

Media release  
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## **RACT calls for greater council capability in managing rural roads**

*Rural Road Safety Month 2022*

Tasmanian councils need more assistance in resources and skills to make our rural roads safer, the RACT says.

“Tasmania’s 29 councils manage 80 percent of our road network,” RACT Chief Advocacy Officer Garry Bailey said.

“But, as our members consistently tell us, many of our rural roads lack even the most basic safety measures.

“And half our roads are gravel roads.”

September is Rural Road Safety Month and comes as Tasmania is confronted with the worst year for deaths on our road since 2009.

So far this year 41 Tasmanians have died on our roads, compared with 25 for the same period last year.

Road safety data shows that 60 per cent of death and serious injury in Tasmania occurs on our high-speed rural roads.

Mr Bailey said the RACT will seek extra funding in the next State Budget for local councils to build their skills and capacity to improve their road networks and to better evaluate speed settings so that speed limits are appropriate for the road conditions.

The Safer Rural Roads Program funded by the Road Safety Levy is an excellent program but more needs to be done.

“There is also the capacity for the Federal Government to do more,” Mr Bailey said.

“That’s why the RACT and the Australian Automobile Association want to see 100 per cent of the soon-to-be-restored fuel excise allocated to improving our existing road infrastructure.

“The best way to improve our rural roads and make them safer is to treat the entire corridor to provide consistent and predictable roads.”

Local government roads comprise 14,500kms of the state's 18,300 km road network.

Of this 14,500km, about 10,700km (78 per cent) are in rural areas.

**RACT's tips on making road safety a priority this Rural Road Safety Month:**

- Obey the road rules
- Be alert for livestock, wildlife and pedestrians
- Take breaks
- Ensure your vehicle is roadworthy, registered and in good mechanical order
- Be mindful of distance and isolation in remote areas
- Always be fit to drive
- Scan the road ahead
- Know your limits and plan your trip
- Stay sharp and take regular breaks
- Don't drive through flood waters
- Drive to suit the conditions