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THE STUDY APPROACH

3.1 Desk Top Study

The study team viewed existing plans to familiarise themselves with information such as the position and extent of the proclaimed road network, rural population densities, positions of schools and health facilities, and agricultural development etc. Various sources of information were used including aerial photography, 1:50 000 topo mapping, and 1: 10 000 orthophoto sheets where available.

Whilst it would have been possible to identify certain important community access roads on the maps from a network consideration, it was a specific request of the Department that emphasis be placed on field visits. The Consultants, together with the Department's CAR technicians were to meet and liaise closely with communities, view important CAR's pointed out by them, and come to terms with factors perceived as important at the local level. All previous applications submitted to the Department relating to community access roads were to be followed up and any new applications considered.

It was not the intention to inspect and record every community access road, but rather to concentrate on those that were identified by the respective communities as important.

Where possible important roads were not highlighted by communities, eg a CAR serving a clinic, these were added via the desk top study where appropriate information was available.

3.2 Field Visits

In most instances, contact was first made at the Regional Authority level where the Consultants were introduced by the CAR regional technicians and the purpose of the CARNS study was outlined. Each Tribal Authority or community was asked to nominate a representative for liaison purposes. Dates for visits to each area were set up over a period of time.

Meetings were held where the scope of the project was discussed. Factors which would guide communities in identifying their important roads were highlighted. Road applications previously submitted and any new requests were then inspected and details recorded for later analysis.

As field work was proceeding simultaneously or prior to the establishment of the Rural Road Transport Forums in certain of the areas, close liaison at this level was therefore not always possible. This situation will however be rectified in due course and the Forums will be thoroughly briefed with a view to active participation in the process. The study is merely the first phase in a dynamic process and input from the Forums will be integrated.

An accurate assessment of population served by the respective roads proved to be difficult and an estimate was arrived at using one, or a combination of population densities, dwelling counts, and figures put forward by communities.

Assessments were based on a population category range to ensure that answers were not overly sensitive to an error in the estimate. Further details of the methods used for the award of points and the method of ranking the roads are presented in Chapters 6 and 7 of this report.

3.3 Guidance of the Project Team by the Steering Committee

Meetings of the project Steering Committee were held monthly and the discussions were used to guide the Project Team in their field work, analysis and reporting. Matters as specified in the project Terms of Reference were considered and passed on to the appropriate subcommittee for further investigation.

Liaison took place with senior representatives of the Maintenance and Planning Divisions, and the Drawing Office within the Department of Transport in order to ensure that all inputs of information to the project, and mapping and summaries would be compatible with and acceptable to the Departments existing systems.

The Steering Committee constantly emphasised the view that the approach which should be taken in this initiative was one of rural development, and using the provision of roads as a important means of generating and retaining wealth at the local level in rural economies.

Mapping

Map 1 at the front of this Report shows the relevant areas and boundaries of KwaZulu-Natal :

- Regional Council Boundaries
- Magisterial Districts
- Rural Road Transport Forum Areas

More detailed maps appear in the Appendix, and larger scale 1 : 50 000 maps are available from the Department of Transport covering the 24 Magisterial Districts which have been covered by this investigation.