

Federal Election Priorities 2022



A safer, sustainable and connected WA



2022 Federal Election Priorities for WA

Infrastructure priorities

An unforgivably high number of people continue to be killed and seriously injured every day on WA's roads. Apart from the immeasurable personal and social impacts, the financial cost to the nation's economy was estimated to be approximately two per cent of Australia's Gross Domestic Product (or \$33.16 billion) in 2016. For WA, it could be as much as \$2 billion per annum.

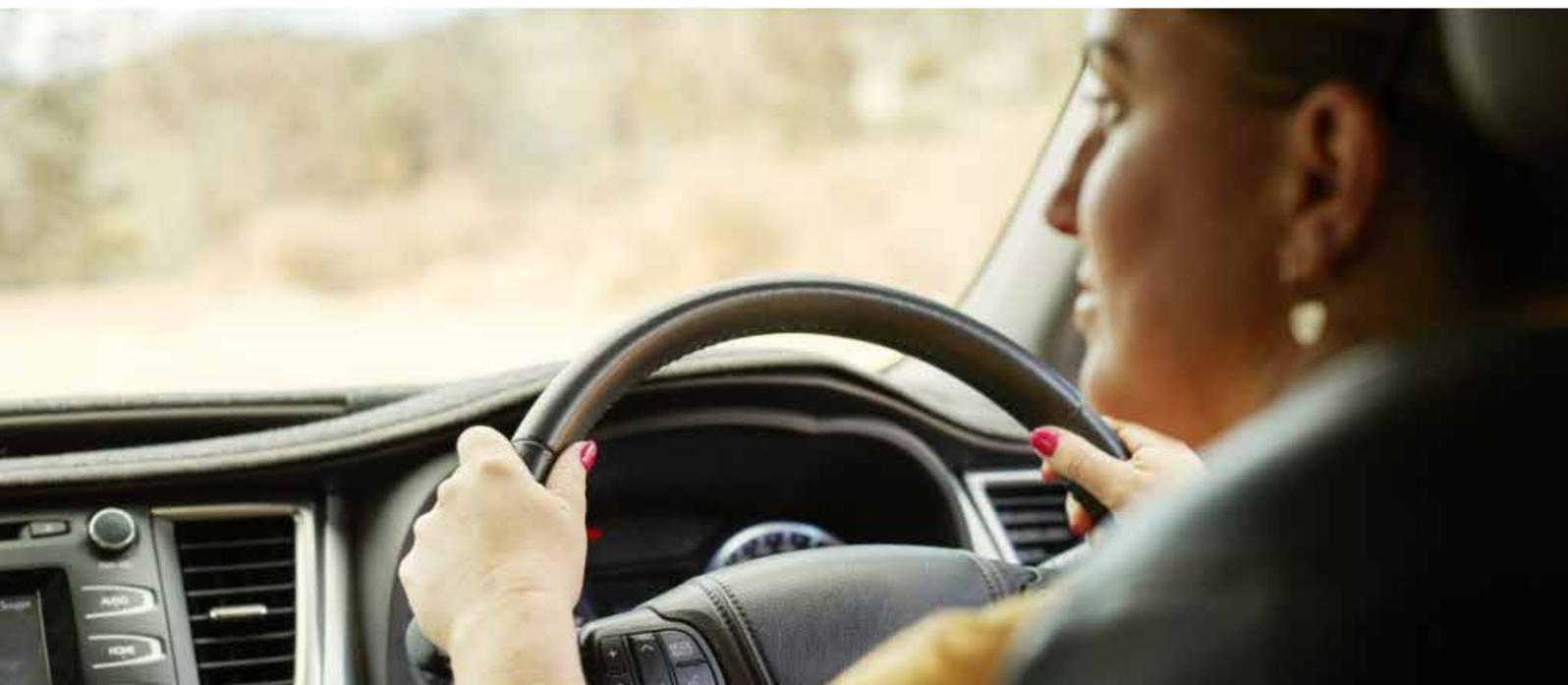
The next Federal Government has the opportunity to prioritise critically important initiatives to not only save thousands of lives and serious injuries, but also significantly reduce the associated economic burden of road trauma and create thousands of jobs.

RAC is the voice of more than 1.2 million Western Australians. RAC members want the next Federal Government to commit and deliver three key infrastructure priorities:

1. Full funding for the regional road safety program to save thousands of lives and serious injuries on WA's regional roads;
2. Funding for the metropolitan intersections program to deliver highly effective, low cost, life and serious injury-saving treatments; and
3. A program of safe and connected active transport infrastructure and enhanced streets and places for cycling and walking in WA

Cleaner, healthier air

In addition to these infrastructure priorities, there is a clear and urgent need for the Federal Government to demonstrate strong leadership and drive large-scale action to reduce vehicle emissions.



Regional Road Safety Program

The challenge

- » Over five years, more than 500 people have been killed and over 2,800 seriously injured on WA's regional roads.
- » Of the 166 fatalities on WA's roads last year alone, 60 per cent occurred on regional roads, despite only 20 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

Fully fund and deliver the Regional Road Safety Program – a landmark State Government proposal to deliver low cost safety treatments across 17,000km of the State's regional road network.

Treatments include sealing shoulders, installing audible edgelines, medians and/or centrelines to address run-off-road and head on crashes.

To date, a total of \$669 million has been jointly committed by the State and Federal Governments, however a commitment to fund and deliver the entire program is urgently needed.

State Government modelling has demonstrated the program is expected to:

1. Save more than 2,100 people from being killed or seriously injured;
2. Reduce regional road trauma by 60 per cent;
3. 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
4. Yield a strong return on investment with a high Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 4.05.



The next Federal Government must:

- » Commit funding in partnership with the WA Government so that the \$900 million Regional Road Safety Program is delivered in full over four years by the end of 2023-24 (\$231 million outstanding).

Low cost metropolitan intersection program

The challenge

- » Urban intersections can be particularly risky due to higher volumes of road users travelling at different speeds and in multiple directions.
- » Nearly one in two crashes in the Perth metropolitan area occur at one of its more than 50,000 intersections and they received almost 60 per cent of the more than 6,000 nominations to the 2018/19 RAC Risky Roads campaign.
- » In just the five years to end-2020, 92 people were killed at metropolitan intersections and 2,849 people were seriously injured – at an estimated economic cost of \$1.6 billion.

The opportunity

Major grade-separations, traffic signals, roundabouts, turn pockets and slip lanes can greatly enhance safety. However, these are often costly and come with long lead times.

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 and turning lanes where space permits;
- » minor geometry improvements to slow vehicle speeds and reduce crossing distances
- » speed cushions and raised platforms
- » modified signal timings
- » other lining, signing and speed management measures.

The next Federal Government must:

- » Commit funding towards 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 (ongoing program cost of at least \$10 million each year).



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

The creation of safe, active streets and expansion of cycling infrastructure are being seen by many authorities globally as a key opportunity to not only manage risks to human health and limit the spread of infection but also to reimagine their 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 package 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.
- » 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 Federal Government must:

- » Commit funding towards a program 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).



Cleaner, healthier air

The emissions problem

The transport sector in Australia is responsible for 19 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions produced, while cars and light commercial vehicles alone contribute 12 per cent of total greenhouse gases produced in Australia each year. In 2015, 2,566 deaths were attributable to air pollution in Australia.

Electric vehicle sentiments in WA

In a recent survey of RAC members, 50 per cent would likely consider an electric vehicle (EV) or hybrid for their next vehicle purchase, however the main barriers to buying an electric or hybrid vehicle are cost (67 per cent); access to charging infrastructure (10 per cent) and range anxiety (6 per cent).

The top three actions our members wanted from governments to reduce vehicle emissions were:

- » Incentives for purchasing low emission vehicles.
- » Regulation of emissions through national standards for new vehicles.
- » The number of low emission vehicles in the government fleet to grow.

It is clear that EVs will play a significant role in reducing vehicle emissions. Community support is growing (55 per cent of members report feeling more positive towards EVs than they did 12 months ago), and it is important that government and industry take actions that encourage and accelerate uptake.

Taxation of electric vehicles

Fuel excise (\$0.433 per litre) is one of many ways drivers pay for road use although by their design, EVs are exempt from paying excise. In response some state governments and industry groups have been supporting and implementing new taxes on EVs.

RAC is strongly opposed to new and additional taxes for EVs; the preferred approach is to incentivise uptake, particularly while fleet penetration in Australia is low.

Where we stand

RAC supports:

- » The introduction of an impactful light vehicle CO2 emissions standard.
- » The introduction of Euro 6 noxious emissions standards.
- » Tax incentives and subsidies for EVs to address the price differential.
- » Improving fuel quality standards in Australia at the earliest possible date.
- » Accelerating the uptake of Euro VI or above standard buses and expand the trial of cleaner alternative-fuelled buses, such as fully electric and hydrogen fuel cell.
- » Delivering an effective rating system to ensure consumers have access to user-friendly emissions and fuel consumption information when purchasing a new vehicle.
- » Enabling wider roll out of charging infrastructure in WA.

About RAC

RAC is a voice for more than 1.2 million Western Australians.

Since our foundation more than 116 years ago, RAC has existed to be the driving force for a better WA. Our vision is for a safer, sustainable and connected future for Western Australians.



rac.com.au