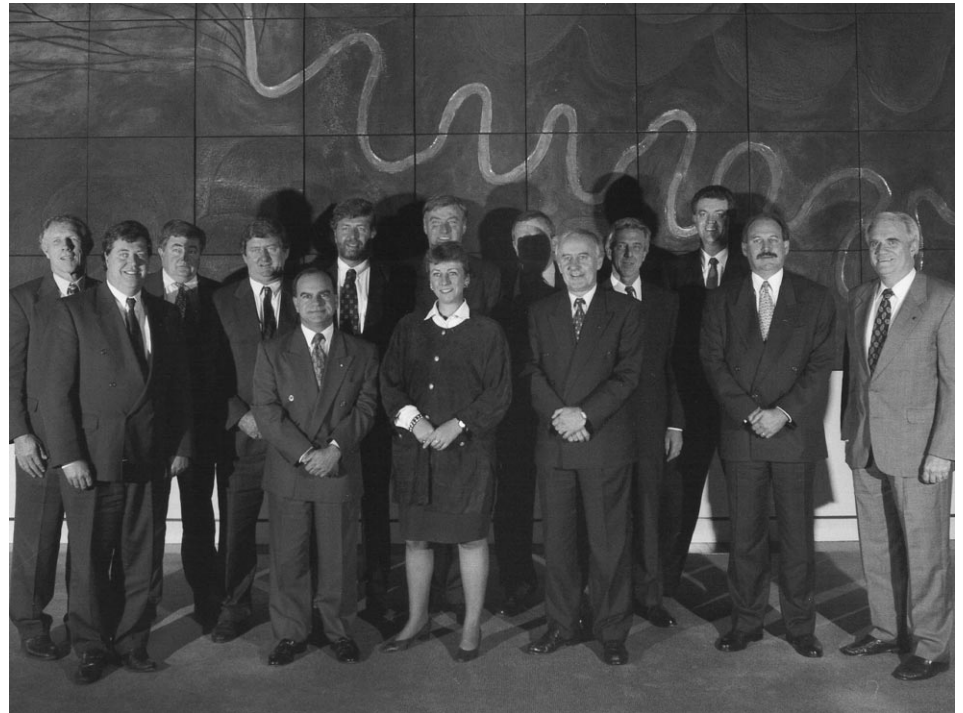


AUSTRALIA'S RURAL ROAD SAFETY ACTION PLAN



Member Organisations represented on National Road Safety Strategy Implementation Taskforce

- Federal Office of Road Safety
- NSW Roads & Traffic Authority
- VicRoads
- QLD Dept of Transport
- WA Dept of Main Roads
- SA Dept of Transport
- TAS Dept of Transport
- NT Dept of Transport & Works
- ACT Dept of Urban Services
- Australian Local Government Association
- Federal Dept of Health & Family Services
- Road Transport Forum
- Australian College of Road Safety
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
- All State Police Forces
- Australian Motorcycle Council
- National Road Transport Commission
- Australian Automobile Association
- Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries
- Australian Council of State Schools Organisations
- Australian Institution of Engineers
- NZ Land Transport Safety Authority



The Australian Transport Council approved Australia's Rural Road Safety Action Plan.

Back row: Eric Charlton, MLC (WA); Cr Rob Rowell (ALGA); Vaughan Johnson, MLA (Qld); Maurice Williamson, MP (NZ); John Sharp, MP (C'wealth); Mick Palmer, MLA (NT); Brian Langton, MP (NSW); Michael Knight, MP (NSW).

Front row: John Cleary, MHA (TAS); Tony De Domenico, MLA (ACT); Diana Laidlaw, MLC (SA); Alan Brown, MP (Vic); Geoff Craige, MLC (Vic); Sen. Grant Tambling (C'wealth).

Introduction

Rural road safety is a major issue in Australia. In recent years, gains in road safety in rural areas have not matched those made in urban areas (Monograph 2, Trends in Fatal Crashes on Rural Roads). Furthermore, research has shown that country drivers are twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash as city drivers (Monograph 5, Driving in Unfamiliar Surroundings Part 3: City Driving/Country Driving).

Country drivers are not necessarily less skilled than their city counterparts. Country drivers drive longer distances often on roads of inferior quality to those found in urban areas.

The separate requirements of rural road safety have been recognised by the road

safety community. For the first time in Australia, a national road safety strategy has been directed specifically at rural areas.

At the Australian Transport Council meeting of 7 June 1996 held in Canberra, transport ministers from all States and Territories and the Federal Government agreed to support the plan. Responsibility for its implementation is shared between government, commercial and community organisations.

This monograph reproduces excerpts from Australia's Rural Road Safety Action Plan, with a focus on the actions proposed under the plan. A full copy of the plan is available from the road safety authority in each State and Territory or from the Federal Office of Road Safety.

Australia's Rural Road Safety Action Plan

For Australians living and working on the land or living in towns and travelling to and from work, a car is an essential requirement for business, recreation and entertainment. For Australians who must travel vast outback distances, a car is not a luxury item, but an item they simply cannot do without.

As many Australians die in rural car crashes as in city car crashes and most rural crashes involve rural drivers. A higher proportion of rural crashes are related to alcohol, excessive speed, not wearing seat belts and fatigue.

Rural community attitudes to road safety are beginning to change but rural communities should see road safety as a major issue affecting their community and one they can do something about. Rural open road crashes cost the community about \$3 billion a year.

From the time of the first National Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan, rural and remote road safety has been recognised as an important issue.

The first national Rural Road Safety Seminar was held in Wodonga in 1995. The Seminar recommended that a separate rural action plan be developed. As a result, this Rural Action Plan is designed to highlight rural road safety and initiatives pertinent to the causes of crashes in rural Australia.

Actions proposed

Activities

Planning Road Improvements

- Undertake safety audits of all National and State Highways and other rural roads.
 - formulate road improvement programs on the basis of their findings.
- Implement a special program of shoulder sealing with high-quality centre and edge-line treatment and other forms of delineation.
- Implement a program for removing or otherwise reducing the danger from potential roadside hazards, including culverts, poles, and trees in particularly dangerous positions.

Public Education Programs

- Localise the content of generic mass media education and make it available to relevant local communities.
 - give special attention to fatigue, alcohol use and failure to wear seat belts.
- Publicise locally the fact that those most likely to be involved in serious crashes in rural areas are rural residents.

Involvement of Local Communities

- Promote greater involvement of rural shires and councils and their local communities in defining local road safety issues and developing partnerships to address them.
- Assist local authorities in the detailed analysis of factors impacting on local road safety, and in the development of action plans to target problems.
- Establish information programs to disseminate information to councils and local communities about successful local initiatives and local programs, as well as those found not to have been effective.
- Provide training opportunities and guidance for local government on best practice in application of road safety countermeasures.
- Formulate special arrangements for Aboriginal communities, particularly in remote areas, ensuring representation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of programs to improve safety for them.

Lead Agency/Supporting Agencies

Commonwealth and State/Territory Road Safety Authorities

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/Local Government

Commonwealth and State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/ Police Services, Insurance Sector & Motoring Associations

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/Local Government and Motoring Associations

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/Australian Local Government Association, IMEA and A.C.R.S.

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities

Commonwealth and State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/ A.C.R.S.

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities

Federal Office of Road Safety/ATSIC, State/Territory Road Safety Authorities

Activities

Speed Management

- Rationalise speed limits on rural roads to provide greater consistency for similar conditions, develop guidelines and tools for nationally consistent speed zoning.
- Use the same guidelines for speed zoning roads through rural villages and towns and on the approaches to provincial cities.
- Introduce appropriate 'traffic calming' measures to induce more moderate speeds through towns.

Management of Fatigue

- Develop guidelines and programs for installation or upgrading of rest areas at appropriate locations with facilities that will make their use attractive to long-distance travellers.
- Encourage community organisations to provide 'coffee stops' on holiday traffic routes. Facilitate coordination of their operations into a publicised network of rest opportunities.
- Encourage Governments to initiate programs at state and regional level of profile line marking or other fatigue management treatments.

Enforcement

- Improve public acceptance of enforcement strategies through public education and community support programs that explain the safety and social implications of infringing important road rules.
- Public education and community support programs to reinforce targeted enforcement in areas with high crash rates.
- Apply random surveillance to heighten perception of the risk of detection of infringing road rules.
- Use special police task forces to enhance local resources.
- Utilise new technology to improve the efficiency of scarce enforcement resources in targeting high risk behaviours, particularly driving at speeds excessive for the road, traffic, or weather conditions.

Trauma Services

- Give priority to the establishment of regionally-linked trauma services and to their support with appropriate technology, including improved communication services.
- EMST (Early Management of Severe Trauma) training for rural doctors and paramedical personnel to be given high priority in development of regional trauma services.

Remote Areas

- Address the unique problems of the most remote areas of Australia by developing programs together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This consultation will extend to the design, implementation, and evaluation of local road safety programs
 - support by a research program directed specifically to the needs of remote areas
 - appoint Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander road safety officers to appropriate areas and give training that will enable them to become leaders in the promotion of road safety for their communities.

Lead Agency/Supporting Agencies

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/
Local Government Authorities

State/Territories Road Safety Authorities

Relevant State/Territory Road Safety
Authorities

Commonwealth and State/Territory Road
Safety Authorities/Road Transport Industry,
Motoring Associations and Local Councils,
AustRoads

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities,
Community Groups

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities,
Local Government

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/
Local Government and Community Groups

State/Territory Road Safety Authorities/Local
Government and Community Groups

Police Services

Police Services

Police Services

State/Territory Health Departments

State/Territory Health Department/RACS,
AACRT

Relevant State Road Safety
Authorities/ATSIC

Federal Office of Road Safety/ATSIC
State/Territory Road Safety
Authorities/Local Councils

Rural Seminar Participants

ARRB Transport Research	Queensland Police Service
Australian College of Road Safety	Queensland Transport
Australian Federal Police	RACV
Australian Medical Association	Riverina Trauma Committee
Australian Motorcycle Council	Road Trauma Support Team
Automobile Association of NT	Roadwatch WA
Counter Disaster Unit, Dept of Human Services & Health	Roadwise WA
Council of Remote Nursing Association	Royal Adelaide Hospital
Dr Michael Henderson - Consultant	Riverina Rural Health Training Centre
Elliott & Shanahan Research	Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
Federal Office of Human Services & Health	Royal Australasian College of Surgeons - Tasmania
Federal Office of Road Safety	SA Health Commission
Goulburn Valley Road Safety Council	SA Office of Road Safety
Helen Benham - Consultant RTA Albury	SA Police
Institute of Ambulance Officers	SA Rural Trauma Project
Institute of Municipal Engineering Australia - NSW	SA St Johns Ambulance
Linemarking Services	SA State Government Insurance Commission
Lions International Australia	Tasmanian Department of Transport
Monash Medical School - Alfred Hospital	Terry Alford - Terry Alford Consulting
Monash University Accident Research Centre	Transport Accident Commission
National Injury Surveillance Unit	Upper Hume Community Health Service
National Road Trauma Advisory Council	VicRoads
NRMA	VicRoads - S.W. Region
NSW Ambulance Service	VicRoads - N.E. Region
NSW Health	Victoria Police
NSW Police Service	Victoria Police - N.E. Region
NSW Roads & Traffic Authority	WA Health Department
NSW Roads & Traffic Authority - RTA Goulburn	WA Police
NT Department of Transport & Works	WA Parliamentary Road Safety Committee
NT Road Safety Council	Wagga Wagga Base Hospital
Parliamentary Secretary for Transport	Western Australian Municipal Association
Queensland Health - Office of the Chief Health Officer	