

RAMM News

Issue 1 October 2003

Kickoff!

Welcome to the inaugural issue of RAMM News.

We thought you'd like to know a little more about the team behind the software you know and love, and all the wonderful things we're up to in the name of better road asset management.

RAMM has come a long way from the "green screen" interface that was developed for Unix ages ago, and is now the benchmark for road asset management software in New Zealand.

Every year has brought improvements, both in terms of functionality and efficiency.

This has been an excellent collaborative process, starting with the annual voting and progressing through development to the release of our software in April every year.

It won't stop there, and this newsletter is part of what we plan to do to extend a great partnership.

Our technical writer / designer Guy will be in charge of putting together the newsletter every quarter. We welcome your comments on it- feel free to send them to guy@cjntech.co.nz.

Enjoy! ■



Campbell
Newman

RAMM 2003 Hits the Streets

RAMM 2003 hit the streets in April, and included many exciting new features.

One of them is **RAMM Network Manager**. This powerful stand-alone network management tool automates many of the tasks associated with managing the road network- for example, this tool can be used to reverse a road or define a seal extension. A new graphical display helps you make the changes by simply clicking and dragging with your mouse.

Another stand-alone application for the advanced RAMM user, **RAMM SQL**, is a sophisticated database query and management tool that uses SQL statements in a Windows environment.

Footpath and Footpath Top Surface data has been consolidated into one asset called **Footpaths**. At the same time, all the functionality associated with Footpath and Footpath Rating has been moved into Windows.

The overall RAMM interface has been enhanced with a new, editable, **Road Names Grid** together with **Double Lookups** and **In-List customisation** for Filters.

A new report for Transfund New Zealand, the **Surface Condition Index (SCI)**, has been included in RAMM Manager. It calculates and records an SCI value for all Treatment Lengths and extracts this data to send to Transfund.

Rating has also been enhanced this year, with new flags and readings available for Surface Water Channels, Rutting Mean Depth, and Service Covers. A **Zero Fill Option** has been added to the Rating Data Entry screen to make life a little easier.

Speed Survey data and **LUX Survey** data for street lights can now be recorded in the RAMM database.

Transaction Logging has been

enabled in the RAMM database to assist with database integrity after a hardware failure.

Phase One of the project to introduce Structural Numbers into RAMM has been completed. The **Adjusted Structural Number (SNP)** can now be recorded against Falling Weight Deflectometer, Benkelman Beam, and Pavement Test Pit data. You can also associate a SNP Number with a length of network.

In keeping with international trends, **Lane IRI-qc** data has been introduced to the Roughness Survey, and is summarised to Treatment Lengths.

A new concept of a **Road Type** has been introduced to RAMM this year. This will allow you to define Road Names for Car Parks, Reserves, etc. and manage them in RAMM with all the tools available to you.

RAMM Unix has been enhanced to allow access to multiple databases using **Informix Dynamic Server**.

For a more comprehensive description of what we've included in RAMM 2003, navigate to the CJN website (www.cjntech.co.nz) and then follow the links to **Getting Help > Online Manuals > What's New In RAMM 2003**. ■

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RAMM 2004 Lifts the Bar

Planned for
2004- Traffic
Signals,
Pavement
Strength,
Revisions to
Surfacing, Risk
Management
and Minor
Structures

Next year's RAMM 2004 release will have a number of exciting innovations.

Traffic Signals



One of these major items is the new RAMM Traffic Signals application. This stand-alone application for Clients and Contractors will allow you to manage your Traffic Signal assets in much the same way as you do your Street Lights. As with Street Lights, Traffic Signal information can be viewed in RAMM.

Pavement Strength

The Pavement Strength application, originally developed by HTC Asset Management Services, to calculate the SNP for Treatment Lengths is being implemented within RAMM. You'll be able to run this process and export the results, together with other RAMM data, for use in your dTIMS Model.

Surfacing

The results of a major review of Surfacing this year will be available in RAMM 2004. The Top Surface and Major Seals have been replaced by a new Surface Structure table. This adds the flexibility of a number of different views of the Surface data in one place.

Risk Management

The method for the determination of Risk for an asset is being enhanced in RAMM Assessment.

You will be able to place Assessment Items into one or four categories: Condition, Risk Likelihood, Risk Consequence, and Other.

Assessment results for Condition Items will contribute towards assigning a Condition (Excellent through to Very Poor) to the asset. Results from Other Items will not contribute to either the Condition or Risk for that Asset.

Using the Standards New Zealand document "Guidelines for Managing Risk", HB 143:1999 as an indication of how to determine Risk we have made some enhancements to the way Risk is recorded and managed in RAMM and RAMM Assessment.

RAMM will now record a separate code for the Likelihood of Failure and for the Consequence of Failure. Once these two things have been determined a Risk Matrix is available to determine the Risk for that Asset. All three codes are recorded for an Asset.

Values for Risk Likelihood run from *Rare* through *Unlikely*, *Possible* and *Likely* to *Almost Certain*. Risk Consequence can take values from *Insignificant*, *Minor* or *Moderate* up to *Major* or *Extreme*. Risk itself ranges from *Very Low* through *Low*, *Medium* and *High* to *Extreme*.

Combinations of Likelihood and Consequence, in the Risk Matrix, then define the appropriate value for Risk. A default Risk Matrix will be supplied with the RAMM 2004 upgrade, but you will be able to define your own rules.

In RAMM Assessment, you can define Assessment Items as contributing towards the Likelihood or Consequence of Failure. The results from assessing these items are recorded against the Asset. RAMM Assessment, by following some rules, can determine the Likelihood and Consequence of Failure for that Asset. Using the Risk Matrix, RAMM Assessment will also assign an overall Risk to the Asset.

You will also see Weightings for the Condition, Likelihood of Failure, and Consequence of Failure, which

are calculated by RAMM Assessment for each Asset. These values, which are in the range 0.00 to 100.00, can be used to list all the Assets relative to one another in terms of criticality. The higher the value of an individual weight, the more important it is that something is done to repair or replace this asset.

More information on Risk and Condition Assessment will be available in the updated RAMM Assessment chapter of the **Working With RAMM** manual.

Other Enhancements

Bridge Information

has been enhanced. Superstructure definitions have been clarified, and new Types, Measurements, Components and Restrictions have been incorporated.

Minor Structures

has been extended to allow you to use it for assets which have a start and end displacement as well as for those with a point location. This gives you the ability to record a wider range of assets in the Minor Structures table.

CAS Data will be made available for plotting in the **Displacement Graph**.

The Street Light Inventory Management

module will be enhanced, with new Grid and Detail windows, extended functionality for Contract Maintenance, Claims, Reports and more. A SLIM manual is also on the cards.

dTIMS Unload

will be made available for all assets.

Asset Valuation

will benefit from the introduction of Formal Valuation Components for Treatment Lengths.

The Mapping

interface has been completely redesigned, and printing maps onto multiple pages will be possible.

RAMM 2004 will also be able to print the photographs included as **Multimedia** objects. ■



Speed Thrills

Anticipating your needs in relation to Setting of Speed Limits 2003

The Land Transport Rule **Setting of Speed Limits 2003** will be coming into force in 2004.

You'll be thrilled to know that we're building the capacity to record and manage speed limits into RAMM.

Road Controlling Authorities (such as Local Authorities) have the authority to set speed limits for all roads

under their jurisdiction.

They also have the responsibility to provide a public register of speed limits.

There's no panic just yet, since you've got until July 2005 to validate all of your limits.

But we're planning well ahead, as you'd expect us to.

RAMM 2004 will be providing a facility to take care of all of this.

RAMM will also be able to verify if you have a speed limit sign within 20m of a **speed limit boundary**.

Speed limit repeater signs spaced 2 minutes driving time apart will also be tracked in RAMM, and you'll be warned if your network isn't up to spec.

Development is in top gear!



Have Your Say

We welcome your input into these current projects

Getting Information In and Out of RAMM

Another long-term project of ours is to improve the options and methods of getting data in and out of the RAMM database.

A range of different tools are available at present for different purposes.

For example, you can use the grids in RAMM to select and export asset data in a table format. We also have a formal File Export and Import utility in RAMM Manager which works at the table level.

There are also other formalized imports and exports such as the Forward Work Programme Unload/Load, the CAS Crash Data Load to name but a few.

We would like you to tell us what else you would like to Export or Import.

Further ideas that have occurred to us are Exporting Rating or Assessment Worksheets in electronic form so that they can be used in the field on a Laptop or PDA.

Obviously, if you export the worksheets electronically, you'd want to import the results again.

At CJN Technologies we believe that the way forward for all these tools is to use a document standard called

XML. XML files can be viewed and manipulated by a wide variety of applications. For example, MS Excel can already read XML files as can Internet Browsers.

Our aim, therefore, is to build up an expertise in XML and to apply the technology to those areas where information needs to be fed in or out of RAMM.

As this is a long term project, it will be implemented over several releases.

However, we would like some guidance on where to start. Please email Nigel (nigel@cjntech.co.nz) with your comments and suggestions.

Contract Management - Will It Be a Hit?

One of the most popular requests for enhancements to RAMM which has emerged over the past year or so is for a "Contract Management System".

This is also a long-term project that will run over the next 18 months or so and aim to release with RAMM 2005.

In order to kick this project off we are asking for some guidance from you.

First and foremost we need to understand what level of functionality you require. For example, is it sufficient to simply record details of the Contract - Name, Start Date,

End Date, etc. - and nothing else?

Alternatively, would you prefer something akin to the Maintenance Contractor functionality that is already provided for SLIM, Signs, and Traffic Signals? This would give you the ability to enter Contract Items and Activities, to handle Maintenance Dispatches, and Claim Processing.

Another area which occurs to us that might be of interest is in supporting the Tendering process for Capital Works and Maintenance contracts.

Perhaps you are thinking of something else entirely. To serve your needs best, therefore, we need to know the broad direction in which we are to head. Please have a think about what you require and jot down your ideas in an email, and send your comments to Nigel (nigel@cjntech.co.nz) as he will be writing the Business Requirements that will guide this project.





Ongoing projects

Your very own RAMM personal trainer - a RAMM training course is the next best thing. The New Zealand Institute of Highway Technology (NZIHT), in conjunction with CJN Technologies, runs a number of RAMM courses in various parts of New Zealand.

Every course is hands-on, with a PC and manuals for each participant. We cover these topics:

Using RAMM (introduction and basic course)

The CJN Forum is a great way to interact with the CJN team and other users of RAMM applications.

You can ask questions, raise issues, make comments and contribute to the RAMM development process.

Viewing Forum articles is possible any time, but if you'd like to post stuff on the Forum you need to register and set up an account first.

Click the **REGISTER** button at the top of the screen and follow the directions.

You'll then be able to post queries, comments and even subscribe to specific threads and discussions so that replies and comments on your posts can automatically be emailed to you.

Check out the CJN Forum at <http://forums.cjntech.co.nz>. ■

Using RAMM Asset Valuation

RAMM Assessment RAMM Bridges Getting More out of RAMM (advanced RAMM functions).

Contact Lisa Knowles at NZIHT (lisa@nzihht.co.nz) for more information on a training course in your area.

Using NOMAD for all your Assets

We're proposing to widen the applicability of NOMAD, so that Forward Work Planning can be done for all asset types in RAMM.

For example, this means you can prepare Forward Work Plans for Treatment Lengths, as is possible now, as well as for Drainage.

By bringing the plans together, you will be able to perform cross-asset optimisation.

This is one of our longer-term projects. We are starting to look at it now, but it won't be implemented until RAMM 2005.

Your ideas or comments on this project, the NOMAD tools or suggestions to widen the scope of the project will be appreciated- please email nigel@cjntech.co.nz. ■

Roamin' in the Forum

RAMM Tip: Arranging the RAMM Grid Window Before Filtering or Exporting

When you're working in the main RAMM window, it's best to set up your grid on a single road before filtering.

This is because applying grid and layout changes to a number of roads after filtering will slow down your system considerably.

Before filtering, select just one road in the road selection panel. In the grid window, click the panel sizer handle with the blue triangles to view the grid columns and select or deselect the columns you wish to view. You can then close the panel with the sizer and proceed with your filtering.

When exporting to Excel, bear in mind that once you export filter results to Excel you

lose the ability to edit and manipulate the data. So before you do your export, make sure you remove all groupings and summaries to make sure that the sort order for roads and displacements is in the default sort order that RAMM presents it in.

If you have more than one column header in the grouping panel of the grid window, drag them carefully back to the grid window, ensuring that only the **Road Name** column header remains. This is the RAMM default. You're now ready to export your data to Excel.

For more information, see the Workspace section in the **Using RAMM** guide. ■

Ask



Fiona

Need help about a RAMM function or a related topic?

You can always call Fiona for help on 0800 CJNTECH (0800 256832).

In addition to her programming and Informix expertise, Fiona has a wealth of experience in quickly diagnosing problems and solving them.

You'll find her easy-going, friendly and helpful.

You can also email her at fiona@cjntech.co.nz. ■

Acknowledgements:

Kickoff: Campbell Newman (cam@cjntech.co.nz)

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