

## Message from the Chair

I would like to extend the best wishes of the SEATS Executive committee to all of the SEATS members.

Over the last few months, there have been several changes with SEATS following the NSW Elections and with new Councillors elected. I would like to send a warm welcome to all new NSW Councillors elected in December 2021 in the SEATS region.

I am also sad to report that Mayor Marianne Saliba was not re-elected in the elections. On behalf of SEATS, I would like to pass my many thanks to Marianne for the roles she played at SEATS and her great contributions, she will be missed.



On another note, Greg Pullen is retiring from Shoalhaven City Council, and this will see a change to how Shoalhaven has participated in SEATS for the past 20 plus years. Further information will be able at the next SEATS meeting. On a brighter note, I am delighted to announce that Andrew Martin has returned to SEATS as our Executive Officer after positive discussions were held between him and the Executive Committee following the resignation of Andrew's replacement in January. It is a very busy time of year with the Federal election about to get underway as well as a State Election in Victoria. These are very important dates for our advocacy and Andrew's expertise will be greatly appreciated. Andrew has certainly "hit the ground running" on his return. You will all get to welcome Andrew back at our proposed SEATS members meeting to be held on 7 and 8 April at Lakes Entrance.

We are in a very busy time of year as the Federal election is almost upon us and this is our opportunity to advocate for what is important to local governments in the South East of Australia. Much work has gone into preparing for the election and we are close to finalising our electoral approach. I can tell you that SEATS will contact every candidate who has registered to run with specific electorate advocacy documents which will be emailed and posted to them. We will also be implementing a campaign on Twitter and Facebook speaking our message to the candidates and be seeking commitments from them on projects we feel are very important to the local community.

As you would all know, NSW has just come out of catastrophic flooding and the damage to local roads is simply astonishing. Please read the article in this newsletter reprinted with permission from the news organisation "Government News" entitled "More than three-quarters of regional NSW roads overdue for renewal". Once again, we are faced with seeking funding to fix transport infrastructure which has been badly damaged through natural weather events. The commitment for State and Federal government will need to be significant if we are going to get our local communities back to any sense of normal.

I look forward to welcoming you to Lakes Entrance on 7 and 8 April for an in-person SEATS meeting. This meeting will serve three purposes:

- Finalise the content for the SEATS Electorate advocacy documents through breakout groups
- Review SEATS Member reports - general presentation
- Breakout groups for the NSW and VIC SEATS members to interact directly with TfNSW and VIC Transport.

Kind Regards, Cr. Patricia White - Chair

## SEATS member conference

- Dates:** 7 April 1 pm to 5 pm, 8 April 9 am to 1 pm
- Where:** Seahorse Room Mechanics Hall  
18 Mechanics Street  
Lakes Entrance 3909
- Dinner:** Central Hotel 321 Esplanade, Lakes Entrance  
To your account  
From 6 pm 7 April
- Accommodation:** SEATS have obtained a corporate rate for SEATS members of \$139.00 at Bellevue on the Lakes



*Seahorse Room Mechanics Hall*

### AGENDA TOPICS

#### Federal election strategy finalisation

SEATS has prepared draft documents for our Federal election strategy covering eight federal electorates. Follow the links for each federal electorate to review your information:

- [Cunningham](#)
- [Whitlam](#)
- [Gilmore](#)
- [Eden Monaro](#)
- [Gippsland](#)
- [Latrobe](#)
- [Hume](#)
- [Monash](#)

We are asking SEATS members to review their "Electorate Documents" and provide additional content including images, maps, and additional narrative that you feel would better enhance your interests. We will be breaking into work groups to discuss the content and finalise our approach

#### SEATS members reports

All SEATS local government members are requested to send their quarterly SEATS report to the Executive Officer via [email](#). At the Lakes Entrance conference, we will be asking your representative to present their transport infrastructure report to the group. This helps SEATS enormously in terms of understanding your priority projects and in turn ours.

#### Break out groups for interaction with TfNSW and Vic Transport

Paul Vecovski (TfNSW) and Harvey Dinelli (Vic Transport) will facilitate a break out session with SEATS local government members to discuss areas of common mutual interest and to gain an insight into the State government prioritisation of funding for transport infrastructure.

**[Register HERE](#)**

# Federal election advocacy

These are the current registered candidates for the Australian Federal Election:



**Cunningham**

Labor	Alison Byrnes
UAP	Benjamin Britton
LDP	Michael Glover
ACP	Alexis Garnaut-Miller

**Whitlam**

Labor	Stephen Jones
Liberal	Michael Cains
UAP	Timothy Banfield
LDP	Michael Wheeler

**Eden Monaro**

Labor	Kristy McBain
UAP	Darren Garnon

**La Trobe**

Liberal	Jason Wood
Labor	Abi Kumar
Greens	Michael Schilling
UAP	Merryn Mott
AJP	Helen Jeges
LDP	Michael Abelman

**Gilmore**

Labor	Fiona Phillips
Liberal	Andrew Constance
UAP	Jordan Maloney

**Hume**

Liberal	Angas Taylor
UAP	Garry Dollin
Phon	Rebecca Thompson
Independent	Penny Ackery
Independent	Sheneli Dona

**Gippsland**

National	Darren Chester
Labor	Jannette Langley
Greens	Marjorie Thorpe
UAP	Gregory Forster

**Casey**

Liberal	Aaron Violi
Labor	Bill Brindle
Greens	Jenny Game
UAP	Anthony Bellve
Independent	Claire Ferres Miles

**Monash**

Liberal	Russel Broadbent
Labor	Jessica O'Donnell
Greens	Mat Morgan
UAP	Christine McShane
Independent	Deb Leonard

The SEATS federal election campaign discussion points will comprise of the following:

Each candidate will receive the SEATS Electorate Advocacy document. Click [HERE](#) PW to access is member122

SEATS will run a social media campaign focusing on Twitter and Facebook and messaging our transport infrastructure priorities to each candidate's Twitter and FB feeds.

SEATS Executive and SEATS members will be encouraged to meet as many candidates as practicable locally.

SEATS Chair and Executive will visit all successful candidates in Canberra to ensure our priorities are reinforced as these new and returning MP's commence their service to their electorates.

## SEATS members reports

SEATS members meet four times every year where we hear from presenters on topics that are of interest to the group. This is also the environment where we share our local government transport infrastructure priorities with each other.

This serves a number of purposes. Primarily it provides SEATS the opportunity to support members through focused advocacy for funding from the state and federal government. It is also an opportunity for members to highlight and request areas of support from SEATS where you believe we can help.

We acknowledge that there is a number of multi-shire freight transport corridors that form the basis for SEATS priorities projects. Examples are the Princes Highway upgrade, the east to west freight link among others.

Coming into focus strongly also is the EV charging network infrastructure requirements of the South East. Another area includes rail trails.

Climate events are also becoming a major area of focus for SEATS in our advocacy. The catastrophic events of bushfires and flooding are now having a major impact on our region's freight transport network. Focused government funding into the rebuilding and improving transport infrastructure resilience is now our major concern and therefore priority.

The length of the report is up to you but SEATS are primarily interested in finding areas where we can advocate for funding and support.

Follow this [link](#) (PW member122) to review the Eurobodalla member report for November 2021. This will give you a feel of how the team in Moruya do the report.



## SEATS meeting dates

SEATS Executive Committee and SEATS Quarterly Meeting - April 7 - 8 at Lakes Entrance

SEATS Executive Committee and SEATS Quarterly Meeting - June 9 - 10 via Microsoft Teams

SEATS AGM, Executive Committee and SEATS Quarterly Meeting - August 11 - 12 at Sale Victoria

SEATS Executive Committee and SEATS Quarterly Meeting - November 10 - 11 via Microsoft Teams

**camaraderie** *noun* mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together

## Significant road damage in NSW

Article by Julie Skatsooon of [Government News](#)

The report by Transport for NSW's regional and outer metropolitan division marked as sensitive and obtained by Government News, rates about 2,000 kilometres, or 11.7 percent, of regional roads as poor or very poor.

It says major highways are typically designed for a 40-year pavement life while minor road pavements generally have a 20-year design life.

"One of the greatest challenges is the sustainable replacement of road pavements that have reached the end of their useful life," the Regional and Outer Metropolitan Asset and Service Plan for the next ten years says.

"The current rate of pavement renewal is well below the long-term sustainable target.

"The average age of pavements is increasing. More than 77 percent of pavements in regional NSW have exceeded the typical minimum pavement design life of 20 years."

About 35 percent of state roads are more than 40 years old "and constructed for a traffic loading standard to the time", which means in many cases they are expected to operate under loads and speeds that "far exceed" their original design.

It says the 2056 target of zero fatalities and serious trauma is at risk of not being met without significant infrastructure investment to reduce the safety risk.

The report also shows that more than 1,000 of the state's 1,200 bridges are between 50 and 60 years old, and notes there are 65 timber bridges on regional roads. This is despite timber assets representing a high risk of service interruption in extreme events like fires and floods.

### Funding shortfall

ROM modeling indicates there's a funding shortfall of \$805 million for the regional road network and it presents a second funding scenario that only addresses the highest risks and would result in a \$1.3 million shortfall.

The report warns that increasing the size of the ROM network through the transfer of regional roads from local government to state management will "lead to a significant increase in funding required to meet safety outcomes".

Opposition roads spokesman John Graham says the document shows the state's roads are falling apart and blames systemic neglect.

"Billions of dollars have flowed into gold-plated toll roads, while our local roads are potholed, broken, and underfunded," he said.

## Significant road damage in NSW Cont;

A spokeswoman for TfNSW said funding decisions about assets and maintenance across the transport network always prioritised safety and security.

Investment in statewide road maintenance funding alone had increased by \$60 million from the year prior to \$1.3 billion for 2020-21, she said.

We're planning for the network's future and responding to the challenges of population growth, bushfire recovery, and the impacts of COVID-19 by getting on with the job of delivering a record \$72.2 billion infrastructure program," the spokeswoman told Government News.

The report also says a significant portion of the rail network is non-operational and 54 percent of the country's regional network, including 64 stations, is non-operational because of a lack of economic viability.

The cost of maintaining non-operational components of the network came to \$2.8 million a year.

The report says regional NSW has come under increased focus because of the impact of bushfires and a post-covid migration of people from metropolitan Sydney.

All up, it recommends \$56.6 billion over ten years, not including new policy proposals, to bring regional traffic assets up to and maintain a steady-state by 2031.



*There's an \$805 million funding shortfall for regional roads according to one scenario presented in an internal government report.*

## Member profile: ACT Government

*Snapshot Priority next five years*

### **Faster rail between Canberra and Sydney and stronger freight links**

"Improving rail transport links between Canberra and Sydney and strengthening freight links across the entire Canberra Region is a high priority to support our economic development and continue growing new opportunities on both sides of the ACT border. The current rail service between Canberra and Sydney is slow by global standards, taking up to 4 hours and 20 minutes to travel around 300km. As it stands, the service cannot compete with air, car, or coach travel. A faster rail connection between Canberra and Sydney presents a unique opportunity to strengthen the economic, service, and social relationship between Canberra, our surrounding regions, and Greater Sydney. Better rail services would not only expand and enhance the connectivity between two major cities but would unlock further opportunities for tourism, freight, urban regeneration and more sustainable population patterns.

"Recognising the important role of rail in better connecting regional centres and cities, the Australian, State, and Territory governments are pursuing a range of opportunities to upgrade the rail network in Australia. Better use of our existing infrastructure through the improved timetabling, modern fleet, and minor track improvements will reduce travel times and enhance the customer experience in the short term, while strategic track upgrades and major realignments that are future-proofed for high-speed rail lay the foundations for a more significant shift in rail technology in the longer term.

As most of the rail infrastructure upgrades required to improve the Canberra to Sydney rail link are in NSW, many key decisions on investment and construction to improve this corridor lie with the NSW Government. The Federal Government also has an important role to play as this is a nationally significant corridor. However, given the significant benefits this work would deliver for the Canberra community and our wider region, the ACT Government stands ready to support and invest in works undertaken in partnership with the NSW Government. As Canberra's international gateway, the Canberra International Airport is also well placed to support increased air passenger and freight movements to and from the region. With the arrival of international flights to Canberra and the ongoing development of high-quality freight forwarding facilities for both fresh and other goods, the Canberra Airport will have a growing role to play in linking businesses and producers in the Canberra Region to the world.

The airport currently has no night time curfew, significant runway capacity, easy access to key road freight routes, and is close to land for potential future commercial development. Both the ACT and NSW Governments have been making significant investments in the regional road network in recent years, including upgrades to the Monaro Highway and other feeder roads into the Canberra Airport. We will continue to prioritise these investments to support a more integrated supply chain from the region to customers throughout the world. Through our regional engagement frameworks, we will continue to coordinate and advocate for investment in rail, air, and road infrastructure on both sides of the ACT border in the coming years".





*Lakes Entrance Victoria*

**SEATS - South East Australia Transport Strategy Inc.**

ABN 91 495 277 812

Contact the Executive Officer via [email](#)

