

VicRoads News

Staff Newsletter

December/January 1997-98



Run, Ride and Roll!



The official opening of the Eastern Freeway extension from Doncaster Road to Springvale Road saw more than 10,000 people explore the new road by foot, skates, bicycles and even wheelchairs!

The 7 km section of freeway was handed over to pedestrians and cyclists, who were able to explore the new road in maximum safety.

Premier Jeff Kennett joined Geoff Craige, Minister for Roads and Ports, in opening the freeway. The Premier waved the flag, starting the run-ride-rollers on their way.

The Premier said the opening marked the completion of one of the most important freeway links in the Melbourne metropolitan road network.

"This four-year project has come in within budget and successfully integrates the needs of all road users, whether they be motorists, bike riders, pedestrians or public transport users," Mr Kennett said.

Mr Kennett said that as well as reducing travel times between Springvale and Doncaster Roads by about 10 minutes, the new freeway extension would halve traffic on Doncaster Road.



Premier Jeff Kennett pictured with one of the youngest run-ride-rollers.

'Run, Ride, Roll' was sponsored by VicRoads, Car City, Doncaster East Rotary Club and others. The event raised \$42,000 for Yooralla and was a first for Melbourne.

"Thanks to VicRoads, thousands of people had a unique experience and Yooralla benefited substantially from the money raised. It showed once again that roads in the community are about much more than just transport," said Yooralla spokesman Colin Stephen.

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Watch this space

Thank you to everyone who contributed suggestions for a new name for this newsletter. We have some talented wordsmiths at VicRoads! The first newsletter of the New Year will be published under the new masthead. Watch this space in the February/March edition to see the winner announced.

If you have any ideas for stories, please contact the editor, Christine Elmer, on 03 9854 2779 or via email: elmerc@vrnotes.roads.vic.gov.au

Three Christmas Cheers for the Cafe



The best froth in the business! Catering Manager Bev Thompson with one of The Cafe's benchmark cappuccinos.

The last shreds of honey-glazed ham have been carved from the bone, the delicious aroma of roasted turkey is fading, and all traces of brandy sauce and clotted cream have vanished from the pudding plates. After another delicious Christmas luncheon, it's business as usual at the VicRoads Cafe in Kew.

The day begins early for staff at The Cafe, with the breakfast and morning tea service starting at 7 am, and tea and coffee supplies to be checked and replenished on all floors by 8 am. Chef Michael Jaspers stops off at Prahran Market on his way to work to check what's in season and order supplies. From her office overlooking The Cafe, Catering Manager Bev Thompson makes sure all is going smoothly including arrangements for the myriad of functions The Cafe caters for each week.

"Life here is certainly never dull," admits Bev, who made her way to the Catering Manager's job via appointments in Property, Advance Planning and Finance.

"We serve an average of 180 people during the lunchtime period, and a couple of hundred people use the trolleys that go around the two Kew buildings each morning.

"We also have days where we feature special food, and we've found that pasta days are particularly popular, but the Christmas luncheon is certainly one of the highlights of the year.

"We run an empty Christmas tree appeal and raffle a hamper of Christmas goodies as part of the event, and donate the proceeds to different organisations.

"Charities we've supported include the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Smith Family, the Salvation Army and the Sacred Heart Mission in St

Kilda, and this year it's the Smith Family's turn again.

"We find that the VicRoads staff are very generous, and that's equally true of the appeal we hold each Easter for the Royal Children's Hospital, and other appeals we've run for causes like Rwanda and the Port Arthur shootings."

Catering is a feature

The Cafe caters all sorts of special functions, ranging from staff picnics and barbecues, to official functions in the Board Room.

"Catering for overseas visitors can be particularly interesting, because we have to be aware of all sorts of cultural considerations, including religious food laws," Bev said.

"We can also set up special tables if a few staff want to hold a birthday lunch or some other private celebration in The Cafe – we just need two or three days' notice.

"One of our regular customers is the VicRoads Retirees Association, who come in every six weeks or so for lunch, and cap off the year with their own Christmas feast in the theatrette."



(L to R) Anna Lidgerwood and Kate McCormack set off with morning tea trolleys loaded with snacks to tempt the VicRoads palette.

Meeting changing tastes

Most of the staff at The Cafe are provided by the contractor, The Bensons Group. Maria Fenaroli, one of the VicRoads staff, will clock up 20 years with The Cafe in March 1998.

"I've seen a lot of changes since I've been here," agrees Maria, who spends most of her time catering for functions.

"There used to be lots of people who made lunch at The Cafe their main meal for the day, and although some still do, we now have people who buy takeaway so they don't have to cook when they get home, and we make lots of cakes for special functions.

"I really enjoy the contact with people my job gives me, and I've watched lots of young people join VicRoads, get married and start families, and I love the photographs they bring in for me to see."

From the Lodge to Kew

The man in charge of the Cafe's kitchen is Michael Jaspers, who came to VicRoads with unusual credentials.

Michael trained at William Angliss and took his first job at Clover Cottage, a restaurant in Berwick. He then moved to Government House in Melbourne, where he was vice-regal chef to Victorian State Governors Davis McCaughey and Richard McGarvie before heading north to become chef to Australia's then Prime Minister, Paul Keating.

"I travelled with the Keatings between the Prime Minister's residences in Canberra and Sydney, and also overseas," Michael said.

Plenty to choose from

Bev Thompson is proud of the variety The Cafe offers: "We have an excellent salad bar, yoghurts, fresh fruit



Chef Michael Jaspers and his team prepared the day's luncheon menu in The Cafe's well-appointed kitchens.

salad, several hot dishes including at least one vegetarian dish each day, and a sandwich bar.

"People can eat inside, or enjoy the outdoor area which we've rechristened The Terrace.

"You can also eat in The Cafe if you bring your own lunch, and the lounge area is for everybody, too – people often hold informal meetings there.

"I'd like to encourage all staff to come down and try us out," Bev said, "and I'd particularly like to welcome the staff who have just moved over to Kew from the Carlton office.

"Come and introduce yourselves, and if you'd like to discuss catering or some other aspect of The Cafe, just come and see us, we're a friendly bunch!"



Staff enjoy the comfortable outdoor environment of 'The Terrace'.

Like to use The Cafe's catering services?

- Please give us 48 hours notice for morning and afternoon teas, and sandwich or savoury lunches
- Place your orders for birthday cakes 48 hours in advance
- The Cafe also caters for barbecues, open days and other large celebrations – please give us five days notice for these functions.

Contact Bev Thompson on 9854 2502 to make a booking or for further details of services provided by The Cafe.

PR Coup for Stephen

He doesn't normally write letters about good or bad service, but when the Director of St Martin's Clinic visited South Oakleigh R&L Office to transfer his car registration, he was so impressed by Stephen Sorrell that he penned this customer feedback.

"The staff member wore 'Stephen' on his badge and served me at counter two, and in the areas of politeness, helpfulness and cheerfulness, this man would have to rate 11 out of ten on all counts," he wrote.

"His mood was sincere and he should, I feel, be acknowledged by the relevant department for what this customer at least really felt was a lesson in public relations at its best!

"Please pass my thanks and congratulations to Stephen for having lifted my spirits this morning, and may he carry on the good work!"



Stephen Sorrell earned high praise for his exemplary customer service at the VicRoads South Oakleigh R&L office.

International Quality Certification Achieved

Thanks to high levels of staff commitment and personal effort, VicRoads has achieved certification to the ISO 9000 series international quality assurance systems.

"Quality assurance systems are one of the key tools for ensuring that we meet customers' needs, and that we do so consistently," says our Senior Consultant, Quality Management, Phil Symons.

"They are part of our approach to achieving Best Practice standards of performance.

"In order to achieve certification to the ISO 9000 series international standards, we have formally documented procedures for our service delivery and business processes.

"Our use of these procedures has satisfied a rigorous external audit, and is now recognised as meeting international standards – so much so, that we have in fact demonstrated our quality systems to visitors from a number of other countries."

Beating the clock

"VicRoads' commitment to quality systems is reflected in our decision to work towards ISO certification for each Division and Department, as well as the overall organisation," Phil said.

"The first four areas to complete the process were SprayLine, Design Department, Land Information Survey Department and the Western Ring Road Project by mid 1996, while the final Department achieved certification in December 1997.

"Overall, we have achieved our goal some six months ahead of our target date, and we're one of the first major government organisations of such diversity to achieve certification of all of its operations."

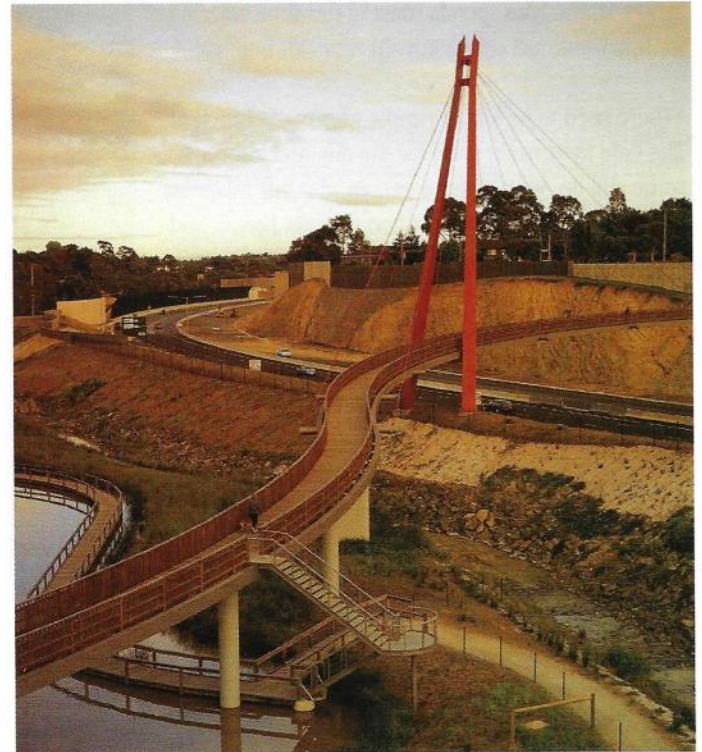
A team effort

"This outcome would not have been possible without the commitment of all staff under the direction of our chief executive, Colin Jordan, our Corporate Management Group and with the support of the Corporate Quality Communication Team," Phil concluded.

"This latter team included a representative from each Division and Department, and helped aim for a consistent approach throughout the organisation, by sharing our knowledge and experience.

"I know that staff took on the considerable challenge of achieving certification, and I'm delighted they have expressed a great deal of satisfaction when certification was achieved."

Gary Liddle's Tour de Force



The Eastern Freeway, passing under the Heyington Avenue pedestrian bridge.

Gary Liddle and his team at Eastern Projects have received accolades from the City of Manningham for a recent tour of the Eastern Freeway Extension.

City of Manningham Councillors and Officers "were extremely impressed with what [VicRoads'] people and agents have been able to achieve. The Project is nothing short of magnificent," wrote Bob Seiffert, Chief Executive of the City of Manningham.

He continued: "We were also very appreciative of the way in which Gary had conducted the tour. His knowledge of the Project, his professionalism and presentation style could not be faulted.

"You can certainly feel secure in the knowledge that whilst VicRoads has people like Gary, Victorians will be well served in the road construction industry for years to come."

High praise indeed! Congratulations to Gary, and all the staff at Eastern Projects!

Metro North West heads for Sunshine

Metropolitan North West Region and Braybrook Registration and Licensing Office have just taken up residence in brand new quarters in the Sunshine Business Park.

"I've lived in Sunshine almost all my life, and I've never seen such large scale development and activity here before," reports Donna Maloney, Administrative Services Support Officer, who is a great ambassador for the area.

"New buildings are popping up everywhere, including shopping centres, entertainment facilities and factory estates.

"Personally, I am very excited that VicRoads has taken the opportunity to become part of this boom in my home suburb."

Heading where the customers are

Donna's comments reflect the logic behind Metro North West's move, which is to take VicRoads services to where the customers are.

"We're now located much closer to the geographic centre of the North West region, and we're close to the Western Ring Road, which will improve access for many of our customers, and also for some staff," says Brian Negus, Regional Manager, Metropolitan North West.

"We'll be offering all the services previously delivered from the Carlton office and the Registration and Licensing Office at Braybrook.

"We're also being joined by staff from the planning and local government areas of the



Moving to where the sun shines. Metro North West staff are packing up and heading west.

(L to R) Danny D'Amato, Dieter Langenschwarz, Mary Crupi, Regional Manager-Brian Negus, Donna Maloney, Richard Henderson and Ken Louey.

Department of Infrastructure (DOI), which means we'll be able to provide a more coordinated service to customers with transport and planning proposals."

All the mod. cons

"Our new home is a very modern complex with up-to-the-minute architectural features and colours, and presents an image of a business which is progressive and dynamic," Brian reports.

"Staff will enjoy the latest office facilities. We've been able to provide ample dedicated parking for staff, and there are trains and buses nearby for public transport users."

"The new registration and licensing office provides the latest technology in an attractive and comfortable environment, and Lucy Cambareri and her staff are really enjoying working there."

Plenty to see and do

Although there is some regret about leaving the cafes and pasticcerias of Carlton, Donna

Maloney has been able to reassure staff that Sunshine has plenty of attraction of its own.

"We're located right next door to the new Sunshine Market Place and the existing shopping centre, and we're only 500 metres from the Westend Entertainment Complex," Donna reports.

"I've identified 40 eateries in the area so far, and when the Sunshine Market Place is finished it will include Big W, Safeway, a 20-Megaplex cinema centre, restaurants, shops and a food court, as well as medical and banking facilities – right in our backyard.

"The local bowling alley is only a couple of minutes walk away, so I'm wondering if a Metro North West bowling league for Friday lunch times could be on the cards."

"I think most staff acknowledge the enormous improvements in our accommodation and the higher quality service we can provide to our customers in our new home," Brian concluded, "and on the basis of Donna's research, it looks as if we'll soon be really enjoying ourselves, too."



CADD Hits the Road in Fiji

Tony managed to take some time out for a first try at scuba diving. He is pictured poised to take the plunge into warm and clear waters which were a treasure trove of coral and fish.

VicRoads' Design Department, now known as VicRoads Design, has not only moved off-budget, it has also set its sights offshore. Tony Nash is currently in the thick of a project to introduce Computer Aided Design & Drafting (CADD) to Fiji's road construction industry.

"The potential for CADD in Fiji was first spotted by Dennis Maxwell, a VicRoads design and construction engineer, who was on secondment to the Fijian Public Works Department," explains Tony, who is a CADD

Applications Specialist with Design Systems.

"The department sent representatives to Australia to assess the packages available and they decided on the MicroStation and InRoads software packages.

"Design Systems, which is part of VicRoads Design, won the contract to provide consultancy services relating to the packages, including setting up the system (known in the trade as system configuration) and provide training in Australia and Fiji."

Training began with the visit to Australia of Fijians Apisai Ketenilagi and Joe Vueti, who combined training sessions at VicRoads and other institutions with a site visit to the Eastern Freeway.

"The way we do road design at VicRoads blew them away," Tony reports.

Then it was Tony's turn to travel, for the first of three scheduled visits to Fiji.

"We're providing staged training on a real project that will take six months," Tony explains.

"We're working on the Sawani Road, which is a 15 km

stretch of two-way, two lane road running through mountainous terrain about 20 minutes from Suva on the island of Viti Levu.

the alignment, all using the CADD system.

"The improved road surface will provide a smoother ride, less wear



The survey team for the Fijian Department of Works pauses for a photograph on the job on Sawani Road.

"It's currently unsealed and is subjected to 3500mm of rain each year.

"Needless to say, it has been badly cut up by the often over-loaded sand, gravel and log trucks that make up a significant proportion of its traffic.

"What we're going to do is widen and seal the road, ease the corners and make some minor improvements to

and tear on vehicles and better travel times.

"Widening the road will also make travel much safer for pedestrians, who are major road users in Fiji."

Tony's first visit to Fiji involved setting up the computer system so the applications run in the same way they do at VicRoads.



"Hardware and software arrive in what you could call a raw state," Tony explains, "and you tailor, or 'configure' them to meet your requirements."

"Over the years, VicRoads has customised the applications to suit road design and survey, and it makes it easier to provide training and support if the Fijian system is configured to resemble ours."

Tony then visited Sawani Road, to get a feel for the way the survey work was being done, and to provide additional training on the Total Stations (electronic theodolites), which the Fijians were using for the first time.

"Dennis Maxwell actually arranged the purchase of the Total Stations and the initial training by the suppliers, Leica," Tony explained.

"Introducing this sort of equipment involved quite an attitude shift, because people needed to be convinced of the benefits of changing from their old ways."

"However, when it was demonstrated that instead of having physically to record 20 numbers for each point surveyed, you simply pressed a

button and the Total Station did the lot, they were keen to be involved."

In addition to confirming and enhancing the training on using the Total Stations, Tony provided further training on the MicroStation and InRoads applications, before leaving the Fijians to complete the road survey and then create electronic models of the data collected, in preparation for the design stage. He will return to Fiji for that phase of the project in mid-November, and his final trip, which will cover the drafting phase, will be in late January-early February 1998.

"This was my first trip overseas for VicRoads, and I think it's an opportunity people shouldn't miss," Tony said.

"I think to go to the place and work is far more attractive than going for a holiday there."

"You get a proper chance to meet the people, and you get a better feel for the culture and the way people live day to day."

"I think it's excellent for VicRoads to have exposure in such a different working environment and I was very



Tony Nash enjoyed the hospitality of his Fijian colleagues. Joe Vueti, a member of the Fijian Department of Works presented Tony with additional Fijian sleeping mat when he visited Australia for training.

pleased to see what benefits we could share with them, and what information we can exchange.

"Whilst the learning curve has been mountainous for my Fijian colleagues, it has also been pretty steep for me."

"I've gained a different outlook and a much better understanding of what to expect and what is required if I become involved in other projects of this type."

"It also made me realise how highly skilled VicRoads staff are – you have such high expectations of your colleagues within VicRoads that it spoils you for other places."

Tony's work in Fiji is one of many technology transfer projects in which Design Systems is becoming involved now that VicRoads Design is operating off-budget.

"We're looking to the future, and this involves becoming more externally focussed," explains Support Manager Wayne Shaw.

"We still supply CADD support services within VicRoads, but the demand is declining with the

outsourcing of design and survey services so we have been working to build our portfolio of external clients.

"Other current projects include providing consultancy services to Queensland Rail and the Northern Territory Department of Works similar to those being provided in Fiji."

"By working on these projects, we are able not only to share the considerable knowledge and skills that exist within VicRoads Design, but to maintain and develop our own expertise in response to the needs of an increasingly diverse range of clients."



Downloading information from the Total Station (the device left of the computer monitor).



Crossroads Give Good Directions

If you're interested in finding out how our road system is performing, you can't go past Austroads' report *Australia at the Crossroads*. It distils information from a two-part study called *Roads in the Community* prepared for Austroads by independent consultants, and is full of fascinating information on road use.

For example, did you know that:

- urban car travel has doubled in the last 20 years, but will only increase by 35 per cent in the next 20;
- women account for 97 per cent of the increase in travel since 1988;
- nearly two-thirds of fatal accidents occur outside major urban areas; and
- road freight movements have also doubled in the last 20 years, and pose greater threats to the environment than increased travel by car?

The study aims to increase understanding of road issues within the community and road authorities by looking at how the road system is currently performing, and examining options for future management and development. This will help Austroads and State road authorities in targeting their works programs, and in their moves to achieve best practice in all their activities.

It is highly readable, beautifully produced and a great resource on road transport. Get your copy from the VicRoads Bookshop now!

A Great Team Effort

The cartographic team at VicRoads Land Information and Survey received contributions from across the organisation for the new *VICROADS Country Street Directory* (3rd edition).

VicRoads Chief Executive Colin Jordan spoke highly of the new directory and made a special presentation of the book to three staff 'For unsolicited contributions toward making the third edition of the *VICROADS Country Directory* an improved product'.

The recipients were Darren Fawkes, Freight Policy Consultant in the Commercial Vehicle Operations group, Traffic and Road Use Management; John Davison, Transport Information Analyst, Strategic Transport Planning section, Road System Management; and Robin Smalley, Technical Officer with the Land Information and Survey cadastral survey section.

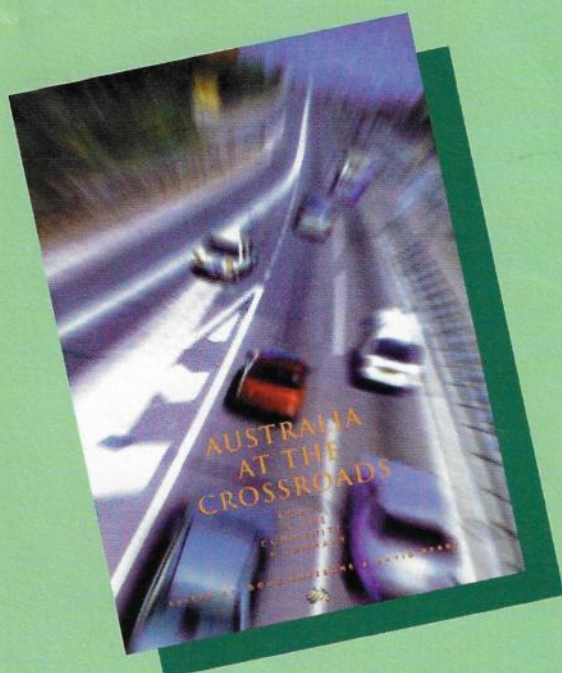
Darren Fawkes came up with a number of ideas to improve the directory during the course of his work in preparing maps of B-double routes and maps showing the locations of low bridges and bridges with load limits.

"Land and Information Survey's foresight in preparing the directory has helped this work immeasurably," Darren said.

John Davison used the directory extensively in VicRoads' partnership with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in coding the 1996 'Journey to Work' question. The ABS coded some 2 million 'Journey to Work' responses on the Victorian Census forms using VicRoads-supplied indexes derived partly from the *VICROADS Country Street Directory*.

"The census data is important in helping our understanding of travel and road usage in Victoria. These indexes were quality checked against other ABS sources. The *VICROADS Country Street Directory* showed up very well against these sources with only a small amount of anomalies detected, which were fed back to Land Information and Survey," said John.

Robin Smalley's contribution to the *VICROADS Country Street Directory* occurred by way of his recreational activities, rather than his professional role at VicRoads! As the Victorian Champion Rally Co-driver (navigator), Robin uses the *VICROADS Country Street Directory* frequently and was in a prime position to provide valuable feedback to the VicRoads cartographic team. As co-driver, Robin is responsible for telling the driver of every bend and squiggle in the road ahead. He also owns a GPS (global positioning system) which he uses for recreational activities.



VicRoads Chief Executive Colin Jordan with the VicRoads cartographic team. (L to R) Ron Cramer, Colin Jordan, Neil Richardson and Teresa Donnellan.



(L to R) VicRoads Chief Executive Colin Jordan presents a copy of the *VICROADS Country Street Directory* to Darren Fawkes.

VicRoads at play

Correspondent Jim Tullberg filed this story on the annual VicRoads Sports and Entertainment weekend, hosted by North Eastern Region 1-2 November in the heart of the Goulburn Valley.

"A hardworking committee began the task of promotion and organisation many months before," Jim reports.

"Sponsorship was sought and gratefully received from VicRoads, local businesses and many of our contractors, with AH Plant and Peter McPherson Compaction as the major contributors.

"Contacts through the regions and metropolitan business areas helped distribute advertising and registration materials, and past attendees were sent personal invitations.

"These strategies, combined with a series of promotional Lotus Notes, attracted a good number of participants, with more than 150 people attending the Sunday presentation BBQ.

"Besides the BBQ, other highlights were the very enjoyable winery tour and dinner dance on Saturday, and a great field of 50 teed off at the very pleasant Shepparton golf club. Other activities on offer were horse riding, ten pin bowling and children's activities.

"South East Metro were well represented among the winners, including regaining the indoor cricket trophy!

"Paul Kelsen again found the run a piece of cake, and the host region came through to win the golf trophy, despite having Bruce Gidley in the team!

"The individual golf winner was the oldest player on the field, Norm Stephens, who retired from the then CRB over 20 years ago. (*Now we all know how Norm's been spending his retirement! Ed.*)

"Rob McQuillen, Doug Thompson and Peter Balfe flew the corporate flag at various functions, and it was great to see Reg and Myrtle Patterson enjoying the weekend.

"The event was a great success.

"Congratulations to the team from North Eastern Region for a job well done, and a big thank you to all participants.

"See you at next year's, wherever it may be!"

Jim Tullberg

Words at work

A series of quality-related terms and one technical road term make up this edition of 'Words at Work'.

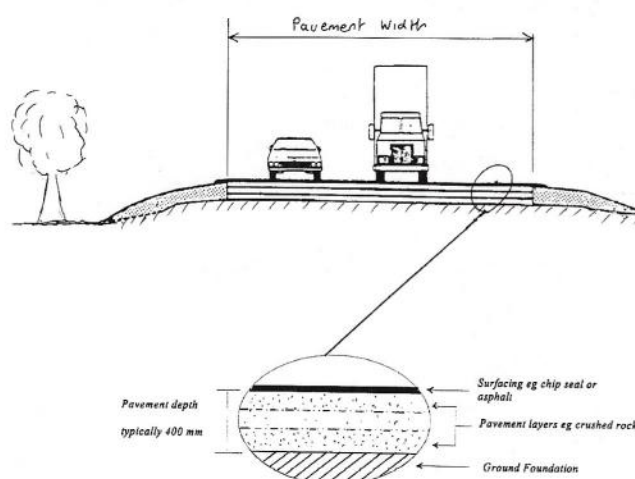
Best Practice is simply the best way to do something – usually very specific to the goals of the organisation concerned. A Best Practice organisation continuously searches for ways to improve *what* it does and *how* it is done. For VicRoads this means ensuring that our strategies (Corporate Plan and Business Plans) and our operational practices deliver the very best results in the best possible way.

Benchmarking is one way of finding, adapting and implementing **Best Practice**. Benchmarking is about comparing *what you do*, and *how you do it*, with others to find and develop better ways of doing things. **Benchmarks** are measurements or results that can be used in the comparison and may become targets to aim for.

Quality Systems support **Best Practices**. They document the way work is to be done within an organisation, and operate to ensure that customer needs are consistently met in an efficient manner.

ISO 9000 refers to the series of standards developed by the International Organisation for Standardisation (hence the 'ISO') as models for **Quality Systems**. The ISO 9000 quality standards set out the requirements for documentation and operation of **Quality Systems** necessary to assure that work is done correctly. This includes management responsibility, understanding customer requirements, controlling the work, correcting faults, staff training – to name only a few. VicRoads has **Quality Systems** in place throughout the whole of the organisation. VicRoads' systems have been certified as meeting the rigorous requirements of these international standards, as reported elsewhere in the newsletter.

Pavement is that portion of a road generally consisting of a surfacing and layers of road making material (such as asphalt, concrete, crushed rock, gravel or combinations of these) which are placed over the ground foundation to form a strong travelling surface for traffic.



If there are terms you would like Words at Work to explore, contact Christine Elmer on extension 2779.

Educating the Educators



A magic show was a highlight of activities at the Early Childhood Road Safety Conference.

Early childhood educators from around Melbourne were introduced to a variety of theoretical and practical tools for educating young children about safe road behaviour at the second Early Childhood Road Safety Conference, held at VicRoads Metropolitan South East Region.

Conference coordinators, Helen Stricker and Josie Speranza, stressed the importance of education in reducing the incidence and severity of road accidents involving children from newborns to six years of age.

"This strong emphasis on education was especially vital in light of recent statistics.

"Of the 477 children under the age of six killed or seriously injured on Victorian roads in 1996, 80 per cent were passengers in motor vehicles, 17 per cent were pedestrians and 3 per cent were cyclists," said Josie.

"Correctly fitted child restraints could have prevented the deaths and injuries of most of the children who were passengers in motor vehicles. These children were either unrestrained or incorrectly restrained," said Josie.

To encourage delegates to promote the purchase and use of correct restraints to parents and other care givers, a practical restraint workshop was held.

Other issues discussed at the conference included pedestrian safety, safe places for children to play, and children's limitations such as vision, height, distance perception and concentration span.

Attendees reported that the conference was most beneficial and a Road Safety Magic Show provided the entertainment for the day!

Road Users' Charter Introduced

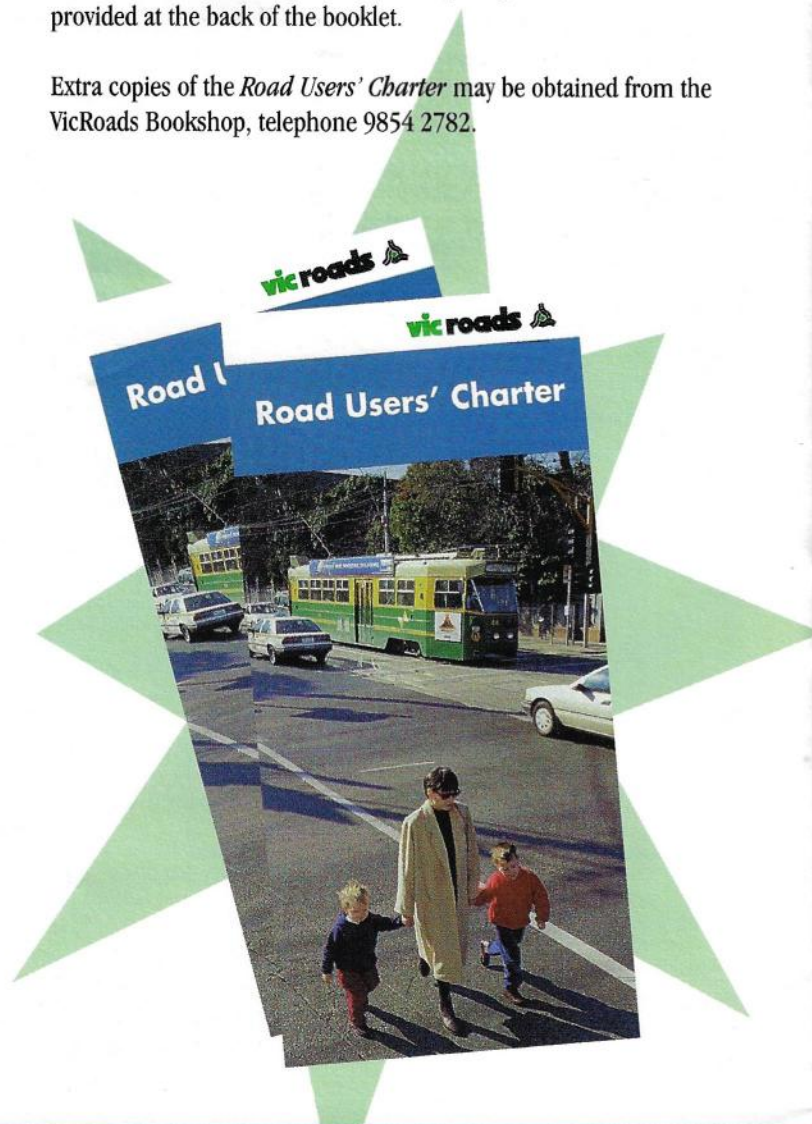
VicRoads has published the *Road Users' Charter*, a 24-page booklet setting out its service commitments to Victoria's road users. The Charter will be released to customers in January 1998.

The Charter sets out VicRoads' service commitments to Victoria's road users in areas such as: safer roads, improving traffic flow, maintaining and developing the road network, registration and licensing services, protecting the environment and communications. The Charter also provides useful contact details for VicRoads' services and offices.

The *Road Users' Charter* is a major customer service initiative and an important part of VicRoads' drive for continuous improvement. Performance against the commitments described in the *Road Users' Charter* will be monitored and our progress will be reported in the 1997-98 annual report

Readers are encouraged to give feedback to VicRoads via <email ruc@vrnotes.roads.vic.gov.au> or the postage-free comment form provided at the back of the booklet.

Extra copies of the *Road Users' Charter* may be obtained from the VicRoads Bookshop, telephone 9854 2782.



Helmets come up trumps on The Great Victorian Bike Ride

North West Metro Regional Road Safety Officer, Chris White, was the 'proof in the pudding' for VicRoads' 'Helmets: wear 'em right' message, on the recent Great Victorian Bike Ride (GVBR) through eastern Victoria.

As major sponsor of the ride, VicRoads promoted the need to wear bicycle helmets correctly. On day four, while cycling towards Inverloch, the message hit home for Chris in a very powerful way.

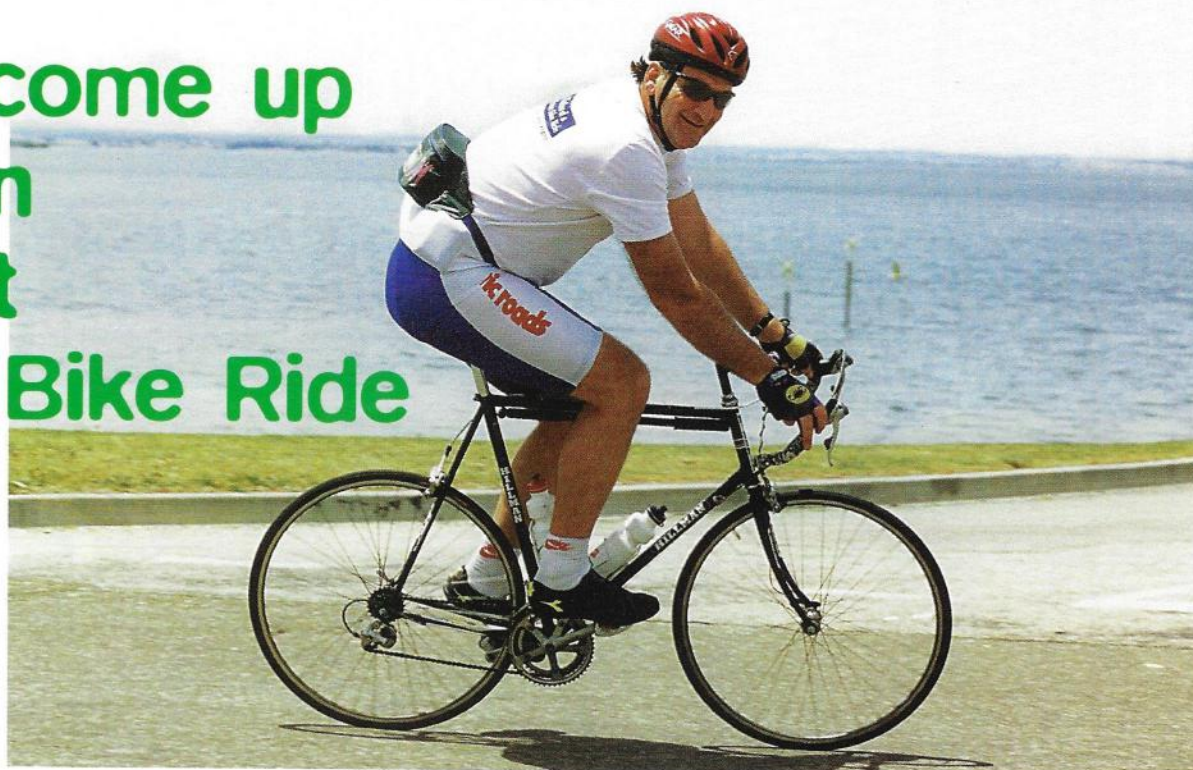
Chris and VicRoads ride team member Alan Pincott from Bairnsdale R&L, were riding together when Alan came to grief on the gravel road shoulder.

Following close behind, Chris had nowhere to go, and in a spill reminiscent of the Tour de France, he was catapulted off his bike, hitting his head on the road.

Although colleagues may disagree, Chris survived with no noticeable impairment to his brain function, thanks to the performance of his 'Gear' helmet, which cushioned the full impact of the crash.



Team members (L to R) Chris White, Greg Ryan, Kim Edmonds and Harry Tew, take a break after a hard day's ride.



VicRoads ride team ambassador, Peter 'Crackers' Keenan on the Ride.

As it is designed to do, the foam helmet insert cracked, absorbing the impact and leaving Chris to thank, rather than count, his lucky stars. Best of all, he had a good tale and a very visible prop to use later that day when the ride team visited Inverloch Primary School.



Chris White extols the virtues of helmets with a school group after his experiences.

An estimated 2200 cyclists travelled from Buchan to Melbourne during nine days of the ride in early December.

Popular sportscaster and former VFL champ Peter 'Crackers' Keenan, joined the VicRoads team as our ride ambassador, making appearances at towns along the way to help spread the message on helmets.

'Crackers' was a great drawcard, visiting schools, acting as 'MC' for VicRoads activities and reporting daily on his regular ABC radio spot.

"In my travels I've seen some strange head gear on cyclists such as construction hard hats and cricket helmets, but my advice is don't bother," he said.

"They won't do the job, you'll still cop a \$20 fine if caught wearing them and you may as well be wearing a bucket if you think they'll save your head in a bike accident.

"Wearing an approved and correctly fitted helmet gives you every chance in an accident so if you ride a bike you'd be 'crackers' not to wear one and wear it right," he said.

The VicRoads team, which included staff members from around the State, ran competitions, set up displays and carried out helmet checks on hundreds of riders visiting VicRoads' marquee, set up each day in the GVBR campground.

Most importantly the team visited 30 schools in Gippsland giving talks on helmet safety and other issues important for safe and enjoyable cycling.

They were eagerly received by schools keen to take advantage of the safe cycling message as the VicRoads Great Victorian Bike Ride hit town.

Ride team member Harry Tew said the ride provided an opportunity to speak with bike riders of all ages and provide feedback on VicRoads' involvement with cyclists who use our roads and bike paths.

"It was a worthwhile experience for all involved although many may have had second thoughts on day four between Paynesville and Sale when riders battled a 45 knot headwind for the 80 km trip," Harry said.

While the VicRoads team made many friends along the way, the competition for attention at Inverloch Primary School was pretty tough.

Road Safety Officer, Greg Ryan, visited the school to talk about helmets but unfortunately he followed after a religious education class which the teacher closed off by giving the preps a chocolate bar.

"Despite my good intentions and being armed with a swag of free stickers and posters, it's pretty hard to compete with God and chocolate on a Friday afternoon," Greg said.



Pushing into the wind on day three.



Greg Ryan on the job, instructing students about road safety.

Getting to know Greg Ryan

Is your career turning out the way you expected?

I didn't have a five year plan. As my career changes, I'm happy to be adaptable with it.

What is your long term career ambition?

I want to be happy always in the job I'm doing. It's important to work with good people who have a positive outlook on life. I like to be around people who have a good sense of humour and enjoy a laugh. The people at Traralgon are tremendous, fantastic to work with.

What are your personal interests?

I love the footy and I coach and play with the Wonthaggi Workmens Cricket Club. We won the premiership last year against Koonwarra RSL. That keeps me pretty busy on weekends.

Can you tell us a little bit about your family?

My dad was a senior lecturer in education at Ballarat University and mum had the unenviable task of looking after me! They live in Ballarat. I have two older sisters who are both school teachers: Fiona, who lives in Adelaide and Marcia who lives in Inverloch. I guess teaching runs in the family.

What is your favourite food?

Mum's homecooked roast – and it's got to be lamb! And chocolate pudding for dessert.

What football code do you follow?

Richmond. And I work for them too, as a recruitment office visiting the under-18 games and checking out who we might draft for next year. Patrick Steinfort, who was at the top of my list, is now playing with the reserves.

What makes you laugh?

A dry sense of humour. John Cleese always makes me laugh. Rowan Atkinson and the Marx Brothers are all very funny.

What one thing would you change about the world?

That everyone could get a Grand Final ticket!

What would you do if you won Tattsлото?

I might not come to work on Monday. I would definitely have a drink, a long one! I've never wanted it, though it'd be handy. I'd go away somewhere for a long time.

How did you come to join VicRoads?

Previously I was a primary school teacher. Some consultancy positions in traffic safety education at VicRoads came up and I was lucky enough to get one of those. About two years ago those positions changed to coordinators and I became permanent with VicRoads and resigned from the education department.

What does your present job involve?

I look after road safety programs for schools through to community groups in eastern Victoria. The students are aged from five year olds to 19 year olds. I get to meet lots of interesting people, travel around a beautiful part of the countryside and hopefully save some lives along the way!

We visit the clients' premises and promote traffic safety in as many ways as we can. I believe some of our most effective work is with the pre-licence age group (16-20 year olds) encouraging them, and their parents, that they should gain as much possible experience before they start to drive. Our bike education for primary school kids is also really important. It has a high uptake from schools and fashions our future drivers and road users by teaching them good habits as primary students.

Where else have you worked in VicRoads?

I've only worked at Traralgon and I've been there for eight years. However, the job changes each year. We're continually coming up with new and exciting programs to use within the schools. Before VicRoads, I was head teacher at Mount Best Primary School in south Gippsland – I was the only teacher there, with nine kids aged from prep to grade six! VicRoads was quite a change for me. I think it's important for teachers to get out in the real world and find out what's going on.

Deefer takes a Bow

Deefeer was introduced to us by Alex Evans of the Calder Highway Project Team. If you've got a pet with attitude, let us know – we may have a spot in the newsletter for him.

"Deefer sort of adopted us," explains Alex Evans.

"He turned up a few years ago when a VicRoads construction gang was working out of the Diggers Rest office.

"He seemed to be lost and the guys started feeding him, and he has since become a permanent member of the Diggers Rest team."

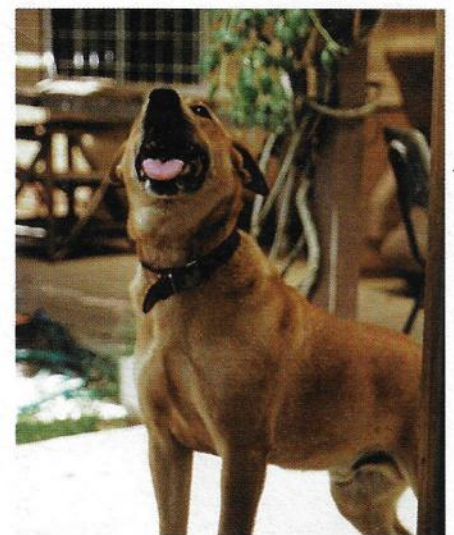
Amusing stories about Digger abound – the misdemeanour that earned him a vasectomy, the time he mistook Alex's foot for a tree in need of watering, and his curious drinking habits.

"Deefer doesn't drink like a normal dog," Alex said, "he sticks his whole snout right under the water and takes a mouthful, just as if he were 'eating' the water.

"When we have a barbecue the boys put a sausage right at the bottom of his drinking bucket, and Deefer will put his whole head under to get the sausage."

Like any respectable dog, Deefer does, of course have a serious side, Alex admits.

"When we use our conference room for meetings, Deefer will often sit right at the door and appear to take a keen interest in proceedings."



Deefer – the canine member of the Calder Corridor Project team.