



SWAT Bulletin

Safety for Workers and Traffic

Number 3, January 2006

Work on Roads

Work on roads, or road reserves, involves many different activities, such as plumbing connections, tree planting and pruning, unloading vehicles and repairing roads.

Legislative Requirements

There are a number of laws which must be complied with whilst working on roads. These include (but are not limited to):

Acts

The Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004

Requires employers, employees and contractors to ensure the safest practicable workplace is provided, and that members of the public are not put at risk. WorkSafe inspectors enforce this Act

The Road Management Act 2004

Includes the requirement to obtain the consent of the coordinating road authority before works commence (unless exempt under the Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations).

The Road Safety Act 1986

Includes the requirement to undertake any works safely, in terms of both the road user and road worker. It includes requirements for traffic management plans, giving appropriate warnings to road users, and engaging appropriately trained and qualified persons.

Regulations

The *Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations 1999*, includes a schedule detailing what a major traffic control device is and when a Memorandum of Consent is required.

The *Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2005* may be of particular interest to road authorities, utilities and persons working for utilities. They detail the types of works that are exempt from the consent and notification requirements in the *Road Management Act*.

Additional regulations regarding traffic management plans are due during 2006.

Copies of Victorian Acts and Regulations may be obtained free of charge from www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au - choose the 'Victorian Law Today' section.

Guidance Material

Guidance material which may be utilised includes:

Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice.

Released 1 January 2005, it has been printed as 'Special Government Gazette S 276'. Copies are available for purchase for a small fee from the Victorian Government Gazette office and the

VicRoads Bookshop, or free online. There is a link from the roadside worksite page at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au. The Code includes guidance on conducting a site risk assessment, preparing a traffic management plan, and choosing appropriate control measures. It also includes information specific to Victoria like the use of multi-message signs and variable message signs, and includes typical traffic management layouts.

AS 1742.3 (Australian Standard 1742.3)

The Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice incorporates many elements of this Australian Standard. However, if there is any conflict between the Code and the Australian Standard, then the Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice applies. Copies are available for purchase from Standards Australia or through www.standards.com.au

Field Guides HB 81.1 thru 81.9

These Field Guides were released under AS 1742.3. There are nine guides, each for different types of worksite. They provide diagrams of typical traffic management layouts. They are available for purchase from Standards Australia.

WorkSafe publications

WorkSafe publications include checklists, memory aids, newsletters, and other guidance material. Roadside worksite safety and traffic management information may be found at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au (choose 'safety basics' from the right hand side of the front page, then 'traffic management/roadside worksites').

Road Authorities

Public roads in Victoria are controlled by a coordinating road authority. In most cases this will either be¹:

- VicRoads, or
- the local council within whose boundaries the road is located.

How do I know who the coordinating road authority is?

- Check the Melways street directory – in the newer editions of this directory VicRoads is the road authority for red², black and green coloured roads, and local governments are the road authorities for brown and orange roads.
- Check direct with the road authority by phone, or check its webpage to see whether it has published a register listing the roads that it controls. (VicRoads' register may be found at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au – select 'roads and projects' then 'road network'.)

Also note that multiple road authorities may need to be notified of planned works. This may occur where the works are to be undertaken on both VicRoads and council roads – for example a project installing new water pipes that needs to be completed on roads belonging to both authorities.

On Victoria's arterial roads, VicRoads is the coordinating road authority, but the footpath, roadside area and service lane are the responsibility of the local council. If the proposed works are to involve both the roadway and the footpath area, for example, VicRoads would consult with the relevant council as part of your application.

It is advisable to check with both coordinating road authorities as to their specific requirements if in doubt.

¹ There are some unusual cases like logging tracks, toll roads, and private roads which may belong to a different coordinating road authority.

² Note that in some cases red coloured roads may have either VicRoads or the relevant local council as the coordinating road authority.

Consents, TMP's and MOC's

The following may be applicable to the work you are undertaking.

Consent for Works

The Road Management Act³ requires that where works⁴ are to be completed in, on, under or over a road that the written consent of the coordinating road authority is obtained.

Traffic Management Plan

It is a requirement of the Road Safety Act that a traffic management plan be in place. The Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice and AS 1742.3 are useful references when preparing a traffic management plan.

Memorandum of Consent

Under the Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations, if a major traffic control item⁵ is to be utilised then a 'memorandum of consent' (MOC) will be required from VicRoads. This is the case whether the coordinating road authority is VicRoads or a local council. Examples of major traffic control items include the installation of temporary traffic lights, or introducing a speed reduction.

What type of worksite is it?

There are several types of roadside worksite which are detailed in the guidance material. These include:

- **Very short term works** – works which take no longer than five minutes to complete.
- **Short term works** – sites where a traffic management plan is required only while work personnel are in attendance and is generally limited to the duration of a single work shift or lesser period where road conditions are returned to normal.
- **Long term works** – sites where a traffic management plan is required to operate both day and night and may be left unattended.
- **Mobile works** – works which entail vehicles moving along the roadway continually at a speed significantly lower than other traffic and obstructing or partially obstructing traffic lanes.

Table 3 in the Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice is a good starting point if assistance is required with classifying your work site.

What about worksite safety?

WorkSafe is looking to ensure that:

- members of the public and motorists are given clear instruction and direction about what they need to do.
- the hazards associated with the works being completed have been identified. These include the hazards associated with the task, and those associated with the environment, including working near traffic.

³ In particular section 63(1).

⁴ In the Road Management Act section 3 (definitions) "works" are described as including breaking up the surface of the road; erecting a structure in, on or over a road; removing or interfering with any structure or marking on a road; planting or removing a tree or other vegetation; tunnelling under a road; connecting a road to a road; installing pipes, drains, cables, poles, buildings, shelters or other structures on the road reserve; erecting any obstructions on a road.

⁵ A 'major traffic control item' is defined in Schedule 2 of the Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations 1999.

- a risk assessment has been completed. A risk assessment process is detailed in the Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice, in 'part 2, division 1'.

- controls have been put in place to provide a safe workplace. It is important to consider the hierarchy of controls when selecting which controls will be used. Some examples may be seen below in an extract from the Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice (table 2):

Hierarchy	Sample controls
Elimination / substitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road closure • Detour • Traffic diversion
Engineering / isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety barriers • Close lane/s • Use different construction method
Administrative / behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed reduction • Warning signs • Delineation of travel path
Personal protective equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visibility clothing

So, as an example, if it is practicable to close the road so that the traffic is removed from the worksite (elimination control) then this is preferred over issuing of personal protective equipment as the sole means of control.

Forms and checklists are found in the Worksite Safety – Traffic Management Code of Practice to assist with the risk assessment process and control selection.

The SWAT Campaign

The aim of the WorkSafe SWAT campaign is to "promote and enforce safe traffic management practices at roadside worksites throughout Victoria".

During the Safety – Workers and Traffic (SWAT) campaign, WorkSafe inspectors are looking in particular at:

Planning	Has the risk assessment process been undertaken? Is there a plan for traffic management?
Advance warning	Is there sufficient warning for motorists approaching the worksite that people are working on or near the road, and that the road conditions may have changed?
Signage	That the correct signs are displayed at the correct time. That the signs are in good condition and class 1 retroreflectivity ⁶ .
High visibility clothing	Ensure that an appropriate style is being worn (eg day or night type retroreflectivity), and that the clothing is in good condition ⁷ .
Worker protection from traffic	That the clearance between workers and traffic is sufficient or other controls such as a speed reduction or barriers are in place.
Work zone separation	Ensuring that other road reserve users, such as pedestrians and cyclists, have been considered and appropriate controls have been put in place to allow their safe passage through or around the site.

⁶ See SWAT Bulletin 1 for further information.

⁷ See SWAT Bulletin 2 for further information.

Education / Training

There are several traffic management courses conducted by registered training organisations in Victoria. Contact your preferred training provider to discuss your particular training needs.

A list of training providers may be accessed through the 'traffic management / roadside worksite safety' page at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au (the link is contained under 'other resources').

Contacts

Coordinating Road Authorities – VicRoads

Queries regarding consents for arterial roads should be directed to the following persons:

Region	Contact	Telephone
Metropolitan North West	Manager Program Delivery	03 9313 1100
	Manager Network Operations	03 9313 1321
Metropolitan South East	Manager Program Delivery	03 9881 8801
	Manager Network Operations	03 9881 8729
Eastern	Manager Program Delivery	03 5172 2609
	Manager Regional Projects	03 5172 2656
Northern	Manager Program Development	03 5434 5054
North Eastern	Manager Program Development	03 5761 1819
South Western	Manager Program Delivery	03 5225 2509
Western	Manager Program Development	03 5333 5702

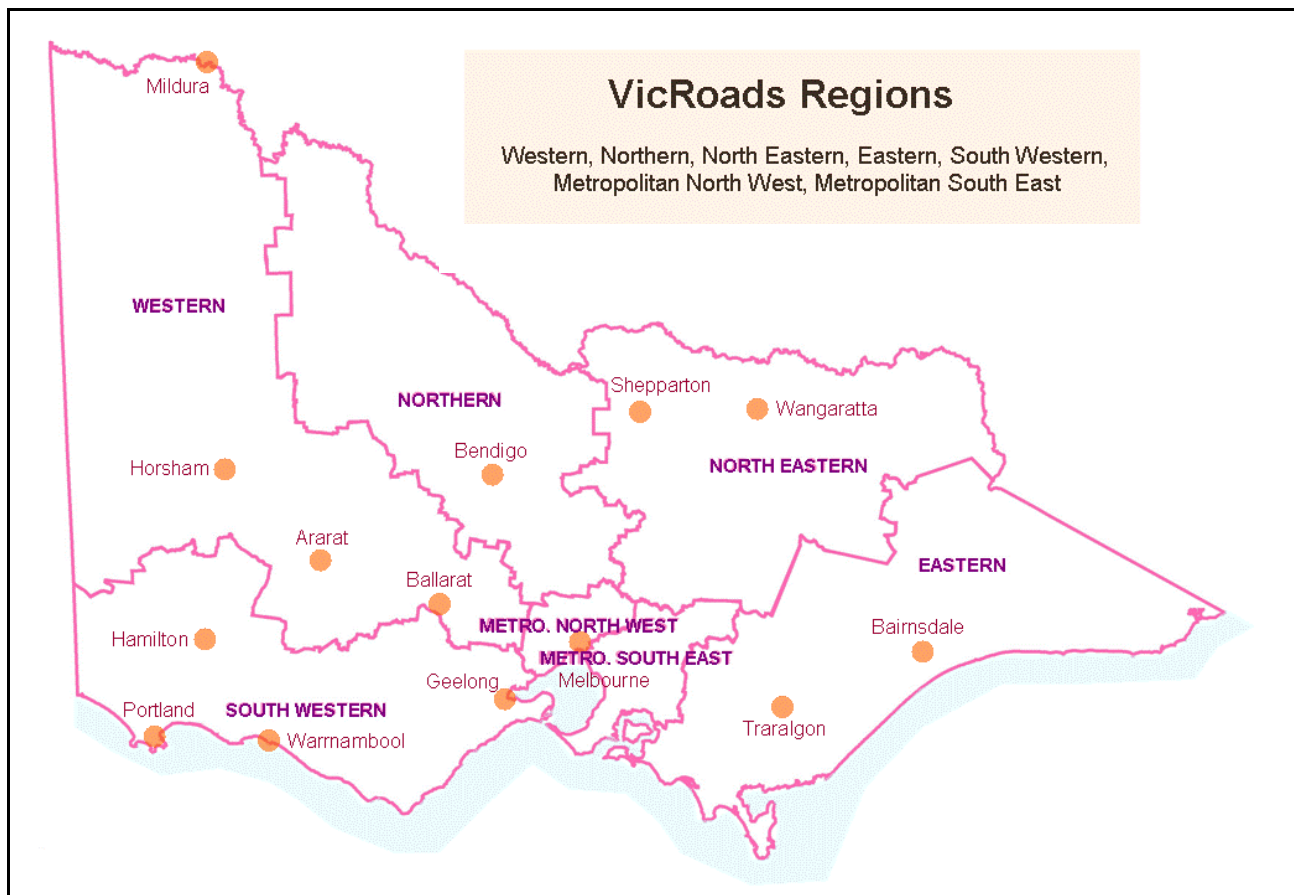
Coordinating Road Authorities – Local Government

Check the white pages phone directory, or refer to the Local Government Directory at www.infovic.vic.gov.au (choose 'resources/research from the left hand column, then under 'Government Directories' browse the 'local government directory on line'). A hard copy is also available from Information Victoria on 1300 366 356.

WorkSafe

WorkSafe's Advisory Service can be contacted on 1800 136 089. This Advisory Service acts as a central contact point for WorkSafe Victoria services, including assistance with general OHS enquiries, and receipt of reports about unsafe worksites.

www.worksafe.vic.gov.au



Thanks to VicRoads for their assistance with this bulletin.