



A Co-operative venture of the municipalities of:  
Cockburn, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Kwinana, Melville & Rockingham

Date: 31 August, 2012

Contact: Mick McCarthy (08) 9364 0631

Reference: Letter to Main Roads – Proposed Changes in Road Classification Criteria

Ray Tollefsen  
Road Classification Knowledge Coordinator  
Main Roads WA  
PO Box 6202  
East Perth WA 6892

Dear Ray

## **PROPOSED CHANGES TO ROAD CLASSIFICATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission regarding the above. As you aware, Chris Fitzhardinge (on behalf of the South West Group) attended the meeting on 14 August 2012 arranged by Main Roads WA to gain feedback from local government on the proposed changes to the road classification assessment criteria.

The South West Group, formed in November 1983, is a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils (VROC). It comprises the Cities of Cockburn, Fremantle, Melville, and Rockingham, and the Towns of East Fremantle and Kwinana. The South West Group is managed by a Board consisting of the Mayors and CEOs of its member local governments.

The South West Group seeks to work with these six local governments and through cooperation with industry, community and the other spheres of government to capture a wide range of opportunities to enhance economic growth as well as supporting a diversity of quality lifestyles whilst servicing and sustaining cohesive, productive communities in an enviable environmental setting.

This submission has been developed with feedback from the South West Group Technical Directors Committee.

### **Background**

Main Roads WA consulted with WALGA on a review of the guidelines for the assessment process for road classification and a meeting was convened at Main Roads WA Head Office on 14 August 2012 for stakeholders to be informed about the proposed changes. The intended process was to get feedback from local governments and IPWEA and then submit

a proposal for change through the State Road Funds for Local Government Advisory Committee.

Western Australia was reported to have the most structured approach to determining and assigning responsibility.

The review is important as it is expected that as a result of growth in the South West Metropolitan Region and greater Perth Metropolitan Area, the construction of new highway alignments and the development of new ports will be required. It is likely that at least a dozen roads will be reclassified over the next ten years in the Perth Metropolitan Area by proclamation or deproclamation. Only three have been assessed in the past six years within the metropolitan area.

### **Impact on the South West Metropolitan Region**

The development of a new port at Kwinana, the Latitude 32 Industrial Area, the Rockingham Industrial Zone, North East Baldivis and the West Mundijong Intermodal Terminal are contributing factors toward growth and will require significant infrastructure support. Combined with urban and commercial growth, it is likely that the creation of a number of significant roads that could be classified as “main roads” in the process.

The likely roads for proclamation are:

- Mundijong Road from the Fremantle Rockingham Controlled Access Highway to an extended Tonkin Highway
- Rowley Road from Kwinana Quay to Tonkin Highway
- Anketell Road through to Thomas Road

Roads which may be deproclaimed could include parts of South Street.

The impact of the changes appears to be aimed at making deproclamation more likely and proclamation more difficult. Only parts of roads may meet the criteria through volume despite, being nominated as freight corridors (Anketell Road and Rowley Road East of Kwinana Freeway may not meet the criteria for volume).

The South West Metropolitan Region could also benefit from having shared responsibility for important network link and public transport corridors. Shared responsibility could also be applicable to seasonal transport tasks such as handling grain.

The South West Group member Councils have variable positions on the proposed changes to road classification assessment criteria based on their local circumstances, with some supporting proclamation of roads that would benefit from the transfer of road responsibilities to the State Government (e.g. future roads required as major freight routes or highways) and others seeking to retain the status quo regarding existing management arrangements.

It should be noted that the proclamation of any existing roads managed by Local Government or the deproclamation of any roads currently under the management of Main Roads will have financial and operational impacts on Local Government in the affected municipality.

### **General Comments**

The timing of the consultation on changes was concerning given the major planning activity being undertaken through the Moving People and Moving Freight initiatives. A request to Main Roads WA for the comment period to be extended to allow for wider consultation and

better consistency with the major transport planning initiatives previously mentioned was not supported.

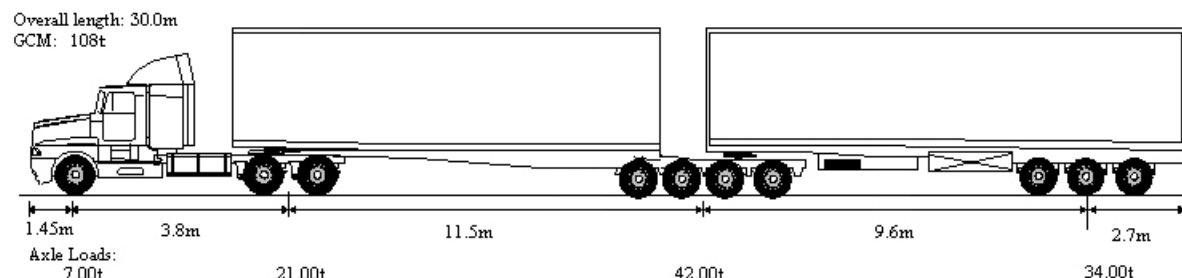
Given the time elapsed since the last review of the road classification assessment criteria in the 1990's, a more comprehensive assessment of the guidelines should be undertaken. The review should include and evaluation of best practice road classification in other states. It may be possible to develop a less prescriptive and more forward looking approach.

The impacts of proposed changes on local governments were difficult to assess. Main Roads WA should develop a set of case studies showing how the new changes will impact existing and proposed roads likely to be considered for reclassification.

A major part of the proposed changes was to use the *Main Roads Act 1930* (MR Act) as a primary filter for assessing road classification. The MR Act is dated in its description of the function of roads. The proposed new Clause 3 of the guidelines needs to be supplemented with the current and future requirements of the road network by explicitly considering long term planning, resilience and functioning of the network and not simply focussing on point to point assessment. The MR Act does not preclude broader consideration of these factors by the Commissioner.

### Specific Comments

**Page 8.** The reference to “commercial heavy vehicle routes” on page 8 needs to also reflect the importance of long vehicles such as Super B Doubles on freight routes to ports. These vehicles are typically 30 metres long and would only score one point and have their numbers diluted with vehicles over 4.5 tonnes. The classification of a route as a road train or long vehicle route with high frequency of the larger vehicles should score higher.



### Typical Super B Double configuration

**Page 14.** Penultimate paragraph has a typo principle should be principal. The same paragraph should include specialised centres as these may have more transport impacts than a secondary centre.

**Page 14.** Final paragraph should include intermodal terminals

**Page 16.** Final paragraph include specialised centres

**Page 17.** Network role .....include specialised centres

**Page 17.** Basis of 30,000 vehicles per day to be put into a national context

**Page 17.** Commercial heavy vehicles ....same comment as for Page 8

**Page 18.** Connectivity .....needs greater emphasis on the network function of roads

**Page 19.** Pedestrians and Cyclists - the current trend is to try to separate pedestrians and cyclists from highways. The whole section should be deleted as it has low impact on the overall score and should not be used to assess whether a road is a highway.

## Recommendations

- 1. MRWA should supplement the provisions on the MR Act with the current and future requirements of the road network by explicitly considering long term planning, resilience and functioning of the network and not simply focussing on point to point assessment.**
- 2. MRWA should prepare case studies showing the impact of changing the criteria on roads likely to be proclaimed or deproclaimed in the next decade.**
- 3. MRWA should prepare a best practice summary from other Australian states and consider using a less prescriptive and more strategic and forward looking process.**
- 4. That Main Roads WA consult widely with Local Governments regarding any proposals to proclaim or deproclaim roads in the South West Metropolitan Region and adjoining areas**
- 5. The section on cycling should be deleted. It only has a marginal impact on scoring and should not be the determinant of whether a road is a main road or not.**

I trust that Main Roads WA will take into account the issues raised by the South West Group in the review of road classification assessment criteria. A copy of this submission has been provided to Ian Duncan at WALGA for consideration as input for the submission they are preparing on behalf of local government.

Yours sincerely,



**Mick McCarthy**  
**Director South West Group**

cc Ian Duncan, Executive Manager Infrastructure, WALGA