

# Safer Roads, Safer Queensland Forum

**Date** Monday 5 December 2016  
**Place** Level 41, 1 William Street, Brisbane

## Background

On 5 December 2016, the Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply, hosted the fourth Safer Roads, Safer Queensland forum which focused on reducing serious road trauma.

In keeping with the previous forums, a wide range of industry and community leaders participated, drawn from research institutions, vehicle technology, engineering and infrastructure groups, motoring and insurance organisations, local government, legal firms, the rail industry, driver trainers, younger people, unions and state government and law enforcement agencies.

This forum built on the success of the three previous Safer Roads, Safer Queensland forums which shaped the development of Queensland's road safety strategy and 2015-17 action plan. The forums are designed to open up the discussion about road safety in Queensland and hear from a wide range of stakeholders about the challenges and solutions.

### National Ministerial Forum on Road Safety

Minister Bailey summarised the key outcomes of a 3 November 2016 National Ministerial Forum on Road Safety. Ministers noted the recent increase in road deaths across Australia and that the lack of progress in reducing serious injuries was unacceptable. It was agreed that jurisdictions would work together, including:

- putting greater emphasis on safe infrastructure investment at all levels of government
- urgently investigating measures to address deaths and serious injuries on regional and remote roads
- discussing safe speeds with communities and applying them particularly where infrastructure improvements are not feasible in the short term
- collaborating better with local government partners to improve safety on local roads
- investigating opportunities for more cost-effective drug testing to enable more roadside testing to occur
- raising awareness of the dangers of using a mobile phone while driving
- improving and increasing road crash data sharing and analysis
- lifting vehicle safety standards.

### Serious Injury Expert Panel

The *Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015-21* sets an ambitious vision of zero fatalities and serious injuries with an interim target to reduce serious injury road crashes by at least 30% by 2020.

Under the *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2015-17*, a commitment was made to 'convene an expert panel to better understand serious injury data and targeted initiatives to reduce hospitalised casualties'.

A Serious Injury Expert Panel (SIEP) comprising experts from academia, industry and government was subsequently formed to guide the development of a program of work to reduce serious injury

road crashes in Queensland. The panel chair, Professor Narelle Haworth, Director of the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety, Queensland (CARRS-Q) presented the SIEP's roadmap for 'Reducing Road Crash Serious Injuries in Queensland' at the forum.

This roadmap focused on the following 'top 5' areas to meet our reduction target:

1. Safer Urban Cities and Intersections
2. Safer Roadsides
3. Safer Vehicles
4. Safer Behaviours
5. Data and Research.

## **Workshop**

Forum attendees workshopped strategies for each of the 5 areas. The discussions and deliberations from the forum will be considered during the development of Queensland's 2017-19 road safety action plan.

## **Where to from here**

The Queensland Government sincerely thanks all participants for attending and sharing their insights. A great many ideas were put forward during the forum. Key themes, discussion points and a sample of specific initiatives are summarised below.

## **Key themes**

***Note: the points below capture the key discussion themes raised by participants at the forum. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Queensland Government or all of the participants.***

### **1. Safer Urban Cities and Intersections**

*Aim: to reduce serious injury road crashes in 60km/h zones, targeting angle crashes at intersections and rear end crashes on the approaches, and speeds for pedestrians and bicyclists.*

Participants noted that intersections are complex and it can be difficult to determine safe gaps, which can cause drivers to take unnecessary risks. It was also noted that intersections are a high risk for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, motorcycle riders and bicyclists.

Participants proposed:

#### *Planning and infrastructure*

- There would be safety advantages in making intersections and road markings as standard and consistent as possible.
- Consider vulnerable road users when designing and reviewing intersections.
- Right turn arrows at intersections should be used where possible, to avoid people having to correctly judge gaps in incoming traffic.

#### *Informing and engaging the community*

- Further information for road users about what line markings mean.
- Information for drivers/riders about the limited difference in journey time when reducing travel speed.

- Educate drivers to be aware of vulnerable road users at intersections and to slow down.

#### *Speed limits*

- Consider decreasing urban speed limits which will decrease the stopping distance and the likelihood and severity of crashes, particularly for vulnerable road users.

#### *Enforcement*

- More enforcement at intersections and on urban roads, including camera detection.

## **2. Safer Roadsides**

*Aim: to reduce the possibility for vehicles to run off the road and roll or hit an object, especially in 100km/h zones.*

Participants noted the importance of having a Safe System approach to road safety across all levels of government (including local government). They also noted the importance of safety standards for roadsides (including new roads, upgrades and risk assessments). Participants acknowledged that a holistic approach would be required to solve these issues, and further work needs to be undertaken to better understand and address the underlying causes of dangerous and aggressive behaviour on the road.

Participants proposed:

#### *Planning and infrastructure*

- Intervention and construction standards for safety (templates for state and local government road cross sections, consistency across the network, fit for purpose).
- Safe System implementation (upstream design and planning document review, state and local government training, intervention and construction standards).
- Continue to use Australian National Risk Assessment Model for the identification and prioritisation of sites.
- Review motorcycle priority routes to examine benefits of retrofitting barrier under-runs on existing barriers.

#### *Informing and engaging the community*

- Work with community to talk about speed (review Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices Part 4, consider vulnerable road users, speed reductions in urban areas, increased speed enforcement).
- Reference true cost resulting from serious injury crashes and associated road trauma. Transport and police departments alone will not be able to solve these issues, and must work with broader stakeholders to better understand and address the underlying causes of behaviour on the road.

#### *Engaging and supporting stakeholders*

- All levels of government work more closely together to improve risk assessments that help prioritise Safe System upgrades (data collection, AusRAP star ratings, High Risk Road type of analysis for local roads of regional significance).

#### *Legislation and policy*

- Ensure safety presides over environmental factors in the legislation where there is a risk of serious harm to road users (facilitate implementation of safer roadsides).

- Embed safety into standard Queensland Government policies and practices (for example, Cooperative-ITS and Cold Applied Plastic for line marking).

### 3. Safer Vehicles

*Aim: to get people into the safest vehicle possible*

Participants noted that vehicle age and safety rating are important factors in both crash avoidance and limiting injury. They noted the importance of influencing people's vehicle purchasing decisions and getting them into safer vehicles, especially those at higher risk of injury (young and older drivers).

Participants proposed:

#### *Influencing behaviours*

- Encourage people (particularly young drivers and older drivers) into safer vehicles by considering incentives that may be linked to tax deductions, insurance discounts, superannuation and salary sacrifice options (a new 'first car owners grant' was proposed).
- Influence people to purchase the safest vehicle they can afford, by better promoting ANCAP and Used Car Safety Ratings.
- Introduce incentives for trucking operators to purchase smaller and more suitable trucks in urban areas.

#### *Messaging*

- Promote greater use of motorcycle safety gear through education and consider introducing mandatory minimum standard of gear to be worn (for example, no exposed skin).
- Provide information/training about vehicle safety features (at point of sale) and influence the motor vehicle sales industry to advise vehicle purchasers of the safety features including vehicle technology to manage fatigue, limit speed, overcome driver distraction, and provide safety alerts (such as vulnerable road users close to the vehicle).

#### *Vehicles*

- Maximise the number of vehicles with 5-star rating for occupant and pedestrian/vulnerable road user protection through influencing fleet buying practices.
- Investigate links between crash data and vehicle safety ratings/features in Queensland.
- Manage vehicle roadworthiness by involving mechanics as a trusted source of advice, and removing un-roadworthy vehicles from the road (noting many older un-roadworthy vehicles are likely to have poorer vehicle safety features).

### 4. Safer Behaviours

*Aim: drivers, riders and pedestrians understand and know how to respond to road risks, comply with road rules and demand action to reduce road trauma. This will be achieved through education, social change strategies, policy, regulation, enforcement and technology.*

Participants noted the importance of giving clear and specific messages to the community regarding the impact serious injuries have on the Queensland community.

Participants proposed:

### *Influencing behaviours*

- Behaviour on the roads can be influenced by road infrastructure and roadsides. For example, distractions outside the vehicle such as road signs could potentially increase crash risk.
- Campaigns, legislation and policies focussing on behaviour (such as the minimum bicycle passing distance) can have a positive impact. Similar requirements could be introduced for other behaviours (such as minimum following distance between vehicles).
- Rewards/incentives for good driving behaviour should be considered.
- Fitness to drive - medical and mental status of the driver is important. Supporting friends and family members to influence people who may not be fit to drive should be considered. It's important family and friends be part of the solution.

### *Messaging*

- Provide the community with facts regarding serious injury crashes (for example, where they are happening and why).
- Campaigns and education programs should be specific, consistent and targeted to individual road users.

### *Technology*

- Technology could be used to improve behaviour on our roads. Suggestions include using in-car technology and other measures for reporting driving behaviour.

### *Enforcement*

- Enforcement plays a critical role in influencing behaviour. Consideration should be given to increased high visibility policing, including overt camera operations.

## **5. Data and Research**

*Aim: to better target funding and initiatives through improved data analysis.*

Participants noted the importance of data sharing and linking to enable road safety research, policies and initiatives be targeted and effective.

Participants proposed:

### *Influencing behaviours*

- Regular feedback on driving performance is important. For example some insurance companies are offering widgets for cars to tell drivers about driving performance but also sending information back to the insurance company.

### *Data*

- Data linkages need to be explored and developed. This includes determining the levels of analysis.
- Consider developing a database of road safety interventions and evaluation outcomes.

- We need a better understanding of the long term outcomes for seriously injured casualties. A breadth of data needs to be considered – from preventative measures through to outcomes (for example, rehabilitation requirements, health and income support claims).

#### *Technology*

- Existing and emerging technology needs to be effectively used. Need to consider other data sources such as geospatial data, in vehicle reports (black boxes), dash cameras and go pros.
- Use the improvements in modelling technology to expand understanding of road safety policies and initiatives.

#### *Research*

- Building evaluations including costs benefit analysis into projects/initiatives up front is important to gain support and funding for initiatives.
- Post-crash response: important and under-researched area of road safety. Need to investigate initiatives like tele-health for regional and rural response, state-wide quality improvement project.