1 RURAL ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION
The Rural Roads Asset Management Systems (RRAMS) Grant has established a graduate recruitment programme aimed at recruiting suitable candidates to undergo the job graduate development programme in the area of road asset management. The RRAMS Programme seeks to attract qualified civil engineering BSc/Eng or equivalent candidates, primarily those seeking experiential learning in order to enhance graduation requirements as part of their academic obligations. The programme is aimed at building road sector management capacity at local government level.

1.2 BACKGROUND
The purpose of the grant as stated in the Division of Revenue Act (DORA) is to assist rural district municipalities in setting up their road asset management systems, and collect road and traffic data in line with the Road Infrastructure Strategic Framework for South Africa (RISFA).

During inception of the RRAMS Grant in the 2011/12 financial year, 21 District Municipalities (DMs) out of the 23 rural districts that were previously declared as Presidential Nodes were selected and allocated R1,688 million each. This was due to the unavailability of road network information, especially in the local government sphere. This made it very difficult to quantify the unavailability of road network information, especially in the local government sphere. These graduates will assist in the sphere of local government, trained Civil Engineering Technicians/Technologists throughout the country. These graduates will assist in the sphere of local government, especially in the civil engineering field.

Vision
There is a huge need for RRAMS training activities (planning, visual inspections, GIS, asset management) to improve professional competence, and this will lead to an improvement in the road sector within the country.

2.2 HUMAN CAPACITY

Progress
Since the inception of the programme, the Department of Transport managed to employ 120 (S3/S4) students in the 2011/12 financial year and, to date, this number has increased to 155 (S4) civil engineering graduates, who are in a position to register as Candidate Technicians with the ECSA.

All the graduates were exposed to various aspects of training and credited with Continuous Personal Development (CPD) points. They were trained in the following fields:
- visual condition assessments
- GIS and AutoCad
- pavement management systems
- traffic data
- project management principles
- bridge management systems.

Most of the graduates did not have a driver’s license when they were introduced to the programme and received assistance from the RRAMS Programme to obtain their license.

Local Job Creation
District municipalities, together with their local municipalities, created jobs for local unskilled labourers (traffic numerators), who are supervised by the RRAMS graduates. About 2000 temporary employment opportunities were created for numerators during the traffic counting process.

2 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

2.1 MISSION
The mission of the RRAMS Programme is to provide high-quality, trained Civil Engineering Technicians/Technologists throughout the country. These graduates will assist in the sphere of local government where there is a shortage of skilled personnel, especially in the civil engineering field.

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2.3 TWENTY-EIGHT DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY ROAD NETWORK STATUS QUOS

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<th>PROVINCE</th>
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2.3 BENEFITS OF ROAD ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Key benefits to governments that adopt formal asset management systems and practices include:
- improved understanding of service level options and requirements
- minimum life cycle (long-term) costs for an agreed level of service are identified
- better understanding and forecasting of asset-related management options and costs
- managed risk of asset failure
- improved decision-making based on costs and benefits of alternatives
- clear justification for forward works programmes and funding requirements
- improved accountability over the use of public resources
- improved customer satisfaction and organisation image.

Long Term
The main purpose of the RRAMS Programme is to improve the road sector to being more efficient and internationally competitive.

2.5 PROJECT TEAM
- National Department of Transport
- National Treasury
- Provincial Department of Roads
- District Municipalities

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The road sectors should be encouraged to pursue and ensure that the problems of anticipated skills shortages are understood at senior management level and taken into account in strategic planning.

The Department of Transport has been implementing skills development strategies from the RRAMS Programme to make sure there will be enough skilled professionals in the next five years, and intends to go the extra mile to offer RAM Learning Academy for road sectors throughout the country.