



STATE BUDGET Submission 2013/14



RAC members are happier

RAC Budget Submission to the WA Government

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CONTACT DETAILS

Advocacy and Member Benefits: advocacy@rac.com.au

1. Executive summary

The mobility challenge facing our State is enormous.

The 2013-2014 State Budget is the WA government's opportunity to detail its commitment to improve how Western Australian's can move around their communities, their city and their State in a safe, accessible and sustainable way.

Western Australia's strong population and continued economic growth brings significant challenges including the urgent need to invest in road, public transport and cycling projects.

In July 2012, only six per cent of Westpoll survey participants rated transport or congestion as a major issue. Six months later, this soared to 21 per cent.

Providing the necessary infrastructure and services required to keep a rapidly growing population on the move can no longer be ignored.

For the State to deliver on its economic and social potential, the State government must also renew its commitment to saving more lives on WA roads.

While the challenges facing our existing road and public transport network will not be resolved overnight or within the scope of one budget, the government must signal its commitment to fund major long-term projects in the forward estimates. Given four months has passed since the State Election this document predominantly sets out the election commitments of the re-elected Barnett government in the expectation that funding will be allocated in this budget.

The RAC believes the key priorities for the 2013-2014 State Budget should be:

- A renewed commitment to efforts to reduce deaths and serious injuries on WA roads;
- Investments in road projects to reduce congestion and deliver greater economic efficiency to business;
- Acceleration of the expansion of the public transport network;
- The use of Royalties for Regions funding to improve the safety of dangerous country roads; and
- Support for active transport like cycling infrastructure.

2. About RAC

The RAC is Western Australia's largest member organisation representing the views and interests of more than 750,000 members.

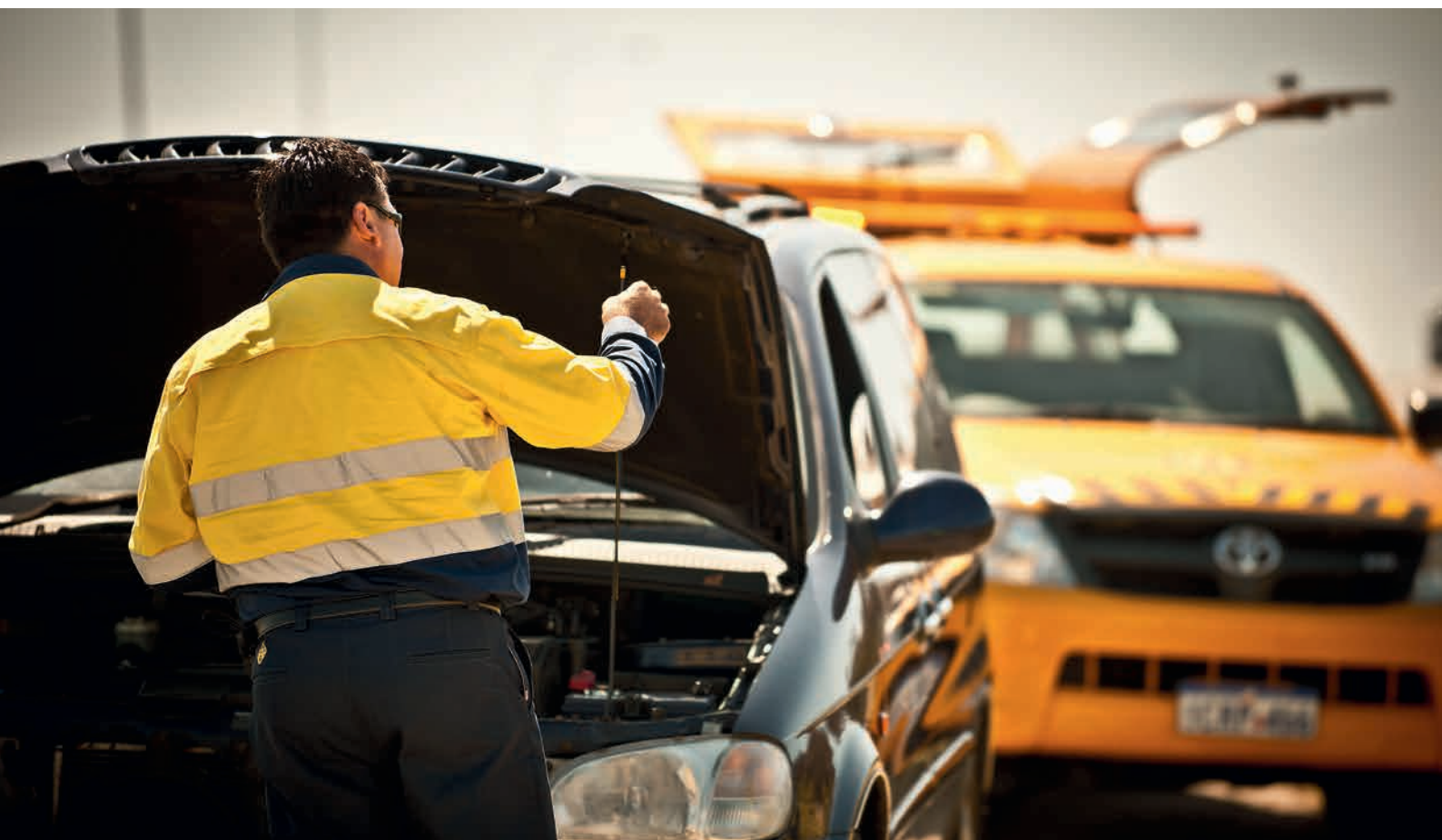
All profits are reinvested to benefit RAC members and the Western Australian community.

In 1905, the RAC started out as a small club for car owners interested in safer roads and touring our State.

Today, the RAC works to ensure all Western Australians are able to travel around the state in the safest, most sustainable and efficient way possible.

The RAC does this by working with government at all levels and other organisations on key issues that affect the way Western Australians move around their community – whether it is as motorists, motorcyclists, cyclists, public transport users or pedestrians. The RAC represents all road users on the State's Road Safety Council.

The RAC employs more than 1400 staff around Western Australia and has an annual turnover of more than \$500million.



3. Renewed commitment to road safety

Twenty years ago WA had the lowest fatality rate of any Australian State. Now it is consistently the worst. Since 2006 Western Australia has consistently been above the national fatality rate.

The RAC believes there must be a renewed commitment to reducing the number of Western Australians killed and seriously injured on our roads.

The RAC calls on the government to:

- Guarantee Road Trauma Trust Account (RTTA) is directed to large key road safety projects. This should include reducing the number of run-off road crashes in country areas, safety upgrades of dangerous metropolitan intersections and additional community awareness and education campaigns. The RTTA should not be drawn on to pay for safety features of new road projects or for projects designed to alleviate congestion. The safety aspects of these projects should come from the core Main Roads WA budget;
- Increase the number of random breath tests to meet the best practice standard of one test per driver per year; and
- Increase the number of traffic hours performed by WA Police.

The RAC calls on the State government to fund and deliver on the road safety promises from the 2013 State Election including:

- New emergency rescue helicopter service based in the South-West. (Estimated cost: \$19.2million.)



4. Investment in our regional roads

In 2012, over half of all fatalities in Western Australia occurred on regional roads. This is despite only 26 per cent of the population living in regional Western Australia.

Upgrades of existing regional major road links can no longer be neglected.

In 2009, the Western Australian Auditor General identified an \$800million backlog in maintenance work on the State's road network. The average age of the road network is steadily increasing, with nearly one third of the network having now reached the end of its design life. More than 25 per cent of roads (or 4,000 kilometres) have not been resurfaced on time, which increases the risk that expensive rebuilding will be required due to road failure.

Across the State, the road networks are exposed to increasing traffic volumes and heavier freight vehicles. Narrow seal and poor road condition are making driving in regional Western Australia hazardous for industry, tourists and local residents.

The RAC calls on the government to:

- Match the additional funds delivered for regional road upgrades from the Road Trauma Trust Account with contributions from the Royalties for Regions Program as part of a 10 year plan;
- Provide at least 50 per cent more funding to address Western Australia's growing maintenance backlog; and
- Fund a rolling program of Road Safety Audits so that every bituminised regional road is audited at least every five years.

The RAC calls on the State government to fund and deliver on the regional road promises from the 2013 State Election including:

- Construction of nine new passing lanes on Albany Highway, between Kojonup and Albany. (Estimated cost: \$23million);
- Upgrade Great Eastern Highway with 15 new overtaking lanes between Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie. (Estimated cost: \$48million over four years);
- Upgrade Coalfields Highway. (Estimated cost: \$28million over three years);
- Widen 11km of Mingenew-Morawa Road. (Estimated cost: \$1.4million. \$1.2million contribution from SinoSteel);
- Upgrade 1.2km of South Western Highway, near Brookhampton. (Estimated cost: \$2.6million);
- Marble Bar Road upgrade. (Estimated cost: \$20million. Completed mid-2015);
- Bindi Bindi Curves upgrade – Great Northern Highway. (Estimated cost: \$40million, Federal government \$32million and State government \$8million. Completed by end of 2014); and
- Upgrade South Coast Highway. (Estimated cost: \$30million. Start 2013-2014).

Road Trauma Trust Account funds should only be directed to these projects if there is an identifiable benefit in terms of reducing deaths and serious injuries.

5. Making our cars safer

The RAC helps fund the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) and the Used Car Safety Ratings program.

By supporting ANCAP, the RAC encourages vehicle manufacturers to build more safety features into their cars and educates consumers to prioritise safety when they are considering a new car purchase.

From October 2012, the RAC no longer insures or finances 2012 and beyond manufactured vehicles with an ANCAP rating of 1, 2 or 3-stars.

The change is aimed at increasing the number of new cars entering the Western Australian market with an ANCAP rating of 4 or 5-stars.

The RAC calls on the State government to:

- Introduce mandatory point of sale display of ANCAP ratings;
- Explore ways to encourage business fleets to purchase five-star rated passenger vehicles and the safest light commercial vehicles for their purposes; and
- Support a national push for mandatory Electronic Stability Control for light commercial vehicles.

The RAC calls on the State government to fund and deliver on the safer cars promise from the 2013 State Election including:

- Promote safer vehicles by providing information on safety ratings and safety features at point of sale.



6. Sharing our Roads

With Heavy Vehicles

In 2010-11 Western Australia accounted for 46 per cent (\$121 billion) of Australia's merchandise exports.

Economic growth is generating additional freight faster than the rate at which the transport infrastructure required to shift it has developed.

In the 12 months ending September 2012, there were 14 fatalities in crashes involving articulated trucks in WA, 13 fatalities involving heavy rigid trucks and 1 fatality involving buses.

[Source: BITRE, July - Sep 2012]

Driver fatigue is an area of concern and providing adequate road side amenity and rest stops for truck drivers is vital.

In February 2013, the Federal and State governments each provided \$4.7million to fund upgrades to eight existing rest stops, build three new rest stops and construct two new layover bays.

The RAC calls on the State government to ensure the \$4.7million in funding is allocated in the 2013-2014 budget and provide additional and ongoing funding to improve road side amenities and rest stops across the State.

With Motorcycle and Scooters

There are approximately 120,000 licensed motorcycles on Western Australian roads. This is increasing at nearly 10 per cent per year.

Motorcycles make up 5.5 per cent of licensed motorised vehicles, yet in 2012 formed 18 per cent of fatalities. In the metropolitan area 30 per cent of fatalities were motorcycle related.

The RAC calls on the State government to

- Fund motorcycle black spot and black lengths safety treatments to help reduce the number of fatal and serious accidents; and
- Fund public awareness and education campaigns on motorcycle and scooter safety.

With Cyclists

The popularity of cycling in Western Australia continues to rise. In 2011-2012 there were more than 3.5million trips on Perth's Principal Shared Path routes, an increase of 13.8 per cent in one year.

Cycle participation is increasing rapidly both as a recreational activity and commuting mode. Cyclists remain a highly vulnerable road user group. For cycling to remain a safe and viable option, investment in infrastructure and behavioural programs are vital.

The RAC calls on the State government to:

- Fund public awareness and education campaigns on sharing the road to highlight cycling safety; and
- Increase funding to expand active transport initiatives at the Department of Transport.

Improvements to the cycle infrastructure are also critical to improve cycling safety (see Section 8 - A Better Cycling Network, p13.)



7. The cost of motoring

The cost of motoring remains a priority issue for RAC members.

Western Australia has more than 2.5million licensed vehicles and it is increasing at a rate of four per cent each year. In the past two years alone vehicle registrations have increased by 281,410.

The RAC has projected there could be an additional one million vehicles on WA roads by 2020.

There are currently more than 1.8million licensed drivers and this will increase by more than 70,000 each year.

In this context, the total State government revenue received from vehicle registration and licence fees will continue to rise.

From July 1, 2013, motor vehicle registration and drivers licence fees increased by 5 per cent and compulsory third party vehicle insurance increased by 4.1 per cent.

Significant increases to the cost of living over the past four years means many Western Australians household budgets are under considerable pressure.

While families can attempt to reduce their water or power use, there is no scope for families to offset any increase in motor vehicle licensing fees, registration or compulsory third party fees.

The RAC has concerns about the move by State government to claim a dividend from the Insurance Commission of WA. The new legislation allows the State government to nominate a dividend to be taken from ICWA's annual profit.

The RAC calls on the State government to:

- Guarantee no significant increase to compulsory third party fees for WA motorists (beyond the rate of inflation) and any profits should be returned to the motoring public through lower premiums; and
- Provide independent verification of any increases to compulsory third party premiums required to cover the costs of moving the scheme to a no-fault basis in line with the proposal for a National Injury Insurance Scheme.

A Productivity Commission report calculated that the additional cost to WA of a "no fault" CTP scheme would be in the order of \$71million per year. Given the State has approximately 2.1million registered vehicles, this would equate to around \$34 per vehicle.

A media report in December 2012 suggested the WA Government was considering an increase in the order of \$87 per vehicle.

8. Reducing the cost of congestion – road, public transport and cycling infrastructure

In direct response to the State's booming population, healthy economy and a maturing social and leisure landscape, Perth CBD is undergoing an unprecedented phase of change.

Increasing employment and a vastly increased residential population is placing more demands on the transport network in and around Perth.

This presents a significant challenge, particularly for Perth's public transport network which is heavily focused on the central area, with 76 per cent of trips occurring within 15km of the Perth CBD.

The delivery of road, public transport and cycling projects needs to be accelerated if Perth is to tackle its worsening congestion problems.

Congestion is having a major social impact on our quality of life and is also damaging our economic productivity, environment and health.

The RAC's own commissioned research by Patersons Research in August 2012 showed that almost 80 per cent of 600 respondents believed congestion was worse than 12 months ago.

In 2012 a survey of more than 400 businesses by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (CCIWA) and RAC showed 84 per cent reported that traffic congestion is having a negative impact on their business.

8a. A better and smarter road network

According to the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, the cost of traffic congestion in Perth will be \$2.1billion by 2020. Road corridors have become increasingly constrained and against a backdrop of increasing budgetary pressure finding ways to get the most out of existing infrastructure is a logical strategy.

Managed Freeways technology is a nationally supported approach to managing the operation of the arterial road network through the application of

smart infrastructure technologies to improve the real-time management of major roads. This includes data collection sensors, variable speed limits and message signs, and ramp metering.

The RAC calls on the State government to commence a trial of managed freeways technologies.

If successful, ensure full lane management is incorporated in the operational design of the Gateway WA project and other major upgrades.

Although making our existing transport network smarter is a key priority there will also be a need to upgrade the existing network to maintain accessibility and meet the demands from new land use developments.

The RAC calls on the State Government to:

- Grade separate major intersections on the Reid, Tonkin and Roe Highways;
- Upgrade Great Eastern Highway as far as the Great Eastern Highway Bypass;
- Construct the Mitchell Freeway Extension north of Burns Beach Road; and
- Construct the Tonkin Highway Extension – Mundijong to link with South Western Highway (in the vicinity of Jarrahdale Road).



The RAC calls on the State Government to fund and deliver on the metropolitan road promises from the 2013 State Election including:

- Realign Curtin Avenue, south of Marine Parade roundabout, Cottesloe. (Estimated cost: up to \$40million);
- Redevelop the Mandurah traffic bridge. (Estimated cost: \$40million);
- Northern suburbs road upgrade package. (Estimated cost: \$500million);
- Gnangara Road upgrade. (Estimated cost: \$14million. Completed by mid-2015);
- New Perth to Darwin National Highway. (Estimated cost: \$196million out of \$800million. Works commence 2016); and
- Upgrade to Great Eastern Highway between Greenmount and Mundaring. (Estimated cost: \$12million).

The RAC welcomed the release of the CBD Transport plan incorporating several new initiatives to improve road user conditions and transport in the city including:

- A third lane in the Graham Farmer Freeway tunnel and increased lane capacity on the Mitchell Freeway;
- Active Traffic Management including Incident Response Service crews which remove broken down vehicles;
- Additional Red CAT buses;
- A Green CAT service that will travel between Leederville and Esplanade stations via City West every 10 minutes;
- Additional priority bus lanes; and
- Additional and improved Principal Shared Paths.

Under the Perth Parking Management Act funds from the parking levy must be spent on improving transport in the Perth CBD area.

From July 1, the Perth Parking Levy fees have increased by five to 15 per cent.

The RAC calls on the State government to allocate 100 per cent of the Perth Parking levy to anti-congestion measures.

8b. A better public transport network

Road traffic congestion is increasing rapidly in Perth and the public transport system itself is heavily congested in peak periods. The Public Transport Plan (Public Transport in Perth in 2031) showed Perth residents will more than double their use of public transport by 2031.

In 2012, public transport use soared to nearly 150 million journeys, a 6.66 per cent increase. This is double the estimated growth rate forecast in the State government's 2031 Public Transport strategy.

[Source: The West Australian, 23 January 2013]



Expanding both the coverage and frequency to public transport will be one of the key levers through which the State Government is able to deliver well-connected, vibrant and revitalised activity centres, as well as manage congestion on the road network. These connections must be made in both the inner and most importantly outer sub-regions where mobility is constrained and people are most vulnerable to rising transport costs.

The RAC calls on the State Government to fund and deliver on the public transport promises from the 2013 State Election including:

- Build a new airport rail link. (Estimated cost: \$1.9billion, including rail cars by 2018);
- Upgrade Kenwick train station. (Estimated cost: \$6.5million);
- New Aubin Grove train station. (Estimated cost: \$80million);
- Stadium transport package. (Estimated cost: \$300million. Completed 2017);
- Metro Area Express (MAX). (Estimated cost: \$1.8billion by 2017); and
- Additional five 3-car B series trains. (Delivery end 2016).

Heavy Rail

Following the completion of the northern rail line to Butler in 2014, the only planned heavy rail line expansion between 2014 and 2021 is the extension of the northern suburbs rail line to Yanchep and the Airport rail link.

According to the State government's Public Transport Plan, public transport patronage increased by 67 per cent over the ten years to 2011 – three times the rate of population growth during the same period. The construction of heavy rail as a public transport option is vital.

The RAC calls on the State government to:

- Construct the Thornlie Line to Cockburn Central via Canning Vale;
- Fund a program to upgrade the access, amenity and security at existing train stations including the immediate upgrade of pedestrian access at the Canning Bridge; and
- Purchase new rolling stock to enable trains to move longer trains at closer headways.

Rapid Transit

Growing congestion and constrained transport corridors has renewed interest in rapid transit systems. Local governments are feeling the impact of growing traffic volumes with arterial road congestion spilling onto local roads.

Several local governments have expressed interest in light rail infrastructure however the cost of this system is clearly prohibitive with outlying suburbs unlikely to be able to generate the patronage needed to support services.

With almost all of Perth's heavy rail lines terminating in the Perth CBD, Bus Rapid Transit in particular has a key role to play in transforming suburban mobility particularly to facilitate orbital journeys.

The RAC supports the proposed Perth light rail network. It is imperative that all three links be delivered on time but the light rail from the Causeway to Curtin University has been deferred and there are indications that the link may ultimately be implemented as bus rapid transit.

The RAC supports the implementation of the most appropriate system type for the link but does not support deferring construction timelines beyond 2020.

The RAC calls on the State government to fund a bus rapid transit program.

Bus Priority

The RAC calls on the State government to deliver a bus priority plan detailing measures to enable bus services to bypass localised congestion on the road network.

8c. A world class cycle network

The RAC Cycling Business Case, released in December 2012, highlighted that up to \$388million was needed over 10 years to bring the network up to a standard which would encourage a significant increase in cycling as a means of commuting.

The revised Bicycle Network Plan is long overdue and is needed to increase cycling investment.

The RAC calls on the State government to:

- Allocate a minimum of \$25million per annum over 10 years for the construction of infrastructure on the WA bike network;
- Plan a network of a new green mode bridges (bus, cycle and pedestrian); and
- Complete the remaining 47 per cent (or 135 kilometres) of high standard dual use paths (Principal Shared Paths).

The RAC calls on the State government to fund and deliver on the cycling infrastructure promises from the 2013 State Election including:

- Build additional bicycle paths within 15 kilometres of Perth CBD. (Estimated cost: \$30million); and
- New bike network – Albany (Estimated cost \$900,000).



9. Planning a robust transport system

The RAC has welcomed the release of a number of draft strategic plans released by the State government over the past two years including the draft Public Transport for Perth in 2031 and the draft Western Australian Perth Bicycle Network Plan.

In its formal response to the plans the RAC has made a number of submissions. The RAC has called for:

- Dedicated funding to implement the plans;
- Accelerated delivery timescales; and
- Mode share targets.

The RAC is concerned that the level of strategic planning is not supported by funding allocations. There is also concern that the timeframes will not meet the needs of WA's growing population and economy.

The RAC calls on the State government to finalise and release all promised transport planning documents.



10. Cars and the environment

Mobility choices that Western Australians make today should not negatively impact upon the lifestyle and choices of future generations.

RAC members have indicated they are concerned about the impact their vehicle is having on the environment and the RAC has embarked on a number of initiatives to address these concerns.

In 2012, the RAC launched the Less Emissions Mission to encourage members to reduce their carbon footprint by rewarding motorists with qualifying lower carbon dioxide emissions vehicles.

The RAC also participated in WA's first electric vehicle trial to help understand what needs to be done to prepare WA for the future use of electric vehicles as well as the opportunities it presents for the motoring industry.

Part of the solution to reduce CO₂ emissions is to support the purchase and use of low emission vehicles along with public transport, walking and cycling.

The RAC calls on the State government to:

- Investigate financial incentives for the uptake of low emissions vehicles through rebates, subsidies and stamp duty concessions;
- Expand the CleanRun EcoDrive program;
- Consider partnerships to promote eco-driving, highlighting the environmental importance and economic benefits of eco-driving; and
- Consider expanding the public electric vehicle recharging facilities, through rebates or subsidies for businesses which install facilities for the community.

In addition, the State government should also investigate opportunities for universities and business to partner research and develop alternative, cleaner transportation options including alternative fuels.





RAC members are happier