

State Election Priorities 2021

A safer, sustainable and connected WA



For the better



Lifesaving, job-creating stimulus

The next State Government has the opportunity to prioritise critically important infrastructure projects to save thousands of lives and serious injuries, significantly reduce the economic burden of road trauma and create thousands of jobs.

State Election Priorities for WA

Road trauma remains a major issue in Western Australia.

An unforgivably high number of people continue to be killed and seriously injured every day on WA roads. Apart from the immeasurable personal and social impacts, the financial cost to the nation's economy is estimated to be approximately two per cent of Australia's Gross Domestic Product (or \$33 billion) in 2016. For WA, it is approximately 2.4 billion per year.

The next State Government has the opportunity to prioritise critically important infrastructure projects to save thousands of lives and serious injuries, significantly reduce the economic burden of road trauma and create thousands of jobs.

RAC is the voice of more than 11 million Western Australians. RAC is calling on the next State Government to deliver:

1. a fully funded **Regional Road Safety Program** to save thousands of lives and serious injuries on WA's regional roads;
2. a fully funded **metropolitan intersections program** to deliver highly effective, low-cost, life and serious injury-saving treatments across the metropolitan Perth road network; and
3. a program to accelerate the delivery of safe and connected **active transport infrastructure**.

These are affordable commitments which can be delivered quickly. They are scalable and can create significant employment and training opportunities from the outset. They will also inject much needed investment into communities throughout the State.



Regional Road Safety Program

The challenge

- » Regional WA presents a significant challenge to saving lives and reducing serious injuries on our roads – in just five years, more than 3,200 people have been killed or seriously injured on WA's regional roads.
- » Approximately 60 per cent of WA's road fatalities occur in regional areas, despite only 21 per cent of the population living there.
- » Nearly 70 per cent of all fatal and serious injury crashes in our regions were the result of run-off-road or head on crashes – deaths and serious injuries that could be avoided through low-cost safety treatments.
- » Deaths on regional roads occur at four times the national average.

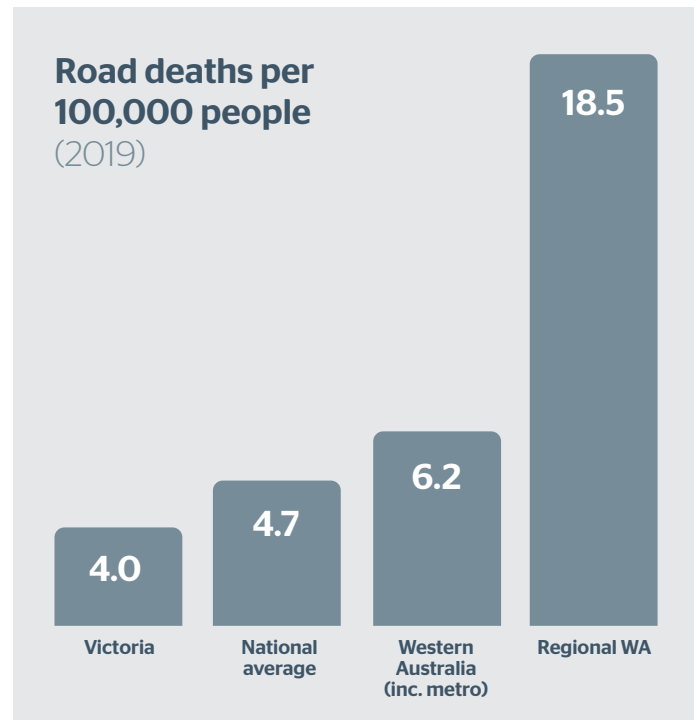
The opportunity

A strategic **Regional Road Safety Program** – a landmark State Government proposal to deliver low-cost safety treatments across 17,000kms of the State's regional road network, connecting nearly every regional town and community in WA. Treatments include sealing shoulders, installing audible edgelines, medians and/or centrelines to address run-off-road and head on crashes.

The State and Australian Governments have announced funding to commence delivery of the first part of a Regional Road Safety Program, however a commitment to fully fund and deliver the entire program is urgently needed.

State Government modelling has demonstrated the program is expected to:

- » Save more than 2,100 people from being killed or seriously injured;
- » Reduce regional road trauma by 60 per cent;
- » Create more than 500 direct and indirect jobs annually, which would likely result in skilled and non-skilled, as well as regional employment and training opportunities; and
- » Yield a strong return on investment with a high Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 4.05.



The next State Government must:

- » commit funding to ensure the roll out of the Regional Road Safety Program in full (\$900 million), over four years. A review of current funding for public sector programs, including Road Trauma Trust Account (RTTA) funding, should be made with a view to increase momentum in delivering this critical program.

The Regional Road Safety
Program would prevent

2,100

crashes causing death and
serious injury - reducing regional
road trauma by 60%.



Low cost metropolitan intersection program

The challenge

- » Nearly one in two crashes in the Perth metropolitan area occur at intersections. Intersections also received nearly 60 per cent of the more than 6,000 nominations to the 2018/19 RAC Risky Roads campaign.
- » In the five years to 2019, 85 people were killed at metropolitan intersections and 2,448 people were seriously injured – at an estimated economic cost of \$1.42 billion.
- » Major grade-separations and other significant infrastructure works (like installing traffic signals and roundabouts) can greatly enhance safety but can be costly and have long lead times.

The opportunity

An opportunity exists to take a new approach and do more, with less.

A program to trial and implement more innovative and lower cost treatments could be applied more widely across the network. Such a program would allow more intersections to be remedied, more quickly, maximising the safety benefits for all road users.

Treatments, which could be implemented for as little as \$20,000 to \$50,000 per intersection include:

- » painted mini-roundabouts
- » minor geometry improvements to slow speeds and reduce crossing distances
- » speed cushions and raised platforms
- » modified signal timings

The next State Government must:

- » fully fund a program to deliver lower cost, network-wide treatments to address common challenges at different intersection types to create a safer road network across metropolitan Perth (total initial program cost of \$50 million over five years).



Safe and connected active transport infrastructure program

The challenge

- » Car is by far the dominant method of travel to work in WA and around half of all car trips are less than 5km with many being under 1km – most people can ride 5km in around 15-20 minutes or walk 1km in around 10 minutes.
- » 13 of Perth's 34 strategic activity centres, including several within Perth's inner area, have poor access to public transport, increasing the importance of active transport connections.
- » Insufficient priority is given to the reallocation of road space for active (and public) transport, critical gaps remain in the Principal Shared Path (PSP) network and there is a need to maintain existing paths (not least lighting quality) to enhance amenity and safety.

The opportunity

Increasing cycling participation has wide-ranging benefits, including health and of course transport.

RAC's 2012 Cycling Business Case demonstrated the returns on investment in cycling projects are between 3.4 and 5.4 times the costs incurred – higher than many other urban transport investments.

The creation of safe, active streets and expansion of cycling infrastructure are seen by many authorities globally as a key opportunity to not only manage risks to human health but also to reimagine cities and streets and support economic growth.

Now, more than ever, there is a need to accelerate the delivery of shovel-ready smaller-scale infrastructure projects and quick-win, temporary treatments to support increased levels of cycling in WA. Such a program could include funding to:

- » accelerate completion of gaps in the PSP network, as well as those as part of the Safe Active Streets program
- » maintain and upgrade existing shared paths, particularly within 15km of the Perth Central Business District, to improve surface and lighting quality (including trialling smart path lighting solutions)
- » enable local governments to deliver active transport infrastructure projects already in the pipeline but which are yet to receive funding through the Western Australian Bicycle Network grants program due to funding constraints
- » trial innovative approaches to rapidly reallocate road space, expand provision for pedestrians and cyclists and create safer streets (including temporary measures like popup bike lanes)

The next State Government must:

- » commit funding towards a program to roll out priority projects to accelerate the delivery of safe and connected active transport infrastructure and enhanced streets and places for cycling and walking in WA (total initial program cost of \$80 million over two years).



About RAC

RAC is a voice for more than 1.1 million Western Australians. Since our foundation more than 115 years ago, RAC has existed to be a driving force for a Better WA by championing change that will create a safer, sustainable and connected Western Australia. RAC is an active participant in the WA Road Safety Council, as the representative of all road users.

Our purpose

The driving force for a better WA.

Our vision

2030: A safer, sustainable and connected future for Western Australians.

Our mission

Delivering great member services and experiences, while inspiring positive community change that makes life better in WA.