



# 2016-17 ANNUAL REPORT

## *The NSW Roadside Environment Committee*

The NSW Roadside Environment Committee (REC) was established in 1994 by the NSW Government in recognition of the environmental values of linear reserves. The REC is an umbrella body of linear infrastructure managers and environment organisations that promotes and coordinates leading practice in linear reserve environmental management across the State.

The vision of the REC is:

*Environmental values of linear corridors are actively managed in balance with other functional needs.*

The REC currently comprises thirteen organisations with interests in the management of roadside and other linear reserves in NSW. The REC member organisations are:

- Roads and Maritime Services (RMS)
- Nature Conservation Council (NCC)
- Essential Energy
- Rural Fire Service (RFS)
- Sydney Trains
- Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia NSW (IPWEA NSW)
- Local Government NSW (LGNSW)
- Local Land Services (LLS)
- Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)
- Department of Industry – Lands & Forestry
- Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC)
- Country Regional Network (CRN) – John Holland Rail Ltd
- Ausgrid

The REC is funded by the NSW Roads and Maritime Services. Member organisations provide in-kind support.

### *Strategic plan*

To work towards its vision, the REC developed a strategic plan for 2016-2019.

The plan is provided in Appendix 1.

There are three outcomes in the strategic plan:

1. Projects delivered and assistance provided to improve linear corridor management
2. REC members understand and share good practices
3. Stakeholders aware of REC's key initiatives

## Key issues

In developing its 2016-19 Strategic Plan, the REC identified the following key issues that it will focus on.

<i>Environmental management issues</i>	<i>Corporate issues</i>
Weed and biosecurity management	Safety (of personnel conducting works in the corridor as well as travelling public)
Native vegetation (including hazard trees)	Planning
Wildlife including road kills	Data management
Firewood collection	Training
Bushfire management and fire regimes	Compliance
Heritage (indigenous and non-indigenous)	Community expectations
Illegal dumping & litter (waste management)	Incident response
Scenic amenity	Regulator relationships
Erosion & sediment control	Community education
Contaminated land	Communications
Noise	Disaster management
Water quality	
Contaminants	
Rest areas	
Signage	
Acid sulphate soils	
Livestock management	

## Achievements

In June 2016 the REC completed its 2013-16 Strategic Plan. An evaluation of this Plan's progress informed the preparation of the 2016-19 Strategic Plan that included a special planning workshop.

The REC then carried out actions related to the new Strategic Plan. These actions included:

- Developing a project for the preparation of a training course and implementation plan for the biodiversity component of Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) (Action 1.6 in the 2016-19 Strategic Plan).  
This project will be funded by the REC and conducted during 2017-18.
- Supporting and promoting the Linear Reserves Program funded by the NSW Environmental Trust (Action 1.1).  
The Linear Reserves Program consists of two programs:
  1. Managing Travelling Stock Reserves for Sustainable Conservation Outcomes managed by LLS in conjunction with OEH (\$4.75 million over three years)
  2. Council Roadside Reserves Project managed by LGNSW (\$2.08 million over three years).

- Sponsoring the Roadside Environmental Management Award as part of the 2016 Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards initiated by LGNSW (Action 3.5).

The Awards are open to all local councils in NSW and aim to recognise outstanding achievements by NSW Local Government in managing and protecting the environment. The 2016 awards were held at Doltone House, Sydney on 29 November.

The REC has sponsored the Roadside Environmental Management Award for the past six years.

The Winner of Division A (population less than 20,000) and Overall Category Winner was Moree Plains Shire Council for its Roadside Environmental Management Plan. This Roadside Environmental Management Plan project provided Moree Plains Shire Council with a clear strategy for conserving and enhancing native vegetation and habitat in its roadside reserves. The Plan is underpinned by the results of a survey of 1,250 km of Shire roads and the training of key council staff in how to identify local fauna and flora and the use of the Plan.

The Roadside Environmental Management Plan now forms part of Council's integrated planning and reporting processes, and includes Best Practice Guidelines for routine road construction and maintenance activities.

Highly Commended in Division A was Lachlan Shire Council for its Roadside Corridor Assessment and Management Guidelines.

Highly Commended in Division B (population between 20,000 and 60,000) was Ballina Shire Council for its Chickiba Roadside Wetlands Restoration Project.



Kylie Kerr and Dennis Purse of Moree Plains Shire Council with the outright winner award

- Reviewing and improving the REC's Terms of Reference in relation to the new Strategic Plan.
- Holding a REC meeting in a regional area of NSW (Actions 1.2 and 2.4) to discuss and learn more about local and regional issues to assist in improved linear reserve management.
- Sharing and learning more about aspects of linear reserve management including new biosecurity and biodiversity conservation legislation, review of crown lands, the review of travelling stock reserves, and new methods for environmental management (Actions 2.1, 2.2 and 2.5).
- Implementing the REC Communication Plan (Action 3.2). Measures of the performance of the Communication Plan implementation in 2016-17 include:
  - Mailing list of stakeholders increased from 380 to 390 individuals/organisations during the year
  - Hits on the REC website averaged 140 per month
  - Four editions of the REC newsletter were produced and distributed electronically to stakeholders during the year as planned
  - The REC Speaker's Kit was used by the Executive Officer to promote best practices in linear reserve environmental management and the role of the REC.
- Actively continuing the REC Facebook and Twitter sites during 2016-17 (Action 3.2). The Facebook site has 44 likes (up from 30 in June 2016) and the Twitter site has 124 followers (up from 101 in June 2016).
- Promoting linear reserve environmental management initiatives through the NSW Landcare Gateway (Action 3.2). The REC page is found at **<http://www.landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/nsw-roadside-environment-committee>**

The REC carried out a range of other activities in 2016-17 related to the Strategic Plan. The activities included:

- Receiving a presentation on Ausgrid's recent improvements in environmental impact assessment/ LLS grant to work at Bunnerong substation
- Receiving a presentation on Protect and Grow Roadsides Program: A Data Driven Strategic Approach by Wingecarribee Shire Council
- Receiving a presentation on Southern Highlands and South-West Sydney Koala Conservation Projects by OEH
- Receiving a presentation on the RMS Litter Reduction Program
- Receiving a presentation on Amendments to the Bush Fire Environmental Assessment Code by RFS
- Receiving a presentation on the latest news from IPWEA NSW
- Responding to a broad range of correspondence from the general community and other stakeholders about matters such as bushfire management, litter reduction, animal road kill and weed management.

## Meetings

The REC met four times during 2016-17. Meetings were held at Sydney (9 August 2016 hosted by LGNSW), Moss Vale (8 November 2016 hosted by Wingecarribee Shire Council) and Parramatta (14 February 2017 hosted by RMS, 16 May 2017 hosted by Molino Stewart Pty Ltd).

The following persons represented the member organisations on the REC during 2016-17:

Martin Driver (NCC) - Chairperson  
Steve Goldie (Essential Energy)  
Julie Ravallion (RMS)  
Jill Croome (RMS)  
Lloyd Van Der Wallen (RFS)  
Luke Durrington (Sydney Trains)  
John Roydhouse (IPWEA NSW)  
Kirsty McIntyre (LGNSW)  
Stuart Gold (OEH)  
Chris Wright (DoI – Lands & Forestry)  
Michelle Quinn (Ausgrid)  
Amber Grant (CRN)  
Helen Wilson (LLS)  
Stuart Ross (ARTC)

The following persons acted as alternates to the above:

Brigid Dowsett (NCC)  
Bruce Thompson (OEH)  
Kathy Godfrey (LGNSW)  
Mick Savage (IPWEA NSW)  
Eve Bleuel (Ausgrid)  
Deepa Punnoose (RFS)  
Leesa Swan (LLS)  
Scott Black (RMS)

Molino Stewart Pty Ltd was contracted by RMS to provide secretariat services to the REC during 2016-17. Neil Dufty of Molino Stewart was the Executive Officer of the REC and was supported by Elise Armstrong, Ruth Fernando and Kavita Vaid of the same company.

*For more details about the REC go to its website*

*<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/about/what-we-do/committees/roadside-environment-committee.html>*

**Outcome 1: Projects delivered and assistance provided to improve linear corridor management**

<i>Action</i>	<i>Measure of Success</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
1.1 Support and disseminate the Travelling Stock Reserve (TSR) and Council Roadside Reserves (CRR) projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participation of REC members in Advisory Committees</li> <li>- Progress disseminated via REC communications strategy</li> </ul>	H	Jun 2019	LLS LGNSW REC rep Secretariat
1.2 Develop ways to manage priority issues and communicate those to stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Key environmental issues promoted to at least one regional forum per year</li> <li>- Hold at least one regional meeting to discuss local issues</li> </ul>	H	Annual	REC members Secretariat
1.3 Investigate and encourage use of available spatial layers relevant to corridor management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigation of Transport for NSW and other platforms</li> <li>- Know status of RVMP GIS data</li> </ul>	M	Dec 2017	REC members Secretariat
1.4 Promote and support grants and relevant funding opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunities are shared</li> </ul>	M	Ongoing	Secretariat
1.5 Promote management systems and operational tools to manage weeds and other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tools shared</li> <li>- Presentations at regional meetings</li> </ul>	M	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
1.6 Build industry capacity for better biodiversity outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accredited training developed and implemented</li> </ul>	H	Jan 2018	RMS, other REC members

**Outcome 2: REC members understand and share good practices**

<i>Action</i>	<i>Measure of Success</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
2.1 Share improved environmental control procedures	- Information supplied	L	Jun 2019	Infrastructure members of the REC
2.2 Share tools and approaches to manage all vegetation for environmental & transport safety objectives	- Information supplied	M	Annual	Infrastructure members of the REC
2.3 Share rapid assessment tools and spatial products	- Information supplied	M	Dec 2017	LLS LGNSW
2.4 Focus REC meetings on key issues and share policies, procedures, learnings etc.	- Year 1 meetings on Weeds, Firewood, Safety Trees, Rehabilitation	H	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
2.5 Brief each REC member on all relevant major government reforms and changes to legislation	- Briefings occur on new reforms and legislation	M	Ongoing	REC members

**Outcome 3: Stakeholders aware of REC's key initiatives**

<i>Action</i>	<i>Measure of Success</i>	<i>Priority</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
3.1 Review the REC communications strategy	- Strategy reviewed and published	M	Dec 2017	REC members Secretariat
3.2 Communicate the REC's purpose and activities	- Speaker's Kit updated - REC communications strategy used	M	Jun 2018	REC members Secretariat
3.3 Provide case studies of good practices	- Case studies prepared & located on REC website	L	Ongoing	REC members Secretariat
3.4 Organise a state-wide linear corridor forum	- Forum successfully held	H	Dec 2019	REC members Secretariat
3.5 Sponsor the NSW Roadside Environmental Management Award	- Award sponsored annually	M	Annual	RMS