

# RAC State Budget Submission 2023-24

## Priorities for a safer, sustainable and connected WA

The 2023-24 State Budget presents yet another opportunity to prioritise funding which will deliver critically important programs and projects to save thousands of lives and serious injuries, reduce harmful vehicle emissions and better connect Western Australians. These initiatives will also create thousands of jobs and help safeguard WA's productivity and liveability into the future.

**! An unforgivably high number of people continue to be killed and seriously injured every day on WA's roads - with our regional roads and metropolitan intersections being the two biggest road safety issues faced by our state. Apart from the immeasurable personal and social impacts, the financial cost to WA's economy is estimated to be \$2.4 billion per annum<sup>1</sup>.**

RAC has five key priorities for funding in the 2023-24 State Budget, which are summarised on this page and detailed in the next section of this submission. We also have several longstanding strategic infrastructure and policy priorities which remain important for ensuring a safe, sustainable and connected future for WA. These are set out at the end of this submission.

RAC considers the **top five priorities for the 2023-24 State Budget** to be:

- 1. Fully funding both the Regional Road Safety Program and a new program extending low cost treatments to local government roads to save thousands of lives and serious injuries;**
- 2. Expanding the low cost metropolitan intersection program to deliver the network-wide safety improvements needed to substantially reduce road trauma at these locations;**
- 3. A program of safe and connected active transport infrastructure and enhanced streets and places for active travel in WA;**
- 4. Freezing motor vehicle registration fees and public transport fares for three years to make the cost of transport more affordable; and**
- 5. Accelerating the transition to cleaner transport and reducing the harmful impact of vehicle emissions on our health and the environment.**

<sup>1</sup> WA Government (2020). *Driving Change Road Safety Strategy for Western Australia 2020-2030*. Retrieved from: <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/driving-change-road-safety-strategy-2020-2030> (accessed 28 October 2022).



**For the better**

## Our key priorities

### 1. Regional Road Safety

#### The challenge:

- » Regional WA presents a significant challenge to saving lives and reducing serious injuries on our roads – over five years, more than 500 people have been killed and over 2,900 seriously injured on WA's regional roads.
- » Of the 166 fatalities on WA's roads in 2021, almost two thirds (or 105 deaths) occurred on regional roads, despite only 21 per cent<sup>2</sup> of the population living there.
- » Over 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 implementation of effective low cost safety treatments.
- » Infrastructure Australia has recognised the poor quality of parts of Australia's regional road network and more specifically single vehicle, run-off road crashes in WA, as issues of national significance. The State Infrastructure Strategy *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow* recognises the importance of delivering road safety programs in line with *Driving change: Road Safety Strategy for Western Australia 2020–2030*, including extending regional road safety treatment programs.
- » WA's road network is vast, with much of it remote and lightly trafficked. While approximately one in two crashes where people are killed and seriously injured on regional roads occur on State Government managed roads, the other one in two occur on local government roads (accounting for approximately 300 deaths and serious injuries each year) and typically attract less funding for upgrades.

#### The opportunity:

The Regional Road Safety Program (RRSP) is a landmark State Government initiative delivering effective, low cost safety treatments such as sealing shoulders, installing audible edgelines, medians and/or centrelines to address run-off-road and head on crashes across the State's regional road network.

The program, announced by the State Government in August 2019, was originally costed at \$900 million and modelling by Main Roads WA estimated it would:

- » save more than 2,100 people from being killed or seriously injured;
- » reduce regional road trauma by 60 per cent;
- » create thousands of direct and indirect jobs over the life of the program, 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 (to put this into context, in a post implementation evaluation of 19 national road investment projects delivered between 2008-09 to 2012-13, the average BCR was 1.82<sup>3</sup>, and the Morley-Ellenbrook Line which was endorsed by Infrastructure Australia in May 2020 has a BCR of 1.1<sup>4</sup>).

Pleasingly to date, \$827 million has been committed by state and federal governments, treating 8,500km by 2023-24. While these funding commitments are welcomed, they represent less than half of the 17,400km of regional state road network originally identified for safety upgrades.

In addition to the continued investment required to fully fund the RRSP, there is an opportunity to apply similar proven low cost safety treatments to approximately 10,000 km of high speed sealed local government roads<sup>5</sup>. Such a program would make a significant impact on regional road trauma by creating a more forgiving road environment that reduces the risk of run-off-road and head on crashes.

#### RAC calls on the State Government to:

- » Commit funding to roll out the \$900 million Regional Road Safety Program in full by the end of 2023-24 (\$73 million outstanding). Delivery of the RRSP should be prioritised to maximise the opportunity to secure potential further funding through the Federal Government's Road Safety Program.
- » Commit funding towards a \$600 million program to deliver low cost safety treatments to 10,000 km of rural and peri-urban local government roads.

2 ABS (2022). *Population estimates by selected Non-ABS Structures, 2001 to 2021*. Retrieved from: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population/latest-release#data-download> (accessed 26 October 2022).

3 BITRE (2018). *Ex-post Economic Evaluation of National Road Investment Projects*. Retrieved from: [https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/2018/rr\\_145](https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/2018/rr_145) (accessed 28 October 2022).

4 Infrastructure Australia (2020). *METRONET: Morley-Ellenbrook Line Project evaluation summary*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/projects/metronet-morley-ellenbrook-line-project> (accessed 28 October 2022).

5 Only \$35 million of the original program budget had been allocated to local government roads.

## 2. Low cost metropolitan intersection program

### The challenge:

- » By nature, urban intersections can be particularly risky as they are places where higher volumes of different road users meet, usually at different speeds; travelling from, and in, multiple directions.
- » Approximately one in two of all crashes in the Perth metropolitan area occur at one of its more than 51,000 intersections. In just the five years to end-2021, 91 people were killed at metropolitan intersections and 2,862 people were seriously injured (including a total of 964 vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists) - with the economic cost equating to approximately \$1.6 billion<sup>6</sup> (or around \$320.2 million per annum).
- » Side-impact and rear-end crashes are the most common crash types at metropolitan intersections, with the former having the most severe outcomes as crashes at these angles (particularly at 90°) provide the least opportunity for impact forces to be dispersed<sup>7</sup>. The type of control and design of intersections also has a significant influence on crash likelihood and severity.
- » Over 4,500 metropolitan intersections had a crash in which someone was injured during the five years from 2015 to 2019. More than 3,500 of these were located on local roads, managed by Local Government, which do not meet the criteria for funding under traditional road safety programs. Many of the local roads were also designed decades ago and consequently are not in line with the latest Safe System road design principles. In addition, most local urban roads have a speed limit of 50 km/h (the urban default), which means that there is a high risk of serious injury or death to pedestrians and cyclists if hit by a vehicle.
- » Major grade-separations and other significant infrastructure works (e.g. installation of traffic signals, full-sized roundabouts, turn pockets or slip lanes) can greatly enhance safety while maintaining, and even increasing, operational performance when applied in appropriate situations. However, it would take vast amounts of money and time to roll these sorts of treatments out to the thousands of metropolitan intersections where safety improvements are needed.



### The opportunity:

Of highest importance to saving lives and serious injuries on Perth's roads is to scale up efforts to make intersections safer for all road users through installing effective, low-cost treatments. Treatments, which can be implemented for as little as \$15,000 to \$50,000 per intersection, include:

- » painted mini-roundabouts, compact roundabouts and turning lanes where carriageway space permits;
- » minor geometry improvements such as tightening turning radii to slow vehicle speeds and reducing crossing distances;
- » installation of speed cushions and raised platforms;
- » modified signal timings and phasing;
- » enhanced street lighting; and/or
- » other lining, signing and speed management measures.

Over several years, Main Roads WA has been implementing the Metropolitan Intersection Crash Program (MICP), delivering targeted improvements at several high-risk intersections across Perth. An evaluation of the MICP revealed that over the period from 2012-13 to 2018-19, a total

<sup>6</sup> Calculated based on KSI data supplied by Main Roads WA and an average cost per fatality of \$78 million and \$310,094 per serious injury (see Litchfield (2017). *The cost of road crashes in Australia 2016: An overview of safety strategies*. Retrieved from: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural\\_and\\_Regional\\_Affairs\\_and\\_Transport/RoadSafety45/Additional\\_Documents](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Rural_and_Regional_Affairs_and_Transport/RoadSafety45/Additional_Documents) (accessed 28 October 2022).)

<sup>7</sup> Candappa, N., Logan, D., Van Nes, N., & Corben, B. (2015). *An exploration of alternative intersection designs in the context of Safe System*. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 74, 314-323. Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265173667\\_An\\_exploration\\_of\\_alternative\\_intersection\\_designs\\_in\\_the\\_context\\_of\\_Safe\\_System](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265173667_An_exploration_of_alternative_intersection_designs_in_the_context_of_Safe_System) (accessed 28 October 2022).

of 10 projects were completed at a cost of \$31.9 million. The total budget allocation from 2022-23 to 2025-26 is \$41.6 million<sup>8</sup>.

While important to continue investing in such major upgrades, given the limited number of intersections that can be treated due to the scale and nature of works involved, an opportunity exists to take a new approach and do more, with less.

In the 2020-21 State Budget the State Government committed \$16.1 million over four years towards the roll out of a Low Cost Urban Road Safety Program delivering treatments to local government roads, on an area-wide or whole-of-street basis, to reduce crash risks for drivers and vulnerable road users. The program includes low-cost intersection treatments in the form of compact and mini roundabouts and raised platforms, in addition to road diet, gateway, mid-block and pedestrian crossing treatments. Following a successful pilot in 2020/21, Main Roads WA are working with local governments on an annual basis up until 2025 to implement treatments<sup>9</sup>.

RAC welcomes the Low Cost Urban Road Safety Program but additional resourcing is needed to scale up the network-wide safety improvements needed to substantially reduce road trauma at metropolitan intersections (\$16.1 million will only fund treatments at around 500 intersections – one per cent of the metropolitan total). Furthermore, speed limits should be reviewed in all areas where treatments are installed, since the treatments present an opportunity for a lower speed limit to be self-enforcing.

#### RAC calls on the State Government to:

- » Commit additional resources and funding to the Low Cost Urban Road Safety Program to ensure that the \$16.1 million budgeted to the program is fully spent within four years and that the program continues on an ongoing basis (scaling up to \$10 million per year).
- » Deliver lower cost, network-wide treatments at intersections where state and local government roads meet to complement the local government road intersections already being treated through the Low Cost Urban Road Safety Program.

### 3. Safe and connected active transport program

#### The challenge:

- » The greater Perth population is forecast to grow by approximately 30 per cent, to just over 2.6 million by 2031 and demand for transport is predicted to increase in line with this growth. This will place significant additional burden on the transport network, with over 7 million daily trips forecast and modelling indicating that the annualised cost of road congestion will more than double from \$1.5 billion in 2016 to \$3.6 billion in 2031. Alongside growing road congestion, the annualised cost of public transport crowding is also expected to increase almost tenfold, from \$17 million in 2016 to \$159 million in 2031<sup>10</sup>.
- » Mode shift from private vehicle reliance to active and public transport remains limited, with an estimated 4.2 million private car trips made each day in Perth and 2.8 million of these trips being under 5km<sup>11</sup>. Most people can cycle 5km in about 20 minutes<sup>12</sup>.
- » 13 of Perth's 34 strategic activity centres<sup>13</sup>, including several within Perth's inner area, currently exhibit low accessibility by public transport<sup>14</sup>, increasing the importance of active transport connections.
- » Dissatisfaction with existing active transport infrastructure is high and fear of sharing the roads with motorists is a main reason for not cycling more often – Western Australians want more investment in on and off-road walking and cycling infrastructure<sup>15</sup>.
- » Currently, insufficient priority and support is given to the reallocation of road space for active (and public) transport, critical gaps remain in the cycle network<sup>16</sup>, and there is a need to maintain existing infrastructure<sup>17</sup> to enhance amenity and safety. It is estimated only 41 per cent of the primary network, and 34 per cent of the 1,564km secondary network are completed. The remainder of these networks are either non-existing or require significant upgrades and replacement<sup>18</sup>.

8 Government of Western Australia (2022). *WA State Budget 2022-23 - Budget Paper no. 2, Volume 1, Part 9 - Transport*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au/budget-papers.html> (accessed 20 October 2022).

9 Main Roads WA (2022). *Strategy and Implementation Framework - Low Cost Urban Road Safety Program*. Retrieved from: <https://www.mainroads.wa.gov.au/technical-commercial/local-government-funding/road-safety-programs/> (accessed 28 October 2022).

10 Infrastructure Australia (2019). *Urban Transport Crowding and Congestion*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/publications/urban-transport-crowding-and-congestion> (accessed 20 October 2022).

11 Infrastructure Australia (2022). *Perth Active Transport Improvements*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/map/perth-active-transport-improvements> (accessed 20 October 2022).

12 Based on average values for journey to work for Victorian Integrated Survey of Transport and Activity (VISTA) participants. Retrieved from: <https://transport.vic.gov.au/about/data-and-research/vista> (accessed on 20 October 2022).

13 As defined by Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage in SPP 4.2 Activity centres for Perth and Peel (2010) as community focal points that include activities such as commercial, retail, higher density housing, entertainment, tourism, civic/community, higher education, and medical services. Retrieved from: <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/state-planning-policy-42-activity-centres-perth-and-peel> (accessed 13 October 2022).

14 RAC (2016). *Transport Accessibility of Perth's Activity Centres*. Retrieved from: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports> (accessed 20 October 2022).

15 RAC (2020). *RAC Member Priorities Tracker: Cycling*. Reports available at: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports/member-priorities-tracker> (accessed 20 October 2022).

16 As identified in the Department of Transport's Long-term Cycle Network for Perth and Peel, as well as several regional cycle strategies. Note: while titled the 'cycle' network it is accepted this network will service other active transport modes, including walking, eRideables, etc. Retrieved from: <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/activetransport/long-term-cycle-network.asp> (accessed 13 October 2022).

17 RAC (2018). *Shared Path Lighting Review*. Retrieved from: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports> (accessed 21 October 2022).

18 Infrastructure Australia (2022). *Perth Active Transport Improvements*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/map/perth-active-transport-improvements> (accessed 7 October 2022).

**The opportunity:**

Of high importance to reducing the cost of congestion in Perth and supporting thriving, healthy and active communities now and into the future is scaling up action and investment to accelerate the delivery of safe and connected active transport infrastructure.

Making it easier for people to travel by active modes has wide ranging benefits related to addressing climate change, managing congestion, improving air quality, increasing physical activity, and reducing social isolation.

Australian Transport Assessment and Planning have established that every kilometre walked or cycled has an economic benefit by reducing vehicle operating costs, mitigating traffic congestion, improving air quality and health, and saving on road building and maintenance costs<sup>19</sup>.

It has been found that the strongest funding scenario to realise the greatest net benefit of investing in cycling infrastructure is full delivery of the highest priority (primary) cycle network routes<sup>20</sup>, which would result in a return of almost \$5 in economic benefits for every \$1 invested. This is a significant return on investment that supports additional funding for active transport infrastructure.

A continuous, low-stress network is essential for people of all ages and abilities to be able to travel safely, comfortably, and conveniently by active and non-motorised modes. A complete network can not only be made up of paths and other off-road facilities, but needs to reallocate and prioritise space on existing roads and streets to make them more comfortable for active travellers.

**! Infrastructure Australia has recognised the essential role of active transport in reducing car reliance and emphasised the need to bring forward the completion of cross-boundary local government transport networks and importance of maintenance and upgrade programs for pathways<sup>21</sup>.**

The WA Bicycle Network Plan outlines that the priority Principal Shared Path (PSP) program through to 2023 will complete almost all PSP links within a 15km radius of the Perth CBD, with the intention for the 2023-2031 program to complete the entire network (as far north as Yanchep, as far south as Rockingham and from Fremantle in the west to Midland and Armadale in the east). Given the PSP network forms the 'spine' of the active transport network across metropolitan Perth, accelerated completion ahead of 2031 will ensure more people have access to the broader network while a dedicated maintenance and improvement fund would increase the accessibility and convenience of routes.

The State Government is completing long-term cycle network strategies for WA and most local governments have comprehensive local plans for walking and cycling. Dedicated long-term funding to deliver these plans will ensure achievement of complete active transport networks, connecting people from where they live to stations, schools, workplaces and neighbourhood centres. Increased state funding for local networks will also support the significant investment in METRONET by making stations more accessible by foot and bike.

Funding should be directed to:

- » accelerate delivery of critical routes in the Long Term Cycle Network for WA, with a focus on completing primary routes (including the PSP network) and routes that connect key local destinations (including schools, stations and neighbourhood centres) and activity centres across metropolitan Perth and regional urban centres;
- » maintain and upgrade existing shared paths, to improve surface and lighting quality (including trialling smart path lighting solutions), prioritising primary and secondary routes categorised as inadequate in relevant long term cycle network strategies;
- » enable local governments to deliver strategic, regionally significant active transport infrastructure routes and projects that are planned but require increased state funding and alternatives to the matched funding model currently in place;
- » enable wide scale trialling of innovative approaches to rapidly reallocate road space, expand provision for pedestrians and cyclists and create safer streets (including measures such as pop-up bike lanes and slower speeds); and
- » deliver travel behaviour change programs in parallel with investment in public transport infrastructure and services (e.g. Your Move Metronet) to encourage active transport and help boost public transport patronage.

**RAC calls on the State Government to:**

- » 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) to grow participation in active modes.

19 Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (2016). *Australian Transport Assessment and Planning Guidelines: M4 Active Travel*. Retrieved from: <https://www.atap.gov.au/mode-specific-guidance/active-travel/5-estimation-of-benefits> (accessed 20 October 2022).

20 Queensland Government (2017). *Research Demonstrates Economic Benefits of Investment in Cycling*. Retrieved from: <https://blog.tmr.qld.gov.au/cycling/2019/11/01/research-demonstrates-economic-benefits-of-investment-in-cycling/> (accessed 21 October 2022).

21 Infrastructure Australia (2021). *Australian Infrastructure Plan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/2021-australian-infrastructure-plan> (accessed 21 October 2022).



## 4. Taking action to make the cost of transport more affordable

### The challenge:

- » Perth households spend around 14 per cent of their income on transport, which equates to almost \$20,000 per year. Bunbury households spend 14.5%, representing almost \$19,000 per year<sup>22</sup>.
- » The cost of transport is rapidly growing, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics reporting a 14.5 per cent increase in Perth in the 12 months to June 2022<sup>23</sup>.
- » People have indicated that rising costs have affected them personally with RAC members saying they spent almost \$900 more on average in the last year to run their car. Two-thirds of members say they have taken action in the last year to try to reduce their motoring costs<sup>24</sup>.
- » Motor vehicle registration fees have increased by around 80 per cent in the past 10 years – around four times the rate of inflation<sup>25</sup>. These fees were increased again by four per cent in the most recent State Budget<sup>26</sup>.
- » A single car household would have saved more than \$1,000 over the past decade if registration fees had increased at the rate of inflation<sup>27</sup> and more could have been saved had fee increases been kept below inflation.
- » In the last five years the typical Perth household has paid nearly \$15,500 for public transport. This is around \$5,000 more than the average figure within Australian capital cities<sup>28</sup>.

### The opportunity:

Ensuring that transport remains affordable is one of the highest priorities for RAC members. More than seven in ten say it is very or extremely important for the government to take action to keep the cost of motoring down and to ensure public transport is affordable<sup>28</sup>.

Furthermore, confidence in government to keep costs down is extremely low. Only one in six members say they have confidence<sup>29</sup> in government keeping the cost of motoring down, and less than one in three have confidence the government will ensure public transport is affordable<sup>28</sup>.

RAC welcomed the decision by the WA Government to freeze motor vehicle related fees in 2020-21 and public transport fares again in 2021-22 – proving it can be done.

Given the record surplus delivered in the latest revised State Budget figures, there is an opportunity for the State Government to take action to ensure transport remains affordable by implementing a three-year freeze on increases to motor vehicle registration fees and public transport fares. This would help to alleviate the growing financial burden of transport on households and bring registration costs back in line with inflation<sup>30</sup>.

### RAC calls on the State Government to:

- » Commit to making transport in Western Australia more affordable by implementing a three-year freeze on increases to motor vehicle registration fees and public transport fares to help bring them back in line with inflation.

22 AAA (2022). *Transport Affordability Index - Q2 2022*. Retrieved from: <https://data.aaa.asn.au/transport-affordability> (accessed 21 October 2022).

23 ABS (2022). *Consumer Price Index, Australia - Transport component of CPI for Perth June 2022*. Retrieved from: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/consumer-price-index-australia/latest-release> (accessed 20 October 2022).

24 RAC (2022). *Member Priorities Tracker: The Cost of Transport*. 267 respondents from the Perth and Peel region, 61 from regional WA. Age, gender, and location sampling quotas were applied, and data has been post-weighted to be representative of RAC's membership (which is broadly consistent with the WA population profile) – the margin of error at total sample level is +/-5% at the 95% confidence level. Reports available at: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports/member-priorities-tracker>.

25 RAC analysis of registration fees in WA based on previous State Budget papers, assuming a sedan with tare weight of 1600kg. The analysis excludes motor Injury Insurance, recording and driver's licence fees.

26 Government of Western Australia (2022). *WA State Budget 2022-23 - Budget Paper no. 3*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au/budget-papers.html> (accessed 20 October 2022).

27 Based on the analysis referenced in footnote 28.

28 RAC (2022). *Member Priorities Tracker: Transport choices and priorities data*. Reports available at: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports/member-priorities-tracker>.

29 Members who said they were very or extremely confident in government plans to do this.

30 With reference to increases made from the commencement of the first term of the current government, including the 2017-18 State Budget.

## 5. Accelerating the transition to clean vehicles

### The challenge:

- » In Australia, transport makes up 19 per cent of national emissions. Road transport contributes close to 85 per cent of transport emissions, with 45 per cent of road transport emissions coming from cars alone<sup>31</sup>.
- » It is estimated that in 2018, air pollution contributed to 3,236 Australian deaths and was attributable to approximately 5.8 per cent of all cardiovascular disease, 3.2 per cent of all respiratory disease and 0.6 per cent of all cancers<sup>32</sup>.
- » Per person, Australia's carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions are almost double the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average<sup>33</sup>.
- » Between 1990 and 2020, the percentage increase in CO<sub>2</sub>-e emissions from road transport in WA is almost double that of Australia's<sup>34</sup>.
- » In 2020, Australia recorded the highest total oxides of nitrogen (NOx) emissions per capita – over 115 kilograms – of all OECD countries; this is over three and a half times New Zealand's NOx emissions per capita, almost six and a half times the OECD figure, and almost ten times the OECD Europe average<sup>35</sup>.
- » Australia's fuel quality is ranked 89th in the world, down from 85th in 2020. Currently Australia's fuel ranks worse than Argentina (88th), Bosnia & Herzegovina (87th), and Guyana (86th)<sup>36</sup>.
- » In 2021, electric vehicle (EV) sales<sup>37</sup> represented only 2.8 per cent of new vehicle sales in Australia, and while this is a sizeable increase of over 150 per cent from the previous year, it still lags far behind the global average of 8.6 per cent<sup>38</sup>. In WA, EV sales for the first half for 2022 represented 1.9 per cent of total new vehicle sales, compared to 0.44 per cent at the same time last year<sup>39</sup>.
- » According to our members<sup>40</sup>, the key barriers<sup>41</sup> to purchasing an EV are cost (68 per cent), followed by access to charging infrastructure (10 per cent); being worried about range anxiety (6 per cent); not knowing enough about them (5 per cent); and uncertainty about running costs/maintenance (3 per cent).



31 Department of Industry, Science and Resources (2022). *National Electric Vehicle Strategy: Consultation Paper*. Retrieved from: <https://consult.industry.gov.au/national-electric-vehicle-strategy> (accessed 28 October 2022).

32 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022). *Australian Burden of Disease Study Impact and causes of illness and death in Australia 2018*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/burden-of-disease/abds-impact-and-causes-of-illness-and-death-in-aus/summary> (accessed 28 October 2022).

33 OECD Data (2022). *Air and GHG emissions*. Retrieved from: <https://data.oecd.org/air/air-and-ghg-emissions.htm#indicator-chart> (accessed 28 October 2022).

34 Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (2022). *Australia's National Greenhouse Accounts*. Retrieved from: <https://ageis.climatechange.gov.au/> (accessed 28 October 2022).

35 OECD Data (2022). *Air and GHG emissions*. Retrieved from: <https://data.oecd.org/air/air-and-ghg-emissions.htm#indicator-chart> (accessed 28 October 2022).

36 Stratas Advisers (2022). *Seven Countries Move Up in Top 100 Ranking on Gasoline Sulfur Limits*. Retrieved from: <https://stratasadvisors.com/insights/2021/07232021-Top-100-gasoline-sulfur-ranking> (accessed 28 October 2022).

37 EVs refer to battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.

38 International Energy Agency (2022). *Global EV Data Explorer*. Retrieved from: <https://www.iea.org/data-and-statistics/data-tools/global-ev-data-explorer> (accessed 28 October 2022).

39 Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (2022). *VFACTs WA Report – New Vehicle Sales June 2022* (subscription).

40 RAC (2021). *RAC Member Priorities Tracker: Sustainability*. Reports available at: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports/member-priorities-tracker> (accessed 28 October 2022).

41 Key barriers identified by respondents who said that they would not consider purchasing an electric or hybrid vehicle next or did not know what vehicle they would purchase next.

### The opportunity:

The broad adoption of low and zero emissions vehicles will significantly reduce harmful vehicle emissions and the impact on our health and the environment. As part of a global response to climate change, the Federal Government has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 43 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030<sup>42</sup>. The State Government has committed to working with all sectors of the economy to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050<sup>43</sup>, and in June 2022, announced a whole-of-government 2030 reduction target of 80 per cent below 2020 levels<sup>44</sup>.

An RAC survey<sup>45</sup> found that 97 per cent of members believe vehicle emissions negatively impact on climate change and human health. There is strong support for government action, with 78 per cent believing the government should be doing more to reduce vehicle emissions, but only 27 per cent having confidence in government to do so. When asked what the top three actions government should take to reduce vehicle emissions, respondents identified providing incentives for purchasing low emissions vehicles; regulating emissions through national standards for new vehicles; and increasing the number of low emissions vehicles in the government vehicle fleet.

Australia is one of the few developed countries without a regulated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions standard for new light vehicles and our noxious emissions standards are less stringent than many countries around the world. Introducing mandatory impactful standards protect against the risk that vehicle manufacturers see Australia as a place to sell the less safe and environmentally friendly models which cannot be sold elsewhere.

According to Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation forecasts, based on the existing trajectory, EVs could account for around 65 per cent of new passenger vehicle sales and almost 50 per cent of the total vehicle fleet in Australia by 2050<sup>46</sup>. As this penetration level is low compared to the policy targets of many other advanced nations, there is an opportunity to scale up government and industry efforts and accelerate broad uptake.

**! State Government estimates suggest simply ‘accelerating the uptake of electric vehicles in Western Australia will provide public health benefits of over \$20 million each year by reducing air pollution’<sup>47</sup>.**

In 2020 RAC welcomed the WA Government’s *State Electric Vehicle Strategy for Western Australia* and accompanying \$21 million Electric Vehicle Fund<sup>48</sup>. RAC also welcomed the allocation of almost \$60 million in the 2022-23 State Budget to accelerate the use of zero emission vehicles<sup>49</sup>.

While it was pleasing to see these recent commitments, further action to accelerate the uptake of low and zero emissions vehicles is required. Such actions include:

- » setting and working towards ambitious targets for WA and Australia’s low and zero emissions vehicle fleet, government fleets, uptake and charging infrastructure delivery;
- » working with the Federal Government to ensure the introduction of impactful emission standards for vehicles, including light vehicle CO<sub>2</sub> and Euro 6d (or equivalent) standards;
- » working with the Federal Government to assess the existing capabilities of the network, and forecast the future demand and operational requirements associated with EV uptake;
- » working with the Federal Government to ensure both commercial and private buildings are EV ready;
- » scaling up tax and other financial incentives and subsidies that support the uptake of low and zero emissions vehicles;
- » working with the Federal Government to improve consumer access to EV information covering topics such as ownership, charging and energy consumption, and the impact of vehicle emissions on health and the environment; and
- » continuing to scale up investment to enable and support the wider roll out of charging infrastructure – identified by Infrastructure Australia as an issue of national significance<sup>50</sup>.

#### RAC calls on the State Government to:

- » Commit to introducing policies and scaling up funding for infrastructure and initiatives that will significantly accelerate and support the transition to clean transport.

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44 Government of Western Australia (2022, June 23). *Ambitious interim target set for State Government emissions* [Press release]. Retrieved from: <https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2022/06/Ambitious-interim-target-set-for-State-Government-emissions.aspx> (accessed 28 October 2022).

45 RAC (2021). *RAC Member Priorities Tracker: Sustainability*. Reports available at: <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports/member-priorities-tracker> (accessed 20 October 2022).

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47 Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (2022). *State Electric Vehicle Strategy for Western Australia*. Retrieved from: <https://www.wa.gov.au/service/environment/environment-information-services/electric-vehicle-strategy> (accessed 28 October 2022).

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50 Infrastructure Australia (2019). *National highway electric vehicle fast charging*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/map/national-highway-electric-vehicle-fast-charging> (accessed 28 October 2022).



## Other strategically important priorities

In addition to these five crucially important priorities, RAC has several longstanding strategic infrastructure and policy priorities which remain important for ensuring a safe, sustainable and connected future for WA. These are for government to:

- » Commit to resourcing and funding the development of a speed management plan, including a framework and near-term deadlines for reviewing and setting speed limits across the road network. The plan and framework should reflect the tolerances of the human body, prioritise safety performance above network efficiency and apply road/street design and enforcement strategies in support of safer speeds. As a priority, support should be provided for local government trials that take a holistic and coordinated approach to planning and rolling out appropriate speed limit reductions.
- » Work with the Federal Government to develop a new road user charging model to respond to the issues associated with declining fuel excise revenue and the need for a more equitable, efficient, and effective funding model. A rigorous cost-benefit analysis of the social, economic and environmental impacts of any potential road user charge should be undertaken before changes to the current system are considered.
- » Continue to commit funding towards the rolling program of intersection grade separations and upgrades to improve safety on WA's major highways and strategically important corridors to bring these up to freeway standard. This should prioritise the Reid Highway/Erindale Road intersection (pending the outcome of the current business case) and the remaining signalised and non-signalised intersections along Tonkin Highway such as Armadale Road (\$250 million).
- » Commit funding to prepare for a future with automated and connected vehicles, helping to position WA and the nation to capitalise on advancements in technology and future proof new infrastructure (\$50 million).
- » Commit to allocating unspent Perth Parking Levy funds towards key active and public transport initiatives outlined in the CBD Transport Plan (account balance stated at \$170 million in *the WA State Budget 2022-23 - Budget Paper No. 3*).

- » Commit funding towards developing and deploying standard architecture for Intelligent Transport Systems across WA to set the foundations for implementing sensors and digital systems to improve real-time management and reliability of the transport network, and support greater prioritisation of public and active transport (\$250 million).
- » Commit funding to implement a program of measures to optimise Perth's heavy rail system (including lengthening of remaining platforms on the Midland/Fremantle/Armadale lines to accommodate 6-car train operations) to make the best use of existing rail assets and cater for increasing demands (\$500 million).
- » Commit funding towards a rolling program of road/rail grade separations and other solutions to remove level crossings, while maintaining connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. This should prioritise Collier Road and Meadow Street on the Midland Line, and Victoria Street and Jarrad Street on the Fremantle Line) and deliver associated urban realm enhancements, improving safety, road, and public transport efficiency and amenity (\$1.1 billion).
- » Commit funding towards planning and delivery of a mid-tier rapid transit network, prioritising connections between the University of Western Australia/ Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and Canning Bridge (via the CBD and Bentley/Curtin), and also between Scarborough Beach/Stirling to Glendalough and onto the Perth CBD, to enhance access to strategically important centres for employment, retail and tourism (\$2 billion).

### About RAC

RAC is a voice for over 1.2 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.

### 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.



For further information please  
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