

Contemporary Guidance in Procuring and Managing Road Safety Audits

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Abstract

Although there is good awareness of road safety auditing (RSA) as a proactive technique for identifying and mitigating road safety related risks throughout Australasia and internationally, local practices in procuring, managing and conducting audits can vary between jurisdictions. The benefits of more effectively guiding practitioners towards good practice are obvious, as well as the need to better integrate current Safe System thinking into the RSA process. To this end, ARRB was engaged by Austroads in 2017 to manage a revision to the current Guide to Road Safety Part 6: Road Safety Audit (Austroads 2009). This paper presents the scope, method and key outcomes of the revision of the existing guide.

Background and Method

A stakeholder workshop, attended by representative from the Australasian jurisdictions, was held in May 2017 to identify and discuss a number of contemporary issues in the principles, commissioning and undertaking of RSA (Austroads 2017). Following the workshop, ARRB was commissioned to scope and prepare a revision of the current Austroads guide. An overarching emphasis was placed on providing more appropriate and user-friendly guidance to project managers and sponsors, to encourage those with limited awareness and/or experience of RSA to commission, and hence see firsthand the benefits of RSA. An issues paper (Karndacharuk, Hillier & Tziotis 2017) was raised to direct the on-going work on the update of the current Guide, with this being supplemented by further consultation workshops and interviews with key stakeholders and representatives from a range of functions within road agencies in Australia and New Zealand.

Project Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the Austroads project (SAG2060) is to:

- Further embed the Safe System philosophy, and to raise awareness of the Safe System Assessment Framework (SSAF) and other similar risk management tools (Austroads 2016), within the context of the undertaking of RSAs
- Provide practical assistance to project managers in their management of crash risk on the road network

The project scope can be outlined as follows:

In scope

- Produce a clear, concise guide for project managers to manage risks of the road network
- Review of existing and applicable documents on road safety audit processes across Australia and New Zealand
- Consultation and a facilitated workshop with road safety audit representatives from each jurisdiction
- Integration of Safe Systems principles into the Guide
- Focus on updating the 2009 Guide to Road Safety Part 6: Road Safety Audit only

Out of scope

- Recommendations relating to existing processes within jurisdictions
- Harmonisation of implementing the revised guide
- Specific guidance to road safety auditors on technical issues

Guidance for Procuring and Managing RSA

The paper will provide guidance on setting a RSA policy to better integrate the Safe System thinking by focusing the RSA process to tackle risks that have the potential to result in fatal and serious injury (FSI). Guidance on the assessment of road safety concerns in accordance with the contemporary Safe System assessment techniques (such as SSAF) is included to address the FSI risks in the context of possible crash severity, exposure and likelihood.

A discussion of the responsibility and independence of the various roles in the RSA process will be offered, along with key principles to procure, initiate, administer, respond to and close out RSA activities. Example of good practices and case studies will also be provided to demonstrate how the undertaking of RSA contributes to the Safe System outcomes.

References

- Austrroads. (2009). Guide to road safety: part 6: road safety audit. Sydney, NSW: Author.
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- Karndacharuk, A., Hillier, P., & Tziotis, M. (2017). Update to AGRS part 6 road safety audit - progress report 1: review of feedback and summary of key issues. Austrroads progress report. Vermont South, Vic: ARRB.