**Complete Flying Minute**

**Submission to Joint Select Committee on Road Safety (05-009-03-0050 MS)**

*By Mal Shervill, Policy Officer Road Safety*

**That the submission to the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety be endorsed.**

<u>**RESOLUTION 191.FM/2020**</u>                                                    <u>**CARRIED**</u>

## Executive Summary

The submission recommends:

1. Develop authentic partnership arrangements built on a common vision and goals, with appropriate resources (knowledge, funding, skills, data, etc.) that enables Local Governments to participate fully and effectively in their role to reduce road trauma.
2. Consider introducing Government policies to encourage and support the accelerated renewal of the vehicle fleet in Australia.
3. Provide national leadership and political support to plan and design an inherently safe road transport system suited to the progressive introduction of increasing levels of autonomous vehicles in Australia.
4. Identify and quantify the differences and gaps in road standards to understand the extent of the task required to bring the network up to safe system standard.
5. Develop a program that supports innovation through funding of demonstration projects and encourages others by show casing effective projects (e.g. national safe infrastructure awards).
6. Develop and fund a program to assess and apply a star rating to the local road network.
7. Support and encourage targeted speed limit reductions planned in consultation with Local Governments and where possible involve community road safety partnerships.
8. Review current standards including maintenance standards of road lining and signing to ensure these methods adequately inform road users of appropriate behaviours and travel speed.
9. Develop a means of monitoring the level and extent of implementation (process evaluation) to understand what effort achieves certain results and to identify the gaps in implementation.
10. Provide Local Governments with access to consistent accurate and timely road trauma and crash incident data to guide decision-making.
11. Explore opportunities to develop and apply a systems-based methodology to road crash investigations, similar to aviation industry investigations.
12. With the States and Territories, develop a method of collating data so that "serious injury" information is reportable for Australia.
13. Align the next National Road Safety Strategy with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to link with global objectives.
14. Consider a road safety framework allowing for the mix of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to road trauma.
15. Define/identify who can/should contribute to road safety then measure and monitor the capacity of the identified parties.
16. Introduce a formal structure, instrument and processes to enable regular and meaningful consultation and engagement with the Local Government sector.
17. Initiate research to identify and develop a more sophisticated safe-system aligned approach as an evolutionary step for the Australian Government Black Spot program.
18. Increase the percentage of funding allocated on the basis of road safety audits to proactively drive safe system transformation of the road network.

## Attachment

Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety:
https://walga.asn.au/getattachment/Policy-Advice-and-Advocacy/Infrastructure/Road-Safety/Submission-Joint-Select-Committee-on-Road-Safety-Jan-2020.pdf?lang=en-AU

## Background

A Federal Joint Select Committee on Road Safety was appointed in August 2019 to inquire and report on steps that can be taken to reduce Australia's road accident rates, trauma and deaths on our roads. The Committee invited comment on all or some of its eight terms of reference by 31 January 2020.

## Comment

WALGA's recommendations are in accord with previous submissions to:
- Inquiry into progress under the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 (Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities).
- Imagine Zero – Consultation for a road safety strategy beyond 2020 for Western Australia (Road Safety Council).

The Infrastructure Policy Team has endorsed WALGA's submission and recommendations.

## Flying Minute Outcomes

Total Invited to Survey: 24
Total Finished Survey: 15

| First Name | Last Name | Completed Date |
|------------|-----------|----------------|
| Tracey | Roberts JP | 20/01/2020 at 13:32 |
| Phillip | Blight | 26/01/2020 at 21:00 |
| Jenna | Ledgerwood | 27/01/2020 at 16:29 |
| Paul | Kelly | Not Completed |
| Malcolm | Cullen | Not Completed |
| Cheryl | Cowell | 28/01/2020 at 10:27 |
| Stephen | Strange | 24/01/2020 at 11:26 |
| Chris | Mitchell JP | 28/01/2020 at 11:32 |
| Les | Price | 22/01/2020 at 20:29 |
| Russ | Fishwick JP | Not Completed |
| Karen | Chappel | 28/01/2020 at 8:21 |
| Michelle | Rich | 28/01/2020 at 14:58 |
| Julie | Brown | 24/01/2020 at 18:28 |
| Doug | Thompson | 20/01/2020 at 15:04 |
| Carol | Adams OAM | Not Completed |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Logan | Howlett JP | 20/01/2020 at 13:59 |
| Tony | Dean | 23/01/2020 at 10:07 |
| Ken | Seymour | Not Completed |
| Peter | Long | Not Completed |
| Ronnie | Fleay | 27/01/2020 at 21:23 |
| Catherine | Ehrhardt | Not Completed |
| Cate | McCullough | Not Completed |
| Mark | Irwin | Not Completed |
| Ruth | Butterfield | 24/01/2020 at 17:14 |

## Responses

Created: 20/01/2020 at 10:57 Results Exported: 29/01/2020 at 2:19
(15) Endorse

Tracey Roberts JP (on: 20/01/2020 at 13:32), Doug Thompson (on: 20/01/2020 at 15:04), Tony Dean (on: 23/01/2020 at 10:07), Les Price (on: 22/01/2020 at 20:29), Ruth Butterfield (on: 24/01/2020 at 17:14), Julie Brown (on: 24/01/2020 at 18:28), Jenna Ledgerwood (on: 27/01/2020 at 16:29), Karen Chappel (on: 28/01/2020 at 8:21), Cheryl Cowell (on: 28/01/2020 at 10:27), Phillip Blight (on: 26/01/2020 at 21:00), Michelle Rich (on: 28/01/2020 at 14:58), Chris Mitchell JP (on: 28/01/2020 at 11:32), Logan Howlett JP (on: 20/01/2020 at 13:59), Ronnie Fleay (on: 27/01/2020 at 21:23), Stephen Strange (on: 24/01/2020 at 11:26)

(0) Endorse subject to

(0) Oppose Recommendation

## Comments

**Doug Thompson** on 20/01/2020 at 15:04
Note "showcasing" is all one word not as in submission- Develop a program that supports innovation through funding of demonstration projects and encourages others by show casing effective projects (e.g. national safe infrastructure awards).

**Stephen Strange** on 24/01/2020 at 11:26
I endorse the submission with the comments more acknowledged must be made in the future that. The freight task will double over the next twenty years (Road and Rail) The increased escalation of Caravans and Camper-trailer traffic on the roads in the last 5 years. The large number of International Drivers on our roads has increased significantly due to tourism and seasonal workforce. I am sure there is accurate data collected somewhere to prove the above. Stephen Strange Chair of the Infrastructure Policy Team.

## Secretariat Comment

"Show casing" amended to "showcasing". (Page four of the submission)

The submission acknowledges that National, State and Territory road networks are experiencing an increasing and complex mix of road users driving variety of vehicle configurations on roads of differing standards and surfaces e.g. tourist traffic or inexperienced road users mixing with heavy vehicles. This causes real risks to road users and the submission calls for a road safety framework allowing for the mix of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to road trauma. (Page six of the submission)

# Submission
# Joint Select Committee
# on Road Safety

## Report on steps to reduce Australia's road accident rates, trauma and deaths on our roads

**January 2020**

## Introduction

The Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) is the united voice of Local Government in Western Australia. The Association is independent and membership-based representing and supporting the work and interests of 138 Local Governments in Western Australia. The Association provides an essential voice for 1,222 elected members and approximately 15,000 Local Government employees as well as over two million constituents of Local Governments in Western Australia.

The Association acknowledges the Australian Government for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety. This submission contains views from the perspective of Local Government and the community on some of the road safety challenges and opportunities in the future.

## Specific comments

### *(a) The effectiveness of existing road safety support services and programs, including opportunities to integrate Safe System principles into health, education, industry and transport policy*

Local Government's role in road safety. Since 1994, WALGA has delivered the Local Government and Community Road Safety Program, known as RoadWise, in Western Australia. The WA State Government funds the delivery of RoadWise supported by Local Governments with financial and in-kind contributions for local road safety action.

The RoadWise model involves a team of regional and Perth metropolitan-based officers who work to build the capacity of Local Governments and local communities to deliver road safety initiatives aligned to Western Australia's Road Safety Strategy 2008-2020 *Towards Zero.* Building capacity involves improving individual skills, strengthening community action and empowering organisations to take responsibility for road safety and contribute to better road safety outcomes. Access the WALGA RoadWise website here.

Austroads report that Local Governments manage around 82% of the road network in Australia where 52% of all casualty crashes and 40% of all road deaths occur.[1] Through their strategic and operational functions, Local Governments have significant influence on the design of the road transport system. Recognition of and a commitment to support Local Governments in their role is key to developing important inclusive partnerships to progress the safe system approach towards a future of zero harm from road crashes.

> 1. Develop authentic partnership arrangements built on a common vision and goals, with appropriate resources (knowledge, funding, skills, data, etc.) that enables Local Governments to participate fully and effectively in their role to reduce road trauma.

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[1] Austroads, *Austroads Research Report AP-R518-16, Safe System Roads for Local Government, 2016*.

Vehicle fleet in Australia. New vehicle technologies spread slowly through the Australian vehicle fleet, as vehicle turnover is gradual. For example, in 2016, the average vehicle age was 10.1 years up from 10.0 years of the National Road Safety Strategy baseline[2]. Given the death and serious injury reduction targets in jurisdictions throughout Australia, it is important to take advantage of the significant advancements in active and passive features that offer increasing levels of protection for vehicle occupants and other road users by renewing our aging vehicle fleet.

> 2. Consider introducing Government policies to encourage and support the accelerated renewal of the vehicle fleet in Australia.

Autonomous vehicles. There is much talk about the approaching age of autonomous vehicles. While the assumed safety benefits of these technologies may be questionable, particularly during the transitional stages, there is an opportunity for national leadership to plan for and design a suited road transport system.

> 3. Provide national leadership and political support to plan and design an inherently safe road transport system suited to the progressive introduction of increasing levels of autonomous vehicles in Australia.

### (d) Measures to ensure state, territory and local government road infrastructure investment incorporates the Safe System principles

Gap in safety performance of road network. System designers and users play a role for successful implementation of the safe system approach on the road network. Local Governments have a strategic and operational role as road and planning authorities, fleet managers and in community development and local leadership. Local Governments face a number of substantial challenges in managing large geographically diverse and dispersed road networks. These challenges, coupled with capacity constraints (limited funds, staff and training[3]), limits expeditious safe system improvements.

Another challenge is the widening gap in safety performance between rural/remote and urban road networks, and between national/state and local road networks. One major difficulty lies in applying cost effective transformations to a vast road network with low crash densities compared to interventions in urban areas and inter-city routes that have higher populations, traffic volumes and crash densities.

The risk of drivers being involved in a casualty crash can be between 1.5 and 2 times higher on the local road network than on the state road networks.[4] Austroads attribute the higher risk to some features of the local road network, including a lower road standard in general and behavioural issues associated with the more diverse mix of road users on local roads.

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[2] http://roadsafety.gov.au/performance/spis.aspx

[3] WALGA, *Local Government Safe System Project Baseline Survey Results Report,* March 2010.

[4] Austroads, *Austroads Research Report AP-R518-16, Safe System Roads for Local Government*, 2016, p. 4.

As a part of the effort to achieve the long-term vision of the National Road Safety Strategy that "no person should be killed or seriously injured on Australia's roads"[5] it is assumed that to apply safe system principles to transform the road network will require improvements from the current accepted minimum standard to the safe system standard or quality. In reality, large parts of the aging road network do not yet meet the current minimum standards meaning the effort and investment to achieve safe system standard roads is likely to be a substantial under-estimate. WALGA recommends a review of the current standards, including the underlying principles, applied to road construction and maintenance.

> 4. Identify and quantify the differences and gaps in road standards to understand the extent of the task required to bring the network up to safe system standard.
> 5. Develop a program that supports innovation through funding of demonstration projects and encourages others by show casing effective projects (e.g. national safe infrastructure awards).

<u>Star ratings for local roads</u>. Many jurisdictions set targets for zero deaths and serious injuries based on the safe system philosophy. Underlying that ambition is the assumption that transforming the road network is simply a matter of upgrading roads from the current minimum standard to safe system quality; however, the effort and investment required to achieve this is largely unknown.

An opportunity exists to initiate dialogue with the Local Government sector to develop and fund a program to assess and apply a star rating to the local road network. This would identify the scale of the upgrade task and enable a systematic approach to prioritising and investing in safe system transformations. Further, this would allow a simple and transparent method of benchmarking and measuring progress, for example, against the Global Road Safety Performance Targets 3 and 4[6], which provides a framework for an investment program.

> 6. Develop and fund a program to assess and apply a star rating to the local road network.

<u>Speed management</u>. Simplistic solutions like lowering speed limits on the local road network whilst prioritizing investment (as specified in the National Road Safety Action Plan 2017-2019) for safe system infrastructure on the national, state and territory road networks is unacceptable.

WALGA acknowledges that speed management is a crucial aspect in reducing death and serious injuries. In our experience, progressive targeted lowering of speed limits in areas of high volume pedestrian or other vulnerable road users is more effective when planned in consultation with the relevant Local Government and community. Collaborating with Local Governments, WALGA RoadWise advocates for speed limit reductions in selected areas.

> 7. Support and encourage targeted speed limit reductions planned in consultation with Local Governments and where possible involve community road safety partnerships.

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[5] Australian Transport Council, *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020,* May 2011.

[6] https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_traffic/12GlobalRoadSafetyTargets.pdf?ua=1

Roads are self-explaining when they are consistent with the expectations of the road user, eliciting safe behaviour simply by design, which includes application and maintenance of lining and signing. In reference to speed limits, a road is self-explaining if driving above the speed limit is uncomfortable. Progressing changes to facilitate implementation of self-explaining roads may hasten the beneficial lowering of travel speeds across the entire road network.

> 8. Review current standards including maintenance standards of road lining and signing to ensure these methods adequately inform road users of appropriate behaviours and travel speed.

### (e) Road trauma and incident data collection and coordination across Australia

<u>Data informing the implementation of road safety strategies</u>. Opportunities exist for national leadership regarding road crash data. Implementing a safe system remains our best chance to address the social and economic cost of road injury and death; however, the challenges and opportunities that exist in road safety mostly relate to our ability to implement and deliver effectively. Data collection, analysis, monitoring and reporting is an important activity supporting the implementation of road safety strategies.

> 9. Develop a means of monitoring the level and extent of implementation (process evaluation) to understand what effort achieves certain results and to identify the gaps in implementation.

<u>Local Government access to road crash data</u>. As stated previously, Local Governments design and manage a significant percentage of the road network in Australia. Local Governments are also responsible for the safety performance of their road network, which road trauma and crash incident data informs.

> 10. Provide Local Governments with access to consistent accurate and timely road trauma and crash incident data to guide decision-making.

<u>Systems-based methodology to road crash investigations</u>. Data from different sources would usefully inform road safety strategies in future, for example, the findings of road crash investigations undertaken by multidisciplinary teams that analyze the underlying cause of contributing factors.

> 11. Explore opportunities to develop and apply a systems-based methodology to road crash investigations, similar to aviation industry investigations.

<u>Measure of "serious injury"</u>. The National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 "is giving greater attention to the serious injury dimension of the road trauma problem." The National Strategy states, "There is no reliable national collection of serious injury crash data, largely because of jurisdictional differences in injury definitions and reporting arrangements."[7] The Strategy asks road transport agencies to work towards adopting nationally consistent road crash definitions essential for monitoring progress towards the serious injury target. The consistent measure of serious injury remains elusive in Australia.

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[7] Australian Transport Council, *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020,* p. 33, May 2011.

> 12. With the States and Territories, develop a method of collating data so that "serious injury" information is reportable for Australia.

### *(f) Recommending strategies, performance measures and targets for the next National Road Safety Strategy*

<u>Safe system approach</u>. Considered world's best practice, the *safe system* approach models the strategies developed and applied by the best performing nations, such as Sweden's *Vision Zero* and the Dutch *Sustainable Safety*. This approach, rather than relying on changing driver or road user behaviour, takes into account the fallibility of humans and recognizes that much of the road safety problem is the result of people making mistakes. WALGA supports the systems concept and recommends the next National Road Safety Strategy adopt a more holistic approach to avoid silos of action resulting from compartmentalizing the safe system approach into cornerstones/pillars.

> 13. Align the next National Road Safety Strategy with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to link with global objectives.

National, State and Territory road networks are experiencing an increasing and complex mix of road users driving variety of vehicle configurations on roads of differing standards and surfaces e.g. tourist traffic or inexperienced road users mixing with heavy vehicles on regional and remote roads. This causes real risks to road users, which road safety strategies must recognise and address.

> 14. Consider a road safety framework allowing for the mix of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that contribute to road trauma.

<u>Principle of shared responsibility</u>. Shared responsibility is a principle universally adopted in the National and other safe system based road safety strategies. This principle appears to have two key flaws - shared responsibility implies equal capacity; and sharing responsibility is likely to erode accountability. The National Road Safety Strategy should seek to better understand gaps in implementation and strengthen accountability.

> 15. Define/identify who can/should contribute to road safety then measure and monitor the capacity of the identified parties.

<u>Recognition of Local Government's role in road safety</u>. WALGA acknowledges the Australian Government's commitment to and leadership in developing, coordinating and monitoring the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020 and the achievements reported in November 2017.[8] Notwithstanding, there remains a significant concern about the lack of similar safety gains for crashes involving:
- regional roads (e.g. run-off road crashes)
- head-on crashes
- older drivers and motorcycle riders
- motorcyclists
- pedestrians

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[8] National Road Safety Strategy, *Implementation status report, November 2017.*

The National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 explicitly identifies Local Governments; however, the National Road Safety Action Plan 2015-2017 almost completely ignores this sphere of government, except in relation to reduced speed zones[9].

The goal of the National Road Safety Strategy is to reduce Australia's annual number of road deaths and serious injuries by at least 30 per cent by 2020. This means that if nothing changes for the local road network, where approximately 50% of serious crashes occur, there will need to be double the improvement on just the 18% of the road network managed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments.

This will lead to the gap further widening in terms of safety performance between national/state/territory road networks and local road networks. For a nation-wide approach, it is important to recognize the role and contributions of Local Governments if Australia is to work towards a safe road transport system.

16. Introduce a formal structure, instrument[10] and processes to enable regular and meaningful consultation and engagement with the Local Government sector.

Access WALGA's submission to the *Inquiry into Progress under the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020* here.

### (g) Recommendations for the role of the newly established Office of Road Safety

See recommendations 1, 6, 17 and 18 of this submission.

### (h) Other measures to support the Australian Parliament's ongoing resolve to reduce incidents on our roads, with a focus on the recommendations from the Inquiry into the effectiveness of the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020

Evolution of the Australian Government Black Spot Program. WALGA seeks continued safety-focused funding for the local road network. The Australian Government Black Spot Program is highly regarded by Local Governments. It remains the only national safety-focused source of funding for local roads and is greatly valued. There are opportunities to develop the criteria and methodology in an evolutionary manner to better support not only reactive treatments, but also proactive mass action network-level treatments of locations/lengths informed by a greater emphasis on road safety audits i.e. beyond Benefit Cost Ratios to Safe System Transformations. For example, model-based methods such as the Empirical Bayes statistical method (Portugal) cited by Meuleners and Fraser[11] as "state-of-the-art".

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[9] Transport and Infrastructure Council, *National Road Safety Action Plan 2015 – 2017,* November 2014, p. 7.

[10] *State and Local Government Agreement, August 2017,* between the Western Australian State Government, Local Government Professionals and WALGA.

[11] Meuleners L, and Fraser M, *Review of the WA State Black Spot Program: a literature review of Australian and International Black Spot Programs,* June 2008.

Future reviews of the Australian Government Black Spot Program should consider how diversifying the criteria and methodology (or even develop an alternate program) might better address the gap in safety performance on rural and remote roads. For example, funding for low cost treatments such as lines and signs (taken for granted in large urban centres) to help bring rural and remote roads closer to the current (minimum) standard.

17. Initiate research to identify and develop a more sophisticated safe-system aligned approach as an evolutionary step for the Australian Government Black Spot program.
18. Increase the percentage of funding allocated on the basis of road safety audits to proactively drive safe system transformation of the road network.

END OF SUBMISSION