

14,500 roads improved, and many more to come

With the help of local government, the Australian Government has improved 14,500 road locations all over Australia at a cost of **\$1.2 billion**. Now we are about to do even more.

AusLink, the National Land Transport Plan, will roll out **\$12.5 billion** for Australia's transport network over five years. It's the equivalent of two Snowy Mountains Schemes. That includes an extra **\$1.35 billion** in payments from the Australian Government to around 700 councils under the AusLink Roads to Recovery Programme.

The programme is making a big difference to the quality of our local roads so they can better serve industry, tourism and the social needs of all Australians.

Councils tell us the scheme:

- allows local decision making and priority setting;
- has simple reporting and administrative arrangements; and
- directs money to councils without state government involvement.

Our evaluation shows councils are using the money wisely to generate returns worth \$1.80 for every dollar outlaid. We have improved the Roads to Recovery Programme this time round to make it even better.



Australian Government
Department of Transport and
Regional Services



The Roads to Recovery programme supports vital transport operations in regional Australia.

The AusLink Roads to Recovery Programme

The AusLink Roads to Recovery programme has made an enormous difference to Australia's local roads since its establishment in 2001. In the first phase of the programme, councils used \$1.2 billion in extra road funding from the Australian Government to carry out around 14,500 road maintenance and upgrade projects nationwide.

The Australian Government has recommitted to the programme and will spend \$1.35 billion on the extended AusLink Roads to Recovery Programme from 2004-05 to 2008-09:

- \$1.2 billion will be distributed to Australia's local councils – \$300 million a year over four years.
- \$120 million is being allocated to AusLink Strategic Regional projects; and
- \$30 million will be spent improving roads in unincorporated areas, parts of Australia where there are local roads, but no councils to administer them.

The Government will spend \$340.6 million on the programme in 2005–06. Roads to Recovery funding is in addition to untied Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) to councils for roads and other purposes. The roads component of FAGs is \$497 million in 2005–06.

Money provided under the Roads to Recovery programme is not intended to replace council revenue spending on roads, or state and territory government assistance to councils for local road construction or maintenance. Local councils nominate the projects to be funded, not the Australian Government.



The Roads to Recovery programme is a key element of the AusLink National Land Transport Plan to improve connections from the farm gate to export point.

Delivering the AusLink Roads to Recovery Programme

The Roads to Recovery programme operates uniformly across Australia. Each council is guaranteed a share of the \$1.2 billion total pool under a formula funding arrangement. Money is paid directly from the Australian Government to councils under simple administrative procedures and spending decisions are made locally.

The allocation for each state and territory is based on population, road length and historic road funding allocations. Life of programme allocations for each state and territory under the extended programme are shown opposite.

Each council's allocation is based on the recommendations of the Local Government Grants Commissions in the states and the Northern Territory for the local roads component of the Financial Assistance Grants. They reflect each council's relative needs for road expenditure.

Any road construction or maintenance qualifies for Roads to Recovery funding. Eligible works can also include:

- Traffic signals and control equipment and bicycle paths associated with a road; and
- Street lighting.

Roads to Recovery funding cannot be used to purchase machinery or pay for staff training. Other funding exclusions are listed in the Roads to Recovery Notes on Administration available at www.auslink.gov.au.

Councils receive payments quarterly in advance. The quarterly payment is based on the councils' reported spending to date against each project and the projected expenditure in the next quarter, up to their annual limit. An important condition of the Roads to Recovery programme is that councils continue to spend their share of rates revenue on roads and do not use Australian Government funds to replace their own, which would mean no appreciable improvement in the local road network as a result of the programme.

In line with the Australian Government's policy of on-line administration, many aspects of Roads to Recovery administration operate via the internet.

Councils access an information and financial database using a password similar to the way many people do internet banking. The information required from councils is entered via the AusLink web site, www.auslink.gov.au.



The Roads to Recovery Programme is revitalising our towns.

Roads to Recovery funding in unincorporated areas

In large parts of Australia, mainly in remote areas, there are no councils and state governments provide council services to small communities. These are known as 'unincorporated areas'. Special programme provisions apply to these areas and to the Indian Ocean Territories.

From 1 July 2005, the Government is providing \$30 million over four years for Roads to Recovery projects in unincorporated areas of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory, as well as the Indian Ocean Territories.

Of this amount, \$16 million will go to the Northern Territory, while a total of \$636,000 will go to the Indian Ocean Territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The remaining funds for unincorporated areas are being distributed among New South Wales (\$2.52 million), Victoria (\$64,000) and South Australia (\$10.79 million).

While the South Australian allocation is being provided to the State Government, the distribution will be determined in conjunction with the Outback Areas Community Development Trust, which is the major consultative body representing remote area communities in that state.

The allocations for unincorporated areas are based on a road length assessment by the Australian Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics.

Roads to Recovery Programme funding allocations, 2005–06

| | Local councils \$m | Strategic regional \$m | Remote ¹ \$m | Total \$m |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| New South Wales | 85.0 | 16.2 | 0.6 | 101.8 |
| Victoria ² | 62.5 | 6.6 | .. | 69.1 |
| Queensland ³ | 62.5 | 2.9 | | 65.4 |
| Western Australia ³ | 45.0 | 1.0 | | 46.0 |
| South Australia | 25.0 | | 2.7 | 27.7 |
| Tasmania | 10.0 | 5.3 | | 15.3 |
| Northern Territory ³ | 5.0 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 10.0 |
| ACT | 5.0 | | | 5.0 |
| IOTs | | | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Total | 300.0 | 33.1 | 7.5 | 340.6 |

Figures may not add precisely to totals due to rounding.

Footnotes

¹ Unincorporated areas.

² Victoria will receive \$16,000 in 2005-06 for unincorporated areas.

³ The strategic regional figures for Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory each include a notional allocation of \$1 million for the Outback Highway. The final distribution of funds for the highway will be determined in consultation with the Outback Highway Development Council, local authorities and the state/territory governments.

Roads to Recovery funding to states and territories 2005-06 to 2008-09

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| New South Wales | \$340m |
| Victoria | \$250m |
| Queensland | \$250m |
| Western Australia | \$180m |
| South Australia | \$100m |
| Tasmania | \$40m |
| Northern Territory | \$20m |
| ACT | \$20m |
| Indian Ocean Territories | \$0.63m |



Improved safety is an objective of the Roads to Recovery programme.

AusLink Strategic Regional Programme

The AusLink Strategic Regional Programme seeks to advance economic growth in regional Australia by providing improved and safer transport infrastructure in addition to the Australian Government's normal sources of funding for local and regional road improvements through the Roads to Recovery programme and Financial Assistance Grants to councils.

On 15 September 2004, the Government announced it would provide \$150 million for 'strategic regional projects' – \$120 million over five years (including 2004–05) for individual projects and \$30 million over four years from 1 July 2005 for local roads funding in unincorporated areas of the Northern Territory, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria.

In late 2004, the Government committed to fund 22 regional strategic projects worth \$93.19 million. As the remaining \$26.82 million does not become available until 2007–08 and 2008–09, it is the Government's intention to call competitive bids in 2006-07.

Should the position change, these arrangements will be reviewed and all councils notified.



Roads to Recovery strategic projects

| State | Projects |
|--------------------------|--|
| New South Wales | Batemans Bay Spine Road [^] Bondi Beach traffic improvements [^] Camden Valley Way-Raby Road intersection Lakes Way upgrade* Pambula Bridge* Princes Highway south of Nowra Raymond Terrace-Dungog and Maitland-Dungog roads* Warnervale Road |
| Victoria | Bryn Mawr bridge Great Alpine Road* Metung boardwalk [^] Yan Yean Road [^] |
| Queensland | Bribie Island Road River Heads Road [^] Russett Park bridge* Tablelands Road* |
| Western Australia | Outback Highway* |
| Tasmania | Port Sorell Main Road* Scottsdale-Bridport Main Road* Bass Highway upgrade at Sisters Hills* Tasman Highway upgrade* |

Footnotes

*Requires State Government contribution.

[^]Joint funding with local authority.

Roads to Recovery – making farm exports more efficient.



Australian Government
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Building our National Transport Future