Department of Transport and Main Roads

Queensland Guide to Road Safety

Part 3: Safe Speed

July 2025

Queensland Government

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Feedback

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About this document

Austroads' *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed* is concerned with speed limits and their application as a speed management too. The use of appropriate speed limits forms an integral part of a safe road system. They are a speed management tool used to improve road safety, while maintaining the efficiency of the road network.

How to use this document

The Department of Transport and Main Roads has agreed to adopt the standards published in Austroads *Guides* as part of national harmonisation. The department seeks to avoid duplicating information addressed in national guidance and has developed documents instead that provide Queensland-specific advice while following the structure established in Austroads *Guides*.

Queensland-specific advice includes practices which vary from national practice because of local environmental conditions (such as geography, soil types, climate); different funding practices; local research; local legislation requirements; and to expand instruction on particular issues.

As such, this Part of the *Queensland Guide to Road Safety* (QGRS) takes precedence over the Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed* except where the Austroads *Guide* is accepted without changes.

This Part is designed to be read and applied together with Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed.* Readers must have access to the Austroads *Guide* to understand its application in Queensland.

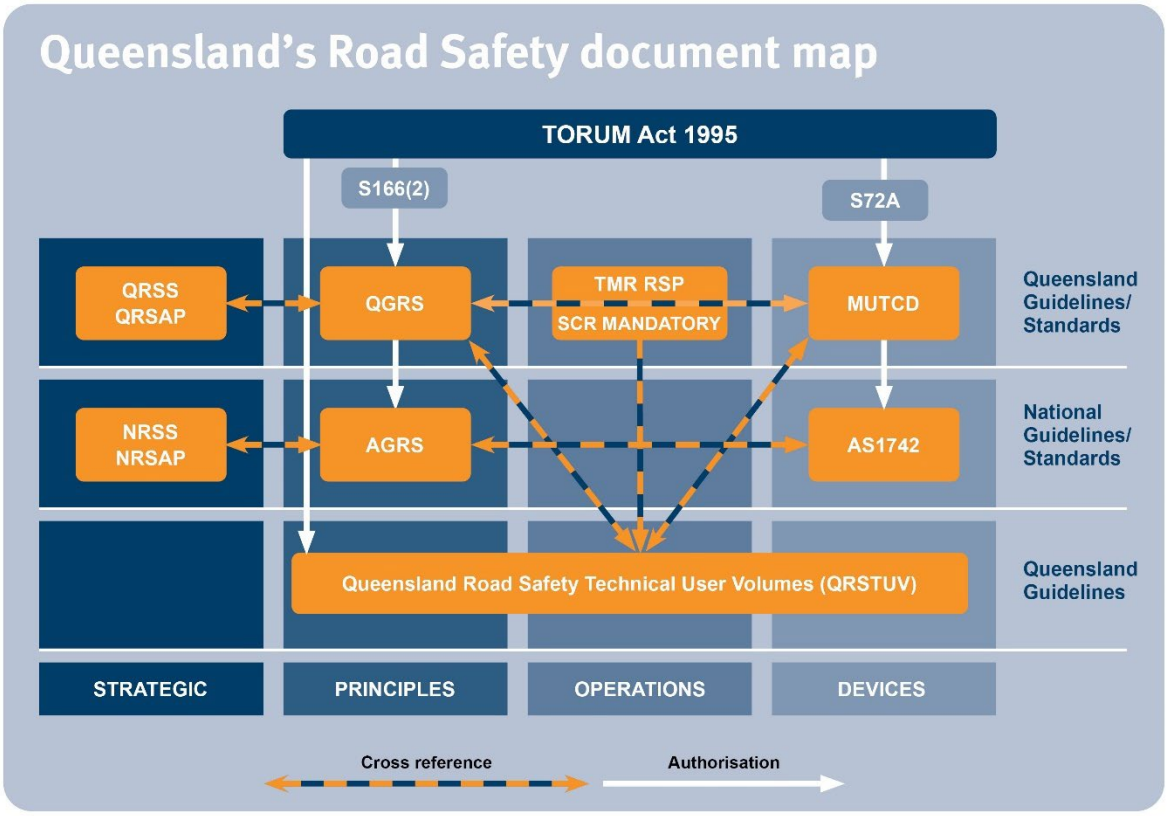
This document:

- sets out how the Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed* applies in Queensland
- has precedence over the Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed* when applied in Queensland, and
- has the same section numbering and headings as the Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part Part 3: *Safe Speed.*

The following table summarises the relationship between the Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed* and this document:

Applicability	Meaning
Accepted	The Austroads *Guide* section is accepted.
Accepted, with amendments	Part or all of the Austroads *Guide* section has been accepted with additions, deletions or differences.
New	There is no equivalent section in the Austroads *Guide*.
Not accepted	The Austroads *Guide* section is not accepted and does not apply in Queensland.

A summary of the documents relevant to road safety in Queensland, and their links, follows:



Definitions

The following general amended definitions apply when reading the Queensland *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed.*

Term	Definition
AGRS Part **3**	Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed,* as amended by this document; for example, a reference to AGRS Part 3 means the reader must refer to the Austroads *Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed,* and the *Queensland Guide to Road Safety* Part 3: *Safe Speed* (QGRS Part 3). Throughout AGRS Part 3, references are made to other Parts of the AGRS (for example, when reading AGRS Part 3, the reader may be referred to AGRS Part 7 for further information). In such cases, the reader must refer to the equivalent Part within the *Queensland Guide to Road Safety* first. Check the applicability of the equivalent QGRS Part before referring to the referenced AGRS Part. Similarly, references may be made to other Austroads Guides (for example, when reading AGRS Part 3, the reader may be referred to the *Guide to Traffic Management* Part 3: *Transport studies and analysis methods)*. In such cases, the reader must refer to the equivalent Queensland Guide first, where such exist. Check the applicability of the equivalent Queensland Guide before referring to the referenced Austroads Guide Part.
AGRS	Austroads *Guide to Road Safety*
AS 1742	Australian Standard AS 1742 *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices*
NRSS	National Road Safety Strategy

Term	Definition
NRSAP	National Road Safety Action Plan
QGRS	*Queensland Guide to Road Safety*
QRSS	*Queensland Road Safety Strategy*
QRSAP	*Queensland Road Safety Action Plan*
QRSTUV	*Queensland Road Safety Technical User Volumes*
RPDM	*Road Planning and Design Manual 2nd Edition*
RSP	Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads *Road Safety Policy*
TORUM Act 1995	*Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995* (Qld)
TRUM	Volume 2 of the *Traffic and Road Use Management* manual preceded this Part of the *Queensland Guide to Road Safety* and was withdrawn on publication of the corresponding QGRS Part.

References

QGRS section	Reference
All	www.legislation.qld.gov.au

Relationship table

Section		Title	Queensland application	Dept contact*
1.	**Introduction**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	1.1	Purpose of the Guide	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
	1.2	Why is Speed Management Important?	Accepted	Safer Roads
	1.3	Speed and the Safe System	Accepted	Safer Roads
2.	**Speed and Harm**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	2.1	The Association Between Impact Speed and Injury	Accepted	Safer Roads
	2.1.1	*Stopping distance*	Accepted with amendments	Road Design
	2.1.2	*Energy transfer*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	2.1.3	*Safe System speeds*	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
	2.1.4	*Further insights on speed and injury severity*	Accepted	Safer Roads
3.	**Speed Behaviour on Roads**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	3.1	Range of Speeds on the Road Network	Accepted	Safer Roads
	3.2	Complications in Perceiving Speed Risk	Accepted	Safer Roads
4.	**The Case for Safer Speeds**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	4.1	Nilsson's power model	Accepted	Safer Roads
	4.2	Kloeden Curves	Accepted	Safer Roads
	4.3	Evidence from Speed Limit Reductions	Accepted	Safer Roads
	4.4	The Case for Addressing Low Level Speeding	Accepted	Safer Roads
	4.5	Travel Time and Productivity	Accepted	Safer Roads
5.	**Ways to Manage Speed**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.1	Roads and Roadside Infrastructure	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
	5.2	Speed Limits and Speed Enforcement	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
	5.3	People	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.1	*Personal factors*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.2	*Legal factors*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.3	*Situational factors*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.4	*Social factors*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.5	*Implementation intentions and pledges to counter speeding*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.6	*People's attitudes towards speeding*	Accepted	Safer Roads
	5.3.7	*What does the community think about speed risks and speed management*	Accepted	Safer Roads

Section		Title	Queensland application	Dept contact*
6.	**Types of Speed Limit**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	6.1	Default Speed Limits	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
	6.2	Signed Speed Limits	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
7	**How Do You Choose the Speed Limit**		Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
	7.1	Crash Risk	Accepted	Safer Roads
	7.2	Current Operating Performance	Accepted	Safer Roads
	7.3	Road and Roadside Infrastructure, Geometry and Roadside Development	Accepted	Safer Roads
	7.4	Unsealed Roads	Accepted	Safer Roads
8.	**Safe Speed for Regional and Remote Areas**		Accepted	Safer Roads
	8.1	Speed Limits	Accepted	Safer Roads
	8.2	Engineering Treatments	Accepted	Safer Roads
	8.3	Enforcing Safe Speeds	Accepted	Safer Roads
	8.4	Vehicle Countermeasures – ISA	Accepted	Safer Roads
	8.5	Speed Management – Community Consultation and Engagement	Accepted with amendments	Safer Roads
References				
Appendices				
A	Meaning of the 85th Percentile Speed		Accepted	Safer Roads
	A.1	Driver Selection of Safe (or Optimum) Speeds	Accepted	Safer Roads
	A.2	Speed Dispersion	Accepted	Safer Roads

Departmental contacts:

- Safer Roads: Safer Roads Infrastructure, Engineering and Technology, Transport and Main Roads email SaferRoads@tmr.qld.gov.au.

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Guide

Addition

Second paragraph, add 'education,' after 'including'.

2 Speed and Harm

2.1 The Association Between Impact Speed and Injury

2.1.1 Stopping distance

Addition

Add 'Refer to the *Road Planning and Design Manual 2nd Edition*, Volume 3, Part 3*: Geometric Design* for more information on stopping distance requirements on the State Controlled road network.'

2.1.3 Safe System speeds

Deletion

Delete fourth dot point.

5 Ways to Manage Speed

5.1 Roads and Roadside Infrastructure

Addition

Consideration should be given to the movement and place function of the road. Speed limits and speed management are essential factors in determining how road space is utilised in respect of Movement and Place. Broadly speaking, speed limits are likely to be higher on roads where movement is the primary function and lower speed limits are likely to be important in creating a sense of ‘place’.

The design of roads and roadside infrastructure should also consider the Movement and Place functions and its influence on speeds. For guidance on Movement and Place on the state controlled road network, refer to Transport and Main Roads *Movement and Place Policy* and associated documents.

5.2 Speed Limits and Speed Enforcement

Addition

Refer to Section 7 below for more information regarding the speed limit setting process in Queensland.

6 Types of Speed Limit

6.1 Default Speed Limits

Difference

Replace entire Section 6.1 with:

The default speed limit in Queensland for:

- a road in a built-up area is 50 km/h, and
- a road that is not in a built-up area is 100 km/h.

The default speed for Personal mobility devices (PMDs):

- on footpaths, shared paths, and crossings is 12 km/h
- on dedicated bicycle paths and roads, where PMDs are permitted, is 25 km/h, and
- in shared zones, is 10 km/h.

These speed limits are legally enforceable with or without posted signs, which avoids the need for extensive signing.

Note: A default speed limit is not the process for selecting a speed limit on a road. It is only one method of applying that speed limit once determined through the appropriate process. Refer to Section 7 for further guidance on the speed limit setting process for Queensland.

6.2 Signed Speed Limits

Difference

Replace the sentence of the second dot point:

Speed limits can vary from 110 km/h in the rural areas to 50 km/h in built-up areas.

with

Speed limits can vary from 10 km/h to 110 km/h.

Deletion

In the second dot point, delete from the last sentence:

such as 60, 70 km/h, 80 km/h and 90 km/h.

Deletion

In the third dot point, delete from the last sentence:

generally 40 km/h,

Deletion

In the fourth dot point, delete from the last sentence:

Speed limits generally vary from 25 km/h to 40 km/h.

7 How Do You Choose the Speed Limit?

Addition

Refer to the *Queensland Road Safety Technical User Volumes* (QRSTUV): *Guide to Speed Management* for the legislated speed limit review / setting process and procedure in Queensland.

The information contained in this section may be considered good general practice in speed management, but the formal process in Queensland is given in the above.

8 Safe Speed for Regional and Remote AreasSpeed Management – Community Consultation and Engagement

8.5 Speed Management – Community Consultation and Engagement

Difference

Replace the first paragraph with:

> Speed management is a critical strategy for addressing road safety concerns, particularly when working with community stakeholders. In Queensland, the process of setting speed limits is a professional engineering service designed to objectively assess risks and recommend appropriate limits based on the road's functional context and focused on the safety of all road users — and is intended to be free from bias or external influences.
>
> **During the Review Phase**:
> Community engagement should focus on gathering insights that inform the investigating engineer's analysis and recommendations. This approach helps ensure outcomes are consistent, technically sound, aligned with the road's Movement and Place functions, as well as credible to the community.
>
> **After the Review Phase**:
> Community engagement becomes essential for implementing and communicating speed management decisions. Education and awareness campaigns—especially in regional and remote areas — where speeding is typically more common and may be perceived to be more socially acceptable (Austroads 2014b) — help build understanding and support among community stakeholders. A strong evidence base is key to explaining the rationale behind changes and fostering community ownership of road safety outcomes.