

26 March 2012

Reference: pm:vp 031226
Enquiries: Ms J Bennett: 0428 690 935

Roads and Maritime Authority
101 Miller Street North Sydney NSW 2060

Re Route Assessment Guidelines for Restricted Access Vehicles

To Whom It May Concern

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

Centroc represents sixteen local government areas and one water authority in central NSW. This is an area the same size as Tasmania with about half the population and a bigger GDP. Centroc exists to advocate on behalf of the region's communities and deliver cost savings and other efficiencies to member councils. The Centroc Board is made up of the Mayors, elected representatives and General Managers of the region.

The management of safe and well maintained roads for freight and passenger purposes is core business for Centroc members. It is therefore a positive step on behalf of RMS to co-ordinate Route Assessment applications. However, requiring Councils and especially smaller Councils with fewer resources, to be familiar and able to deliver the work required for Restricted Access Vehicles (RAV) processes as outlined in the draft guidelines will be more than challenging.

Unfortunately, due to the floods, the engineering group of the region has been unable to meet to provide a substantial response to these guidelines. However, from email discussion the following concerns have been raised where the general view is that the resourcing from a smaller Council perspective may not be consistently achievable, especially in those Councils with larger geographical area to staff ratios and a proportionally greater percentage of bridges and railway crossings.

The following specific points were made:

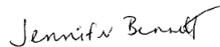
- If Centroc members are to do this work, it should be on a cost recovery basis. Fees should be levied, but they are hard to deal with fairly when RMS give all subsequent applicants access to the road without reference to Council. The fees to assess bridges could easily be in excess of \$4,000 which would be difficult for a single operator to find, but could be fairly shared between say five or six applicants.
- Section 2.3.2 of the Investigation Levels document, provides a positive link back to land use zonings, however it should be borne in mind that LEP's are still being completed and therefore the use of standard zonings will take time to be seen through.

- Section 2.5 provides a positive link back to Work Health and Safety where this will be challenging to deliver.
- An issue that has been identified previously and not adequately addressed in the documentation is that once a route is gazetted from point A to B, there is no restriction on someone along the route from also using it, and there is no mechanism to address entry/exit at that location. This is important from a road safety perspective.
- Members report that they do use the existing guidelines strictly, to ensure they are not exposed to any liability should there be an accident and their approval is called into question. Unfortunately this does frustrate applicants, and we appreciate this. We do not want to be seen to be preventing the transport sector from getting savings, which will hopefully also provide us with reduced loadings on our roads, saving us maintenance dollars.

Therefore, members suggest that there is scope for RMS to manage this process across the region rather than so many staff having to get up to speed with the process and then manage it.

Centroc members would be pleased to further discuss any aspect of this submission. Please contact the Centroc Executive Officer Jenny Bennett on 0428 690 935

Yours sincerely



Jenny Bennett
Executive Officer

Central NSW Councils (Centroc)