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## **Consultation on draft Best-Practice Design Guide for Canberra's Streets and Intersections**

2 June 2023

To the Consultation Team,

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

The draft Design Guide: Best practices for urban intersections and other active travel infrastructure in the ACT document notes that its development is a commitment from the ACT Transport Strategy 2020. The Design Guide will present non-technical principles and examples for best-practice design of intersections and streets that support all forms of transport including walking, riding and driving. The concepts are meant to balance safety, efficiency and attractiveness depending on the function of a street. The draft notes that it "applies the Safe Systems approach to streets and paths in a way that not only makes it safer and more convenient for people walking, cycling and use [sic] other forms of active travel, but also makes the street environment safer for all road users" (p1).

In general we believe that the Guide offers some excellent examples of best practice. It incorporates many frameworks for enhancing safety on our roads. These are likely to improve safety for people using all modes of transport on our roads and are welcome.

The draft would be improved through connecting with Vision Zero planning, in line with commitments made by all Australian Governments, including the ACT Government, to work towards eliminating deaths and serious injuries on our roads by 2050.<sup>1</sup> A comprehensive and meaningful approach to Vision Zero requires a model that identifies how proposed designs will contribute to getting to Zero.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1686307/ACT-Road-Safety-Strategy-2020-2025\\_New.pdf](https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1686307/ACT-Road-Safety-Strategy-2020-2025_New.pdf) ; <https://www.roadsafety.gov.au/nrss>

Ideally, each of the treatments identified in the Guide would be matched with data on the fatalities or serious injuries related to the pre-treatment condition. We would also expect estimates of the numbers of suitable ACT sites for treatments. A further step is to identify a range of cost estimates for each of the design treatments. In this way, the Guide would be able to be used to help build a plan to achieve Vision Zero in the most effective and efficient way. It may be that this work has been completed or commenced, however this is not clear from the draft Guide.

ACRS recommends that the Guide include:

- A clear, quantified specification of what a safe road system will look like by agreed Vision Zero target dates;
- A clearly defined quantification of our existing road categories and safety indicators;
- An analysis of the gaps between what exists now and what we want to achieve; and
- An indication of how many, and how by how much, each of the treatments in this Guide will help close identified gaps.

Placing the Guide in the context of a review of the ACT Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan would be beneficial. This review should be along Safe System principles using data to identify where we want to get to, where we are currently, how and when are we going to get to where we want to go, and what investment is required.

ACRS recommends the ACT Government adopt such a systematic approach to Vision Zero. It should incorporate the principles in this Guide but attach parameters to each treatment. Those parameters would reflect the extent to which a treatment can and should be implemented. A number of jurisdictions in the ACT's vicinity have embarked on this path and have experience the ACT could make use of.<sup>2</sup>

We note that the draft also needs to be proofread for minor edits and formatting, as there are some errors in the consultation version.

ACRS appreciates the opportunity to make this submission and contribute to improved road safety in the ACT. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any further information.



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<sup>2</sup> Le, Joseph; Keulen, Mark; Tang, Joyes; Durdin, Paul; Baththana, Jay & Ford, Steve (2022) Transforming the NSW Road Network through Vision Zero Modelling. Presentation to the Australasian Road Safety Conference 28-30 September 2022, Christchurch, New Zealand. <https://o90734.p3cdn1.secureserver.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/ARSC2022-Christchurch-Proceedings.pdf>