Thinking differently about road safety

Submission to the Legislative Council Select Committee on Road Safety in Tasmania



August 2021

RACT



Introduction

Eleven years after the last Legislative Council inquiry into road safety, little has changed in terms of death and serious injury on Tasmanian roads.

Despite 69 findings and 52 recommendations from that inquiry, Tasmania today has the worst road safety record of any state.

Between 2011 and 2020, 321 lives were lost on Tasmania's roads and 2695 people were classed as seriously injured.

For each fatality that's a family torn apart, a community devastated. For every serious injury that's a life interrupted or changed forever.

The human cost has a profound impact on family, community, and state.

Tasmania's road death rate is 6.6 people for every 100,000 population – the global measurement of road safety by the World Health Organisation.

In contrast, Victoria, the best-performing state, had a rate of 3.08 per 100,000 people to March 2021.

In Norway, the nation with the best road safety record, the death rate is 2.0 per 100,000 people.

The RACT's view is that if Tasmania can learn from the best and adopt effective road safety practices, we can be world leading.

But it will take more than government action. It will take community action. It will mean Tasmanians changing their ways -- not just behind the wheel but in supporting a revolution that will save many lives.

If there is no change, if we keep on the same path, 175 Tasmanians will die on our roads in the next five years and 1500 will be seriously injured.

That's what's at stake in this inquiry.

RACT's policy position

The RACT, as a member of Tasmania's Road Safety Advisory Council, which advised the State Government on road safety policy, endorses the Safe System approach to road safety.

In essence Safe Systems acknowledges that human make mistakes and that we need to design our roads, design our vehicles, and educate our populations so that when there is error by a driver, the consequences are mitigated.

The most visible example in Tasmania is the wire-rope barrier on parts of our highway network. That infrastructure, a key ingredient in the road safety successes of Norway and other Scandinavian nations, prevents head-on and run-off road crashes which account for the majority of death and serious injuries in Tasmania.

In 2020 Sweden won the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP) Global Innovation Award for its 2+1 wire rope median road design – the design adopted in Tasmania.

The Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute said:

> The evaluations of 2+1 roads show, in total, the number of fatalities and seriously injured decreased by 50% and studying only links (excluding intersections), the number of fatalities and seriously injured decreased by 63%.

Safe Systems is supported by all Australian States and the Commonwealth, all state motoring organisations, the Australian Automobile Association, the Federation Internationale de' L'Automobile, and the United Nations. It was also endorsed by the previous Legislative Council inquiry into road safety.

The RACT's four evidenced-based policy pillars on road safety – safe roads, safe vehicles, safe road users, safe speeds – mirror the Safe Systems approach and Tasmania's Road Safety Action Plan 2020-2024.

Many of the recommendations contained in this submission are based on those policies and the evidence that underpins them.

Those policies are the foundation for the RACT's advocacy activity on road safety.

The policies also reflect the considerable input from the RACT's three regional advisory committees, the larger RACT membership, the research programs conducted by other state motoring organisations and the Australian Automobile Association, the globally recognised road safety research institutes within Australian universities, the experience of nations that have dramatically lowered their incidence of road trauma, and the work by road safety authorities in other states and New Zealand.

The RACT has also drawn on the expertise of the Road Safety Branch in the Department of State Growth, the work of which informs the deliberations of the Road Safety Advisory Council, the infrastructure skills within the RoadsTas division of State Growth, and the considerable knowledge and direct experience of the dedicated members of Tasmania Police.

We have also looked internationally and have drawn on the knowledge of the Federation Internationale de L'Automobile, the Royal Norwegian Automobile Club and the Vision Zero Academy in Sweden.

The challenge

After more than 40 years of declining road trauma in Tasmania, the past decade has seen no change in the rates of death and serious injury.

The State Government's target of less than 200 deaths and serious injury by 2025 will not be reached.

This is despite significantly safer cars through technological advances, an upgraded graduated licensing scheme to lift the skills of new drivers, improvements to road infrastructure on the state's key transport routes, the Midland and Bass highways, community campaigns targeting speed, distraction and drink-driving and continued police enforcement and deterrence operations.

The RACT, as a Road Safety Advisory Council member, supports the Road Safety Action Plan, 2020-2024, which aims to reduce death and serious injury on our roads to less than 200 by 2025.

However, we are concerned at the lack of progress on approving and implementing some of the key elements of that action plan and the resources devoted to road safety within the Department of State Growth.

In particular there has been excessive delay in renewing and expanding Tasmania's road safety camera network to include technology that detects and not just speed but mobile phone use and seatbelt infringements.

There is still no progress on a speed management and community engagement strategy, and a new motorcycle training regime has still not been advanced.

The Road Safety Advisory Council progress reports, which are publicly available on its website, reveal these delays.

It's cold comfort that we are not alone: the targets set by the National Road Safety Strategy have not been met. The review of the National Road Safety Strategy in 2018 summed up the problem in two words: "Implementation failure."

We know what needs to be done, we have an Everest of evidence on the problems and the solutions.

For example, in Tasmania we have let the speed camera network degrade, firstly with the retirement of mobile speed cameras in 2012 because of budget restraints forced upon Tasmania Police by the government of the day. The state's 10 fixed cameras are also reaching the end of their life.

The proposed renewal of the network with the latest technology came before the Road Safety Advisory Council in March 2018. There has been little progress until recent months while other states have raced ahead to upgrade their networks.

The RACT now is confident that with the intervention of Infrastructure Minister Michael Ferguson the asset renewal will forge ahead later this year and early next year.

Not only has Tasmania failed to do things differently in the past decade, it has failed to keep pace with innovation.

There was not the political will 11 years ago in Tasmania and until governments at all levels stop looking at road safety through a political lens and build a unity of purpose across the political divide, the tragedy and trauma on our roads will continue.

Globally and nationally there is the same recognition that a new approach is needed.

The challenge (Cont.)

The Australian Automobile Association's submission to the 2018 inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy establishes the benchmarks for change that the RACT – as an AAA member – believes should be adopted by both the Commonwealth and all state governments.

The full submission by the AAA can be found here:

Submission to Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020

AAA - Attachment 1 (roadsafety.gov.au)

AAA - Attachment 3 (roadsafety.gov.au)

AAA - Attachment 4 (roadsafety.gov.au)

Following that report of the national Inquiry, the AAA published Reviving Road Safety which reinforces the campaign for change.

www.aaa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/AAA-Reviving-Road-Safety-2019.pdf





The challenge (Cont.)

Further, the AAA in its evaluation of the draft National Roads Safety Strategy, in March 2021, called for:

- Inclusion of rigorous road safety accountability and reporting requirements for state and territory governments as a condition of Commonwealth funding.
- Inclusion of specific Commonwealth, state, and territory government actions, responsibilities, and accountabilities.
- Inclusion of key performance indicators capable of informing whether agreed actions are effective over time.
- The fast-track of a ‘data hub’ with a demonstrated commitment to incorporate the learnings from the Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, by ensuring real time detailed reporting of road fatality and injury data and trends.
- Acknowledgment that the Office of Road Safety agrees that the “primary measure of success” is the overall reductions in road trauma, and therefore enshrines a commitment to measure and report on absolute fatality and injury rates, in addition to per capita rates.
- Support for a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Road Safety to allow the ongoing and routine scrutiny of the progress of the next National Road Safety Strategy.

The challenge (Cont.)

- Articulation of actions flowing from the recommendations of the 2018 Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020; the 2019 Review of National Road Safety Governance Arrangements; and the 2020 Joint Select Committee on Road Safety.

The RACT fully supports those recommendations.

In the Tasmanian context of the responsibility of the State Government to deliver, this means:

- Road Safety elevated within the State Service with direct reporting to the responsible Minister.
- Prioritising road safety in infrastructure delivery and investing in cost-effective safety upgrades for both state and local government road networks.
- Meeting Commonwealth road safety accountability and reporting requirements.
- Developing metrics for measuring serious injuries caused by road crashes.
- Setting key performance indicators for road safety to cover infrastructure, enforcement, education and post-crash trauma.

The lack of progress described by the AAA in reducing the rate of death and serious injury on our roads mirrors the global experience.

The president of the Federation International de l'Automobiles, Jean Todt, opening the 2020 meeting of the organisation in Sweden said:

> After 20 years of stagnation – road fatalities have remained around 1.35 million per year since the turn of the century – we might need to do things differently. Indeed, we will not achieve our goals by doing more of the same. To reduce road deaths and injuries, we need a sea-change in thinking. We need to look behind at core pillars, our approaches to date, and remake the foundations on which they stand. This means laying down safety as a value so fundamental and non-negotiable that it actually becomes a hallmark of the road transport system, an asset."

That is exactly the position of the RACT when it called earlier this year for a radical re-appraisal of road safety policy because of the ongoing trauma on our roads.

In 2020, when there were fewer vehicles on our roads because of the Covid-19 pandemic, Tasmania lost 36 people in road crashes compared to 29 in 2019. There were also 284 people seriously injured in 2020, compared with 249 in 2019.

Already in 2021, our death and serious injuries are tracking ahead of 2020.

We need to do things differently.

- By employing the latest technology to enforce our laws.
- By improving our driver training.
- By involving more schools in government-funded road safety education programs.
- By speeding up the rollout of safer roads.
- By building the capacity of state and local government, and the civil construction and professional services sectors, to deliver safer roads.
- By setting speed limits that match the quality of our roads.
- By reforming the speed setting regime to ensure it is independent of state and local government and consistent in its application.
- By encouraging Tasmanians to get the safest car they can afford.
- By setting key road safety key performance indicator benchmarks and reporting to State Parliament every year on our performance.
- By gathering detailed data to plan an evidence-based response to road trauma.
- By imbedding road safety into the workplace health and safety regimes of every business.

The challenge (Cont.)

We need to accept the evidence that shows how we can save lives and act on it.

Road safety is a public health challenge and, like all public health challenges, requires a vigorous preventative response.

That means demanding that every elected official at every level of government act always to put the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians above any other consideration.

We can start by adopting this fundamental, articulated by Jean Todt:

> "... laying down safety as a value so fundamental and non-negotiable that it actually becomes a hallmark of the road transport system, an asset."

That will mean tough and uncompromising decisions that must have the backing of every member of the Tasmanian Parliament.

It also means a new governance structure that elevates road safety to a whole-of-government approach across the portfolios of infrastructure, justice, police and emergency services, health, education, workplace safety, and local government.

Matts Belin, Director of the Vision Zero Academy in Sweden's Trafikverket (Swedish Transport Administration) distilled the solution in discussions with the RACT:

> Within government administration, a road safety agency doesn't just require an investment in funding, it requires an investment in authority.
>
> Road safety needs to have the same authority as the two other important government elements that are critical to success – police and transport authority.
>
> Road safety must be a lead agency with the authority to drive strategy and influence others.
>
> That strategy must have a clear aim of controlling harmful energy on our road system and setting speed limits that are appropriate to road conditions.

The RACT supports that view. It requires strong leadership and a fundamental re-assessment of the capacity of government to keep Tasmanians safe on our roads.

Tasmania has done it to save lives and keep Tasmanians safe in our other great public health challenge – the COVID-19 pandemic.

Road safety demands the same leadership, the same whole-of-government approach, the same acceptance of expert advice based on evidence, and the same unity of purpose from our Parliament.



Innovation

Leaders in other nations have tackled the road safety challenge with politically courageous new approaches.

Sweden, Germany, Austria, Denmark, Switzerland and France now have traffic fine regimes based on income.

Norway – which has the world's best road safety record -- tripled the fine for mobile phone use while driving. It conducted a three-year public consultation before doing so.

In the United States scientists are developing technology that automatically detects a driver's blood-alcohol level through testing their breath using sensors in the cabin. If you are over the limit, you can't start your vehicle.

The European Union has decreed that by July 2024 all new vehicles will have to have driver-distraction and fatigue-detection systems, intelligent speed assist to keep drivers within the speed limit, emergency stop signal which indicates to following drivers that your car is braking heavily, reversing cameras and more.

Some countries have lowered their maximum legal blood alcohol level to 0.02 (In Australia it's 0.05). Sweden – a road safety leader -- introduced it more than 20 years ago. China, Morocco, Serbia and Poland have adopted it while other nations have been even tougher. In Hungary, Romania, the Czech Republic and Uruguay the blood-alcohol limit for drivers is zero. (In Tasmania a zero blood-alcohol limit applies to unlicensed and learner drivers, provisional licence holders, people convicted of causing death driving a motor vehicle, people with three or more drink-driving convictions in 10 years. For drivers of all public passenger vehicles, e.g., buses and taxis, and vehicles exceeding 4.5 tonnes GVM) it is zero.)

From January 1, 2022, all new cars, vans, buses and trucks in Europe will have Intelligent Speed Assist (ISA). A camera in the car reads the signs and sends a signal to the cruise control to adjust the speed accordingly. The system can be overridden by the driver.

Innovation (cont.)

Calculations show that ISA can prevent 20 per cent of the approximately 25,000 deaths that occur in traffic in Europe each year.
That is, about 5,000 lives can be saved.

The strong recommendation of road safety authorities in Sweden and Norway to the RACT was the setting of key performance indicators. Currently the only measure of road safety performance in Tasmania is the rate of death and serious injury. The RACT notes that work has begun within the Department of State Growth on developing key performance indicators on road safety. The RACT will have input into their development as a member of the Road Safety Advisory Council.

The Federation Internationale de L'Automobile is developing a benchmarking index to assess the road safety performance of private companies. This is a tool that could be applied in Tasmania has part of WorkSafe Tasmania's development of workplace health and safety regimes that include road safety. The FIA says:

> At a corporate level, companies should put road safety at the centre of their operations, from their relationship with suppliers to the delivery of services, including the relationship with their employees.

The FIA believes public-private partnerships in road safety are vital in achieving this – a model the RACT believes can be developed in this state through WorkSafe Tasmania and business and industry peak bodies.

Sweden has embraced the same strategy.
Dr Matts Belin, Director of the Vision Zero Academy in Sweden's Trafikverket (Swedish Transport Administration), says Trafikverket is working co-operatively with business (Ikea, for example) on road safety practices to make them an integral part of workplace health and safety.

The FIA is supporting what it calls a speed vaccine: 30km/h speed limits on school routes and residential streets. Tasmania's school zones have a 40 km/h limit. South Australia has a 25 km/h limit. The Hobart City Council last year considered a 30km/h limit for some CBD streets. Hobart has since successfully adopted a 40km/h limit for some CBD streets – a move supported by the RACT.



Inquiries

Since the 2011 report by the Legislative Council Inquiry into Road Safety, there have been a series of federal and state inquiries.

In 2016 the Centre for Automotive Safety Research in Adelaide submitted to the Road Safety Advisory Council a report, Analysis and Modelling of Crashes in Tasmania

www.towardszero.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/133212/CASR_StateGrowth_Stategy_Report_Final.pdf

In 2018 the Inquiry into National Road Safety Strategy 2018 submitted its report to the Federal Government.

www.roadsafety.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-11/nrss_inquiry_final_report_september_2018_v2.pdf

In 2019, the Victorian Legislative Council completed its report into road safety.

www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/SCEI/Inquiry_into_the_Increase_in_Victorias_Road_Toll_/Report/LCEIC_59-04_Increase_in_Vic_road_toll.pdf

In 2020 the Federal Parliament's Joint Select Committee on Road safety submitted its report.

parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportjnt/024344/toc_pdf/ImprovingRoadSafetyinAustralia.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf

In 2021, that committee reconvened to further its work on road safety.

As the review into the National Road Safety Strategy said:

> The substantial issue from submissions, forums, meetings and discussions was the need for dramatic change in road safety management, given the inadequately acknowledged national road injury epidemic and the national costs to the economy now and in the next 30 years from road crashes.
>
> It is well recognised that the costs of reducing trauma from road crashes are borne in the health, social and productivity sectors of the economy.

Some of the benefits of a judicious application of safety initiatives demonstrated to the inquiry show a return across portfolios of up to 20:1.

Leadership from the very top of government is required to recognise and unlock these multi-agency high returns on investment.

Failing to improve our current situation will result in 12,000 people killed and 360,000 admitted to hospital at a cost of over $300 billion over the next decade alone.

We must act on a scale that matters, with a disaster response that reflects the true measure of the problem. **Lives depend on it.**

What RACT members told us

In preparing this submission, the RACT conducted an on-line survey to illuminate the concerns Tasmanians have about safety on our roads.

There were 2010 responses and they confirmed what RACT members have been telling us – that road safety is a high-priority issue for them.

The key themes from the survey were consistent with the issues RACT members raise in our quarterly surveys in terms of road safety.

Survey respondents believe many of our roads are not safe enough because of poor design and construction and inadequate maintenance.

They want to see substantial safety upgrades on our highways, consistent with the RACT policy of having all our highways 3-star rated.

They want to see a greater police presence on our roads to deter bad behaviour.

Driver training emerged as a major concern, with calls for the teaching of more advanced driving skills, more road safety education in schools, and refresher courses and testing for older drivers.

Respondents also called for more public education campaigns on road rules.

Here are just a few of the comments posted on the survey website:

> *" Clear signage and well-thought -out design of roundabouts and slip lanes and more money spent on the horrendous Huon Highway."*

> *" The main roads I regularly drive on are in a terrible state at the moment. There are numerous very deep potholes and areas where the road surface is broken and very uneven. Even areas which have been repaired in the last 18 months to two years are now rough and uneven again. It's time the State Government took control of all state roads."*

> *" Make full licence holders go back to driver training school every five years or so to see if they understand what it really means to be a safe driver."*

> *" Hobart CBD around Macquarie and Davey needs red-light cameras."*

> *" There are places where speed limits are just ridiculous. The road from Queenstown to Strahan has a speed limit of 100 the whole way, despite the fact that the recommended travel time for the 40-odd km journey is 40 mins i.e., average speed 60 kmh. The powers that be can hardly blame drivers for driving too fast for the roads they are on if the speed limit is so patently inappropriate."*

“ Regular (say every 5 years) re-testing of ALL drivers. There are far too many old drivers who have failed to keep up with changes to the road rules, or who never knew the road rules to begin with.”

“ More education in schools, both primary and high schools/colleges. Primary kids are great at educating their parents and will be drivers one day.”

“ Have TV real-life documentaries of bad driver behaviour. More police highway patrols.”

“ Despite what they say, many truck drivers drive aggressively and at the speed limit. They need to understand the enormous kinetic energy associated with the loads they carry and in particular with B doubles. It is frightening to be tailgated by one of these large trucks, especially at speeds greater than 100 kmh.”

“ More police presence on our roads and more discreet road surveillance systems, especially on rural roads and highways.”

“ Review speed limits on all roads. Are the speed limits appropriate for the type of road or section of road? Are the speed limits appropriate for driving through a busy town? I’ve been on narrow/winding/twisty/blind corner country roads in the Huon Valley and am constantly appalled at speed limits as high as 80-90 kmh..”

“ More police road patrols. Be seen. Restore mobile/portable speed camera sites.”

“ Advise road injury statistics, not just deaths but the enormous toll from road accidents on individuals, including rehabilitation and recovery timeframes. People don’t seem to know..”

“ All cars with hard-to-see colours, such as black, grey, silver and some other iridescent colours should be made to have their lights on at all times, so they are easier to see as they sometimes blend into the colour of the road. ”

“ Increase and enforce penalties. Education works to a point, but harsher penalties might work for those who ignore education.”

“ Coming from Melbourne recently to Hobart I notice too many cars driving close behind the vehicle in front of them. Get the word out again about safe distance between vehicles.”

“ I would like to see zero alcohol readings. Then there is no guessing if you’ve had too much to drink. If zero you know you can’t drink at all. Take turns when you go out who is the designated driver.”

Speed

Speed and distraction continue to be the major causes of death and serious injury. Speed is a contributing factor in 29% of deaths and serious injury and distraction 24% on Tasmanian roads.

As the 2016 report conducted by the Centre of Automotive Safety Research at the University of Adelaide, Analysis and modelling of crashes in Tasmania, said:

> There is overwhelming evidence that whenever speed limits are lowered, road trauma reduces.
>
> Even small changes in travelling speed across the network can lead to large reductions in road trauma.
>
> This is supported internationally but much of the research evidence has actually originated in studies on Australian roads.
>
> For example, in South Australia the move from 60 to 50 km/h (Kloeden et al., 2007) and 110 to 100 km/h (Makenzie et al., 2015) is associated with a 25% drop in casualties on those roads where the change occurred.

According to Austroads, in its submission to the 2020 Federal Parliamentary Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Road Safety, “there is a 30 per cent improvement in road safety performance for every 10kmh reduction in speed”.

But despite the facts on speed and its consequences being the most robust of any evidence base in road safety, drivers are continuing to ignore the message and government response has been piecemeal.

Data gathered by the Department of State Growth shows that there has been an increase in the incidence of drivers exceeding the speed limit.

Historical speed data from traffic counters located across the State road network shows a consistent year-on-year increase in speeding behaviour since 2016. Over that time, the mean speed has increased by 0.8 per cent.

The proportion of drivers travelling above the speed limit has also increased by 13 per cent and the proportion of drivers travelling at more than 10km/h above the speed limits increased by 18.7 per cent.

Tasmania Police data, publicly available on its website, shows there were 11,343 drivers detected exceeding the speed limit by 15-29km/h in the 12 months to the end of December 2020.





There were 472 drivers who exceeded the speed limit by 30km/h or more. There were also 1,100 mobile phone offences detected in 2020.

Those figures could be regarded by some as an enforcement success. However, as the numbers remain consistent over the past five years, it should be regarded as a policy failure in our efforts to reduce risk on our roads by changing driver behaviour.

A 2018 survey conducted by research company EMRS for the Department of State Growth buttresses the view that some Tasmanians are prepared to exceed the speed limit.

> By far the most common situation in which respondents would be very likely or fairly likely to consider travelling up to 10 km/h over the speed limit was to "overtake a slow driver" (71% currently); followed by to "keep up with the general flow of traffic" (45%); if they were "familiar with the road" they were driving on (44%); and if they were "running late" (41%).
>
> In the latest round, males were more likely than their female counterparts to consider travelling up to 10 km/h over the speed limit in every situation except when "running late".
>
> The higher degree of acceptability among males of low-level speeding was also evident in further aspects of road safety explored in the research.
>
> On comparing the latest results with the previous round, in 2018 the respondents' propensity to be very likely or fairly likely to consider exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 km/h increased across most situations.

The situations where there was a sizable increase of 10 percentage points or more above the level recorded in 2015 were: "to overtake a slow driver" (69% currently); "to keep up with the general flow of traffic" (52%); if "running late" (52%); if "the risk of crashing is low" (50%); if "the risk of getting caught by the police is low" (48%); and "in light traffic conditions" (44%).

Attitudes to low-level speeding remain a recurring issue of concern in 2018, with 37% of respondents in total agreeing to some extent that "it is safer to keep up with the general traffic flow, even if it means going 5-10 km/h over the limit"; 34% agreeing that "driving 5-10 km/h over the limit is generally acceptable"; and 23% that "it's OK to travel up to 10 km/h over the speed limit if you are an experienced driver".

In all cases, these total figures varied only marginally from those recorded in the previous research rounds.

Compared to current attitudes to low-level speeding, those held toward excessive speeding were somewhat less concerning, with a lower figure of 12% of respondents in the latest round agreeing that "it's OK to travel more than 10 km/h over the limit on the open road if you are an experienced driver". This figure was closely in line with those recorded in the previous rounds.

Speed (Cont.)

Currently speed limits in Tasmania are the responsibility of the Transport Commissioner, and one of numerous responsibilities that fall to the commissioner as a deputy secretary within the Department of State Growth.

The document Speed Zoning Guidelines, issued by the Department of State Growth, sets out the principles of speed setting.

www.transport.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/277133/Tasmanian_Speed_Zoning_Guidelines_-_October_2020.pdf

There is no guidance in that document for individuals, organisations and local government on the process to be followed in seeking a review of speed limits.

If a person is seeking a speed limit review for a state road, they need to contact the department; if they need a review of a council road, they need to contact the relevant council.

Therein lies the weakness. Local government is the major road manager with 14,000 kms of road under its control compared with 3,700 kms of state-controlled road.

The state has the capacity to audit its roads, as part of the process in determining appropriate speeds, through the Infrastructure Risk Rating tool available to it through Austroads.

> To quote Austroads: "This is a simple road assessment methodology designed to assess road safety risk at a network level, primarily as an input to the speed limit setting process.
>
> "Inappropriate or excessive speed is a major road safety issue.
>
> "Effective speed management is fundamental and critical to reducing speed-related road trauma.
>
> "Speed limit setting is at the core of speed management. Speed limits need to be set at a safe and appropriate level, considering the function, design and safety of the road."

Local government does not have that capacity or the access to the skills and the tools needed to conduct that same audit.

The RACT supports the speed setting guidelines but the current split in responsibilities between state and local government is a major impediment to a consistent speed-setting regime in Tasmania.

The RACT view is that the state should have sole responsibility for the risk-rating of the entire road network – state and local – and the subsequent setting of speed limits.

The statutory duty for that speed setting should remain with the Transport Commissioner but that responsibility requires more resources to be fully effective.

Decisions on speed limit changes, as of June 2020, are on the Transport Services section of the Department of State Growth website.

www.transport.tas.gov.au/roads_and_traffic_management/managing_the_roads/speed_limits_on_tasmanian_roads/speed_limits_under_review

The speed limits changes listed have been supported by the RACT and are examples of sound decisions based on evidence and of the Transport Commissioner properly exercising his statutory independent duty.

The inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy in 2018 said:

> An audit of the road system is not required to realise that many speed limits currently across the Australian road network are not conducive to eliminating harm.
>
> Many local streets—which are often used by pedestrians and cyclists—have speed limits of 50km an hour, a limit well in excess of the biomechanical tolerances of pedestrians and cyclists of around 30km an hour.
>
> Similarly, a regional back road with no shoulders, narrow profile, and no line markings, and a high-volume, multi-lane highway with protective barriers share the same 100km an hour limit.

Speed (Cont.)

These anomalies need to be rectified and speeds better aligned with the road infrastructure.

A major historic impediment to applying measures to reduce travel speeds is the perceived increase in travel times associated with going slower.

In most settings, however, increases in travel speeds translate into extremely modest decreases in travel times, but an escalating risk of crashing.

A seminal study conducted in Adelaide showed that a 5km an hour increase in travel speed in a 60kmh zone resulted in double the crash risk (Kloeden et al, 1999).

Eliminating harm through speed management is not all about reducing travel speeds.

The relationship between travel speeds and road design and infrastructure is an important one.

For example, the presence of flexible barrier systems roadside and as a central median provides an error-tolerant environment that can accommodate much higher travel speeds.

Similarly, the installation of well-designed roundabouts slows vehicles down through intersections so that any collision is unlikely to lead to serious outcomes.





Speed (Cont.)

The Victorian road safety inquiry in 2019 said:

> Speed is one of the most significant contributing factors to road trauma, with both the severity of a crash, and the likelihood of crashing, increasing as speed increases.
>
> 'Safe' is defined as speeds that are appropriate for the conditions, including: traffic volume and type; road standards; roadside conditions; and nearby land use. In Victoria, speed limits are predominantly dictated by road design, including factors such as corners and barriers.
>
> As well, variable speed limits respond to operational and/ or environmental conditions on certain sections of a road.
>
> The Committee recommends that the Victorian Government consider wider deployment of variable speed limits and undertake research into vehicle-specific speed limits.

Speed and road standards must be considered simultaneously.

> Higher speed limits can be maintained by improving infrastructure; where infrastructure cannot not be upgraded, lower speed limits can improve road safety.

A report by consultant Bruce Corben to the Tasmanian Road Safety Advisory Council in December 2019 said:

> The major mismatch between speed limits and the general quality of infrastructure on Tasmania's urban and rural roads must be resolved. While there are, of course, exceptions, this basic gap in the 'physics of safe movement' is not unique to Tasmania. Notwithstanding, the gap must be addressed on the trajectory to 'Zero by 2050'. To do this, Tasmania should consider establishing a small specialist team to address, at least in the first instance, rural speeds, in recognition that only a small fraction of the length of Tasmania's rural roads with 100 km/h default speed limits can be treated in the next three decades with Safe System aligned infrastructure.

As the 2011 Upper House inquiry report into road safety noted:

> Careful attention must be given to the setting of speed limits, as there are glaring inconsistencies in this respect in some locations in Tasmania.
>
> It is a disconcerting fact that the condition of the majority of the roads in the Tasmanian highway network is considered unsuitable for a speed limit as high as 110km/h.

A re-evaluation of speed limits on all Tasmanian roads should be undertaken by experts. This should be accorded a high degree of priority to give drivers confidence in and respect for the laws they are required to obey.

Laws that are perceived to be reasonable and appropriate will achieve greater compliance.

In its formal findings it noted:

- There are surprising inconsistencies in the setting of speed limits in some locations in Tasmania.
- The majority of the Tasmanian highway network is unsuitable for a speed limit of 110km/h.

As a result, it recommended:

- All Tasmanian highways that are not divided, dual carriageway, with runoff road protection and, where necessary, central barriers should have a maximum speed limit of 100km/h, unless independent expert advice from a body such as the ARRB Group or MUARC determines that a speed limit of 110km/h is appropriate.

While there have been substantial improvements to the Midland Highway, thanks to a 10-year renewal program that began in 2014, there are still significant stretches which, under the 2011 recommendation, would have had the speed limit reduced to 100 km/h.

There was no recommendation from the 2011 inquiry that might have led to a review and reform of the speed setting regime across the state and local networks.

The international experience offers further compelling testimony on the critical role of speed management in reducing road trauma.

In Sweden, a world leader in road safety and the pioneer of the Safe Systems approach, Trafikverket (Swedish Transport Administration) said:

> No one single factor means as much to safety in road traffic as speed. Since Vision Zero was first introduced in Sweden, an overview has been made of the speed limits on the state and municipal roads. A fundamental principle is that the speeds are to be determined based on the technical standards of the roads and vehicles, so that the tolerance of people against external forces is not exceeded.
>
> In the countryside, median separation and the standard of the roadside areas are decisive factors for the speed limits that are set.
>
> This means that only roads which are meeting-free are given a permissible speed of over 80 km/h, the only exception being roads that carry little traffic.
>
> In urban areas, it is the degree of separation of unprotected road users from cars that is decisive for determining the speed limit that can be set.

In Norway, which has the world's best road safety record, the Norwegian speed limit is 80 kilometres per hour, except for in built-up areas or town centres, where it is 50 kilometres per hour unless otherwise stated. It can be as low as 30 kilometres per hour in residential areas, and as high as 110 kilometres per hour on certain dual carriageways and motorways.

The International Road Assessment Program (iRAP) says:

> Speed management is a complex area of policy for any country.
>
> The setting and enforcement of speed limits compatible with the road use at a location is an essential component of a safe road system.
>
> Roads should be engineered to reflect the road use and desired speed environment.
>
> This involves political leadership, community engagement, enforcement and engineering to achieve the best outcomes.

The Federation Internationale de L'Automobile says:

> Communities across the world are recognising that the first step to a Safe System is safe speeds. Where road users can't be safely separated, for example by dividing oncoming traffic with a barrier or keeping cars away from pedestrian areas, speeds must be reduced to within a limit that prevents serious injury. Cities that adopt this approach are seeing dramatic casualty reductions.

The 2020 annual report of the International Transport Forum says:

> Speed management is a critical element of any road safety strategy. Reducing speed is essential to achieve less frequent and less severe road crashes. Setting appropriate speed limits and enforcing them is thus a core strategy for fewer road deaths and serious injuries.

The report provides a comprehensive list of speed limits around the world (Table 7, Page 51).

www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/irtad-road-safety-annual-report-2020_0.pdf

The RACT's view is that speed limits on many Tasmanian regional roads may not be safe for those roads because of lower quality design and construction and the absence of safety infrastructure.

On roads where safety improvements may be years – or decades away – reducing the speed limit is the only way to immediately make those roads safer.

Speed enforcement and deterrence

During the State Election campaign, the RACT urged all political parties and candidates to support the renewal of Tasmania's road safety camera network.

Our position was strongly confirmed by 5014 RACT members who participated in our March quarter 2021 survey – 83% supported the cameras as a road safety measure and 95% supported the fines revenue being used to establish and maintain the camera network.

This asset renewal should include the new generation of cameras that detect distraction, including mobile phone use, seatbelt use, as well as speed and vehicle registration.

They shoot down through the windscreen from a range of sites, including fixed to overpasses and sign gantries and from roadside mobile trailers using extendable poles that reach out over the road.

The next generation of road safety cameras have been rolled out in NSW, and Queensland, and Victoria and South Australia are committed to having them operating later this year or in early 2022.

During the six-month NSW trial, 100,000 motorists were detected using their mobile phone while driving.

The cameras have strong majority support from the community as mobile use is widely regarded as dangerous. NSW conducted three community surveys and found support for the camera initiative at 80%.

Research has shown that distraction while using a mobile phone is equivalent to driving with a blood-alcohol level of between .07 and .10.

In Sweden, a world leader in road safety, there are 1,100 speed cameras covering 3000 kilometres of road.

As a comparison, across Tasmania's state-controlled road network of 3,700 kilometres there are 10 fixed cameras and no mobile speed cameras.

By 2025 Sweden will add a further 2000 cameras across 6000 kilometres of road – a policy which has a public approval rating of 75 to 80 per cent because the revenue from fines goes back into the road and road safety budgets.

This public support is also strengthened by having a policy of activating cameras only 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the time, although the cameras continue to measure speed continuously.

This is central to Sweden's road safety camera policy of deterrence and education: their prime function is to reduce speed, not punish drivers.

The mobile cameras, mounted on trailers, and operated by Tasmania Police civilian employees, were withdrawn from service because of funding cuts to Tasmania Police and were reaching the end of their life.

The fixed cameras are also at the end of their life and are at times out of service during maintenance.

While the RACT does not have access to camera revenue data, it understands there has been a significant fall in fines since the withdrawal of the mobile cameras and the amount of down time for the fixed cameras.

The publicly available minutes of Tasmania's Road Safety Advisory Council show that police recommended the introduction of this new technology and point-to-point speed cameras in 2018.

The cameras are supported by RSAC, as well as RACT, which is represented on RSAC, and are a key element in the State Government Towards Zero Action Plan.

Speed enforcement and deterrence (Cont.)

That plan says:

- Inattention and distraction are concerning causes of serious casualty crashes.
- Strategies to address this growing issue, such as technologies that can detect the use of mobile phones by drivers, will be investigated and implemented.
- Speed cameras are relatively underutilised as a deterrence and enforcement mechanism in Tasmania.
- In other states and territories, enhanced speed camera programs have resulted in significant reductions in serious injuries and fatalities on the road.

The plan then says: “We will investigate a range of proven and emerging speed camera technologies and assess their potential to reduce speeding and save lives at high–risk locations and across the entire road network.”

The RACT supports any technology that helps reduce deaths and serious injury through deterrence, education, and enforcement.

The Police Association of Tasmania publicly supported the RACT’s policy position on automated speed enforcement during the election campaign and after.

And the RACT supports the association’s call for a greater police presence on our roads, including a dedicated highway patrol.

The best-practice model for these cameras would mean 16 mobile and fixed-camera units.

They would be overseen by a private contractor, not police officers. Using police officers would, in the RACT’s view be a considerable drain on resources. It notes that the State Government has withdrawn police officers from court duties as that has long been identified as an inefficient use of police resources.

There needs to be legislative change to embrace the new functions these cameras have.

Camera revenue should be used to establish a new network of mobile cameras and maintain them – as happens in other states. The national picture is outlined in more detail below.



The national picture

NSW

- The Community Road Safety Fund was established by legislation in 2012 and came into effect in 2013 and includes (but is not limited to) all mobile phone detection cameras, speed/red light cameras and point-to-point speed cameras.
- The total Community Road Safety Fund expenditure for the 2018-19 financial year was $304 million, of which $157 million came from camera revenue.
- This went towards a range of road safety and infrastructure programs, enforcement, education, and vehicle technology, while also helping fund road upgrades under the Safer Roads Program.

Victoria

- More than $410 million in traffic camera and on-the-spot speeding fine revenue went into the Better Roads Victoria Trust account in 2019-20
- In 2019-20, $394 million went towards both outer suburban ($222 million) and rural regional ($172 million) roads.

Queensland:

- Revenue from the Camera Detected Offence Program (CDOP) is published and itemised separately in annual reports. The most recent published data shows that in 2019-20 revenue from CDOP was $172 million and net revenue was $109 million.
- This went to fund road safety upgrades, education, and rehabilitation programs, as well as the Targeted Road Safety Program. This program looks at innovative and cost-effective road safety initiatives to improve the safety of road network.

The national picture (Cont.)

Western Australia

- The Road Trauma Trust Account (RTTA) is a Special Purpose Account that funds road safety projects. It receives 100% of the revenue from photographic speed and red-light camera fines.
- Total payments of $123 million are expected from the account in 2020-21 and will fund crash programs, education, and enforcement.
- It also funds the Road Safety Community Grant Program, which enables communities to be involved in road safety initiatives.

South Australia

- Apart from the $60 victims of crime levy, all revenue from anti-speeding devices in South Australia is returned to road safety through the Community Road Safety Fund, which funds a wide range of key road safety initiatives including education, engineering, and enforcement programs to improve road safety for all road users. Revenue from fixed speed camera fines was almost $40m in 2019-20.

There are other technological innovations that can be exploited to moderate speed, detect inattention and fatigue.

For example, intelligent speed assist alerts drivers if they exceed the speed limit.

ISA uses global positioning (GPS) satellite navigation technology to identify the road a vehicle is travelling on and the speed limit. ISA alerts the driver if they exceed the limit.

Currently later-model vehicles have a speed alert which must be set manually by the driver.

Roads

Tasmania's investment in road safety measures through the road safety levy and the road infrastructure budget should be designed to deliver the best results in reducing death and serious injury.

However, the monitoring and evaluation of road safety infrastructure initiatives to ensure we are delivering the greatest benefit remains inadequate in Tasmania and nationally.

This was made clear in the 2018 review into the National Road Safety Strategy, and by Austroads, which sets our infrastructure standards and is supported by all states.

The key Austroads findings:

- Monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs is "currently poor but recognised as important," was Austroads' distillation of its review.
- It found that most jurisdictions did not require monitoring and evaluation of a project's impact on safety performance.
- Cost benefit analysis was used in some jurisdictions at the project evaluation stage to give a picture of the economic benefits of safety interventions.
- It advises caution about making safety choices based solely on cost benefit analysis.
- It notes that the Safe System approach does not put a value on life and health that can be traded off against other benefits.
- Any evaluation must take account of external factors that could impact the outcomes of any project or program.



Roads (Cont.)

The inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy in 2018 found:

- The ability to monitor performance against inputs and outputs was limited.
- A new suite of KPIs is needed to monitor actions and measure how the infrastructure system is being made more tolerant and more survivable.
- A starting point should be the KPIs adopted by Sweden for its national road safety approach.

RACT strongly believes there is a need to ensure the state and national highway network is rated and maintained at no less than three stars under the AusRAP scheme by 2030.

RACT also believes all other local government or privately owned roads should be maintained to Australian standards.

Road maintenance and road infrastructure investment were the top two member concerns in RACT's 2020 Member Survey.

The RACT has consistently urged the Tasmanian and Federal governments to increase road infrastructure expenditure to ensure all the state's highways are rated no less than three stars under the AusRAP scheme by 2030 to reduce deaths and injuries.

Newly constructed sections of highway should achieve a safety rating of no less than four stars.

This should include:

- Multiple lanes, improved lane widths, sealed shoulders (particularly on cyclist routes), visual cues and delineation, highly visible line markings, audible edge lines, medians, flexible wire rope barriers, safe overtaking opportunities no more than 7-8 minutes apart, as well as turning facilities and stopping bays.
- Increased funding for road maintenance, so that it is proportional to road project investment, in order to improve the long-term quality of the Tasmanian road network. This must include the monitoring and auditing of road standards.
- Prioritising necessary safety upgrades to rural and urban roads and highways in areas where there is high traffic, high risk and elevated crash numbers.

Roads (Cont.)

Local government and the Tasmanian Government should also ensure:

- The quality and visibility of intersections, medians, median/traffic islands, roundabouts, traffic lights and kerbs are to the Austroads standards through regular audits. If these are not to standard, the responsible road owner must deliver appropriate maintenance.
- Protections for vulnerable road users, such as separate lanes or cycleways for cyclists, raised crossings for pedestrians and traffic calming in busy areas such as shopping zones.
- Roadside hazards such as vegetation, embankments and roadside furniture, are identified and removed.
- Road line markings are maintained to Australian standard on all Tasmanian roads and audible-tactile lines installed on roads that have experienced high fatigue-related crashes.
- Rails are fitted below guard rails on high-speed, tight-radius corners and padding fitted on wire barrier posts on slow-speed, tight -radius corners to protect motorcyclists during a crash.



Roads (Cont.)

There is about 370km of risk-rated national highway in Tasmania, which is just under 2% of the total Australian road network (AAA, 2016)

The highest level of road trauma in Tasmania was on the Bass Highway, which accounts for 45% of casualty crashes and 41% of fatalities. By length, the Bass Highway constitutes 36% of the network, meaning that its casualty crash and fatality rates are disproportionately high (AAA, 2016).

Three of the 10 worst sections of Tasmanian highway in Tasmania also rank in the worst 10 across all of Australia on the National Land Transport Network (AAA, 2016).

Just two of the nine best sections of Tasmanian highway received a risk rating of low. This shows that even the best highways in this state have significant room for improvement when compared with the entire Australian network (AAA, 2016).

The AusRAP Star Rating Report assessed 366km of Tasmanian highways in 2013. In total, 98% were rated at 1-3 stars, with just 2% at 4-stars and no 5-star roads (AAA, 2013).

It is acknowledged that this percentage is now likely to be higher, given upgrades to the Midland Highway. However, it is still expected that the average rating is below the national average.

The AusRAP report also developed a Safer Roads Investment Plan for Tasmania's highways.

- It found that a $74 million investment in Tasmanian highways would result in 71% of Tasmania's highways being rated at 3-4 stars. However, 29% of the highways would still be rated at 2-stars. Tasmania's 1-star ratings would be eliminated, but there would still be no 5-star highways.
- This investment would also prevent 400 fatalities and serious injuries, thus resulting in $186 million in safety benefits, over 20 years (AAA, 2013).

The AusRAP rating program has not been used in Tasmania since 2013. However, Austroads now has responsibility for the program.

The RACT believes the rating system should be adopted by Tasmania and put into practice across both the state and local government road networks.



Vehicles

Tasmania has the oldest car fleet in Tasmania at an average 12.8 years compared with the national average age of 9.8 years.

That puts Tasmanian road users at greater risk when they make an error and when they crash.

The main barriers to safer vehicle uptake in Tasmania, where average incomes are the lowest of any state, is purchase price and other upfront costs.

The cost of safer vehicles is also impacted by federal import fees, including the 5% vehicle import duty and Luxury Car Tax, as well as customs duties and GST. It is also impacted by state-based registration and stamp duty, which is included in the registration of new or used vehicles (AAA 2020, RAC 2019 and FCAI, 2020).

More people driving newer cars would reduce road trauma. Getting there depends on reducing or removing Commonwealth tariffs and taxes and for state governments to offer incentives through the registration regime for people upgrading to a five-star vehicle – just as the Tasmanian government has done for e-vehicles.

Governments and organisations can help to accelerate the introduction of safer vehicles in the passenger fleet by continuing to require all government fleet purchases, including those by government business enterprises (GBEs) to have 5-star ANCAP ratings.

This can be achieved by 5-star ANCAP fleet policies, which the Tasmanian Government has had in place since 2018 (RAC, 2019 and Department of Treasury and Finance, 2020).

The turnover of these vehicles into the used-car market increased the likelihood of buyers choosing a safer vehicle and bringing down the average age of the Tasmanian fleet.

The RACT has consistently urged vehicle designers, manufacturers and importers, Tasmanian vehicle dealerships and all levels of government to work towards lowering of Tasmania's fleet age from 13 years to the Australian average of 10 years by 2030. This will be achieved through stakeholder consultation and submission processes, both nationally and state-based, as well as stakeholder lobbying.

This will put live-saving technology within the reach of more Tasmanians and improve safety on our roads.

Vehicles (Cont.)

Tasmanians need to be encouraged to purchase new and used vehicles of all classes with the highest ANCAP rating they can afford, with a strong preference for 5-star rated vehicles. This will ensure they have the safest structural integrity and are fitted with the latest passive safety features and safety assist technologies.

Age makes a difference.

About 20% of Tasmania's fleet, about 82,000 vehicles, are more than 18 years old.

In Tasmania, the rate of fatal crashes is four times higher for vehicles aged 15 years or older than for vehicles aged five years or less (Department of State Growth, 2019).

Cars with a five-star rating are safer, not just because of airbags and seatbelts.

There are now cameras and sensors in the vehicle cabin that use facial recognition technology to detect fatigue and distraction, including using a mobile phone.

Some vehicles now measure head and eye movement and alert you if your gaze wanders off the road.

Lane departure warnings are common in new cars. Sensors read the road and can take over the steering to keep you in your lane.

Adaptive cruise control will keep you the right distance behind a vehicle in front. Much easier than trying to calculate whether you are leaving that three-second gap.

Autonomous emergency braking uses radar to measure the distance of vehicles in front of you and hits the brakes faster than any human to save you from that rear-ender.

Safe-exit warnings detect an oncoming hazard, such as a cyclist or another vehicle, and automatically prevents you opening the door until the hazard passes.

There are now cameras that not just cover the rear of your vehicle to help you park, but video feeds covering a vehicle's blind spot, and overhead cameras to give you a 360-degree view of what's around you.

If all Australians drove the safest car in its category, road trauma involving light passenger vehicles could be reduced by 26%. If each vehicle incorporated the safest design elements in its class, trauma could be reduced by 40% (NRSS 2011-2020).

The Australian Automobile Association says that if the age of the Australian vehicle fleet was lowered over four years by just one year, 1377 lives would be saved.

It would also result in 44,467 fewer hospital admissions.

Research into two innovations reveal the road safety benefits:

It shows that electronic stability control (ESC), which was mandated for all new vehicles in Australia in 2012, reduces the risk of single-car crashes by 25% and single four-wheel-drive crashes by 51% per year (TAC, 2018).

Research jointly commissioned by ANCAP, the Australian Government and Euro NCAP revealed low-speed autonomous emergency braking (AEB) technology led to a 35% reduction in real-world rear-end crashes per year and the severity of these crashes by 53%. There are also benefits also for cyclist and pedestrian avoidance (ANCAP, 2020).

Workplace health and safety

Ensuring every workplace has road safety imbedded in workplace health and safety regimes would have a significant impact on the incidence of road trauma in Tasmania.

In 2018, Safe Work Australia reported that 62% of all reported work-related fatalities related to vehicles.

In 2019, all states endorsed Vehicles as a Workplace: Work Health Safety Guide as part of ensuring road safety is part of workplace health and safety.

www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/21629/vehicles-as-a-workplace-national-guide.pdf

Worksafe Tasmania has the responsibility for ensuring the procedures and practices outlined in the guide are adopted by Tasmanian businesses.

The RACT strongly endorses the guide.

Any road safety workplace regime should include:

- Five-star rated company vehicles.
- Training regimes.
- A properly maintained fleet.
- Monitoring of driver performance. (in-cabin telematics, which are now commonplace in heavy vehicle fleets, are increasingly being used by light-fleet owners to monitor not just safety but efficiency and costs).

The road is also a workplace for hundreds of Tasmanians who build and maintain our road network or work close to roads in many other occupations.

The State Government's Your Speed is Our Safety campaign has highlighted the risks associated with the road as a workplace and the need for proper training, protection and enforcement to ensure worker safety.

More enforcement around road workers is needed to drive the message home that these areas are workplaces and need to be managed with the same focus as any other workplace.

Mobile speed cameras and heightened police presence would be valuable additions to enforcement and deterrence around road workers.

Vulnerable road users

Pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and personal mobility device users, including e-bikes, e-scooters and disability scooters, have a high risk of being severely injured in a crash with a vehicle as they are completely unprotected and have no physical protection to absorb crash energy.

The safe co-existence between cyclists, pedestrians and other traffic can be achieved through better education, enforcement and engineering.

In Tasmania, pedestrians are involved in an average of 9% of fatalities and serious injuries per year, with cyclists involved in an average of 4% of fatalities and serious injuries (Department of State Growth, 2017).

Pedestrians have a 90% chance of survival if hit by a car travelling at a speed of 30km/h or below, but less than a 50% chance of surviving an impact at 45km/h or above (World Health Organisation, 2019).

The National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) recommends more speed limits of 40km/h or lower in pedestrian and cycling areas (NRSS, 2011-2020). The Hobart City Council recently introduced a 40kmh speed limit on some CBD streets.

The RACT supported this initiative but wants to see local government and the Tasmanian Government support and implement speed limit reductions to 30km/h but only in areas of high pedestrian or cyclist activity across Tasmania, such as retail or school precincts. In South Australia the speed limit in school zones has been reduced to 25 kmh.

The RACT has also strongly supported laws introduced in 2017 that dictate the vehicle passing distances from cyclists, including 1.5 metres in speed zones more than 60km/h and at least 1 metre on zones below 60km/h.

Separation of cyclists from vehicles is the most effective way to reduce the risk of rider injury. Cycleways also alleviate safety concerns of cyclists, enticing more people to ride (Bicycle Network Australia, 2017).

Separated cycleways, wider footpaths, street furniture, landscaping, overpasses, narrower streets, improved signals and crossings, as well as lower speed limits in key CBD, suburban and rural areas can increase safety and the appeal of walking and cycling (Heart Foundation, 2018).



Vulnerable road users (Cont.)

Like cyclists and pedestrians, motorcyclists are also considered vulnerable road users as they have a high risk of being severely injured in a crash with a vehicle as they are not as well protected and have no physical protection to absorb crash energy (Department of State Growth, 2019).

Motorcyclists are over-represented in serious casualty crashes as they are not as visible as larger vehicles and, like pedestrians, are not well protected during a crash (Department of State Growth, 2019)

On average, motorcyclists are involved in 29% of crashes that result in serious injuries or fatalities on Tasmanian roads per year, despite making up just 4% of registered vehicles (Department of State Growth, 2018).

Since late 2017, Tasmanian motorcyclists now need to undergo a two-day pre-learner training course which will include on-road motorcycle rider mentoring and coaching activities (Department of State Growth, 2019).

They then need to have their licence for six months before undertaking a new pre-provisional off-road and on-road assessment to obtain a P1 motorcycle licence.

Motorcyclists can also undertake refresher courses if they have not ridden a bike in a long period of time.

Motorcyclists can keep safe by following speed limits, wearing helmets and the latest protective clothing, riding to the conditions, not riding when fatigued and maintaining the latest safety motorbike features.

Fully licenced motorcyclists are allowed to lane filter in Tasmania as of January 2019, providing it is not: in a school zone, at speeds greater than 30km/h, at the edge of the road or near pedestrians, cyclists, heavy vehicles and parked cars. It is a means to improve traffic flow (Road Safety Advisory Council, 2019).

Additionally, there are concerns that guard rails and flexible wire barriers can create a hazard for motorcyclists who fall and hit the posts (Department of State Growth 2019). In response, the Tasmanian Government has agreed to fit rub rails below guard rails on high speed, tight radius corners and for padding to be fitted on wire barrier posts on slow speed, tight radius corners.

Anti-lock braking systems (ABS) on motorcycles have been shown to reduce crashes that result in serious injuries or fatalities by up to 39% per year (Department of State Growth, 2016).

Recommendations

Safe Roads	When	Measure
Independently review the skills and capacity of the Department of State Growth to apply the Safe Systems principles in designing, upgrading and maintaining Tasmania's road network.	By July 2022	Yearly skills and capacity audit.
Establish a state roads authority, independent from the Department of State Growth, to manage the state road network.	Within 2022-23	100% effective deployment of the allocated budget.
Reform the governance of road safety to ensure road safety policy is a shared responsibility for heads of State Government departments and at a Cabinet level.	Within 2022-23	Annual whole-of government report on performance against KPIs.
Establish a road safety directorate that reports directly to the responsible Minister and has the authority to drive an all-of-government approach to road safety.	Within 2022-23	Report annually on performance against KPIs.
Establish a regime to build the skills and capacity of local government to design, construct and maintain its road network in line with Safe Systems principles.	Within 2022-23	Annual audit of local government road improvement.
Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of road safety infrastructure projects, enforcement and education, based on key performance indicators.	Within 2022-23	Key performance indicators met and publicly reported on annually.
Safety-rate the Tasmanian network, both state and local, to ensure speed limits are consistent with the physical limitations of the road.	Begin program by January 2023	Speed limit changes, crash data.
Adopt the Victorian Safe Systems Assessment Framework to ensure safety is given the highest consideration when designing and constructing roads and highways.	By July 2022	Increase in highway ratings to 3-star.

Recommendations (Cont.)

Safe Roads (cont.)	When	Measure
Develop 10-year programs for all Tasmanian highways to ensure that framework is implemented consistently across all projects and that there is public transparency around the process.	By January 2023	Every highway to have a 10-year program, executed on budget and on schedule.
Design all highway improvements to meet the 3-star AusRAP rating.	Within 2022-23	Increase in 3-star rated highways.
That the Auditor-General regularly review the implementation of road safety policy to ensure the Safe Systems principles are adhered to in the design, construction, and maintenance of the road network and that key performance indicators are met across education and enforcement.	Within 2022-23	Auditor-General reports annually to State Parliament.
That the state road authority reports each year on progress in meeting the Safe Systems principles as part of its standard reporting to government and the people of Tasmania on its programs.	By end of 2022-23	Increase in roads compliant with Safe Systems principles, in accordance with 10-year plans.

Recommendations (Cont.)

Safe Vehicles	When	Measure
That all State Government departments and government business enterprises complete the conversion of their fleets to 5-star safety-rated vehicles.	By July 2022	By July 2022, all State Government vehicles are 5-star ANCAP rated.
That all State Government departments and government enterprises ensure road safety is an essential element of workplace health and safety regimes.	By June 2023	By June 2023, all government employees have taken road safety training.
That WorkSafe Tasmania supervise the introduction of road safety into workplace health and safety regimes in all Tasmanian workplaces and extend its inspection regime to ensure compliance.	By the end of 2023-24	Measurable decline in workplace injury involving vehicles.
That the State Government investigate ways to encourage the uptake of 5-star vehicles, both used and new, through incentives provided through the vehicle registration system.	By the end of 2023-24	Increase in registration of 5-star vehicles to agreed targets.
That the motor vehicle retail industry be encouraged to promote the safety aspects of new and used vehicles.	By the end of 2022-23	Increase in registration of 5-star vehicles to agreed targets.
That the Tasmanian Government make mandatory vehicle inspection safety certificates upon the transfer of registration for vehicles more than seven years old.	By the end of 2022-23	A mandatory system in place and operating.
Ensure vehicle age, safety rating and roadworthiness data is gathered in the investigation of crashes.	By the end of 2021-22	Data recorded as part of Tasmania Police standard operating procedure and is publicly available.
Launch an education campaign on the importance of buying the safest vehicle possible and to explain the value of safety features in saving lives.	By the end of 2021-22	Campaign developed and deployed.

Recommendations (Cont.)

Safe Road Users	When	Measure
Review the Graduated Licence Scheme after 12 months to ensure it is meeting the needs of participants and delivering road safety outcomes.	By June 2022	Review complete and recommendations published.
Review the licensing and regulation of Tasmanian driving schools and instructors to ensure they meet the standards required to operate under the GLS.	By the end of 2023-23	Review complete and recommendations published.
Ensure the Learner Driver Mentor Program has the capacity to meet the needs of learner drivers by delivering its services in an efficient and timely manner, particularly in rural and regional Tasmania.	By the end of 2021-22	Program reviewed and results published.
Launch a recruitment program for driver mentor volunteers to ensure the program can reduce waiting times and meet demand in 2022.	By January 2022	Reduction in waiting times for participants within agreed targets.
Review the motorcycle training regime in light of the over-representation of motorcyclists in death and serious injury on Tasmanian roads.	By the end of 2021-22	Program reviewed and enhanced program in place.
Establish a courts-driven diversionary program within the justice system to deliver driver behaviour change by repeat and serious offenders.	By the end of 2022-23	Programs established and operating.
Establish an individual case-management program for repeat and serious offenders so that certain licence conditions can be imposed to assist in behaviour change.	By the end of 2022-23	Program established an operating.
Review the alcohol interlock program with a view to extending it.	By the end of 2022-23	Increased take-up, decline in repeat offenders.

Recommendations (Cont.)

Safe Road Users (cont.)	When	Measure
Review road safety education in Tasmanian schools to ensure the programs delivery and content is best practice.	By June 2022	Increase in schools taking programs.
Legislate to address driver distraction by addressing unsafe actions or behaviour rather than just mobile phones.	By July 2022	Legislation in place to allow enforcement of distraction offences.
Use the result of fatigue research currently being conducted by the Australian Automobile Association to develop fatigue management regimes backed by legislation.	By the end of 2023-24	Decline in fatigue-related crashes.

Recommendations (Cont.)

Safe Speeds	When	Measure
Urgently renew and extend the state's road safety camera network of fixed and mobile cameras.	Early 2022	Sixteen automated road safety cameras deployed, including fixed and mobile.
Fund the installation, management, and maintenance of the camera network through the revenue raised by the network.	Early 2022	100% of the revenue raised by the network is deployed on road safety initiatives.
Call urgently for tenders from private-sector providers to install and operate the network, thereby freeing police for other traffic enforcement and deterrence duties.	Early 2022	Refreshed camera network operating without reducing police resources.
Launch an intensive education campaign to demonstrate the effectiveness of the automated enforcement technology in detecting and deterring distraction.	By December 2022	Campaign successfully deployed.
Introduce the technology with a three-month moratorium where offence notices will be issued to drivers but no fine imposed or penalty points deducted.	By December 2022	Technology deployed, tested and public acceptance gained.
Establish a means by which Tasmanian communities can request short-term automated speed enforcement technology in their area for enforcement, deterrence and education.	By December 2023	Establish regime to deploy automated enforcement technology on request.
Establish a new speed-limit-setting regime to ensure a consistent approach across the entire road network, both state and local government.	During 2022-23	Regime developed and in place.


RACT