

# Media Release

Wednesday 9 September 2015

## Western Australian motorists short changed again

A new report commissioned by RAC examining the amount of tax motorists pay has again found our State is being short changed by Canberra.

RAC Senior Manager Policy & Research, Anne Still, said the latest analysis shows Federal investment in Western Australian roads has dramatically declined.

“Last year, for every dollar the Australian Government collected from WA motorists, it spent just 34 cents on improving the State’s roads. This is a significant step backward from the previous year, in which only 41 cents in the dollar was returned to WA,” Ms Still said.

“In real money terms, this means last year the Australian Government collected \$2.3 billion from WA motorists in the form of motor vehicle taxes, but spent only \$780 million on State transport infrastructure upgrades.

“While 41 cents out of every dollar is already a disappointing return, the reduction to 34 cents means WA has missed out on an additional \$155 million in Federal infrastructure spending in just 12 months, with the majority of funding flowing to projects in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, or into consolidated revenue.”

Ms Still said if WA received just 50 per cent of the money paid in Federal taxes by motorists, we would see an extra \$360 million returned to the State this year.

“This would fully-fund construction of the much-needed 11.5km Thornlie rail line extension in just a single year and could be used to build another 12 kilometres of passenger rail every year after that. This is almost the equivalent length of the Midland rail line each year,” Ms Still said.

“Building major regional roads like the Bunbury Outer Ring Road could be paid for in just two years.

“Our concern is that successive governments have failed to return a fair share of funding back to Western Australia and this has contributed to the State facing significant road safety and transport infrastructure challenges. To meet the demands being placed on our State, we urgently need a fairer deal from Canberra, and the facts back it.

“Perth is well on its way to becoming the most congested capital city in the country. In a mere 15 years’ time, Infrastructure Australia predicts seven out of the 10 most congested roads in the country will be in Perth, and congestion will cost more than \$16 billion a year by 2031.”

Per capita, more road fatalities occur on WA roads than any other state. In 2014 alone, one person on average was killed on WA roads every two days.

“Our regional transport networks also need increased funding to improve safety and efficiency. Between 2012 and 2026, the regional local government areas of the City of Bunbury, City of Albany, and City of Greater Geraldton are expected to experience population increases of up to 15, 22 and 29 per cent respectively.

“WA urgently needs a fairer distribution of funding and the State Government must also support this position by ensuring that projects are being put forward that are ready to be funded, and delivered.

“RAC released its top 10 Federal infrastructure priorities and policies for Western Australia earlier this year and this latest report shows these projects could be achieved sooner if WA received its fair share.”

RAC’s Federal infrastructure priorities are:

1. Perth light rail
2. Road network management technologies
3. Self-driving vehicles and network systems
  - Tonkin Highway, Reid Highway to Leach Highway
  - Kwinana Freeway, Perth CBD to Manning Road
  - Kwinana Freeway, Roe Highway to Thomas Road
  - Roe Highway, Kwinana Freeway to Tonkin Highway
  - Mitchell Freeway, Hutton Street to Warwick Road
  - Rolling program of grade separations
  - Reid Highway: Erindale Road
  - Reid Highway: Tonkin Highway to West Swan Road
  - Roe Highway: Tonkin Highway to Great Eastern Highway
4. Thornlie rail line extension
5. Bunbury Outer Ring Road

RAC is calling on all WA Federal Members of Parliament to use the [RAC Federal Priorities for Western Australia](#) to advocate for a fairer share of infrastructure funding for WA.

[The 2015 Motorist Taxation Revenue and Road Spending report](#) is available on the RAC website.

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