

DUBBO CITY COUNCIL CASE STUDY

The Intelligent Access Program (IAP) helps to deliver 'first and last mile access' for the Dubbo community helping to lift operational efficiencies and achieving significant reductions in fuel consumption and environmental emissions.

ABOUT DUBBO CITY COUNCIL

Dubbo is located in central western New South Wales at the junction of the Newell, Mitchell and Golden Highways. Dubbo serves as the regional hub for one third of New South Wales, which has a population of approximately 120,000 people. This means Dubbo has a diverse economic base spanning the retail, health, manufacturing, transport, tourism, education, construction, agriculture, business services and public sectors.

Dubbo City Council occupies 3,425 km² and has a population in excess of 42,000 people, which in recent years has grown at an annual rate in excess of 1%. Nearly 90% of the population live within the Dubbo urban area with the balance living either in nearby villages or on farms.

DUBBO'S ROLE AS A TRANSPORT HUB

Dubbo enjoys Higher Mass Limits (HML) access to:

- Sydney via the Mitchell and Great Western Highways
- Melbourne and the Victorian HML network via the Newell Highway
- Brisbane and the Queensland Higher HML network also via the Newell Highway
- Newcastle via the Golden and New England Highways
- Bourke, western Queensland and the Northern Territory via the Barrier and Mitchell Highways
- Walgett and western Queensland via the Castlereagh Highway
- Broken Hill, South Australia and Western Australia via the Barrier Highway.



According to Councillor Allan Smith, Mayor of Dubbo City Council, Dubbo's economic growth is underpinned by these excellent transport links. 'While it is possible to run road trains, AB-Triples and B-Triples on some of the New South Wales road network on and west of the Newell Highway, there is no access for these vehicles east of the Newell Highway.'

Councillor Smith says that as Dubbo is the only city on the Newell Highway, these vehicles are often broken down there into smaller units like B-Doubles to continue their eastward journey and vice-versa on westbound journeys to western Queensland, the Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia.

'Additionally, Dubbo's role as the regional service centre for western New South Wales means it is also increasingly the origin and destination of road freight movements to meet the needs of local communities. Many of Australia's largest transport companies have depots in Dubbo and work with prominent locally based transport operators to service that need. This means Dubbo serves as an increasingly important local, regional and national transport hub,' Councillor Smith said.

WORKING WITH INDUSTRY

Councillor Smith says that, 'Council recognises its size and location at the junction of major national and state highways means it is important to work with the transport industry in providing service to the needs of locally based businesses, the western region of NSW and beyond.'

'The Council works closely with operators to identify and where appropriate approve safer, more efficient road access. This is of particular importance in a city like Dubbo, which serves as an important freight hub as well as the origin and destination of many long distance journeys. This is because, other things being equal, the benefits of achieving 'first mile' or 'last mile' access are greater on longer journeys.'



THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

According to Councillor Smith, Dubbo City Council has approximately 1,200 km of local roads as well as almost 113 km of state and regional roads with 34 bridges and major culverts. A total of 38% of the local road network is unsealed and two bridges are of timber construction. Council adopts a hierarchical approach to each local road having regard to the recognised functional classifications of roads (local, collector, sub-arterial and arterial) which is reflected in terms of the road traffic volumes as well as the importance of the road.

‘This means some roads receive priority in terms of maintenance over others based on the road’s social and economic significance to the region.’

‘As a matter of principle the Council adopts a policy of supporting access for HML vehicles and vehicles operating under Performance Based Standards (PBS) on higher order local roads provided the geometry of each road is considered suitable for heavy vehicles larger than the normal semi-trailer and the pavement is deemed capable of supporting the heavier loads. Bridges are not a major issue in Dubbo but the two remaining timber bridges would prevent access for Restricted Access Vehicles (RAV) south east of Dubbo.’

WORKING WITH TRANSPORT OPERATORS

Councillor Smith said eight transport operators have applied for access within Dubbo City Council to operate under the IAP.

‘Each applicant advised the Council that they had signed up with the IAP supported by an IAP Service Provider.’

‘To make an informed decision, Council officers assessed applications to access the local road network and in the process developed an understanding of the IAP.’

Councillor Smith said the IAP provided the Council with a high level of assurance that the transport operator would comply with conditions to access the approved route. Consequently, the Council approved requests for HML access on a total of ten routes as well as quad axle access on one route. Access along these routes was only made possible thanks to the IAP and includes roads leading to the Dubbo Regional Livestock Markets, the Fletcher International Exports Pty Ltd abattoir and the new Inter-Modal Terminal operated by Fletcher off Yarrandale Road.

According to Councillor Smith better access for HML and quad axle vehicles has had the greatest impact on local livestock carriers, processed meat, grain hauliers, general freight, liquefied petroleum gas, quarried gravel, fuel and bitumen businesses by helping to lift operational efficiency.



PRODUCTIVITY, EFFICIENCY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

'Council's decisions mean that HML and quad axle transport operators on these approved routes can achieve significant reductions in fuel consumption and environmental emissions. A reduction in the number of truck trips is also achievable for these transport tasks. These productivity, efficiency and environmental outcomes are made possible because payload increases can be achieved for trucking companies operating on HML under IAP,' Councillor Smith said.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, visit the TCA website at www.tca.gov.au

AT A GLANCE

- Dubbo's role as the regional service centre for western New South Wales means it is increasingly the origin and destination of road freight movements
- The IAP provided the Council with a high level of assurance that transport operators would comply with conditions to access approved routes
- The Council approved requests for HML access on a total of ten routes as well as quad axle access on one route



The information contained in this case study is intended to convey the experiences of the transport operator/s concerned. The benefits of IAP mentioned in this case study may not be true for all transport operators. Transport operators should consider the appropriateness of IAP to their business operations, objectives and circumstances before enrolling in IAP.