

Regional Road Safety Forum, Cairns

Summary and key themes

Date: Tuesday 27 August 2019

Place: Rydges Plaza Cairns Resort, 50 Grafton Street, Cairns City

Background

On 27 August 2019, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) hosted a Regional Queensland Road Safety Stakeholder event in Cairns which focused on the key road safety issues affecting the Far North Queensland region. The Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Andrew Mahon, General Manager (Land Transport Safety and Regulation) of TMR, and Mike Keating, Assistant Commissioner (Road Policing Command) of the Queensland Police Service were at the event. They engaged with 43 delegates representing community groups, local industry and government agencies.

Minister Bailey welcomed everyone in attendance and TMR staff delivered presentations on the next *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2020-21* and local crash data, and Assistant Commissioner Mike Keating discussed community engagement and collaboration. Andrew Mahon then led a future focussed workshop where delegates contributed to discussion topics identifying the characteristics of road safety in the year 2030, external influences on achieving a model road safety environment and potential partners for delivering a safer future. Several notable themes emerged from the discussions.

Where to from here

The Queensland Government sincerely thanks all participants for their time and input. The themes and ideas discussed during the forum support the next *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2020-21* and inform the development of the next road safety strategy. Key themes, discussion points and a sample of specific ideas are outlined below.

Key themes

Note: The below summary aims to capture the key discussion themes raised by a range of participants at the forum and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Queensland Government or all participants.

Delegates had the opportunity to indicate areas of interest when registering for the event. Many subjects were identified, which included:

- driver education
- road conditions
- speed limits
- traffic calming in residential areas
- remote communities

- drink driving
- international drivers
- road safety for vulnerable road users, including older road users, bicycle riders, pedestrians and people with a disability.

The workshops generated several road safety ideas centring around increased education and training, changing behaviours and attitudes, leveraging vehicle safety technology and considering infrastructure changes.

While greater road safety education was recommended across the board, several specific areas were also identified. Participants highlighted the need for a 'whole of life' approach to education and/or training as well as education targeted towards international visitors. It was recommended that driver training take into consideration different road environments such as rural versus urban and for different vehicle types.

Changing road user behaviour and attitudes was another theme delegates focused on. It was suggested that road users reconsider how they approach speed and overtaking as well as address why they may become impatient when driving. It was discussed that road users should consider their mental state and outside influences before driving, including distracting technology, to assess their fitness to focus on the driving task.

Sharing the road was another key behaviour delegates considered important. It was suggested that there is a normative attitude of entitlement on the road, and that a cultural shift to mutual responsibility for sharing the space with other road users is needed.

Forum participants were optimistic about the ability for technology to impact road safety. Automated vehicle features ranging from Automated Braking Systems to full automation were identified as having the potential to positively impact road safety. Many other technological solutions were also put forward to make the driving task safer for drivers, including speed limiting, driver monitoring (for fatigue) and blocking access/data to mobile phones.

Within the broader area of infrastructure, delegates raised the importance of planning for population increases, investing in infrastructure that reduces both fatal and non-fatal crashes, more spaces to overtake, more bike infrastructure and road signs tailored to international visitors.

Ideas

The forum generated several road safety ideas centring around increased education and training, changing behaviours and attitudes, addressing distracted driving, sharing the road and specific measures targeting younger road users and road users as they age. The ideas also support many of the actions to be presented within the next *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2020-21*. The forum in Cairns is among the first in a series of consultation activities, designed to inform the development of the next Queensland road safety strategy. A sample of the ideas from the forum is provided below.

Ideas:

- Investigate the effectiveness of emerging driver monitoring technology in reducing the incidence of fatigue and distraction.
- Encourage road users to develop personal and environmental awareness to recognise signs of fatigue and distraction.
- Investigate / develop approaches to ongoing, whole of life, driver education.
- Encourage people to keep their road rules knowledge up to date.
- Identify opportunities to improve education to support drivers as they age.
- Investigate additional driver education requirements and targeted road signage for international visitors.
- Deliver targeted infrastructure improvements and safety treatments on state controlled and local government roads.
- Consider speed management threshold treatments aimed at reducing speeds at the transition from a high speed rural environment to a lower speed township environment.
- Continue to work with local governments to help design and deliver local solutions to road safety problems, including provision of local data and information.
- Encourage the use of public transport.