

Final Report to the NRMA ACT Road Safety Trust – Yass Valley Council Country Roads Campaign

You Don't Have to be Speeding –to
be driving too fast on country roads

A road safety project delivered by the Yass Valley Council, funded by the NRMA ACT Road Safety Trust and supported by the NSW Local Government Road Safety Program.



Final Report to the NRMA ACT Road Safety Trust –Yass Valley Council Country Roads Campaign

You Don't Have to be Speeding –to be driving too fast on country roads

Overview:

'You Don't Have to be Speeding –to be driving too fast on country roads' was launched on December 5, 2014 on the main street of Yass, utilising a live (on site), radio broadcast as a tool to promote the commencement of the campaign to both locals and ACT residents.

The launch marked the beginning of a three month radio advertising campaign that included over 600 scheduled announcements, news and talkback radio coverage by five radio stations and one television station evening news. The campaign also utilised social media and local community radio as further 'free' advertising. Editorial was published in The Canberra Times, Fairfax media's on-line network and the Yass Tribune.

NSW and ACT Police both supported the campaign. Yass Highway Patrol increased their presence on country roads whenever possible. The campaign was timed to correspond with NSW Police operations *Safe Arrival* over December, *Safe Return* in January and *Operation Saturation* in February.

The campaign has resulted in the completion of several road safety checks and the design of engineering treatments along these road lengths for consideration by Council and for use in future funding submissions. Treatments include roadside clearing, signage and increases to guidepost frequency. Council has been successful in gaining funding via National Black Spot funding for two of these sites, the first of which will be completed by 30 June 2015.

Background



This NSW/ACT cross border education campaign focuses on motorist's behavior, as well as their awareness of conditions on country roads. The primary campaign message addresses appropriate speed selection on country roads, urging motorists to slow down and drive to conditions.

The campaign combines three road safety elements -Education, Enforcement and Engineering.

Messaging is relevant to both ACT and Yass Valley motorists, aiming to address the common issue of speed as a major causal factor of crashes in both the ACT and the Yass Valley.

Project Strategies, Objectives and Outcomes

Education

- Implement a high profile media and community awareness campaign (to a target audience including ACT and Yass Valley motorists):
 - Airing of 600 scheduled radio announcements over four commercial radio stations
 - News coverage by five radio stations 106.3, 104.7, 2CC, 2CA and ABC 666
 - Additional coverage through use of radio station promotional vehicles and campaign giveaways
 - Evening news coverage by Prime Canberra
 - Print media coverage in Canberra Times (two articles) and Yass Tribune, Fairfax Media on-line content, included in Journal of the Australasian college of Road Safety
 - Scheduled Facebook campaign via Yass Valley Facebook page (12 x weekly posts highlighting different conditions or hazards) to 684 followers, posts shared by Yass Valley Community Facebook page with 1,273 followers and Yass Valley Connect with 235 followers. ACT Police media Facebook page also posted campaign messages (to 32,290 followers) message tweeted to 7,290 followers on @ACTPolicing twitter.
 - Display of campaign posters and distribution of campaign giveaway in three NRMA branches (Queanbeyan, Woden and Gungahlin) and in two NRMA Motorserve outlets (Tuggeranong and Majura Park).
- Promote working relationships between a range of road safety stakeholders from NSW and the ACT:

Campaign content and messaging was developed in consultation with a project advisory team comprising representatives from the ACT and Region Chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety (which includes members of the ACT Government, private and not for profit road safety stakeholder organisations), Yass Police Highway Patrol, ACT Police (both highway patrol and Police media) and Roads and Maritime Services.

NRMA was engaged via their ACT Corporate Affairs and Regional Policy area. This resulted in the display of campaign posters and distribution of the campaign car air freshener giveaway via five NRMA shop fronts.

Other Councils that surround the ACT were informed about the campaign and asked to participate by adding posts to their Council Facebook pages and circulating media releases



to their local media contacts. This Council networking has resulted in the more formal briefing of eight Councils and the submission of a joint funding application to grow the campaign across Council areas that surround the ACT and those that experience high volumes of ACT traffic (including: Goulburn, Queanbeyan, Palarang, Snowy River, Eurobodalla, Tumut, Tumbarumba and Gundagai).

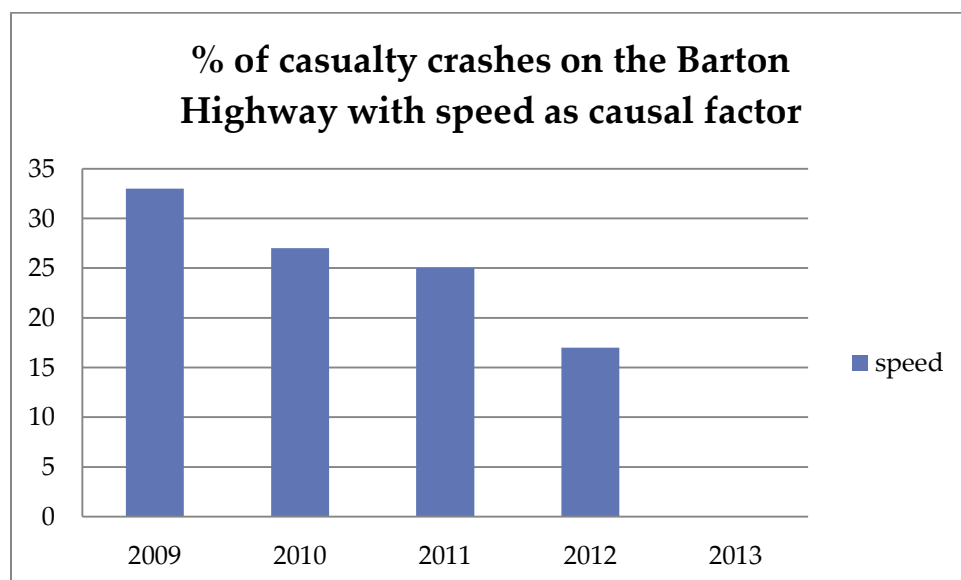
Enforcement

Council has been running this type of campaign on the Barton Highway since 2010. Data collected prior to the 2010 Barton Highway Law Enforcement campaign showed the percentage exceeding speed limit at 51.16%. In February 2013 the percentage exceeding speed limit was measured at 27% demonstrating a drop of 24.16% after 2011/12 and 2012/13 Barton Highway campaigns.

It is this experience, that has helped form the basis for the preparation of and methodology (advertising backed by enforcement) behind the country roads project and encouraged the commitment of NSW Police to work with the Yass Valley Council in its delivery. Table one shows data that Council has collected to date demonstrating the reduction in crashes on the Barton Highway that have speed as a causal factor. This shows that over a longer period of time (six two week long campaign bursts over 4 years) this type of approach appears to be having an impact.

In conclusion, this first country roads campaign should be seen as a pilot of a longer term approach to reducing crashes on country roads.

Table 1:



- Implement a campaign that is backed by Police enforcement:

The campaign was timed to coincide with several major Police operations scheduled during January 2014 to the end of February 2015. Table two below summarises these operations.

Table 2:

Month	Operation	Activity	Comments
December 19 Dec to 4 January	Operation Safe Arrival Focus on arterial roads as well as highways	4996 RBT 193 Speeds 50 TINS No major incidences occurred.	All local Police cars were on the road over this period with six additional cars from Sydney (10 patrol cars in total).
23 to 26 January Australia Day	Operation Safe Return	1466 RBT 27 Speeds 22 TINS	All local cars deployed plus three additional cars from Sydney.
9 to 17 February	Operation Saturation	651 TBT 11 Speeds 8 TINS	All local cars deployed

RBT=Random Breath Tests conducted, Speeds=speeding infringements issued, TINS=Traffic infringement notices issued.

Due to equipment malfunction data demonstrating the 85th percentile speeds travelled by vehicles during the campaign has not been completed (Council has since purchased new traffic counters). However, some data collected earlier in the campaign enabled Council to share intelligence with Police and inform them of roads with higher traffic volumes and higher average speeds.

For example, traffic data collected tells us that an average of 900 vehicles travel on Murrumbateman Road each day, the 85th percentile speed travelled by these vehicles is 107 km/ph. This demonstrates that motorists are speeding on this road regularly and it is this type of information that Council was able to offer to Police in order to encourage additional enforcement focus on country roads.

Burley Griffin Way traffic counts (showing an average of 1745 vehicles per day) demonstrated an 85th percentile speed of 104 km/ph (with maximum speeds recorded at over 140km/ph) which dropped to 99 km/ph during the campaign period (January to February 2015). Additional enforcement on this road was undertaken during Police operations 'Safe Arrival' and 'Safe Return'.



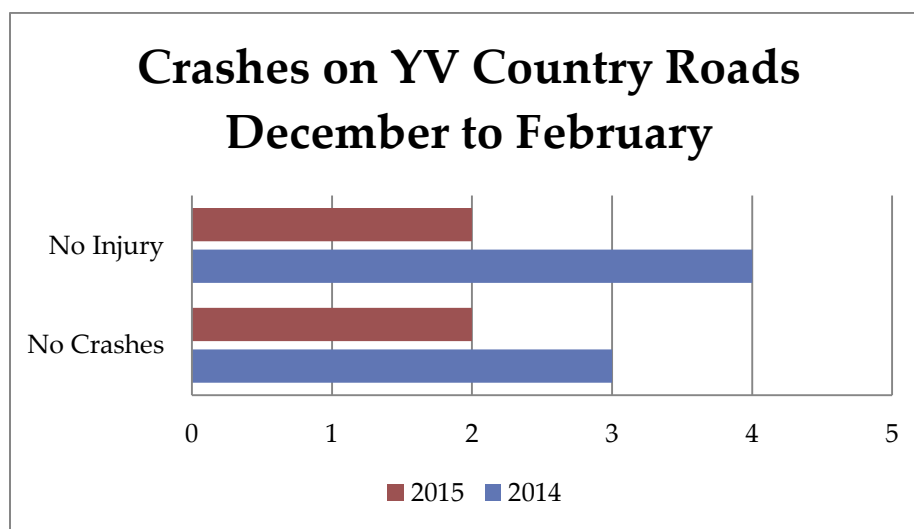
- See a decrease in the amount of crashes on rural roads in the Yass Valley Local Government Area involving both ACT and local motorists:

Past research by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has shown that road safety messages seeking to use intrinsic motivation of people do not work as well as campaigns where there is an increased likelihood of getting caught by Police (extrinsic motivation). Measurement of vehicle speeds by traffic counters have shown that high levels of Police enforcement in short bursts coupled with targeted media have an effect in the immediate term which also translates to the longer term.

As an inaugural three month campaign, there is not sufficient data to draw conclusions about reductions in crashes from the same period in 2013/14 (when no campaign was run) to December to February 2014/15 with the initiation of this campaign.

Table three demonstrates (preliminary) data for these periods:

Table3:



There was one less injury crash on country roads between December 2014 and February 2015 (the campaign period). Five year data 2010 to 2014 shows 175 crashes on Yass Valley country roads over five years which averages to 35 per year or 2.9 crashes per month (on country roads).

During the three month campaign period there was a total of two crashes or 0.6 per month in comparison to 1.0 per month in the same period in the previous year. In 2013 the Yass Valley averaged 3.2 cashes per month and in 2012 the average was 2.7 crashes. Although the quantity of campaign related data is by no means enough to draw conclusions regarding campaign success, it is interesting to note the drop in monthly crash averages during the campaign period.

Engineering

Perform road inspections and identify financially viable engineering treatments to encourage reduced speeds on rural roads:

Murrumbateman Road -road side clearing:

During the campaign period Murrumbateman Road was inspected by Council's Director of Engineering, Works Manager and Road Safety Officer. The road was prioritised for inspection due to the high volume and high speeds of traffic using this road as indicated by traffic count data and also reports by Police to Council regarding negative driver behavior on this road.

There is no immediate solution to slow drivers down, as community education campaigns take time to influence behavior, so Council's approach is to look at harm minimisation via financially viable engineering treatments.

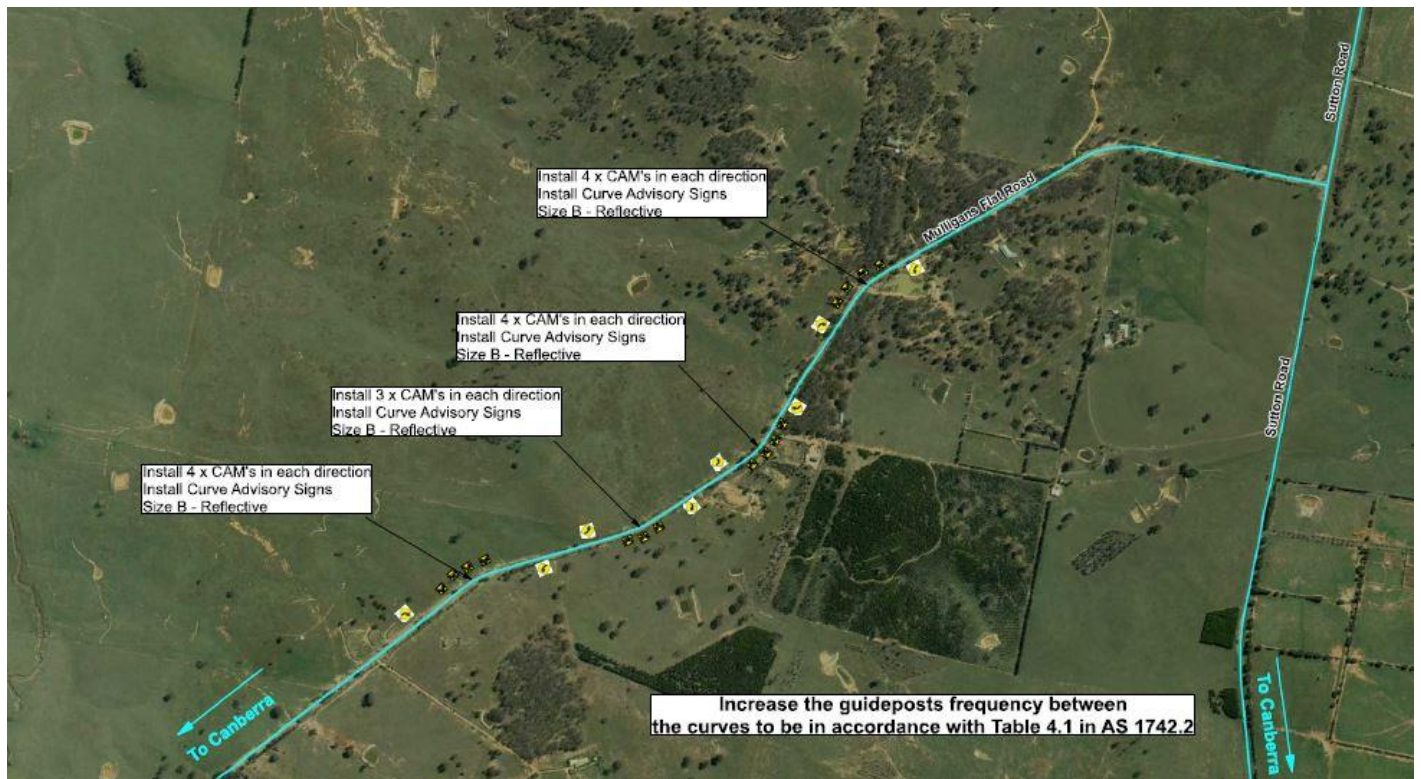
Inspection of Murrumbateman Road has resulted in agreement by Council to enhance roadside safety by improving the Clear Zone in multiple areas along the road. Council is currently gaining quotes for removal of significant amounts of trees and saplings over several kilometers of the road. By both removing non-frangible trees and roadside debris (that may be hazardous to errant vehicles) improvements to sight distances will also be achieved.

Mulligans Flat Rd:

Mulligans Flat road has a history of off road crashes on a narrow, windy, unsealed section of the road. Inspection of this road confirmed that there is minimal curve advisory signage or alignment delineation.

Council has been funded via National Blackspot Funding to install new Size B reflective curve advisory signage on the roads substandard horizontal curves as well as curve alignment markers. Additionally the frequency of guide posts will also be increased along this section of the road.

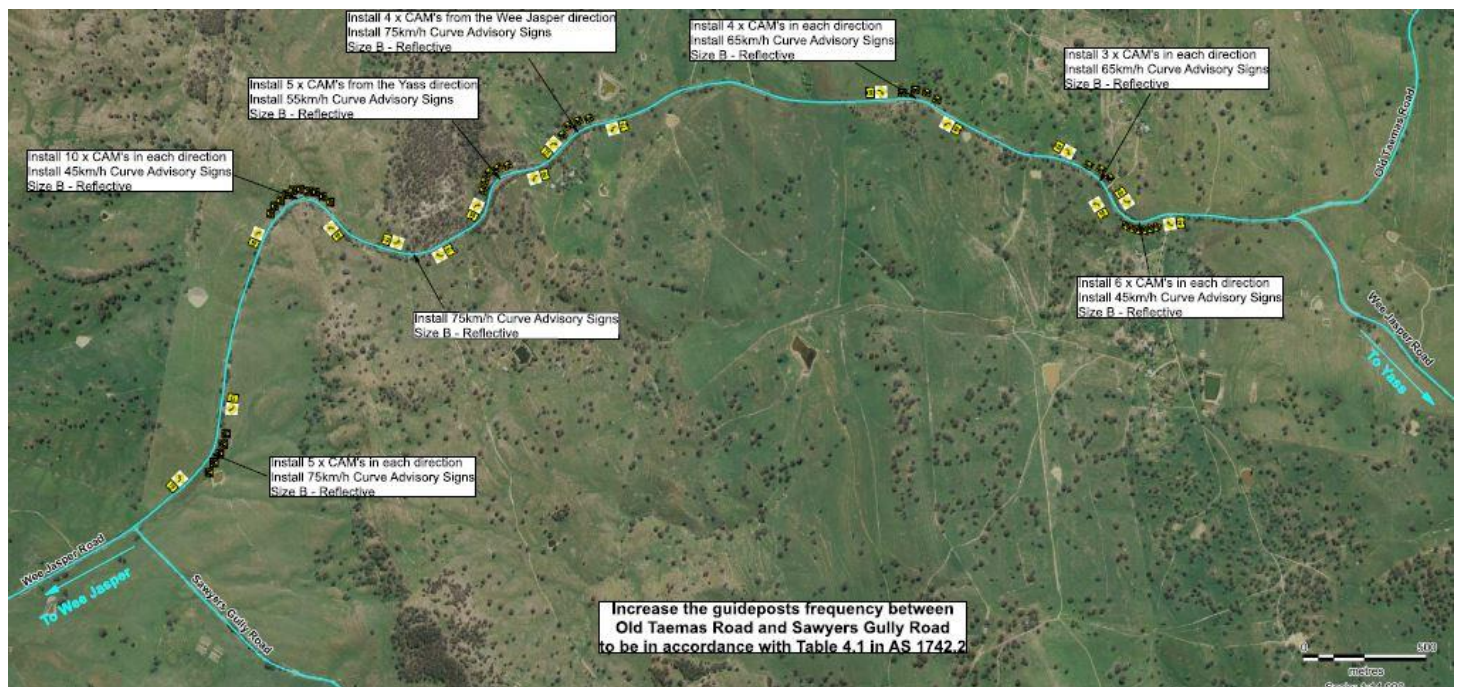
This road was prioritised for inspection due to its high traffic volumes and crash history. This type of road treatment will greatly increase the delineation of corners and provide advanced warning to drivers. The aerial photograph below demonstrates the placement of signage.



Wee Jasper Rd:

Wee Jasper road was also highlighted to Council via community feedback, its history of off road crashes (particularly on a 6 km narrow, windy section). The road has minimal curve advisory signage or alignment delineation.

Council was successful in gaining National Black Spot funding via the NSW Government and will install new (and upgrade existing) Size B reflective curve advisory signage on substandard horizontal curves along with curve alignment markers. Additionally the frequency of guide posts will also be increased along this section of the road. The aerial photograph below demonstrates the placement of signage.





Other road safety issues highlighted via the campaign:

Council's Road Safety Officer received a number of phone calls as a result of individuals hearing the campaign radio commercial. Callers commented that they had heard or seen the campaign message and this had prompted them to call and inform Council of their concerns. Increased networking between NSW Police and Council resulted in the reporting of hazards identified by Police (for example Police highlighted an area where motorcyclists were frequently crashing, dangerous driver behavior around rural school buses and foliage obstructing sight distances on curves and bridges).

This generation of dialogue and additional reporting of hazards resulted in the following type of installations, treatments, and/or investigations:

- Installation of advance warning signage regarding school bus pull over areas on Merryville Drive, Murrumbateman Road and Oakey Creek Road (to alert inexperienced country road drivers/speeding local traffic to the presence of rural bus stops)
- Investigation of traffic volumes and crash history to support Blackspot Funding applications for improvements to:
 - Gundaroo Road
 - Yass Valley Way
 - Mulligans Flat Rd
 - Wee Jasper Road
 - Dog Trap Road and
 - Nanima Road
- Removal of roadside foliage, saplings and trees in the Good Hope area (Fifeshire Rd)
- Inspection of speed zoning at approach to Hume Park tourist resort
- Investigation into need for and available funding for roadside clearing on Murrumbateman Road
- Initiation of communication between Council Ranger and Council Engineering regarding prevalence of Kangaroos on a number of country roads and placement of warning signage.

Links to research project '*ACT driver and rider perceived risk of driving in NSW*':

During the same period that the Yass Valley Country Roads Campaign was funded, the ACT NRMA Road Safety Trust funded a research project (being conducted by ARRB Group) investigating *ACT driver and rider perceived risk of driving in NSW*.



Preliminary results of this study have recently been shared and results offer some support to the methodology and content of the Yass Valley campaign.

Difference in Conditions:

Of note is that ACT drivers do see a difference in travelling on NSW roads – relevant to this campaign was that ACT drivers safety concerns included 'different road conditions, particularly on rural roads' as well as 'concerns with travelling on unsealed, winding and narrow roads'.

In response to this the report recommends:

- Driver and rider education on what to expect when travelling interstate
- Drawing attention to different road types, speed zones and traffic mix
- Increased focus on the importance of trip planning
- Increased focus on informed speed selection in different environments.

Link to Yass Valley country roads campaign methodology/content:

- Social media element to campaign highlighted conditions and hazards on country roads such as: presence of wildlife, gravel roads, narrow winding roads as well as stay alert and speed selection messages
- Radio news and talkback featured discussion about conditions and hazards on country roads
- Radio commercial voiced various conditions and hazards typical to country roads
- All social media and radio promotion highlighted speed selection via a driving to conditions not to speed limits message
- Campaign message "You don't have to be speeding –to be driving too fast on country roads" raises the issue of appropriate speed selection
- Road Safety and campaign information was distributed via Yass Tourist information centre and NRMA outlets.

Speed and speed selection:

The research survey showed that overall awareness of posted speed limits was slightly lower in NSW compared to within the ACT. Drivers self-reported that they adjust their driving for the road type; however this is contrary to the crash analysis which may suggest that drivers are not aware of how fast they are going or are reluctant to recognise that they may sometimes drive too fast for conditions.



The report recommends:

- Increased speed enforcement
- Higher visibility of speed limit signs
- Road user education on speed selection behavior on different road types.

Link to Yass Valley campaign methodology/content:

- Campaign involved additional targeted enforcement
- Future campaign bursts should utilise Variable Message Signs (VMS) to raise driver awareness of speed and road types
- Future campaign should offer more detailed information (via website and brochure) regarding speed selection for different road types – e.g. specific information for safe driving on gravel roads.

Fatigue:

The research survey also showed that most respondents were aware of the changes in their driving when tired and there was a higher awareness of tiredness when travelling on NSW roads. Most respondents indicated that they usually stopped to rest when tired or shared vehicle control. However the number of respondents that reported drifting off road due to tiredness was higher for travel in NSW than in the ACT.

The report recommends:

- Provision of information on rest stops
- Advertising the importance of resting when tired
- Use of VMS signage to prompt controllers to rest
- Need to highlight that tiredness is also a risk in short trips

Link to Yass Valley campaign methodology/content:

- Future campaigns via website and brochure should provide some local information regarding rest stops
- Website and brochure could offer information regarding the risks and signs of tiredness as per the NSW state campaign “Don’t Trust Your Tired Self”
- Use of VMS will be considered for future country roads campaigns

Summary

One of the highlights of the 'You Don't Have to be Speeding –to be driving too fast on country roads' campaign is the stakeholder engagement achieved and collaborative work between Council, two Police regions and both private and Government road safety stakeholders.

This collaboration greatly increased the reach and impact of the campaign well beyond the means of the campaign's advertising budget. This collaboration was also of interest to media outlets, generating excellent dialogue on radio, in print and on television news about this combination of education, law enforcement and engineering.

Now this collaboration has grown to include eight additional Councils (Queanbeyan, Palarang, Goulburn Mulwaree, Eurobodalla, Snowy River, Tumut, Gundagai and Tumbarumba) who have, with Yass Valley Council, made a joint bid for funding in the NRMA ACT Road Safety Trust final grant round. This funding bid proposes extension of the campaign across a substantial geographical area, to Councils that are experiencing similar crash statistics and issues as the Yass Valley including speed related crashes on country roads and high volumes of ACT traffic using the road networks.

The *You Don't have to be Speeding* campaign methodology is akin to the award winning Project RAPTAR run in the Ravenshoe area of North Queensland as it utilises three elements of the Safe Systems approach to road safety. These elements are Education, Enforcement and Engineering. Much of Project RAPTAR's success was attributed to the collaboration achieved between road safety stakeholders including Councils, Police, Government and the wider community as the project team worked to meet its objectives to; improve road safety, reduce road trauma and educate the community about road safety issues and consequences.

This first, three month, *You Don't have to be Speeding* campaign has achieved a comprehensive reach in regard to stakeholder involvement, community education via advertising, social media and news media. Police and Council both received direct feedback with regard to recognition of and support for the campaign by community members in the ACT and Yass Valley.

Planning and timing of the campaign along with intelligence sharing in this localised approach meant that additional enforcement was highly visible, informed and targeted.

The campaign worked to increase Councils focus on country roads engineering, by highlighting relevant crash statistics and traffic data which ultimately resulted in additional (or targeted) road safety inspections. These inspections have led to two successful grant submissions, planned road side clearing works, installation of additional signage and a heightened awareness of Council's capacity to implement minor works that can offer a significant road safety outcome.

This first country roads campaign has demonstrated what can be achieved through collaboration and both internal (Councils and road safety stakeholders) and external or community promotion of road safety -that will ultimately reduce injuries and fatalities on our country road networks.

Budget/Expenditure:

Acquittal of funds received from the NRMA –ACT Road Safety Trust Grants Program 2014/15.

All funds received from the Trust were expended for the purpose for which they were received. The table below outlines the total cost of the project and the costs claimed from the Trust grant monies.

Type	Description	No claim	Trust	Project Total
Radio Advertising	3 months x 4 commercial stations		\$37,969.80	\$37,969.80
Advertising production costs	Voice over charges		\$341.00	\$341.00
Traffic count and data collection	Laying of counters Additional cost in-kind (Yass Valley Council) 2x \$2491 per count	\$1,380.80	\$3,601.20	\$4,982
Media launch	Venue and catering (RMS funded)	\$150.00		\$150.00
Signage for launch and media events.	Campaign branded car air freshener giveaway		\$1,188.00	\$1,188.00
	Campaign posters (RMS funded)	\$350.00		\$350.00
Project Management (Road Safety Officer Salary and on costs)	In-kind (Yass Valley Council/RMS)	\$4,900.00		\$4,900.00
TOTAL		\$6,780.80	\$43,100	\$49,880.80



Melissa Weller
Road Safety Officer
Yass Valley Council



James Mercer-King
Finance Manager - CPA
Yass Valley Council



List of Attachments:

1. Attachment A – Schedule of Facebook Posts.
2. Attachment B – Canberra Times article 6 December
3. Attachment C –Canberra Times article 10 December
4. Attachment D –ACRS Journal article, Vol 26 2015
5. Attachment E –Fairfax Media online article
6. Attachment F – Yass Tribune article 10 December
7. Attachment G – Copy of campaign web page content (via YVC webpage)
8. Attachment H – Campaign media log
9. Attachment I – Campaign poster
10. Attachment J- Air freshener giveaway