ACRS Submission on Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy Discussion Paper

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 Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

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6 October 2026

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Introduction

The Australasian College of Road Safety is the region's peak membership association for road safety with a vision of eliminating death and serious injury on the road. Our members include experts from all areas of road safety including policy makers, health and transport professionals, academics, community organisations, researchers, federal, state and local government agencies, private companies and members of the public. The purpose of the College is to support our members in their efforts to eliminate serious road trauma through knowledge sharing, professional development, networking and advocacy. Our objectives include the promotion of road safety as a critical organisational objective within government, business and the community; the promotion and advocacy of policies and practices that support harm elimination; the improvement of relative safety outcomes for vulnerable demographic and user groups within the community; the promotion of post-crash policies and practices; and the promotion of a collegiate climate amongst all those with responsibilities for and working in road safety.

The College believes that we should prevent all fatal and serious injuries on our roads; the road traffic system must be made safe for all road users; system designers should aim to prevent human error and mitigate its consequences; life and health are not exchangeable for other benefits in society; and that all College policy positions must be evidence based.

The current Towards Zero Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026 ends in a few months, and the discussion paper is designed to help shape the next Strategy. The discussion paper notes that the next Strategy will be grounded in the Safe System approach, based on global best-practice, and strengthened by more effective and systematic road safety management. Independent modelling was commissioned to inform the development of the Strategy, highlighting the need for a stronger and more integrated strategic approach to delivering road safety initiatives across Tasmania.

The draft Strategy proposes strengthening:

- Partnerships – strengthening work with partners to deliver outcomes
- Governance – enhancing prioritising and delivering evidence-based efforts
- Performance management – ensuring remaining on the right path to success
- Ongoing engagement – connecting effort and community outcomes
- Movement and Place Framework – aligning road function with appropriate safety measures

ACRS response to the Discussion Paper

a) Proposed Strategic Framing

Where can we strengthen our management approaches, partnerships, and the use of evidence and data to achieve road safety outcomes?

- Structured consultation with road safety practitioners should be undertaken using the Safe System framework, ensuring representation from health, police, local government, insurance bodies, and the education sector.
- Formal and informal partnerships between road safety stakeholders should be actively fostered to improve collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective ownership of outcomes. Regular local

forums, conferences, and seminars can strengthen professional networks, build communication channels, and support the exchange of emerging evidence, good practice, and lessons learned.
- The Road Safety Action Plan should maintain a clear line of sight to Strategy objectives, with measurable actions, defined accountabilities, and regular reporting against agreed performance indicators.
- Improving the collection, analysis, sharing, and public reporting of road safety data should be a priority(1).

What are the barriers to strengthening management, partnerships and the use of evidence and data to deliver road safety outcomes?

- Siloed thinking and organisational boundaries, which can limit collaboration, information sharing, and collective ownership of road safety outcomes.
- Limited communication channels and stakeholder engagement opportunities, resulting in missed opportunities to share knowledge, align priorities, and build effective partnerships across government, industry, community, health, police, insurance, local government, and education sectors.
- Inconsistent collection, sharing, and accessibility of data, which can restrict the ability to identify trends, evaluate interventions, and make evidence-based decisions(1).
- Insufficient networking and professional development opportunities for road safety practitioners, limiting the exchange of lessons learned, emerging research, and innovative approaches to road safety management.
- A lack of emphasis on lifelong road user education and training, with many initiatives focused on novice drivers rather than ongoing learning throughout a person's road use journey.
- Underutilisation of media and public communication opportunities, reducing the community's awareness and understanding of road safety issues and the role that all road users can play in improving safety outcomes.

Are there any additional approaches that should be considered?

- Ensuring that the education sector is explicitly recognised as a key road safety partner alongside health, police, local government, and insurance organisations.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of current driver education and training systems, including the assumptions underpinning novice driver training.
- Expanding the use of Road Safety Audits and similar review processes. These not only contribute to safer roads and roadsides but also provide opportunities for practitioner collaboration, knowledge sharing, professional networking, and community engagement.
- Strengthening mechanisms for cross-sector collaboration and information sharing, ensuring that lessons learned, data, research findings, and successful interventions are routinely exchanged between practitioners and agencies.

b) Action areas

Is the Movement and Place framework a useful way to understand and discuss road safety in Tasmania?

- Yes. The Movement and Place framework provides a useful way to understand and discuss road safety in Tasmania by recognising that roads and streets serve multiple functions and must balance the movement of people and goods with the needs of the communities and places they pass through.

- The framework helps ensure that the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, motorcyclists, freight operators, and motorists, are considered in transport planning and decision-making(2, 3).
- By encouraging a more holistic and context-sensitive approach, the Movement and Place framework can help deliver safer, more accessible, and more liveable communities while supporting broader transport and economic objectives(4).

Are there any improvements or alternative approaches that should be considered?

- Covered above.

c) Action Area 1: Safer Behaviour and Choices

Do you support an Action Area that focuses on safer behaviour and choices?

- Yes. A dedicated Action Area focused on safer behaviour and choices is essential, as road user knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours remain significant contributors to road safety outcomes.
- Road users are exposed to a wide range of media influences that can normalise behaviours contrary to road safety and public health objectives, including speeding, alcohol and drug use, risk-taking, aggression, and unrealistic portrayals of vehicle performance and crash consequences.
- To counter these influences, road safety communications should be evidence-based, targeted, and sustained. Public education campaigns should not only raise awareness of risks but also promote positive behaviours, strengthen community understanding of Safe System principles, and encourage all road users to make safer choices. Effective communication, combined with enforcement, infrastructure, and training initiatives, can support long-term behavioural change and contribute to improved road safety outcomes.

What actions or initiatives should be prioritised?

- Traditional police enforcement and automated traffic enforcement should remain central components of the road safety response. Highly visible policing activities can deter unsafe behaviours, reinforce community expectations, and target high-risk locations and road users. Automated enforcement technologies, including speed and red-light cameras, provide consistent, objective, and widespread enforcement capability, increasing the perceived likelihood of detection and supporting long-term behaviour change.
- Enforcement efforts should be supported by public education campaigns that clearly communicate the risks associated with speeding, impaired driving, fatigue, distraction, and other unsafe behaviours. Coordinated enforcement and communication programs can strengthen deterrence, improve compliance, and build community understanding of the reasons behind road safety interventions(5).
- Driver licensing, training, and education programs should also remain a priority. Road safety education should be viewed as a lifelong process, supporting road users from their earliest experiences as passengers through to driving, riding, cycling, and walking at all stages of life.
- Consideration should be given to integrating Roadcraft principles into driver training and licensing programs at a level comparable to their incorporation within motorcycle rider training. This would promote hazard perception, observation, planning, and defensive driving skills, helping drivers to better anticipate and respond to risks within the road environment.

Are there additional issues, opportunities or innovations that should be considered?

- Leverage telematics technology to encourage safer driving behaviours by providing feedback on speeding, harsh braking, acceleration, cornering, and mobile phone use, while using incentives and self-monitoring to promote behaviour change.
- Explore a licensing-based telematics app to support novice drivers, drivers subject to licence restrictions, and participants in remedial programs through real-time feedback, hazard awareness training, and driving experience tracking.
- Expand telematics use in government and commercial fleets to monitor driver performance, identify risks, target training interventions, and improve road safety outcomes, while generating valuable data to support evidence-based road safety policies and programs.

d) Action Area 2: Safer Cities, Neighbourhoods and Places

Do you support an Action Area that focuses on safer cities, neighbourhoods and places?

- Yes

What actions or initiatives should be prioritised?

- Implement consistent and credible speed management through uniform speed zoning, consistent speed limits in urban areas and rural townships, and clear, easily understood speed signage across the network.
- Strengthen the transition to lower-speed environments by clearly defining urban road environments and expectations through gateway treatments, including road markings, landscaping, visual cues, and traffic-calming infrastructure that reinforce appropriate driving behaviour beyond town signs and street lighting.
- Prioritise community education and awareness campaigns that explain the rationale for speed limits and safety infrastructure, building public understanding of the relationship between speed, crash risk, and injury severity rather than assuming these safety benefits are already understood(6).

Are there additional issues, opportunities or innovations that should be considered?

- Establish a Road Safety Audit policy that requires audits at key stages of planning, design, construction, and operation.
- Strengthen consideration of vulnerable road users by reviewing road design, maintenance, and traffic management practices to ensure the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, older road users, and people with disabilities are consistently considered.
- Improve delineation and road environment treatments through enhanced centreline and edge-line marking, tactile and audible line treatments, and targeted high-friction surface treatments at high-risk locations such as intersections and approaches to hazards.

e) Action Area 3: Safer Travel on Roads Designed for Movement

Do you support an Action Area that focuses on safer travel on roads designed for movement?

- Yes

What actions or initiatives should be prioritised?

- Implement consistent and credible speed management through appropriate speed zoning, clear signage, and supporting public education that explains the relationship between speed, crash risk,

and injury severity. Related messaging should improve community understanding and acceptance of speed management measures.

- Ensure movement corridors are designed to safely support operating speeds, with infrastructure investment prioritising median treatments, separation of opposing traffic flows, and safer intersection and junction design(7). Road environments should be self-explaining and aligned with Safe System principles so that infrastructure, speed limits, and driver expectations are consistent(6).

f) Other opportunities

What are the most significant opportunities and challenges for improving road safety in Tasmania?

- The most significant opportunity for improving road safety in Tasmania is achieving a stronger and more consistent understanding of systems thinking and the Safe System approach across government, industry, communities, and road users(8, 9). This should be accompanied by the implementation of proven road safety measures and a clear, evidence-based focus on speed management, given the strong relationship between speed and the likelihood and severity of crashes.
- Improve driver capability and decision-making. Particular attention should be given to novice drivers, who may have limited experience in judging gaps, managing risk, and safely overtaking on higher-speed rural roads.
- Prioritise proven infrastructure treatments on high-risk corridors, including 2+1 road designs, median separation, safer overtaking opportunities, and intersection upgrades.

Are there any road safety priorities, actions or opportunities that are not currently reflected in this discussion paper?

- Strengthen the role of supervising drivers by introducing education and accreditation requirements for parents and other learner driver supervisors. Consider establishing a minimum competency standard beyond simply holding a driver's licence to ensure supervisors can effectively model safe driving behaviours and provide consistent, high-quality guidance to novice drivers.
- Introduce mandatory remedial driver education programs for offenders as a consequence of unsafe driving behaviours and traffic offences. These programs should focus on behaviour change, risk awareness, and safe driving practices, operating as a complement to existing penalties rather than as an alternative means of reducing fines, demerit points, or licence disqualification periods(11).

Do you have any additional comments on the proposed direction of Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy?

- Maintain strong alignment between the Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy and the National Road Safety Strategy, ensuring that priorities, performance measures, Safe System principles, and delivery frameworks are consistent and mutually reinforcing(10).
- Develop Road Safety Action Plans that are targeted, adequately resourced, funded, and fit for purpose, with clear accountabilities, implementation timeframes, and built-in monitoring and evaluation processes to measure effectiveness and support continuous improvement.
- Embed continuity mechanisms within the Strategy and Action Plans by including triggers for ongoing planning, resourcing, review, and delivery, ensuring momentum is maintained across government terms and planning cycles.
- Develop and implement a coordinated Road Safety Media and Communications Strategy that aligns with the Strategy and Action Plans, maximises opportunities for public engagement, reinforces key

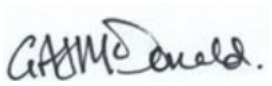
safety messages, and supports long-term behavioural change through consistent and evidence-based communication.

- Strengthen driver education and training systems by continuing support for initiatives such as AusRAP road infrastructure star ratings and enhanced novice driver training programs, including the reinstatement of complementary driver education initiatives. Consider improving the capability of learner driver supervisors through formal training and minimum competency requirements to promote more consistent and effective driver development outcomes.
- Hypothecation of safety camera fines to road safety programs as per Western Australia practice; Road Trauma Trust Account (RTTA) (12)

Conclusion and Recommendations

The levels of road trauma experienced in Tasmania highlight the need for a current, evidence-based, ambitious Road Safety Strategy. Road Safety needs a consistent cross agency and partner focus, needs to be suitably funded and the Strategy needs to be supported by Action Plans that are timely, funded and evaluated.

ACRS welcomes this consultation and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to improving road safety in Tasmania. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any further information.



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