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FIJI ROADS
Better Roads, Better Access, Better Business

The official Newsletter of Fiji Roads Authority

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Agreement signed for Heavy Vehicle Regulation changes

WITH the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA), the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and the Road Haulage Association (RHA) on 2 November 2016, weight restrictions are now being placed on vehicles until 31st of December 2017, to address the issues of overloading and to enable the industry time to re-fleet.

Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport Permanent Secretary Paul Bayly said, “The cost to the economy and to the roading network is extremely high and what we have come up with is a practical solution in allowing weights for different types of vehicles.”

Time to re-fleet

Mr Bayly said the co-signers were aware that a large number of operators have been using vehicles that are grossly overloaded and that this transition agreement would last until December 31st, 2017 to enable the industry time to re-fleet.

“It provides time to re-fleet, to reorganise businesses, so that they can set the lines and meet the prescribed weight limits for all types of vehicles that are operating.”

Weight restrictions

He said weight restrictions were not currently provided under the LTA legislation, so this was a very good industry response to deal with “this very important problem for Fiji.”

Mr Bayly said they want to make the public aware of the penalty and enforcement regime that is now in place, and that which will be developed.

24-hour enforcement

“Many of you would have seen the introduction of weigh bridges. The LTA is now



From left: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, Mr Paul Bayly, FRA CEO, Mr John Hutchinson, LTA Acting CEO, Mr Aptinko Vaurasi and RHA President, Mr Hector Smith during the MOU signing at the FRA office in Suva.

conducting 24-hour enforcement in a number of areas, so there is a whole package of reforms in this MOU. We will be having a meeting with operators over the next week or two to describe the problems they are causing to the roads by continuing to grossly overload.”

Fiji Roads Authority Chief Executive Officer John Hutchinson said there would be modifications to the laws regarding how vehicle weights are measured.

“Principally it’s a change in the best way for LTA to assess vehicle suitability for use on the

road and implementing that suitability.”

New assessment system

Instead of measuring the gross weight of a vehicle, the new system would assess automobiles according to, mostly, axle load and axle spacing.

“We’re encouraging operators to usher in articulated automobiles, which have a number of axles which may distribute the load.”

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Zaina says “Sota tale” to Fiji

As her contract with Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) comes to a close, Ms Zaina Khan, Programme Engineer, reflects upon what began as a trip to Fiji to get to know her extended family and Fiji, but became three years of intense, demanding and, ultimately, hugely rewarding work as the FRA Programme Manager of the Nadi and Suva Road and Infrastructure Upgrading Projects (NASRUP).



A recently opened section of the Namaka corridor.



Ms Zaina Khan, onsite at the NASRUP Nadi project

“The NASRUP programme is a portfolio of five separate capital works projects at both the West and East of Viti Levu, from the exits of Nadi and Nausori airports, our international gateways, along Queens and Kings Roads to Nadi and Suva respectively. The portfolio is of a magnitude Fiji has not seen before, and it has a programme budget of \$335 million, over five to six years,” said Ms Khan.

“It has been implemented in the busiest road corridors of Fiji with the greatest urban populations, the most complex utilities networks above and below ground and an extremely dense and influential number of individual residential, commercial and organisational stakeholders. I have to thank them all for having contributed to the success of NASRUP in so many individual and collective ways; too numerous to mention. NASRUP is as complicated as any programme would be in New York or London, with the added difficulty of two geographical locations,” said Ms Khan.

As she hands over the responsibility of this portfolio to her successors, Ms Khan said that she is proud of what has been achieved so far.

NASRUP sections complete

In Nadi, of the planned 12 kilometres of upgrade, the new three kilometre two-lane

road from Wailoaloa to Narewa is open to traffic. The upgraded two kilometre four-lane road from Naisoso to Votuilevu roundabout is open already, and a significant portion of the two-lane section representing half of the four kilometres from the roundabout to Wailoaloa is also open to traffic.

More than half of the nine kilometres of upgrading in Suva has been completed and has been opened to traffic. The Wainibokasi two-lane road is open to traffic, as are the Caqiri-Pilling and Makoi-Omkar four-lane sections. Road and infrastructure upgrading to the existing two-lane road is ongoing on the remaining Nasinu-Davuilevu section, which will eventually become four-laned.

“People have asked many times, ‘Why is it taking so long?’ In fact, a project of this magnitude and complexity would normally take 10 to 15 years from concept to completion and we have only just finished year four in September 2016,” said Ms Khan.

Collaborative effort

“It would be a huge undertaking anywhere in the world, and I must emphasise that it was, and continues to be, a collaborative effort.

“FRA’s engaged contractors and consultants have worked long and hard with all stakeholders across both the

Nadi and Suva locations. These start at local grassroots level with the individual residents and businesses both big and small along the roadside; at the simplest level we have asked for a section of their gardens or frontage and moved their fence line. FRA has received huge support from these communities, who could see that the upgrade would benefit them, not just in terms of the road upgrading, but also for the future.

There has been significant involvement from major organisations such as Airports Fiji Ltd and of course the utility providers, such as Fiji Electricity Authority, the Water Authority of Fiji and Telecom Fiji Ltd and the relevant Town Councils in Nadi and Suva

Manager of the Year

Ms Khan’s consultative skills and commitment to NASRUP were acknowledged in the public arena when she was awarded the prestigious Manager of the Year Award at the 2016 Fiji Women in Business Awards, held on May 13th 2016 at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva.

Throughout her time on NASRUP, both prior to the award and even afterwards, she found herself being approached by women and men, young and old, all who were thinking about making different choices for either themselves or the various females in their families.

Fijian roots

Ms Khan was born in England. Her father hails from the West of Viti Levu, where her grandfather, Mohammed Rafiq Khan of Sabeto, was a founder of Fiji’s first bus company before beginning his own business, M R Khan Buses – a family-run business that is still in existence.

“I originally came to Fiji to get to know my extended family, and to find work so I could simply finance my Fijian adventure. I arrived on Fiji Day in 2013,” said Ms Khan.

At first, finding work in Fiji proved more challenging than she had anticipated, as more than one potential employer “regretfully” turned her away, on the

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Cogeloa Bridge completed well ahead of schedule

COMMUNITIES relying upon the Cogeloa Bridge in Labasa for access to markets, education, health services and other amenities have welcomed the completion of the new bridge construction, five months ahead of schedule.

FRA Programme Manager for Bridges and Jetties, Mr Nixon Toremana, said that the initial completion date for the bridge construction was February 2017.

“Instead, the work that began to construct the new Cogeloa Bridge on April 20th this year was completed on September 20th.

“It has been transformed from a single-lane bridge to a structure with increased capacity that can support the single-lane traffic and a railway crossing line, as well as a pedestrian pathway.

“We would like to thank our consultant and our contractor, Fletcher Construction Company, for a job well done. They have been committed since day one to getting this bridge built, and ensured that all works carried out on the site were completed with minimum impact upon both the local environment and the nearby residents,” said Mr Toremana.

“The new bridge will bring great relief to the community, especially to school children and sugarcane farmers.”
The new bridge cost FRA approximately FJ\$4.39 million under the Bridges and Jetties Renewals Budget and is designed to comply with the one hundred-year design life.

The new Cogeloa Bridge.



Bailey Bridge a viable option

BAILEY or Modular Steel bridges offer a low cost, effective and robust bridging solution for a number of bridge replacements, which, if well maintained, would last for many years.

Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) Chief Executive Officer, John Hutchinson, said that the Vatuwaqa Bridge is a good example of a Bailey bridge that has been in place for years, providing continued access to motorists

Mr Hutchinson said that it is FRA’s priority to keep the major arterial roads, especially the Queens and Kings Roads, open at all times.

“In August, we installed a Bailey bridge alongside the Vugalei Bridge, which sits on

Kings Road. Any major repair works such as the emergency repairs to the Vugalei Bridge require a detour or diversion such as this Bailey bridge to be put in place before full works can commence.”

Mr Hutchinson said the cost of installing the temporary Vugalei Bailey Bridge and constructing the approaches and traffic diversion is approximately FJ\$280,000. These would be in use until FRA completes renovating the slab and beams on the existing bridge, which might take a year.

“The Bailey bridge has sufficient capacity to accommodate all legal loads as currently

accommodated on the Vugalei Bridge,” said Mr Hutchinson.

Mr Hutchinson said FRA has a supply of Bailey bridges to provide relief on the road network when faced with challenging bridge conditions, but is looking to procure additional stock to have as a necessary alternative when working to keep our main roads open.

Installing the Bailey Bridge alongside the Vugalei Bridge on Kings Road.



Stinson Parade Bridge to be replaced

THE Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) has acquired a section of land from Fiji Ports Corporation Ltd (FPCL) to allow for the construction of the new Stinson Parade Bridge.

Although the new bridge will be built in the same place as the old one, the land acquisition will provide for an improved bridge design that aligns well with the existing Harris Road intersection.

As the bridge construction project is a China Aid project, funded through China Government Grant Aid, the tender process was conducted by the Government of the Peoples Republic of China, with the contract awarded to China Railway Group 14.



In 2015, at the invitation Fiji Roads Authority (FRA), Mr Roy Singh, Hot Spring's Operations Manager, had the opportunity to present the Hot Spring journey at the bi-annual IPWEA (Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia) Conference that was held in Rotorua in New Zealand. The IPWEA Conference attracted more than 800 public works professionals from 17 countries.

Hot Spring – the journey

Mr Roy Singh, Operations Manager, Hot Spring Hire Services Ltd (HSHL).

How it began

Aptly named after the geo-thermal hot springs in Savusavu, the original Hot Spring Hire Services Ltd began with Roy's father, Mr Bobby Singh, back in the 1980s as a plant hire contractor. Mr Singh, Senior, although semi-retired, is currently Hot Spring's Managing Director.

In 2006, Mr Roy Singh, decided to explore and test the market in Suva, while the family patriarch continued to run the Savusavu business.

He recalls that he wanted to “invent a similar operation in the Central Division. I did that for whole of 2006. So from the three vehicles that we were hiring out, I decided to move into heavy machinery.”

The call

Every move that Roy Singh has made on behalf of the company has been calculated, except for the telephone call he answered in January 2013 from Fulton Hogan Hiways Joint Venture (FHHJV) Special Projects Manager, Mr Eddie De Vries. FHHJV is a major contractor undertaking FRA projects.

The initial requests from Mr De Vries to hire Hot Spring equipment quickly turned into requests to supervise FHHJV projects, something that was beyond the Hire Plant company's functions to begin with. It did, however, transform Hot Spring from a company that solely hired out equipment to a firm with a more robust function that now includes roading and building and civil operations.

“We realised, in 2013, there was a gap in the market that needed to be filled. We got a team together of supervisors and technical personnel and started supplying equipment with labour and trades people,” said Mr Singh.

To meet these new challenges, Hot Spring then hired a Construction Manager, Mr Ishri Prasad, and Project Manager, Mr Vijen Naiker, to oversee the company's expanding operations. It also prompted some urgency in 2013 to vacate and relocate from the 20-foot container office in Nasinu to an office space on Lakeba Street in Samabula, what Mr Singh called a “tactical move”, to be closer to the FHHJV operations at its Samabula Depot.

“We even sync our work schedule with FHHJV to the point where our office opens for business by 7am,” said Mr Singh.

Mr Singh acknowledges the role that FHHJV has played in the development of the company.



HSHSL carries out resheeting work in the Central Division.

“If I hadn't answered that call back in January 2013, I wouldn't be where I am today. They gave us the opportunity,” he said, “and we capitalised on it. We continued to invest in the company to provide the services they needed and to get the job done.”

As a subcontractor working with FHHJV, it was imperative that Hot Spring workmen were inducted on FHHJV health and safety procedures, ultimately a plus for Hot Spring as this included training on health and safety, traffic management, and quality assurance systems.

“We are very safety focussed and we have placed certain controls in our operation to ensure that the risks are minimised,” he said.

Also the experience of working with FHHJV has contributed greatly to Hot Spring's ability to successfully tender for Fiji Roads Authority contracts.

“The non-price submissions on FRA tenders clearly state the attributes that we need to fulfil. If we hadn't received any training from FHHJV, we wouldn't have qualified as we would've lacked the essential experience,” he added.

Family support

Expansion meant the business needed additional capable personnel. It also meant strengthening its HR (human resource) and admin departments. Mr Singh's wife, Mrs Visha Singh, assisted in the administrative and accounts setup of the office.

Mr Singh describes himself as an “operational person”, always on the go,

therefore he needed somebody that could proficiently set up the office. Since the basics are under control, he says, “We are able to focus a lot more on our core work.”

The Hot Spring team

Machinery and equipment aren't the only things that Hot Spring considers investments, “My employees are my biggest assets, I am here today because of them,” affirmed Mr Singh.

The company's original office staff roll has grown from two to 10 and the company's field team from three to 100. The current team includes engineers, project and construction managers, and administration staff, all of whom, says Mr Singh, “help to successfully run the company. They have all contributed equally.”

He fondly remembers how the company had to switch from a normal payroll programme to a proper human resources system to efficiently process pay for the number of Hot Spring employees that had begun to pass the seventy mark.

The company has now recruited a Business Development Manager, Mr Nilay Singh, to further streamline the company's operations as it continues to expand.

Recruiting engineers

It hasn't always been smooth sailing. Recruiting local civil engineers, for instance, was a challenge and looking abroad was not an option due to cost. Even for Mr Singh, the hiring of engineers was a different ball game, which, he says, required expert advice.

“As the demand was there for us to step up, we had to get more technical people in. We had to strategically change what we were doing from a hire plant to a civil construction roading company.

“We hired qualified engineers, which was difficult in the beginning because we are a hire plant company, so who would want to work for a hire plant company,” he said

Hot Spring advertised in the local media for an engineer position at the company, only to receive applications from “very junior persons.” It was finally decided that hiring junior applicants was the best alternative with the possibility of offering them additional training.

Projects and modernising

“Our break came in July 2014 when FRA awarded us the project to perform roadworks on Veisa Farm Road, a 4.7 kilometre unsealed farm road in Tailevu under FRA's Rural Roads Programme. Since then, we've been responding to open tender advertisements within our capacity,” recalls Mr Singh.

Hot Spring has since then won a tender for a road maintenance project on Kadavu (2014) and a series of other tenders to date. This year, the company adds another milestone to its expanding portfolio – winning an ADB (Asian Development Bank) funded FRA tender for the Transport Infrastructure Investment Sector Project (guardrail improvement works).



The Hot Spring quarry operation on the island of Kadavu.

The project is being carried out in the Central and Northern Division (Savusavu).

Mr Singh describes it as a “boost for a local team. We've always done guardrail jobs for FHHJV, but manually. For this new project, we've decided to go one step further and purchase two guardrail machines. It's rather exciting. We're lifting our standards and we're portraying an image that locals are capable, not only with expertise but also with industry-standard equipment.”

Mr Singh concluded: “We are not looking at short-term goals. Hot Spring is here

to stay. Our goal is to become better at what we do. The company continuously modernises its equipment and fleet of vehicles to include GPS. We value how we are portrayed in the market and we want to turn the one-off customer into a lifetime customer.”

A snapshot of Hot Spring Hire Services Ltd

- Originated in Savusavu.
- Established 10 years ago in the Central Division.
- Services: Hire plant, roading, building and civil.
- Hired machinery is operated by personnel with 10 years of experience.

Tenders won from FRA, 2014 – 2016

- Veisa Farm Road, unsealed road upgrade.
- Landslip remediation, Kings Road.
- Kings Road improvement, Samabula and Nakasi.
- Kadavu Island road maintenance.
- Central Division resheeting.
- Footpath renewal work.
- Nausori Market pedestrian improvement.
- Deconstruction of Suva Ports Authority building & FEA Substation building.
- Guardrail improvements.

HSHSL at work on construction for the Goodman Fielder company.



Slip repair on Kadavu Island.



Hot Spring yard.

Forward Works Programme for sealed roads

THE Fiji Roads Authority has a Forward Works Programme (FWP) for sealed roads. This spans up to 20 years, reflecting the renewal lifecycle of the tarseal and underlying pavements.

In an effort to increase resilience and manage the extent of sealed road failure, FRA is resealing sealed roads, with particular emphasis on ensuring the waterproofing of roads that are in good condition. This is to prevent them from failing to an extent that would require full rehabilitation.

The resealing of sealed roads can significantly extend the life of the road, with reduced maintenance costs, at around 20% of the cost that would have been required for full rehabilitation.

FRA carries out continuous monitoring of the road condition to better understand the rate of change to the road surface. Major factors that contribute to the condition of the roads include: the number of heavy vehicles, particularly overloaded vehicles; old seals that have lost their waterproofing; the underlying pavement construction and geology, and prevailing weather conditions that can saturate the materials.

Taking the above factors into



Resealing Queens Road at Pacific Harbour.

consideration, FRA prioritises road rehabilitation work based on the road's age, condition, vehicle use, ensured access to essential services, and available funding mechanisms.

In addition, the timing of replacement plans for underground services of water and sewer lines (WAF), power and telecommunications (FEA and TFL) are also built into the FRA's prioritisation of road rehabilitation.

As an example, Waimanu Road in Suva is

included in the FRA programme for 2017/18. This is to enable time for utility providers to prepare their upgrades of underground services along this extensive section of arterial urban road.

Over the last three years, FRA has averaged 34 kilometres per year of sealed road rehabilitation. In the coming three years, the demand will increase to 54 kilometres per year, due to the deteriorated condition of the remaining sealed network.

Controlled traffic eases movement, promotes safety

FRA is currently trialling safer traffic options for motorists travelling through the Munia and Matuku streets at Samabula, says FRA's Manager Subdivision & Development Planning, Eric Singh.

With FRA's \$1million road safety budget, these trials and additional road enhancements in other locations are expected to improve road safety issues and ease traffic flow in areas that produce traffic gridlocks during peak travelling hours.

"We have managed to reduce accidents at the trialled areas at Samabula, improve on travel time, reduced congestion in that area and provide, especially at Munia, a safer crossing space for pedestrians crossing the road as there is less traffic movement at that corner," said Mr Singh.

He highlights the controlled traffic at the road connecting the new Nausori Bus Station and Nausori market as a model of good traffic management with a raised median preventing motorists from making illegal turns and traffic signals to guide motorists and pedestrians behaviour.

FRA is also working closely with the Department of Town and Country Planning and City and Town councils to integrate road planning into their municipal modelling.



FRA Manager Subdivision & Development Planning, Mr Eric Singh.

FRA Cadet Programme builds local expertise

FIJI Roads Authority (FRA) is encouraging young, newly qualified engineers to pursue careers in the Roading Industry through the new FRA Cadetship Programme.

FRA has initiated the Cadet Programme as one way of building up local capacity and capturing knowledge while there is expatriate expertise in the organisation.

This knowledge transfer programme in the technical field has just begun with two new recruits. They are local engineers whose skill sets and knowledge will be developed through on-the-job training, mentoring and assigned tasks and responsibilities. They are working with Senior Engineers in their respective fields to gain the necessary experience.

Mr Kunal Nand, FRA Cadet Engineer, is one of the two graduate engineers already participating in the programme, starting work with FRA on the 19th of August this year, after successfully applying for his current position.

"I only graduated from Fiji National University (FNU) with my Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering in April this year. But already, FRA is giving me a lot more responsibility and opportunities than I would normally expect as a new employee," said Mr Nand.

He has been given responsibility for managing aspects of some ten to twelve projects that include NASRUP (the Nausori - Suva Road Upgrade Project), Ba Hospital, Road Upgrade Project, Matokana Road

Upgrade, Natewa Bay Coast, Savusavu Bay, and some of the associated footpath upgrades.

"As a cadet, I assist on these projects, as directed by Senior Management. I inspect work in progress and liaise with clients and contractors, and I report directly to the Programme Manager. FRA has given me an amazing opportunity to get out and show that I have the skills to do the job.

"Even though we cadets come in with no experience, FRA is giving us exposure to a variety of different types of work and we get to travel to the work-sites. It is an exciting job that is always interesting," said Mr Nand.

FRA intends to attract more talented young engineers to participate in the FRA Cadetship Programme.

FRA Cadet Engineer, Mr Kunal Nand (left), inspects work in Lami with Hot Spring Hire Services staff members.



FRA commitment impacts career



Mr Vijendra Naicker at work in his office at Hot Spring Hire Services Ltd.

Diploma in Civil Engineering at Fiji National University (FNU).

FRA contract

One of the major companies awarded a contract by FRA was Fulton Hogan Hiways Joint Venture (FHHJV), who approached Erasito Consultants in search of local staff who could be seconded to FHHJV to assist as project managers and engineers.

"I was one of the candidates, and I remember

thinking, "Am I going to be a contractor?" Because I had seen the long hours that contractors put into their work. Not that consultants don't work long hours, but I had never imagined myself as a contractor," said Mr Naicker.

"But I am young and looking for challenges, so I went to FHHJV for the most memorable interview I have ever had. It was all very relaxed, over a cup of coffee on the balcony."

Mr Naicker was involved in two major projects during his time at FHHJV: the Laucala Bay Road Upgrade and the Harris Road Upgrade.

From the Authority's inception, key to the awarding of any contracts to international companies was the degree to which they would work with local contractors, the number of local staff they would employ, and their involvement in the transfer of knowledge and training of these employees.

In 2013, when the first contracts to overseas contractors were being taken up, Mr Naicker was working with Erasito Consultants Ltd in Project Management and Engineering. This position saw him travelling the Pacific and working with a variety of clients on different projects. He had come to Erasito Consultants as an Engineering Technician after completing his Advanced

Mr Naicker is currently pursuing a further qualification in Project Management, which will lead to his accreditation as a Project Management Practitioner (PMP) with the Project Management Institute in 2017.

Harris Road

"I am really proud of being involved in the Harris Road project. It must be one of the busiest roads in the Pacific Islands, with the Suva Markets, the Port of Suva and the bus station all in close proximity. Following FRA's

direction, we successfully upgraded the road and changed traffic flows to protect the seal from container trucks servicing the port," he said.

While working with FHHJV, Mr Naicker had professional dealings with Hot Spring Hire Ltd.

"In all our dealings, Roy (Roy Singh, Operations Manager, Hot Spring Hire Ltd) kept the professional separate from the personal. I've known Roy as a friend for some time, so I was very impressed by the fact he never tried to use our friendship for his business advantage. His whole company is based on honesty and integrity.

New opportunities

"So when my secondment to FHHJV finished, opportunities were presented to be part of a fast growing industry and share my knowledge and skills as my contribution to the industry. I was also looking for a change. After some deliberation, I started at Hot Spring Hire in early 2014."

The Hot Spring client list, that includes Goodman Fielder International, for example, indicates a wider reach than road projects alone.

"But my involvement with road upgrades has continued, with Hot Spring Hire Ltd successfully tendering for the Kadavu Rural Road Maintenance Project and recently completing the Central Division resheeting road works," said Mr Naicker.

Agreement signed for Heavy Vehicle Regulation changes continued from page 1

Mr Hutchinson said the public would be aware of the very large, Chinese, 10- and 12-wheeler, heavy-duty dump trucks.

"Those particular trucks are examples of heavy duty off-road vehicles, designed for use on the mine and construction sites and off-road conditions. They were never designed for use on roads."

The capacity of these particular vehicles is such that they can be up to three times the legal road limit.

"They are grossly overloaded and even under the new legislation they will continue to be grossly overloaded."

Move to ban vehicles

Mr Hutchinson said as a consequence, the Government is moving to ban the importation of these vehicles and to require the operators of the existing vehicles in the country to modify their trucks.

As such, modification would require the operator to reduce the carrying capacity of the truck. Ultimately it would require a decision as to whether it was still

economically viable to use for cartage. He said that in the majority of cases, most of these vehicles will become uneconomical and eventually be phased out.

Remove overloading from network

"Overloading of vehicles causes serious damage to our road infrastructure. That is a cost to taxpayers and we need to manage it. We need to remove overloading from the network as quickly and efficiently as possible, and this is the first step in the process."

Mr Hutchinson said the transitional weight limits would be in place until the new, regulated weight comes into force next year, after being passed in Parliament.

LTA Acting Chief Executive Officer Aptinko Vaurasi said overloading is a "very hot topic right now" and the Government and the private stakeholders are trying their level best to minimise and eradicate the various illegal operations.

Transition period

"The transition period will go for about 12 months and expire on 31st of December 2017. Within that period, truck owners will

be given the opportunity to re-fleet."

He recommended that truck owners should, if possible, change to using articulated vehicles with well-spread axles so that the loads are well distributed, which would reduce the damage on the roads.

MOU milestone

RHA President Hector Smith said this MOU was a milestone for them, which had taken a number of years negotiating.

He said there has been a lot of educational awareness provided by the stakeholders so that infrastructure would last longer, businesses will prosper and there would be fewer fatalities.

With reference to re-fleeting, Mr Smith said, "We have a guideline in which our members know that the commodity that they are purchasing will do the job on our roads. It's a win-win for the industry, for our road, people and also our members," he said.

The mill and fill technique has been used to upgrade Ratu Dovi Road.



Night works at Ratu Dovi Road

SECTIONS of Ratu Dovi Road, from the Nokonoko Road roundabout to Kinoya Road, were upgraded, with Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) contractors carrying out mill and fill works on 500 metres of Ratu Dovi Road at night.

Mill and fill involves removing the old asphalt from the top layer of the road's surface and filling it with newly designed and prepared asphalt. The operation on Ratu Dovi Road involved removing 56mm of the existing road and replacing it with new asphaltic concrete pavement for added reinforcement.

This process eliminates the existing potholes as well as giving a smoother ride to the travelling public. The work could only be carried out during periods of suitably dry weather.

Tenders Awarded

THE Fiji Roads Authority is pleased to announce the following tenders have been awarded:

FRA 16/46 Kadavu Rural Road upgrade,

to Jaduram Investment
\$3,929,892.86

FRA 16/47 Geotechnical Investigations for Jetties 2016/2017,

to Geotech Drilling international Services
\$1,167,888.00

Khalsa Road to be upgraded

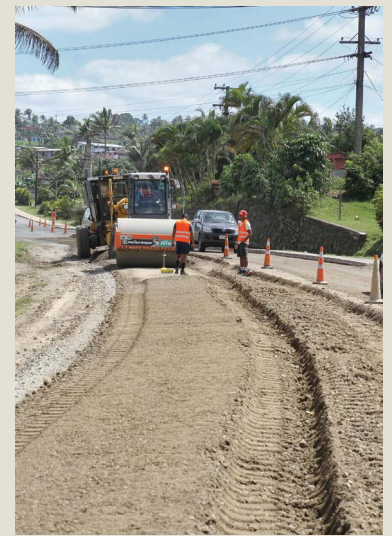
THE continuous wet weather that the country experienced in August and September impacted Fiji's roads.

Working under the Fiji Roads Authority (FRA) maintenance programme, the contractor is focussing its attention on sites that require restoration.

One of these sites is Khalsa Road, which is a major pothole reduction area, where mill and fill works have taken place, but further work is planned.

Already 5,000m², over four different sections, has been completed, with about 100 millimetres milled off the top material and replaced with new material, an asphaltic concrete pavement for added reinforcement.

The reconstructed sections were then stabilised 200 millimetres deep with cement with a two-coat seal, with additional work planned to take place soon.



A section of Khalsa Road during the reconstruction process.

Q&A

In each issue of **ROADS**, we will answer commonly asked questions received at FRA.

Why are only a number of roads fixed in a year?

IN order to manage the enormous task of improving all of Fiji's roads, FRA has to prioritise where renewals and rehabilitation work will take place. This is the result of having to acknowledge that financial and physical resource constraints influence these decisions.

FRA prioritises key bus routes that service schools, and carry people and produce into towns or markets. In addition, commercial areas with a high volume of heavy vehicle use as these contribute to the general economy of Fiji. Likewise, other smaller streets are programmed for renewals and rehabilitation work and will continue to receive the pothole treatment until they are due for renewals

Our towns and city roads, including busy roads like Ratu Dovi and Khalsa road as seen on this page, are examples of the continued road improvement work that has taken place this year. If the road is in too bad a state of disrepair, then FRA will schedule work to carry out a full renewal, but it may take one or two years before this can be actioned.

Zaina says "Sota Tale" to Fiji continued from page 2

grounds that she was too well-qualified and experienced for any positions they would have on offer.

This was hardly surprising, when you consider that Ms Khan's qualifications include an Honours Degree in Civil Engineering and a Postgraduate Degree in Secondary School Physics and Science Education, and her resume includes work on many complex major projects both internationally and in the UK, including the 2012 Olympics held in London.

Perseverance leads to FRA

However, within weeks her perseverance bore fruit, as during an interview with yet another company, she learnt of FRA and their search for a senior engineer. Ms Khan successfully applied for a position commensurate with her experience and her qualifications and she was appointed to the position as the NASRUP Programme

Manager.

The size of the portfolio meant that Ms Khan had to divide her time between Nadi and Suva, living out of a suitcase.

Sota tale

"Soon it will be time to pack the suitcases for a final time, to return to England. No one knew that as I was accepting the Manager of the Year Award, my mother was undergoing cancer surgery in England. It was very difficult, knowing she was not well. But my mother insisted that I stay and she is immensely committed and proud of what I have done for Fiji. Now, I will be able to spend some time with her and the rest of my immediate family back home," said Ms Khan.

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