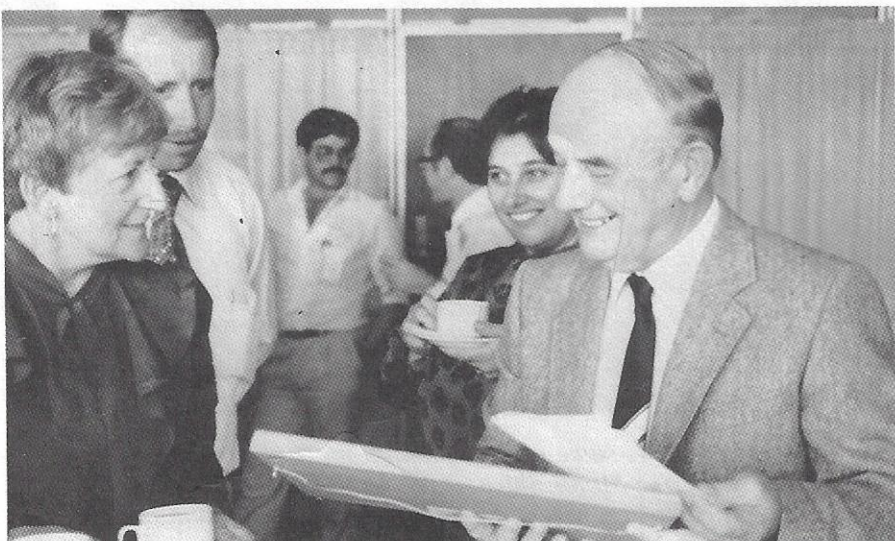
In the early days of the Co-operative all accounting was done by hand, mainly by Murray, with the help of a couple of others. However, it quickly became obvious that these methods were too time consuming to allow the Co-operative to operate to its full capacity.

Murray made arrangements for the accounts to be processed on the mechanical accounting machines then in use with the TRB.

Even with the machines the task of accounting for the rapidly growing Credit Union was becoming too onerous, so Murray looked at other methods.

The result of his investigation was the computerised accounting system that the Credit Union is using today. When the system was installed in 1981 the TRB Credit Co-operative Ltd was one of the first Credit Unions in Victoria to have a fully computerised system.

Over the years many people have contributed to the success of the Co-operative, but none more so than Murray. Without Murray's steady influence and unflinching dedication the Credit Union would not be the success that it is today.



Credit Union staff admire Murray's farewell gift.

## Pottsie's Pallate Pleasers

by Geoff Potts  
Manager - FOI

### Chicken Surprise Packages

The quantities below make enough for four delicious servings.

4 pieces chicken fillet  
2 rashers of bacon, chopped  
4 sheets rolled puff pastry (or filo if preferred)  
100g sliced smoked salmon  
200g grated cheese (I use cheddar and mozzarella)  
1 peeled, sliced avacado  
1 clove of garlic, peeled  
Egg and milk wash to glaze pastry  
Salt, pepper and seasoning to taste

Place the chicken fillets flat on the board and make two horizontal cuts about three quarters of their length.

Rub the fillets all over with the garlic clove and the other seasonings.

Place slice of salmon and cheese into the cuts.

Using a skillet brown the breasts on both sides for about one or two minutes.

Place in the middle of the puff pastry sheets and cover with avacado slices, chopped bacon and some left-over cheese.

Brush the pastry edges with the egg and milk wash and fold over into packages.

Glaze the packages with the egg and milk wash and bake in a hot oven for 20 minutes or until golden brown.

**Bon appetite!**



# Australasian Road Safety Conference in Melbourne

Representatives from all Australian States and Territories and New Zealand met in Carlton during March to discuss road safety.

Opening the Road Safety Program Initiatives Conference in the ground floor theatre Transport Minister Mr Tom Roper said that road safety was an issue which transcended State boundaries.

'Improving road safety is a national imperative, and this conference and the resulting pooling of knowledge can only enhance the road safety activities of the individual states', Mr Roper said.

'On average somebody is killed in a road crash somewhere in Australia every two and a half hours; every six minutes somebody is injured.

'The total annual financial cost to the community of road accidents is estimated at about \$3000 million.

'These graphic figures emphasise the need for continuing and

concerted efforts on road safety', Mr Roper said.

'The national road toll has fallen from 3800 in 1970 to just over 2900 last year. This reduction is encouraging particularly when it has occurred during a period of increasing vehicle numbers and usage.

'It proves the value of the efforts and the initiatives of all Governments.

'In Victoria those efforts have included seat belt and .05 legislation and more recently, improved driver testing, increased expenditure on providing safer roads, better enforcement procedures and greater public awareness.

'Similar efforts have been made in all States, however, we cannot as a nation afford to be complacent.

'This conference is an important element in our endeavours to redress this national problem'.



# ROVING ROVI

In October of last year Random On-road Vehicle Inspections (ROVI) were introduced in Victoria by the RTA. Vehicle Surveyor Ed Hollyoak explained the operation of the program to Round'n'About.

Roadworthiness testing is designed to encourage operators to maintain their vehicles in a safe condition at all times.

We have 14 vehicle surveyors in the ROVI team, all qualified mechanics. They patrol in distinctively marked Ford F100's equipped with special gear such as air jacks, compressors and generators. They also travel in panelvans and Authority vehicles for on-site inspections.

Inspection sites are marked by fluorescent reflective warning and directional signs placed on the roadway. Sites are selected with a special regard to safety.

Vehicles found to have significant mechanical safety problems are issued with a 'Notice To Repair' - the 'dreaded yellow canary' which was featured on advertising material used to inform drivers of the ROVI campaign.

The canary notice gives operators seven days to repair the specified vehicle faults. Vehicles with dangerous defects can be required to be towed off to be repaired.

Our surveyors pay particular attention to tyres, brakes, steering and suspension.

Two surveyors inspect each vehicle to ensure a speedy turn-around - time is of such importance to transport operators. One surveyor does the actual checking while the other enters the information into a hand-held computer.

The information recorded includes location and time of inspection, faults found and whether or not a Notice of Repair is issued.

The computer memory can hold data on 20 vehicles at a time. When the memory is full the data is offloaded onto tape using computer equipment in the F100.

The tapes are sent daily to the mainframe computers in Carlton to form the basis of a state-wide survey of vehicle condition by make, age, and model.

This data will be made available to manufacturers, the ASA and others concerned with the deterioration of mechanical systems.

The issue of each canary will also be recorded in the central computer and action will proceed automatically in three weeks from date of issue if the terms of the notice have not been satisfied.



# RTA ON 3LO

It was early February, the bush was thick and dry after a wet Spring, school was to start next day when we would again be responsible for the safety of school bus passengers in danger from bushfire.

Ballarat based Western Regional Manager Nevil McQuinn is the Authority's senior officer dealing with Displan, the State's Disaster Planning organisation. As in previous years he was emphasising the essential bushfire safety codes to school bus drivers, passengers, teachers and parents.

As before, all stops were pulled out to inform country people of procedures to be followed when bushfire threatens - the exercise has to be repeated each year as urban teachers are sent to rural areas and parents move to the country from the cities.

Our country officers call on schools to ensure that any new teachers know their fire safety procedures; all school bus operators and drivers are mailed procedure cards to be displayed in their buses; and Regional Managers mount a blitz on all media to hammer home the message.

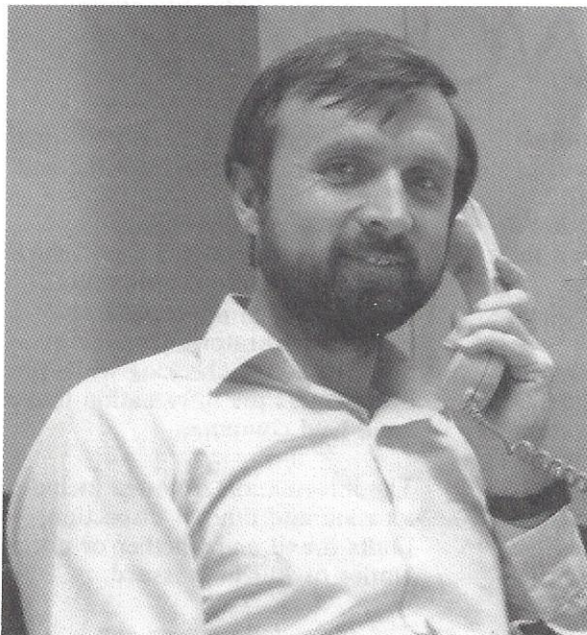
It had been quite a job - and quite a responsibility - to initiate and put in motion the whole scheme but in the early afternoon of that February day Nevil was relaxed and cheerful as he approached one of the more pleasant duties associated with his bushfire responsibilities.



Nevil had been invited by 3LO's popular Barbara Horn to give his safety message to her listeners all over Victoria. Nevil was more than pleased to mix his business with the pleasure of talking to Barbara again.

Our photograph shows Barbra and Nevil in the new ABC studio in Melbourne during the interview; Round + About wishes to thank Barbra Horn for her assistance.





For this reason Nick has been researching books, magazines, journals and newspaper articles which purport to describe how our society will develop in the future. Based on this research he has prepared his own interpretation of the future for Traffic Management in a paper named 'Traffic Management Towards 2000'.

The paper begins by looking at a number of key trends in society. It describes the historical transition from an agricultural society to an industrial one and then to today's information society. It examines work patterns and trends in population, in travel, in urban development and in technology.

Some key issues according to Nick relating to future urban form and traffic include:

**Decentralisation and urban sprawl** will continue as people look for high quality places to live, although a small group will continue to prefer inner urban dwelling;

**Employment Centres** are becoming 'footloose' as they no longer need to be near large concentrated populations of workers - jobs are beginning to follow people instead of the other way round;

**Working Hours** have been declining over the past two hundred years and will continue to decline until most people have no need to work at all;

**Future Urban Form** has been described as 'decentralised concentrated dispersion' scattered suburban style areas with no central district - and will be less determined by industry but more by telecommunications, leisure habits, amenity factors, and so forth. Cities will be service centres for industrial hinterlands.

The challenge for planners will be to understand that the formality of the industrial era is giving way both spatially and temporally to the informality of the post-industrial society.

Activities which involve the transfer of information such as banking, holiday booking, publishing, information services and some aspects of shopping are increasingly being made available through home or business computers.

There are increasing opportunities for people to work from remote terminals such as from their homes or small suburban offices while management communication needs will be fully met by computer networking, teleconferencing and so on.

Developments in computers, fibre optics, microwave radio communications and satellite technology have been making communications faster and more convenient.

Physical travel associated with the transfer of information will soon be obsolete or at least highly inefficient in comparison with 'instant' electronic travel.

Roads will be left to the movement of people, goods and services for those types of trips which cannot be substituted by electronic travel. These trips will be made safer and more efficient by further technological developments which will control vehicle spacing, aid in navigation, and assist in the selection of the optimum time of travel.

by Nick Szwed

Nick Szwed is Section Leader of the Planning and Development Division (PADS) of Traffic Management Division in Camberwell.

One of PADS' objectives is to generate initiatives for the Traffic Management Division.

Planning initiatives in today's rapidly changing environment require an appreciation of what the future might be like in order to ensure that new projects do not become irrelevant.

# TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TOWARDS 2000

**As a result of this research Nick believes that Traffic Managers should contemplate the following future scenario.**

In the future there will be more travel in urban areas. Trips will be shorter and occur mostly in suburban or fringe areas and will be distributed throughout the day.

The peak hour rush to the city centre will become relatively less important. Trips to work will become less significant but social and recreational travel will increase.

Future vehicles will be increasingly 'intelligent'. They will advise drivers on optimum trip scheduling, routing and speed in terms of travel time and cost. They will also give early warning of traffic flow problems and provide route alternatives.

The vehicle of the future will help the traffic manager to study traffic patterns, monitor system performance, detect incidents, manage traffic control devices, prioritise certain vehicle types and charge for road use.

The following resolutions should be adopted by the traffic manager when planning for the future.

Solutions to **peak hour** problems should depend less on increased capacity.

The aim should be of system uniformity along with enhanced system use off-peak and in lower use areas.

**Central business district** trips should take lower emphasis.

The city centre's share of urban activity and employment is not growing at the same rate as in the rest of the metropolitan area. This trend is likely to continue for the reasons mentioned earlier.

**Alternative approaches** can and should be promoted by the traffic managers.

Home based occupations, telecommunications, more flexible and shorter working hours will all help to change travel patterns and travel problems. All of these should be recognised by the traffic managers to improve the system.

In the short term the traffic manager should fully automate his office, install teleconferencing facilities, link into professional information networks throughout the world, encourage his staff to work from home and introduce the flexi-year.

In the longer term he could encourage other Government bodies and the private sector to promote such practices as providing free networked personal computers for employees who would work from home.

**Decentralisation** should be promoted.

The industrial age need of concentrated urbanisation with city centres and district centres is obsolete in a telecommuting world. Planning - urban and traffic management - should be co-ordinated to evolve alternative approaches acknowledging the trends to decentralisation.

For example, 14 district centres are at present being promoted; it could be worth while developing a much greater number of 'sub-district' centres.

**Local areas** should be protected.

In order to enhance the guiding principle for the future of 'quality of life' we must continue to exclude through traffic from local areas, as we are now doing with the Local Traffic Precinct scheme.

**Tourism and leisure** activities should get improved access.

As leisure time increases due to increases in part-time employment and unemployment, access to recreational areas and facilities will need to be upgraded.

**Road safety** should continue to be promoted.

Technology should reduce road accident numbers by making the vehicle 'fail-safe' by such means as automatic headway and braking controls rather than by making the environment absolutely safe.

Traffic managers could consider initiating joint ventures with vehicle engineering groups to develop safety systems for vehicles; for example, they could devise a system to stop vehicles running off the road in place of remedial treatments of roadside hazards.

**Electronic vehicle identification** should be promoted: this would enable the implementation of congestion-based road pricing systems, electronic surveys and monitoring, dynamic real-time system guidance and control,

incident detection, prioritisation for certain vehicles, electronic citation for traffic offences and detection of stolen vehicles.

**Driver information** should be improved.

The electronic navigation systems currently being developed could be extended by developing a link with the SCRAM Signal System which would provide drivers with information about congestion levels on the roads.

**Client communication** should be improved.

All of our services could be listed on Viatel, including all of our warrants, guidelines, regulations and procedures for obtaining approvals.

**In conclusion**, traffic managers should realise that information is a transforming technology which - like electricity - alters everything it touches, such as work, travel, and communications. Also, the rate of change is continuing to accelerate.

Those endowed with the responsibility of planning for Victoria's future should acknowledge these two points and plan for change, facilitate change, and direct it, rather than be directed by it.





## Minister in Mildura

**Transport Minister, Tom Roper, visited Mildura last December to inspect the start of work on the last of the 32 accident black spots to be treated in the Mildura area.**

After his tour of inspection the Minister held a local press conference.

'The 32 intersections treated handle some of the heaviest traffic in Mildura', he said.

'Sixty six accidents including six fatalities have been recorded at these intersections over the past five years.

'Apart from the the human suffering involved these accidents have cost the community nearly \$3 million.

'The 32 site treatments costing \$375,000 will, according to our estimates, save around \$180,000 per year - in other words they will pay for themselves within two years.

'Such low cost treatments are highly cost beneficial to the community: saving lives, property and hospital costs, pension payments and possible loss of valuable skills to the community'.

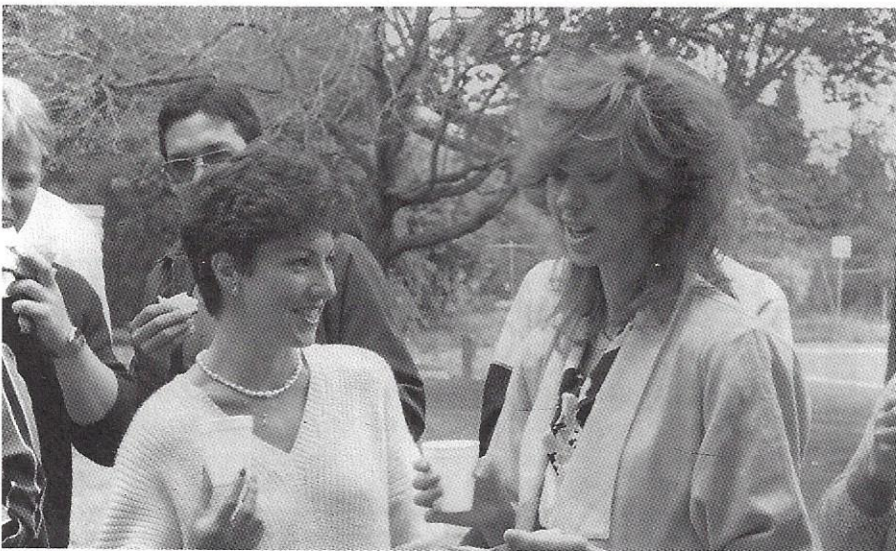


The Minister on site at the 32nd blackspot treatment site in Mildura.

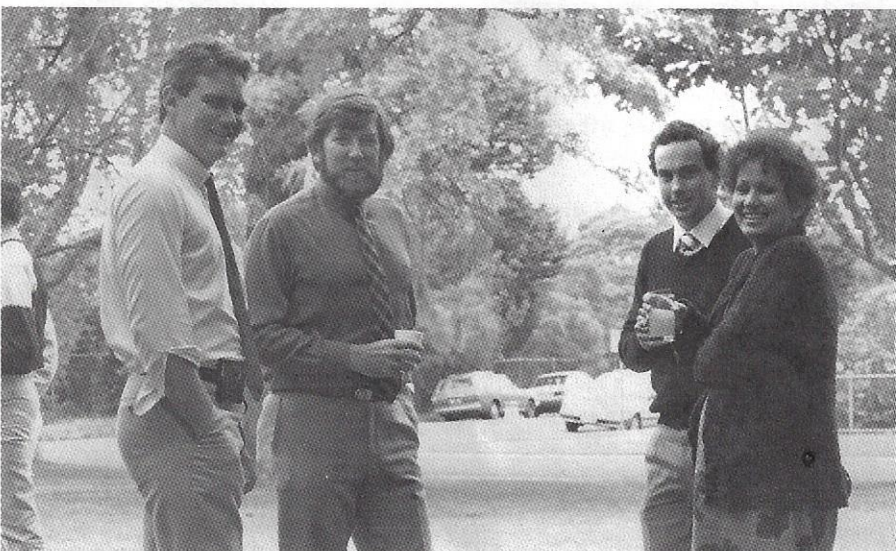
## Camberwell when it sizzles

The first official outing for staff of the new offices in Prospect Hill Road in Camberwell fired up at noon on 21 February in the form of a sausage sizzle in Read Gardens, a few minutes walk from the office.

**John Berends** of Strategies organised the festivities, and the snags were cooked by Cordon Bleu candidates **Michael Lamers, Richard Olsen and Graham Rodger** with much advice from the hungry onlookers.



Donna Hancock and Robin Rowe at the sizzle.



Greg Rowe, Rex Davis, Alan Barkley and Cheryl Varney.

## Computerised Directory for Switchboard

**Carlton switchboard will soon be much faster at locating staff telephone numbers for callers thanks to a screen based, computerised internal telephone directory.**

The Telecom system will provide a less cumbersome access to information than the old manual 'cardstrip' system be easier to update and less prone to error.

Its sophisticated search facility allows information to be accessed from various rotating descriptor points such as **surname, given name, floor location, extension number, title and function.**

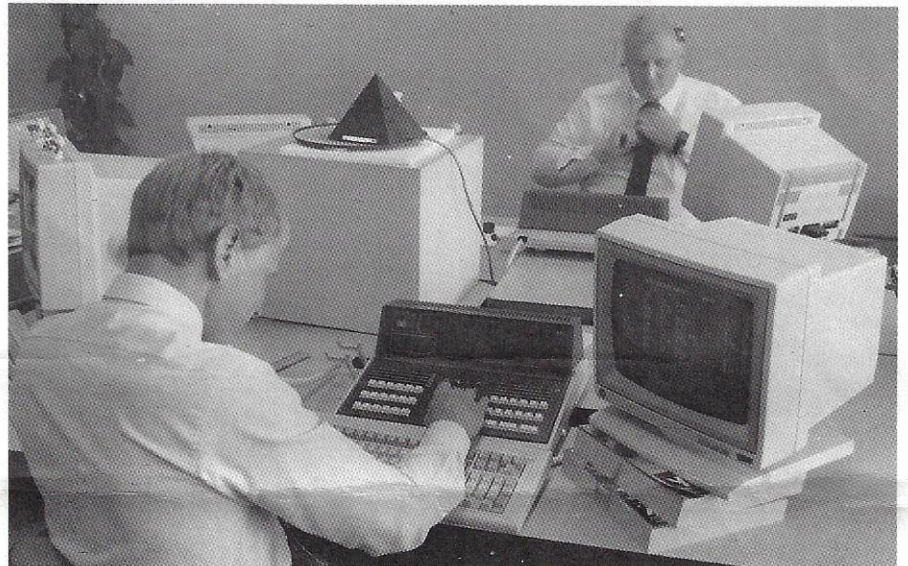
The computer also carries messages relating to staff absences, either temporary or prolonged leave, or attendance at courses. It can also offer a referral number or contact in case of urgent need.

This means that the switchboard operators can ask the computer to display, for example, all staff with the title of manager, and the screen will show all managers' names, locations, functions and phone numbers.

Switchboard Supervisor **Cheryl Sutherland** told **Round'n>About** that the system, although not yet complete, is working fine. **Karen Greenfield** of Administrative Services is at present working on a functions based directory.

'The system also has room for various codings, and we have already stored in its memory the locations of our 100 plus photo points.

'We are now puzzling over how to best serve callers who ask for their nearest photo point, as a lot of people do - how do we get that into the system?'



Switchboard operators Michael Doran and Jim Tipczak using the new Telecom screen based directory.

## FISHING FOR COMPLIMENTS

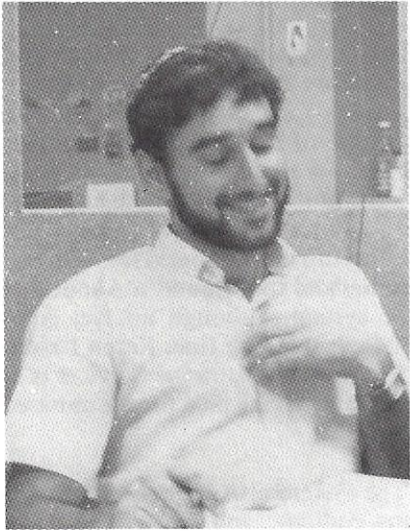


**Gippsland Region fielded - or beached - an eight strong team for the sixth annual Surf Fishing Competition. The competition was held over the first weekend of March near Woodside on the Ninety-Mile Beach. Rob Greening, Kevin Foley, Paul Taylor, Terry Dyer, Vin Smith, Ross Mummery, Greg Oowler, Terry Cooper and Jim Lake competed for the handsome trophy.**

The total catch came to six crabs of which Paul Taylor's two took the prize, although they did not even register on the judge's scales. Rob Greening's single captive arthropod was careless enough to lose a claw and was consequently disallowed. The Department for the Environment reported large numbers of dead fish washed up on nearby beaches during the competition. Fears that a spill of noxious chemicals had caused the ecological catastrophe were allayed when autopsies revealed that fish had killed themselves laughing. The next fishy outing will be in mid-June when about 20 rod'n'reelers will go after the bream up at Tambo. All interested RTA staff are welcome - contact Rob.



# Artificial Intelligence - Expert Systems



by **Daniel Lourie**  
Engineer  
Planning and Development Section

**Computers are learning to see, to understand speech and to make important decisions!**

Programs are taking shape that do a fair job of understanding plain English; robotics will soon use computer vision systems; and systems exist that assist in the repair of faulty equipment, diagnose blood and lung disorders, and perform on mineral deposits, and perform many other functions.

We are now in the age of the fifth generation computer, and 'smart' computer software which incorporates the ability to reason is trickling onto the Australian market.

This branch of computer science which is concerned with making a thinking machine is called **Artificial Intelligence**.

But what really is Artificial Intelligence [AI]? Are the expert systems useful, or even close to human intelligence? And how do these topics relate to us in the Road Traffic Authority?

AI is about the nature of thought, of the mind, of what it is that we do up in our skulls. How exactly do we do it?

**In strict terms AI refers to a program's 'ability to learn from its experiences and make decisions based on those experiences', and on the program's knowledge of the field in question.**

Expert Systems [ES] are the vehicles used in knowledge engineering to automate reasoning. These systems are a class of knowledge-based computer programs which emulate the behaviour of human experts and give advice, like the human specialist. In other words, it is an intelligent assistant.

A human specialist has knowledge, expertise and intuition supplemented by experience, and applies his skills at the appropriate time. The Expert System tries to encapsulate and mechanise these aspects of the human expert and the fusing of the knowledge of a number of experts, thus ensuring expert performance.

So what does this imply? It means for example that a person with a particular medical problem can simply sit at a computer terminal, answer a few questions asked by the Expert System, and the system will diagnose the sickness and suggest a treatment.

At the present these Expert Systems are capable of coping with only one specific area of expertise, but as computers become more powerful they will no doubt act as experts in multiple fields.

Some current Knowledge Based Expert Systems already being commercially used are :  
**Mycin** - diagnoses blood disorders and advises on treatments;  
**Puff** - diagnoses lung diseases;  
**Molgen** - advises on gene cloning;  
**Prospector** - advises on likelihood of mineral deposits; and  
**Dendral** - infers chemical structure.

An Expert System can be built in any field where experts are needed to solve poorly defined problems using their experience and knowledge. The transport field is definitely one such area which is 'full of such ill-structured problems where human behaviour, social and political considerations and multi-objective decision making are involved' ('AI and Transport Applications', VTI, Sweden, 1982).

Potential applications of KBES in Transport can be divided into specific topics, each of which

describes a particular function of ES. They are :  
**design** - roadway, interchange, traffic control;  
**Planning** - response to disaster, public transport network travel advice;  
**Operations and Control** - signal timing, timetable schedule, traffic congestion diagnoses;  
**Maintenance** - pavement decay, vehicle repair tasks.

Because ES appears to have a high potential for solving transport problems, it will be useful for transport planners and engineers.

ES's will effectively function as expert human consultants and hence be able to explain their reasoning and how they have arrived at particular conclusions.

They won't be able to feel, they won't be original in their thoughts, they won't be sympathetic or subjective ... but the knowledge and expertise of a few experts will conveniently be at your fingertips.

There is no doubt that Expert Systems will, in time, replace the fallible human professional.

The only question that remains to be asked is - if computers are, or will be, able to see, to talk, to act and to think, where will it all end? And where will we fit into the picture of this expanding computer world?

## Shanghai SCRAM Shoppers

In November at the invitation of the Department of Trade, Mr Miao Fengsheng, Deputy Director - Traffic Branch of the Shanghai Public Security Bureau led a Chinese Trade Delegation to Australia.

The purpose of the visit was to examine traffic signal control systems in both Sydney and Melbourne with a view to installing the Australian SCAT/SCRAM Traffic Signal Linking System in the city of Shanghai.

During the three day visit to Melbourne the delegation was hosted by members of the Traffic Signals Group and all aspects of traffic signal design, construction and operation were discussed.

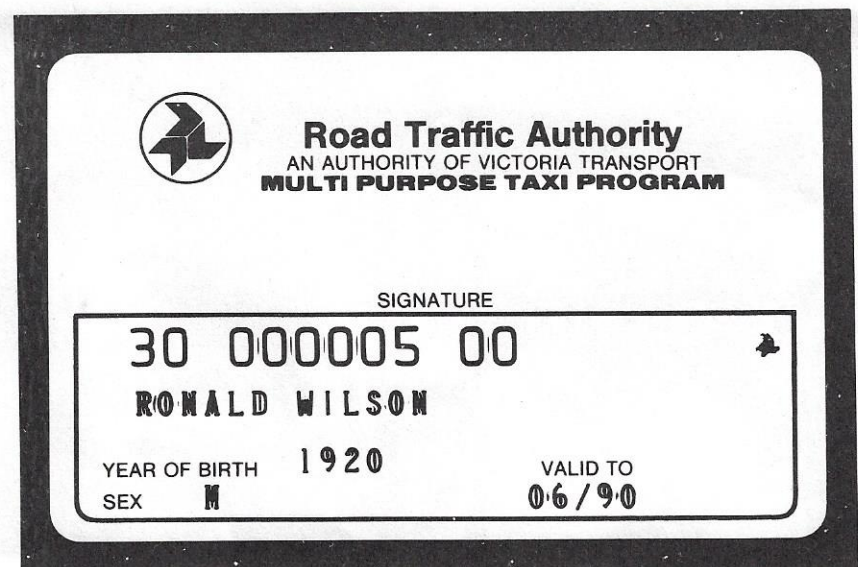
The visitors showed particular interest in the Metropolitan Control Centre and indicated that the design would form the basis of the Shanghai Control Centre.

The visit to Australia culminated in the signing of contracts with several manufacturers of traffic signal controllers and it is anticipated that officers from the Authority will be involved in the implementation of the linking system in Shanghai.



Our photograph shows Bruce Hearn accepting a gift from Mr Miao Fengsheng on behalf of the Authority.

## Maxi Taxi Innovation



**The Multi Purpose Taxi Program voucher books will be replaced with personalised plastic cards which participants in the scheme will be able to use like other credit or charge cards.**

Not only will they be handier for the participants to use, they will also reduce our administrative overheads because we will no longer need to print and distribute the voucher books.

The cards will be distributed to participants during the last week in May and the plastic card system will come into operation on 1 June.

The Maxi-Taxi program provides half price taxi travel to persons otherwise unable to use public transport up to a \$25 maximum subsidy per trip.

Participants currently are issued with books of vouchers which they complete and hand to the taxi driver at their destination, and the driver is able to cash in the vouchers at his depot each end of shift.

The old system was difficult to handle in the case of passengers whose disabilities included such ailments as arthritis, which, when it affects the hands, makes writing out a voucher a very painful experience.



## Bassinet Scheme Success

Community Programs Officer Netta Barling and Deborah Kinsey-Lee worked together on the Safety Bassinet Loan Scheme from March to December of last year.

To date 185 Victorian Municipalities have joined the scheme and 11,500 bassinets have been issued to them.

Netta and Debbie travelled around Victoria running training sessions for representatives of each participating municipality.

The workload was so enormous last year that Child Road Safety Educators **Trish Genat** and **Margaret Buszard** assisted by running some of the training sessions.

The Bassinet Scheme was initiated early last year with Government funding of \$704,000 to encourage parents of very young children to use safety restraints.

**Ford Australia** provided \$175,000 towards the State initiated scheme, part of which was in the form of a station wagon which is not only a means of transport for the girls but is also a mobile demonstrator of how to fit the bassinets.

Both Netta and Deborah enjoyed the work, although Deborah has since moved into the area of administrative support for the Schools Program.

Netta continues to co-ordinate the loan scheme with the assistance of **Kay Rawlings**.

Netta worked for several years as a nursing sister before completing her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology and Politics at Monash.

Before joining the RTA she worked for 18 months as Community Education Officer with the Monash University In Vitro Fertilisation program. She is married with three children.

Deborah, who comes from Auckland, studied nursing and has worked in child care, administration and various other roles in New Zealand, England and Melbourne.



## CIVENEX '86

by **George Guimarra**

The Authority participated in CIVENEX '86 at Werribee Park during 4 - 6 March.

CIVENEX is an annual Civil Engineering exposition held as part of the Municipal Engineers Conference Week to bring together the buyer, the user and the seller.

The RTA had the theme of 'Information Management' to demonstrate the Authority's computing expertise and services.

The purpose of the display was to show how the Authority is developing better systems for the management of information with the aid of computer technology.

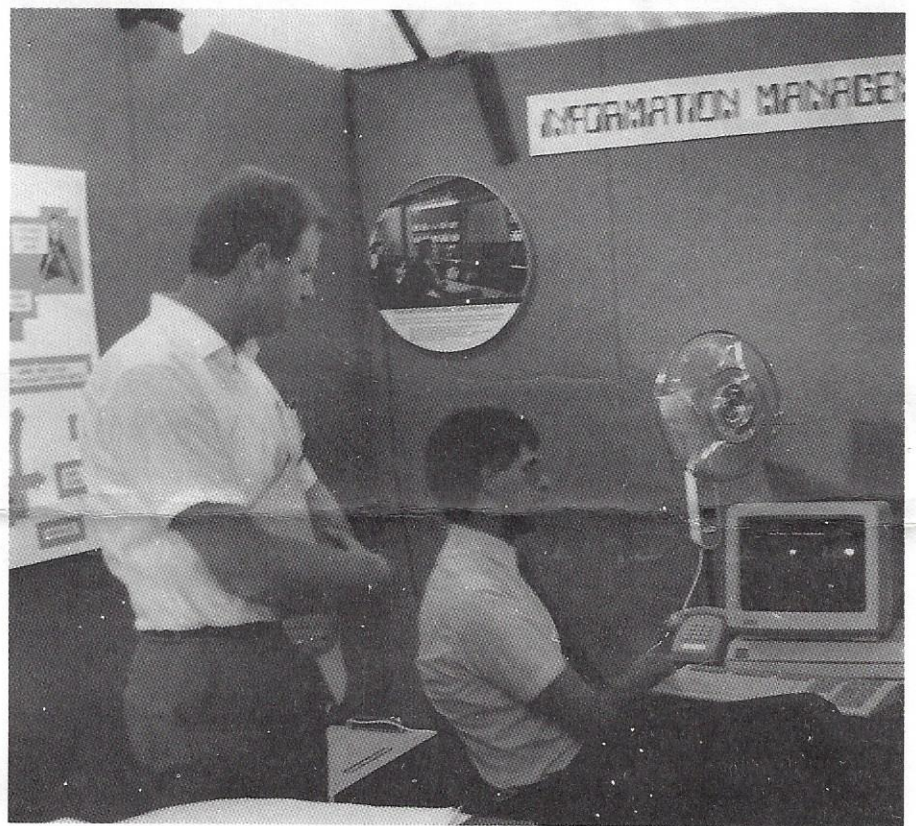
These systems will enable direct access to various forms of information for staff and assist in servicing the data needs of other authorities, municipal councils and agencies.

The Authority had three major elements in its display.

Our **Program Management System** was illustrated by means of a computer terminal showing the type of information available.

**Computer Aided Drafting equipment** was used to demonstrate the latest methods of plan production as used in the design of traffic intersections, amongst other high-volume usages.

A series of panel displays indicated how direct access can be obtained to the Authority's **data banks**.



*Trevor Mc Cullough of Programs showing PMS to Darryl Treloar, Shire Engineer of Rosedale.*

## RTA Geelong Rebuild

Work has started on the \$1.4 million Authority offices in Fyans Street, Geelong.

The project was announced last September by the Minister for Transport, Mr Tom Roper.

The building will be single storey, steel framed and brick veneer. It will be air conditioned and cover about 750 square metres.

The new office is designed for a staff establishment of 29 offering the RTA services of driver learner permit and licence testing, issue and renewal, photo point, vehicle inspection, registration and registration transfer, road safety publicity, traffic signals monitoring, RTA Displan centre, road patrol control and will accommodate our South Western Regional administration.

Extensive parking and inspection areas with stormwater drainage, asphalt paving, kerbing and landscaping are also being provided.

The works will occupy an area on the 1.3ha block west of the existing office building which will be demolished.

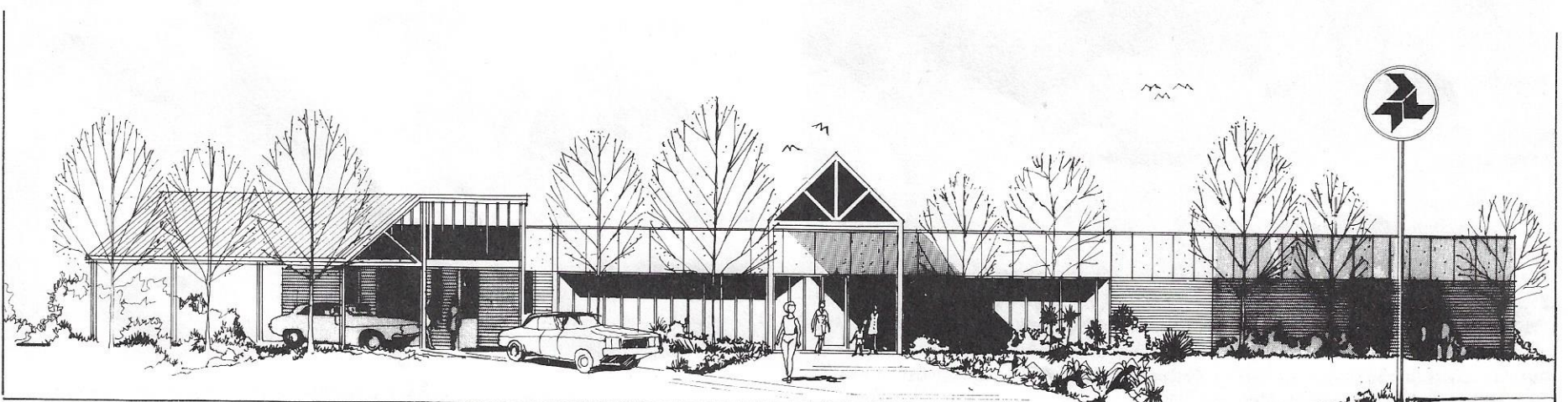
The present office, built in the mid-1960's for the Police, was designed to accommodate a staff of six and only offered the then Police functions of vehicle registration and licence testing.

It will incorporate the functions now available at the Carr and Kilgour Streets office where Regional Manager **Max Douglas** is centred.

All the Geelong personnel are excited by the prospect of the new accommodation, especially Office Manager **Graham Pidgeon**.

But one member of staff at Geelong is said to not be going to move into the new office - rumour has it that Max Douglas is retiring in late June.

**Good luck, Max!**

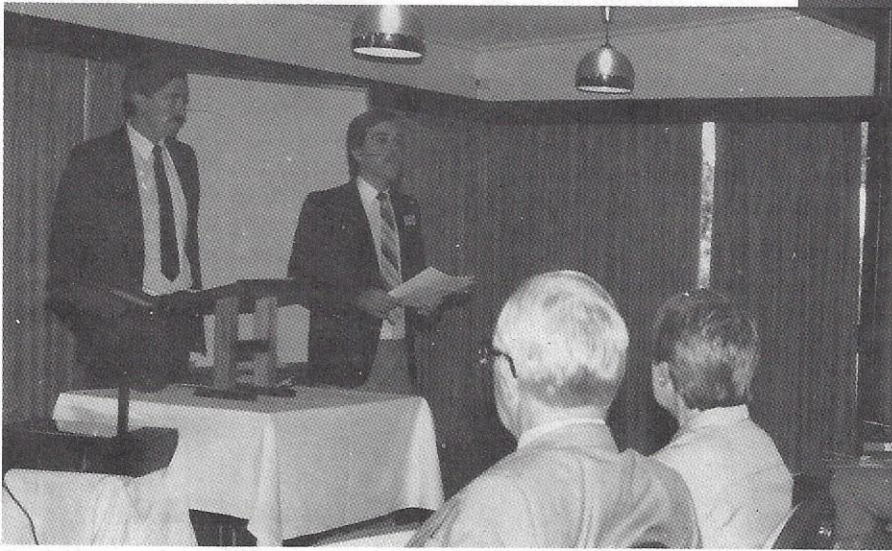




## Planning for Retirement

A seminar on early planning for retirement has been developed in conjunction with the Early Planning for Retirement Association as part of the range of training courses offered by the Authority.

This development recognises the provision of appropriate pre-retirement information to staff members on a range of issues encompassing superannuation, investments, taxation, health and leisure activities.



Recent amendments to the Superannuation Act now provide for optional early retirement from age 55. In the first group of courses conducted all staff aged 55 and over, and spouses, were given an opportunity to attend a seminar.

The seminars occupied a day and a half. The first was held at

Studley Park Receptions in Kew. The setting proved ideal for the topic of retirement. The final half day of the seminar was held in Carlton.

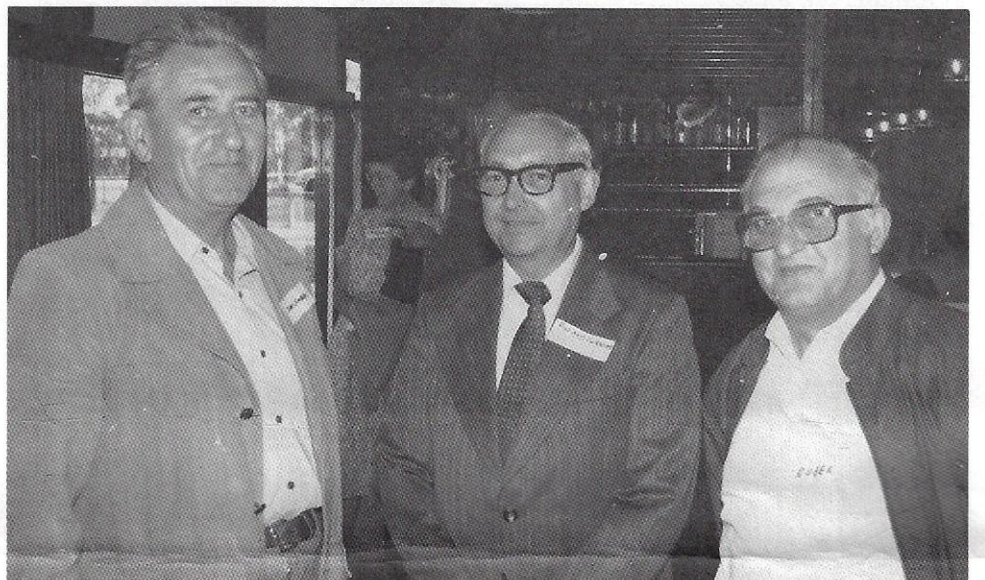
Recognition for his role in initiating this very positive training course must go to our recently retired General Manager - Special Projects **Gerry Kelly**.



*Kerras Burke, John Berends and John Evans at the Seminar.*

*Rod Mc Donald being introduced to the group by Richard Ballantyne.*

*John Farkas (Drivers), Roland Commins (Pay Office) and Robert Fuller (Mail, South Building)*



## 21st Century Reception Desk



Traffic Management in 3 Prospect Hill Road is, like the other divisions of the Authority, rapidly modernising to meet the demands of today's world as is epitomised by this ultra modern reception desk outside General Manager (Traffic) Brian Negus' office staffed by Lorraine Boag.

## IF IT MOVES WE MEASURE IT



*All part of the Enforcement job - Rob Carboon measures a 1.7m brown snake (without head) encountered at Melton weigh bridge.*

## RTA PLAYING CARDS

Double packs of official RTA playing cards

Available from Public Relations

**\$6.00**



# GERRY KELLY RETIRES AS PLANNED

On Friday 9 May recently retired General Manager - Special Projects Gerry Kelly, whose last project for the RTA introduced an early planning for retirement program, celebrated his retirement with dinner at La Padella in Lygon Street, Carlton.

Gerry led the Ministerial Project Team that drafted the future structure and function of the RTA and, as General Manager - Operations, oversaw implementation of the interim and final structures.

Nearly 40 friends and workmates joined Gerry and his wife Julie for a presentation in recognition of his contribution to the Authority.

Gerry, who officially retired on 6 March, was born in Melbourne in 1926. He joined the AIF in early 1945 as a volunteer but never saw action - he was still in basic training at Cowra by V-E Day and was undergoing Wireless Signals training at Bonegilla when V-J Day arrived.

From Morotai he volunteered for service with the Australian Component of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan where he was posted from February '46 to June '47.

He joined the Public Works Department in 1951. He later moved to the Health Department where he was involved in the Polio immunisation program.

In 1959 he joined the Public Service Board where he served later as Senior Public Service Inspector for Organisation and Methods, Work Measurement and Management Systems.

Later he served as Director of the Management Services Division until his appointment as Acting Director of Personnel and Recruitment.

In both later positions he travelled extensively within Australia generating and maintaining contacts with Public Service Boards and Departments in other states and in Canberra. In 1978 he received a Public Service Overseas Travel Award to make an extensive visit to North America, Europe and Asia to inspect private and public sector organisations.

Gerry joined the TRB in April 1981 prior to it being amalgamated with the MRB. As General Manager - Registration he introduced a program of change in responsibilities and installed a formal consultative mechanism to assist changes in the organisation.

During late 1982 Gerry was seconded to the Ministry of Transport where he worked as Project Leader of the RTA project team.

Gerry returned from the Ministry in late December 1982 and worked with several colleagues on the implementation of the reorganisation. In September 1983 he was appointed General Manager - Operations. His main task was to manage the introduction of the

new photographic driver licence which was introduced on 1 November 1984.

The Reorganisation and Structure Report approved by the Minister which formed the basis of the RTA structure in 1983, was seen as an interim structure to launch the new Authority. The later restructure implemented in September 1985 was an identified outcome of the 1983 structure.

In September '85 Gerry was appointed General Manager - Special Projects to undertake some short term tasks until his retirement in 1986.

One of his special projects was the program of Early Planning for Retirement seminars, which has already been implemented (see page 8). As Gerry approached optional early retirement he became increasingly aware of the pitfalls and perils that awaited the inwary retiree.

"A person has to look at retirement as changing over to a new career", Gerry said.

"It's a big step, and an irrevocable one. There can be relatively large sums of money involved and bad decisions at this time can be disastrous".

"By learning well in advance about what to expect and how to handle the situation the program enables participants to plan their resources to best advantage for their retirement."

Now that he has retired Gerry is completing the refurbishing of his home and implementing external changes to reduce the level of maintenance required

Gerry and his wife Julie enjoy travelling and have already had several small holidays in between their regular golfing.

They are now planning an extended tour of the United States and Canada, taking apartments for a month or so in the cities that they visit.

This leisurely progress is perhaps the result of Gerry's last trip to North America in the Winter of 1983 to study driver licence formats there. Gerry flew in 15 airplanes in 19 days, averaged four hours sleep per night for the duration of the trip and was caught in a blizzard in Minneapolis/St Paul.

It is little wonder that he now wants to have matters of no greater urgency to deal with than to relax in the conservatory of the Empress Hotel on Vancouver Island and to visit the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.

Gerry said that he enjoyed immensely his time at the Authority and his association with its staff. He appreciated the co-operation which he received since his arrival in 1981.

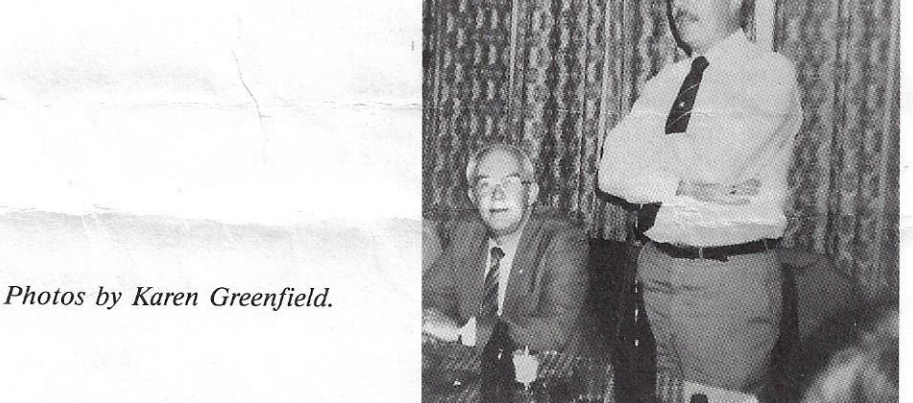
"The experience was great - I'm glad I didn't miss it", Gerry said.



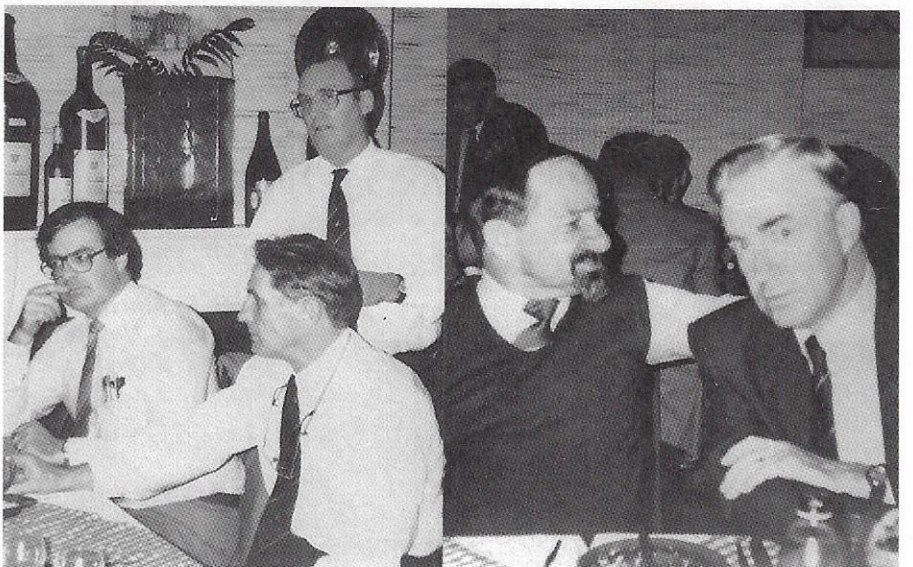
Julie and Gerry Kelly - sorry to part.



Vin Smith, and Anna Naoum

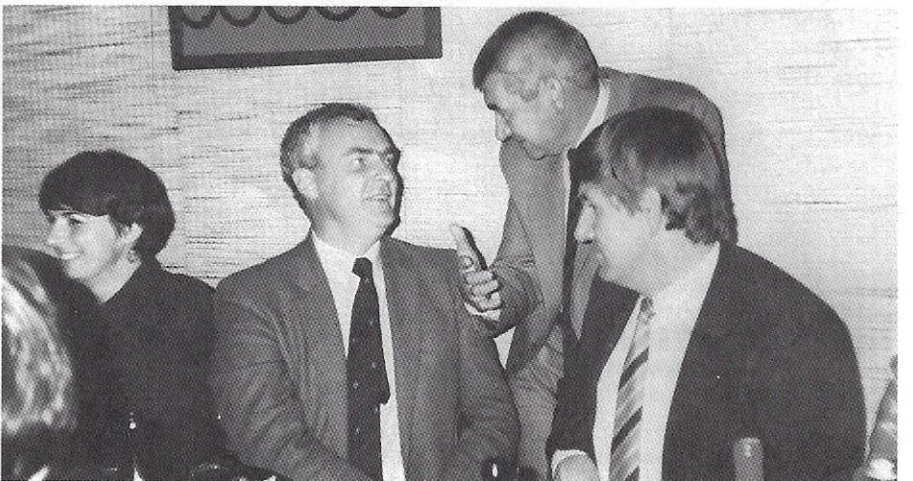


Peter Golden farewells his predecessor.



Greg Angelo, John Permezal and Kevin Shea.

Arthur Eldridge and John Byrnes.



Margaret Douglas, Ernie Atkinson, Bob McNamara and Rob McQuillen.

Photos by Karen Greenfield.



# FERRRET

In the course of his never ending quest for the truth within and without the Authority your scribe this issue found himself in Hawthorn looking into the activities of the Traffic Signals Installation and Maintenance Sub-group.

The section is headquartered in the new premises at 818 Glenferrie Road on the first floor, a much appreciated improvement on their previous accommodation.

**Geoff Kloot**, the sub-group manager, was kind enough to show your scribe around and to answer some questions on the role and functions of the section.

**Geoff, can you quickly sum up the objectives of your section?**

Our job is to ensure the efficient installation and the effective maintenance of traffic signals, the control and operation of a stores system to provide the necessary signal equipment and to ensure the proper and efficient financial control of the works.

**Where does your area fit into the RTA structure?**

Our sub-group is one of three reporting to the Group Manager - Traffic Signals, the others being the Metropolitan Control Centre and Signals Design and Operation.

Our sub-group is made up of 80 staff in three sections - Installation, Maintenance and Supply, led respectively by **Colin Bates**, **Ken Jordan** and **Ken Maynard**.

**What does the Installation Section do?**

As the name implies, they install traffic signals in accordance with plans provided by either the Traffic Design Group or the Signals Design and Operations Sub-group.

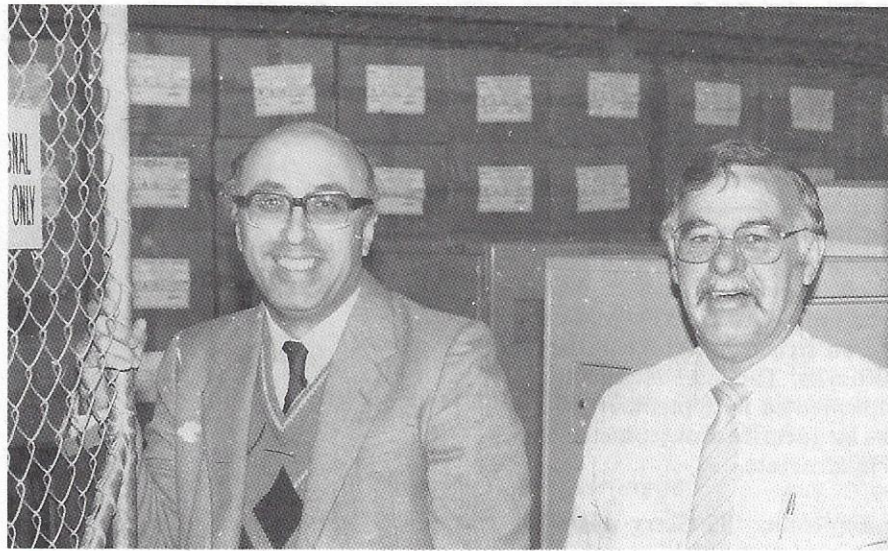
We break the various tasks into two areas - civil engineering and electrical work.

Civil engineering tasks include the installation of conduits, cable pits and foundations, and Electrical works include the erection and wiring of the signal equipment and the controller preparation and its installation.

**What does maintenance involve?**

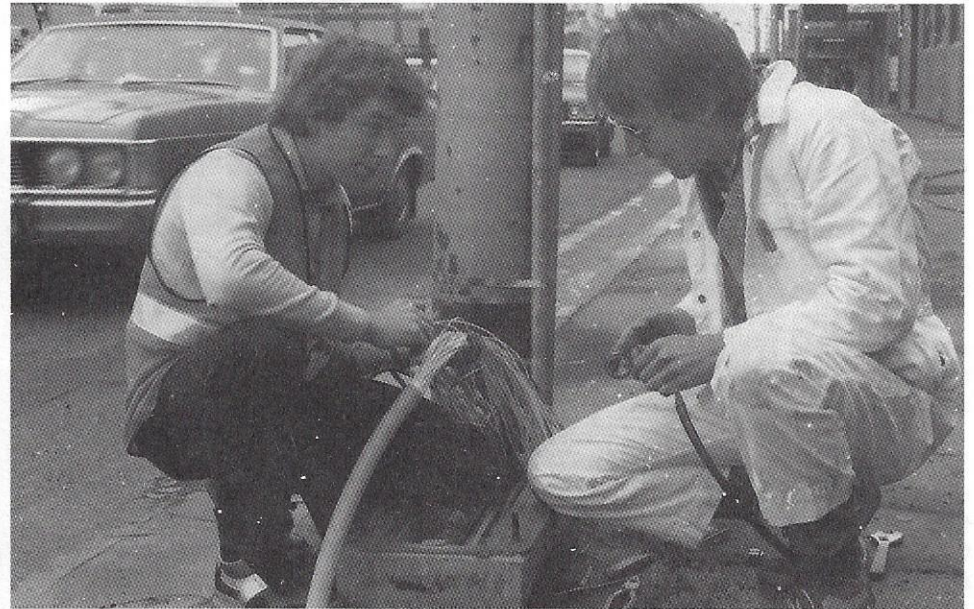
Maintenance ranges from replacing burnt out light globes through replacing signal pedestals knocked down in road accidents to repairing faulty signal controller units.

Experience shows that one man can carry out fault maintenance on 80 sets of signals or routine service on 120 sets each year.

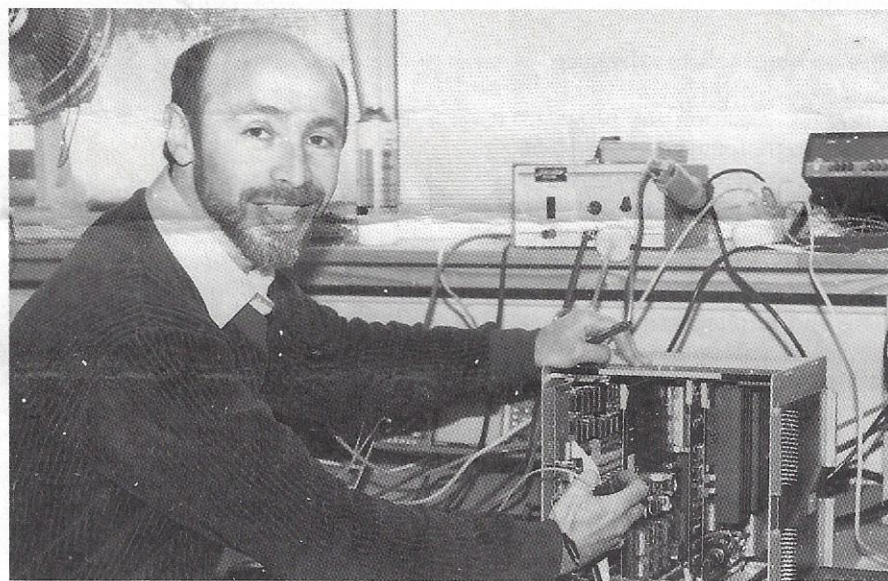


*Geoff Kloot and Direct Labour Officer Bob Stewart.*

*Traffic Signal Technician, Steve Mongan and Steve Maker wiring up a Traffic signal controller box in Sydney Road, Coburg.*



*Traffic Signal Technician Ben Bekerman checking the processor of a signal controller.*



The building in Burwood Road used to also house our repair and maintenance workshop, and the controller preparation area. Both of these activities are carried out in well equipped air conditioned workshops located in our new building.

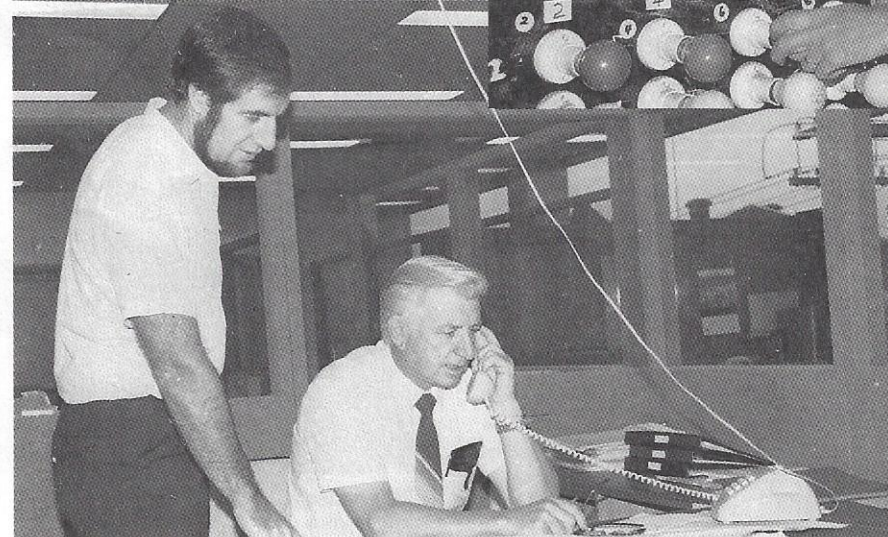
**It sounds like quite a lot of work for the number of staff.**

We employ contractors to augment our direct labour force. In country areas the Authority's direct labour staff provides back-up and technical advice to the local contractors. We have an engineer in Geelong to supervise signal works in that area. In the remainder of the rural area the RCA supervises on our behalf.

*Traffic Signal Technician Stu Hamilton and Jim Howard - both recently transferred from MCC - changing lamps in a mimic panel.*



*Section Leader - Installations Colin Bates and Works Officer - Installation Bruce Ritchie discussing installation plans.*



In Melbourne we now use direct labour to maintain nearly 500 sets of signals. We have taken over responsibility for central Melbourne's signals from the Melbourne City Council.

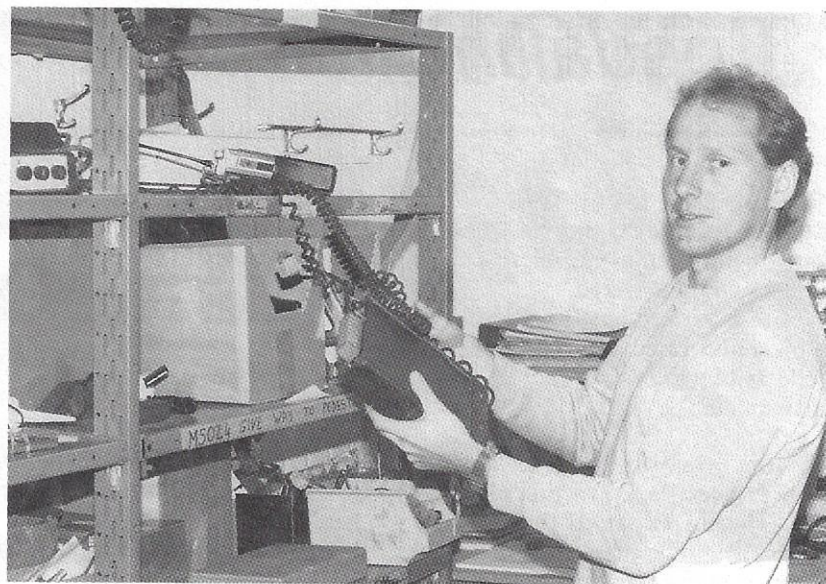
**What is the biggest job on your plate at the moment?**

The major task at present is the installation of traffic signals throughout Melbourne to enable the SCRAM co-ordination system to be implemented.

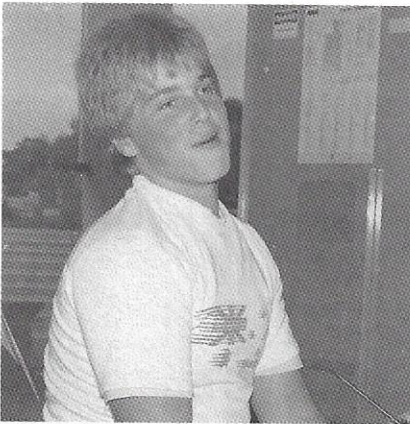




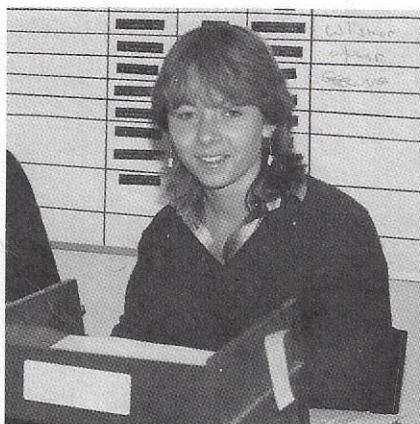
Lon Pruscino of the civil engineering crew.



Radio Technician John Karas with older style 2-way Radio Equipment



Technician Apprentice Tom Fitzmaurice about to interlock a controller.



Clerical Officer Kaley Treverton preparing direct labour wages.



Supply Officer Lisa Aarons arranging deliveries from the store.

This is a large scale engineering program involving equipment specification and purchase, works agreements, tenders for field work, contract supervision, expenditure certification, as well as extensive works supervision.

This project also involves the provision of public signals as part of the fairway system. Obviously after commissioning the signals they then become our maintenance responsibility. Ultimately we expect to maintain nearly 2000 sets of signals in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

The Signal Installation and Maintenance Sub-group is unique within the Authority being the only area involved in field construction and maintenance works. Therefore we have staff with training and skills not generally found elsewhere in the organisation. Our vehicle fleet of 40 reflects this with travel towers (cherry-pickers), trucks and vans forming the majority of the fleet.

Because of the unique role of Signal Installation and Maintenance Sub-group some staff members may be interested in seeing what they do. Geoff Kloot would be happy to show them around the building and explain the Sub-group's activities if they would care to contact him.

## The Ministry and the RTA

The Road Traffic Authority is one of eight statutory authorities which together comprise the nearly \$2.4 billion per annum Transport portfolio. The other authorities are the Metropolitan Transit Authority (the Met), the State Transport Authority (V/line), the Road Construction Authority, Port of Geelong Authority, Port of Portland Authority and the Grain Elevators Board.

In brief, the function of the Ministry is to oversee the provision and regulation of transport and the provision and maintenance of the State's transport infrastructure. In a highly mobile society transport matters are very important.

Where does the RTA fit into the Transport portfolio? Our 1985/86 budget is \$126 million and we employ about 2000 staff in nearly 40 locations throughout Victoria.

Our functions include the management and regulation of road transport, driver licensing and vehicle registration, promotion of road safety and operation of the Vehicle Securities Register.

As with the other authorities all of our functions are controlled by the Ministry of Transport.

The MTA is responsible for all metropolitan train, tram and bus services. Former RTA Chairman, Kevin Shea, is now Chairman and Managing Director of the MTA and is responsible for its annual \$800 million plus budget.

V/line is known for its country rail and bus services as well as the movement of freight, especially

grain. Wide ranging improvements in services including air conditioned trains and the Webb Dock Rail Link contributed to V/lines budget of \$650 million this year.

The RCA, together with municipal councils, constructs and maintains our roads and is funded mainly from State Government road user charges (vehicle registration fees) and Federal Government Grants. This year's budget is over \$550 million.

Victoria's ports are under various authorities. The major ports each serve a specific market - Melbourne is the biggest container port in the southern hemisphere while Geelong handles mostly agricultural produce and services a growing industrial sector.

Portland handles grain, livestock, woodchips, petroleum and fertiliser products and soon will handle the output of the new aluminium smelter. Minor ports come under the Ports and Harbours Division while navigation, pilotage and vessel survey and registration are the responsibility of the Marine Board of Victoria. These last two bodies are directly managed by the Ministry.

The combined Ports' budgets for this year amounts to nearly \$190 million.

The Grain Elevators Board's budget is \$80 million. The GEB operates some 300 receival sites in Victoria and the southern Riverina with storage capacity of three million tonnes in the country and one million tonnes on the docks.

## motorcycle licence testers get new tests, new uniforms



Peter Golden inspects the new uniform modelled by its designer, motorcycle licence tester Darryl Johnston.

Motorcycle riders these days are getting a completely new practical road test, according to CLARO motorcycle testing officer Warren Gordon.

The new tests were designed to provide testing officers with better assessment capabilities than the old 'once around the block' tests which were considered to be too rigid in form and limited in scope.

And to go along with the new tests a new uniform was designed to replace the old Police-style jodhpurs and boots.

The new uniform consists of a white helmet, silver leather jacket with blue inserts, blue leather leggings with double silver piping along the outside leg and black Medal motorcycle boots.

'All of us are very pleased with the new outfits', Warren said.



## pedalling for profit

**Why on earth were 30 or so RTA staff pedalling sweatily through Melbourne's inner southeastern suburbs on 18 March?**

No transport strike, no shortage of petrol had brought this event to pass - it was the brain child of **John Verreyt** of Traffic Strategies to acquaint staff involved in bicycle matters with bike facilities and the needs of their users.

The riders were led by Tony Adams of the State Bicycle Committee who pointed out bicycle facilities and answered questions during the trip. Bicycle helmets and hired bicycles were made available to all participants.

The first group of riders set out from Princes Park in Caulfield at 9am. The riders passed through North Brighton, then took the cycle track along the Nepean Highway as far as Gardenvale Road. There they turned left and cycled to the beach bicycle path.

They kept to the seafront past Elwood and St Kilda and turned inland at Middle Park to ride around Albert Park Lake, and from there to Princes Bridge via the St Kilda Road.

From the City they followed the Yarra bicycle path to Grange Road, and then crossed the river to cycle through several of the local traffic precinct streets of Hawthorn on their way to Central Park where lunch awaited them.

After lunch the second group of riders retraced the path of the first

group and were picked up, bikes and all, by bus at Caulfield.

'The main benefit of the rides was our gaining an appreciation of what is good and bad in cycling facilities from the user point of view', John said.

'Now we designers, engineers and planners all have experience first hand as users and are better aware of cyclists' needs and problems'.

Attitudes towards the rides were assessed by means of questionnaires afterwards and were generally considered to be of value to participants.

John is hoping to organise more management orientated rides in the future.



*Janet Kaylock, Martan O'Brien, Peter Carter, John Verreyt and John Carey check the traffic before crossing Power Street, Hawthorn.*

## GOLF



*Bob Sturrock presenting the trophy to Vin Smith.*

In the annual golf contest with the Department of Motor Transport, the NSW team took the Trophy this February with a 24 stroke lead.

The rounds were played at the NSW, Royal Sydney and The Australian Golf Club courses.

Closer to home it was Vin Smith who took out the Bob Sturrock Perpetual Trophy this year at the final round played at Chirside Park.

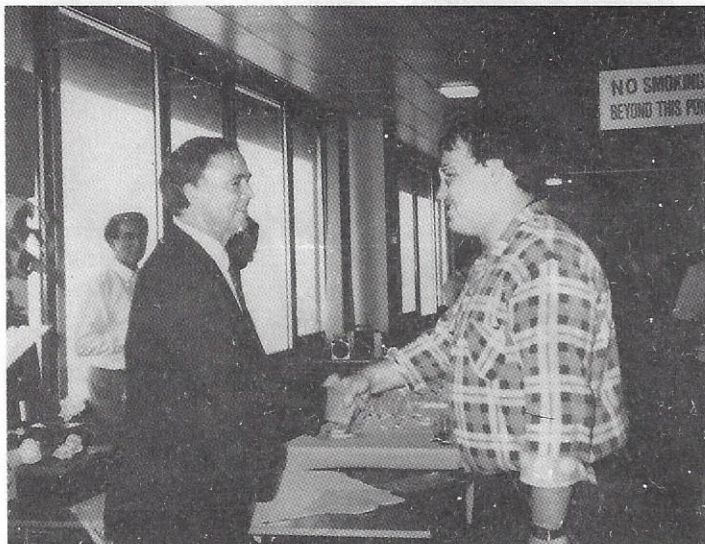
The trophy is presented annually based on performance in the monthly RTA Social Club Golf Tourney.

'Be sure to mention that Brian Lindsay was runner-up', Vin said.

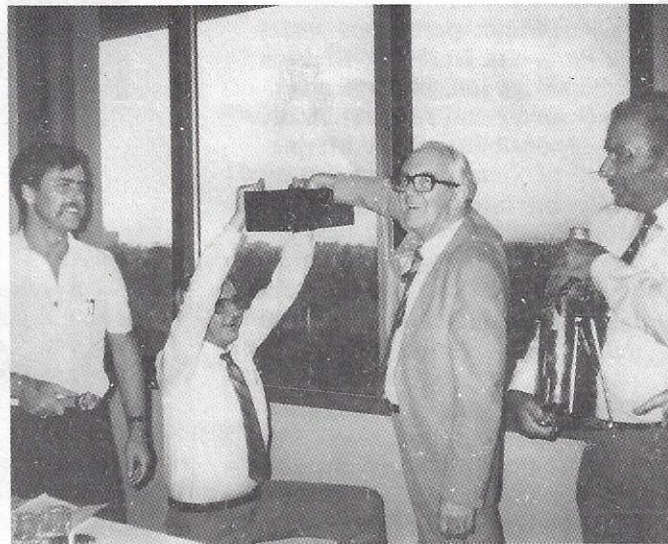


*The RTA golfers in Sydney - Gerry Menary (Manager), Frank Nolan, Brian Lindsay, Vin Smith, Ernie Atkinson, Carlos Solier and (front) Clive Vander-Hoeven.*

## CRICKET



*Chairman Vin Smith thanking team scorer Mark Kalletta.*



*GERRY KELLY picks a winner assisted by Gerry Radnell and Norm Deckker.*

Perhaps we did not do as well as we would have liked in the Sydney game against the DMT this February, but we certainly showed our paces in winning the Victorian Public Service Cricket Association Shield.

Playing against the Department of Agriculture who won the toss and elected to bat, we bowled them out in the 38th over for 105.

The RTA team was captained by Geoff Hughes and notable players included Angelo Herft, Tony Ziegelaar, Warren Smyth, Greg Withers, Steve Farrugia and Martyn Tyndal.

At a recent "Happy Hour" in the South Building canteen, Chairman Vin Smith presented commemorative medallions to all of the players.