RAC Public Policy

2015

For the better

About RAC

RAC represents the interests of more than 800,000 Western Australians and is the leading advocate on the mobility issues and challenges facing our State. A key role for RAC is to act as a voice for our members and as a strong public advocate on the mobility issues which affect Western Australia (WA).

RAC works collaboratively with Government and other organisations to ensure safe, accessible and sustainable mobility options are available for our members and the community.

RAC aligns its activities with the following three themes:

» **Safety** – A safe mobility system can be defined as a system that outperforms national and international safety benchmarks. It encompasses safer drivers in safer cars on safer roads.

» **Accessibility** – To have a cost efficient, convenient and reliable commuter network is an essential part of personal mobility.

» **Sustainability** – Sustainable mobility is broader than the environmental aspects of mobility: it encompasses the mobility needs of current and future generations.

We also reinvest our profits for the benefit of our members, by supporting several major sponsorship programs such as RAC's Rescue helicopter as well as a number of grass roots community projects aligned to RAC's Mobility Agenda.

About our Public Policy

RAC advocates for all Western Australian road users, whether they are a driver, passenger, cyclist, motorcyclist, or pedestrian. This document outlines our public position to support better mobility for Western Australians.

RAC is also a signatory to a number of policies published under the banner of the Australian Automobile Association.

The policies outlined in this document are approved by the RAC Council and form the basis of our efforts to deliver a better world of mobility to our members.

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1. Safe mobility

No matter how we choose to move around Western Australia, we should be safe in doing so. » The WA road fatality rate is unacceptable. No-one should be killed or injured on our roads. » In line with WA's road safety strategy, we must align to the Safe Systems approach which is, to have safer drivers in safer cars on safer roads at safer speeds. » All road users have a responsibility to ensure our roads are safe for everyone.

1.1 Governance

There must be a renewed and improved commitment to reducing the number of Western Australians killed and seriously injured on our roads.

1.1.1 Decision making

An effective road safety advisory and decision making structure will help reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries.

Policy decisions on road safety should be consistent with the "safe systems" approach and efforts to reduce road trauma should focus on the core safe systems principles.

1.1.2 Funding

The ability to effectively direct available funds to high priority road safety projects and areas can positively impact road safety outcomes.

1.2 Safe road use

Deliberate driver behaviour and inattention are a major cause of road trauma. All road users have a responsibility to use roads responsibly and legally.

1.2.1 Enforcement

Enforcement of the *Road Traffic Act 1974* and other related legislation is critical to making the road network safer.

Double demerits

Double demerit points targeting periods of high traffic volume and increased road trauma are supported. Such periods should be actively communicated in advance.

The list of double-demerit offences should be regularly reviewed.

Police performance indicators

Greater transparency around Police Traffic Enforcement information would improve the community understanding around the nature and delivery of traffic enforcement.

1.2.2 Education

Road user education and the development of driving skills are critical to making the road network safer.

School based education

Driver and road safety education should be a compulsory part of the school curriculum.

Primary school road safety education should focus on safe road use as pedestrians and cyclists. Secondary school education should focus on preparing young people to become responsible road users.

Pre-licence preparation should include instruction in driving skills, driver behaviour, and the consequences of irresponsible road use.

Appropriate training must be available to those who deliver road safety education.

Post-licence education

Those who are required to drive as part of their employment should be made aware of their responsibility to drive in a safe and legal manner. This should include instruction on fatigue, distraction, speed, and the effects of alcohol and/or drugs.

Where possible, additional practical training to employees who drive as part of their employment is encouraged. Drivers and riders should be encouraged to undertake courses aimed at improving their awareness of safe road use.

A comprehensive suite of intervention, rehabilitation and education programs that address illegal road use behaviour, reflecting the seriousness and recurrence of the offence, should be considered when sentencing.

Community awareness

Government should fund community education campaigns which raise awareness of major road safety issues such as driver inattention and focus on the shared responsibility of road users.

Road safety campaigns should highlight the dangers faced by specific at-risk groups such as vulnerable road users and people in regional areas.

Governments should explore and implement measures which encourage responsible road use, particularly for novice motorists.

1.2.3 Alcohol

Driving or riding a vehicle whilst impaired by alcohol places them and other road users at increased risk.

Penalties
Such behaviour should be subject to rigorous enforcement and strong penalties to reflect the seriousness of the offence.

Penalties for drink driving should reinforce the message that such behaviour is unacceptable. RAC supports the continued assessment of current strategies and encourages community discussion on these matters.

Repeat offenders should face stronger penalties and be required to undertake counselling and/or education before being permitted to return to the roads.

The use of alcohol interlocks for drink driving offenders is supported with the cost preferably to be borne by the offender.

Enforcement
Government should adequately resource the WA Police to allow them to undertake continuous, high-profile drink driving enforcement activities.

WA Police should be resourced to test a minimum amount equal to 1.5 breath tests per licenced driver per year. WA Police should be resourced to conduct targeted enforcement campaigns to suit rural and regional settings.

Government should fund regular, high profile community awareness activities and school education programs about the dangers of drink-driving.

1.2.4 Drugs

Legal and illicit drugs can affect driving and riding ability placing themselves and other road users at increased risk.

Penalties
Drug driving should be subject to enforcement and strong penalties.

Repeat offenders should face stronger penalties and be required to undertake counselling and/or education before being permitted to return to the roads.

Enforcement
WA Police should be resourced to increase the volume and range of drug testing. Until a national consensus is developed on the number of tests per driver and rider per year, the WA testing rate should be no lower than the national average.

Government should fund regular, high profile community awareness campaigns and school education programs about the dangers of driving while under the influence of drugs.

1.2.5 Licensing

Drivers and riders of vehicles have a legal obligation to hold a current licence to drive. The carrying of a driver's licence should be compulsory.

Novice
The system for learner and novice drivers and riders should be built around the principle of ensuring young people become responsible road users.

A graduated licensing process including graduated demerit points for young road users is supported.

RAC recognises the importance of learner road users undertaking supervised driving under a range of conditions and acknowledges that increased supervised hours in the learner phase reduces crash risk when a full licence is gained. The logbook system of supervised driving is supported but learner road users and their parents should be encouraged and supported to go beyond the mandated minimum hours.

Driving school instructors should be required to undertake mandatory training to a minimum Certificate IV standard.

Extraordinary licence
Extraordinary licences should only be issued in exceptional circumstances.

Penalties
Those who drive or ride without a valid driver's licence should be subject to penalties which reflect the seriousness of the offence.

The loss of driver's licence as a result of unpaid fines and infringements is supported so long as there are a range of options to repay fines and infringements.

Fitness to drive
Fitness to drive is determined by the ability of the road user to use their vehicle in a manner which does not place them and other road users at increased risk.

Persons with a condition such as medical or physical, which could affect their ability to drive, should be required to advise appropriate authorities of this condition. Medical practitioners should ensure that an accurate assessment and the effect on driving is reached, before informing appropriate authorities.

Where it is safe to do so, drivers with conditions should be helped to keep their drivers licence as it underpins their personal mobility and access to health, social and community opportunities.

Governments should take an active role in supporting the older community to continue having an active and independent lifestyle particularly if driving ceases to be an option. Governments should also implement an agreed plan to provide appropriate transport modes and services.

1.2.6 Inattention

Inattention, be it deliberate or unintended, is a significant cause of road trauma and the number of deaths and serious injuries is comparable to speeding and drink driving.

Road users can be distracted when using in-car technology, mobile phones or hand-held electronic devices.

Penalties
Penalties for the use of devices which cause driver inattention and distraction should be reviewed regularly and updated accordingly.

Enforcement
All road users should act to minimise any in-vehicle distraction and obey laws relating to the use of hand-held mobile phones.

The use of covert police motorcycles to deter and penalise the use of mobile phones or hand-held electronic devices is supported.

Vehicle manufacturers and after-market equipment suppliers should consider the road safety implications when designing and placing new technology which could potentially distract motorists.

1.3 Safe vehicles

All vehicles, whether new or old, should meet certain standards if they are to be driven on Western Australian roads.

1.3.1 Vehicle standards

Advancements in vehicle safety technologies which help avoid crashes or reduce the severity of crashes will help reduce road trauma.

Australia's vehicle safety standards are outlined in the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) and apply to all new vehicles.

Australian Design Rules

ADRs should be reviewed more regularly so that road users can receive the full benefit of safer vehicle technology faster.

Emerging technology such as autonomous braking should be progressively introduced.

New vehicles

The Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) tests the safety features of new vehicles. Governments should fund ANCAP to assess the safety features of new vehicle models coming onto the Australian market.

No new vehicle should be allowed to be introduced to the Australian market unless it has undergone testing by the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) or a comparable international testing regime.

Western Australians should be encouraged to purchase new vehicles with a 5-star ANCAP safety rating.

It should be mandatory for all vehicles tested by ANCAP to display their ANCAP star rating at the point of sale. RAC supports the mandatory display of ANCAP star ratings in associated sales and promotional material.

As a minimum, all new passenger and light commercial vehicles on sale in the Australian market should have Anti-lock Braking Systems, Electronic Stability Control front airbags and head-protecting side airbags as mandatory safety features.

Seatbelt reminders for all seating positions should be standard. Rear view cameras should also be mandatory for all passenger and light commercial vehicles. Autonomous emergency braking should be progressively introduced for all light vehicles.

These requirements should be actively reviewed and upgraded as new safety features are introduced.

Used vehicles

Used cars should undergo an independent vehicle inspection when there is a change of ownership.

The Used Car Safety Ratings assesses the safety features of used vehicles. When purchasing a used vehicle, buyers should be encouraged to purchase vehicles with a 5-star Used Car Safety Rating.

Fleet and commercial vehicles

Governments should help accelerate the introduction of safer vehicles in the passenger fleet by continuing to require all government fleet purchases of passenger and light commercial vehicles to have an ANCAP rating of 5 stars.

Industry should be encouraged to implement fleet policies which require that all passenger and light commercial vehicles are 5-star ANCAP rated.

Professional driving instruction should be provided only in vehicles with a five-star ANCAP safety rating.

1.3.2 Motorcycle standards

Vehicle design standards must be actively reviewed and introduced to motorcycles to develop safer and more efficient vehicles.

All new motorcycles should be fitted with Antilock Braking Systems and Electronic Stability Control to increase safety and reduce motorcycle crashes.

Protective clothing standards should be investigated and progressively introduced to increase the level of protection for riders.

1.3.3 Personal Mobility Devices

Personal Mobility Devices (PMDs) can promote greater mobility through increased choice and also contribute to reducing traffic congestion.

In order to better facilitate safe technology in a growing market, Government should develop and adopt vehicle safety standards and policies which appropriately consider interaction with other road users and support the increased uptake of PMDs.

1.3.4 Seatbelts/child restraints

All vehicle occupants must comply with seatbelt regulations.

Penalties

Penalties for failing to comply with this requirement should reflect the seriousness of the offence and the heightened road safety risk.

Enforcement

Government should adequately resource the WA Police to allow them to undertake continuous, high-profile seatbelt enforcement activities.

Government should promote the importance of proper use of seatbelts and child restraints through regular community awareness campaigns and the provision and promotion of child restraint fitting and checking services.

1.4 Safe roads and roadsides

The design and condition of roads and roadsides can affect the chance of having a crash and in the event of a crash, the level of severity. Safety for all road users is strongly linked to road and roadside design.

1.4.1 Road design

Road planning and design should take into account the needs of all road users including cyclists, pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties.

Road design must be context sensitive and consider all road users, the street environment and adjacent land use.

Road standards

All new roads should be built to a 4-star AusRAP rating.

All existing major regional routes should be upgraded to a minimum 3-star AusRAP rating.

Design standards should be regularly updated to reflect the outcomes of scheme monitoring, new research, innovation and technology.

Road maintenance
All levels of government should invest and commit to long term programs to maintain and raise safety standards across the road network and reduce WA's road maintenance backlog.

Roadside help phones
Roadside help phones can provide safety and security. These are particularly important where there is poor mobile phone coverage.

1.4.2 Preventative measures

Roadsides should be treated in such a manner which can reduce the severity of crashes.

The risk or severity of a crash can increase if obstacles such as poles, trees, embankments, and ditches are in areas adjacent to the roadway. Mitigation measures should be implemented in areas where there is a record of road crashes or where a high crash risk has been identified.

Dynamic Digital Billboards
Advertising on dynamic digital billboards which, attract attention to something other than the driving task and can reduce driver attention, are not supported.

1.5 Safe speeds

Speeding is the leading cause of fatalities on WA roads. Setting speed limits which reflect the road conditions as well as having appropriate levels of penalties and enforcement will reduce the incidence of speed related fatalities and serious injuries.

1.5.1 Speed limits

The setting of speed limits should be transparent and consistent with road safety outcomes.

Motorists should be able to understand why speeds have been set for different road types and situations which, in turn, help them drive to the conditions.

Speed zones should be clearly signed at regular intervals. Efforts should be made to avoid frequent changes in speed zones. The temporary reduction of speed limits for roads with an identified road safety problem is supported but should not be used as a long term alternative to resolving the specific problem by way of remedial works.

Targeted reductions of speed limits are supported for urban areas of high pedestrian/bicycle activity or for roads with a known road safety problem.

A speed limit of 50km/h in residential areas is supported.

A speed limit of 40km/h for roads around schools is supported.

The introduction of self-enforcing 30km/h zones in areas with a high potential for conflict with pedestrians is supported.

1.5.2 Speeding

Exceeding the speed beyond the conditions without full regard for the vehicle condition and driver ability increases the risk of crash and serious injury and fatality.

Penalties
Fines and demerit point penalties for speeding offences should reflect the seriousness of the offence.

Motorists who exceed the speed limit should receive notification of the offence in a timely manner.

Enforcement
Speed limits should be rigorously enforced to ensure compliance and the safety of all road users.

Speed enforcement requires a range of strategies including fixed and mobile, overt and covert, as well as dual red light-speed cameras and point to point technology.

Speed cameras should be placed in areas with an identified road safety problem, high pedestrian activity or a history of speeding behaviour. Cameras should not be positioned to maximise revenue. The sale and use of radar detectors should be banned.

Speed and red light camera revenue
All revenue from speed and red light cameras infringements should continue to be re-invested into road safety.

2. Accessible mobility

Western Australians need to be able to move easily around their community, using a range of transport options. » We must ensure our road, public transport, and cycling systems can meet the increasing demands of a growing population. » To have a cost-efficient, convenient and reliable commuter network is essential. » A core element of accessible mobility is to ensure that the cost of motoring does not become prohibitively expensive for Western Australians. » An efficient and reliable transport network is required to support economic growth of the State.

2.1 Cost of motoring

Increases in the cost of motoring can add pressure to already strained household budgets and constrain mobility.

The inefficient collection and distribution of taxation can delay the development and maintenance of the transport network.

2.1.1 Taxation

All levels of government share the responsibility to provide a safe, well-designed, well-maintained and efficient transport network.

Revenue raised from motorists through tariffs, stamp duties, registrations, licence fees, fuel excise, GST and the like should be reinvested in improving the safety and efficiency of the transport network.

Any increase to the cost of motoring should be kept at or below the cost of inflation.

2.1.2 Funding model

A road user charge should only be implemented as a part of genuine reform of taxation on road users.

Governments should work toward the development of a road user charge to replace the existing revenue raising fees and charges.

Area cordon charges which charge vehicles entering a defined area, and/or toll roads should only be considered as part of a broader reform of taxation on motorists and should not be imposed on top of the existing fuel excise charges.

A rigorous cost-benefit analysis of the social and economic impact of any congestion charge/toll road should be undertaken before such a charge is considered.

Federal fuel excise should be reformed as part of the broader reform of taxation on motorists.

The allocation of Federal funds to Western Australia should be increased to recognise the unique challenges faced in building and maintaining the road network in this State.

A model which hypothecates 50 per cent of the funding from the fuel excise towards transport network projects and activities is supported.

Government should investigate appropriate alternative sources of funding essential transport infrastructure including those appropriate for regional areas. Such investments should include public transport and cycling infrastructure projects.

2.1.3 Fuel

A free and open competitive market for petroleum products best serves the interests of consumers.

Market competition

Governments should monitor the industry and relevant markets to protect the interest of consumers and guard against anti-competitive behaviour.

The State government should continue to provide the FuelWatch scheme to monitor prices and empower consumers to make the best choice on when and where to purchase fuel. FuelWatch should also be resourced to provide detailed research on petrol pricing behaviour over longer periods of time on a more regular basis.

Market regulation

Legislation and policy should be directed towards ensuring that all sectors of the industry (refining, wholesaling, distribution and retailing) operate in a transparent manner.

The State government should monitor excessive differences between metro and regional prices with a view to eliminating superficial fluctuations.

Labelling

All retailing establishments should, as a minimum, clearly indicate the retail prices of ULP, Diesel and LPG sold at the site, not inclusive of any discount. Displaying discounted prices in addition to this minimum is at the discretion of the retailer but a discounted price should not be displayed in a manner which would make a reasonable motorist believe it was the standard price.

Misfuelling can damage vehicles and cause motorists to incur repair costs. Different fuel types should be clearly labelled and consistently colour coded on the bowsers across all fuel brands.

2.1.4 Insurance

Road users should be encouraged to insure themselves against liability for damage to third party property.

Compulsory third party insurance

Government should provide a no-fault compulsory third party insurance scheme for all people catastrophically injured as a result of a motor vehicle crash. Profits derived by the scheme should be directed toward road safety initiatives. Surpluses should not be paid as cash dividends to Government.

The cost of a no-fault compulsory third party insurance scheme should not add increasing and unnecessary financial burden on Western Australians.

2.1.5 Rights of vehicle owners

Vehicle owners, as consumers, have the right to choice and a fair deal when it comes to their vehicles.

As consumers

The rights of motorists as consumers should be protected by appropriate legislation.

All motor vehicle dealers and repairers should be licenced by an appropriate authority.

Manufacturers, importers and retailers of motoring products should be required to ensure that their products meet the claims made for them. These claims should be supported by product testing carried out to appropriate Australian standards.

Repairs

Consumers have the right to choose where to have their vehicle serviced or repaired.

Equally, consumers have the right to access data generated by their vehicles. Consumers should be able to use this data to make informed decisions with regards to their vehicles' servicing.

Consumers must have adequate coverage for warranty and servicing of these vehicles. Consumers must also be made aware when used imported vehicles do not suit Australian conditions and fuels.

Tools and information required to fully service and repair modern vehicles should be made available by manufacturers to the market at a reasonable price. Failure to do so on a voluntary basis should prompt governments to legislate to ensure the rights of motorists.

Towing

There should be a right to choose a towing company in the event of a crash or breakdown, except where the vehicle is required for evidentiary purposes by the WA Police, road authority or where the driver is incapable of making an informed choice.

Vehicle owners should have the right to choose where their vehicle is towed to.

2.2 Congestion

There is no single solution to manage congestion and in seeking to manage congestion, a suite of options should be employed.

2.2.1 Projects and initiatives

Costs benefit analyses, which include non-monetised benefits, and business cases for major and high value transport projects should be publicly available to improve the transparency of decision making.

A cost-benefit analysis of these projects should be conducted before determining the preferred investment.

2.2.2 Transport and land use planning

Planning undertaken by all levels of Government should recognise the critical link between land use and transport activities.

Land use planning

Planning should ensure the integration of all modes of transport and land use to ensure the mobility of the community and to minimise the environmental impacts of mobility.

Urban planning should improve or enhance access within the community whether it is to employment, leisure, social and health and recreation opportunities by providing transport facilities which cater for both private and public transport.

The use of mixed-use residential and commercial land developments of increased densities around activity centres and public transport hubs should be encouraged to manage travel demand on routes to and from the city.

The concept of developing new communities which rely less on motor vehicle transport to access these activities is supported.

Strategies such as decentralising employment, to reduce the extent people need to travel for work purposes are supported.

2.2.3 Network management technologies

Continued investment in our road network is essential, particularly in maximising the efficiency of existing infrastructure.

Self-driving vehicles and network systems

Self-driving vehicles have the potential to reduce the number of road fatalities but also manage traffic congestion.

Government should take a role in leading discussions to facilitate, regulate and fund these systems and eliminate potential barriers.

Intelligent transportation systems

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) is a broad range of information and communications technology that improve safety, efficiency and performance of a transportation system.

ITS should be integrated into the state highway, vehicles and public transportation network to help reduce congestion, improve mobility, save lives and optimise the value of existing infrastructure.

2.2.4 Public transport

The public transport system should be efficient, reliable and affordable.

Investment

Sustained and widespread investment in improving the quality and reach of the public transport system is required.

A multi-tier public transport system should be provided comprising city-shaping infrastructure such as heavy rail, light rail and bus rapid transit as well as local bus priority measures.

Governments should invest in improving the frequency and reliability of station feeder services to help reduce the demand for railway station parking. These services should be actively promoted as an alternative to driving to rail stations.

The use of multistorey car parks for the purpose of park and ride public transport services should only be supported where a business case demonstrates value for money.

Universal access
Appropriate universal access throughout the public transport system should be provided.

2.2.5 Cycling

The personal and community benefits of cycling are widely recognised and its growing popularity as a means of commuting, and for recreation, is evident. However, cyclists remain a highly vulnerable road user group.

Infrastructure
For cycling to remain a safe and viable transport option, accelerated investment in infrastructure and education programs that facilitate safer cycling is vital.

In addition to off-road infrastructure, the availability of appropriate and well-designed on-road facilities are essential to providing improved safety and amenity. Government should pave the way for the trialling of more innovative approaches to the design of on-road cycling infrastructure.

The provision of secure end-of-trip facilities for cyclists at public transport hubs is an important step to encouraging alternative mobility options.

Regulation
Cyclists should be able to use footpaths where and when it is safe for cyclists and pedestrians to do so. Cycling on footpaths should be managed so as to limit this activity in areas of high pedestrian demand and also where cycling-specific infrastructure is provided.

Awareness and education
The State Government should fund public awareness and education campaigns and training to highlight pedestrian and cycling safety and build skills and confidence.

2.2.6 Walking

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users. The sufficiency of the network to support increased levels of walking, which includes use of wheelchair accessible vehicles from other modes of transport is integral.

Infrastructure
For pedestrians to remain safe from other modes of transport, Governments and developers need to provide safe and attractive travel routes particularly around schools, areas with high pedestrian traffic.

Increased investment in dedicated pedestrian infrastructure is supported.

2.2.7 Parking

Parking should be managed to provide short term access to the community for services and to local amenities.

Management
Parking strategies should provide an appropriate balance between off-street and on-street parking and should encourage off-street parking on roads with high traffic volumes.

Adequate and appropriate levels of ACROD parking should be allocated.

Revenue
Revenue from government taxes placed on parking spaces and revenue raised from parking charges should be immediately re-invested in providing additional public transport, cycling or walking improvements.

Infringements
Parking and clearway restrictions should be clearly advertised, for example through visible and legible roadside signage, improved advertising on parking meters and/or with appropriate road marking.

Owners of vehicles parked in contravention of signed parking restrictions may be penalised by an appropriate authority. Penalties should not be excessive or inconsistent with comparable penalties for traffic offences.

Stronger penalties should be considered for offences that impact negatively on safety and congestion.

2.2.8 Shared mobility options

Collaborative consumption, as part of the sharing economy, is an economic arrangement whereby people share access to products or services, rather than having individual ownership.

Car/ride sharing
Car sharing and legal ride sharing should be supported to supplement existing transport networks, providing improved travel choices, as well as reduce personal costs of travel and the number of vehicles on our roads.

2.2.9 Demand management

Managing the demand on the transport network at peak times is a way to alleviate congestion.

TravelSmart
The Government should provide additional funding to expand programs which evaluate existing programs to make the existing infrastructure more effective and more efficient.

3. Sustainable mobility

Human activity is having a considerable impact on the planet's climate system. » The mobility choices we make today should not impact negatively on the lifestyle and choices of future generations. As we move around our community, we need to ensure we minimise our impact on the environment. » It is necessary to have an integrated strategy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from vehicles. Part of the solution is initiatives targeting driver behaviour, vehicle purchasing decisions, reducing congestion and promoting public and active transport. » We also need to manage our fuel sources wisely, promote new technologies and alternative vehicles and develop cleaner, more sustainable fuel. » Planning practices and energy policy should support connected liveable communities and sustainable mobility for all.

3.1 Behaviour change

Initiatives targeting behavioural change have the potential to assist motorists reduce their carbon footprint in a cost effective manner.

Education

Campaigns which help motorists better manage the energy use of their vehicle and reduce greenhouse gas emissions are supported including purchasing lower emissions cars, reducing the amount of driving through route planning and alternative modes of transport, switching to cleaner fuels and driver behaviour including fuel efficient driving and eco-driving principles.

Awareness

Governments should support the dissemination of information for both public and private motorists that encourages the purchase of lower emissions vehicles; fuels and components; and driving more efficiently. This information should highlight the environmental importance and economic benefits.

Investment in carbon offsets (such as Gold Standard Voluntary Emission Reduction units or Australian Carbon Credit units) to mitigate remaining greenhouse gas emissions that cannot be abated should also deliver environmental, economic and social co-benefits that positively impact the economy, health, welfare and environment of local communities.

3.2 More sustainable transport modes

The reduction of carbon emissions from vehicles can be achieved by promoting the use of alternative modes of transport, including public transport and active transport.

3.2.1 Public transport

Increased patronage can form part of an integrated strategy to reduce emissions and improve the connectivity of our transport systems.

Investment

To be a viable alternative to vehicle use, sustained and widespread investment in public transport and alternative transport options is required.

Investments in public transport should reflect the potential environmental benefits from reduced vehicle emissions. These environmental benefits should be captured as part of the cost-benefit analysis behind public transport investment decisions.

Fleet standards

The public transport fleet should aim to use the most environmentally efficient energy source.

3.2.2 Active transport

The uptake of cycling and walking as alternatives to private vehicle and public transport should be encouraged.

Planning and infrastructure

Planning decisions should incorporate the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. Infrastructure should be provided to not only ensure safety but also to increase the attractiveness of cycling and walking as a mobility option.

3.2.3 Fuels

The finite nature of the world's crude oil reserves requires current vehicle technology to be improved in order to maximise energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Alternative fuels

The use of alternative fuels can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, provide cheaper fuel for motorists and enhance liquid fuel security. When considering alternative fuel sources, the alternative fuel should have positive sustainability impact, or at the least, less negative impacts than the current fuel source. This means consideration of climate, biodiversity and land-use impacts; fuel security; water scarcity; and greenhouse gas emissions from their production.

3.3 Government and industry polices and initiatives

Government and industry should adopt policies and initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions including taxation, standards and policies, as well as infrastructure, design and research initiatives.

3.3.1 Government policies and initiatives

Government should adopt policies and initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Taxation

Taxation policy should encourage rather than constrain the uptake of energy efficient vehicles to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and ensure perverse climate change outcomes are not created.

Emissions standards

Efforts should be made to improve light vehicle efficiency by introducing national light vehicle emissions standards. This is a low cost opportunity for emissions reduction which can deliver positive benefits to motorists.

Mandatory national light vehicle emissions standards should be based on carbon dioxide emissions which sets an emissions intensity target for the Australian light vehicle fleet and improves the emission intensity of the vehicle fleet supplied to the Australian market.

This activity needs to be properly resourced to ensure it is effective and efficient.

Policies

Governments should adopt policies that encourage the use of a wide mix of power and fuel systems to enhance consumer choice and gradually reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Government should develop a policy on low emissions alternative fuels to inform a comprehensive transport energy plan. Motorists should be incentivised to take up alternative fuels where these are cost-effective and have a positive sustainability benefit.

Governments can promote greenhouse gas reductions by buying more fuel efficient vehicles and encouraging businesses to adopt low emissions vehicles.

Governments should promote fuel efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through urban planning, network design and Intelligent Transport Systems to avoid congestion and improve traffic flow. The development of new and existing urban areas should be planned to effectively integrate roads, public and active transport and land use to help minimise the impact of mobility on the environment and ensure the community has the opportunity for safe, reliable, convenient, affordable and efficient travel.

Infrastructure

Government should develop a plan to support the uptake of lower emissions vehicles and the provision of the infrastructure required to service alternative vehicle technologies. Public Electric Vehicle charging facilities should be expanded and rebates or subsidies provided for businesses installing community facilities.

3.3.2 Industry policies and initiatives

Industry should adopt policies and initiatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Technology and design

The motor vehicle manufacturing industry should continue to invest in cost-effective low carbon and cleaner automotive technologies across a range of vehicle characteristics, including aerodynamics, fuel efficiency, drive trains, driver information devices, energy recovery hybrids, rolling resistance and weight.

Manufacturers should also invest in production materials, technologies and recycling to reduce the life cycle emissions of vehicles.

Technology should support reliable and cost effective sustainable mobility for everyone in society.

The utilisation of new and emerging technology solutions and improvements to traffic management that reduces congestion have the potential to deliver significant reductions in vehicle emissions.

Research initiatives

Alternative fuels should consider the full life cycle assessment ('well-to-wheels') of emissions. Research into the safe production and use of biofuels should be encouraged by Government.

RM595

For further info on this policy
please contact advocacy@rac.com.au

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