



POST-EVENT SUMMARY OF SYMPOSIA AND WORKSHOPS AT ARSC2016 (As at 16 September 2016)

Wednesday 7 September: 3:30pm

**Room: Bradman
Symposium**

Building Capacity for Road Safety and Taking Responsibility

Key Organiser:

Lauchlan McIntosh AM

Australasian College of Road Safety
Lauchlan.mcintosh@bigpond.com

Overview:

Improving road safety results requires multi-disciplinary actions, which are often poorly coordinated. There tends to be an overemphasis on blaming the road user, and the responsibility of research, infrastructure, vehicles, technology and trauma care as well as the total cost to the community is not well recognized nor given equal or even a higher priority within the system. The role of management of the total system, or the interactions within the system, and hence the allocation of responsibility is clouded. Who should, or who can build the capacity necessary for that interaction and how will we allocate reduction responsibility targets?

This symposium was to identify the capacity of the various pillars within the Safe System to specific areas of responsibility and accountability to consider how to join the pillars to gain synergy, and hence more reductions in road trauma by collaboration with many governments, business and the community.

Summary/Outcome:

The scene was set with a case study from Queensland. Complimentary thinking with a network wide analysis for upgrading the Bruce Highway. Experience suggests that by reactively treating historic crash locations, only a limited benefit will be realised. A model treating location by location may help to contribute to the 30% reduction target set under the National Road Safety Strategy 2011 – 2020 but will not achieve the step change required to meet the anticipated 50% reduction target set by the United Nations or the *Vision Zero* target. A step change improvement could be achieved, multiple programs could be concentrated.

A truly proactive means to address the problem is to consider a total network implementation through vision standards for road stereotypes. This relies upon the design practices moving upstream to the network planning phase so that network level design analysis is undertaken (rather than being solely applied to project design) to ensure the best decision is made for that specific network stereotype.

Also, with the removal of the non-feasance rule, road agencies no longer have immunity from legal claims arising from not knowing of road deficiencies. Therefore, a comprehensive assessment approach would be expected to mitigate legal risk on a consistent basis and not just treating past crash locations. Such an approach has been applied on the Bruce Highway.

500km was upgraded over two years, with a 50% reduction in fatalities (50 lives saved over 3 years) a saving of \$5bn in construction cost and \$50m spent on targeted safety improvements.

This addressed the infrastructure "Safer Roads Pillar" with a broader and more collaborative than usual approach and actually introduced a network safety standard at the beginning of the process, a standard set in effect by the customer. Making simple, crisp guidelines available, especially for local government to assist in introducing the new approach was a key role for Austroads. The ACRS network could be used to assist in developing wider partnerships to help the understanding and acceptance.

In terms of the road user, we considered the incentives set by their insurers and whether reform of the current regulatory insurance environment would allow insurers to be more effective in influencing driver behaviour in terms of risk and exposure (time of day and days, locations) and even road builders/owners.

Current regulations for user insurance subsidise "unsafe" road use and while road users do pay for road use through blunt instruments (excise, registration, equitable third party insurance) there is no incentive, no market based option available for drivers who reduce crash risk by reducing exposure.

New monitoring technologies are being used very effectively in the UK by some insurers and crash rates by the users have been reduced. A very cost effective way to reduce driver caused trauma. These results demonstrate that by seeking new ideas, using new technologies and reforming regulations, not only identifies some often unconsidered barriers in identifying responsibility for reducing road trauma.

Joining the pillars is a high level activity and often lost on practitioners, regulators and researchers working in specific pillars. MUARC in conjunction with the University of Melbourne has developed a road safety management program which does bring together for students in the course the various factors, but also adds a component on "adaptive leadership" training to assist participants develop effective techniques to manage a reformed or changed environment. This is another example of a "step change" and wider collaboration to improve the education of those involved in reducing road trauma.

The ACRS is an association for people and organisations working in road safety. The College values experience as much as academic qualifications in its members, who come from a wide range of disciplines. These include but not limited to engineers, epidemiologists, road trauma specialists, regulators, researchers, psychologists, driver trainers, enforcement personnel, policy makers, transport manufacturing industries, motoring associations, and various businesses.

The College provides local networks and seminars, a quarterly Journal for publication of peer reviewed papers and other relevant material, a weekly "Alert" of specific road safety items which are widely distributed and read. It also responds to specific national road safety inquiries, comments on road safety policy and manages the annual Australasian Road Safety Conference with partners Austroads and others, depending on the location of the event. Such activities do maintain and build capacity in road safety management for its members, for policy makers and a limited extent the community.

In summary building capacity in road safety is happening; the new Austroads step change approach, potentially a review of insurance regulation to use a market process to reduce risks, specific road safety

management training with built in leadership training with collaboration between Universities, expanding and enhanced networking and publications and policy input from the ACRS.

Whether it is adequate, whether it will be enough to ensure a step change in reducing road trauma, or encouraging higher levels of responsibility through collaboration, was not considered.