



ENGINEERS
AUSTRALIA

Media Release

Wednesday 24 November 2010

Australian infrastructure report card shows little change

The release today of the Engineers Australia *2010 Australian Infrastructure Report Card* has found that little or no real overall progress has been made in the past 5 years, despite some attempts to make up for past under-spending. Five years ago, Australia's overall result was a C plus and it remains a C plus in 2010 – meaning major improvements are still required.

Speaking at the release of the report at the National Press Club in Canberra today, Peter Taylor, the Chief Executive of Engineers Australia said, "Since our national report in 2005, Australia has experienced significant economic and population growth and, clearly, expenditure on maintaining and replacing existing infrastructure - not to mention new infrastructure - is well below what is necessary.

"There is still a lack of strategic and coordinated planning and prioritisation across many sectors and we are facing more intense challenges.

"Growth in the economy, coupled with new technologies, will see a significant growth in demand for expanded and new infrastructure and population growth is also an issue whether we use low or high growth assumptions.

"Such a growing and ageing population will accelerate the demand for all transport, water, energy and telecommunication services."

The report found that a large proportion of Australia's infrastructure is reaching the end of its useful life. Increasingly, owners will have to spend money on replacement of ageing assets, not only to meet the needs of an expanding population, but also to cater for increasing minerals and gas exports.

The capital investment on infrastructure required over the next decade will be very significant. But one of the areas that can easily be overlooked is the need to ensure that whole-of-life operational performance and maintenance costs are covered. While short-term savings can be made by reducing maintenance, the end-result is inevitably more expensive and disruptive.

"Since our last report, most sectors have developed plans for a massive expansion in capital works, but this is mostly to meet existing demand rather than provide capacity to meet future demand, and while plans have been made - relatively few projects are actually funded.

"Long-term, fully integrated planning, and the cash to back it, will be the key to ensuring Australia will have the necessary quality and quantity of infrastructure for our future economic and social needs," Taylor concluded.

A full copy of the report, with ratings and comments about infrastructure sectors at the national, state and territory levels is available at www.engineersaustralia.org.au .

A copy of the nation-wide comparative table is attached.

Further Information: John Bright – 0407 234 490 jbright@engineersaustralia.org.au
Engineers Australia is the common name of the Institution of Engineers, Australia with a membership of over 92,000

infrastructure report card 2010

Australia

Infrastructure Type	Australia 2010	Australia 2005	Australia 2001	Australia 1999	ACT 2010	NSW 2010	NT 2010	QLD 2010	SA 2010	TAS 2010	VIC 2010	WA 2010
Roads overall	C	C		C-	B	C-	C	C-	C-	C-	C+	C+
National roads	C+	C+	C	C		B-	B	C-	C	C+	C+	B-
State/Territory roads	C	C	C-	C-		D+	C-	C-	C	C	C+	B-
Local roads	D+	C-	D	D		D+	D+	C-	D	D	C-	C-
Rail	D+	C-	D-	D-	F	D-	C+	C-	C	F	D	C+
Ports	B-	C+	B			C	C+	B	B-	B-	C+	B-
Airports	B-	B	B		B-	B	B-	B-	B-	B	B	C+
Water overall	C+	C			C+	C+	C	C+	C+	C+	C	C+
Potable water	B-	B-	C	C-	B-	B-	C-	B-	B	B-	C	B-
Wastewater	B-	C+	C-	D-	C+	C+	C-	B-	B-	C	B-	B
Stormwater	C	C-	D		C+	C	B-	C	D	C-	C-	C
Irrigation	C	C-	D-			C		C+	C+	B-	C-	C+
Electricity	C+	C+	B-		B+	C-	C-	C	B-	B-	C-	B-
Gas	B-	C+	C		A-	C	A-	C+	B+	C	C	C+
Telecommunications	C		B		B-	C-	C-	B	C	C+	C	C-
Overall	C+	C+	C	D	B-	C	C+	C+	C+	C	C	C+

Approx Gross State Product

2.1%

32.2%

1.3%

18.8%

6.6%

1.9%

24.3%

12.8%

