



DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT

14th February 2006

**DSS11 MAINTENANCE GRADING OF UNSEALED
RURAL ROADS
FILE: * GAW**

SUMMARY:

Reporting on the mid year review of Maintenance Grading of Unsealed Roads within the Shire.



DESCRIPTION:

Council maintains 1021 km of Local Roads of which 436 km are sealed roads and 585 km (163 roads) of unsealed roads, as shown in the 2005–2010 Transport Infrastructure Strategic Plan. As stated in the Strategic Plan it is desirable to grade heavily trafficked roads three (3) times per annum and medium trafficked roads twice (2) per annum with Point Plomer Road being graded five (5) times per annum with associated maintenance works being carried out in conjunction with the grading. This would be achievable if a substantial budget of \$1.4 million was attached to the program. The 2005–06 budget for Unsealed Rural Roads Maintenance for Kempsey Shire Council is \$855,000.00 which allows for grading of unsealed roads once per year, spot re-sheeting of gravel in failed pavement areas and basic maintenance of the network. The approved budget has been divided into three categories:

- 1) maintenance grading - \$380,500.00;
- 2) gravel patching (spot resheeting) - \$200,000.00; and
- 3) general maintenance - \$274,500.00.

At the time of writing this report, 60% of the financial year has passed and the figures below are based on this figure. (10% of this time is the Christmas break where no grading was undertaken to any road within the Shire.). The year to date costs for Unsealed Rural Roads is:

\$210,730.00 (55.4% expenditure) for maintenance grading;

\$175,395.00 (88% expenditure) for gravel patching (spot resheeting); and

\$181,980.00 (66.3% expenditure) for general maintenance;

totalling \$581,158.00 or 68% expenditure of the approved budget.

The General Maintenance split is higher than normal for this time of the year, and can be attributed to the severe storms that Kempsey experienced late in 2005. A significant amount of damage, as in fallen trees, deep ruts in the gravel pavement, blocked drainage systems and fallen rocks occurred to the unsealed road network in the western part of the Shire.

A total of 62 roads have been graded within this period leaving 101 roads to be graded within the third and fourth quarters of the financial year. The 62 roads total 292 km of unsealed roads that have been graded within these two quarters. A break up of the 62 roads shows that 54 roads (248kms) have been graded once as per the maintenance schedule, 7 roads (20kms) have been graded twice and one road (5kms) has been graded three times. The additional gradings were due to storm damage during the second quarter and requests to grade roads. The remaining 101 roads to be graded in the third and fourth quarters equates to 293 km of road.

The average cost to grade an unsealed road this financial year is \$850.00 per km whilst spot re-sheeting with gravel is at an average of \$3,987.00 per km. To complete the maintenance grading program consisting of 293kms, a total budget of \$249,050.00 will be required. To achieve this result within the remaining budget of \$273,842.00, a number of factors need to be considered for the next two quarters:

- If the road network should deteriorate due to severe weather conditions is forced Council to re-grade roads due to safety issues, a number of roads remaining within the program will not be graded due to a shortfall within the budget.
- Community complaints and other outside influences intervene in the delivery of the program by having previously graded roads re-graded and will force a number of roads to be removed from the remaining program for this year.
- No spot re-sheeting with gravel will be undertaken on the remaining roads within the Maintenance Grading Program. Roads that are remaining on the program will be graded by the grading crews to the best grading practices allowable but it must be noted that this will not satisfy all persons affected.
- Routine maintenance activities, such as storm water management, site distance clearing or benching on corners,

tree maintenance and general works will only be undertaken in areas of high risk.

The areas of the Shire that have been graded within the first and second quarter of the current financial year are shown in the Kempsey Shire Rural Road Map provided to Councillors [Appendix H](#). These areas in the western section of the Shire are W1, W3, W4 with the crew currently in W5. The eastern section of the Shire areas that have been graded are E1, E5, E6, E7, E8, with area E2 currently being graded. The remaining five areas in the eastern and western sections of the Shire will be completed in the following two quarters of the 2005-06 financial year.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

▪ ***Environmental***

There are no environmental implications from this report.

▪ ***Social***

The social implications from this report are that access to some properties may become potholed and rough if they cannot be maintained as per the program leading to increasing complaints from the residents.

▪ ***Economic (Financial)***

The financial implications from this report are that with 60% of the financial year passed, gravel road maintenance expenditure is nearly 10% in advance. Should unsettled weather continue into February, March and April, the maintenance budget will not be sufficient to cater for the normal level of maintenance.

▪ ***Policy or Statutory***

There are no policy or statutory implications from this report.

▪ ***Director's Review***

A combination of increasing costs, including overheads and plant charges, and unsettled weather mean normal community maintenance requirements are becoming more difficult to achieve.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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K J Finnie
DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES