

Survey vehicle builds big picture road priorities

■ Rourke Walsh

The Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley will build a detailed picture of its road network in an effort to identify areas with the greatest need of repairs and upgrades.

Using a high-tech machine known as a network survey vehicle, contractor ARRB Group spent about 2½ days last week conducting the survey of all sealed Shire roads.

The NSV, worth more than \$500,000, is a regular four-wheel-drive vehicle fitted with several cameras and a special laser sensor bar along the front bumper.

ARRB Group principal consultant Rob Hood said 13 point lasers measured the distance to road and built a three dimensional map of undulations, texture and ride-ability.

"With time, you can also use it to see how fast the road is deteriorating so that then you



ARRB Group principal consultant Rob Hood and Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley president John Moulden with the high-tech network survey vehicle. Picture: Rourke Walsh

can predict, if the traffic conditions don't change, a road will reach its tolerable limit in a certain amount

of years," he said. "When roads get rough they start damaging vehicles that use the roads and things like

produce that trucks might be carrying.

"The technology also measures things like how fast you can go around certain corners so that warning signs for people to slow down can be put up."

Shire acting chief executive Kevin Hannagan said the process would identify the roads in greatest need of work and feed into long-term asset management to get maximum value for the Shire's available funds.

"The Shire doesn't have buckets of money so what we've got to do is work out how to invest the money we have got to get the best outcome," he said.

"If we can move to a more scientific-based decision process about need, it will give us the best bang for buck."

The vehicle can operate with the car travelling up to 100km/h.

The Shire has about 260 roads to survey.