

From: roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au on behalf of Office of Road Safety <roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 March 2021 10:46 AM
To: RoadSafetyStrategy
Subject: National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 - have your say submission - Michael Timms [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: nrss-2021_30-submission-from-rtz-zero.pdf

Submitted on Tue, 2021-03-23 10:44

Submitted values are:

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Which area/s of the draft Strategy are you commenting on (select all that apply):
Movement and place, The social model, Governance, Heavy vehicle safety, Other/not listed

What is your primary area of interest in road safety?
Please refer to attached submission

What road safety issues are the most important to address?
Please refer to attached submission

What do you believe are the strengths of this draft Strategy?
Please refer to attached submission

Is there anything important that you think is missing from this draft Strategy?
Please refer to attached submission

Do you give permission for your submission to be published on this website following the end of the consultation period?
Yes



Comments on the draft National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30

Contents

Movement and Place: Influencing	Page 2
Enforcement: Monitoring and Reporting	Page 3
Social Model and Heavy Vehicles	Page 5

Michael Timms
Partner, RTS Zero
23 March 2021

Author Bio

Michael Timms retired from New South Wales Police Force in January 2020 following a 33-year career. Mr Timms has over three decades experience in Highway Patrol and road policing and was a member of the Command Leadership Group, Traffic and Highway Patrol Command.

He holds a Bachelor of Professional Studies (Policing) UNE, majoring in road safety studies and completed the Monash University Road Safety Leadership Program in 2016. He has written and presented papers to road safety conferences in Australia, North America and Europe.

The submission is made in the author's personal capacity as a former Highway Patrol officer, current road safety practitioner and consultant (RTS Zero).

Current positions (voluntary):

- Australasian College of Road Safety, NSW Chapter, Committee Member and Treasurer
- Oz Help Health in Gear Program, Steering Committee Member

Movement and Place: Influencing

NRSS 2021-30 needs to have every-day road user in mind. The graph on Page 7 is derived from Austroads, a body who specialises in preparing high-level technical publications for industry stakeholders.

There is an opportunity within NRSS 2021-30 to lay the foundations for the national communications strategy that will be needed to support road safety in the coming decade and indeed, all the way to 2050. This being the case, the graph contained in the draft adds no value to the discussion and should be deleted.

The attitude of sections of the public to reducing speed limits to as low as 40km/h or 30km/h, as would be required within the framework of movement and place, ranges from sceptical to downright hostile.

Consider the following March 2021 Facebook posts from the NRMA.



The Facebook post from 4 March 2021 about the removal of speed camera warning signs drew 158 likes, 17 shares and almost 400 comments. An examination of those comments illustrates how complaints of “revenue raising” continue to plague enforcement programs particularly those related to camera-detected offences.

The comparison with the Facebook post of 8 March 2021 could not be more stark. Here, the NRMA is conveying information as to the massive cost of road trauma being borne by the people of NSW and the comparative safety of roads, by local government area. Yet it received a fraction of the shares, likes and comments compared to the post about the removal of speed camera warning signs.

Even the Mobile Phone Detection Camera Program, winner of the 2020 NSW Premiers Award, has been the subject of relentless negative press coverage (<https://www.9news.com.au/national/speed-camera-and-mobile-phone-use-fines-spike-in-nsw/1686f126-6213-44ff-b1e7-1856bb3d1e0a>).

Are the public more concerned about being booked, unfairly (in some minds) or otherwise, than they are about being killed or seriously injured in a crash? Will these concerns be amplified as more 30 and 40km/h speed zones are introduced?

If the answer to those questions is “yes”, then NRSS 2021-30 needs do more to challenge this view.

Enforcement: Monitoring and Reporting

There appears to be hope that national bodies will step up and provide leadership.

National bodies supported collectively by governments also have responsibilities for road safety.

The Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency is responsible for providing advice on current and emerging policing priorities and cross-jurisdictional coordination, for example through co-Chairing the National Drug Driving Working Group.

Draft NRSS 2021-30, Page 27

The level of national guidance and coordination in regards to NRSS 2021-30 appears uncertain.

There was a period in the late 2000's and early 2010's when the Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory (ANZPAA) was active in coordinating and leading national road policing efforts.

ANZPAA would work with the jurisdictions to coordinate strategy across Australia and New Zealand., creating Communications Toolkits and promoted consistent terminology, such as the *Fatal Five*:

Remember the Fatal Five:

- *speed*
- *seatbelts*
- *alcohol/drugs*
- *distraction*
- *fatigue.*

Source: Operation Crossroads 2014 – ANZPAA Communications Toolkit

Significantly, ANZPAA collated and published data for an agreed twelve-day Australia-New Zealand Xmas-New Year National Holiday Period ensured a nationally consistent holiday road toll period.

Unfortunately, ANZPAA have ceased the collation of this data.

ANZPAA is no longer facilitating the cross-jurisdictional Operation Crossroads focused on road safety. Police jurisdictions will continue to take their own approaches to road safety activities over Christmas and the New Year.

ANZPAA is no longer collecting data relating to the Christmas and Easter Holiday Road Tolls for Australia and New Zealand....All media enquiries regarding the Holiday Road Toll should be directed to the relevant police media unit.

<https://www.anzpaa.org.au/services/initiatives/operation-crossroads>

The 2020-21 Christmas-New Year road safety period was inconsistent in terms of operational duration and messaging, ranging from an 11-day campaign in NSW and the ACT, up to 61 days in WA.

TABLE: 2020-21 Australian and New Zealand Christmas-New Year Holiday Police Operations

State	Operation Name	From	To	Duration
Western Australia	Operation Brightly	Nov-27	Jan-26	61 days
Queensland	Operation Sierra Noella	Dec-09	Jan-29	52 days
Northern Territory	Operation Roland	Dec-17	Jan-07	22 days
Victoria	Operation Roadwise	Dec-18	Jan-06	20 days
South Australia	Operation Safe Holidays	Dec-19	Jan-03	19 days
New Zealand	No name quoted	Dec-24	Jan-05	14 days
Tasmania	Operation Crossroads	Dec-21	Jan-01	12 days
New South Wales	No name quoted	Dec-24	Jan-03	11 days
Aust Capital Territory	No name quoted	Dec-24	Jan-03	11 days
<i>BITRE Christmas Period</i>		<i>Dec-23</i>	<i>Jan-03</i>	<i>12 days</i>

Compiled from Police Media Unit releases and other media reports

The Draft NRSS 2021-30 considers enforcement to be sufficiently important to warrant its own Fact Sheet.

Whilst “state and territory governments....are responsible for police enforcement and compliance” (Draft NRSS 2021-30, Page 27), there needs to be a baseline level of commitment to the national strategy from law enforcement.

The communique issued following the meeting of the Transport Infrastructure Council on 20 November 2020 spoke about “options for tracking delivery of the new Strategy and Action Plan and the potential for establishing an advisory group for the National Road Safety Strategy”.

The establishment of an advisory group would be essential in monitoring and reporting on the annual progress of the strategy and action plans outlined on Page 25 of the Draft NRSS 2021-30.

The prospects of meeting many of the performance indicators will rise or fall depending on the commitment of law enforcement.

Therefore, experienced road policing practitioners must be involved in the monitoring and review process. Retired police officers who are independent of current positions within government could be ideal candidates for such a task.

Social Model and Heavy Vehicles

Road use also needs to be seen in a broader context as the way people live their lives affects use of the roads. Under the social model this Strategy recognises that other preventative health work, for example focusing on mental and physical health, will also impact road safety.

Risky Road Use, Page 18, Draft NRSS 2021-30

The following case study is an example of adverse health issues contributing to road trauma. The good news is how elements within the transport sector are showing leadership to improve the health and wellbeing of truck drivers, particularly owner drivers and small fleets who are not supported by large corporate employee assistance programs.

Case Study: R v Crockford 2020, Dubbo District Court

A Queensland truck driver was sentenced to serve nine years and six months in jail over a 2018 crash that killed a young couple stopped at a roadworks site. Robert Crockford, 52, was driving a semi-trailer when it crashed into several cars stopped on the Newell Highway between Gilgandra and Dubbo in January 2018.

Hannah Ferguson, 19, and her boyfriend Reagen Skinner, 21, both died. Ten other people were injured, including a two-year-old girl.

The offender, Robert Crockford, 52, was a truck driver employed by a Queensland-based transport company whose website states they operate a fleet of over 50 prime movers and trailers.

From the Judgment (R v Crockford 2020, Judge Williams):

*In addition to **the reduced hours of sleep** the offender had in the two nights prior to the collision, his sleep was affected by his **alcohol consumption** on 15 January 2018 and his **undiagnosed sleep apnoea**. The offender told doctors in the days following the offending that he experienced sleepiness during the days leading up to the collision.*

A brief report was provided by Dr Jacques Ette of the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JHFMHN).

The report noted the current medical issues of the offender, namely:

- 1. Cough syncope*
- 2. **High Cholesterol***
- 3. **Hypertension***
- 4. **Sleep Apnoea***
- 5. Previous fixation of comminuted fracture of proximal to mid shafts of the left femur with nails and screws*

Early Opportunity: Good Practice

Whilst space within NRSS 2021-30 is limited, Office of Road safety and TIC will need to demonstrate examples of the social model in action as part of the overarching media strategy alluded to on Page 2 of this submission.

The medical conditions that afflicted the driver in the case study are targeted by the newly established *Health in Gear* program. As a healthier trucking industry will improve road safety, *Health in Gear* presents an early opportunity to promote good social model practice.

Health in Gear is a health and wellness initiative for owner driver truck drivers. It has been developed by the OzHelp Foundation and the University of Wollongong in collaboration with drivers for the driving community.

Health in Gear considers the many challenges faced by Australian drivers and offers simple, evidence-based actions designed to support drivers in feeling healthier and happier while on the road and at home. The initiative aims to get drivers thinking about how small actions can make a big difference, helping them to be as well as they can be, while keeping the wheels turning too!

<https://healthingear.com.au/about/>

Media Release: Launch of Health in Gear

<http://healthingear.com.au/media/Media%20Release%20Health%20in%20Gear%20Launch.pdf>