HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND RESOURCES

Inquiry into the social issues relating to land-based driverless vehicles in Australia

Submission from the

Australasian College of Road Safety

27 February 2017

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Contents

Attachments

Letters to Ministers Fletcher and Chester

1.0 Summary

- Australia's National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020[1] sets out a range of strategies to reduce road trauma by 30% by the end of the decade, resulting in a reduction of the impost unnecessary road trauma impacts on national productivity. This Strategy is unfunded despite the national annual cost of road trauma being at least $32bn pa, 1.8% of GDP and increasing.

- Autonomous vehicles are claimed to reduce the potential for driver error, a contributor to road crashes and hence road trauma. Other submissions to the Inquiry set out a wide range of estimated benefits and risks, based on current examples of semi-autonomous and autonomous vehicles.

- The current road vehicle fleet is estimated at 18.4 million vehicles, with an average age of 10.1 years.[2] New, smarter vehicles will take time to be integrated into the current fleet. There is currently no proven, practical way to test new autonomous vehicle safety prior to widespread use.

- Federal standards for new vehicles currently follow a world collaborative standard process but set no mechanisms for encouraging the early introduction of new technologies. Non-regulatory mechanisms, such as ACNAP, government and corporation purchasing policies, and direct agreements can encourage manufacturers into early adoption of new technologies.

- International research suggests that real progress in reducing road trauma will necessitate a fundamental paradigm shift in the way the road safety problem is viewed, as well as the strategies used to address it. Technology to reduce collision rates through semi-autonomous and autonomous vehicles could accelerate that process but may also increase distractions in the introductory processes. The measurement of associated risks is not well defined and Australia does not appear to have an adequately resourced national coordination program to do so.

[1] http://roadsafety.gov.au/nrss/

[2] http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/mf/9309.0

2.0 Recommendations

- We urge the Inquiry to recognise full economic and social impacts of road trauma on the national economy and the lack of a well-resourced national program to encourage the introduction of safe semi-autonomous and autonomous vehicles into a mixed traffic fleet.

- We urge the Inquiry to recognise the complexity of and the need to resource and adequately assess, at a national level, the relative safety of semi-autonomous and autonomous vehicles. Urgent action with a paradigm governance shift could bring substantial social and economic benefits from reduced road trauma.

- We urge the Inquiry to note the mechanisms used in other countries to encourage the early introduction of safe collision avoidance technologies while cooperating with programs which are assessing the impacts of distractive technologies which are increasing being introduced into new vehicles by manufacturers and communication providers. Australia should actively endeavour to join such research projects.

3.0 Background

The Australasian College of Road Safety (ACRS) is the region's peak membership association for road safety professionals, agencies, corporations and members of the public who are focused on saving lives and serious injuries on our roads.

Past Federal government analysis put the annual cost of road trauma to the economy at $27bn.This was the equivalent of 18 per cent of health expenditure and 1.8 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (2012-13).[3] At that time road trauma had been falling steadily with a 34% reduction in deaths per 100,000 over the 2005-2015. Hospitalised injuries increased during this period.[4]

This downward trend in fatalities has not continued, with a 3.8% increase in deaths for the twelve-month period ending October 2016. In addition the number of hospitalised injuries from road trauma are growing despite a National Strategy and Action Plan for further reductions, and are currently at least 37,000 per year (2015 figure) in Australia[5] i.e. around 100 people seriously injured per day.[6]

It is reasonable to estimate that the 2016 the costs are likely to to have been over $32bn. In a report to the Australian Railway Association on the Cost of Road Crashes in 2010, Dr Richard Tooth notes; "The significance of road crash costs in Australia has been consistently underestimated, both in terms of the overall cost and the extent to which these costs are incorporated (i.e. internalised) in road-users' decisions."[7]

[3] https://bitre.gov.au/publications/2014/files/report_140.pdf
[4] http://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/road_deaths_australia_annual_summaries.aspx
[5] https://bitre.gov.au/publications/2016/files/is_076.pdf
[6] http://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/road_deaths_australia_monthly_bulletins.aspx
[7] http://www.econ.mq.edu.au/Econ_docs/research_seminars/2011_research_seminars/Tooth_Accidents_180311.pdf

With 25 people dying and 700 being seriously injured each week in Australia, the ripple effect of each road trauma event to our families, to the workplace and communities is enormous. It is reasonable to assume the cost to the national economy over the next decade to be in the order of at least $350bn.

The subsequent impact on Australia's health system and communities is too often overlooked, as is the impact on national productivity.

(The College notes the many submissions to the Inquiry which cover a wide range of issues and we do not wish to duplicate this work. Our prime interest is in improving the safety of Australian road users for the social and economic benefits to the nation and to encourage the Vision Zero aspiration that no one should die on the road network.)

4.0 Key Issues and Experiences

The College in September last year encouraged debate in a symposium on the topic; *"Autonomous, semi-autonomous and existing vehicles. What will be the impact on road safety results and when?"* at the Australasian Road Safety Conference held in Canberra.[8]

That symposium reported the significant collision reductions benefits of semi-autonomous vehicles particularly those reported by Subaru from a four-year study of real world tests in Japan.

The reported conclusion was that to progress further we will need;

- A national consistent approach to communication (same work protocol).
- Manufacturers and non-government agencies must manage the disruption due to policy and regulatory changes.
- Government should take up the policy leadership (not the product driven policy) and development in infrastructure.
- More investment from Government and private sector will be needed to fast-track road and vehicle reform.
- Confidence in the technology is a key point and we all have different parts to play.

It was recognised that;

- Consumers will need confidence the technology works and is independently tested and assessed;
- The automotive and technology industries need the confidence the technology won't breach any regulatory issues;
- Politicians and decision-makers need the confidence to amend or remove regulation where needed without limiting innovation;
- The community will need to deal with the immediate automation issues before jumping too far ahead; and
- There were no reliable predictions for the value of fully autonomous vehicles in terms of actual reductions in crashes and there is doubt over whether full autonomy will occur. However large reductions in crash rates from driver assist technologies have been

[8] http://acrs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Symposium_Autonomous.pdf

> demonstrated now and early introduction of these, will also assist in gaining acceptance of further automation."

The College notes that two Federal Ministers appear to share responsibility for the safety of vehicles and has written to both Ministers last year and this year to encourage the early introduction of semi-autonomous technologies in vehicles to assist in reducing unnecessary road trauma, referencing non-regulatory mechanisms already in place in the USA.

The letters also encouraged the Ministers to use our MOU with the US Department of Transport to share research on distraction in vehicle technologies often associated with new technologies from manufacturers and communication providers.

(Copies of the letters are attached. They are currently unanswered.)

The College notes that in Australia the introduction of new safety technologies has been very effectively encouraged in Australia through the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) and that they have a forward agenda to ensure that such encouragement will continue.

Fleet purchasing policies which include requirements for five star ANCAP ratings and or specific safety technologies (by governments, corporations, hire car firms, contracts) are other non-regulatory mechanisms which have effectively brought forward these new technologies (such as Electronic Stability Control, Autonomous Emergency Braking, Data recording) enhancing the safety of the new car fleet across Australia, well ahead of regulation.

While ANCAP with its international colleagues and links through the Global New Car Assessment Program (GNCAP) has in place testing and assessment methods for the relative safety of semi-autonomous technologies, considerable work must be undertaken on assessing the relative safety of fully autonomous vehicles.

The College recommends to the Inquiry the recent testimony entitled Challenges and Approaches to Realizing Autonomous Vehicle Safety submitted to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection on February 14, 2017; by Nidhi Kalara of the Rand Corporation. [9]

The testimony notes three challenges that currently stand in the way of a vison of safe autonomous vehicles:

1. There is currently no proven, practical way to test autonomous vehicle safety prior to widespread use.
2. There is no consensus on how safe autonomous vehicles should be.
3. Real-world driving experience is an essential ingredient for improving safety, but it also exposes people to the very safety risks we hope to reduce.

The testimony challenges the often-held view that on road testing of a few vehicles will determine relative safety e.g. " Given that current traffic fatalities and injuries are rare events compared with vehicle miles travelled, fully autonomous vehicles would have to be driven hundreds of millions of

[9] http://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF17/20170214/105548/HHRG-115-IF17-Wstate-KalraN-20170214.pdf

miles, and sometimes hundreds of billions of miles, to demonstrate their reliability in terms of fatalities and injuries"

The conclusions drawn are;

"…autonomous vehicles hold enormous promise for transportation safety, but realizing the safety benefits is not guaranteed. This is, in part, because it is difficult to know how safe autonomous vehicles are and because Americans may not agree on how safe they should be. Concerted and immediate effort should be made to develop sound and feasible testing methods and to develop those methods into a regulatory framework that balances the need for development and deployment of the technology with appropriate levels of safety at each stage of exposure. While this is taking place, policymakers should pursue ways of fostering the development of autonomous vehicles while lowering their risks."

It has been recognised in a recent OECD/ITF Report that "Real progress (in reducing road trauma) will necessitate a fundamental paradigm shift in the way the road safety problem is viewed, as well as the strategies used to address it. This paradigm shift involves a move from traditional road safety policies to an integrated view in which road traffic becomes a "Safe System" where serious outcomes from crashes are presented in the first place….road safety has to be horizontally correlated with other important areas of the road transport system…there is a convergence of public policy agendas around the notion of sustainable mobility….there is a strong business case to include the prevention of road traffic deaths and serious injury on the health agenda."[10]

4.1 Regulation, enforcement and associated structures.

In Australia's federal system, government responsibilities for road safety vary across jurisdictions:

> The Australian Government is responsible for regulating safety standards for new vehicles, and for allocating infrastructure resources, including for safety, across the national highway and local road networks.
>
> State and territory governments are responsible for funding, planning, designing and operating the road network; managing vehicle registration and driver licensing systems; and regulating and enforcing road user behaviour.
>
> Local governments have responsibilities for funding, planning, designing and operating the road networks in their local areas.[11]

There are many government collaborative mechanisms and agencies (eg Austroads, National Transport Council, Heavy Vehicle Regulator, National Road Safety Partnership, BITRE) which address some aspects of road safety, various State agencies and university safety centres, various associations (eg ACRS, AAA, ATA, AFMA, motor cycle, bicycle, pedestrian, community, and other specific issue groups) dealing with a wide range of relevant issues, but no national overarching mechanism.

[10] http://www.globalncap.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Zero_road_deaths-SafeSystems.pdf
[11] https://infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/

Autonomous vehicles and their introduction into the Australian vehicle fleet does not appear to have a well-resourced national approach. Submissions to this Inquiry report a range of State and National programs, with some coordination, but no overall scale or a "paradigm" shift in the existing governance mechanisms, which should be implemented in ensuring and encouraging a safer national system with such disruptive technologies. Given the potential benefits, urgent action would be beneficial.

Volvo Australia has reported in their submission to this Inquiry;

> "Public confusion is exacerbated by regular media reporting which describes a utopian world in which drivers are transported from home to office in fully driverless, 'handsfree' vehicles"[12]. Based on future technology advances this scenario is certainly achievable in Australia, but realistically it is probably some decades away. However, the average Australian is understandably worried about the public safety implications of such a scenario, and some even question the utility of the technology in their day-to-day lives.

In the USA the National Highway and Safety Administration has gained voluntary agreement from 20 manufacturers to introduce collision avoidance technologies rather than regulate. [13]

While this has been criticised as inadequate[14], the benefits of the new technologies are well established and early introduction into both the light and heavy vehicle fleet will bring substantial reductions in road crash rates and hence improve national productivity.

New technologies assist in monitoring travel performance factors including speeding, driver fatigue, and route usage and have been implemented by some fleets without regulation.[15]

The TAC in Victoria is actively promoting collision avoidance technologies[16] as is ANCAP by including fitment of these into its updated rating scheme.[17]

To date no agreement has been sought by the Australian Government from new vehicle importers to include collision avoidance technologies, or to introduce any regulation to mandate their introduction.

We have recommended such action to the Government.

4.2 International Comparisons

In terms of annual deaths per 100,000 population in 2014: Australia's rate of 4.92 was the 14th lowest rate out of the 32 nations with available data. [18](We ranked 11th out of 24 in 2004.[19])

[12] http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Industry_Innovation_Science_and_Resources/Driverless_vehicles/Submissions Submission 11
[13] http://www.nhtsa.gov/About-NHTSA/Press-Releases/nhtsa_iihs_commitment_on_aeb_03172016
[14] http://www.consumerwatchdog.org/resources/ltr_nhtsa_re_aeb_petition5-23-16.pdf
[15]https://www.ntc.gov.au/media/1411/enforcement-approaches-for-speeding-heavy-vehicles-discussion-paper-may-2016-sarah-jones-toll-group-jun-2016.pdf
[16] http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/tac-campaigns/vehicle-safety
[17] http://www.ancap.com.au/understanding-safety-features
[18] https://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/international_road_safety_comparisons.aspx
[19] https://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/files/irsc_2004.pdf

Between 2005 and 2014, the rate of annual road crash fatalities per 100,000 population in Australia declined by a total of 38.9 per cent. Over the same period the OECD median rate fell by 46.0 per cent. However, recently Australia's annual death rate has risen to 5.3, which lowers Australia to the 19th lowest rate out of 32, on par with France, assuming other countries remained the same.

Australia's relative performance in terms of this measure then has been steadily falling, and it is reasonable to assume the impact on our productivity relative to other OECD nations is increasing. With the costs of road trauma at 1.8% of GDP and rising, the associated fall in productivity decreases our international competitiveness with these results.

Road trauma affects not just the road users, but impacts flow across at least a dozen Federal Government portfolios. The College is currently updating a detailed overview of these impacts which we anticipate to be available by the end of March 2017.

Semi- autonomous and autonomous vehicles do have great promise to reduce the social impacts of national road trauma but to be most effective we need national leadership, scale and resources together with effective international cooperation and a paradigm shift in the governance arrangements of vehicles.

5.0 Attachments

AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF ROAD SAFETY

ABN: 12 841 412 581

Patron: His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

The Hon Darren Chester MP
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23 September 2016

Dear Minister,

Re: Action on Reducing Road Trauma

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in your recent Road Safety Round Table in September.

Thank you also for addressing the delegates at our 2016 Australasian Road Safety Conference (ARSC2016) Dinner at Parliament House. Your address was very well received, particularly your Call to Action to shake off the national complacency and acceptance which you see is contributing to the growth in road trauma.

I have attached the ARSC2016 Post-Conference Evaluation Summary that was produced following a survey of conference delegates. As you can see, responses were overwhelmingly positive concerning the success of the conference and satellite events, and delegates remain supportive of our continued collaboration in our efforts to reduce road trauma.

I am sure your staff and the Department will have appraised you of the wide range of outcomes from the many papers and symposia at the Conference. It is difficult to summarise these outcomes into one or two magical solutions to reverse the growth in road trauma you mentioned.

As I outlined at the Round Table there have been many, many recommendations made to improve road safety following a raft of inquiries and reports over as many years. There has been a steady decline in road safety long term research and resourcing since the national Office of Road Safety was folded into the Australian Transport Safety Bureau.

Spending on road safety, as was noted at the Round Table, must be seen as a long term productivity investment for the nation, not as an annual expense. The cost to the economy of road trauma at current rates over the next fifteen years will be in the order of $500 billion.

Investing in productive and safe infrastructure and systems should be obvious and a priority for governments, business and the community.

The ACRS has made a succinct, simple (unsuccessful) submission to the Federal Government Budget process over the last two years for a small reallocation of infrastructure resources to enhance national road safety research, collaboration and communication. While your question to us is "What we would do if we were the Minister", our response is; **"Why are the many recommendations made, by so many experts, over such a long time, seen to be politically unacceptable?"**

We need to re-establish national competency in actioning solutions as we had previously when road deaths were reduced from around 3500 to the current 1200 level. Without that competence we are coasting, we need national leadership and resourcing.

We need to bring in many of the other road safety players into the conversation; insurers, importers, vehicle dealers, the "disrupters" (Apple, Telstra, Google, Telsa), the aftermarket manufacturers, as well as the traditional groups who are keen to help.

An overview of the ARSC2016 conference proceedings, the "wrap-up" of the Conference, can be accessed via the Conference Wrap-up link or through our College web site www.acrs.org.au.

Austroads is preparing a report in response to a questionnaire given to all delegates asking for ideas on "a step change recommendation" to reduce road trauma. We expect that to be available shortly.

In your address to ARSC2016 delegates you expressed concern at the distractions caused by texting from mobile phones while driving. At the Conference exhibition the "Textstopper" device demonstrated that there may well be technological solutions to that distraction caused by mobile phones, and this is supported by new technologies recently described by the Canberra based firm, Seeing Machines. I note a recent app in the USA from AT&T called "DriveMode" which helps avoid distractions while driving. I am sure your Department will brief you on these and how we can encourage assessment and if suitable, early introduction.

The Heavy Vehicles Plenary at the Conference chaired by Eric Howard was well attended with strong presentations from the police, logistic companies, the regulator and a researcher with interaction from delegates including drivers. This session focused on improving heavy vehicle safety with such a wide range of views, not always heard in the current political debate on this important area.

One other presentation which caught my eye was the collision results over 4 recent years in Japan of 300,000 new cars; 250,000 that were equipped with collision avoidance technology. The vehicles equipped had a 61% lower crash rate than those not fitted, a rate considerably better than the already good results of 25-50% reported elsewhere. Last year we noted that the US Government vehicle regulator had encouraged 10 major manufacturers to voluntarily equip their new vehicles with this technology (now increased to 20) and had hoped for similar action here. Unfortunately, no such "encouragement" has been made of Australian vehicle manufacturers and importers by our regulator. Every year we delay technology for cars, trucks and buses will leave those unequipped vehicles in the market, on our roads, for at least the next 20 years.

Surely if crash rates of new vehicles can be dropped by at least 50%, we should be acting now to ensure they are all equipped with this technology.

The College is keen to work with you and all the various bodies involved in road safety to not only reduce the rising trauma rates, but also to bring our rates down to world best practice.

Our strengths are particularly in networking and communication between the many bodies. We would ask that you reconsider our request made earlier this year for support to undertake an expansion of these key activities in rebuilding the capacity needed to achieve best practice results.

Yours sincerely,

Lauchlan McIntosh, AM
President
Australasian College of Road Safety

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27 September 2016

Dear Minister,

Re: Road and Vehicle Safety in the Urban Environment

During the 12 months ended August, there were 1,276 road deaths in Australia. This is a 6.9 per cent increase compared to the total for the 12-month period ended August 2015. This increase is against a background of a steady decline is fatalities for decades.

Much of this recent increase has occurred in urban areas, which account for about half of the fatalities. While drivers may cause crashes, it is well known that unsafe infrastructure and unsafe vehicle are major contributors to the unnecessary trauma associated with these crashes.

Earlier this month the Australasian Road Safety Conference was held in Canberra with around 600 delegates. A "wrap-up" of the Conference can be accessed via the Conference Wrap-up link or through our College web site www.acrs.org.au. Many papers and symposia covered areas relevant to making safer urban infrastructure.

Cycling, road design, speed zones, hospital and trauma care resources were some examples of the relevant papers and the issues around the implications of the introduction of semi- and autonomous vehicles into the light and heavy vehicle fleet were also covered.

One of our keynote speakers was Professor Mark Stevenson FACRS – Professor of Urban Transport and Public Health at the University of Melbourne. Professor Stevenson has recently published a paper as part of a 3-part 'Urban Design' series in The Lancet:

> *Worldwide, the majority of people already live in cities and by 2050, it is estimated that 75% of 10 billion people have cities as an important social determinant of health. Air pollution, physical inactivity, noise, social isolation, unhealthy diets, and exposure to crime play a very important part in the non-communicable disease burden. This 3-part Series explores how integrated multisector city planning, including urban design and transport planning, can be used as an important and currently underused force for health*

and wellbeing within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals in both high-income countries and low-income and middle-income countries.

As I recently noted in a letter to your colleague, the Hon Darren Chester, one conference presentation that caught my eye was the collision results over 4 recent years in Japan, of 300,000 new cars - 250,000 which were equipped with collision avoidance technology. The vehicles equipped had a 61% lower crash rate than those not fitted, a rate considerably better than the already good results of 25-50% reported elsewhere.

Last year we noted that the US Government vehicle regulator, the the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (headed by Dr Mark Rosekind), had encouraged 10 major manufacturers to voluntarily equip their new vehicles with this technology by 2022 (this has now been increased to 18 manufacturers). See http://www.nhtsa.gov/About+NHTSA/Speeches,+Press+Events+&+Testimonies/mr-nhtsa-faa-safety-forum-04222016).

We are encouraged by the recent Memorandum of Cooperation between Australia and the USA to foster collaboration on "key issues for all transport modes and the coordination of public and private sector resources and expertise to advance safe, secure, secure and integrated transport systems" and also recognise the long term relationship with NHTSA in the USA and Australia's Department of Transport and Infrastructure.

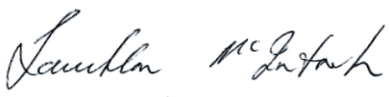
We understand that there is provision in the MOC to agree additional areas for collaboration on a case by case basis. The collision avoidance systems in new cars are in fact components of Intelligent Transport Systems which are identified in the MOC as an area for specific collaboration.

Unfortunately, to date, no such "encouragement" has been made of Australian vehicle manufacturers and importers by our regulator, but perhaps this could be done as part of our collaboration with the USA. Every year we delay implementation of this type of technology for cars, trucks and buses will leave those unequipped vehicles in the market, on our roads, for at least the next 20 years. We do not need to wait for fully autonomous vehicles for this saving to occur.

I would be happy to brief you further on this information as I believe that the cost of road trauma can only be reduced by concerted national action to implement new standards and technologies for our infrastructure and vehicles. Investment, coordinated research and implementation and encouragement of new technologies in road safety should not be seen as an annual cost, but a future long term cost reduction program for the nation – an investment in substantial future savings for the economy and our society in terms of public health.

I would be happy to meet with you either in your Sydney or Canberra office at your convenience. Please contact the College Executive Officer, Claire Howe, on eo@acrs.org.au or (02) 6290 2509 for any further information or to progress a meeting.

Yours sincerely,



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3 January 2017

Dear Minister,

Encouraging uptake of collision avoidance technologies

In September last year I wrote to you (copy attached) suggesting that you consider a specific program to "encourage" the early introduction of collision avoidance technologies in all new vehicles. I referenced such a program promoted by the US National Highway and Safety Administration.

In December last year the European Commission set out a range of advanced safety measures, with a timetable, that could be fitted to vehicles in the future and have the potential to save lives on the roads.

As I am sure you are well aware, road deaths and injuries in Australia are tragically increasing, and our ranking has fallen from being in the top ten best performers in the OECD to be at the bottom of the top 20.

Europe realised a major step forward in vehicle safety on 1 November 2014 with new safety features becoming mandatory for every new car, van, truck, and bus sold in the EU. In addition to standard electronic stability control systems, all new cars sold in the EU must be equipped with new safety features, such as driver seatbelt reminders, ISOFIX child seat anchorages or tyre pressure monitoring systems. From 1 November 2015, all new trucks and buses must also be equipped with advanced emergency braking systems as well as lane departure warning systems.

Collision avoidance technologies are now well established, having been available since 2008. Considerable research and real world data exists to show the benefits of these technologies, including in a Monash University report that was sponsored by your Department and others and was published over 2 years ago. This study determined that, for heavy vehicles, Autonomous Emergency Braking Systems at all speeds was estimated to produce the biggest fatal and serious injury reduction, preventing up to a quarter of fatal crashes.

Similar studies have shown at least the same benefits for light vehicles, with the Subaru study I referenced in my previous letter showing up to 61% lower crash rate for some 250,000 AEB equipped vehicles over a 4-year period.

The cost of these technologies is reducing rapidly and, given the real benefits in reducing collisions and hence the overall cost of road trauma, we should not have to wait for the delay which beset the introduction of seat belts decades ago. In addition there is no reason why the Australian vehicle fleet should be less safe the the US or EC fleets.

I urge you to take immediate action to encourage the fitment of collision avoidance technologies into the Australian vehicle fleet now. Safety in vehicles is a Commonwealth responsibility, simple methods such as mandating AEB for all Commonwealth fleet vehicles, and ensuring Commonwealth contractors use AEB equipped vehicles are two examples. This would send a clear message to vehicle importers to fit AEB to vehicles for the Australian market, as well as assisting with the early introduction into the second hand vehicle fleet as the government progressively sells its vehicles.

I would be happy to meet with you either in your Sydney or Canberra office at your convenience. Please contact the College Executive Officer, Claire Howe, on eo@acrs.org.au or (02) 6290 2509 for any further information or to progress a meeting. I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Lauchlan McIntosh AM
President
Australasian College of Road Safety

cc The Hon Darren Chester

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03 January 2017

Dear Darren,

Re: Action on Reducing Road Trauma

In September last year I wrote outlining action options for reducing road trauma (copy attached). I suggested in that letter that *"We need to bring in many of the other road safety players into the conversation; insurers, importers, vehicle dealers, the "disrupters" (Apple, Telstra, Google, Telsa), the aftermarket manufacturers, as well as the traditional groups who are keen to help."*

In late November last year the US National Highway and Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) released comprehensive guidelines to help address driver distraction caused by mobile and other electronic devices in vehicles.

NHTSA says that *"The proposed, voluntary guidelines are designed to encourage portable and aftermarket electronic device developers to design products that, when used while driving, reduce the potential for driver distraction. The guidelines encourage manufacturers to implement features such as pairing, where a portable device is linked to a vehicle's infotainment system, as well as Driver Mode, which is a simplified user interface. Both pairing and Driver Mode will reduce the potential for unsafe driver distraction by limiting the time a driver's eyes are off the road, while at the same time preserving the full functionality of these devices when they are used at other times."*

We understand that the recent Memorandum of Cooperation between Australia and the USA to foster collaboration on *"key issues for all transport modes and the coordination of public and private sector resources and expertise to advance safe, secure, and integrated transport systems"* includes specific reference to the components of Intelligent Transport Systems.

In order to expedite the engagement of the mobile device and network communication providers in Australia, to ensure we keep up with the latest developments, would it be possible to partner with NHTSA in its initiative to introduce similar guidelines here to assist in reducing as quickly as possible the distracting effects on driving of these devices?

In light of the tragic increase in road deaths and injuries in Australia over the last two years, actions that reduce collisions are urgently required.

I look forward to your response and would be happy to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Lauchlan McIntosh AM
President
Australasian College of Road Safety

cc The Hon Paul Fletcher