



3 September 2009

Director General
Department of Planning
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Kylie Seretis

Pacific Highway Upgrade, Banora Point Upgrade: Request for Modification of Ministers Condition of Approval No. 5.4.

Dear Kylie,

The Federal and State Governments on the 14 August 2009 announced the selection of the alliance team to build the \$310 million Pacific Highway upgrade at Banora Point. The Roads and Traffic Authority's (RTA's) partners for this major upgrade are Abigroup Contractors, Seymour Whyte Constructions and engineering firm Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation. The alliance team will be referred to as the Banora Point Upgrade Alliance (BPUA).

On behalf of the RTA, the BPUA are currently preparing a Communications Strategy for the project which is a requirement of a number of conditions included in the Conditions of Approval with regard to community information, consultation and involvement.

The RTA recognises the extensive and rigorous consultation processes undertaken to date throughout the development of the concept design and Environmental Assessment process.

However, the RTA also recognises the following key factors of importance in preparing the communication strategy in delivering the project to the community:

- There will be local and regional community that will be impacted by construction activities.
- There will be community directly impacted by the upgrade - residents and businesses adjacent to the construction area, motorists using the road, cyclists and pedestrians using existing facilities and Wilson Park users; and
- There will also be community with an interest in the project due to the nature of their work, travel and general interests with special interest groups such as – Aboriginal groups, Local Council, and organised groups such as the Community Highway Group and Business Focus Group, all requiring consultation.

Therefore the RTA recognises the diverse information and consultation needs of all these communities and commits to a robust plan of consultation which would be inclusive and participative in nature.

Targeted and on going consultation with the community and key focus groups, on issues of relevance to them, would assist in ensuring that a wider audience is able to participate in the engagement process, as the issue they would be invited to provide input to would be relevant to their needs.

The Communications Strategy would guide community relations activities for the life of the project, would be regularly updated to be relevant and would include measurable performance indicators.

In view of the proposed extensive engagement program and the ongoing maintenance of specific interest group engagement, the RTA recommends to the Department of Planning that a Community Interest Group for the project would not be the most effective consultation method for the project. It is the RTA's considered position that the purpose of establishing a Community Interest Group is for the dissemination of project information; design issues and mitigation measures; the CEMP and construction activity information could be more effectively undertaken for 'whole' community by implementing the above engagement strategies.

The RTA considers the changes would be consistent with current best practice and would not result in a decrease in the communication performance for the project. It is also understood that this proposed change has recently been accepted by the Department of Planning for other Major Projects.

The attached table shows the existing Condition of Approval No. 5.4, which discusses the establishment and maintenance of a community interest group, the proposed revision to the Condition of Approval and provides detailed discussion on the justification for the proposed revision.

Should you require further information, please contact the RTA's Senior Project Manager, Strategic Projects Mr Peter Borrelli on 02 6640 1022 or the BPUA Stakeholder and Planning Manager Mr Garry McPherson on 0439 494015.

Yours faithfully



Robert (Bob) Higgins
General Manager Pacific Highway

3/9/09