

RAC submission to the WA State Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030

October 2019



For the better

About RAC

RAC is a voice for more than one million Western Australians and speaks out on the road safety, transport, land use and air quality challenges facing WA. Since our foundation almost 115 years ago, RAC has existed to be a driving force for a Better WA by championing change that will deliver safe, easier and more sustainable transport to better connect Western Australians and their communities now and in the future. RAC is an active participant in the WA Road Safety Council, as the representative of all road users.



RAC submission to the WA State Road Safety Strategy 2020-2030

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 on our roads.

Preventable road trauma has an enormous and devastating impact on communities and is, unacceptably, the most common reason for injury-related hospital admissions¹. Apart from the immeasurable personal and social impacts, the financial cost of road trauma to the nation's economy was estimated to be between \$22 and \$30 billion in 2015², and for WA this has been estimated to be \$900 million per annum³.

WA, once a leader, has one of the poorest road safety performances of all Australian states. Just aiming for the Australian average would save 42 lives each year, and if WA were to match Victoria's current record (Australia's best performing state) 66 lives could be saved annually⁴.

Sadly, by the end of the current *Towards Zero* strategy period (2008-2020), the Road Safety Commission forecasts WA will have fallen short of achieving the target of a 40 per cent reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on WA roads by 2020, meaning an additional 283 people will have been killed or seriously injured; their own and their loved ones lives irrevocably changed forever.

The State Government must do more to tackle the unforgivably high number of people being killed and seriously injured on our roads and to do this it is critical that the next strategy drives immediate action to achieve a longer term and globally-aligned target of zero deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

It is widely recognised and repeatedly communicated by experts that solving 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.

While there are many actions aligned with the Safe System approach that will have an important role in helping to end preventable road trauma, our submission focusses on the following key gaps that have led to WA's inadequate road safety performance and need to be responded to as a priority:

- > bipartisan commitment to and delivering on ambitious, life and serious injury-saving targets;
- > achieving safer speeds through courageous leadership;
- > building a safer transport system through low cost solutions; and
- > applying lessons learned and best practice from leading jurisdictions.

¹ Department of Health. (2017). *Western Australian state trauma registry report*. Retrieved from: <https://rph.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/Files/Hospitals/RPH/About%20us/News/wa-state-trauma-report-2015>.

² Using the "willingness to pay" method. Retrieved from: https://www.aaa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AAA-ECON_Cost-of-road-trauma-summary-report_Sep-2017.pdf.

³ Estimate provided by Main Roads Western Australia.

⁴ Calculations based on average BITRE fatality rates for Victoria and Australia from 2014 to 2019, applied to ABS WA population estimates for the December quarter of each year. The number of lives saved is based on fatality counts from the Road Safety Commission website for each year (as at 10 Sep 2019), averaged over 5 years (2014-2018).

Bipartisan commitment to and delivering on ambitious, life and serious injury-saving targets

The challenge:

- » The rate of road deaths in Victoria averaged over the five years to end-2018 is 41 per 100,000 people (with a target of 2.96 by 2020⁵), compared to a rate of 6.7 in WA⁶ (with suggested target rates in the Consultation Paper of 3.2 or 2.5 by 2030⁷). Adopting either target would mean we would only be aiming for a comparable fatality rate in 2030 to what Victoria is targeting to achieve, one year from now.
- » In a 2017 study undertaken by Curtin-Monash Accident Research Centre (C-MARC) on behalf of RAC exploring the reasons behind Victoria's nation-leading road safety performance, "road safety governance" was identified as being the top factor that had contributed to WA's slower progress in saving lives between 2000 and 2015.
- » The management of road safety has lacked priority for reasons including the fact that some high-impact solutions can be unpopular with the community.
- » Government agencies responsible for cornerstones of the Safe System framework do not share targets or sufficiently link programs and coordinate efforts that might maximise opportunities to impact road deaths and injuries.

The opportunity:

Setting a more ambitious target to halve WA's current KSI rate over the next five years would demonstrate a genuine commitment to saving lives and reducing the impact of road trauma. Victoria took approximately ten years from where WA is today to reach their current fatality rate and as such, for WA to achieve the same outcome (i.e. a 50 per cent reduction) in half that time, an unwavering commitment by all sides of government, industry and the community is essential. This is significant given that, in general, Victoria has implemented road safety initiatives on a far greater scale, and sooner, than WA.

It is essential the Strategy ensures bipartisan leadership of road safety and in support of this RAC believes a realignment of the WA Road Safety Commission is necessary so that a Commissioner reports to a Joint Parliamentary Standing Committee rather than a Minister. Parliamentary reporting provides an opportunity for the Commissioner to clearly identify the extent to which government agencies with road safety responsibilities are or are not meeting those responsibilities effectively. The 2014 Browne Review of road safety governance in WA identified a clear flaw in the current reporting relationship where some recipient agencies are reluctant to comply with monitoring and evaluation requirements.

At the departmental level, government agencies must take a stronger, bolder and more collaborative approach to progress road safety solutions with an effective governance structure, supported by shared and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). In fact, road safety must be made the foremost priority of the Transport Portfolio (the Department of Transport, Main Roads WA and the Public Transport Authority)

and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, and be effectively engrained within the priorities of other government departments and agencies with an opportunity to influence outcomes.

Effective implementation of shared KPIs must be supported by clearly defined responsibilities and established milestones, which are monitored with reports provided to Parliament. This may include specific plans for areas with high impact, such as speed management. The Browne Review recommended that a detailed strategic plan be developed for the implementation of *Towards Zero* which contains milestones by which progress can be demonstrated, and further recommended three-year action plans; no actions plans have however been made public.

This is necessary to hold government agencies across all levels and sectors with an influence on road safety to account for their share of improvements required to tackle the unacceptably high number of people dying and being injured on our roads, as well as to ensure greater transparency for the community around road safety spending.

To effectively deliver on ambitious targets, funding will also be required at a level to ensure greater agility and action in rolling out programs and initiatives in a timely manner, and at the scale necessary to make a significant, tangible impact.

RAC 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.



⁵ Calculations based on average BITRE fatality rates for Victoria and Australia from 2014 to 2019, applied to ABS WA population estimates for the December quarter of each year. The number of lives saved is based on fatality counts from the RSC website for each year (as at 10 Sep 2019), averaged over 5 years (2014-2018).

⁶ BITRE. (2018). *Road trauma Australia 2018 statistical summary*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/files/Road%20trauma%20Australia%202018%20statistical%20summary.pdf>.

⁷ Calculated based on ABS 2030 population projections (Series B)

Achieving safer speeds through courageous leadership

The challenge:

- » Travelling speed significantly impacts both the likelihood and severity of a crash for all road users involved and the human body can only tolerate a certain amount of force (or kinetic energy, which is the energy of motion) in the event of a crash. So, in a crash the speed at which the colliding objects (e.g. cars, buses, bicycle, people) are travelling is critical to whether those involved survive.
- » Higher vehicle speeds: allow less time to respond to hazards; increase stopping distance; reduce the opportunity for other road users to avoid a crash; and make it more likely a driver will lose control of the vehicle⁸.
- » WA speed limits remain amongst the highest in the world⁹, and apart from the Northern Territory, WA is the only Australian jurisdiction to still have the 110km/h rural default.
- » Over the lifetime of *Towards Zero*, KSI is only projected to have reduced by five per cent on regional State-owned roads, including highways, compared with 46 per cent for locally-owned regional roads.
- » Generally speaking, speed limit reductions are unpopular with the community¹⁰. RAC's recent speed survey has highlighted that while speeding is acknowledged as one of the riskiest behaviours on our roads, most West Australians are opposed to the concept of speed limit reductions and 110km/h sealed rural roads received the greatest opposition (65-70 per cent).
- » Courageous leadership by government to achieve safer speeds was impacted and lacking during the consultation process for *Towards Zero* where the optimal safe system option was not pursued due to community opposition to speed limit reductions, despite the opportunity to save an additional 4,300 lives and serious injuries.
- » Studies have shown drivers misjudge the amount of time saved when increasing speeds or the amount of time lost when decreasing speeds^{11,12}.

The opportunity:

There is a significant and growing body of national and international evidence around the substantial life-saving benefits of reducing speed limits. The role of speed limit reductions was previously acknowledged (but not planned for) in *Towards Zero*: "...speed limit reductions, applied where infrastructure improvements are not feasible in a reasonable timeframe, would make a substantial contribution to reducing road trauma in Western Australia".

In 2016, Soames Job, Global Lead for Road Safety at the World Bank, and Chika Sakashita, International Road Safety Consultant and Senior Project Leader at Global Road Safety Solutions, wrote: "speed is the single element of road safety that, with management, can drive down the number of deaths and serious injuries sufficiently to allow a chance to deliver the global road safety targets within existing time frames and budgets" in part, because it is such an important element of all crashes across all countries, and because reductions are possible within limited budgets.

In 1987, the Victorian Government increased the rural default speed limit from 100km/h to 110km/h and a little more than two years later reverted it back to 100km/h.

This saw a 25 per cent increase in KSI when the speed limit was raised, and a 19 per cent reduction when it was dropped back¹³. Similar results have been found in other jurisdictions^{14,15}. Further, according to Nilsson's Power Model, a 10 per cent decrease in speed, could achieve up to a 40 per cent reduction in fatalities and a 30 per cent reduction in KSI on high speed roads¹⁶.

While there is opposition amongst the community to blanket speed limit reductions, RAC's survey has shown support for targeted reductions (63 per cent supported them for one or more road type and only 8 per cent opposed reductions across all road types) and when provided with information about the impact of speed on outcomes, 29 per cent were more likely to support reductions.



Efforts to achieve travel speeds which are safer, and appropriate for the road environment, will require courageous leadership by a government truly committed to saving lives lost in crashes today, not in years to come.

To support implementation and effectiveness, speed limit reductions would need bipartisan support and to be coupled with efforts to increase community understanding of the impact of speed on crash outcomes and need to deliver safer travel speeds;

and as appropriate, the use of road and street design practices and measures to promote desired speeds and more consistent road users behaviours, as well as enforcement activities to help achieve reductions in mean operating speeds in a timely manner^{17,18}.

RAC 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 support a reduction in the default 110km/h 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
- » more personally engages communities in understanding the need for safer speeds through ongoing, high profile and wide-reaching education.



⁸ Langford, J. in CMARC. (2011). Identifying measures to promote the benefits of safer speeds. Retrieved from: <https://c-marc.curtin.edu.au/completed/index.cfm>.

⁹ Fildes B, Langford J and Hellyer S (2009). Safety can be a hard message to sell. Paper presented to the 2009 Road Safety, Policing and Education Conference, Sydney, Australia.

¹⁰ Langford, J. in CMARC. (2011). Identifying measures to promote the benefits of safer speeds. Retrieved from: <https://c-marc.curtin.edu.au/completed/index.cfm>.

¹¹ Fuller et al., 2006, 2008; Fuller et al., 2009; Svenson, 2008, 2009, in MUARC. (2008). The impact of lowered speed limits in urban and metropolitan areas. https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/216736/The-impact-of-lowered-speed-limits-in-urban-and-metropolitan-areas.pdf.

¹² Debnath, A.K., Haworth, N. & Rakotonirainy, A. (2017). Driver beliefs regarding the benefits of reduced speeds, *Journal of Transportation Safety & Security*, 9, 470-488, DOI: 10.1080/19439962.2016.1241848 BITRE *Annual international road safety comparisons* retrieved from: https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/international_road_safety_comparisons.aspx.

¹³ Sliogeris, J. (1992). *110 kilometre per hour speed limit - evaluation of road safety effects*.

¹⁴ Mackenzie, JRR, Kloeden, C.N. & Hutchinson, T.P. (2014). *Reduction of speed limit from 110 km/h to 100 km/h on certain roads in South Australia: a follow up evaluation*. CASR report, 2014.

¹⁵ Bhatnagar Y, Saffron D, de Roos M. and Graham A. (2010). *Changes to speed limits and crash outcomes: Great Western Highway case study*. Proceedings of the Australasian road safety research, policing and education conference 2010.

¹⁶ Nilsson, G. (2004). *Traffic Safety Dimensions and the Power Model to Describe the Effect of Speed on Safety*, Doctoral thesis, Department of Technology and Society, Traffic Engineering, Lund, Sweden.

¹⁷ MUARC. (2008). *The impact of lowered speed limits in urban and metropolitan areas*. Retrieved from: https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/216736/The-impact-of-lowered-speed-limits-in-urban-and-metropolitan-areas.pdf.

¹⁸ Varhelyi, 1996, in MUARC. (2008). *The impact of lowered speed limits in urban and metropolitan areas*. Retrieved from: https://www.monash.edu/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/216736/The-impact-of-lowered-speed-limits-in-urban-and-metropolitan-areas.pdf.





Building a safer transport system through low cost solutions

The challenge:

- » Many crashes occur when ordinary people make everyday mistakes and road and street design can significantly influence crash likelihood and outcomes, yet we continue to use outdated guidance and are slow to implement proven, low-cost solutions.
- » Regional WA presents a significant challenge to saving lives and reducing serious injuries on our roads. In 2018 alone, more than 60 per cent of all road fatalities occurred on regional roads, despite only around 20 per cent of the population living in regional WA.
- » In the five years to end-2018, around four in five regional fatal crashes were the result of a head-on crash or a single vehicle running off the road.
- » In the metropolitan area many KSI crashes occur at intersections, in fact over the past five years, 30.4 per cent of all KSI crashes did¹⁹.
- » Vulnerable road users (e.g. pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists) are at significant risk on our roads, particularly in the metropolitan area, with cyclist and motorcyclist KSI having increased significantly over the lifetime of *Towards Zero*, while car driver and passenger KSI has reduced.

The opportunity:

Many of the crashes occurring on our regional roads could be avoided through implementation of effective low-cost safety treatments such as sealing shoulders, installing audible edgelines, medians and/or centre-lines.

In August 2019, the State Government announced²⁰ it had determined a significant opportunity to save lives and stop serious injuries resulting from run-off-road and head-on crashes by delivering a costed program to upgrade more than 17,000 kilometers of WA's regional road network, over nine years.

If implemented in full, the program is expected to deliver a reduction in regional KSI of 60 per cent, or over 2,100 KSI crashes at a 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 1.8²¹).

The total cost is \$900 million, with one year of the program representing just 3.4 per cent of the State Budget spending allocated towards transport, rail and roads in 2019-20 (\$2.917 billion)²².

To date the State Government has committed just \$20 million per annum and alarmingly there has been no further commitment by the State or Federal Government toward this life-saving program, despite it surpassing the cost benefit return from other urban and regional projects.

Currently, in designing and redesigning our urban roads, streets and intersections in WA (whether as part of new sub-divisions or within existing suburbs) there is an over-reliance on outdated guidance which often encourages higher travel speeds (for example by having a design speed higher than the intended posted speed) and does not appropriately prioritise the needs of our most vulnerable road users. This is despite *Towards Zero* aiming to "encourage and support these professionals (planners, designers and engineers) to find solutions that move beyond current standards" and "innovative solutions that ensure the way our roads and roadsides are designed and built provides inherent safety". However, in the United Kingdom (UK) for instance, which is amongst the best performing Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries in terms of fatality rates, urban street design guidelines (through Manual for Streets for example) focus on designing streets for people by ensuring design appropriately balances the movement and place functions of the corridor and area, as well as applying a user hierarchy with pedestrians at the top and, to support lower speed limits²³, a range of low-cost design changes including narrower lane widths, tighter geometric design and greater use of zebra crossings are recommended.

By nature, urban intersections can be particularly risky as they are places where higher volumes of different road users meet, usually at high speeds; travelling from, and in, multiple directions. Under the direction of the Road Safety Council, Main Roads WA (MRWA) has estimated that the BCR resulting from the Metropolitan

Intersection Crash Program over the period 2012/13 to 2018/19 is 2.0, and has recently been exploring a program to maximise the safety benefits delivered at metropolitan intersections through the use of lower cost and system-wide solutions so that a greater number of intersections can be remedied, more quickly.

RAC recommends that the next road safety strategy for WA:

- » commits to rolling out the program to improve regional road safety in full, 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 guidance, 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.



¹⁹ Calculated based on data provided by Main Roads Western Australia. (2019).

²⁰ Federal backing sought for WA road safety initiative. Retrieved from: <https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2019/08/Federal-backing-sought-for-WA-road-safety-initiative.aspx>.

²¹ BITRE. (2018). *Ex-post economic evaluation of national road investment projects*. Retrieved from: https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/2018/files/rr_145_vol1.pdf

²² Department of Treasury. (2019). *WA State Budget 2019-20. Where the money comes from and where it goes*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ourstatebudget.wa.gov.au/2019-20/fact-sheets/overview.pdf>.

²³ A maximum speed of 30mph / 50kph applies to nearly all mixed-use urban streets, and speeds of 20mph / 32kph or below is recommended for areas with significant pedestrian movements.

Applying lessons learned and best practice from leading jurisdictions

The challenge:

- » For WA, just aiming for the Australian average would save 42 lives each year, and if WA were to match Victoria's current record 66 lives could be saved annually²⁴. While some innovations have been trialled and implemented during the lifetime of *Towards Zero*, WA has in many regards been less agile and progressive in trialling and implementing solutions than other states, delaying opportunities to save lives. For example:
 - > At 50 hours, WA has one of the lowest numbers of mandatory supervised driving hours prior to a learner being able to undertake a Practical Driving Assessment (PDA); only the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Northern Territory have lower requirements. Young drivers are over-represented in KSI crashes; those aged 17-25 represent 12 per cent of WA's population but made up 19 per cent of people killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes from 2014 to 2018.
 - > The number of people killed or seriously injured on WA roads in crashes where driver inattention was a factor is increasing; in 2018 alone, 29 people were killed²⁵, bringing the five-year total to 120 people²⁶. However, the penalty for illegal use of a hand-held phone in WA remains more lenient than in Victoria, New South Wales (NSW) and the ACT.
 - > Enforcement innovations have generally been adopted later than in Victoria and other jurisdictions, or on a smaller scale e.g. alcohol interlocks were introduced here in 2016 compared to 2003 in Victoria; and while mobile speed cameras were introduced two years after Victoria, point-to-point average speed cameras were introduced 11 years after.
- » Insufficient focus on monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of road safety programs and initiatives, as well as public release and sharing of information between jurisdictions, greatly hinders the ability of WA to benefit from lessons learned and identify and apply national and international best practice.

The opportunity:

Solving the crisis of road related deaths and serious injuries is a challenge shared by jurisdictions world-wide. While there are many factors that influence the characteristics and contributory factors of KSI crashes and thus the road safety performances of different jurisdictions (including varying socio-demographics factors, cultures and values; degree of urbanisation and population distribution; and traffic density for example), there will be lessons WA could learn from nation-leading jurisdictions such as Victoria and better performing OECD countries. In the early 2000s, Spain and France for instance had much higher road fatality rates than WA but have since made significant progress and now outperform us. In 2000, Spain's fatality rate was 14.5 per 100,000 people and France's was 13.7, compared to WA's at 11.3; in 2006 both country's rates dropped below WA's and this trend has continued, with Spain's rate declining to 3.9 in 2016 and France's to 5.38 (compared to 7.6 in WA)²⁷.

However, when RAC commissioned the aforementioned C-MARC study to evaluate the reasons behind Victoria's road safety performance, the research team were impeded by gaps in WA's historical data, a lack of public record keeping and selective outcome monitoring and evaluations.

Towards Zero outlined the responsibilities of the Road Safety Council as including "evaluating research and evidence to

identify the most effective ways to reduce the level of death and serious injury and prevent property damage on our roads" and "evaluating the effectiveness of the road safety initiatives once they are implemented and reporting on progress". However, the current commitment to track "trends in crashes and progress of implementation" is not enough to successfully do this. Looking forward, the Strategy must place greater emphasis on monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of road safety programs delivered in WA, as well as proactively exploring innovations and successes in other jurisdictions and seeking to align our efforts, in a timely manner.

A noteworthy example is the success of Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) systems across Australia which have been associated with the decline of young people represented in KSI crashes over the last decade²⁸. Victoria and NSW require learners to undertake a mandatory 120 hours of supervised practice and Queensland 100 hours, and significant crash reductions were recorded after these changes were introduced²⁹. Available research suggests the optimum mandatory number of hours of supervised practice may be somewhere between 80 and 140³⁰ and in a recent RAC survey related to preparing for and undertaking the PDA novice drivers, non-professional supervisors and instructors generally felt on average 71 hours should be mandated to produce safer drivers (21 higher than the current minimum of 50 hours in WA).

Similarly, penalties and enforcement activities have been shown to positively influence driver behaviour^{31,32} which is a key determinant of crash likelihood. Last year, RAC's *Mobile Phone Distraction Survey* showed four in five respondents (81 per cent) reported using their mobile phone while in control of a vehicle at least some of the time and 37 per cent admitted to doing so regularly. When asked if being caught and penalised with the current WA penalty of three demerit points and a \$400 fine would make them stop, 75 per cent said that it would. A further 21 per cent said that while it would not stop them completely, they would use their phone less often and only four per cent said that it would not make any difference.

In the NSW *Road Safety Plan 2021*, published in February 2018, the State Government outlined its intent to investigate camera-based

technology to enforce mobile phone use offences. In July 2018, legislation came into effect to enable a pilot of world-first mobile phone detection camera technology, using artificial intelligence to automatically review images and detect offending drivers. Between January and June 2019, 8.5 million vehicles were checked, and more than 100,000 drivers were detected illegally using their phones³³. Following the success of the pilot, the NSW Government has committed to spending \$88 million³⁴ to roll out a program of portable and fixed cameras later this year, and to progressively extending it to perform 135 million vehicle checks by 2023³⁵. The Road Safety Advisory Council has also recently announced it is funding a Tasmanian Police project to evaluate several new enforcement technologies following the NSW pilot³⁶.

RAC 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.

²⁴ Calculations based on average BITRE fatality rates for Victoria and Australia from 2014 to 2019, applied to ABS WA population estimates for the December quarter of each year. The number of lives saved is based on fatality counts from the RSC website for each year (as at 10 Sep 2019), averaged over 5 years (2014-2018).

²⁵ Inattention-related crashes include those crashes where police suspected inattention as the primary crash factor. Inattention includes distractions, eating, using in-vehicle devices, using mobile phones, etc.

²⁶ Road Safety Commission (2019). Annual preliminary fatal and critical injuries on WA roads, 2014 - 2018.

²⁷ BITRE. *Annual international road safety comparisons* retrieved from: https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/international_road_safety_comparisons.aspx.

²⁸ Scott-Parker, B., & Rune, K. (2016). Review of the graduated driver licensing programs in Australasia. *Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety*, 27 (4), 15-22. <https://acrs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Review-of-the-Graduated-Driver-licensing-programs-in-Australasia.pdf>.

²⁹ Transport for NSW. (2014). *Australian graduated licensing scheme*. Retrieved from: <https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/gls.pdf> & <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/about/corporate-publications/statistics/registrationandlicensing/tables/table438.html>.

³⁰ Senserrick, T. & Williams, A. (2013) *Summary of Literature of the Effective Components of Graduated Licensing Schemes for Car Drivers*, Austroads Project SS1707.

³¹ Elvik, R. (2016). Association between increase in fixed penalties and road safety outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 92, 202-210.

³² Shinar D, McKnight A.J. (1985) The Effects of Enforcement and Public Information on Compliance. In: Evans L, Schwing R.C. (eds) *Human Behaviour and Traffic Safety*. Springer, Boston, MA.

³³ Transport for NSW. (no date). *Mobile phone detection cameras targeting illegal phone use across NSW*. Retrieved from: <https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/mobilephones/technology.html>

³⁴ Raper, A. *Mobile phone detection cameras to be rolled out across NSW roads by December*. Retrieved from: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-09-22/mobile-phone-detection-cameras-rolling-out-nsw-december/11536664>

³⁵ Transport for NSW. (2019, September 22). *Cracking down on drivers using mobile phones illegally*. Retrieved from: <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/news-and-events/media-releases/cracking-down-on-drivers-using-mobilephones-illegally>

³⁶ Powell, M. (2019, September 24). *Phone detection cameras for Tasmania could follow NSW roll out*. Retrieved from: <https://www.examiner.com.au/story/6404038/tas-police-considering-phone-detection-cameras/>

Summary

Looking back over the last ten years, progress in road safety in WA has been unforgivably slow. 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.

! We need a real change, driven by bipartisanship. Once the Australian leading performer in road safety, WA can be again, but it is up to all of us to be bold in our actions. 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?

In support of our submission we enclose RAC's previous responses to the:

- » [2018 Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020](#);
- » [2015 Australian Senate Inquiry into Aspects of Road Safety](#);
- » [2015 WA Legislative Assembly's Community Development and Justice Standing Committee Inquiry into Methods of Evaluating Police Performance](#); and
- » [2014 Review of Road Safety Governance in Western Australia](#) (the Browne Review).

We also enclose our most recent [Federal Priorities for WA and State Budget Submission](#) publications. These set out broader priorities to reduce road trauma, including: the application of intelligent transport system (ITS) technologies integrated into road / transport networks and vehicles; regulating and planning for automated vehicles (which will be particularly important during the transition period to manage potential safety risks) and measures to reduce exposure to risk by managing traffic demand through encouraging and facilitating shift away from single occupancy car travel. All of RAC's previous submissions and publications are available for viewing and download via <https://rac.com.au/about-rac/advocating-change/reports>.

We thank the State Government for this opportunity to provide input and we look forward to supporting the implementation of a bold, ambitious and impactful Road Safety Strategy for WA.



For further information please
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