

ACRS ACT Chapter Chapter Meeting Minutes

Time 3PM AEST (ACT Time)

22/7/26 Via Zoom

Attendees:

Meryl Hinge
Rod Katz
Cecily Michaels
Kate Beck
Hooman Alenoori
Katherine Buttsworth
Lauchlan McIntosh

Amanda George
Lesa O'Leary
Jen Woods
Steve Hugler
Peter Hill
Lyndal McKay
Rajesh Narayan

Apologies:

John Ryan
Jess Weatherby
Anne Napier
Andy Hughes
Steve Lake
Ram Subramanian

1. Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Quorum

- Expressed thanks to Meryl for arranging hosting at the Yass Valley Council buildings.
- Introductions for the benefit of new attendees
- Welcomed new attendees including Lyndal from Tumut and Rajesh from Fiji.

2. Matters for Discussion

Given the context of the meeting, Yass, a regional centre close to the Hume Highway, a lot of discussion was focussed on the recent spate of truck crashes on the Highway. Various reasons were suggested as to why this may be occurring. The role of training, licensing and fitness to drive regulations were discussed. A number of gaps in the licensing system were noted as having an impact on crash likelihood.

Kate clarified the upcoming Fitness to Drive changes applying to the heavy vehicle industry from 1/8/26.

Lauchlan shared information (in italics below) from NSW quarterly Road Safety Advisory Council Meeting courtesy of Mick Timms (NSW ACRS Chapter Chair):

RSAC is chaired by TfNSW Deputy Secretary Sally Webb and Roads Minister Aitchison and/or her staffers attend for the duration. There are people from various organisations at the table.

I raised the recent Breadalbane crashes and heavy vehicle safety in general (speed limiter tampering is on the rise again <https://www.fullyloaded.com.au/nhvr-targets-illegal-speed-limiter-tampering/>).

I can relay the following:

Statistics:

-Heavy vehicle fatalities are at their highest since 2019

-42 Year to Date (up to 13 July) which is +18 YTD

-TfNSW is doing "a deep dive" of heavy vehicle road trauma

Hume Hwy:

-Analysis of AusRAP reporting on the NSW road network has led to a \$30M project to improve safety star ratings on the Hume Hwy. This will be announced shortly.

Road Policing:

-Traffic & Highway Patrol Command Assistant Commissioner David Driver said there will be "an appropriate police response" as a result of the Breadalbane crashes.

Cecily noted that, while the major incidents involving heavy vehicles are a real concern, it is important not to lost sight of the broader road safety picture. Her particular concerns in active transport safety are fundamental to achieving road safety goals.

Other topical road safety issues were mentioned including:

- e-devices
- "medicinal" cannabis and impairment
- Training and GLS: motorbikes

Rod noted that the ACT Government road safety team had written expressing their intention to step back from participating in ACRS forums. This is in the context of the Department having a round of voluntary redundancies. Rod noted that this is in contrast to other jurisdictions where State government employees play active roles in ACRS activities. A case in point being WA where a senior road safety practitioner in government is active as a Chapter Chair and presented at a Rural Road safety network webinar the day previous regarding the use of LIDAR and AI to implement AusRAP in a time and cost-efficient manner.

This is also in the context of the ACT government declining opportunities to collaborate on an e-device enforcement forum and hosting of the 2027 Australasian Road Safety Conference. IT is likely that the 2027 ARSC will now take place in Adelaide with the SA government expressing strong interest in supporting the event. Reasons for the pausing of the community grants program were also discussed.

3. Next Meeting and sharing of contacts

Next meeting proposed for 16/9/26. Venue yet to be decided but acknowledge Steve Lake, Peter Hill and Carla Hoorweg who have indicated they could possibly accommodate the meeting.

Attendees agreed that draft minutes would be circulated and emails of attendees shared.