Examples of Some Road Management Boards

(Prepared by Ian G. Heggie, revised March 1999)

ENGLAND: Highways Agency Advisory Board

Established in 1994, the U.K. Board consists of a chairperson and four or more members. Members are appointed by the permanent secretary, after consultation with the Agency's chief executive officer, based on nominations prepared by staff of the Department of Transport. The minister is informed of the appointments. The permanent secretary is ex officio chairperson, and the Board does not meet in his/her absence. The other members include the chief executive of the Agency, one or more of the Agency's executive Board members, one or more departmental representatives, and one or more non-departmental members. There are currently two non-departmental members who are appointed in their personal capacity. The Board has no subcommittees and no permanent secretariat. One of the department's staff acts as secretary to the Board and is assisted by other departmental staff. The secretarial functions absorb about five person-weeks per year.

The Board was established as a non-statutory board in 1994 through publication of a Government Framework Document. The Board's general role is to support the permanent secretary in advising the secretary of state on the strategic direction of the Highways Agency. In particular, the board advises on the Agency's:

- Corporate and business plans.
- Performance against the targets set in its corporate and business plans.

The board also supports the Agency's chief executive to achieve his/her aims and objectives.

FINLAND: Board of FinnRA

This Board was established in 1990 and consists of a chairperson and seven members. Members are nominated by the director general of FinnRA and appointed by the cabinet on the recommendation of the Minister of Transport and Communications. The director general is ex officio chairperson, and the other seven members currently represent the Ministries of Transport and Environment, the municipalities, the Confederation of Industries, the road transport industry, the labor union, and the union of employees. The Board has no subcommittees. One of the directors of FinnRA handles its business, and a secretary takes minutes and arranges meetings. The secretarial functions absorb about one person-year per year.

This Board was established under the Finnish National Road Administration Decree, 1990. It was set up to involve the public in discussions on road sector development, strengthen concern for the environment, improve the effectiveness and efficiency of FinnRA, and make road planning more transparent. The decree empowers the Board to:

- Make decisions on FinnRA’s goals and operations, taking into account the goals set by the Ministry of Transport.
- Decide on administrative arrangements.
- Decide on the budget proposal, the activity and financial plans, and long-term development programs.
- Monitor implementation of the organization's goals and approve the financial accounts.
- Decide on important research and development tasks.
- Issue the organization's rules and regulations, except where these functions have been delegated to the director general or other functionary.
- Deal with any other matters of importance to the organization as decided by the chairperson.
JAPAN: The Japan Road Council

The Council was established in 1952 and consists of a chairperson and 12 members. Members are nominated by the director general of roads and appointed by the minister of construction. The chairperson has traditionally been president of the Japan Road Association (always a former undersecretary from the Ministry of Construction). Board members include representatives of the motor industry, business community, trade unions, academia, and local government. Much of the Council’s substantive work is carried out by three subcommittees: one deals with road policy, one with toll roads, and the other with environmental issues. The Council has no permanent secretariat.

The role and duties of the Council are laid down in article 77 of the Road Law, 1952. The law provides for a Road Council to be established by the Ministry of Construction at the request of the minister. The Council’s role is to:

• Investigate present road conditions and propose future improvements.
• Deliberate on management of the road fund and toll-road financing, and advise the minister on changes necessary to reorient road financing.
• Examine important topics like road safety, traffic congestion, and environmental damage, and propose a long-term strategy on road policy to be adopted by the government just before the start of the five-year road improvement programs.
• Deliberate on the contents of the five-year road improvement programs prepared by Ministry of Construction and, after the Council is satisfied with the program, convey that consent to the minister.

NEW ZEALAND: Board of Transit New Zealand Authority

The original National Roads Board was established in 1954 with the minister of works as chairperson. The board established in 1989 and consisted of a chairperson, deputy chairperson, and six members. Members are appointed by the governor-general on the joint recommendation of the ministers of transport and finance and based on consultations with various industry associations. The chairperson is appointed by the governor-general from among the members of the Board. The chairperson of the 1989 board was a former local authority engineer, the deputy chairperson was past president of the Institution of Professional Engineers, and the other six members had backgrounds in town planning, industry, local government, road transport, farming, and accounting. The Board sets up ad hoc subcommittees to deal with specific tasks. The subcommittees always include the chairperson and usually two other board members. The Corporate Services Manager of Transit New Zealand acts as secretary to the board, and the secretarial functions absorb about one person-year per year.

The legislation establishing the Board was passed in 1954 and was amended in 1979, 1989, and 1996. The Board established under the Transit New Zealand Act, 1989, empowered the Board to:

• Prepare an annual national land transport program and review and revise the program from time to time.
• Manage implementation of the following elements of the program: local roading, safety (construction and maintenance), passenger transport, state highways, and administration.
• Make payments from the [road fund] account and, in special cases, present proposals to the minister for funding outside the approved national land transport program.
• Control the state highway system, including planning, design, supervision, construction, and maintenance.
• Advise local authorities in relation to their functions, duties, and powers and audit the performance of every local authority as compared with its statement of intent contained in the relevant land transport program.
• Provide the minister with such information and advice as the minister may require and carry out such other land transport functions and duties as the minister may prescribe.
SOUTH AFRICA: South African Roads Board

The original Board was established in 1935. The Board operating until 1998 was established in 1988 and consisted of 12 members—6 public and 6 private—appointed by the minister of transport, posts, and telecommunications, following consultation with the constituencies represented on the Board. The director general, transport, was ex officio chairperson. Two members represented the central government, two represented provincial governments, and one represented metropolitan and local authorities. The six private sector members represented car users, the bus industry, the road freight industry, business (commerce, industry, mining, and agriculture), the engineering profession, and academia. The Board had three committees: finance, tenders, and urban transport and planning. The urban transport and planning committee managed the Urban Transport Fund, reviewed the transport plans prepared by the core cities, and made recommendations on these plans to the Board. The Board was terminated in 1998 and its powers devolved to the provinces. Until 1995 there was also a toll road committee, which advised the Board on all matters pertaining to toll roads. The chief director, roads, acts as secretary to the board. The secretarial functions absorb about two to three person-years per year.

The current South African Roads Board was set up in 1988, and the legislation was amended in 1995. The main purpose of the Board is to promote and encourage the development of transport and, where necessary, to coordinate various phases of transport in order to achieve the maximum benefit and economy of transport services to the public. The main objectives of the Board are to:

- Design, build, and maintain a national network of freeways and other roads, including toll roads.
- Compile a priority list of roads to be built or improved.
- Design and build various special roads that are in the national interest.
- Set geometric standards for the construction of national and special roads.
- Preserve the environment.
- Expend available funds in the most cost-effective manner in providing a primary road network.
- Initiate research, whether in South Africa or elsewhere, in connection with the design, planning, or construction of roads.
- Grant bursaries or subsidies to enable people to study or research any subject connected with roads.
- Advise the minister, at his/her request, on questions relating to roads that may be raised by the government of any other country or territory.
- Provide rest and service areas, in conjunction with private enterprise, at strategic points on national roads in order to promote road safety.

The Department of Transport is charged with carrying out the executive and administrative work necessary to enable the board to carry out the duties and functions assigned to it.