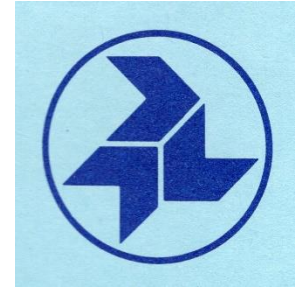


# The Road Traffic Authority

In 1984 when the CRB became the Road Construction Authority (RCA) and its traffic management function shifted to the Road Traffic Authority (RTA), I went to the RTA to head up the research and development area where our role was to come up with new road safety initiatives. The most advanced thing we did there was to develop Australia's first Expert System (now called Artificial Intelligence) in traffic engineering. Our work was published internationally and although, our methodology was adopted for VLIMITS which is still used for speed management, we were too far ahead of our time and after the merger of RTA with RCA this initiative lapsed.



## RTA Traffic Management Division



Other areas we investigated were land use development impacts, skid resistant surface treatments and wire rope barriers. We also had a look at the trends in technology and forecast the rise of autonomous vehicles (back in 1987).

I worked for Bill Sagers and Don Howie and started with John Smelt, Jill Earnshaw and Rob Fremantle in my team. I worked out of the TTM Consulting office for a couple of months to help them with a project they were trying to complete for the RTA. It was an interesting experience to work with Glen Holdsworth and Jim Higgs in a private consulting environment.



Bruce Thompson, Nick, Peter Cecil, Charles Uber



Volf Frishling, Daniel Lourie, John Verreyt, Dean Zabrieszach, Jill Earnshaw, Trevor Griffin, John Griffith



Everyone who worked for the RTA looks back on that period as one of great innovation and achievement. The main reason that the Government split the Traffic Management function from the Construction arm of the CRB (against the advice from senior CRB officers) and combined it with RoSTA, was to give Traffic Management a stronger focus. It was given independence and enough resources to focus on the task of squeezing the maximum capacity and safety out of the existing road network. Previously, at the CRB, smaller traffic engineering projects were too often sacrificed in favour of big build projects. I believe when the RTA and RCA were merged in 1989, the emphasis on traffic management declined again.



2002 Rob Freemantle, Nick, Bill Saggars, John Smelt, Jill Earnshaw at Bill's retirement

During my time at the RTA, I took on a leadership role with the committee of the Association of Professional Engineers Australia (APEA). There was a lot going on with all the changes in structures and conditions. When the rumours started about merging the RTA and RCA staff became concerned and it became a big issue for all unions.



When Michael Roux, CEO of RTA, suddenly announced a plan to move the Traffic Management Division from Hawthorn to 222 Exhibition St in the city and the staff were up in arms.

They wanted to know the reasons for the move. When none was forthcoming, staff decided to work to rules as a protest. This was only the second time that engineers at CRB/RCA/RTA had ever gone on strike. (I think the first was in the early 1960s when there was a major pay dispute which led to the formation of the APEA Group at the CRB.) The move to 222 was eventually abandoned and RTA merged with RCA.



Michael Roux

The people who worked at the RTA were proud of the work they did. Most feel that a great amount was achieved to improve the existing road network in a relatively short time. Many formed strong bonds which are celebrated once or twice a year with the "SLACK" lunch.



SLACKers\* long table clockwise from front: Martie Nash, Peter Vulcan, Phil Jordan, Nick Szwed, Graham Brookes, Rob Skelton, Mal Mc Donald, Mike Lamers, Rob Ekers, (Pat Rogerson hidden), Elizabeth Hovenden, John Smelt, Rob Freemantle, (John Gaffney hidden), (Clive Mottram hidden), Frank Brown, Ken Daley, John Griffith, Bruce Thompson, David Nash, Sophie Schyschow, Jill Earnshaw. Short table: Don Purdue, Bob Parr, Geoff Symons, Andrew Milvain, John Burke.

\*Strategies Lunchtime Alcoholics Cuisine Klub.

There are lot of documents and photos of the RTA times on the VicRoads Association website at:

<https://vicroadsassociation.org/rta/>

TELEPHONE LIST

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		NADALIN, Tina	8105
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BARNARD, George	8194		
BEAN, Stephen	8159	OLSEN, Richard	8145
BERENDS, John	8181	O'SULLIVAN, David	8102
BERTHELSEN, John	8194		
BROOKES, Graham	8156	PAGE, Jeff	8150
BUI, Bill	8154	PHIBBS, Robert	8136
BURGESS, Ron	8195	POSPICHAL, Nadia	8135
		PURDUE, Don	8140
CECIL, Peter	8151		
CERSSON, Alex	8143	RANASINGHE, Stan	8193
CHANG, Stanley	8131	RODGER, Graham	8144
CLEELAND, John	8170	ROZARIO, Pam	8107
COMPUTER ROOM	8180		
CONSULTANT	8176	SAGGERS, Bill	8106
CULL, Chris	8138	SCHYSCHOW, Sophia	8123
CURRY, Peter	8137	SII, A	8173
		SMELT, John	8161
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		SZWED, Nick	8160
GIBNEY, John	8126		
GRIFFIN, Trevor	8125	TARRY, Jo	8167
GRIFFITH, John	8163	TIERNEY, Graham	8190
		TILLEY, Eve	8183
HENG, Fok	8157	TZIOTIS, Michael	8130
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HOWIE, Don	8100	UBER, Charles	8166
JORDAN, Phillip	8152	VERREYT, John	8132
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		WILLIAMS, David	8144
LAMERS, Michael	8142	WILSON, Debbie	8101
LEUNG, Stephen	8177	WISHART, Sharon	8184
LOO, Louis	8121	WREN, Michael	8172
LOURIE, Daniel	8165		

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