



WESTERN CANADA ROADBUILDERS & HEAVY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION (WCR&HCA)

Introduction

The Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA) originally known as the Prairie Roadbuilders Association, had its origins in 1943. Its founding members were the roadbuilder associations from the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. At that time they were the nucleus of the Prairie Roadbuilders Section of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA).

In 1956 the Alberta Roadbuilders Association joined and the 'Prairie Roadbuilder Association' name was formally adopted. When the British Columbia Roadbuilders Association joined in 1973, its name was again changed to the Western Canada Roadbuilder Association. To more fully reflect the broad nature of industries it represents, the name was further amended in 1996 to its current *Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA)*.

Mandate

The WCR&HCA has from its inception been concerned about the need to properly invest in Canada's infrastructure including its transportation network. The record of the Annual Convention held in Saskatoon in 1953 shows that the following resolution was adopted:

"1. Continued Federal Aid Asked in the Building of Highways

WHEREAS – The increase in volume of road using traffic and the economic development of this country has far exceeded the rate of construction of road facilities and has resulted in a steadily increasing back log of road requirements; and

WHEREAS - A properly integrated road system is necessary from the standpoint of improved lines of transportation for use in both peace and war. To provide access to undeveloped areas, to provide mobility of defence projects, to expand our tourist industry, to provide dust-free roads and has become vital in the daily economic life of our country; and

WHEREAS - The Construction of the Trans-Canada highway demonstrates that the Federal and Provincial Governments can work together in accord;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED – That the Prairie Roadbuilders section of the Canadian Construction Association urges that the Federal Government in Canada set up a National Highway Commission to co- ordinate the planning, financing and construction of main highways in Canada and provide the Federal appropriations in keeping with the financial abilities of the Canadian people, to be made available to the provinces on a percentage basis having due regard to area, population, vehicle registration and the ratios of mileage of road per unit of population."

The arguments cited in support of a National Highways Commission to administer the planning, financing and construction of main highways in Canada were as sound at the 1953 convention, as they are today.

TRIP/Canada

Commitment to the above principles led the WCR&HCA to initiate in 1983, formation of The Road & Information Program Canada (TRIP/Canada). Since then a number of TRIP/Canada reports on the condition of Canada's municipal infrastructure and highways were prepared and circulated nationally to all 3 levels of government. The WCR&HCA supported the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) calling for and completing a series of reports addressing the concept of and funding for a National Highways System.

National Transportation & Infrastructure

The WCR&HCA has consistently maintained a focussed attention on national infrastructure policy issues. In 1996/97 the Board of Directors adopted a National Infrastructure Policy (NIP) which targeted its attention at 3 program component parts: the municipal infrastructure deficit then estimated at \$44 billion; the national highways system requirements then estimated at \$12 billion; and strategic infrastructure investments aimed at creating new areas of economic activity. This policy was in substance subsequently adopted by a number of national and provincial associations including the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), the Coalition to Renew Canada's Infrastructure (CRCI) and TRIP/Canada.

Recognizing that TRIP/Canada's mandate should be broadened, the WCR&CHA successfully recommended in 1997, that TRIP's name should stand for "*The Road & Infrastructure Program Canada (TRIP/Canada)*".

In 1998 the WCR&HCA prepared a brief (updated in 1999) on national infrastructure policy, which fleshed out the "Guidelines to a New Infrastructure Program", adopted by the Premiers at their 1996 and 1997 Annual Premiers Conference. The brief was then used in national, provincial and municipal government lobby efforts to pursue adoption by the federal government of a formal National Transportation & Infrastructure Policy.

Transportation Awareness Partnership (TAP)

"If the public had an appreciation for the critical contribution that transportation makes towards life in Canada, to the same extent it has for healthcare and education, the public sector would be better able to address its policy challenges and issues more effectively."

Independent of one another, a broad range of transportation stakeholder organizations in western Canada came to similar conclusions. To change public policy, we must have the support of an informed and active public opinion.

It is in this regard that the Transportation Awareness Partnership (TAP) was formed with the support of the WCR&HCA Board and active participation of the Chief Operating Officers of the four member Associations.

Its objective quite simply is "*to participate in an awareness campaign that seeks to raise public awareness, understanding and appreciation of the significance of transportation in people's daily lives, such that it is motivated to demand a world class transportation system from government.*"

National Affiliations

The WCR&HCA is an active member of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA), is a member of the CCA Roadbuilder & Heavy Construction Council and TRIP/Canada, and supports efforts of the Coalition to renew Canada's Infrastructure (CRCI). It also has a seat on the Board of Directors of the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC).

Organization

The WCR&HCA currently headquartered in Winnipeg, has 4 member associations, which represent the heavy construction industry in western Canada. They are: B.C. Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association, Alberta Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association,

Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association of Saskatchewan and Manitoba Heavy Construction Association.

The governing body of the WCR&HCA is its Board of Directors. It is made up of two (2) directors plus the Chief Operating Officers from each of the 4 member provincial associations. The office of Chairman rotates annually, with the annual convention hosting association concurrently holding the office of Chairman.

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