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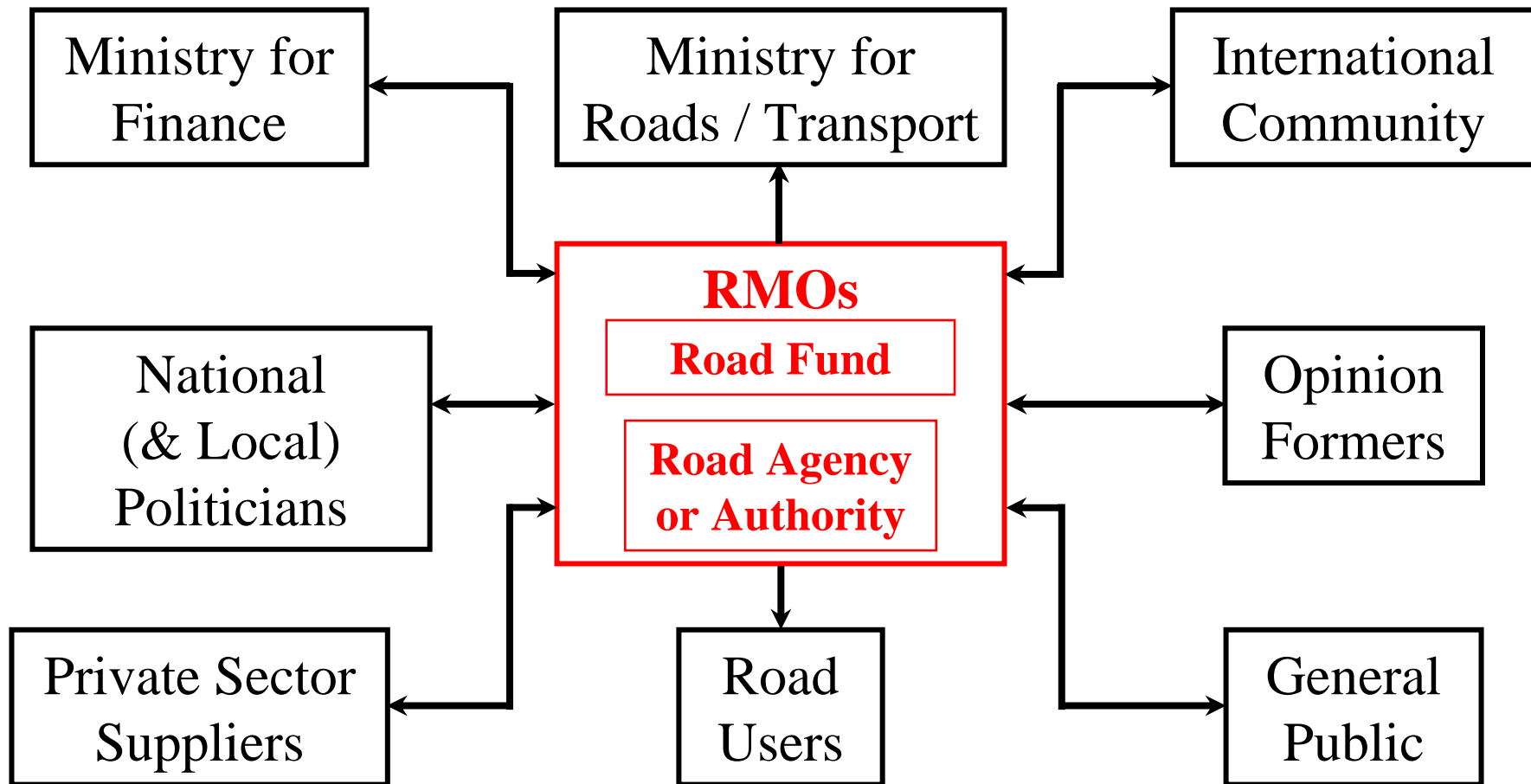
Communication Strategies for Road Management Organisations (RMOs)

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No Institution is an Island but must Communicate with its Key Stakeholders:



Communications is a Two-Way Process

- **Externally**, between the RMO and its stakeholders:
 - Top-down: Policies, objectives, activities, issues, etc.
 - Bottom-up: user priorities, activities, issues, etc.
- **Internally**, between an organisation's leadership & all of its staff:
 - Top-down: vision, objectives, strategies, etc.
 - Bottom-up: Staff issues, operational factors, etc.

Don't Underestimate the Importance of a Good Communication Strategy!

- It is an important element for *every* successful commercial organisation in *every* country.
- It involves consistently promoting (selling) the organisation's **image**: what it does, and why.
- The reasons why a RMO needs a communication strategy are the same as why commercial organisations have one: they are paid to provide a product or service to people.

Why Good Communications are Particularly Important for RMO's

- Those paying have little choice about who provides the service and limited say in how their funds are used.
- There is a long lead-time between payment and subsequent service provision.
- The relationship between what users pay and what they receive is not clear, simple or direct.
- There is a temptation to spend limited funds on building new roads, rather than maintenance of existing roads.
- Roads cost a lot of money to maintain. There is a temptation to “borrow” some of this for other purposes.

The Benefits of a RMO having a Good Communication Strategy.

- The RMO can be **proactive**: it can better set and control the agenda, dealing with the most important issues on an informed basis.
- It can educate the wider community about the issues it faces and engender a higher level of community support.
- It promotes transparency and discourages inappropriate or ill-informed external interference.
- Internally, it can promote a sense of common purpose, team building & esteem.

Important Elements of a Good Communication Strategy

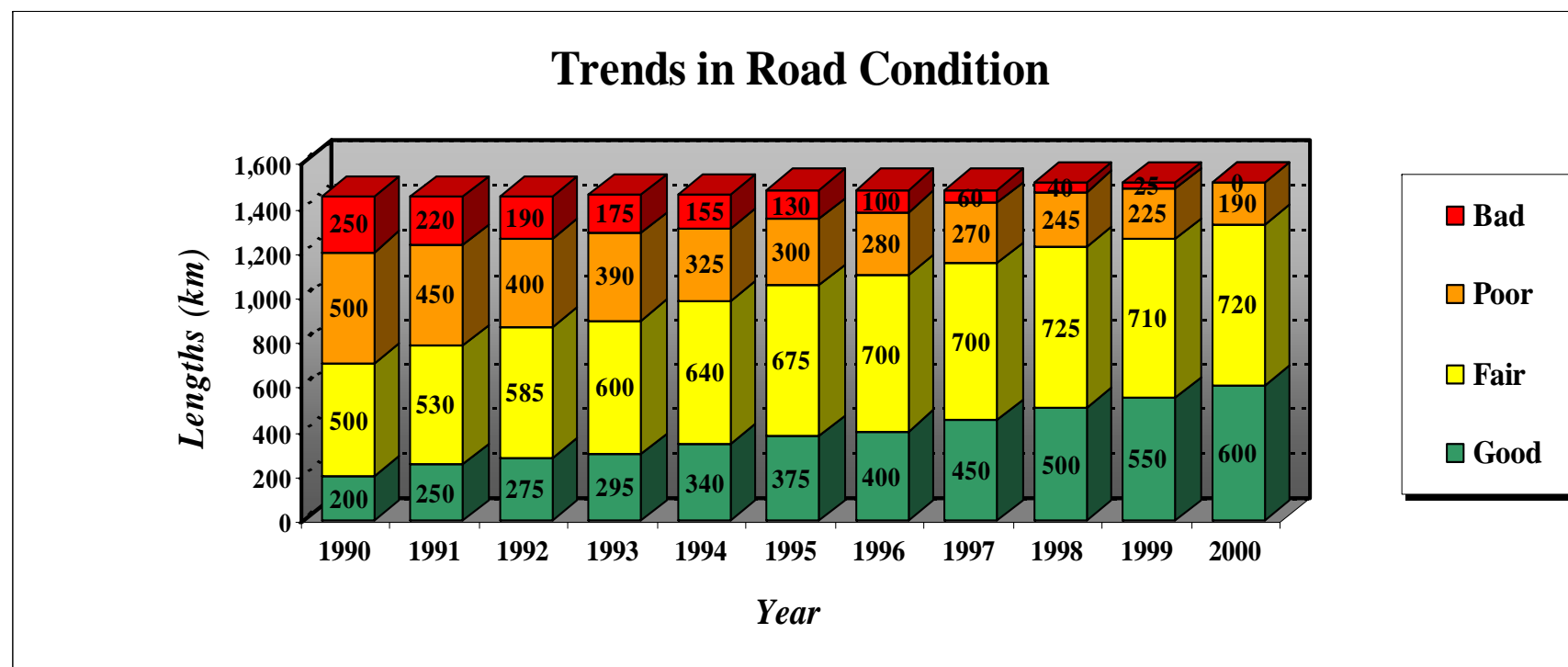
- **Have clear objectives.**
- **Know your target market.**
- **Tailor the message** to suit the target market.
- **Sell the benefits**, not the features!
- **Use appropriate terminology.**
- **Use local people** and the **local language.**
- **Be consistent and keep doing it!**

Type of Information to be Communicated

- Network statistics (lengths, condition, speed & axle load limits, journey times, trends, etc.).
- Work scheduled & completed.
- RMO's KPIs, target values & trends.
- Expenditures (planned & actual).
- Key policies & Organisational Structure.
- Technical issues faced by the RMO.

Use MAPS, CHARTS, PHOTOS & COLOUR!

| Trends in Road Condition | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Year | | | | | | | | | | |
| Condition | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 |
| Good | 200 | 250 | 275 | 295 | 340 | 375 | 400 | 450 | 500 | 550 | 600 |
| Fair | 500 | 530 | 585 | 600 | 640 | 675 | 700 | 700 | 725 | 710 | 720 |
| Poor | 500 | 450 | 400 | 390 | 325 | 300 | 280 | 270 | 245 | 225 | 190 |
| Bad | 250 | 220 | 190 | 175 | 155 | 130 | 100 | 60 | 40 | 25 | 0 |
| Total | 1450 | 1450 | 1450 | 1460 | 1460 | 1480 | 1480 | 1480 | 1510 | 1510 | 1510 |



Suggested Communication Strategies

- Publication of **regular Newsletters** (e.g. double sided colour A4 pamphlets). Distribute to ALL key stakeholder groups.
- Newspaper & **media interviews & articles**.
- Regular **meetings / briefing sessions** with MPs, Road Users, Institutions, Media, Opinion formers, General Public, etc.
- **Annual Report** (detailed & summary).
- **Technical articles** in specialist publications.
- **Web site** containing maps, statistics, reports, policies, etc.
- **Telephone “hotline” & email** address for comments.
- Road **billboards & posters**.
- TV, Radio, Newspaper & Magazine **advertisements**.
- **Sponsorship** of suitable events, individuals &/or facilities.

Recommended Organisational Arrangements

An effective communication strategy is an **ongoing process**. The RMO should therefore have a **specialised PR / Communications Unit** devoted to promoting the organisation's message and image. This small unit should report directly to the Chief Executive and should contain:

- A PR / Communications expert, knowledgeable of the local market & with good local contacts.
- A DTP / Graphic artist / publishing expert.
- Secretarial / Admin. support.
- Adequate resources.

Institutional Support

- Regular budget for PR/Communications by the RMO.
- Legislation stipulating specific reporting requirements for RMO to external stakeholders.
- Specific legislative requirement to enter into an annual Performance Agreement.
- Requirement for Independent Technical & Financial Audit.
- Policy of transparency: everything is to be publicly available unless specific reasons are given why not.
- Proper monitoring by parent Ministry & public.