

VICROADS ASSOCIATION INC.

Reg No A0022250S

46th Annual Report

March 2025 – 31 December 2025

I have pleasure in presenting the 47th Annual Report of the VicRoads Association.

This is my first Annual Report as President after taking over from David Jellie, who stepped down in 2025 after over 20 years at the helm. I'd like to thank David for staying on the Committee, and for his fellowship and assistance over the last year.

I've enjoyed being President - and the Newsletter Editor, as well as the friendship and contributions of our Committee Members. I've also been honoured by the support and encouragement of the Membership at large.

Membership

I'm greatly saddened to advise that since the beginning of 2025, ten of our Members, including four of our oldest, have died. They were – Barbara Salmela, Bill Brake, Merv Williams, Doug Howes, David John Williams, Vic Asher, Tom Glazebrook, Peter McDonald, and Joan Tucker. Their passing is a great loss to the Association.

On a brighter note, we have been pleased to welcome ten new Members, bringing our current numbers to 313. They are:

Tuan Hoang, Christina Koh, Melissa Ong, David Ryan, Ossie Martinz, Chris Parker, Jim Kierce, Sue Grosman, Peter Ryan and Tony Boyd.

It has been good to see increasing numbers of women and former staff from a range of areas across VicRoads joining our Association – and I hope this trend continues.

The Association's application form, in electronic form is on our website, making it easier for those who wish to join us, and it is also attached to every Newsletter. By all means, share it with your former colleagues.

We have new Rules of Association

At our 2023 AGM, Members agreed to update our Rules of Association to accord with the State Government's *Model Rules* and subsequently supported our proposed new Rules at the 2025 AGM. These are now with Consumer Affairs Victoria, and a copy is available on our website.

One of the main changes has been our financial year, which previously ran from the end of February to the end of February. Now, it runs from 1 January to 31 December.

Working through the changes wasn't easy and I'd like to thank the Committee for its good work in doing this. The new Rules required the nomination of a Vice President and, during 2025, the Committee unanimously voted David Jellie to this role in recognition of his outstanding work on behalf of the Association.

Our Newsletter

As Editor, I am pleased to have been able to issue a Newsletter every month - thanks to the excellent articles I have received from our Members. These contributions reinforce our connections and friendship and are always greatly appreciated. I look forward to publishing more Member stories and recollections in the coming year.

One of the big changes to the Newsletter has been that we are no longer able to email it directly to Members due to restrictions on bulk emails imposed by Internet service providers. We now use a specialised email service – Mailchimp, to advise Members when the latest Newsletter is available to view on our website.

Our website

I'd especially like to thank Nick Szwed, who has continued to excel in his role as webmaster, and Patsy Kennedy who has been an invaluable assistant to Nick in managing this important asset for our Members. The website has a regular stream of hits from all over the world. Nick also takes lots of photos at our events and these then become part of our record of people and activities on our website.

If you haven't visited the website, or perhaps not recently, I encourage you to do so. It is probably the largest, single source of data about VicRoads and its people.

This year we have been pleased to see Members contributing their stories for inclusion on the website. There are no strict rules, and contributions can take whatever form you like - so we hope this area of the website will continue to expand in the year ahead.

Events

2025 saw many great, social events and outings for our Members - on whose behalf I would like to thank our Committee Members for their considerable work in arranging these most enjoyable occasions.

We had six occasional lunches at Shoppingtown Hotel in Doncaster, with 50 different Members and a higher average attendance of about 26, with a maximum of 32. I wish to thank Kel York, who continues to make all the arrangements with the hotel and always ensures that the luncheons go smoothly.

In March, eleven Members and guests embarked on one of our most ambitious outings - a cross-border outing to Cooma, NSW, where they were treated to a unique, visual presentation of the Snowy 2.0 Project using 3-D software to show the complex, underground works in incredible detail.

Stopping at Orbost on the way, David Jellie gave a presentation on the Snowy River bridges, which was also attended by local people. In Canberra, the group visited the National Gallery, the National Museum and the National War Memorial and finished the day with dinner at the Ainslie Football Club. A highlight of the return trip was a visit to the Benalla Art Gallery.

In April, about 15 Members and guests attended an eye-opening presentation on the National Broadband Network (NBN) at its Operations and Management Centre in the City. It covered the NBN's physical assets, its national responsibilities and its provisions for major disaster management. Afterwards, the NBN treated our group to a very nice lunch.

On 11 June, 40 Members and guests attended a special presentation by nine North East Link project managers at the project's Koonung site office near Bulleen.

It was perhaps one of the most stunning technical visits the Association had ever experienced. Just one of its many, major innovations was the Project's cloud-based digital communications

system integrating all of its complex workings and involving over 400,000 shared design, data and cost files. After our visit, the group gathered for lunch at the Manningham Hotel.

Once again, we held a midyear lunch at the Waverley RSL and given the ongoing popularity of this event we have included another one in our 2026 program of events. A big thank you to Ken Vickery for arranging all the events held at Waverley RSL.

On 14 July, 16 Members and guests visited the Transport Accident Commission's innovative *Road to Zero* facility at the Melbourne Museum. After an introductory talk by a senior road safety educator we explored the facility, which brings to life the physics of road safety and the principles of effective public health campaigns. This was followed by a very pleasant lunch at La Spaghetтата in Lygon Street, Carlton.

On 25 August, 21 Members and friends visited the former Royal Mint Building, which now houses the Hellenic Museum. The group was given a guided tour of the Museum's exhibits with in-depth background information on ancient Greek culture and its ongoing influence in today's world. The group then enjoyed lunch at the adjacent Mint Bar and Restaurant.

On 15 September, 11 Members and guests visited the National Gallery of Victoria for its beautifully presented *French Impressionism* exhibition and were later treated with a special presentation from one of the Gallery's senior lecturers, whose insights greatly enhanced the experience. This was followed by lunch at Young and Jacksons Hotel.

On 9 October, over 27 Members and guests met in Ballarat where they received an illuminating presentation by senior Department of Transport and Planning staff about the Grampians Region - one of the Department's five Victorian regions, and the considerable management challenges involved in administering an area about the same size as the Czech Republic. That evening, we gathered for dinner at the Ballarat Leagues Club.

The next day, 29 Association Members and guests visited the Ballarat Alstom factory where 25 *Extrapolis 2.0* trains are being built for Victoria.

Several very interesting presentations were made by the Alstom Site Director and senior managers, and the group was shown over the factory where the trains were being assembled. The day finished with a splendid dinner at the Ballarat Golf Club.

It was great to have some of our Members from the Geelong and Ballarat area join us for this event.

At the Annual Golf Day in October, we didn't attract as many Members and friends as we had hoped - but we haven't given up and we have scheduled another day later this year. For the record, Roy Gilmour won the trophy yet again! In recognition of his efforts in organising this annual event since its inception 10 years ago, the Committee voted to name the Association's golf trophy - the Jim Webber Trophy.

This year's Christmas party at Waverley RSL attracted 94 Members and guests who enjoyed catching up with friends and meeting some of our newer Members. Jill Earnshaw made up two Christmas hampers for our lucky draw, with the largest hamper being won by John Nation.

Our Treasurer, Ken Vickery advised that, despite the ongoing adjacent works for the Suburban Rail Loop, the RSL will continue to be available for our functions until at least late 2028.

Committee

Our Committee in 2025 was:

President: John Wright
Vice President: David Jellie
Secretary: Jill Earnshaw
Treasurer: Ken Vickery
Membership Secretary: Iris Whittaker
Members: Jim Webber, Graham Gilpin PSM, Patsy Kennedy, Noel Osborne RFD, Alan Mackinlay, Nick Szwed and Allison Pinto.

[It will be proposed at the AGM that this Committee be re-elected as no new nominations were received]

The Committee has been busy since our 46th AGM in March 2025, holding five Committee meetings up to the end of December 2025.

Once again, I would like to thank all the Committee Members for their support and contributions.

As President, I have valued the assistance given to me by Jill Earnshaw, our Secretary. Her willingness to answer the phone at any time of day, proofreading of the Newsletter, arranging our events program and generally keeping us all on track has been very much appreciated.

I was also pleased that the Committee has had the benefit of the knowledge and experience of our former President and now Vice President, David Jellie who continues to provide invaluable history and support to the Committee and our Members.

Ken Vickery, our Treasurer, has continued to keep our income and expenditure recorded and arranges the annual auditing of the accounts.

Iris Whittaker, our Membership Secretary, does an excellent job managing our Membership data and producing name tags for participants at all our events. Our other Committee Members continue to volunteer their time and offer invaluable advice and assistance in managing the Association. On behalf of the Members and myself, I thank you all.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Doug Thompson for reviewing our accounts.

I would also like to thank the Department of Transport and Planning for its support in assisting us in arranging a number of our very successful visits throughout the year, and for providing senior people to present and keep us informed of some of the key projects being delivered in Victoria.

I would also like to thank the Transport Accident Commission for its kind assistance in our Roads to Victoria outing and we look forward to a further visit of its Geelong facility in the coming year.

Thank you to all our Members for being so loyal and appreciative of what we do. After all, that is our mission – to support each other with our friendship.

John Wright
President