



Fostering communication, networking, professionalism and advocacy in road safety

2018-2019 ACRS Pre-Budget Submission

**A proposal for resourcing national road safety to reduce
the tragedy of increasing deaths and injuries on our roads**

About the Australasian College of Road Safety

The Australasian College of Road Safety was established in 1988 and is the region's peak organisation for road safety professionals and members of the public who are focused on saving lives and serious injuries on our roads.

The College Patron is His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

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Executive Summary

Australia's collective performance against our National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) ([Australian Transport Council, 2011](#)) target of a 30% reduction in deaths and serious injuries by 2020 is unlikely to succeed. Current projections indicate that we are on track to reduce deaths by under 20%, and that serious injuries are in fact continuing to rise, estimated to reach over 40,000 per year by 2020 (Figure 1, [BITRE, 2017](#) & ACRS and Figure 2, [BITRE, 2016](#)).

The Australasian College of Road Safety (ACRS) strongly supports the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Hon Darren Chester, in his call for national leadership to address this tragic situation. The College requests the Federal Government recognise and fund the NRSS within its budget processes, provide significant additional national road safety funding, and in particular fund a credible response to the Independent Inquiry into the Effectiveness of the National Road Safety Strategy chaired by Dr Jeremy Woolley and Dr John Crozier.

This request updates previous requests from the College in 2015, 2016 and 2017, and comes after we have seen the deeply concerning statistics relating to the number of both deaths and serious injuries on Australian roads over the last couple of years. Around 100 Australians are dying every year over what has been predicted, and the number of Australians seriously injured are rising such that at least 37,000 people are hospitalised each year - of which 4400 become permanently disabled.

This request includes specifically a collaborative program between the Commonwealth Government and the Australasian College of Road Safety to assist in building knowledge and capacity for road safety professionals and practitioners, especially in rural and regional Australia where 66% of the trauma occurred during 2015 ([Transport and Infrastructure Council, 2016](#)). The collaborative program would allow the Commonwealth Government to leverage a stronger road safety response from existing road safety activities of the College.

Our collaborative efforts to reduce road trauma are tragically stalling after decades of reductions. Our performance when compared internationally has fallen from among the top ten to the bottom of the top 20 countries. The cost of this trauma to our nation has risen to around A\$30bn per year in 2015 and continues to rise ([AAA, 2017](#)).

The Federal Government has specific road and vehicle safety responsibilities, including the allocation of significant infrastructure resources.

In February 2017, the College called on:

- All Federal Parliamentarians to unanimously reject the current increasing rate of road death and injury, and commit to the ultimate goal of eliminating fatalities and serious injuries on the road.
- The Federal Government to
 - Task the Productivity Commission with undertaking a full enquiry into the impact of road trauma on Australia's productivity, and the national investment and policy decisions required to achieve the nation's policy goals of a safe road transport system
 - Make the publication of targeted safety star ratings on the National Road Network a condition for any Commonwealth investment in the network, from 2017/18 onwards
 - Undertake a full policy review in 2017/18 of how to leverage greater safety results from its current investment in road transport.
 - Ensure all new vehicles (cars, vans, motorcycles, buses and trucks) are equipped with world best practice safety technology and meet world best practice crashworthiness.

It is our hope that the Independent Inquiry will address these matters more fully. The College also called on the Federal Government to establish a six-monthly forum for national stakeholders seeking to support significant improvements in road safety. The purpose of the forum would be review progress in road safety at a national level, and discuss key initiatives for significantly improving results. This request includes a specific proposal to address this.

A recent OECD ITF 2016 report ([OECD, 2016](#)) and a BITRE report in 2014 ([BITRE, 2014](#)) recommended a paradigm shift in management of road safety, in building research and in leadership with emphasis on a “Safe Systems” approach. While such a “Safe Systems” approach has been recognised for some time in Australian road safety strategies and plans, the messages and techniques need to be urgently communicated to the many “on ground” practitioners and community groups across the country.

Over the last 5 years the ACRS has successfully implemented a range of activities at low cost, and developed enhanced road safety communication programs through weekly online e-newsletters, professional journals, city-based chapter meetings, and a significantly expanded annual conference in partnership with Austroads (the Australasian Road Safety Conference series ([ARSC 2015->](#)) which has attracted 600-700 delegates per event. This combined conference has supported an increase of almost 50% in number of attendees and there has been corresponding increase in collaborative programs which have specifically encouraged breakdown of silos within portfolios and across portfolios. The Conference has been successful with sponsored outreach programs with rural and remote and with Low- and Middle-Income Country participants.

The College is in a unique independent position to build on that success to expand current programs beyond its membership of direct stakeholders and politicians to a much wider audience of local engineers, road and vehicle designers, social and community workers, local administrators, police, health professionals, insurers, vehicle importers and technology companies for example. As testament to the high regard in which the College ACRS is held, on 12 November 2017 the College was awarded a prestigious [2017 Prince Michael International Road Safety Award](#) for excellence in work supporting the Management Pillar recommended in the UN Decade of Action agenda. This award is recognition of both the collaborative and inclusive nature of the College as well as reliance on a strong multi-sectoral network of experts to support the provision of evidence-based strategies for road trauma reduction.

The College is a very cost-effective organisation, with a small, efficient secretariat supported voluntarily by a range of specialist practitioners, professionals and leading academic researchers. This efficient model has demonstrated success with increased awareness and research. A collaborative program with the Government would allow an extension of the programs and contribute directly to reduction in road trauma.

The College reaffirms its previous request for funding, detailing a revised set of proposals to the value of \$3.1m over 3 years, and encourages the Government to commit to an adequately resourced national budget for successful implementation of the NRSS.

1.0 Priority Budget Spending Areas

We have previously proposed bringing the College's collective expertise to bear on:

- The preparation (in conjunction with the National Health and Medical Research Council, and the Australian Research Council) and initial implementation of a National Road Safety Research Plan
- The coordination (in collaboration with the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics) of work on injury data collection and reporting to meet OECD reporting guidelines for estimating serious injuries.

These are important long-term activities for road safety in Australia. There are other significant investments required by all Governments and stakeholders and the ACRS has identified a number of priority initiatives in previous submissions.

Through this pre-budget submission, ACRS invites the Federal Government to leverage the College's road safety status in Australia, bringing together as we do all major road safety research institutes, consultancies, non-government organisations, as well as many different public agencies with responsibility in the area.

It is proposed that the Government work with ACRS to establish a number of strategic road safety communication and partnership projects. Options include:

- 1) **Facilitate Stakeholder Engagement:** Establish and manage a six monthly stakeholder engagement process, bringing together major organisations with direct responsibilities in the safety of the road traffic system
- 2) **National Road Safety Promotion:** Prepare and deliver a national road safety communications plan targeted to major influencers and organisations across society to facilitate greater contributions
- 3) **Regional and Remote Development:** Develop and implement a specific regional and remote program incorporating scholarships and small grants to initiate community responses within this significantly over-represented community
- 4) **Annual Road Safety Conference** A multi-year commitment to support highest quality keynote speakers, and Scholarships for professionals in low and middle income countries
- 5) **International Collaboration** Leadership by example in the Decade of Action for Road Safety by providing seed support the formal establishment of an ACRS international Outreach Chapter and/or ACRS ASEAN Chapter.

1	Stakeholder Engagement
Why	<p>It is important to build a consensus across the whole community to recognise and implement the many evidence-based programs which can significantly reduce trauma while maintaining personal mobility. There is however no national mechanism through which the wide group of national stakeholders are brought together to address issues of national significance in road safety.</p> <p>This lack was addressed directly in the review of the NRSS. Since then, Austroads has increased its capacity to act nationally for its member organisations, but a much more strategic effort is needed nationally if Australia is to actually improve its sluggish and unacceptable road safety performance in the immediate and longer term.</p>

What	<p>As one of four key points in its 2017 Submission to Federal Parliamentarians, the College called on the Federal Government to establish a six-monthly forum for national stakeholders seeking to support significant improvements in road safety. The purpose of the forum would be review progress in road safety at a national level, and discuss key initiatives for significantly improving results.</p> <p>Such a forum would be for the exchange of information and ideas about how to achieve the elimination of fatalities and serious injuries on Australia's roads, consistent with the Safe System approach to road safety endorsed by all Australian Governments. The forum would have no actual or implied decision rights. It would encourage voluntary actions by all parties represented, whether they are governments, public or private organisations.</p>
How	<p>It is proposed that the Federal Government engage the Australasian College of Road Safety to establish and run on its behalf a six monthly national road safety forum for three years, starting July 2018. We would work with the Federal Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a terms of reference for the forum • Identify, recruit and sustain membership of the forum • Develop and manage the forum agenda • Prepare materials for consideration, or requested, by the forum • Prepare minutes and document commitments made at the forum • Manage logistics associated with the forum. <p>There are a number of different ways this could be managed. The College proposes that our role is as an informed facilitator of discussion. A co-Convenor arrangement is proposed, with the Federal Government being one of those Convenors. The College could assume a co-Convenor role, or that role could be met from within the membership of the forum.</p>
Investment	Total ACRS staff, hosting and attendance expenditure: <u>\$197,000 per year</u>

2	National Road Safety Promotion
Why	<p>Despite the breadth and diversity of stakeholders working towards road trauma reduction, there is no truly national approach to support road safety promotion other than the College's publications.</p> <p>Communication is key to ensuring stakeholders feel engaged and supported in their work towards trauma reduction, as well as keeping them informed of latest developments and information. Feedback from non-ACRS members who become aware of the ACRS Weekly Alert for example is often surprise that this comprehensive engagement service is available, and wish they had been aware of it earlier. The benefit of this weekly newsletter is that it promotes not only ACRS news and events, but includes outcomes, summaries and commentary from relevant events, helping to build a consensus across stakeholder networks.</p> <p>There is much more that can be done to bring in the wider groups of stakeholders including manufacturers and insurers for example, and to build a platform to launch community awareness programs at a national level. The College has the expertise and independence to be able to expand our work in this area.</p>
What	Communicate with all road safety stakeholders, by expanding ACRS's already successful communication networks to reach a broader stakeholder audience. This

	<p>may include specific seminars at the annual conference or separately, site visits, distribution materials etc (in line with Section 7 of the Coalition Policy).</p> <p>Develop and implement with government agencies, including the transport and health sectors, an agreed Road Safety Communications & Marketing Plan to leverage the opportunities available through a stronger network of road safety stakeholders (in line with Section 7 of the Coalition Policy).</p> <p>The communication strategy would include a strong focus on connecting with regional and remote stakeholders who are working to reduce their significant over-representation in road death/injury statistics. This strategy would include employment of dedicated regional and remote communications specialist(s)/coordinator(s).</p>
How	<p>It is proposed that the Federal Government engage the Australasian College of Road Safety to establish a National Road Safety Communications Working Group with members sourced from nationally identified specialist organisations. The aim of this working group would be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Road Safety Communications & Marketing Plan • Work with an ACRS Communications specialist to implement the Plan <p>There are a variety of ways this could be managed. The College proposes that it employs a full-time Senior Road Safety Communications Manager who would be responsible for managing the Communications Working Group, and implementing the resultant Communications Plan.</p>
Investment	<p>Total ACRS staff, meeting and publication expenditure: <u>\$189,000 per year</u> (1st year, 2nd & subsequent year costs dependent on goals of resultant Communications Plan).</p>

3	Address the Regional and Remote Road Deaths Disparity
Why	<p>As highlighted by the federal Minister, Darren Chester, we are currently experiencing a disparity between the number of deaths occurring on roads outside urban areas. The latest data shows that around 2/3 of road deaths are occurring on regional roads.</p> <p>The recent conference in Perth enabled the WA Road Safety Commission to provide scholarships for 19 regional and remote participants to attend the conference, representatives who would otherwise be unable to participate. Feedback from each attendee has been very positive in terms of both networking opportunities for future work and knowledge transfer. We proposed that forming a partnership with the Commonwealth will allow this program to be expanded to maximise impact in our regional and remote regions.</p> <p>With the jurisdictions currently considering the development of a regional and remote road safety strategy, the College would provide a perfect opportunity to provide an independent facilitator/manager to assist in strategy development, stakeholder engagement and strategy implementation.</p>
What	<p>Communicate with all road safety stakeholders to develop and implement a Regional Road Safety Strategy.</p> <p>Develop and implement with government agencies, including the transport and health sectors, an engagement strategy for regional and remote stakeholders, including convening a satellite event with the Australasian Road Safety Conference for those</p>

	<p>working in Local Government Agencies and wider stakeholder groups as required/agreed.</p> <p>Develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy for Regional and Remote stakeholders, to complement and strengthen outcomes from the R&R strategy and the ARSC satellite event.</p>
How	<p>It is proposed that the Federal Government engage the Australasian College of Road Safety to assist in/drive development and implementation of the Regional and Remote Road Safety Strategy. The aim of this engagement would be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a central reference point, with the Department, and oversight of development of a Regional and Remote Road Safety Strategy • Work with the ACRS management specialist to implement the Strategy <p>There are a variety of ways this could be managed. The College proposes that it employs a full-time Senior Road Safety Regional and Remote Manager who would be responsible for managing satellite event at ARSC conferences as well as managing engagement activities across jurisdictions throughout the year.</p>
Investment	<p>Total ACRS staff, hosting and attendance expenditure: <u>\$240,000 per year</u> (1st year - 2nd & subsequent year costs dependent on goals of resultant Communications Plan).</p>

4	Annual Road Safety Conference
Why	<p>Feedback from all recent conferences indicates that the vast majority of delegates find the event extremely helpful in expanding the networks and increasing their expertise.</p> <p>Since the College took over management of the merged jurisdictional (RSRPE) and ACRS conferences this new event has been cemented on the regional calendar as a major provider of knowledge transfer & professional development for the diverse road safety stakeholder networks across Australasia and increasingly globally.</p> <p>The conferences historically attract 600-700 attendees and post-event surveys show the event to be overwhelmingly successful. The event provides a jurisdictional focus each year as it rotates around the region as well as maintaining a broader national and regional focus through targeted workshops & concurrent sessions, expert keynote presenters and timely themed plenary sessions, seminars, satellite events, and scholarships – both regional and targeted at Low and Middle-Income Countries.</p>
What	<p>It is proposed the Federal Government provides a three year commitment of sponsorship for the conference including a specific allocation to assist Australia's engagement with and aims of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety and to address issues of national importance, both current and emerging. For example this includes the emergence of new technologies, support for keynote speaker engagement, and support for LMIC Scholarships.</p>
How	Multi-year agreement
Investment	<p>College management of the ARSC LMIC program (\$30,000), procurement of eminent speakers (\$30,000), LMIC Scholarships (\$50,000), and Gold Sponsorship (\$50,000). Total: <u>\$160,000 ARSC sponsorship per annum</u> over three years.</p>

5	International Collaboration
Why	<p>In a 2016 letter from Dr Etienne Krug at the World Health Organization (WHO) to Hon Michael McCormack MP, the WHO expressed their keenness <i>“to explore further how the Government of Australia might be able to collaborate with WHO to support countries, in particular in the WHO /Western Pacific Region, to define priorities and make the urgent progress needed”</i>. Some ideas for follow up included ... <i>“Facilitating capacity development for road safety in low-income and middle-income countries through a specific programme at the Australasian Road Safety Conference 2016 in Canberra”</i>.</p> <p>The support provided by the Federal Government to international delegates to the Australasian Road Safety Conference has provided a significant boost to the early initiative of College members to explicitly incorporate a regional component in this premier road safety knowledge event. This began with the landmark 2008 conference in Adelaide where one-off AusAID and World Bank funding was secured to support this work. Capacity development in the region is expected to be a key issue for some time to come.</p>
What	It is proposed that the Federal Government support the formal establishment of an ACRS international Outreach Chapter and/or ACRS ASEAN Chapter. The Chapter would be twinned with one of the College’s most active Chapters (Queensland, New South Wales or Victoria), and a program of knowledge transfer and professional activities supported over a period of three years. The goal would be to establish a Chapter which can sustain itself from the fourth year onwards.
How	Multi-year agreement
Investment	Total ACRS staff, hosting and attendance expenditure: <u>\$250,000 per year.</u>

Table 1: Contribution sought by ACRS to improve road trauma reduction outcomes

<u>Program</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>Total over 3 years</u>
1. Facilitate Stakeholder Engagement	\$ 197,000	\$ 197,000	\$ 197,000	\$ 591,000
2. National Road Safety Promotion	\$ 189,000	\$ 189,000	\$ 189,000	\$ 567,000
3. Regional and Remote Development	\$ 240,000	\$ 240,000	\$ 240,000	\$ 720,000
4. Annual Road Safety Conference	\$ 160,000	\$ 160,000	\$ 160,000	\$ 480,000
5. International Collaboration	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ 750,000
<u>Total per year</u>	\$ 1,036,000	\$ 1,036,000	\$ 1,036,000	\$3,108,000

2.0 Key ACRS Achievements

This section describes three current and innovative activities, and outlines our most recent achievements over the past 12 months in particular. The College has three innovative programs presently contributing to the process of reducing road trauma, predominately concentrating on the Management Pillar recommended in the UN Decade of Action agenda.

1. Collaboratively supporting the [Australian](#) and [New Zealand](#) National Road Safety Strategies;
2. Managing the [Australasian Road Safety Conferences \(ARSC\)](#); and
3. Publishing the world's only peer-reviewed [Journal](#) dedicated to road safety.

2.1 *Collaboratively supporting the Australia and New Zealand's National Road Safety Strategies.*

In 2017 the College presented a comprehensive [2017 Submission to Australian Federal Parliamentarians](#), outlining Australia's stalled progress against National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 targets for death and injury reduction, the multi-portfolio impacts of road trauma across the spectrum of federal departments, and comprehensive recommendations on the way forward to reduce road trauma.

The innovative process developing this submission including drafting in collaboration with the [ACRS Executive Committee](#) and [Fellows](#). This submission was supported by significant organisations including the [Australian Automobile Association](#), the [Royal Australasian College of Surgeons](#), and [Carers Australia](#) – in tandem representing around 10 million Australians/New Zealanders. This submission has been downloaded over 6,000 times globally and has generated ongoing discussions in Federal Parliament including in the [Senate by the co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Road Safety](#).

2.2 *Managing the Australasian Road Safety Conference (ARSC)*

The [Australasian Road Safety Conference \(ARSC\)](#) series (including prestigious [Awards](#)) was established with leadership from the College Executive Committee during an extended submission process in 2014/15. ARSC has successfully amalgamated the College conference and the Australian/New Zealand government-run conference (via the [Austroads multi-jurisdictional agency](#)) to form the largest road safety-dedicated conference in our region. The College manages the conference on behalf of all ACRS members and jurisdictional government agencies.

The conferences to date have attracted 500-700 attendees and have received an overwhelmingly positive reception. (See the [ARSC2017 post-conference wrap-up](#), the [ARSC2016 post-conference wrap-up](#), the [ARSC2015 post-conference wrap-up](#) and the [photo galleries](#) for supporting evidence).

In Canberra there were 150+ peer-reviewed papers and 13 symposia, providing the platform for the wide range of delegates to build their knowledge for application in reducing road trauma. [ARSC2017](#), with a theme of "Expanding Our Horizons", attracted over 650 delegates to Perth, Western Australia this October.

For the second year we welcomed delegates awarded [Scholarships to attend from Low and Middle Income countries](#), with specific targeted sessions to assist in building knowledge and skills. For the first time this year we offered [Scholarships for those from regional and remote areas to attend ARSC2017](#). This innovation is aimed at addressing the current disparity where 2/3 of deaths occur on roads outside urban areas.

ARSC2018 will be in Sydney in September 2018 and is anticipated will be our largest event yet. The focus on regional safety and international outreach will expand.

2.3 *Publishing a quality peer-reviewed Journal on road safety research.*

The [Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety](#) (JACRS) publishes high quality peer-reviewed papers four times a year. It provides a rigorous platform to communicate the evidence for the delivery of road safety. Recently the ACRS has concentrated on significantly expanding and strengthening the [JACRS Editorial Board](#) and raising the JACRS Impact Factor (IF) in order to become a world class publication, sought after by high profile authors.

2.4 *Recent Achievements: 2017*

Achievements for the 2017 year have been extensive and include the following:

- Managing the annual Australasian Road Safety Conference series, in partnership with Austroads. In 2017 this event attracted 650+ road safety stakeholders to Perth. The [post-event survey](#) showed a high level of satisfaction across all facets of the event, and the conference has now become the major road safety event on the calendar in our region.
- The holding of multiple Australasian and Chapter events across a diverse range of subjects, from older drivers to safer vehicles and the safe system. Numbers of delegates attracted has ranged from 40 to 100+ attendees.
- Presentation of a comprehensive [2017 Submission to Federal Parliamentarians](#). This submission has been downloaded over 6,000 times and was developed collaboratively relying on the expertise of our [ACRS Executive Committee](#) and [Fellows](#).
- Meetings with federal and state politicians to assist in expediting reductions in the road toll. This has included meeting with Minister Chester, his advisers and his Department, as well as meetings with a variety of jurisdictional Ministers.
- Supporting the federal [Parliamentary Friends of Road Safety](#) group. This is a non-partisan group of federal politicians which has 4 main objectives:
 - Elevate within the Federal Parliament greater awareness of road safety.
 - Inform Federal Parliamentarians of the need for continued improvement in road safety outcomes.
 - Inform Federal Parliamentarians of the national and international initiatives with potential to improve road safety outcomes.
 - Ensure the Federal members of Parliament are aware of the enormous social and economic cost of failing to continually prioritise improved road safety outcomes.
- Maintaining a close connection with the College's eminent Patron. Our current Patron is the Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC, whose patronage supports a broader profile for the work of the College and all those involved in saving lives and injuries on our roads. This support has included activities such as the recent [joint media release commemorating the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims](#). This media release has been viewed over 2,500 times.
- The holding of a successful [2017 Australasian Road Safety Conference in Perth](#). Many thanks go to our competent Western Australian Chapter Executive Committee, ably led by co-Chairs Professor Lynn Meuleners (C-MARC) and Paul Roberts (ARRB).

- In partnership with 3M, ACRS has continued for the seventh year the prestigious [3M-ACRS Diamond Road Safety Award](#). This annual award has provided recognition to exemplary road safety initiatives, including [Kidsafe ACT \(2017\)](#), [DriveSafe NT Remote \(2016\)](#), [Queensland Government Bruce Highway Project \(2015\)](#), [Amy Gillett Foundation \(2014\)](#), [BHP-Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance \(2013\)](#), [Project Tocan \(2012\)](#), and [Project RAPTAR \(2011\)](#). Through this award we encourage all road safety practitioners from the public or private sectors to submit highly innovative, cost-effective road safety initiatives/programs which they have recently developed that stand out from standard, everyday practice and deliver significant improvements in road safety for the community.
- Presentation of the [ACRS Fellowship](#) to deserving candidates who have made outstanding contributions towards road trauma reductions. In 2017 this honour went to [Ms Samantha Cockfield, the Road Safety Manager at Victoria's Transport Accident Commission](#), for her outstanding contribution as an advocate for road safety both in our region and internationally. Sam has contributed enormously to excellence in road safety strategy development across all road safety pillars, and in particular in being a strong leader and mentor in promoting best practice at a national and international level. Submissions for the Fellowship encourage nominations for deserving candidates who have shown exemplary commitment to reducing road trauma.
- Presentation of several verbal and [written submissions](#) to a variety of audiences.
- Media releases on topical issues including [seat belts on high speed school buses](#), the [NT open speed limit proposal](#), and the [proposal to relax QLD bicycle helmet laws](#). 2017 media releases include:
 - [World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims -Joint ACRS President & Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove Media Release](#) (19 November 2017)
 - [ACT Child Safety Program Takes Out Top Road Safety Prize](#) (12 October 2017)
 - [TAC's Samantha Cockfield recognised with prestigious Australasian Road Safety Award](#) (12 October 2017)
 - [US Expert to Keynote Perth Road Safety Conference](#) (8 October 2017)
 - [Road Trauma Rising - ACRS presents the way forward](#) (27 March 2017)
 - [Road deaths and injuries rising: Time to fund road safety election promises in budget to save lives and injuries](#) (17 January 2017)
- In partnership with the National Health and Medical Research Council, the College held a National Road Safety Research Workshop during 2013 which culminated in the development of a [National Road Safety Research Framework](#). This work is ongoing.
- During 2011 the College initiated an [ACRS Weekly Alert e-newsletter](#) which was converted to an online version in 2013. Circulation of the e-newsletter continues to increase amongst road safety stakeholders as it provides an easily digestible weekly snapshot of the many news items and events around Australasia and the rest of the world.
- Recently the College undertook to develop and maintain an [online database of papers for annual Australasian Road Safety Research Policing and Education conferences](#). This has provided researchers, authors and the general public with an accessible, up-to-date repository of these important publications. This database is updated annually following each conference.

- ACRS continues to publish the quarterly ACRS journal, which is the only road safety dedicated peer-review journal - ably edited by our competent Journal Managing Editor Dr Chika Sakashita and Editor in Chief Professor Raphael Grzebieta.
- Contributed to the development of major party road safety policies. For example the [Coalition's Policy to Improve Road Safety](#) can be viewed here.

3.0 Key ACRS Benefits

The [Australasian College of Road Safety](#) is Australasia's peak membership association and provides a wide range of services to members, particularly focussing on factors in the Management Pillar of road safety action in the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety.

3.1 Aim and objectives

ACRS is the region's peak membership association for road safety professionals, advocates, and members of the public who are focused on saving lives and serious injuries on our roads. The College aims to provide a rich, collaborative environment promoting communication, networking, professionalism & advocacy across all spheres of road safety – including policy, advocacy, research, application & dissemination.

The Objectives of the College are specifically aimed at expediting road trauma reduction as follows:

- To foster closer communication, co-operation and support among all groups and individuals working at all levels in road safety and traffic education programs;
- To provide a focus for dissemination of information on road safety and traffic education available in Australia and from overseas;
- To encourage community groups to work for the reduction of the road toll;
- To encourage the professional assessment, evaluation and monitoring of road safety programs, and to promote those that are most effective in reducing road trauma;
- To provide a forum for promotion of workable road safety initiatives through appropriate government and private bodies;
- To encourage the provision of an environment of care and support for victims of road trauma; and
- To promote best practice road safety to all levels of Government

[ACRS membership](#) includes experts from all areas of road safety, and has active Chapters in jurisdictions across Australia/New Zealand. ACRS is proud to have as our [Patron the Governor General of Australia](#), who has officiated at [College Awards](#) and other activities.

3.2 Eminent Patronage

ACRS is privileged to have as our Patron the current Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd). Sir Peter was pleased to accept the role as ACRS Patron as he sees the work of the College as complementary to his responsibilities as Governor-General and to themes of personal interest to him.

Sir Peter gave a widely acclaimed Boyer Lecture in 2009 entitled *A Very Australian Conversation*. 40 years of military experience and service to the nation placed him in a unique position to talk about the challenges and opportunities faced by society today and into the future. His presentation covered issues including our regional relationships and our leadership abilities both as a nation and as individuals, the political and sociological changes over his lifetime, and a future we might aspire to—one which will challenge our descendants.

Sir Peter said *"Paying it forward". In many ways that is a succinct expression of the major obligation of our existence. Doing things now for the protection and upliftment of relatively helpless future generations, which either don't exist yet or are presently too young to take action themselves...."*

3.3 *Cost-effective budget plus respect earned since inception in 1998*

The College is a Not-For-Profit entity and has operated effectively since foundation in 1988, with funding from membership subscriptions and events. ACRS relies heavily on volunteer contributions from members and, in particular, the [Executive Committee](#) and our [awarded Fellows](#).

Through our increased activity and outreach over the last 5 years our turnover has quadrupled to \$1m in 2016. We however retain only a minimal residual operating budget for our small administration team of 1.8 FTE paid staff, so that operating funds can primarily support road trauma reduction activities.

3.4 *Network of Experts & Research base*

The College relies strongly on the expertise of our [Executive Committee](#) and [awarded Fellows](#) for advice on all matters.

In 2013 the College initiated a collaboration with the [National Health and Medical Research Council](#) (NHMRC), hosting a [workshop](#) aimed at developing [a National Road Safety Research Strategy](#). Forty-five stakeholders from around Australia including economists, policy makers, lobbyists, health professionals, researchers and scientists, met to discuss a research strategy, determining national research priorities in line with the current National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 and the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety. The main outcome of the workshop included agreement and consensus on the need for a research framework that could be monitored and updated on an annual basis – which was one of the reasons for the formation of ARSC Conferences in 2015.

For the JACRS and ARSC conferences, all papers submitted for publication undergo a rigorous peer-review process. Papers submitted to JACRS as a *Perspective/Commentary on Road Safety* or *Correspondence* are also required to meet the high standard expected of our authors.

3.5 *Innovative organisation*

The College is a cost-effective and innovative platform for:

- Distribution of evidence-based road safety knowledge;
- Encouraging active networking;
- Enhancing management of road safety nationally, regionally and internationally; and
- Providing independent and reputable advocacy on mechanisms for reducing road trauma.

The College has been invited to be a lead contributor to the current Government review of the National Road Safety Strategy. This is evidence of the high esteem in which the College is held amongst the road safety fraternity.

The annual series of ARSC conferences (since 2015) are recognised widely through high participation and a wider reach as a key independent forum for sharing expertise to reduce trauma (see [feedback](#) and [surveys](#) from ARSC2017 here).

JACRS is circulated to all members and is available freely online. It provides a vehicle for road safety professionals to publish research, sometimes a requirement for academic recognition. JACRS citations are now being indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), and citation activity is visible in Web of Science

The College has gained increasing reputation internationally, and has [recently become an official member of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration \(UNRSC\)](#).

The College is a key supporter of the [Australian Parliamentary Friends of Road Safety](#) group of around 50 federal politicians, and assists in encouraging the Co-chairs to join the Global Legislators for Road Safety program.

3.6 *Ongoing evaluation*

Evaluation has been sourced through the post-conference delegate survey and feedback from conference attendees as detailed/hyperlinked above, and has been overwhelmingly positive.

3.7 *Ongoing commitment to improvement*

The College has a history of growth and is already working on the three key projects for 2018 and beyond. The venue for ARSC2018 in Sydney is booked and arrangements are progressing for ARSC2019 and ARSC2020. JACRS is revitalising the Editorial Board, including the addition of key international experts, and will become the highest calibre scientific journal for road safety. The College is also seeking to expand our ability to assist in road trauma reductions through this budget submission and detailed proposals contained within.

3.8 *Ease of replication*

The College model is easily replicable in other regions. The College has minimal operational resources but is willing to provide qualified advice and support to potential start-up entities.

3.9 *Sustainable organisation through diligent management*

The College is expanding in terms of increased turnover and standing within the road safety community, and in acceptance and recognition. Membership is diversifying and comprises individuals, jurisdictional government agencies, research establishments, and private firms.

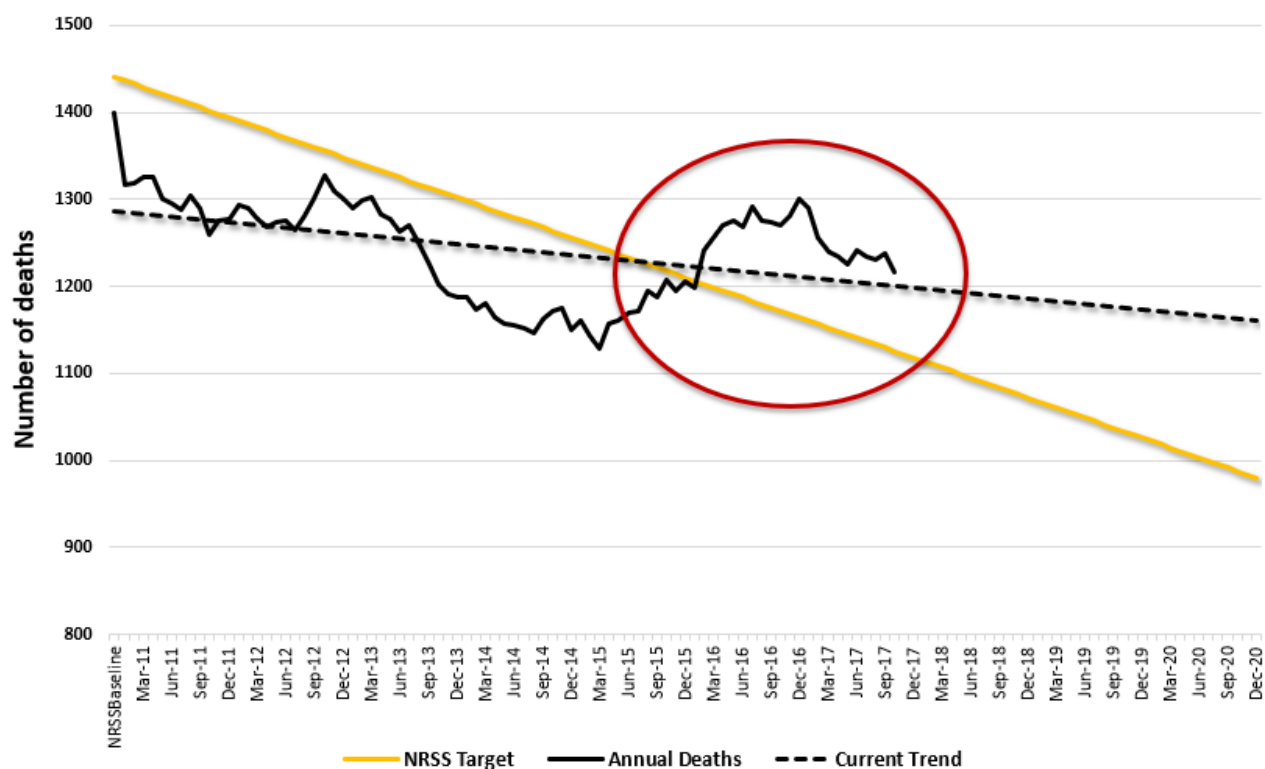
Funding is always 'tight', and proposals and programs are regularly initiated to ensure a sustainable organisation.

4.0 Background & Supporting data

Road trauma is one of the highest ranking public health issues we face as a nation today, and the number of people affected, particularly through serious injuries as a result of road trauma, is increasing (Figure 1, [BITRE, 2017](#) & ACRS, Figure 2, [BITRE, 2016](#)). Death from road trauma in rural and regional Australia is over-represented in the statistics, in 2015 accounting for around 66% of all trauma. Each week in Australia 25 people die and at least 700 are seriously injured, and the ripple effect of each road trauma event to our families and communities is enormous.

Figure 1: Deaths from Road Trauma in Australia 2010-2017

Comparison with NRSS targets and current trend (Source Data: [BITRE, 2017](#) Chart: ACRS)



The causes and consequences of road trauma continue to have a serious impact on Australia's productivity, estimated by the federal government to cost our economy \$27bn per year in 2011 – with recent data showing this had risen to around \$30bn per year by 2015 ([AAA, 2017](#)). This is similar to Australia's annual Defence Budget of \$31.9m for 2015/16 ([DoD, 2015](#)) and equivalent to 18% of health expenditure ([BITRE, 2014](#)) and 1.8% of the national GDP ([OECD, 2016](#)).

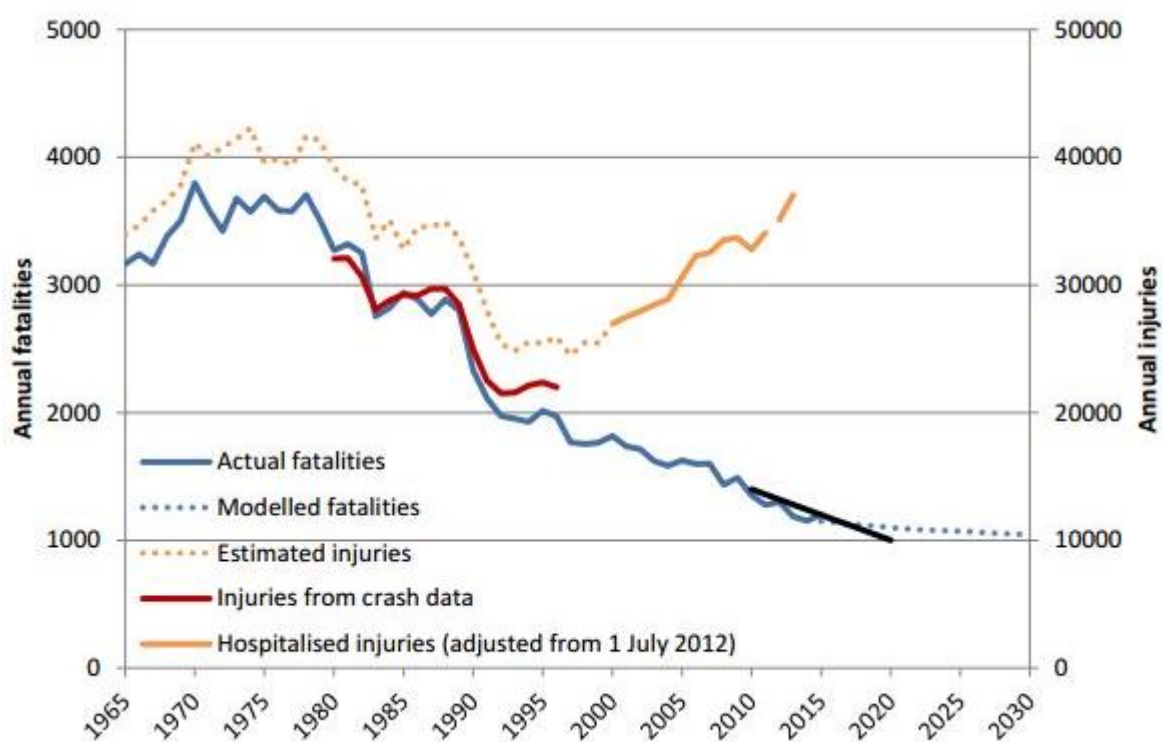
A detailed update of the BITRE 2009 Report was published by the Australian Automobile Association in 2017 which confirmed the total cost to the community and calculated the direct annual cost to the Federal Government in 2015 to be \$3.7bn ([AAA, 2017](#)).

Australia's performance has not improved to the same degree as many Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries since the year 2000. The OECD IRTAD Annual Report 2014 reports that 'Success in improving safety levels over the decade since 2000 continues to be

unequally spread, both across countries and across transport modes. The ... least success was recorded for the United States (-20.0%) and Australia (-28.5%) as well as in a number of observer countries' (OECD, 2014).

Unfortunately, the number of serious injuries from road crashes in Australia continues to increase each year. Between 2000 and 2013, the number of (Australian) people hospitalised due to road crashes increased from 26 963 to 35 059 per year (OECD, 2016). The number of serious injuries now sits at over 37,000 per year, and continues to rise (Figure 2, BITRE, 2016). The AAA report estimated that in 2015, from the 37,964 estimated hospitalised injuries, 4,436 people were estimated to have become permanently disabled (AAA, 2017). This is an increasing load on health, disability and social services, not to mention the personal and workplace productivity losses.

Figure 2: Australian road fatalities and injuries
Historical and modelled: 1965-2030 (Source: BITRE, 2016)



While the majority of road safety improvements are implemented and seen as the responsibility of State, Territory and Local Governments, the impact of road trauma is evident in programs across all Federal portfolios, in business, and of course across the community. World best practice in reducing road trauma recognises the need for a “systems approach”, a united effort involving all governments, business and the community to adequately address this serious and tragic health productivity and social issue.

Three of the top measures suggested by road safety experts—research, management and leadership—are strategic and were listed as not amenable to economic analysis in the BITRE report *'Impact of road trauma and measures to improve outcomes'* (BITRE, 2014). These important strategic activities are, however, addressed in the broader *Review of the National Road Safety Strategy* (Austroads, 2015). This Austroads report identifies 13 priority areas for which more emphasis is recommended because of changing crash patterns or a real or perceived lack of activity. However, no specific resources are allocated for those actions, nor is there any specific responsibility nominated.

The College as an effective independent national network, is able to assist in bringing all groups together to expedite achievements across all 13 priority areas identified in the report, with the following three examples having immediate relevance to this submission:

National Strategic Leadership

Internationally, road safety management is a growing focus of attention as various institutions and jurisdictions recognise that the limits to improved road safety performance are, in part, shaped by the capacity of the road safety management system operating in a country.

The College supports the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Darren Chester in his call in October 2017 to 650 delegates at the Australasian Road Safety Conference in Perth for road safety to have a national focus, a national response, and national leadership.

Communication Strategies

Communication of road safety messages is essential in gaining support for road safety initiatives.

All jurisdictions face similar challenges in communicating Safe System principles and shifting community perceptions in favour of interventions that will work. The literature review found some innovative and promising communication campaigns, reflecting a variety of approaches.

The College already has efficient communication networks and could extend these with additional resources. The cooperative development of resources and guidelines to assist jurisdictions in communication activities could be part of the action plan.

Monitoring Serious Injuries and Crashes

Road safety has long relied upon road fatality counts as the main outcome indicator. It has been recognised that this provides an incomplete basis for planning and monitoring because initiatives directed at reducing deaths are not necessarily effective at reducing other harm, particularly persisting disability.

Measurement of serious road injury is currently limited and often disconnected. Substantial improvement is necessary because of the large numbers of cases, the burden of disability resulting from many of the cases, and the differences in trends and other aspects of the data between fatalities and serious injuries. A “Big Data” approach should be considered to assist in the measurement and monitoring of serious injuries, to improve the availability and reliability of information for analysis.

The College has an extensive network of member organisations and relationships with stakeholders, and has an excellent track record in bringing all groups together to collaborate to enhance our road safety outcomes. The College is in a prime position to provide the government and Australian communities with well-planned, efficient and coordinated support to bring our nation back to being a leader on the world stage in terms of road trauma reductions.

In this submission, the College requests a total of \$3.1m over 3 years to fund activities aimed at substantially increasing Australia’s road trauma reduction rate – an investment by the Australian

government that will have ripple effects across the economy and society for many years and kame direct reduction to the cost of road trauma to current Government outlays..

The Coalition's Road Safety Policy ([LNP, 2013](#)) recognises that the rate of progress in road trauma reductions has slowed in recent years, and also recognises that effective change is necessary. The Policy sets out a plan to increase our combined efforts to reduce road trauma:

*Under a Coalition government the Transport Minister will work closely with all stakeholders to encourage a collaborative approach to research, innovation and the delivery of new programmes to help save lives and reduce injuries on our roads. This will include existing road safety researchers and bodies such as the **Australian Research Council**, the **National Health and Medical Research Council**, and the **Australasian College of Road Safety** to build scale in research and assist in the development of road safety initiatives.*

The Coalition has committed expenditure in road safety through Departmental programs which include Black Spot funding, supporting State-specific activities through COAG, support of Local Government road safety awards, the AAA Keys to Drive Program, participation in ANCAP, Vehicle safety research, various NTC programs as well as some AID road safety programs to name a few.

The College supports and encourages continued funding of these. However, resourcing of these programs tends to be disconnected with each organisation seeking funds on a case by case basis - almost competing for a very small funding pool, particularly when measured against infrastructure spending and the real costs of road trauma to the nation.

We believe that part of the paradigm shift needed in road safety management will be recognition of the importance and value of new "disruptive" technologies (i.e. "a technology that displaces an established technology and shakes up the industry, or a ground-breaking product that creates a completely new industry" ([WhatIs, 2016](#))) across policy, data management, communication, vehicles and post trauma care, all of which should be encouraged and monitored to assist in reducing road trauma.

The College notes that against the rising cost of road trauma, internal department funding for road safety policy, research and related programs has declined over the past two decades. Even in the current appropriation funding will fall from \$18,2m to 16.3m in 2020-2021 (AAA, 2017).

The College does not believe that any new money is necessarily required for the funding, as the value of the programs proposed could be funded adequately as an almost "rounding" figure within the current national roads infrastructure budget which is in \$Billions. A relatively small reallocation may be possible if specific funds are not available. Funding the programs suggested below will assist in building scale in road safety nationally. This is vital. We believe there is little value in the Federal Government funding State and Local Government roads unless there is national leadership and a coordination program to ensure that those funds are committed to align with a specified reduction in road trauma. The economic benefits which will accrue across so many Federal as well as State and Local Government portfolios will be much greater than the outlays proposed here. Benefits of various specific improvements alone are set out in the recent BITRE report.

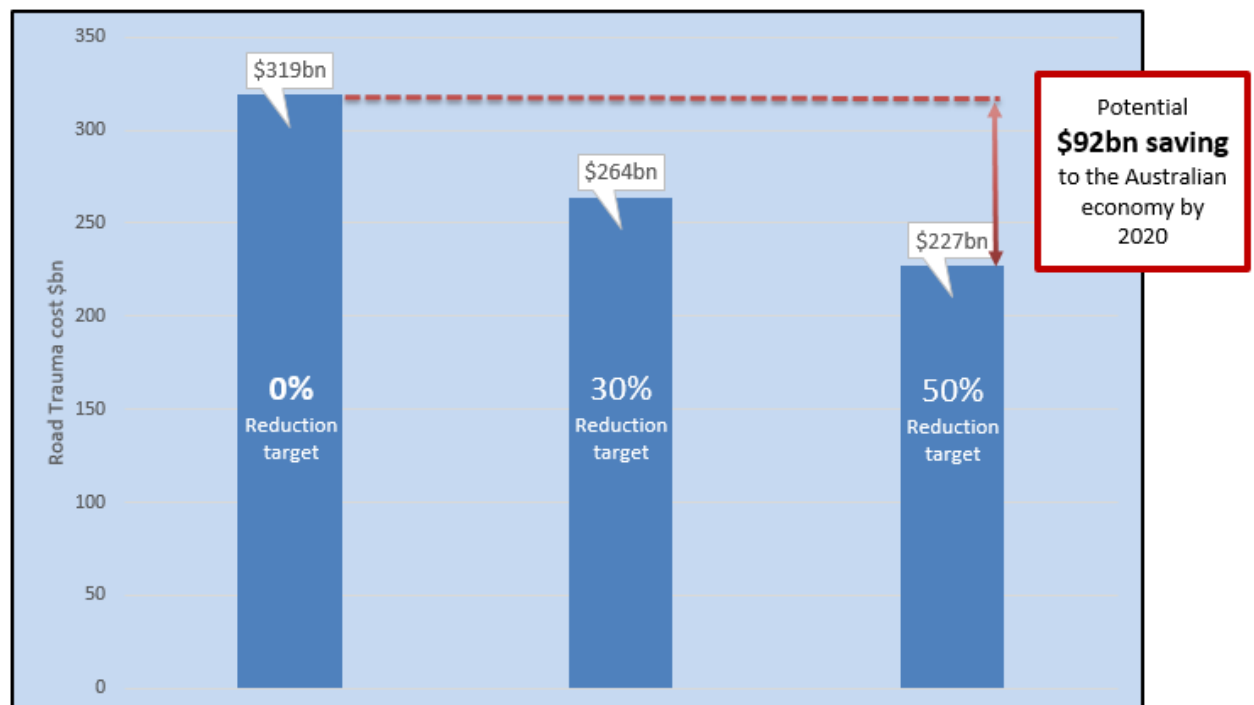
However, to be most effective, a multifaceted national program which covers the five major road safety action pillars is necessary. While the Government has acknowledged the College's past two Budget Submissions, no reallocation of or new resources have been made available to the College or the Department. This is particularly disappointing given the trauma increases we have experienced.

Given the recent and tragic increase in road deaths and injuries, every effort must be undertaken to lift our target reduction in deaths and injuries by a further 20% at least, to bring us in line with the targets of the majority of OECD countries.

Priority budget spending areas recommended in this report are designed to support the government and College's road trauma reduction work, as well as supporting the recommendations outlined in the Coalition's Road Safety Policy. These key recommendations support the wider government actions as well as improved outcomes for Australian society as a whole. We believe this program can be used to leverage greater involvement in other related contributions and activities by many stakeholders.

The 2014 ACRS Submission to the Australian Road Safety Community ([ACRS, 2014](#)) outlined concerns over the continued and substantial cost of road trauma to the Australian economy and societal well-being as a whole (Figure 3, [ACRS, 2014, and Appendix 1](#)).

**Figure 3: Cost of road trauma to the Australian economy
with 0%, 30% and 50% reduction targets**
\$bn cumulative 2011-2020



As outlined in our 2015 Submission to the Senate Inquiry into Aspects of Road Safety in Australia ([ACRS, 2015](#)), although there are many good examples of effective road trauma reduction programs occurring in organisations across Australia, there is a fragmentation and disconnection that detracts from Australia

achieving the maximum benefit and effect of these programs. This is hindering the potential gains that Australia can make.

The proposals outlined in this 2018-19 Pre-budget Submission are aimed at significantly increasing Australia's achievements in reducing road trauma, in line with recommendations in the Coalition's Road Safety Policy, the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020, and the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2010-2020.

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Attachments

Attachment 1 – ACRS Membership

The Australasian College of Road Safety membership consists of the following:

- All Australian and New Zealand road safety research agencies
- Australian and New Zealand universities
- Injury prevention, brain injury and neuroscience research organisations
- Australasian medical representative groups
- Australian federal government road safety & health promotion agencies
- State and Territory road transport agencies
- Local government agencies
- Policing agencies (both federal and state)
- Emergency services agencies
- Road safety research funding organisations
- Medical associations
- Safety promotion and training agencies
- Carer advocacy groups and associations
- Independent road safety consultants
- State vehicle and personal insurance agencies
- Driving schools and instructor associations
- Road safety advocacy groups, including motorcycles, children, youth, pedestrians, cyclists
- Road industry groups, including vehicles, trucks, roads
- International road safety consultants, agencies and advocacy groups
- Fleet safety associations
- Independent economist consultants and companies
- Engineers & engineering associations
- Legal firms
- Trucking companies
- Vehicle manufacturing companies
- Vehicle safety advocacy and testing organisations
- Other public or private companies interested in or working in the field of road safety
- Secondary, tertiary and post-graduate students currently studying in the road trauma field
- Interested members of the public

Imagine the consequences...

Imagine if our nation was providing defence forces to combat war overseas, and that *25 soldiers were dying and 700 being seriously injured each week* - week after week, year after year. Imagine if there was no end in sight, and the wartime fatalities had increased in the last calendar year compared to the year before. The public and political pressure to end these mass casualties would be immense.

Imagine if there were 5 Boeing 737 crashes every week in Australia, with *25 passengers dying and 700 being seriously injured each week*. The public outcry would be enormous, the effects on our nation soul destroying. Every effort would be made to stem this tide of death and injury.

Imagine if there was an epidemic which consistently, year after year, was the leading cause of casualty in our population for 1-44 year olds. Imagine if it was the leading cause of death and injury in our young people between the ages of 15-24. The forces mobilised to counteract this epidemic would be enormous.

Imagine the effects on health system if our hospitals were dealing with the injured from these plane crashes, war events or epidemics – *700 people per week* - reaching the emergency doors with serious injuries, enduring lengthy hospital stays and for some a lifetime of disability.

Imagine the strain on our disability services and community support structures if our communities were dealing with these injured people – *700 people per week* – some requiring extensive and costly lifetime support.

Imagine the consequences of these deaths and injuries on our communities – the 25 deaths per week resulting in outpourings of grief from our families and communities, and the 700 people each week who are released from hospital to be cared for by families and communities in the longer term.

Imagine if the annual cost to our economy of these plane crashes, wartime efforts or epidemics was estimated to be over \$27 billion in 2011, and had risen to around \$32b by 2016, and continued to increase each year over and above CPI. This is more than Australia's current annual defence budget of \$31.9b (Department of Defence, 2015). The political and social pressure to solve this problem would be enormous.

This is the road trauma reality – 25 people dead and 700 seriously injured every week.

Week after week.

Year after year.

The impact of road trauma is all-encompassing, impacting the full spectrum of the political agenda. A much stronger focus on saving lives and injuries on our roads, covering all age groups and user groups, all the factors in roads and vehicles, and including all facets of road crashes such as trauma services and post-crash care, would have a major impact on Australia's economic and social well-being. There are many simple and cost-effective solutions.

The College urges all federal politicians to raise the profile of road trauma across our nation and internationally, and provide strong leadership and support for a coordinated approach towards road trauma reductions.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 1: Australian road trauma costs 2011-2020 Comparison of costs (\$b) – 30% vs 50% reduction targets

Year	Road Trauma cost baseline figures (assuming annual trauma reduction = 0)			30% reduction target against NRSS baseline figures				50% United Nations reduction target against NRSS baseline figures			
	Deaths (No.)	Injuries (No.)	Road trauma cost \$b ^a	% reduction from baseline ^b	Deaths (No.)	Injuries (No.)	Road trauma cost \$b ^a	% reduction from baseline ^b	Deaths (No.)	Injuries (No.)	Road trauma cost \$b ^a
NRSS Baseline	1,400	32,500	27		1,400	32,500	27		1,400	32,500	27
2011	1,400	32,500	27.81	-3%	1,358	31,525	26.98	-5%	1,330	30,875	26.42
2012	1,400	32,500	28.64	-6%	1,316	30,550	26.93	-10%	1,260	29,250	25.78
2013	1,400	32,500	29.50	-9%	1,274	29,575	26.85	-15%	1,190	27,625	25.08
2014	1,400	32,500	30.39	-12%	1,232	28,600	26.74	-20%	1,120	26,000	24.31
2015	1,400	32,500	31.30	-15%	1,190	27,625	26.61	-25%	1,050	24,375	23.48
2016	1,400	32,500	32.24	-18%	1,148	26,650	26.44	-30%	980	22,750	22.57
2017	1,400	32,500	33.21	-21%	1,106	25,675	26.23	-35%	910	21,125	21.58
2018	1,400	32,500	34.20	-24%	1,064	24,700	25.99	-40%	840	19,500	20.52
2019	1,400	32,500	35.23	-27%	1,022	23,725	25.72	-45%	770	17,875	19.38
2020	1,400	32,500	36.29	-30%	980	22,750	25.40	-50%	700	16,250	18.14
Total	14,000	325,000	318.81		11,690	271,375	263.88		10,150	235,625	227.26

^a Assumes 3% CPI, and utilises \$27b figure estimate in NRSS 2011-2020 i.e. \$3,180,598 per death and \$316,869 per serious injury (2006 dollars)

^b Assumes linear reduction over 10 years i.e. 42 deaths and 975 serious injuries (30%), and 70 deaths and 1,625 serious injuries per year (50%)