

WA State Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030

RAC Submission

- Executive Summary

In this moment, the State has an exceptional opportunity to reshape the next decade in terms of the lives lost and serious injuries needlessly occurring on Western Australian (WA) roads. On behalf of all road users, including our more than one million members, RAC is seeking a bolder, more ambitious State Road Safety Strategy to 2030 that will aim to ensure no one has to suffer the life-long devastation of a loved one being killed or seriously injured (KSI) on our roads.

An unforgivably high number of people are being killed and seriously injured on our roads...

Looking back over the last ten years, progress in road safety in WA has been inexcusably slow and, once a leader, we now have one of the poorest road safety performances of all Australian states. As a result, people continue to die and be seriously injured on our roads and communities continue to be devastated by the catastrophic and life-long impacts of road trauma.

The State Government must do more. It is critical the next strategy drives immediate action, through a system approach¹, to achieve a longer term and globally-aligned target of zero deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

We need a real change, and we need it now...

RAC believes we need **bipartisan commitment to, and action to deliver on ambitious, life and serious injury-saving targets** and recommends that the next road safety strategy for WA:

- » is developed by the Road Safety Council and its appointed experts, in consultation with a bipartisan Parliamentary Reference Group and with all sides of Government and representative agencies being signatories to the Strategy;
- » demonstrates a genuine bipartisan commitment to saving lives and reducing serious injuries by setting a more ambitious target to reduce the KSI rate by 50 per cent by 2025;
- » supports the Commissioner and Road Safety Council reporting to a Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee rather than a Minister;
- » requires a whole of government commitment to road safety, and adoption of performance measures for senior leadership within government agencies, linked with six-monthly reporting by Directors General and Chief Executive Officers on outcomes (as recommended by the Browne Review);

- » sets out a requirement for each agency represented on the Road Safety Council to prepare a road trauma reduction plan, capturing how they are contributing to achievement of the target, which is reviewed and reported on annually;
- » commits to the appointment of a panel of three road safety experts to judge the merits of Road Trauma Trust Account (RTTA) submissions, offer policy advice to the Commissioner and to serve on the Road Safety Council;
- » deals with long standing and pervasive data collection and reporting problems including requiring State Government agencies to adopt more robust approaches to track and measure reduction in road trauma statistics;
- » includes a resolute commitment to roll out programs and initiatives at the scale necessary to make a tangible impact and includes costed and funded shorter term action plans (for metro and regional WA) to ensure effective implementation (with these and progress reviews being made public); and
- » releases a complete list of RTTA funded projects and their outcomes for transparency and accountability.

RAC believes we need to **achieve safer speeds through courageous leadership** and recommends that the next road safety strategy for WA:

- » sets out a framework and near-term deadlines for reviewing and setting speed limits across the road network that reflect the tolerances of the human body, prioritises safety performance above network efficiency and applies road / street design and enforcement strategies in support of safer speeds;
- » includes a commitment to investigate a reduction in the default 110km/hr speed limit to 100km/h to target fatalities and serious injuries on regional roads and bring WA into line with the rest of the country. Where road design and conditions are appropriate, a posted 110km/h limit could remain in place for selected roads; and

¹Solving road trauma requires a system approach, with the active and complementary implementation of all four cornerstones – that is, safe road use, safe roads and roadsides, safe speeds, and safe vehicles – rather than responding to each in isolation (referred to as the Safe System approach).



- » more personally engages communities in understanding the need for safer speeds through ongoing, high profile and wide-reaching education.

RAC believes we need to **build a safer transport system through low cost solutions** and recommends that the next road safety strategy for WA:

- » commits in full to rolling out the program announced by the State Government to upgrade over 17,000 kilometers of WA's road network to improve regional road safety, irrespective of Federal Government funding. A review of current funding for public sector programs, including RTTA funding, should be made with a view to kick-start this critical program;
- » commits to a rolling program to rate the safety of higher volume arterial regional roads across WA to enable prioritisation of safety treatments and build a case for Federal Government funding;
- » focuses on network-wide solutions for metropolitan intersections, including trialling innovative and lower-cost approaches which can be more broadly applied to address common challenges at different intersection types; and
- » in facilitating lower and safer travel speeds, supports a review of urban road and street design standards and guidelines, led by the Road Safety Commission and its appointed experts, to prioritise consideration of both the movement and place functions, and a user hierarchy that seeks to protect the most vulnerable users, first.

RAC believes we need to **apply lessons learned and best practice from leading jurisdictions** and recommends that the next road safety strategy for WA:

- » sets out a framework for accountable outcome monitoring evaluations of road safety spending, including frequent reviews and evaluations of RTTA funded initiatives;
- » supports road safety programs and initiatives that are actively benchmarked and evaluated against research;
- » establishes more formal arrangements to identify best practice, collaborate with national and international road safety experts and facilitate more effective information sharing (including leveraging opportunities through the national Office of Road Safety, Austroads Safety Task Force and partnerships with academic institutions); and
- » facilitates a more agile approach and demonstrates a clear commitment to testing the trialling innovations in road safety.

Let's not look back and wish we'd done more...

We need a real change, driven by bipartisanship. We have a unique opportunity ahead: regardless of agency, organisation or political persuasion, do we want to look back in five or ten-years' time and consider all the extra lives that could have been saved if only we had just done more? Let's be bold in our actions.

To read our full submission, and previous road safety submissions, please visit:
<https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports>.

For further information
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