



Institute of
Public Works
Engineering
Australia
(NSW Division)

IPWEA (NSW) ROADS & TRANSPORT DIRECTORATE

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25 October 2013

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Dear David,

Revision of Guide to Road Safety Part 6 – Road Safety Audit: Interim Report Submission

Introduction

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia (IPWEA) is a not for profit, membership based, professional organisation representing engineers and others involved in the provision of public works and services predominantly in the local government sphere.

The Roads & Transport Directorate has been set up by IPWEA (NSW) in conjunction with Local Government NSW to provide support to its members working in local government across the state. It is supported financially by membership contributions from Local Councils in NSW.

Background

The Roads & Transport Directorate has been set up to meet the demand from members of IPWEA (NSW) to act as a focus for research activities and to provide technical advice.

Its main purpose is to assist Local Government in NSW in the area of road infrastructure and transport related activities by:

- Assisting members in discharging their road management roles in the most effective manner consistent with current legal obligations and the most recent technical practices in the critical area of consistent and cost effective asset management and road safety;
- Assisting the IPWEA (NSW), Local Government NSW, individual Councils and members in lobbying for a higher priority to be placed on road infrastructure provision and maintenance and for a more equitable share of resources and funding; and
- Providing for IPWEA members and Local Government a powerful technical and research resource on transport issues at regional, state and national level. The activities would be, as circumstances dictate, either proactive or reactive to achieve the optimum benefit for the region or state.

The Directorate commenced operation in October 2004 and has been involved in determining the needs of members and developing solutions to meet those needs. Over that period the Directorate has made submissions on a range of issues. Copies of some of these submissions¹ are available on the website at: www.roadsdirectorate.org.au.

Submission Approach

This submission includes brief comments on the contents of the Interim Report in Section Number order. These comments are not meant to be exhaustive and the author is happy to provide any additional detail or clarification where necessary.

Section 1.1 Project Overview

We agree with the general principles detailed in the dot points. It is agreed that the developments in assessment tools available, the adoption of the safe system approach and incremental changes in the road network environment warrant a thorough review of these guidelines.

It is suggested that particular attention should be paid to the ageing population and the increasing use of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs in addition to electric cycles, electric skateboards, quad bikes and Segways which are increasingly being used on our regional and local road networks.

In a more general sense it is important that the Guide has application to small local roads, collector roads and regional roads as well as the state road network. In particular, assumptions about the resources available to conduct audits on local and regional roads should be carefully considered.

Section 2.3 Key Areas of Investigation

We agree with the dot points listed here with particular emphasis on the first five areas.

Section 3.1.1 Structure of the Guide

We are not sure about the statement that “*the Working Group supported presenting the Guide in two sections within the one publication to address the issues for the audit team and project sponsor/manager separately*”. It is our view that these two things are different: one is the Audit as covered by this Guide the other is how the Audit Report might be used by others. If this latter issue is to be included it might be included as a brief Appendix.

Section 3.2 Implications for the Guide

Having regard to the contents of Table 3.1 it is difficult to see why the Guide should delve into writing more specific position descriptions and organisational charts (or is this a too literal interpretation?).

Section 4.1.1 Risk Management

The final dot point relating to who carries out risk assessment needs clear and concise definition. The identification of the risks existing would seem to be the function of the Road Safety Audit, the assessment of the risks possibly a joint task and the evaluation of solutions one for the client.

Table 4.1 uses the word “Intolerable” rather than Severe, Very High, Extreme. This word carries emotive overtones which suggest that immediate action should be taken to rectify.

¹ Copies of submissions are available at: <http://www.ipwea.org/RoadsTransportDirectorate/AboutRD/Submissions/>

This is surely not the function of the risk assessment but a decision to be made by the client based on the objective risk assessment.

Is the final dot point in Section 4.2 appropriate? Isn't this the client's problem, and not part of the Audit?

Section 5 Safe System Hierarchy of Control

We fully support the principles contained in the two dot points on page 9 as an appropriate outcome from this review. As noted elsewhere, this will provide small road authorities with limited road safety capacity to identify and examine some solution options as a result of having conducted an audit. This would seem to be a desirable outcome.

Table 5.1 are the two right hand columns matters for recommendation by the auditor? If not they could be retained for completeness with a note to that effect.

Section 7 Variation to the Standard Road Safety Audit Process

Are these variations? The other view is that there is a single Road Safety Audit process that might be applied to:

- Project Design Plans
- Construction Traffic Management Plans
- As Constructed Project Works
-

Table 7.1 suggests three different audit processes rather than auditing three different phases of one project.

Section 9 Use and Relevance of Crash Data

It is our view that where such data is available and relevant it should be referenced. Exclusion what might be an overwhelming factor in achieving an adequate audit outcome would seem counterproductive.

Section 10 Case Studies

The case studies should include the use of Road Safety Audits on the local and regional road networks. The current examples largely concentrate on the state road network. Having regard to the fact that about 50% of fatalities occur on regional and local roads this does not present a balanced view.

We see no problem with the case studies and model audit report being contained in an appendix.

Section 11 Recommendations in an audit

IPWEA supports the suggestion that further discussion on the role of recommendations in an audit report should be discussed in more detail. This discussion should occur once some of the basic definitions referred to earlier have been clarified.

Section 12 Road Safety Issue Categories

IPWEA fully supports the view that a table of road safety categories similar to those in Table 12.1 should be included in the Guide.

Section 13 Tools and Technology

IPWEA fully agrees with the statement in the final paragraph of Section 13.1.1 that there is *“a need to clarify the role of this technology in conducting audits in the Guide, in audit training and in audit project briefs”*.

It is important that each specific site is physically assessed and that the auditor's training and experience is applied to achieving the outcome.

Section 14 Road Safety Audit Checklists

We consider that the existing comprehensive checklist is an essential part of the Guide and should not be removed. Making the checklist available on the Austroads website makes the use of the Guide disjointed and incomplete. We have no problem with an updated checklist being included as an Appendix rather than as Chapters 10 and 11 as at present.

Section 15 Training and Accreditation

IPWEA fully supports the statement that:

It would also be timely, and beneficial, to consider a uniform management across jurisdictions of registering road safety auditors. For project managers, this would improve access to qualified and experienced road safety audit practitioners; for road safety auditors, the process of registering for audits across Austroads jurisdictions would be simpler and more cost effective.

We have developed courses on Road Safety Auditing and want to continue to be involved in training in this area which we see as extremely important for Local Government. To achieve this we fully support the recommendation that Austroads consider:

- *adopting a national framework for road safety audits and for road safety auditors. This national framework will provide common training and accreditation criteria for those seeking to conduct road safety audits in Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions*
- *developing a new national curriculum for road safety audit training for delivery across Australian and New Zealand jurisdictions*
- *establishing and operating a national database of accredited road safety auditors to replace the individual databases and lists that are currently operated by jurisdictions.*

We would also submit that these recommendations could be partially achieved and further enhanced by linking the newly developed training modules to the National Competency Standards. This would ensure a national framework together with standardisation of content and assessment.

IPWEA (NSW) and the Roads & Transport Directorate appreciate this opportunity to have input into the Revision of the Guide to Road Safety Part 6 – Road Safety Audit: Interim Report, and would value any opportunity to provide any additional details arising from the above submission.

For further information in relation to the submission please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned on:



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