Transfund News

A monthly newsletter published by Transfund New Zealand

November 1999 Issue 17

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Transfund open for e-business

With no ribbon-cutting ceremony, just a few mouse-clicks and a sigh of relief from staff members involved, Transfund last month linked its new web site to the information highway.

Several weeks of detailed planning and consultation have resulted in a site which is not only full of valuable information but will also, by next month, be a place to do business.

"It's an interactive office," says Transfund chief executive Martin Gummer. "It enables us to make publicly available details of just about every aspect of our business, but more importantly it will simplify and speed up transactions with our key stakeholders."

It is this facility that was one of the compelling reasons for launching the web site.

Tapping into TAPS

The introductory page at *www.transfund.govt.nz* gives a choice of topics that are accessed by clicking on the relevant name – for example: Corporate Profile, National Roading Programme, Manuals & Policies, etc. One button is marked TAPS, and for most visitors that's all they will see of the site's most important feature.

Access to the Transfund Allocation Programme System is restricted to road controlling authorities and regional councils, who are provided with a login and unique password enabling them to enter the TAPS site.

From there, they can submit their monthly NRP claims, review the financial status of their current NRP agreement, request changes to allocations and access historical NRP records – all with total security. Each unique password takes the client straight to the relevant records in Transfund's accounting system.

The TAPS site will be "live" from December for receipt of RCAs' and RCs' November 1999 claims, and is expected to result in smoother and faster processing of claims.



Visitors to Transfund'sweb site can access information on every aspect of the organisation, download and print publications and reports, and conduct routine NRP transactions.

Site structure

For those simply wanting to access information about Transfund and its activities, there is a wealth of data. The layout of the site is simple and provides the following information:

The **Corporate Profile** pages state Transfund's mandate and principal tasks, explain how the organisation operates, and profile the Board, Transfund's five divisions and their responsibilities.

Our Business details Transfund's key business relationships and explains in greater depth how funds are allocated and what the key funding goals are.

The **NRP** pages give details of how the National Roading Programme is developed and how funding is allocated. It explains the different output classes and funding criteria. Next year full details of the 2001/2002 NRP will be posted on this site.

The **Publications** pages currently include copies of Transfund News and TranSafe and will soon contain Transfund's annual report, Statement of Intent, and copies of Transearch. Copies of most of these publications will be downloadable and can be printed as PDF files. **continued on page 2**

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- Research report offers 'Park & Ride' planning help
- . NRP Update
- QA for local roads are you ready?
- Southern region
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Work is progressing on the **Manuals & Policies** section, which will contain documents such as the Alternatives to Roading (ATR) Manual, Project Evaluation Manual (PEM), Competitive Pricing Procedures (CPP) Manual, Programme & Funding Manual, RAMM policies, etc.

Contact Us gives full contact details for Transfund's national and regional offices, and will soon feature a feedback form which can be used to direct enquiries straight back to Transfund by email.

Future developments

Already site expansion is being planned for next year. Some of the important additions planned include:

- a "What's New?" section with up-to-date press releases of Transfund activities and achievements
- publication of Transfund's general circulars via the web site
- education and training details and resource material



- a search engine which will enable visitors to quickly locate any item on the web site, including specific sections in any of the manuals and policy documents
- a "Links" page providing access to other road industry sites, stakeholders' sites, related Government departments, overseas information sources, etc.

Transfund welcomes industry comment on its new web site, which should be directed to Julie-Anne Maloney, direct dial 04 495-3277 or email *julie-anne.maloney@transfund.govt.nz*

Major Projects Review – key findings

Transfund's Major Projects Review, which is examining all aspects of the processes for identifying, evaluating and delivering major road construction projects, is in its closing stages with the conclusions of the four work teams having been reported to the project's industry steering group on 11 November.

A full report will be presented to a special meeting of the Transfund Board on 30 November and to the Transit Authority on 1 December. Following these meetings, and subject to the Board's agreement, Transfund and Transit staff propose holding a series of stakeholder briefings and consultation workshops to communicate the results and receive feedback.

Five areas have emerged as key themes, with the following recommendations:

• **Institutional accountabilities:** There is need for a clearer accountability framework, supported by robust performance indicators and related incentives and sanctions. This recommendation underpins practices to enhance 'value for money' by clarifying roles for Transfund and Transit as "purchaser" and "supplier" respectively. Performance indicators should be aligned with **these** roles and accountability strengthened for delivery of outputs (**RCAs**) and achievement of sector outcomes (Transfund).

Portfolio value & management: Transfund should adopt a "portfolio focus" rather than a project-by-project focus when making investment decisions, and should communicate its expectations regarding the desired sector outcomes it seeks to achieve with its portfolio of projects. RCAs can then react accordingly and submit projects that are aligned with those outcomes. The project teams have recommended that Transfund should introduce output funding (an allocation of funds for a group of negotiated outputs) to better align outputs with sector outcomes and strengthen the RCAs' accountability for delivering these outputs. Larger and higher risk projects would probably continue to be approved by Transfund on a project-specific basis.



Major Projects Review co-ordinating team meeting. Standing L-R Jill Kaczynski (BCG), Steven Woolford (BCG), Peter Wright (Transfund), Colin Crampton (Transit). Seated L-R Kevin Biggar (BCG), Bob Alkema (Transfund), Rick Van Barneveld (Transit), Perry Keenan (BCG).

- Project selection and evaluation: Transfund should enhance its funding evaluation process in two ways – (i) by taking a segmented approach to the funding evaluation process, based on project size and risk, and (ii) by improving project development processes by reaching agreement with **RCAs** on the development of key best practice processes. Transfund should take greater interest in project development processes.
- **Project pricing:** Fixed Price Lump Sum should feature in all physical works contracts within three years. Components that cannot be adequately quantified and managed by contractors will continue to be priced on a schedule of rates.
- Project development and delivery mechanisms: To take advantage of opportunities to innovate and to more appropriately allocate contractormanageable risks, trials of alternative delivery methods (such as design-build and design-refine-build) should be undertaken over the next two years. Feedback from a formal evaluation of the trial projects will be used to refine and improve the implementation strategy. Project development practices should include early investment in scoping and risk assessment, a more proactive approach to RMA themes, and more emphasis on quality of suppliers.

The project steering group is currently identifying specific proposals and issues, along with an appropriate timetable for implementation, and will communicate these to stakeholders during the planned briefings early in 2000.

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Research report offers 'Park & Ride' planning help

A research report funded by Transfund, and available to urban policy and planning practitioners, explains the various stages for developing and operating a Park & Ride (P+R) programme.

P+R involves the provision of car parking facilities well outside the central area of a city, linked with the city by public transport services. It is a concept that combines the benefits of both car use and passenger transport use into an efficient and effective system, and is a potentially powerful urban transport policy tool.

Auckland and Wellington Regional Councils have developed formal P+R policies, contained in their regional land transport strategies, and already operate some P+R services. This report describes the most favourable conditions for building or extending Park and Ride facilities. This should assist councils to identify and put forward P+R proposals that could qualify for funding assistance as alternatives to roading (ATR) projects.

Key benefits

The report, prepared by consultants Booz-Allen & Hamilton (NZ) as part of Transfund's 1998/99 research programme, explains that P+R measures are designed to shift car parking concentrations from the central business district (CBD) to suburban fringe locations. Benefits include:

- reducing traffic levels and congestion levels on urban radial routes and in the CBD
- reducing the need and pressure for increased road capacity, and reducing emission levels, energy use and other environmental impacts
- reducing the amount of parking required in the CBD.

Another valuable benefit could be to increase the level of service and cost-effectiveness of passenger transport services.

In researching international experience with P+R, the report's authors found that "the most essential and almost universally applicable criterion for the success of P+R schemes is a shortage of reasonably-priced central area parking". They say that if this criterion does not apply, P+R will probably only succeed if a high level and high quality passenger transport service links the parking site with the CBD.

Other necessary features include well located and designed car parking facilities, high quality passenger transport services between car parks and the CBD, and appropriate marketing of the scheme.

Useful resource

Planning criteria and guidelines for P+R facilities in the main urban centres of New Zealand are set out in tabular form in the report. This allows for easy transfer into a planning and policy manual for use by practitioners.

Separate tables provide criteria and guidelines for each specific activity of developing a P+R scheme.

The report is titled "Park and Ride Policies and Criteria" (Research Report No 136), and is available from Customer Services, Standards New Zealand, Private Bag 2439, Wellington, phone 04 498-5991, fax 04 498-5994.

> Commuter carpark at Paremata Station, north of Wellington.



NRP Update Earlier this month NRP Category 2 projects to the value of \$20.74 million were approved at a review meeting, bringing the year-to-date approvals to \$63.04 million. The following are the most significant new approvals (full list available on request from NRP manager Murray Riley, direct dial 04 495-3263).					
REGION	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT PHASE	EST. TOTAL COST \$000	1999/2000 CASHFLOW	
Bay of Plenty	SH38: Te Whaiti seal extension	Works	2,415.0	340.0	
Taranaki	SH3: Urenui safety improvements	Works	2,302.0	1,000.0	
Canterbury	SH73: Whites Bridge	Works	2,650.0	1,050.0	

QA for local roads – are you ready?

Among their other duties, Transfund regional staff are currently reminding territorial authorities of the need to prepare for the introduction of quality assurance systems for all Transfund financially assisted work. Where necessary they are also providing assistance for authorities needing help with implementation of the new requirements.

At the moment quality assurance systems are being promoted as best practice for local roading contracts. However from 1/July 2000 it will become mandatory for all contractors carrying out financially assisted physical works

to have QA systems in place for new contracts.

Earlier thii year, following work undertaken by the QA for Local Roads working party, a position paper was widely circulated to industry representatives, resulting in 23 submissions being received, Nineteen of these supported the proposal that the Transit New Zealand quality requirements, applied to all State highway physical works, should also apply to local authority physical works. The Transfund Board adopted the proposal in May 1999.

Quality Assurance standards

Transit's quality assurance regirements provide for different levels of QA, depending on the complexity of the project. These levels are:

- . ISO 9000 for complicated tasks
- . Transit Quality Standard 1 (TQS1) for reasonably complicated tasks
- . Transit Quality Standard 2 (TQS2) for straightforward tasks.

TQS2 will be the minimum standard required for all contracts let after 1 July 2000,

Contractors are being advised that training courses on TOS 1 and TOS2 will be available from the New Zealand Institute of Highway Technology on an "as required" basis from early next year, on a full cost recovery basis.,,

Any territorial authorities needing advice on implementing quality assurance standards should contact their Transfund regional office as follows:

Northern Region - Dave Macdonald

(09 529-9936) or Cambell Snook (07 853-6919). Central Region - Bob Alkema (04 495-7600). Southern Region -Neil Bennett (03 365-3330).

Southern region off ice moves

On December 11, Transfund's southern regional office moves from its present central Christchurch location to new premises at 85 Riccarton Road.

Transfund's lease on the present Landsborough House office is due to expire in three months, so regional office staff took the opportunity to look for more cost-effective accommodation.

"This, combined with greater comfort and access to a major arterial road route, makes the new premises more convenient both for staff and for meetings with our key South Island stakeholders," says Transfund southern region manager Neil Bennett.

Phone and fax numbers are unchanged.

Talking Points

Transfund places a strong emphasis on consultations with industry stakeholders in all matters affecting its funding policies. Some of the policy initiatives on which we're currently consulting are:

Issue	Parties involved	Timing	Contact
Possibility of increasing the funding allocation for minor safety projects from 2.5% of maintenance budget to 5%	RCAs	Responses called for by 1/12/99	Transfund Regional Offices
Relating maintenance output measures to outcome based performance indicators	RCAs	Responses called for by 1/12/99	Transfund Regional Offices
Evaluation procedures for funding of existing passenger transport services	Technical Working Group (RCs, transport operators, MoT, Auckland City Council)	Regular meetings	Jayne Gale, Transfund 04 495-7604
Review of benefit parameters used in Transfund's project evaluation procedures	RCAs, RCs, AA, Road Transport Forum, MoT	Regular consultation & meetings. Project completion by June 2001	Ian Melsom, Transfund 04 495-3266
Sector outcomes, draft key performance indicators (KPIs) and impacts on NRP agreements	Roading and Passenger Transport working parties	Further meetings scheduled for December	Alar Treial, Transfund 04 495-3440
Consultation on the findings from the Review of Major Projects	RCAs, consultants, contractors and other industry groups	February 2000	Peter Wright Transfund 04-495 3270
CPP Training Workshops	RCAs, consultants, contractors	March/April 2000	Bernie Cuttance Transfund 04 495-3273

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Transfund News

A monthly newsletter published by Transfund New Zealand

October 1999 Issue 16

Stepping up the pace for future investments

The Transfund Board last month announced a number of measures that could soon lead to increased investment in new roading and passenger transport projects.

A number of factors have combined to indicate that more money than originally forecast could be available for new projects, and the Board is keen to ensure that road controlling authorities and regional councils start planning now in order to take advantage of any increased funds that may become available.

The factors include:

- savings in maintenance expenditure due to competitive tendering, Transfund's new evaluation policy, the introduction and trialling by Transit of longer term performance specified maintenance contracts for State highways, and changes initiated by Transfund to maintenance contract terms
- stronger economic growth projections, which currently indicate that Transfund's share of revenue from the National Roads Fund will grow from \$915 million this year to over one billion dollars within three to five years.

Transfund is asking road controlling authorities and regional councils to indicate those road construction or ATR projects that are sufficiently advanced to start within the next three years – even though they may not meet Transfund's current benefit-cost ratio (BCR) cut-off of 4. The Board also resolved to:

- lower the BCR cut-off for investigation and design of transport projects from 4 to 3, with immediate effect, in order to speed the planning processes of future projects and give Transfund more flexibility in utilising all available funding
- consider applications from local authorities for advance funding for investigation and design projects
- signal that in February 2000, it may be able to reduce the cut-off to below 4 for new roading and passenger transport projects submitted for the 2000/2001 NRP.

By February 2000 Transfund will have received forecasts of expenditure from all authorities and will have had the opportunity to assess these. It will also have considered revenue forecasts and be in a position to establish where the BCR cut-off should be set for the medium term. In the interests of continuity and consistency, Transfund intends that whatever level the BCR is set at should be sustainable for at least two years.

By providing this advance notice of a possible drop in the BCR level, Transfund hopes to aid the planning of future developments by territorial authorities and the consulting and contracting industries. Transfund regional managers will actively consult with RCA asset managers about ways of accelerating the development and delivery of new roading projects, and about the potential opportunity for investing more funds in minor safety works.



Inside:

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- Major projects review making good headway
- Instructions issued for 2000/2001 NRP
- . NRP Update
- Implications of ATR funding policy changes
- Changes to vehicle operating costs (VOCs)

. Talking Points

Review of benefit values used for project evaluation

Last month Transfund commenced a review of the benefits and benefit values used in project evaluation for calculating the benefit/cost ratios (BCRs) of road construction projects.

Transfund decided to review the benefit values used in its Project Evaluation Manual (PEM) to ensure that they take account of the latest research findings, reflect industry best practice and – most importantly – that they properly reflect the values and preferences of New Zealand road users.

The aim is to identify a comprehensive mix of benefits that accurately reflects road user values. Some of the current PEM values, such as non-work travel time, are based on international research that is relatively old and needs to be updated using New Zealand research. The project will involve a lot of survey work, and will include the use of focus groups to establish which benefits to include and what values they should have.

The project commenced on 2 September with a workshop in Wellington, where participants identified and prioritised some of the benefit parameters which are currently omitted or poorly represented in the evaluation procedures.

The workshop also considered the issue of *resource cost valuations* for work travel time, vehicle operating costs and part of the accident costs versus *willingness to pay* (*WTP*) valuations for comfort, reduced frustration and that part of accident costs associated with pain, grief and suffering.

Project plan

Stage 1 of the review of PEM benefit parameters will take approximately eight months and will comprise four main activities:

- an international literature review of benefit parameters, valuation techniques and parameter values
- a review of the sources, reliability and comprehensiveness (against international best practice) of Transfund's evaluation parameters, and determining which parameters the subsequent survey and research should focus on
- determination of the most appropriate survey tools for quantifying those parameters
- finally, on the basis of the above reviews, development of a survey strategy for establishing valuations for PEM benefit parameters.

An integral part of **the** plan will be a series of focus groups involving both the public and industry groups, to establish initial preferences and values. Transfund hopes to include some of **the** updated benefit values in its evaluation of projects for the **2001**/ 2002 NRP, and the remainder for **2002/2003**.

The **format** and content of stage 2, the determination of the complete benefit parameter mix and values to include in the PEM, will be dependent on the outcome of stage 1 and will be promulgated when stage 1 is complete. The target completion date for stage 2 is June 2001.

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Instructions issued for 2000/2001 NRP

On 30 September Transfund issued the instructions required by road controlling authorities for development of their district roading programmes for 2000/2001. Programmes are to be submitted to Transfund regional offices by **1** December 1999.

Key features of the instructions for 2000/2001 include the following:

- the BCR cut-off for investigation and design of roading projects with a total construction cost of \$400,000 or greater is reduced from 4.0 to 3.0 (effective immediately)
- advance funding can be considered for investigation and design of local roading projects
- the process for negotiating the maintenance allocation is largely the same as for 1999/ 2000
- some work categories are combined, and the bridge reconstruction output is amended
- some new procedures have been introduced into the Project Evaluation Manual (PEM), including risk analysis guidelines, accident analysis procedures and revised VOCs.

This year Transfund is also requesting information on minor safety projects in order to assess the benefits of possibly increasing the allocation from 2.5% of the maintenance budget to 5%.

The instruction pack includes a detailed template for district roading programmes, with guidance on the information Transfund requires, and advance details of the changes to the Programme & Funding Manual (as listed above).

NRP	Update During September new NRP projects to the value of \$16.23 million were approved at two review meetings. The following are the most significant new approvals (full list available on request from NRP manager Murray Riley, direct dial 04 495-3263).			
REGION	PROJECT NAME	PROJECT PHASE	EST. TOTAL COST \$000	1999/2000 CASHFLOW
Auckland	ALPURT Sector B2 (enabling contract) ALPURT Sector B1 (b)	Works Works	2,000.0 4,800.0	2,000.0 4,800.0
В.О.Р.	SH5: Reporoa Road South	works	375.8	375.8
Taranaki	SH3: Kuwhatahi reconstruction	Works	840.0	670.0
Nelson/Marlbro	SH6: Spooners Range Summit Realignment	Works	5,310.0	2,655.0

Major projects review making good headway

Strong themes are already emerging from the work of the teams reviewing the processes by which road construction projects are developed, managed and built.

The project co-ordination group guiding the four work teams met in mid-September to review progress after four weeks of this twelve-week project. The group was impressed not only by the commitment and volume of work being put in by team members, but more importantly by the quality of their investigations at this early stage.

A common theme coming from all four teams – each addressing specific questions – is the need for segmentation of projects according to their attributes including size, complexity and environment. "The teams are saying that different projects need handling in different ways and with different management processes," said BCG project manager Perry Keenan, a member of the co-ordination group.

"They are reviewing and testing the current processes, across all project phases, and seeking to identify changes that will result in added value to the road users. It is becoming clear that some current processes do not add significant value and that resource costs could be better utilised."

Issues of organisational responsibilities and accountabilities are also being challenged right across the board, including those of



Second steering group meeting in progress. From left Steve Scott (NZ Contractors' Federation). Martin Gummer (Transjiind chief executive), Jack Bryant (independent representative), Perry Keenan (Boston Consulting Group).

Transit, Transfund and local authorities. "No stone is being left unturned by the work teams," comments Peter Wright, Transfund's review & audit manager, also a member of the co-ordination group. "A lot of really good ideas are being brought forward, including many from both roading and non-roading industries offshore with advanced project management skills." The project steering committee, chaired by Transfund chief executive Martin Gummer, met on 30 September to obtain an overview of the work completed so far, give its approval for work to proceed on emerging notions, and if necessary refocus the work of the four teams. A separate report will be issued on the outcome of this meeting.

Attachment To Report 99.72c

Changes to vehicle operating costs (VOCs)

The Transfund Board has agreed to phase in a revision to the vehicle operating cost (VOC) values included in the Project Evaluation Manual (PEM). This is one of a number of changes to the PEM implemented in 1999 (see September *Transfund News*).

Recent research both here and overseas indicates that over the last 10 to 15 years there has been a significant reduction in the costs of running motor vehicles. These reductions, which are primarily due to improved technology incorporated into vehicle construction, impact on both the base vehicle running costs and the costs associated with road roughness.

A consequence of changing the VOC is that for projects submitted to the 2000/2001 NRP the VOC benefits (and disbenefits) will be reduced by approximately 25 percent. The Transfund Board has also resolved that during the coming year the VOC will be further refined and new procedures incorporating these further improvements will be issued next year (see separate article on page 2).

Background

The VOCs in the PEM have three distinct components:

- . base vehicle running costs
- · road roughness costs
- speed change cycle costs (when accelerating and decelerating)

and these components are comprised of the costs of fuel, oil, tyres, repairs and maintenance, and vehicle depreciation related to use.

The New Zealand model used to generate these costs (NZVOC) was developed in the 1980s and was based on the World Bank's highway design and maintenance model (HDM3), but modified and calibrated for New Zealand conditions.

Revising the VOCs

Research commissioned by Transfund and conducted by Opus Central Laboratories,

together with work by the World Bank on its latest HDM4 model, has shown that the operating costs of today's vehicles are considerably lower than those last used to calibrate parts of the NZVOC model.

While VOCs make up only approximately 17% of the total benefit stream of projects submitted to the NRP, it is clear that a change in the VOC model could have a significant effect on some of Transfund's investments, particularly those projects that deal with roughness reduction, such as seal extensions.

Following consultation with road controlling authorities at a workshop and forum in July this year, and considering the options for updating the VOC values, the Transfund Board resolved to phase in a reduction to the VOCs over two years. The initial reduction is considered to be conservative (based on the Opus calculations), and further work will be undertaken to refine the VOCs during 19991 2000 with a view to fully implementing further improvements for the evaluation of projects submitted to the 2001/2002 NRP.

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Implications of ATR funding policy changes

The Transfund Board recently completed a review of financial assistance rate (FAR) policy for alternatives to roading (ATR) projects. Proposals for changes to the policy will be considered in April 2000, with changes likely to be implemented after July 2000.

While there is currently only one ATR project receiving financial assistance from Transfund – the Marlborough log barging project – at least two major Auckland-based ATR proposals are likely to be submitted for funding before July. They are the Britomart transport centre and the North Shore bus rapid transit project

Wellington and Canterbury regional councils may also submit proposals.

Since ATR projects are primarily funded on an *output* basis, Transfund recognises that regional councils need to be able to predict payment levels with reasonable certainty. It therefore wishes to ensure that any such projects approved for funding on the basis of the present FAR policy are not disadvantaged by any subsequent policy changes.

(Even with a stable FAR rate, fluctuating outputs can affect payments markedly. Last year, for instance, the Asian crisis dramatically reduced the number of logs barged in Marlborough, reducing expected annual funding from \$76,000 to \$4,000).

Policy determined on approval

In order to provide certainty to councils preparing ATR proposals for submission to Transfund, the Board last month resolved that:

- for future ATR projects funded as capital projects, the FAR policy will be fixed when the project is approved, for the duration of the project, and
- for future ATR projects funded as *outputs*, the FAR policy will be fixed when the project is approved, for the duration of the contract between the regional council and the operator.

However, in the latter case, the Board agreed that if the FAR policy changes to



Loading logs at Manaroa in the outer Pelorus Sound for barging to Picton Funding assistance for this ATR project helps relieve pressure on local roads.

the council's advantage, Transfund may, at its discretion, offer the increased FAR to the council.

It was also agreed that, for ATR projects approved *before* July 2000, Transfund would anticipate potential changes in the FAR policy by negotiating on a case-by-case basis how these potential changes would apply to each project.

Talking Points

Transfund places a strong emphasis on consultations with industry stakeholders in all matters affecting its funding policies. Some of the policy initiatives on which we're currently consulting are:				
Issue	Parties involved	Timing	Contact	
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Relating maintenance output measures to outcome based performance indicators	RCAs	Responses called for by 1/12/99	Transfund Regional Offices	
Evaluation procedures for funding of existing passenger transport services	Technical Working Group (RCs, transport operators, MoT, Auckland City Council).	Regular meetings	Jayne Gale, Transfund 04 4957604	
Review of benefit parameters used in Transfund's project evaluation procedures Transport	RCAs, RCs, AA, Road Forum, MoT	Regular consultation & meetings. Project completion by June 2001	Ian Melsom, Transfund 04 495-3266	
Proposed sector outcomes and kRopdifigranance indicators (KPIs) Transport	Roading and Pad-Rassen ger working parties	Further meetings sched- uled for late October	Alar Treial, Transfund 404 495-3440	

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