

[REDACTED]

From: roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au on behalf of Office of Road Safety <roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 March 2021 12:02 PM
To: RoadSafetyStrategy
Subject: National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 - have your say submission - Warren J Johnson [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Submitted on Tue, 2021-03-23 12:02

Submitted values are:

Name
Warren J Johnson

Organisation
Youthsafe

Email
[REDACTED]

State
NSW

Which area/s of the draft Strategy are you commenting on (select all that apply):

Targets for reducing deaths and serious injuries , The themes – safe roads, safe road use, safe vehicles and speed management , The social model , Regional roads , Remote areas, Indigenous Australians, Vulnerable road users , Risky road use

What is your primary area of interest in road safety?

Youthsafe's Mission is to partner to prevent unintentional injury of young people. Given the disproportionately high crash casualty rate of young novice drivers we have a strong focus on promoting low risk driving behaviors in pre-learners, learners and provisional drivers. We are the longstanding state-wide Training Provider of the NSW Safer Drivers Course. We are also a trainer for Learner Driver Mentors and run interactive road safety sessions in over a hundred schools and community venues annually.

What road safety issues are the most important to address?

Supporting the Graduated Licensing Schemes nationally and trialling ways to add further value to those schemes.

What do you believe are the strengths of this draft Strategy?

The strategy has many great features. For example

*its inclusion of serious injuries as well as fatalities - sometime the former gets eclipsed by the latter which is unfortunate, as serious road injury rates remain obdurately high.

*the representation of the safe system as a tripartite focus on roads, vehicles and road use with speed management relating to each foci. Maybe this could be more effectively presented as a Venn Diagram with speed management sitting in the common heart of the diagram and movement and place in the background as supporting context?

*the social justice challenges around Indigenous Australians, regional roads, remote areas etc

*the social model to effect cultural change through the activity and influence of community-based organisations.

*the aim to reduce age of the fleet. Note however that this issue is compounded by the fact that a disproportionate percentage of drivers who drive cars in excess of 10 years of age are young novice drivers because they are often given the family hand-me-down car or the price point for purchasing an older car better aligns with their capacity to pay: see below comment on what's missing.

*the linking of road casualty crashes as a workplace issue. Again, note the disproportionate rate of workplace injuries per se that impact on young workers. They are the age group most impacted by workplace incidents that cause harm: see below comment on what's missing.

Is there anything important that you think is missing from this draft Strategy?

Our principal recommendation relates to the need to identify young novice drivers as an especially high risk cohort of road users. This is entirely missing from the draft despite the page 3 reference to the strategy seeking to support "safe transport options for all ages".

Here are a few relevant facts:

Both globally and within Australia, young drivers are significantly over-represented among those killed or injured in road traffic accidents, as young drivers are more likely to engage in risky driving behaviours (AIHW 2011).

Young drivers remain the most over-represented group of drivers involved in crashes on our roads. The highest period for risk is shortly after licensure, and continues up to age 24 (BITRE 2013).

Young drivers (17 – 25 years) represent one-quarter of all Australian road deaths, but are only 10 – 15% of the licensed driver population - <https://www.youngdriverfactbase.com/key-statistics/>

A critical issue in relation to this cohort relates to the crash casualty rates of those during the first six to 12 months of independent (Provisional Licence) driving.

A 17 year old driver with a P1 licence is four times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than a driver over 26 years - <https://www.youngdriverfactbase.com/key-statistics/>

This highlights the need for the national strategy to explore ways to add further safety value to existing graduated licensing schemes/driver licensing programs. As the value of the graduated approach to exposing young drivers to increasing road use risks is well documented, all jurisdictions should be encouraged to trial evidence-based ways to add even greater safety value to existing schemes through innovative countermeasures and cross sectoral collaboration.

Given the importance of this issue we strongly recommend that a tenth priority be added to the strategy to identify the issue of young novice drivers.

A less satisfactory approach could see this cohort placed under Risk road use but that is likely to deny it the prominence it should be afforded and diminish subsequent ameliorations.

The reference made in the strategy to driver licensing programs (page 16) would be given further strategic purpose if such programs were also identified with the development of low risk driving behaviours. Licensing programs are more than meeting a list of technical tick boxes: behaviour and attitude must be also effectively developed and managed as part of licensing.

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