

The Strategic Alliance Workshop

Wednesday 7 April 2004

The AAPA/QDMR Strategic Alliance has been functioning since December 2001. The mission has been to provide superior flexible pavements for the community which provide best value for Main Roads and ensure a sustainable business environment for AAPA members through collaboration and total commitment.

The Alliance has progressed and some notable outputs achieved. To assist with the future success of the Alliance, a planning workshop was conducted on Wednesday 7 April 2004. The workshop was facilitated by Alan McLennan of Strategic Services P/L and had a dual purpose of reviewing progress so far, and to outline strategies for the future. Presentations on QDMR imperatives and challenges for industry were presented by Dennis Wogan, Don Muir and Steve Wilson.

In addition, the following workshops were conducted:

How has the Alliance impacted on my area of responsibility?

What is possible with this Alliance?

In what way is the Alliance working well? Identify critical strategies to move from current state?

The results of the planning workshop are presented in the workshop report by Alan McLennan.

The report concluded that the workshop was extremely successful in producing raw data related to review and to future strategies. The workshop also nominated a small working group to take the outputs of the workshops and develop a framework for the Alliance Board to sign off as the basis for the new strategic direction for the Alliance.

The workshop also identified that future developments follow two strands:

- ways to build and strengthen the Alliance as an organisation and;
- more effective ways for the Alliance to deliver timely outputs.

At the conclusion of the one-day workshop it was agreed the Alliance had matured and benefits were being delivered by this improved communication mechanism. There was general agreement that the Alliance should continue into the future.



Ron Gordon presenting Certificates of Appreciation to Steve Wilson (Strategic Alliance Chairman), Trevor Parminter (Rovert Consulting) and Graham Shardlow (Metropolitan District)



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Strategic Alliance NEWS LETTER

Developing superior flexible pavements



Issue 1 of 2004

ASPHALT REGISTRATION SYSTEM A Whole New Way of Working!

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A new and improved system for the registration of asphalt suppliers has been developed over the past 18 months in close cooperation with AAPA as a priority project under the auspices of the Main Roads/AAPA Strategic Alliance. This Alliance has been established to improve the performance of asphalt pavements and ensure business sustainability of asphalt suppliers.

The improved system has been developed collaboratively by the following stakeholders:

- Pavements, Materials & Geotechnical Division - System Manager responsible for application of asphalt technology in Main Roads;
- Main Roads Districts - Asset Managers responsible for delivery of road pavements;

- AAPA - industry organisation representing the majority of currently registered asphalt suppliers.

Suppliers of asphalt paving services to all Main Roads works (except minor maintenance, emergency and non-critical works) are required to be registered as approved asphalt suppliers.

On 1 March 2004, a revised registration system was introduced and a manual defining this improved system was released.

Public notice of release of the revised registration system has been advertised and specific advice on the system, together with copies of the manual, have been issued to Main Roads Districts, currently registered asphalt suppliers, known potential suppliers and industry organisations.



Articles in this and prior newsletters available on the web site at <http://www.aapa.asn.au/docs/queensland.html> and on Main Roads Intranet at <http://pmg>

Asphalt suppliers already registered under the old system were advised that it was necessary to re-apply by 30 April 2004 in accordance with the requirements of the improved system or their registration would lapse.

The Department's standard specifications for asphalt are being updated to ensure compatibility with the revised registration system.

A steering group comprising representatives from PMG Division and Main Roads Districts is being established to manage the implementation plan (including training, monitoring and review activities) with a view to ensuring the improved system is effectively embedded in practice within two years.

- Requirements for asphalt manufacturing and asphalt paving equipment;
- Requirements for asphalt suppliers' management systems;
- Procedures for registration of approved asphalt suppliers, including application requirements and assessment processes (with site inspections and interviews);
- Procedures for, and controls over, approval of asphalt mix designs;
- Requirements for management of asphalt quality throughout all stages of its manufacture, transport and paving, including requirements for quality control, management of variation and disclosure of associated data;



Barry Rule (Project Team), Ian Reeves (Sponsor Team), Larry Mudge (Sponsor Team), Rob Vos (Sponsor Team) and Trevor Parminter (Project Team)

Benefits

The benefit expected from this initiative is increased life of asphalt pavements. If the current trend of 8-14 year life span is extended to 10-16 years (ie. 14%-25% increased life), this will mean an annual saving of \$7 - 12.5M (based on the current estimated annual investment in asphalt pavements of \$50M).

System Overview

The components of the improved system are:

- Documented manual - policies, responsibilities, procedures and forms;
- Requirements for experience and capability of asphalt suppliers (and their key personnel);
- Requirements for coordination of superintendent's surveillance plans with the management and process plans (including inspection and test plans) of asphalt suppliers and contractors;
- Procedures for face-to-face assessment of performance of asphalt suppliers involving contractors (where relevant), superintendents and District representatives;
- Procedures for de-registration of asphalt suppliers;
- Procedures for appeals (eg. in relation to refusal to register, conditions imposed on registration, de-registration); and
- An electronic database register format.

Training Certificates Underpin the Register

AAPA's head office has been working for over three years to develop competencies leading to Certificates at levels II and III for workers in the bituminous surfacings industry.

When the Register was being developed, the potential availability of these Certificates influenced the experience and capability expectations of the asphalt supplier and contractor staff.

Soon the current Certificate IV in Road Works Management, aimed at supervisory level and above, will be joined by Certificates II & III providing a continuous growth path for workers in the bituminous surfacings sector of the civil construction industry. AAPA has estimated that, in private industry and government in Queensland, there are between 800 and 1000 people who work in the supply, construction and maintenance of flexible pavements.



Training for Certificates

Through close cooperation with Construction Training Queensland, Department of Employment and Training and Queensland based Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), it is hoped to fast track those currently in the industry through skills assessments to provide RPLs (Recognition of Prior Learning). This will lead to some gap training or traineeships for existing workers. Most new permanent appointees will be offered either Cert II or III as part of career path planning.

Detailed information is available on the web: (<http://www.aapa.asn.au/docs/competencytraining.html>).

Certificate II

Trainees will be required to use small plant and equipment, use a variety of hand and power tools, compact bituminous materials, undertake manual tasks, control traffic, safely handle bituminous materials and interpret drawings and specifications.

Trainees may work in asphalt laying and compaction operations using a variety of specialised construction equipment, hand spreading of asphalt, spreading and rolling of aggregates and application of bituminous products using specialist equipment, and undertake road (surface) maintenance operations.

Certificate III

Trainees will be required to professionally undertake and conduct surfacing operations in the selected pathway which may involve safely handling bituminous materials, interpreting drawings and specifications, producing asphalt products, the implementation of traffic management plans, maintaining bituminous surfacing quality & traceability records and the operation of asphalt production, bituminous surfacing, and compaction equipment.

Bituminous surfacing equipment may include asphalt production plants and pavers using specialist level control systems, road profilers, materials transfer vehicles, bitumen tankers and sprayers, tip trucks, aggregate spreaders and a variety of asphalt and sprayed seal compaction equipment.

Question: How will the assessments and audits change?

Answer: Similar to Alliance principles the system now requires:

- Performance assessments must be undertaken face-to-face in a positive spirit, if not, the details recorded will not be accepted and consequently will not be reliable for their intended purpose.
- Audits must be undertaken and managed in accordance with good auditing practices. Audit objectives must be defined and disclosed and there must be open audit processes, prompt close-out discussions (in stages if there are delays in obtaining test results), prompt preparation of reports, management decisions and follow up actions.
- These requirements apply to the following:
 - audits by superintendent of project applications of asphalt supplier processes and/or systems;
 - audits by District of project applications (ie. of superintendent, asphalt supplier and/or contractor processes and/or systems);
 - audits by PMG Division of asphalt supplier and/or District processes or of the registration system itself.

Question: What is the acceptance of the system? From industry? From Main Roads?

Answer: Both parties are pretty supportive:

- District staff and asphalt suppliers directly involved in trial implementation projects, and with development of the improved system, have all expressed positive support for the improved system and its expected benefits; similar expressions of support have been made by a number of Main Roads senior executives.
- It is essential that all others involved in application of the improved system (especially contractors and superintendents) are fully briefed on the system - otherwise lack of understanding and 'resistance to change' may erode the current attitudes of acceptance.

Any other questions can be directed to Barry Rule on (07) 3834 3021 or barry.r.rule@mainroads.qld.gov.au



Training Activities

- (a) Asphalt suppliers to be briefed (individual companies - on request) on system requirements sufficient to facilitate preparation of adequate applications for registration.
- (b) A series of one-day training workshops on the details of the system - each to be attended by a mix of relevant staff:
 - Various levels of staff of asphalt suppliers;
 - Contractors;
 - Staff of Main Roads Districts; and
 - Other Main Roads officers (C&D Division, PMG Division).
- (c) Project-by-project briefing of relevant staff prior to commencement of works (asphalt suppliers, contractors, superintendents, Districts) - to facilitate understanding of system requirements and effective implementation.

Transition Arrangements

- (a) Registration -
Asphalt suppliers were required to apply for registration under the improved system by 30 April 2004 - failure to do so would mean existing registration lapsed.

(b) Contract Implications -

- Tenders for all projects involving asphalt works which are invited from 1 March 2004 are to be based on the requirements of the improved system;
- For tenders invited prior to 1 March 2004, performance requirements for asphalt suppliers are those defined in the contract for the particular project.

Management of Implementation Phase

A project team has been established with responsibility to ensure effective implementation of the improved system by end of 2005 - representatives include:

- PMG Division; and
- Main Roads Districts.

*For more information contact: Barry Rule
Phone: (07) 3834 3021*



Q&A : What's New in the System?

Question: *Why was a new approach needed?*

Answer: *Influences came from a number of directions*

- Deficiencies in the previous registration system;
- Unacceptably high levels of premature failure and under-performance of asphalt pavements;
- The need for improved performance of subcontractors and specialised suppliers as identified in the Pacific Motorway Learnings Project;
- Review of the Main Roads Major Works Prequalification system which provided a framework for engaging specialised suppliers and assessing their performance.

Question: *What was done to develop the new system?*

Answer: *Through an Alliance project with maximum involvement of Districts and industry from draft through trials covering*

- Definition and management of trial implementation phase;
- Briefing of District and project staff about the draft system requirements and trial implementation arrangements;
- Review of findings of trial projects; and
- Definition of implementation strategy, plan and detailed arrangements.

Question: *What improvements can be expected?*

Answer: *There is a potential for the following improvements:*

- More reliable manufacture of asphalt to approved mix designs;
- Improved standard of quality control and management of variation;
- A better regime of surveillance by superintendents based on preconstruction planning of surveillance activities that target high risk activities
- Development of confidence in performance capability of asphalt suppliers - coordinated with management plans of asphalt suppliers and contractors;

Question: *Who will experience the changes first?*

Answer: *All stakeholders will, but better relationships will develop through:*

- Improved understanding of responsibilities of all parties to the system should facilitate close cooperation, identification of common goals, and reduction in contractual dispute; and
- Processes for assessment of performance will foster continuous improvement - for asphalt suppliers, contractors, superintendents, Districts and PMG Division (both in their systems and their personnel).

Question: *Have there been improvements already?*

Answer: *Yes, they include:*

- Better understanding of roles and responsibilities for the various parties to the system;



Surveillance & Auditing Systems have been Strengthened

- Improved quality control practices by some asphalt suppliers;
- Improved regime of surveillance emerging in some Districts;
- Strengthened dialogue between Main Roads and AAPA; and
- Clear definition of further research and future system improvement requirements for joint consideration under the umbrella of the Main Roads/ AAPA Strategic Alliance.

Question: *What are the constraints to implementation of the system?*

Answer: *Some possible ones to consider:*

- All parties to the system and its application on projects **MUST** have thorough understanding of the improved system and what it is based on, and be adequately experienced in asphalt technology. Otherwise there will be no improvement, only superficial 'paper work'.
- Superintendents (and their representatives) must have a thorough understanding of the meaning of surveillance as defined in the improved system and be competent in its planning and coordination of it with the management plans of asphalt suppliers and contractors; and be astute in their surveillance practices.
- The basis of asphalt pavement designs for particular projects must be understood by all parties to the contract-asphalt suppliers, contractors and superintendents. Specific requirements for pavement rehabilitation and overlay may necessitate particular emphasis, or varied requirements for aspects of the defined system (eg. in relation to mix design, plant and equipment, capabilities of personnel, etc).