

ROADS REVIEW

THIS MONTH, WE ASKED THE INDUSTRY'S DECISION-MAKERS, 'NOW THAT WE'RE INTO THE SECOND HALF OF THE YEAR, WHAT INDUSTRY MILESTONES OR CHALLENGES HAVE STOOD OUT TO YOU SO FAR IN 2026?'



CADELL TAYE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER – NATIONAL PRECAST CONCRETE ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

One of the most encouraging developments in 2026 has been the continued focus on capability building across the precast sector. We've seen strong uptake of industry-specific training, with more than 1000 enrolments in National Precast's Micro-Credentials program and growing recognition of formal career pathways through the new Certificate III and traineeship initiatives. It's also been positive to see precast playing an increasingly important role in major infrastructure and housing projects, with manufacturers continuing to innovate, improve productivity and deliver high-quality outcomes despite ongoing market challenges.

Image: National Precast



DR. SEKHAR SOMENAHALLI, SENIOR LECTURER, TRANSPORT ENGINEERING AND PLANNING – ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY

In South Australia, one of the most encouraging achievements in 2026 has been the continued commitment to integrating road safety, sustainability, and network efficiency into infrastructure investment decisions. Among these initiatives, the ongoing advancement of the \$15.4 billion River Torrens to Darlington (T2D) Project stands out as a landmark investment that will significantly improve north-south connectivity, freight efficiency, and network reliability across metropolitan Adelaide. Similarly, although South Australia has increased funding for road maintenance in recent years, a significant maintenance backlog remains, particularly on regional roads. These roads continue to face challenges associated with ageing pavements, increasing freight demands, extreme weather events, and constrained maintenance budgets. Sustained investment in asset preservation and renewal will be critical to maintaining network safety, resilience, and serviceability. Looking ahead, South Australia should also place greater emphasis on identifying critical transport corridors, safeguarding them from disruption, and planning alternative routes and network redundancies. I am confident that the South Australian Government, together with industry and research partners, will continue to build on the progress achieved in 2026 and work towards delivering a safer, more resilient, and sustainable transport network for the future.

Image: Adelaide University



MIZANUR RAHMAN, PROFESSOR IN GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEERING

As we move into the second half of the year, increased seasonal rainfall is expected to result in greater subgrade moisture fluctuations and associated ground movements, particularly in clayey soils. Consequently, a higher rate of utility failures may be anticipated during this period, with failure rates likely to decline towards September and October as moisture conditions stabilise. While the impact of climate-induced ground movement is well recognised in the design of residential footings, it has not been widely incorporated into the design and management of road infrastructure and buried utility networks. The industry should therefore give greater consideration to both short- and long-term adaptation strategies to address these climatic influences and improve the resilience of future road and utility infrastructure. Approximately 30 per cent of Australia's surface soils are 'clayey', making climate-related ground movement a significant national infrastructure challenge.

Image: Adelaide University

If you or someone at your organisation is an industry leader and would like to be a part of this monthly column in 2026, please get in touch with Editor, Tom O'Keane: tom.okeane@primecreative.com.au