

MEDIA RELEASE

17 June 2009

RAC calls on government to respond to Auditor General's road report

The RAC has called on the State government to prepare an urgent response to a damning report by the Auditor General on maintenance of the state road network.

The Auditor General has found that contract flaws have left the State's taxpayers facing a bill of almost \$800million to eliminate overdue maintenance.

The report found that a quarter of the road network is overdue for resurfacing while nearly one third of the network is reaching the end of its design life.

RAC Head of Member Advocacy Matt Brown said the report highlighted a litany of failures in the management of the State's most important economic asset.

"Our road network underpins our economy and our way of life," Mr Brown said.

"The RAC has been ringing the alarm bells for many years now that our network is not keeping pace with our economic growth and has, in fact, been deteriorating.

"No-one can say these findings have come as a surprise. The Auditor General has simply confirmed our worst fears.

"At a time when we desperately need to grow our economy, our road network is in danger of falling apart.

"This systemic failure to maintain our roads is also putting lives at risk. Our AusRAP analysis of our state's roads identified almost 1,000 kilometres of highways with an unsatisfactory safety rating.

"Over the past 10 years, while the State was experiencing an unprecedented resources boom, the level of resurfacing declined by 30 per cent while rebuilding declined by 80 per cent.

"It's scandalous that we have wasted this opportunity to put in place a road network to take our State, its economy and its people into the future."

Mr Brown said the State government needed to publicly respond to the Auditor General's report.

"We are not interested in apportioning blame, we are more interested in how we can work together as a community to try to fix this mess," Mr Brown said.

"The government needs to commit some serious additional funding to the road network over the next five years – and even then they'll only be playing catch-up."

ENDS

1

For more information contact RAC Media

Ph: 9436 4402, 9436 4258

Mob: 0419 813 188, 0421 586 049

or email adrian.firth@rac.com.au rosalind.lane@rac.com.au