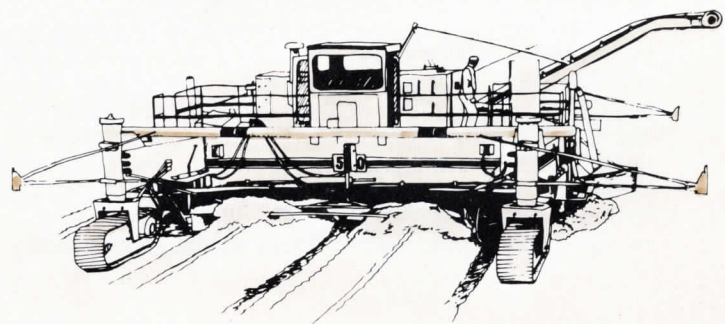
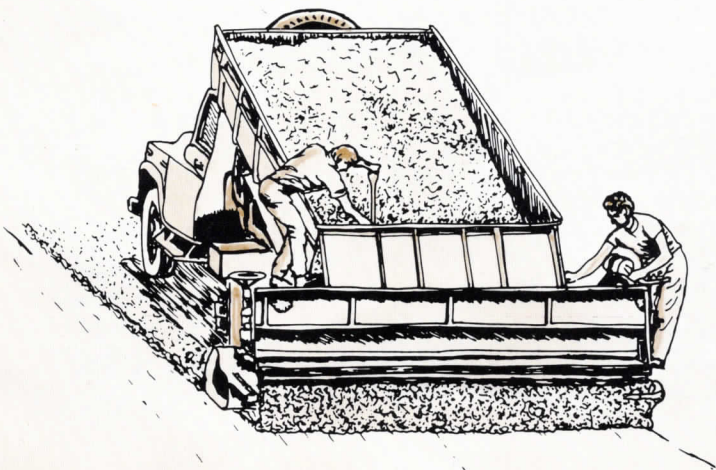
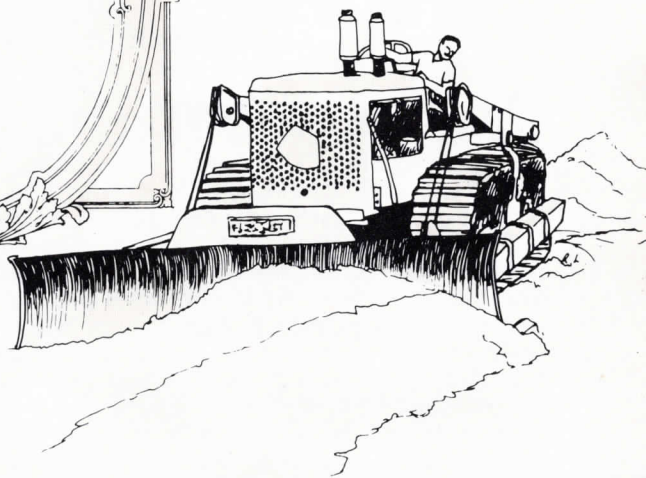
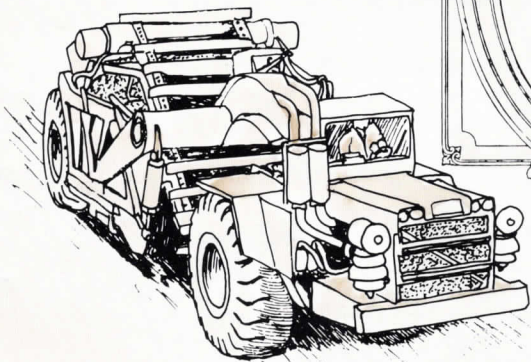
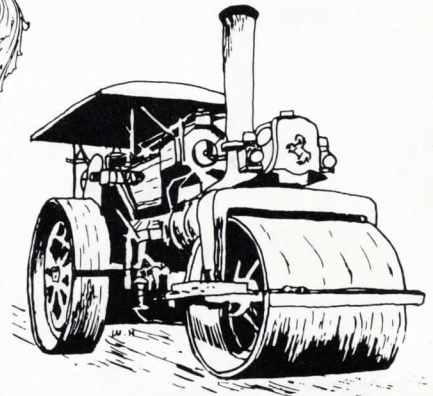


**70 YEARS
OF
GROWTH
1913-1983**



70 YEARS OF GROWTH

1913-1983

In the early 1900s Victoria's roads were in a very poor condition and, by 1912, settlement had far outpaced road construction and there was no comprehensive road system linking all parts of the State.

The demands created by these conditions led to the proclamation of the Country Roads Act 1912 on 1st January 1913. The Act established a three member Board as a central road authority—the Country Roads Board, Victoria. In March 1913, a 53 year old Scotsman, William Calder, was appointed as the Country Roads Board's first Chairman.

In his first two years as Chairman, Mr Calder and the other two Board Members carried out a detailed investigation into the condition of Victorian roads.

Road maintenance was high on the priority list, and a comprehensive road patrol and repair system was established.

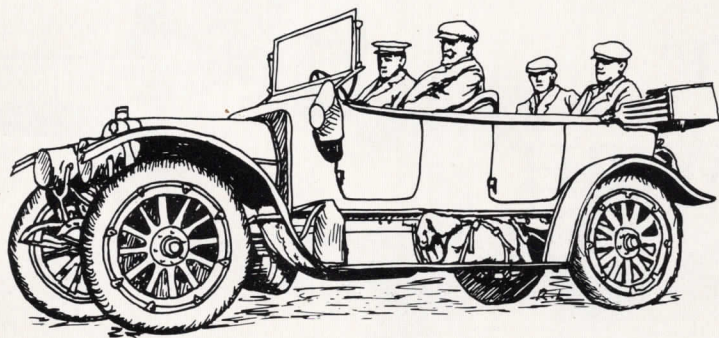
As a result of the investigation, the CRB nominated some 8,047 km of roads for declaration as main roads, being the major road classification provided for under the Country Roads Act 1912.

Since those early years, the types and classifications of roads has increased. In 1924, legislation providing for the declaration of State highways was enacted.

In 1955, the CRB commenced the duplication of the pavements of certain heavily trafficked sections of State highways. With the considerable growth in motor vehicle ownership and the large increase in the volume of traffic using roads, the advantages of high capacity roads with limited access soon became apparent. The first freeway (originally referred to as a bypass road) to be constructed was the Maltby Bypass Road which was completed in 1961.

Tourists' roads and forest roads were other classifications provided for in the Country Roads Act as the CRB's responsibility.

There are approximately 160,000 km of public roads in Victoria, of which about 24,000 comprise the State's principal road network of Country Roads Board declared State highways, main roads, tourists' roads, forest roads and freeways.



Formation of the Country Roads Board

At a meeting held in Warragul on the 15th August 1911, representatives of 18 councils met together and passed a resolution "That the Government be asked to form a Gippsland development trust, subject to the consent of the Councils, the Government to lend £1,000,000 to the trust at 3¾ per cent, with 1½ per cent sinking funds and subsidies, special grants (averaged) and money received from the unused roads and water frontages in Gippsland, the Government to find the balance of interest and sinking fund; this £1,000,000 to be expended by the Shire Councils, under the supervision of the trust, upon the main roads leading to stations, the trust to recommend to the Government, from time to time, proposals for railways and ports required for the development of Gippsland". The following day, a deputation conveyed the resolution to the Acting Premier and the Acting Minister of Public Works and was assured that its representations would be sympathetically considered.

In 1910 the Inspector General of Public Works, Mr W Davidson, had submitted a report recommending the establishment of a Roads Board to take over the care and management of main roads and subsequently Mr J A Norris, then Sub-accountant of the Treasury, was directed to investigate and report upon the road needs of the State. In his report, published on 21st December 1911, Mr Norris also recommended the establishment of a central roads authority stating inter alia that lack of co-operation between municipalities in the construction

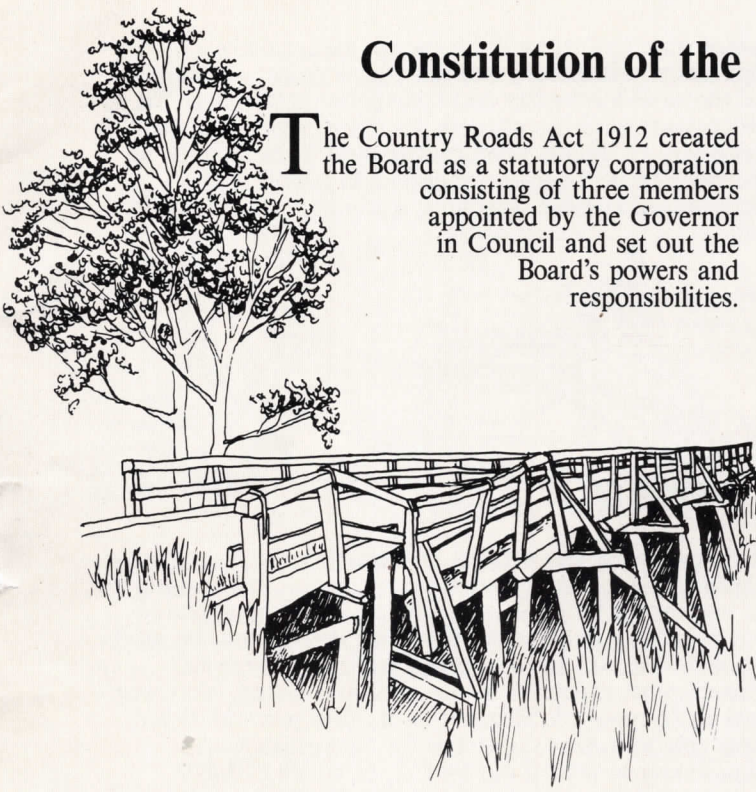
and maintenance of arterial routes, the distribution of such State aid as was available without supervision over the expenditure or "thorough investigation into actual needs, and the absence of a central authority to supplement, guide and weld together the efforts of local bodies" were equally to blame.

The development of the motor vehicle accelerated by rapid improvements in construction of the petrol engine and pneumatic tyres was bringing a new class of traffic to roads. Motor vehicles were first used for pleasure and later for carting small loads. This traffic accentuated the demands for better roads. These demands, and the representations of Mr Davidson and Mr Norris, were not to be denied and, in 1912, the Country Roads Bill was before Parliament. Experience in Victoria, and overseas, had indicated that if the problems of road construction and maintenance in a rapidly developing country were to be overcome, it would be necessary to appoint a strong central authority with wide discretionary powers to work in close co-operation with the existing machinery of local government, to provide expert technical knowledge of recently developed techniques and to disseminate information regarding surveys and investigations made. The Act of 1912 was, therefore, framed with these requirements in mind.

On 1st January 1913, the Country Roads Act was proclaimed creating a central road authority after 50 years of disintegrated control.

Constitution of the Country Roads Board

The Country Roads Act 1912 created the Board as a statutory corporation consisting of three members appointed by the Governor in Council and set out the Board's powers and responsibilities.



Amongst other things the Act provided that the Board should carry out all such surveys and investigations as were necessary or expedient to ascertain—

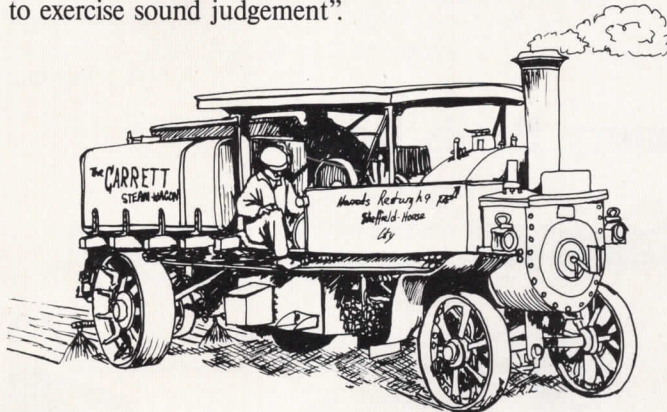
- (i) what roads should be main roads;
- (ii) the nature and extent of the resources of Victoria in road-making materials and the most effective and economical methods of utilizing them;
- (iii) the most effective methods of road construction and maintenance in the whole or any part of Victoria;
- (iv) what deviations in existing roads, or what new roads should, in its opinion, be made so as to facilitate communication and improve the conditions to traffic;
- (v) record, publish and make available for general information the results of all such surveys and investigations;
- (vi) purchase all land, machinery, tools and materials necessary for the purposes of the Act.

Although these powers and responsibilities have been extended from time to time to meet the demands of changing conditions, the basic provisions of the original Act of 1912 have remained unaltered, enabling the Board to preserve its independence and to discharge its duties to the greatest benefit of the State as a whole.

The First Two Years

When introducing the Country Roads Bill in the Legislative Assembly in 1912, the Hon H McKenzie outlined the Board's duties and stated that its first duty would be:

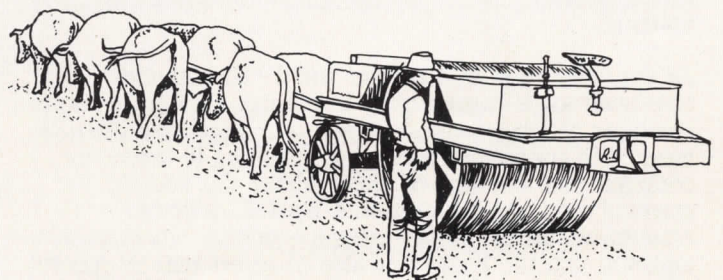
“to make a thorough investigation into existing highways so that it may have the materials on which to exercise sound judgement”.



Since the Act gave the Board very wide discretionary powers in determining which roads should be main roads, but required that councils were to be consulted before the declaration of any main road, it was also necessary that councillors should have a clear conception of the provisions of the Act, of the manner in which the Act was to be administered, and the benefits expected to ensue from operation of the Act. The Board, therefore, immediately set about the task of visiting every municipal district in the State, to inspect the roads in each and to explain the provisions of the Act to the respective councillors.

To facilitate the investigation, the Board divided the State into ten districts, taking them in the order considered to be the most necessitous, and formulated certain principles for its own guidance. First, it was decided that the inspection of a district should be completed before determining what roads should be main roads within any one municipality and, second, that in deciding what roads should be main roads the following criteria should apply:

- (i) whether they were main arterial roads carrying extensive traffic, or likely to carry extensive traffic between centres of population, or from one district to another;
- (ii) whether they were subject to considerable traffic from rural districts to the railway systems;
- (iii) whether they were developmental in character, that is, whether their construction would be likely to lead to improved settlement or increased production.

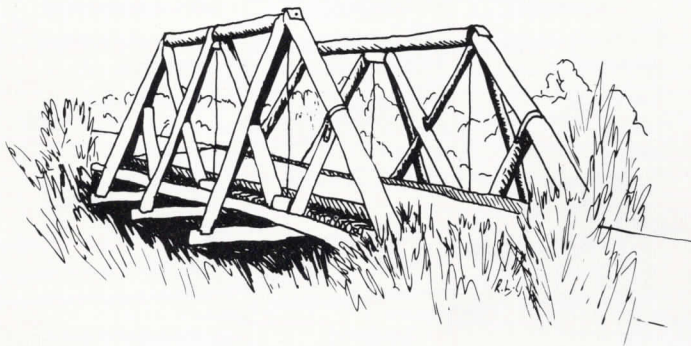


With these considerations in mind the Board commenced its investigation with an inspection of the Gippsland District. This was carried out between May and September 1913 when conditions were at their worst, and the greater part of the journey had to be made on horseback. Inspections of East Gippsland, the Cape Otway District, the North-Eastern District and the South-Western District followed in 1913, the remaining parts of the State being visited in the following year. In its Second Annual Report, the Board was able to state that:

“In the course of the investigation, every shire and borough in the State was visited...and without exception the Board was most cordially received”.

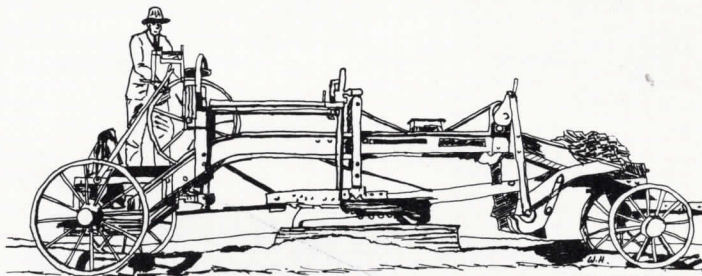
As a result of the investigation of road conditions throughout the State, the Board declared some 8,047 km of roads to be main roads, and outlined, for the guidance of municipalities, some considerations which were to be followed in the construction of the system.

The investigation had revealed that a wide diversity of constructional methods operated throughout the State and that design standards varied from shire to shire.



Frequently, little attention was given to the provision of adequate foundations and drainage. The lack of adequate thickness in the pavement and faults in its construction due to poor materials and improper methods had resulted in many of the failures noted. Many municipalities lacked

proper equipment, some having no road-making appliances whatsoever, and few had a proper appreciation of the need for regular and systematic maintenance. In its discussions with the councils, therefore, the Board found it necessary to discuss these matters and, subsequently, to provide the necessary instruction and advice in the adoption of suitable standards, methods and equipment.



Occupied as it was with its investigation, the Board could devote little attention to road construction, particularly as it was decided that no construction would be approved until surveys and investigations had determined the most suitable location for the road. Faulty alignment had proved most expensive in the past, and old mistakes were not to be repeated. However, in its first year, the Board was able to approve contracts for permanent works amounting to a total of £94,876, of which £23,440 represented contracts let directly by the Board and £71,436 by the municipalities. The first contract under the Country Roads Act was let for metalling on the Olinda Road in the Shire of Fern Tree Gully on 23rd December 1913, while the first to be completed was on the main Gippsland Road in the Shire of Warragul, adjacent to the site where the Calder Memorial now stands on the Princes Highway 3.2 km on the Melbourne side of Warragul. In the following year contracts for permanent works amounting to £496,878 were approved, £80,647 of which represented contracts let directly by the Board and £416,191 by the municipal councils. In the first year, 28 municipalities were affected by these works and in the second year 92 municipalities were affected.

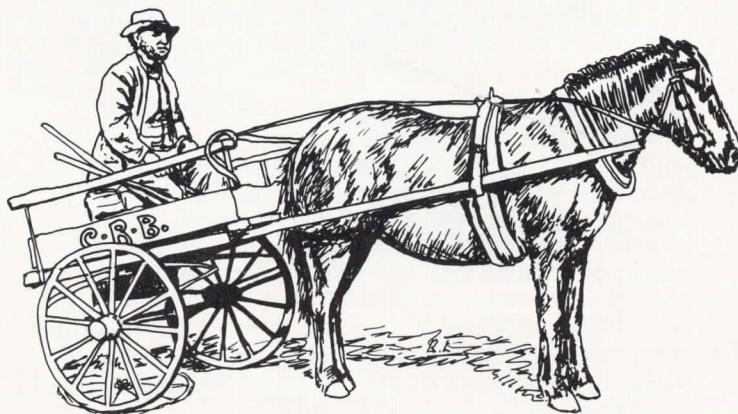
Early years of the Country Roads Board

In 1915 it was hoped that a start could be made on a major construction programme, but owing to the outbreak of war and the consequent enlistment of large numbers of men who could otherwise have been engaged on roadworks, this hope was not realised.

Many councils took the CRB's advice on the need for acquiring roadmaking plant. During the war years some councils spent considerable sums on plant and made extensive arrangements for the supply of roadmaking material.

At the conclusion of hostilities the CRB's activities continued to be hampered by increasing costs and shortages of labour and materials. The economic situation resulted in contractors becoming unwilling to tender for contracts and a system of direct labour was adopted for essential road and bridge works. By 1922 a certain amount of stability in the general economic situation was apparent and the Board was able to report that 90 percent

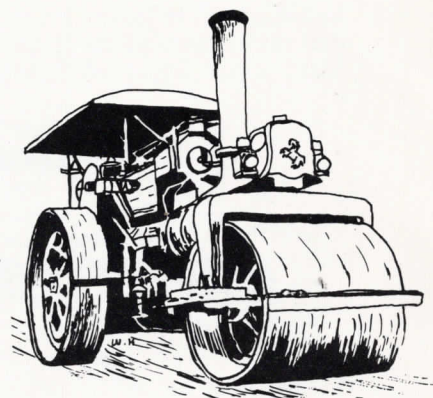
of all construction works which had been undertaken during that year had been carried out under contracts.





In 1924 the Highways and Vehicles Act was passed, providing for the declaration of State highways which were to be the direct responsibility of the CRB. The Board accordingly appointed a Highways Engineer and a number of District Engineers to represent the Board in various parts of the State and to directly control the work to be undertaken in their districts. In 1925 district headquarters were established at Benalla, Bendigo and Sale.

The year 1926 marked a major change in the provision of road finance by the passing of the Federal Aid Roads Agreement for the provision of Commonwealth funds on a systematic basis.



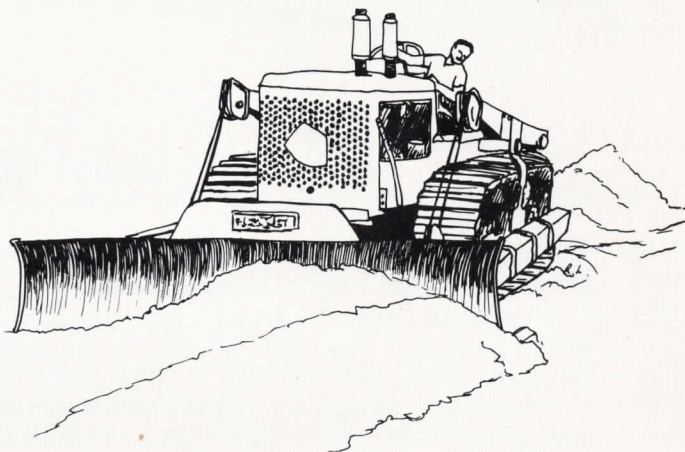
The financial depression of the 30s restricted the activities of the community to such an extent that in 1930 the revenue derived from motor registration fees declined considerably. The CRB was compelled to reduce expenditure on maintenance and curtail the programme of construction works. However, the provision of funds for unemployment relief enabled work to be undertaken on the construction of some subsidiary roads.

Prior to 1936 no definite system had been in force for the maintenance of roads to tourist resorts, with the result that considerable deterioration of these roads had taken place. In 1936 the Tourists' Road Act empowered the CRB to recommend the proclamation of such roads as it considered to be appropriate as tourists' roads, and to be responsible for the maintenance and construction of such roads.

World War II

In 1939 Australia's entry into the war resulted in the immediate calling up for the Services of many of the CRB's officers as well as many of its personnel engaged in construction works. Numerous requests were received from the Defence Authorities for the CRB's services and only a skeleton staff remained to carry out essential maintenance.

Early in 1942 the Commonwealth Government asked the State Government to allow the CRB to undertake the reconstruction and sealing of a 987 km section of the Stuart Highway in the Northern Territory between the railheads at Alice Springs and Larrimah. The task was completed during 1943.



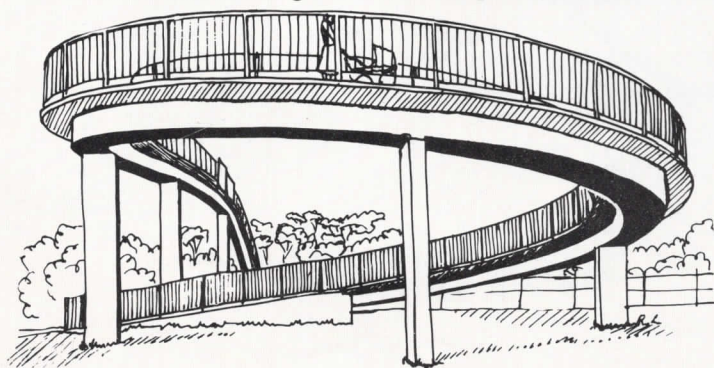
The post war period

Deficiencies in the State's road system which had accumulated during the war were quickly tackled

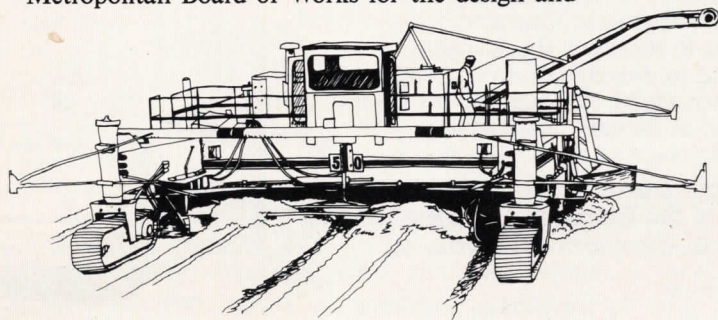
with funds which had accrued and the manpower available on demobilisation. During the period from 1945 to 1950 many new bridge projects were initiated, the State highway system was increased by 1,489 km to a total of 6,189 km, and a start was made on road access to estates being developed by the Soldier Settlement Commission.

Over the past 20 years the CRB's activities and responsibilities have been extended to include:

- the construction of freeways;
- the elimination of railway level crossings;
- the provision of overpasses and underpasses for school children.



In December 1973, the Premier of Victoria announced that the responsibilities of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works for the design and



construction of arterial roads and bridges in the Melbourne metropolitan area would be transferred to the Country Roads Board.

Amending legislation, the Metropolitan Bridges, Highways and Foreshores Act 1974 was passed during May 1974.

The provisions of the Act came into operation on 1st July 1974 on which day approximately 210 staff and supervisory personnel who had been engaged principally on work involving metropolitan roads and bridges transferred from the M&MBW to the CRB.

A new era

The West Gate Bridge Authority (Transfer of Functions) Act 1982 was enacted in the 1982 Autumn Session of State Parliament. Under this Act, the West Gate Bridge Authority was abolished, and its powers and functions, together with 113 staff, were transferred to the CRB.

On 1st June 1982, the Honourable Steve Crabb MP, Minister of Transport, announced that a major restructuring of the Ministry of Transport and the existing Transport Authorities would take place.

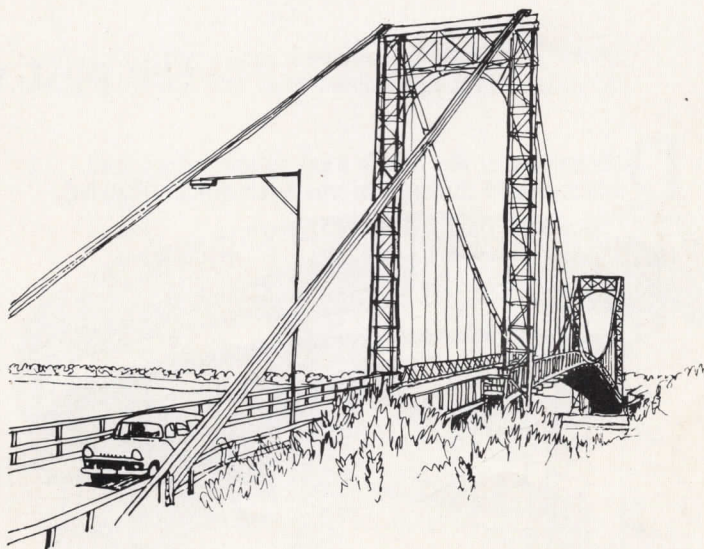
Task forces and project teams were formed to consider broad objectives, functions, responsibilities, structure and establishment of four new Transport Authorities to replace the eight existing Authorities.

As part of this restructuring, a new road construction authority is proposed to replace the Country Roads Board. This authority in conjunction with municipal councils will be responsible for the design, construction, maintenance and management of the State's road system.

It is proposed that the new Road Construction Authority will become operational from 1st July 1983.

Brief highlights

- 1913 Formation of the Country Roads Board
- 1915 Completion of two years of investigation into road conditions throughout the State
- 1918 Developmental Roads Act passed; this led to the construction of roads giving access from farming properties to railway stations or to a main road leading to a railway station. Commencement of work on the Great Ocean Road, to provide employment for returned servicemen
- 1923 Commonwealth Government passed the Main Roads Development Act which provided the first general funds to States to supplement Federal funds on a dollar for dollar basis
- 1924 Legislation passed for the declaration of State highways which became the direct responsibility of the CRB
- 1925 District headquarters of the CRB established at Benalla, Bendigo and Sale
- 1926 Federal Aid Roads Agreement passed by the Commonwealth to provide funds from revenue on a systematic basis. District headquarters of CRB established at Beaufort. Barwon River Bridge at Geelong constructed
- 1928 District headquarters of CRB established at Warrnambool and Head Office
- 1930 CRB compelled to reduce expenditure because of decline in motor registration fees received during the depression
- 1932 Completion of the Great Ocean Road
- 1936 Tourists' Road Act passed, empowering the CRB to recommend the proclamation of tourists' roads and to be responsible for the construction and maintenance of roads proclaimed as tourists' roads. Phillip Island Bridge at San Remo constructed



- 1939 World War II with the consequent diversion of most resources to defence works
- 1940 Dandenong and Geelong Divisions of the CRB established
- 1943 Forest Roads and Stock Routes Act passed
- 1944 Traralgon Division of the CRB established
- 1945 Resumption of normal activities after war
- 1948 Stawell district of the CRB divided into Ballarat Division and Horsham Division. Metropolitan Division of the CRB established
- 1950 Commonwealth Aid Roads Act passed; provided for a distribution to the States of a portion of the monies raised through petrol sales
- 1954 Level Crossings Fund established to accelerate the replacement of railway level crossings with overpasses or underpasses
- 1955 Commencement of dual carriageways on State highways
- 1956 Legislation passed giving CRB power to construct freeways
- 1960 Completion of present CRB Head Office building in Kew
- 1961 First freeway (the Maltby Bypass) opened at Werribee
- 1963 Dual carriageways on the Princes Highway between Oakleigh and Dandenong completed
- 1964 Introduction of a scheme for the replacement of school crossings with pedestrian overpasses or underpasses on busy roads
- 1965 Roads (Special Projects) Fund established to provide finance for special road projects throughout the State
- 1966 CRB appointed as the design and construction authority for the access roads to the Lower Yarra Crossing Project (West Gate Bridge)
- 1968 Section of Tullamarine Freeway, north of Essendon Airport opened
- 1969 Arrangements made for transportation studies to be undertaken in the urban areas of Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong. Phillip Island Bridge completed
- 1970 Tullamarine Freeway, south of Essendon Airport, completed
- 1971 West Gate Freeway, between Altona North and Spotswood, completed
- 1973 Western Freeway at Pentland Hills and Mulgrave Freeway, Jacksons Road to Springvale Road, Waverley completed
- 1974 Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works roading responsibilities in the Melbourne metropolitan area transferred to the CRB. Mulgrave Freeway, Jacksons Road to Stud Road, completed
- 1975 Completion of the Western Freeway at Myrningong, and the widening of High Street, St Kilda and Hoddle Street, Collingwood
- 1976 Completion of Hume Freeway, Wallan to Broadford; South Gippsland Freeway to Hampton Park; Mulgrave Freeway, Springvale Road to Blackburn Road; and the Snowy River Bridge at Orbost
- 1977 Completion of Eastern Freeway, Collingwood to Bulleen; Mulgrave Freeway, Blackburn Road to Forster Road; and Princes Freeway, Orbost
- 1978 Completion of West Gate Bridge; Charles Grimes Bridge (Johnson Street Bridge); and the Western Freeway at Ballan
- 1979 Completion of Mulgrave Freeway, Forster Road to Huntingdale Road; Tullamarine Freeway adjacent to Essendon Airport; and Hume Freeway, Avenel to Tubbs Hill. Adoption of SCRAM traffic signal project
- 1980 Completion of Mornington Peninsula Freeway, Keysborough to Seaford and Hume Freeway at Violet Town. Abolition of Roads (Special Projects) Fund
- 1981 Completion of Princes Freeway, Drouin Section, Hume Freeway, bypass of Avenel, and the final section of the Mulgrave Freeway, Huntingdale Road to Warrigal Road
- 1982 Completion of Hume Freeway bypass of Seymour, Calder Freeway Keilor Section, the arterial road extension of the Eastern Freeway and the La Trobe Terrace overpass in Geelong. Announcement of restructuring of transport authorities, including the formation of a new Road Construction Authority to replace the Country Roads Board. Abolition of West Gate Bridge Authority, and transfer of powers and functions to the Country Roads Board
- 1983 Completion of the bypass of Wallace and Bungaree. Appointment of Mr T H Russell as Chief Executive of the proposed new Road Construction Authority.

