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**Transport & Travel**  
Strategic Reference Group

# ATTACHMENT BOOKLET

**TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL**

**THURSDAY 12 AUGUST 2021**

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Parliament of New South Wales

## Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety (Staysafe)

Report 1/57– July 2021

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW



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The motto of the coat of arms for the state of New South Wales is “Orta recens quam pura nites”. It is written in Latin and means “newly risen, how brightly you shine”.



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## Membership

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## Chair's foreword

Local roads are a fundamental part of everyday life, with virtually every journey starting or ending on one of these roads. Unfortunately, a high percentage of fatalities and serious injuries also occur on local roads.

When we consider the statistics regarding the number of accidents on our roads, it is important to recognise that behind these numbers are people who may have lost their life or have experienced serious trauma that can have a long lasting impact on them and their loved ones.

Local roads are managed by local councils with funding assistance from both the New South Wales and the Australian Governments. Throughout this inquiry we heard about the hard work being done to improve road safety. However, it is also clear that there is a need for greater communication and cooperation between all stakeholders to further enhance and improve road safety programs.

Road safety is an issue in which all levels of government have important roles to play. In this report, the Committee identifies opportunities to reduce trauma through infrastructure maintenance, road safety planning requirements and road user behaviour programs.

The Committee considers that better planning and coordination about road safety campaigns and projects is needed across all levels of government. In particular, the Committee found that local councils are a vital partner in the NSW Government's efforts to improve safety on local roads. However, strategies are needed to improve the ability of local councils to fulfil this role. Local communities are also a valuable source of information about road safety issues in their areas and strategies are needed to increase their engagement in road safety programs.

The Committee heard concerns that the legislation under which local government operates lacks explicit and implied roles and responsibilities for road safety. The Committee notes the approach in Victoria, where explicit references to the role and responsibility of local road authorities for road safety is legislated. The Committee recommends that the NSW Government consider a similar approach for New South Wales.

The Committee heard that local councils often have insufficient funding to adequately address their local road infrastructure needs. The Committee considers that a review of all existing state government road safety infrastructure funding programs will help to ensure that these programs are able to meet the needs of local councils. The administrative process and requirements that local councils have to meet when applying for road infrastructure funding should also be reviewed to ensure the process is not unnecessarily complex.

Collecting local road accident data and sharing that information with local councils is an important factor when councils are identifying road safety projects within their area. The Committee recommends that local councils have greater access to local road accident data so they can better identify and prioritise accident hot spots in their area. Proper planning is an important part of coordinating and implementing road safety measures. The Committee also recommends that having community strategic plans integrated into the NSW Government's regional transport and other State strategic plans can help improve engagement and cooperation across all stakeholders.

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The Committee also heard about how road safety campaign information is not always provided to local councils in a timely manner. It is important that local councils receive this information in a timely manner to ensure road safety officers have the time and resources to engage with their communities and promote road safety campaigns.

Consideration should be given to how local councils can develop and train their staff to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to design and implement road safety measures. The Committee heard that local councils may not have experienced engineering staff who understand the Safe System approach to road design and safety. Councils may also not have staff who are familiar with how to conduct a road safety audit.

The Local Government Road Safety Program is a partnership between Transport for NSW and 80 participating councils which focusses on improving road user behaviour. The program funds road safety officers who can play an important role in engaging with their local communities to promote road safety. The Committee heard concerns about the program and has made recommendations on how it could be improved to better meet the needs of local councils.

The Committee also makes recommendations to improve the safety of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and motor cyclists. We heard how some councils have already introduced 40 and 30 kilometre an hour speed zones in areas of high pedestrian activity to better protect all road users. The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW continue to support local councils to introduce reduced speed zones.

The Committee is also concerned that the process for lowering speed limits in urban areas is overly long and complicated. Local councils expressed frustration with their ability to adjust speed zones on roads for which they are responsible. Evidence to this inquiry suggests that the process to adjust speed limits can be complex and difficult and should be streamlined. For this reason the Committee recommends that the Government simplify the process for lowering speed limits.

Other issues highlighted during the inquiry, and where the Committee has made recommendations, include the need for better strategies to improve driver behaviour through the use of speed zones, and driver education programs. The provision of suitable rest areas for heavy vehicles using local roads is also examined, as well as ways to improve road infrastructure around schools.

The Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into mobile speed camera enforcement. The inquiry is looking at recent changes to the program and the impact these changes have had on a range of issues, including reducing fatalities and serious injury on our roads.

The Committee hopes that this report, and its twenty-two recommendations, will help guide and support making our local roads safer for all road users.

I thank all the members of the Committee for their interest and informative contributions to this report. I also thank the Committee staff for their work.



**The Hon. Lou Amato MLC**  
Chair

## Findings and recommendations

Finding 1	7
Better planning and coordination about road safety issues, campaigns, and projects is needed across all levels of government.	
Recommendation 1	9
That the NSW Government consider whether local government should have a legislated role and responsibility for road safety.	
Finding 2	16
Local councils often have insufficient funding to adequately address local road infrastructure needs.	
Recommendation 2	17
That the NSW Government review all existing state government road safety infrastructure funding programs to ensure they are meeting the strategic needs of local government in reducing road trauma on local roads.	
Recommendation 3	17
That Transport for NSW, as a priority, review the administrative requirements involved in local government road infrastructure funding applications and consult with local government to co-design the application process and reporting requirements.	
Recommendation 4	18
That the NSW Government make representations to the Australian Government to establish the proposed national road safety fund.	
Finding 3	25
Local councils are a vital partner in the NSW Government's efforts to reduce trauma and improve road safety on local roads.	
Recommendation 5	28
That the NSW Government improve the collection and dissemination of data to local councils regarding incidents that occur on local roads on at least a quarterly basis.	
Recommendation 6	28
That the NSW Government improve mechanisms for councils to access a wider range of local road safety incident data.	
Recommendation 7	30
That the NSW Government examine ways to better integrate community strategic plans into the Government's regional transport and other State strategic plans.	
Recommendation 8	32



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That Transport for NSW and the Department of Education explore opportunities for road safety officers to support the Road Safety Education Program in the wider community, particularly in rural and regional areas.

Recommendation 9 \_\_\_\_\_ 38

That Transport for NSW review and examine the Local Traffic Committee model and assess any benefits of broadening its role and/or membership.

Recommendation 10 \_\_\_\_\_ 39

That Transport for NSW ensure all road safety campaign related information is provided to local councils and road safety officers in a timely manner.

Recommendation 11 \_\_\_\_\_ 44

That Transport for NSW examine additional ways to support local council staff, particularly engineering staff, to develop their knowledge, and expertise about the Safe System approach.

Recommendation 12 \_\_\_\_\_ 44

That Transport for NSW develop additional guidelines and resources for local council staff involved in the planning, delivery and maintenance of road assets, particularly for conducting road safety audits.

Recommendation 13 \_\_\_\_\_ 46

That the NSW Government work with local councils to review the need for additional rest areas on the road network, and, where necessary, upgrade existing rest areas to provide separate parking for heavy vehicles, or install additional rest areas.

Recommendation 14 \_\_\_\_\_ 47

That the NSW Government explore ways to better work with local councils and communities when planning and installing road safety infrastructure around schools.

Recommendation 15 \_\_\_\_\_ 51

That the NSW Government conduct a review of the objectives, funding levels, guidelines and duration of the Local Government Road Safety Program.

Recommendation 16 \_\_\_\_\_ 54

That the NSW Government consider funding specific road safety officer roles for local government joint organisations under the Local Government Road Safety Program, in addition to the funding available to each council for a road safety officer.

Recommendation 17 \_\_\_\_\_ 54

That the NSW Government consider addressing different local government area sizes and populations in future revisions of the Local Government Road Safety Program, to ensure councils with larger populations and areas are supported by an adequate number of road safety officers.

Recommendation 18 \_\_\_\_\_ 57

That Transport for NSW review the induction, training, and ongoing support opportunities provided to road safety officers, and examine ways to improve networking between road safety officers across NSW.

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That Transport for NSW continue to support local councils to introduce 40 and 30 kilometre an hour speed zones in areas of high pedestrian activity.

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That Transport for NSW improve its business processes to streamline investigation, simplify assessment criteria and speed up the approval of local government requests to lower speed limits.

Finding 4 ..... 65

The Staysafe Committee should examine the NSW Speed Zone Guidelines, and the processes impacting speed zone decisions, and the impact of speed zone signage on road safety, in a future inquiry.

Recommendation 21 ..... 70

That Transport for NSW raise awareness of motorcycle rider safety as a vulnerable road user in local government planning and assessment in a similar way to other vulnerable road users.

Recommendation 22 ..... 70

That the NSW Government develop additional strategies to improve driver behaviour with vulnerable road users on local roads.

## Chapter One – Local Roads in New South Wales

### The NSW road network

- 1.1 Virtually every journey starts and ends on a local road. As stated by the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) in its submission, the opportunity for improving safety on local roads is as broad as it is important to the lives of everyone across NSW.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2 The ARRB went on to say that:
- In taking on a review such as this it is important to remember that a journey on NSW local roads is far more than simply getting into the car; it will involve walking or riding a bike, it may be for commuting or simply for recreation – getting out and enjoying one's community.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.3 According to the NSW Road Safety Plan 2021:
- The NSW road network gives all of us access to work, school, friends, families and the services we need. For many, it's a workplace, and for all, it's a fundamental part of everyday life that keeps the economy moving.
- But sadly, lives are lost, and people are seriously injured on our roads, every day. Each year, over two-thirds of fatalities in NSW happen on country roads.<sup>3</sup>
- 1.4 The NSW road network is almost 185 000 kilometres in length and carries more than 60 per cent of the freight moved in the state.<sup>4</sup> Roads are administratively classified as either state, regional or local, and managed by local government and Transport for NSW (TfNSW).
- **state roads** are the major arterial links throughout the state and within major urban areas. They are the principal traffic carrying and linking routes within the Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong and Central Coast urban areas and connect urban centres, major regional towns, the state's regions and provide interstate connections. TfNSW is responsible for managing these roads.
  - **regional** roads, together with state roads, provide the main connections to and between smaller towns and districts and perform a sub-arterial function in major urban areas. They are largely the responsibility of local councils and are capitalised as a council asset, and
  - **local roads** comprise approximately 80 per cent of the road network and provide for local circulation and access.<sup>5</sup>
- 1.5 The NSW Government is responsible for funding, planning, designing and operating the road network, managing vehicle registration and driver licensing systems. It also regulates and enforces road user behaviour. Councils manage the

<sup>1</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Towards Zero, [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), '[The road trauma challenge in NSW](#)', webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>4</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, [NSW road network](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>5</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Roads & Maritime Services, [NSW Road Management Arrangements](#), December 2008, viewed 11 June 2021.

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road networks in their local area, with funding assistance from both state and federal governments.<sup>6</sup>

- 1.6 IPWEA (NSW) indicated to the Committee that different types of roads are treated differently by different levels of government:

The focus of policy and the development of strategies in the past has concentrated on the State Road Network but has not recognised that State Roads and Local Roads have different problems and levels of service requiring different solutions... The standard of local roads is often to a lower level than State Roads.<sup>7</sup>

### The concept of 'local roads' and who is responsible for them

- 1.7 The Committee heard varying definitions and descriptions of the category 'local roads' during the inquiry. The National Motorists Association Australia (NMAA) told the Committee that local roads range from urban residential to rural non-highway roads:

They [local roads] carry local residential traffic, collect traffic going to higher level roads, secondary roads in cities can be very busy multi-lane roads and in rural areas may be unsealed or sealed and are generally of two lanes. Other than purely residential streets, local roads are used extensively by vehicles from outside the Local Government Area.<sup>8</sup>

- 1.8 Bicycle NSW in their submission defined a 'local road' as 'a place where people live. Freeways between towns and cities with no residential homes adjacent to them fall outside the definition, but other roads and streets are encompassed'.<sup>9</sup>

- 1.9 In this report the Committee will focus on the administrative description of local roads as used by TfNSW – meaning roads for which local councils are responsible.

### How local roads are used

- 1.10 Local roads are crucial for vibrant local communities. They are used in a variety of ways, and can differ significantly throughout the state. Evidence presented to this inquiry indicates:

- Metropolitan areas have a high population density with a variety of demographics. These areas also have more vulnerable road users such as children, pedestrians and cyclists, and the number of vulnerable road users is expected to rise as development densities in metropolitan and urban areas increase.
- Local roads in metropolitan areas provide for both local circulation and access between suburbs. They are diverse in nature, with a mix of speed zones and vehicular, walking and cycling traffic. Limited public transport in some areas means a high reliance on cars for transportation.
- Local roads in regional areas are crucial to regional life because they connect towns and villages. Many local road users travel large distances daily, undertaking long, repetitive trips at high speed. Mobile phone reception can be patchy, and when crashes occur, it can take a long time for help to arrive.

<sup>6</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> [Submission 11](#), Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> [Submission 10](#), National Motorists Association Australia, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> [Submission 1](#), Bicycle NSW, p. 2.

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- Vehicles registered in country areas are on average two years older than those in metropolitan areas, and older vehicles are more likely to lack the latest safety technology.<sup>10</sup>

**Working better together across all levels of government**

- 1.11 The need for the three levels of government to work together when planning and delivering road safety programs was raised in several submissions. In their submission, IPWEA (NSW) recommended that all three levels of governments cooperate to develop policies, strategies and programs. The need for broader cooperation between TfNSW and local government on the NSW Road Safety Plan 2021, especially the Safe System approach, was also recommended.<sup>11</sup>
- 1.12 Transport for NSW is currently preparing a new 2026 Road Safety Action Plan, that will build on the road safety initiatives already delivered through the Road Safety Plan 2021.<sup>12</sup>
- 1.13 ARRB submitted that road safety for local government is a multi-faceted and 'wicked problem' that is considered a financial burden, placing already strained budgets under stress that means other services need to be reduced, and with limited specialty skills and staff resources, applying good practice is considered unachievable, even unnecessary.
- 1.14 ARRB has no doubt that local government needs to change how it views the roles and responsibilities that it has to provide safer infrastructure to their communities, but there also needs to be a change in how the other levels of government support councils and local communities to understand what needs to be done and how best to do it within the context of their local area.<sup>13</sup>
- 1.15 During the public hearings, the Committee asked several stakeholders for their views on how all levels of government can work together more to reduce trauma on local roads.
- Mr Michael Savage, Technical Resources Manager, IPWEA (NSW) said the three levels of government need to find the best way forward, and the best value-for-money to reduce the road toll and achieve better results than at present.
  - Mr Arjan Rensen, Roads and Transport Directorate Manager, IPWEA (NSW), added that with the current funding models, councils have to compete for funding. Mr Rensen indicated that councils often do not propose road safety projects for funding due to the amount of work required to prepare applications, along with their low success rate:

<sup>10</sup> For example, [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), [Saving lives on country roads](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021; [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 22, [Submission 3](#), City of Sydney, p. 1; [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, pp. 2, 4; Northern Beaches Council, pp. 1, 3; Mr Philip Devon, Manager, Transport Network, Northern Beaches Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [2026 Road Safety Action Plan](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>13</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 4.



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A good solution would be, in our three levels of government that work together, to change the funding model, provide funding and just let local government go with the job and make improvements.<sup>14</sup>

- Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, ARRB, told the Committee that there needs to be a partnership approach between state and local government.

The councils have a very different level of problem compared to the State highway network and they are not necessarily equipped with either the resources or the skills and the research but there is so much that the State Government has available to it that they can readily work with local government...<sup>15</sup>

- Mr Alan Hay, also from the ARRB, added that local government has particular challenges and limitations that the state government does not have, and that ARRB had developed best practice guides for local government on behalf of the Commonwealth. Mr Hay said that communication with local government is about taking councils on the journey, not just box-ticking.<sup>16</sup>

- 1.16 According to Local Government NSW (LGNSW), when framed against the Safe System approach, responsibilities for the Safer People, Safer Vehicles, and to a large extent, the Safer Speeds pillars largely lie with the Australian and NSW Governments. LGNSW noted that councils make their largest contribution, as per the national road safety governance arrangements, under the Safer Roads Program pillar. LGNSW said that this shows the established understanding that road safety is a shared responsibility of all three spheres of government, with each playing an important role.<sup>17</sup>

### Improving communication between councils and Transport for NSW

- 1.17 According to the NSW Government submission, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) interacts daily with councils in a range of ways including Regional Consultative Committees, the Local Government Liaison Committee and Local Traffic Committees. Support is also provided through:
- TfNSW Local Government Coordination Teams in each region that engage with councils both operationally and strategically on a range of issues, including local government grants, reporting on funded projects and assisting councils to meet outcomes, and
  - the TfNSW Road User Safety Team oversees the delivery of projects by providing support and advice, reviewing media and marketing materials, attending steering committee meetings, and monitoring the budget to ensure value-for-money. The team also provides input and support for funding applications, and provides help with crash data analysis and facilitates network meetings.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Mr Michael Savage, Technical Resources Manager, and Mr Arjan Rensen, Roads and Transport Directorate Manager, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), [Transcript of Evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, pp. 8-9.

<sup>16</sup> Mr Alan Hay, NSW State Technical Leader, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of Evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, pp. 12-13; pp. 38-39.



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- 1.18 However, Penrith City Council expressed a different view. The Council suggested that involvement in road safety by TfNSW has been significantly eroded over the past few decades, with spending not keeping up with the rapidly growing road network and road users as population increases. The Council also noted that local roads are under increasing pressure through lack of spending on arterial roads, and the current framework fails to recognise the growth happening across the entire local and state road network.<sup>19</sup>
- 1.19 Lack of information about current road safety campaigns and changes to the road rules was also an ongoing and frustrating issue. For example, Blacktown City Council said that they sometimes only found out about the launch of a campaign at the same time as the media does.<sup>20</sup>
- 1.20 According to Wentworth Shire Council, collaboration between councils has its successes. However, where boundary councils do not participate in the Local Government Road Safety Program (LGRSP), partnerships are lacking.<sup>21</sup> More information about the LGRSP is included later in the report.
- 1.21 Lake Macquarie City Council told the Committee that they have a close working relationship with the City of Newcastle at officer level and work closely with their transport strategist. While the Council does not liaise with other councils specifically about their road safety programs, but do cooperate on a range of issues to provide a safer transport network in Lake Macquarie and the wider Central Coast and Hunter regions. The Council did support a proposal that a road safety officer (RSO) position be shared across councils in the Hunter region to help prepare regionally consistent Road Safety Action Plans.<sup>22</sup> The role and function of a RSO is discussed later in the report.
- 1.22 The submission from the Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) noted that, in their experience, better collaboration is starting to occur with TfNSW:
- While early days, better collaboration is starting to occur with TfNSW where road safety is a critical priority. See for example the work being undertaken on transport planning in the pilot in Central NSW. The view of the Joint Organisation Board is if this work translates into two year implementation plans, with governance arrangements in place to provide surety, better outcomes will occur. An example in the region is the collaborative work on road rail interface.<sup>23</sup>
- 1.23 When asked at the public hearing about how the relationship with TfNSW could be improved, Ms Jenny Bennett, Executive Officer, CNSWJO, provided more information about the assistance TfNSW had provided:
- We have actually been able to help write some of their problem statement documents collaboratively. This is completely new for us in Central New South Wales where the experience has been the planning is done to us, not with us. So we are very excited by this new approach by Transport for NSW and we certainly would like to see that continue. The transport planning that we are doing in the region at the moment

<sup>19</sup> [Submission 22](#), Penrith City Council, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Ms Fiona Frost, Road Safety Officer, Blacktown City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 18.

<sup>21</sup> [Submission 14](#), Wentworth Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 4; [Answers to questions taken on notice](#), Lake Macquarie Council, September 2020, p. 2.

<sup>23</sup> [Submission 31](#), Central NSW Joint Organisation, p. 3.

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identifies road safety as a significant priority and there is a real opportunity for us to work with them on what that looks like on the other side.<sup>24</sup>

...We want to see governance arrangements bringing together the different stakeholders to ensure that implementation happens. And again, that would be a completely new approach for Transport for NSW but something, as a joint organisation, we have seen working very effectively in other areas.<sup>25</sup>

- 1.24 The NSW Government submission noted that TfNSW is working with a range of partners to develop a Towards Zero Community Partnership Framework. This will allow councils, organisations and individuals to better connect with each other to better plan and deliver road safety projects in their communities using the Safe System approach. The Government sees this a way to establish road safety as a shared responsibility through councils and community partnerships and to help integrate road safety into local planning processes.<sup>26</sup>

**Cross border issues between councils**

- 1.25 The Committee was told that it can be difficult to resolve road safety infrastructure problems where roads cross local government borders, largely due to lack of communication and different perspectives on infrastructure priorities.

- 1.26 Wentworth Shire Council told the Committee that collaboration between councils has had its successes. However, where a boundary council does not have a RSO, partnerships are lacking. Long-term road safety planning for multi-shire road networks can also be hindered by competitive funding opportunities and conflicting or incomplete projects that cross LGAs. For example, Wentworth Shire Council also told the Committee that:

Recently a council was funded to seal a 70km length of unsealed road up to our shire boundary however the remaining 26km of Poonaerie Menindee Road (within our shire) has not been funded – therefore the route will remain weather dependant.<sup>27</sup>

- 1.27 At a public hearing, the Committee asked CNSWJO representatives about how joint organisations could assist individual councils with road safety projects to ensure they are completed when they cross local government borders.

- 1.28 The CNSWJO replied that they already have two groups working together, one at the strategic level which talks with TfNSW and other government agencies about roads that are not owned by council. CNSWJO also has a technical group, which consists of directors and managers responsible for road safety projects. CNSWJO does talk about roads that cross council borders, and puts them into a priority matrix to provide advice to the state and federal governments on roads that should be funded.<sup>28</sup>

- 1.29 The City of Sydney Council gave the Committee an urban perspective, noting that they have a very good working relationship with a number of neighbouring councils and there are a number of projects where they work across boundaries.

<sup>24</sup> Ms Jenny Bennett, Executive Officer, Central NSW Joint Organisation, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 49.

<sup>25</sup> Ms Jenny Bennett, [Transcript of evidence](#), pp. 49-50.

<sup>26</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 38.

<sup>27</sup> [Submission 14](#), Wentworth Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Ms Jenny Bennett, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 49.

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- 1.30 For example, they are strongly connected to their neighbouring councils through the LGRSP in terms of pedestrian and cycling education and drink driving campaigns, and they also work across boundaries on road safety issues with NSW Police to enforce the road rules, particularly mobile phone usage.<sup>29</sup>
- 1.31 When the Committee raised this issue with LGNSW at the hearing, Cr Linda Scott, President of the LGNSW, advised that, as a peak body, LGNSW tries very hard to ensure that councils share knowledge and best-case examples, particularly through the annual Australian Local Government Association conference.
- 1.32 LGNSW added that there has also been a lot of discussion and as part of that process, councils are collaborating on a regional basis to ensure their boundaries do not have different standards of roads.<sup>30</sup>
- 1.33 The Committee was interested to know if councils with a large revenue base could share some of their money with neighbouring, less resourced councils, so they could upgrade roads that cross council boundaries. LGNSW informed the Committee that councils spending money outside of their LGAs would be a breach of the *Local Government Act*.<sup>31</sup>

**Committee comment****Finding 1**

**Better planning and coordination about road safety issues, campaigns, and projects is needed across all levels of government.**

- 1.34 Based on the evidence presented to this inquiry, the Committee found there is a need for better communication and coordination across all levels of government. Road safety is an issue in which all levels of government have important roles to play.
- 1.35 All levels of government are involved in local road safety and the focus of work is on how to achieve the best outcomes. This is a challenge in identifying needs, determining the funding requirements, allocation of funding, capability to plan and deliver programs and the administration.
- 1.36 The Committee notes, however, that TfNSW is addressing stakeholder concerns about the need to improve communication between it and local councils under the Towards Zero Community Partnership Framework. We encourage further work to continue this effort.
- 1.37 From the evidence presented to this inquiry we consider that improved cross-council collaboration in terms of infrastructure and behavioural programs will help reduce road trauma on local roads. The Committee calls on TfNSW to improve its communication with local councils to ensure that councils are better aware of and involved in state-wide road safety campaigns.
- 1.38 The Committee was particularly concerned at comments made about incomplete road infrastructure projects at the borders of some LGAs. The case highlighted by

<sup>29</sup> Mr Andrew Aspden, Manager of Transport Planning, and Mr Peter Wright, Road Safety Officer, City of Sydney, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 26.

<sup>30</sup> Cr Linda Scott, President, Local Government NSW, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 35.

<sup>31</sup> Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 36.

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Wentworth Shire Council, of a road that had been sealed to a local government border, and work not continuing into the neighbouring council, was a particular example.

- 1.39 The Committee encourages TfNSW to lead the way in ensuring that road safety is looked at holistically across the state, and that road safety issues and projects are coordinated between LGAs where appropriate.

### Legislative and regulatory requirements

- 1.40 The ARRB submission stated that, beyond normal investment focused on routine maintenance and upgrades, road safety planning by NSW local government is a voluntary activity driven by a compliance with 'standards'. This is because there is no legislative requirement for NSW councils to do more in relation to road safety planning.<sup>32</sup>
- 1.41 ARRB called for greater acknowledgement by councils that road safety is part of their core business through the development of greater awareness among elected officials and senior management about the role and responsibility of councils for road safety to ensure they deliver a sustained, whole-of-council approach to the elimination of fatal and serious injury trauma.<sup>33</sup>
- 1.42 Concern was expressed in some submissions that the legislation that local governments operate under lacks explicit and implied roles and responsibilities for road safety. There is no formal requirement in the government integrated planning and reporting framework to have road safety specified.
- 1.43 For example, ARRB submitted:
- The Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020 (2018) found that 'Local government, despite owning the majority of all Australian roads, is not sufficiently engaged or resourced to deliver road safety. Local government is in an unenviable position, being dependent on state legislation for its authority and revenue; limited in its ability to commit to sustained road safety outcomes in its areas; and with a significant proportion of fatalities occurring on its roads.'<sup>34</sup>
- 1.44 ARRB indicated that there is no requirement for councils in their integrated planning and reporting framework to have road safety in their community strategic plan or any other strategic plan they may develop:
- As a result, the 128 NSW councils adopt a highly variable approach toward the delivery of road safety, and this often relies upon an individual 'champion' within the organisation to drive change. While there are some examples of councils with a solid commitment, they are considered to be the exception, and even these Councils will lack an embedded approach that harnesses the whole organisation to contribute to road safety action.<sup>35</sup>
- 1.45 ARRB told the Committee that the legislative approach in Victoria differs from NSW, as the *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic) has explicit references to the role and responsibility of road authorities (including local government) for ensuring

<sup>32</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, pp. 6–7.

<sup>34</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 4.

<sup>35</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 5.

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road safety is a core consideration. ARRB concluded that, with no legislated role or responsibility for road safety, the success of road safety planning by NSW local government is limited and behind other states.<sup>36</sup>

1.46 Mr McTiernan of the ARRB commented further on this at a public hearing:

The situation is quite different in other jurisdictions. In Victoria, in particular, its Road Management Act explicitly lays out what is expected of road authorities in delivering road safety, as well as the other road management functions.<sup>37</sup>

1.47 IPWEA (NSW) supported the ARRB's view, recommending that clarification of legal roles and responsibilities for councils as road authorities should be undertaken in the context of existing legislation.<sup>38</sup>

1.48 IPWEA also called for the NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation to be amended to require all councils to develop and implement a Road Safety Strategic Plan. IPWEA called for more resources for councils to implement this requirement generally in accordance with the IPWEA's recently released guide to developing council road safety plans.<sup>39</sup>

1.49 Regarding Integrated Planning and Reporting by councils, LGNSW submitted that:

LGNSW understands that the NSW Centre for Road Safety (CRS) has for some time considered making road safety planning a mandatory component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. While LGNSW strongly supports efforts to improve road safety, we are not aware of any evidence from CRS to show that making strategic road safety planning a mandatory component of the IP&R framework will have any direct impact on reducing the road toll.<sup>40</sup>

1.50 LGNSW advocated improved consultation between TfNSW's Centre for Road Safety, councils and RSOs, including information sessions and workshops. LGNSW argued this helps councils understand where and how best to encourage a more strategic approach to road safety in their local areas. LGNSW also called for additional resourcing within the Centre for Road Safety to assist with better consultation and collaboration.<sup>41</sup>

#### Committee comment

##### Recommendation 1

**That the NSW Government consider whether local government should have a legislated role and responsibility for road safety.**

1.51 We note the evidence provided by IPWEA (NSW) about the Victorian approach, where explicit references to the role and responsibility of local road authorities for road safety are legislated. The Committee recommends that the NSW Government

<sup>36</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> Mr David McTiernan, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 7.

<sup>38</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 20.; IPWEA (NSW) Roads and Transport Directorate, [A Guide to Developing Council Road Safety Strategic Plans](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>40</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 7.



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review the need to include similar references to road safety in relevant legislation that impacts local government in NSW.

- 1.52 With or without legislative change, to meet the challenges of strategic planning and implementation of road safety plans at local government level needs the integration of planning, decision making, funding and capability to deliver effective road safety initiatives.

## Federal road safety developments

### National Road Safety Strategy 2021–30

- 1.53 The Committee notes that a consultation draft of the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 was released for public comment from 23 February to 23 March 2021 by the Office of Road Safety. When approved it will replace the current National Road Safety Strategy 2011-20.
- 1.54 The draft Strategy has three key themes: Safe Roads, Safe Vehicles and Safe Road Use. Speed management is embedded within all three themes, as is providing safe access for vulnerable road users through 'Movement and Place' frameworks.<sup>42</sup>

### The Federal Office of Road Safety

- 1.55 In 2018 the inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy (2011–2020) highlighted the need for national leadership and coordination to develop and promote a strategic approach to developing the next National Road Safety Strategy and to ensure better road safety outcomes for all Australians.
- 1.56 The Office of Road Safety was established in July 2019 to provide leadership towards the elimination of road trauma in Australia. It aims to do this by working with state and territory governments, police, road safety organisations and other stakeholders. The role of the Office involves:
- collecting, verifying and disseminating information and data on the success of road safety interventions
  - analysing research and data to inform road safety policy development
  - developing national targets, policy priorities, performance indicators and contextual indicators for the next National Road Safety Strategy
  - partnering with states, territories and local government to complement existing road safety strategies and pilot new and innovative road safety solutions
  - supporting individuals, businesses, and other stakeholders to contribute to improving road safety.<sup>43</sup>

## Classification of roads

- 1.57 In February 2019, the NSW Government announced the start of a Road Classification Review and the transfer of up to 15 000 kilometres of council owned

<sup>42</sup> Australian Government, Office of Road Safety, [National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021

<sup>43</sup> Australian Government, [Office of Road Safety](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.



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and managed roads to state management. This is part of a broader package of support for local councils to better manage and maintain the rural road network.<sup>44</sup>

- 1.58 This review was welcomed and supported by LGNSW, NRMA, and Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales. Some stakeholders felt that the reclassification of some regional and local roads as state roads would better allow councils to manage their local road system.<sup>45</sup>

**Committee comment**

- 1.59 The Committee considers the proposed transfer of some local roads to state roads could provide for better management of arterial and regional roads. It will also allow councils to focus on the remaining local roads in their areas and relieve some of the burden of local road maintenance.
- 1.60 The Committee believes however, that this transfer should not result in reduced funding to local government for the delivery of local road safety programs.
- 1.61 The Committee looks forward to seeing the outcome of the Road Classification Review when it is completed.

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<sup>44</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Roads & Maritime Services, [Regional Road Transfer and NSW Road Classification Review](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>45</sup> Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 37; [Submission 19](#), National Roads and Motorists Association (NRMA), p. 5; [Submission 12](#), Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales, p. 4.

## Chapter Two – Funding local road safety

### Infrastructure funding issues

#### Availability of funding for local road infrastructure

- 2.1 One of the major concerns expressed by stakeholders to this and other similar inquiries was that, despite being responsible for the majority of Australian roads, local government is insufficiently resourced to deliver local road safety.
- 2.2 The inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020 found that local government is not sufficiently engaged or resourced to deliver road safety. Similar findings were made in the Final Report of the Review of National Road Safety Governance Arrangements 2019.<sup>46</sup>
- 2.3 Evidence presented to this inquiry also supports those findings. Council stakeholders put to the Committee that:
- nearly 70 per cent of fatal crashes occur on local roads but 670 per cent more money is spent nationally on the state road network than on the local road network<sup>47</sup>
  - there is a mismatch between where the crashes and fatalities are occurring and where funding is allocated<sup>48</sup>
  - road safety initiatives are often unfunded as other work takes priority<sup>49</sup>
  - projected future growth will place demands on existing infrastructure, increasing possible future road safety issues<sup>50</sup>
  - current arrangements for planning and implementing road safety improvements take a substantial level of resourcing that is often beyond the means of a local council. This means councils tend to be more reactive in delivering road safety infrastructure,<sup>51</sup> and
  - the location of crashes is often widely dispersed, making it difficult to target road safety treatments.<sup>52</sup>
- 2.4 Industry stakeholders also commented that:
- a properly costed and funded long-term plan is needed to ensure that road conditions are not allowed to deteriorate to levels that compromise safety or productivity<sup>53</sup>
  - attention to data collection and collaborative partnerships between stakeholders would greatly improve road safety, as would making clear the legal roles and responsibilities for councils as road authorities, and<sup>54</sup>

<sup>46</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 4; Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development, [Review of National Road Safety Governance Arrangements Final Report](#), Australian Government, June 2019, p. 10.

<sup>47</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 7.

<sup>48</sup> Cr Linda Scott, President, Local Government NSW, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 41.

<sup>49</sup> [Submission 18](#), Blacktown City Council, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 2; [Submission 25](#), Wollondilly Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>51</sup> [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> [Submission 18](#), Blacktown City Council, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> [Submission 19](#), National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA), p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> [Submission 11](#), Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), pp. 16, 17.

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- a change in road user behaviour and community attitudes is needed even after road infrastructure improvements are made.<sup>55</sup>

2.5 Mr Michael Savage, Technical Resources Manager, IPWEA (NSW), also told the Committee that prioritising where funding should be spent for road safety is a significant problem within councils:

I don't know whether auditing of what has been done is the solution, but it might very well provide part of the solution. There is funding available that needs to be spent on roads. Whether or not individual councils and communities are getting best value for that expenditure is something that is not really measured and that may in fact provide some part of this solution.<sup>56</sup>

2.6 Council funding options to deliver road safety initiatives include municipal rates levied on local property owners, and funding from local infrastructure contributions, also known as developer contributions, which are charged by councils when new development occurs. Developer contributions are used to provide infrastructure such as open space, parks, community facilities, local roads, footpaths, stormwater drainage and traffic management.<sup>57</sup>

2.7 The Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) told the Committee there has been no full risk assessment of regional roads and that local governments do not have a clear view of their road networks or where there are problems. The ARRB advised that a pilot project involving three councils, the ARRB and TfNSW is looking at this issue.<sup>58</sup>

**Concerns regarding the need for matched funding**

2.8 There are concerns that government programs require matching funding from already limited council resources.

2.9 For example, Cr Linda Scott, President, Local Government NSW (LGNSW), advised the Committee that not only does much of the state and federal funding require councils to match funding, it is also very targeted towards boosting the capacity of roads, and councils are therefore unable to spend allocated funding on their own priorities.<sup>59</sup>

2.10 As previously mentioned, there are problems getting funding where road safety issues cross council boundaries. Long-term road safety planning for multi-shire road networks is hindered by competitive funding opportunities and conflicting or incomplete projects. As a result, some road safety upgrades have only been partially completed.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 8.

<sup>56</sup> Mr Michael Savage, Technical Resources Manager, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 3.

<sup>57</sup> NSW Government, Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, [Local infrastructure contributions policy](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>58</sup> Mr David McTiernan, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 11.

<sup>59</sup> Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 36.

<sup>60</sup> [Submission 14](#), Wentworth Shire Council, p. 2.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
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2.11 Evidence to this inquiry indicates that funding remains one of the major challenges to local road safety. Of particular concern was the complexity of the federal and the NSW Government competitive funding application processes. The Committee heard that:

- a number of worthy projects are unfunded because of the competitive nature of the application process<sup>61</sup>
- the application process is onerous with no guarantee of success<sup>62</sup>
- there is a disproportionate amount of administration time required to process and submit smaller grants<sup>63</sup>
- better coordination across road safety grant programs would be of benefit.<sup>64</sup>

2.12 Wollondilly Shire Council provided a useful insight into the difficulties they face when applying for funding:

The costs associated with roads are high and the funds available to service them are finite. The roads asset “backlog” calculated at the end of 2015/16 was projected at \$42m. Unfortunately, on the ground this “backlog” over the years has resulted in many roads that are older than their intended life and have deteriorated significantly.

... Our only avenue to try and boost our funding levels to improve safety on our road is via grants offered by the State and Federal Governments through the Safer Roads Program Funding. The application process is onerous and time consuming on Council resources and staff, who are already overstretched. There is no guarantee that the application will be successful and as such, Council are unable to dedicate resources to preparing detailed designs for projects that might not see the light of day. The applications rely heavily on crash statistics and of the those only fatal or serious injury crashes are able to be used in support of the application. Crashes involving animal strikes are not considered at all.<sup>65</sup>

2.13 The Council called for:

a better, fairer funding stream from State and Federal Government is requested to allow local government to make decisions on the best place to use the funds, especially those on the fringe of metro areas with little public transport options, to improve local road safety.<sup>66</sup>

**Maintenance backlogs**

2.14 Concerns were expressed that under the current governance arrangements and funding system, councils lack the capacity to maintain local roads. This has led to growing infrastructure maintenance backlogs.

2.15 Transport and Road Safety Research (TARS), and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of NSW explained that an 'infrastructure backlog

<sup>61</sup> [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 3.

<sup>62</sup> [Submission 25](#), Wollondilly Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Mr David Hughes, Director Built and Natural Assets, Lake Macquarie City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 12.

<sup>64</sup> Mr Thomas Boyle, Senior Transport Strategist, Lake Macquarie City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 12.

<sup>65</sup> [Submission 25](#), Wollondilly Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup> [Submission 25](#), Wollondilly Shire Council, p. 2.

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occurs when an asset is not performing at its optimal level which has safety implications, particularly in relation to local road network'.<sup>67</sup>

- 2.16 TARS, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine told the Committee that:

According to an analysis of local council annual financial statements for 2016-17, the local road infrastructure backlog increased to \$2.2 billion, with the regional council road infrastructure backlog increasing \$115 million to \$1.7 billion. This represents approximately 75% of the total infrastructure backlog.<sup>68</sup>

- 2.17 Cr Scott commented that rate capping also constrains the ability of councils to raise revenue as populations and the road network grows, which creates a maintenance backlog. Cr Scott said that councils do their best, but with tight budgets that are rate capped, there is just so much that can be done.<sup>69</sup>

- 2.18 Cr Scott supported a 'rethink' of how existing road safety resources are used:

With the current New South Wales backlog on road maintenance on local and regional roads estimated to be over \$2.1 billion and the relatively small proportion of road safety budgets directed to councils it is time to seriously rethink how we direct the existing road safety resources and to increase the funding directed to road safety across the board. Among the recommendations made by the inquiry in the National Road Safety Strategy was a call for the establishment of a national \$3 billion annual road safety fund. This is just 10 per cent of the total cost to the economy of fatal crashes, which is estimated to be \$30 billion.<sup>70</sup>

- 2.19 The NRMA added that reforms are needed to increase resourcing and engineering capacity in the regions, and to revitalise the regional and local road network through funding.

- 2.20 NRMA also noted that the NSW Government has committed more than \$1 billion to help clear the council roads maintenance backlog, replace NSW's worst timber bridges, and reclaim up to 15 000 kilometres of council-owned regional roads. However, the NRMA believes this is a short-term measure and more needs to be done to ensure funding is sustainable to further improve road conditions and road safety.<sup>71</sup>

### Funding for local roads under the NSW Road Safety Plan 2021

- 2.21 The NSW Government's Road Safety Plan 2021 (RSP2021) was released in February 2018 and sets a target of a 30 per cent reduction in road fatalities by 2021. The Plan adopts the internationally recognised Safe System approach which considers how people, vehicles, speeds and roads work together to create a safe system with a focus on six priority areas:

1. Saving lives on country roads
2. Liveable and safe urban communities

<sup>67</sup> [Submission 12](#), Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales, p. 4.

<sup>68</sup> [Submission 12](#), TARS UNSW, p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 39.

<sup>70</sup> Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 35.

<sup>71</sup> [Submission 19](#), NRMA, p. 4.

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3. Using the roads safely
4. Building a safer community culture
5. New and proven vehicle technology
6. Building a safe future<sup>72</sup>

## 2.22 According to the Road Safety Plan 2021:

As the NSW population, road network and trips continue to grow, we have the opportunity to make sure new and upgraded roads are safe by designing in the latest proven safety features. How we plan, develop, design, operate and maintain roads is fundamental to ending road trauma. Smarter and integrated planning can prevent crashes from occurring. If a mistake happens, better road design can mean that the impact of the crash doesn't result in death or serious injury.<sup>73</sup>

## 2.23 Funding to deliver RSP2021 was announced in June 2018. The NSW Government committed to spend \$1.9 billion over five years (from 2018-19) to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads, with funding allocated across six priority areas:

- \$640 million to the Saving Lives on Country Roads initiative, for infrastructure safety upgrades
- \$250 million for the Enhanced Enforcement program, including 50 additional highway patrol officers in regional areas, roadside alcohol testing and a doubling of mobile drug testing, and
- \$180 million to the Liveable and Safe Urban Communities program, which aims to increase liveability and safety in urban communities through infrastructure safety upgrades for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.<sup>74</sup>

## 2.24 Several concerns were expressed during this inquiry about problems with delivering RSP2021. For example:

- existing road safety planning requirements are not meeting the stated aim of reducing road fatalities by at least 30 per cent from 2008-10 levels by 2021, and that a much more concentrated and targeted effort is needed<sup>75</sup>
- much of the road safety guidance made available to the industry to date has not been directly relevant to local government, and
- no encouragement from the state or federal governments for local government road safety planning to have specific targets for reducing crashes.<sup>76</sup>

**Committee comment****Finding 2**

**Local councils often have insufficient funding to adequately address local road infrastructure needs.**

<sup>72</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>73</sup> NSW Government, Towards Zero, [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), 'Building a safe future', p. 22, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>74</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 7.

<sup>75</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 14.

<sup>76</sup> [Submission 9](#), Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, p. 3.



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## Recommendation 2

**That the NSW Government review all existing state government road safety infrastructure funding programs to ensure they are meeting the strategic needs of local government in reducing road trauma on local roads.**

## Recommendation 3

**That Transport for NSW, as a priority, review the administrative requirements involved in local government road infrastructure funding applications and consult with local government to co-design the application process and reporting requirements.**

- 2.25 Despite the increase in road safety infrastructure funding as part of federal and state government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, local government still faces significant challenges to sufficiently address local road infrastructure needs. Evidence received regarding the stark difference between the quantity of funding available for state roads compared to local roads was particularly notable, especially when considering the size of this road network.
- 2.26 There is also a need for the NSW Government to review funding application processes for all its road safety grant programs to remove any unnecessary complexity and burdens. The programs and application processes should be co-designed with local government to place their needs at the centre of the process while ensuring the appropriate probity and accountability for state government funding.
- 2.27 More needs to be done to prioritise road safety on local roads. The Committee calls on the NSW Government to work with councils to provide them with the skills and resources they need to better prioritise road safety in their LGAs.
- 2.28 The Committee also notes that the NSW Audit Office is planning to conduct a road asset maintenance audit and a road safety audit in the period 2021-22 to 2022-23. The Committee looks forward to the Auditor-General's reports of these audits.<sup>77</sup>

## Federal local road funding sources

- 2.29 Federal road safety related funding for councils is provided through:
- financial assistance grants
  - the Roads to Recovery grants program
  - the Black Spot Program that targets safety issues on urban and regional roads
  - the Bridges Renewal Program to upgrade and replace bridges, and
  - the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program to improve productivity and safety outcomes of heavy vehicle operations.
- 2.30 Through the Local and State Government Road Safety Package, the Australian Government is investing an additional \$2.2 billion in road safety funding from 2019-20 to boost these programs. The Australian Government also committed

<sup>77</sup> NSW Audit Office, *Insights for Better Government: Annual work program 2020-21*, 'Three-year performance audit program by cluster' – Transport, 24 July 2020, pp. 30-32, viewed 11 June 2021.

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\$500 million to support jobs, businesses and the resilience of local economies under the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.<sup>78</sup>

- 2.31 In June 2020, the Australian Government announced a joint investment with the NSW Government of \$1 billion in shovel-ready infrastructure projects and road safety upgrades to help the state's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding was allocated to three key priorities:

- \$240 million to fix 11 congestion hotspots around Sydney
- \$382 million to help local councils upgrade roads in regional areas, and
- \$398 million for road safety projects in regional areas.<sup>79</sup>

**National Road Safety Fund**

- 2.32 The Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 found that increases in deaths and serious injuries on Australia's roads show that resources currently spent to reduce harm are lacking. Based on this finding, it was recommended that, from 1 July 2019, the Australian Government should commit \$3 billion a year to a road safety fund.<sup>80</sup>

- 2.33 In evidence to this inquiry, both LGNSW and IPWEA (NSW) supported the establishment of a \$3 billion a year road safety fund.

- 2.34 LGNSW noted that stimulus and scale of investment are critical if real progress is to be made in eliminating harm on Australia's roads. The LGNSW submission went on to say:

It is clear that only appreciable federal government investment in road safety measures will address road trauma on local roads and that without such investment, making road safety plans mandatory for councils will be of limited benefit.<sup>81</sup>

- 2.35 In its submission, IPWEA reported that a fund of this size could help resource councils to contribute to other aspects of the Safe System approach beyond the Safer Roads Program component.<sup>82</sup>

**Committee comment****Recommendation 4**

**That the NSW Government make representations to the Australian Government to establish the proposed national road safety fund.**

- 2.36 While the Committee welcomes the funding already provided by the NSW and Australian governments to improve road safety, we note that several stakeholders called for increased funding for road safety projects particularly on local roads. Considering the funding challenges discussed throughout this inquiry that councils

<sup>78</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 30; Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Communications, [Local and State Government Road Safety Package](#), webpage; [Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>79</sup> Prime Minister of Australia, [\\$1 billion to unlock thousands of infrastructure jobs in NSW](#), media release, 29 June 2020, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>80</sup> Joint Select Committee on Road Safety, [Improving Road Safety in Australia](#), Parliament of Australia, October 2020, p. 29, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>81</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 9.

<sup>82</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 25.

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can face in terms of managing their local roads, the Committee feels that increased access to funding through a national road safety fund would be beneficial.

- 2.37 The Committee recommends that the NSW Government make representations to the Australian Government for the establishment of a national road safety fund. There should be adequate access to that fund by NSW councils specifically for projects associated with safety on local roads in our state.

## Chapter Three – Local road safety planning

### How the NSW Government works to improve safety on local roads

#### Future Transport 2056

3.1 Future Transport 2056 (FT2056) is the NSW Government's 40-year vision, directions, and outcomes framework for customer mobility in NSW. FT2056 sets an aspirational target of zero fatalities and serious injuries on NSW roads by 2056. It is being delivered through a series of supporting plans, including:

- Services and Infrastructure Plans for Greater Sydney and regional NSW, and
- The Road Safety Plan 2021 (RSP2021).<sup>83</sup>
- The Road Safety Plan 2026 (currently being prepared by Transport for NSW).

#### The Road Safety Plan 2021

3.2 The Road Safety Plan 2021 features target initiatives for reducing road trauma and aligns the Government's Towards Zero vision with Future Transport 2056. The Plan adopts the internationally recognised Safe System approach which acknowledges that: the human body has physical limits to withstanding the impact of a crash; people sometimes make mistakes but this should not cost anyone their life; roads, roadsides, travel speeds and vehicles need to be designed to help avoid a crash or reduce the impact of a crash if it happens; and road safety is a shared responsibility.<sup>84</sup>

3.3 The Plan recognises the critical role local councils play in reducing road trauma and includes a commitment to delivering and refining the Local Government Road Safety Program (LGRSP), which is discussed later in this report.<sup>85</sup>

3.4 Public consultation on a draft 2026 Road Safety Action Plan closed on 29 April 2021. According to the Centre for Road Safety website, this next plan will build on the effective road safety initiatives already delivered through the Road Safety Plan 2021.<sup>86</sup>

3.5 **Figure 1** provided by the NSW Government summarises the Safe System approach, which incorporates four key aspects: Safe roads, Safe speeds, Safe vehicles and Safe people.

<sup>83</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 6.

<sup>84</sup> NSW Government, Towards Zero, [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), pp. 4, 10, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>85</sup> NSW Government Towards Zero, [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), updated April 2021, Version 2.1, p. 2, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>86</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [2026 Road Safety Action Plan](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

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Figure 1: Towards Zero: The Safe System Approach<sup>87</sup>



3.6 According to the NSW Government submission, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has worked with a range of partners to develop a Towards Zero Community Partnership Framework that:

- enables councils, organisations and individuals to better connect with each other to plan and deliver road safety initiatives in local communities by adopting a Safe System approach
- establishes road safety as a shared responsibility through councils and community partnerships
- strengthens understanding among all council planners and practitioners of the Safe System approach and helps integrate road safety into local planning processes, and
- builds a safety culture and accelerates innovative local road safety solutions.<sup>88</sup>

3.7 The Government believes that the Towards Zero Community Partnership Framework will help reduce road trauma across NSW by:

- making it easier for businesses, non-government groups and road safety advocates, in communities of all sizes, to access resources and guidance to help them create Towards Zero community partnerships to address local road safety issues
- providing support for councils to plan for and implement Towards Zero Community Partnerships within their local communities that use the skills and resources that are already available in their community partnerships, and
- supporting councils to strengthen their capacity to proactively identify and address local road safety issues with their communities and partners.<sup>89</sup>

### Trauma statistics on local roads

3.8 The NSW Government informed the Committee that there are over 9000 casualties annually from crashes on local and regional roads. The Government submitted that

<sup>87</sup> [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), 'The Safe System saves lives', p. 10, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>88</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, pp. 36-37.

<sup>89</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, pp. 36-37.

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local and regional roads account for more than half of all casualty crashes on NSW roads.<sup>90</sup>

- 3.9 The submission also noted that there had been a decrease in the number of casualties on local and regional roads between 2014-15 and 2018-19:

Between 2014-15 and 2018-19 there was a 25 per cent decrease in casualties on Local and Regional roads, and a similar reduction in casualties for all roads in NSW (25 per cent decrease) over the same period.<sup>91</sup>

- 3.10 NSW Government statistics for the period 2013-14 to 2018-19 show local and regional roads accounted for 52 per cent of all casualty crashes. This includes half of all fatalities and more than half (55 per cent) of all serious injury crashes in NSW (see **Table 1**).<sup>92</sup>

**Table 1: Casualty Crashes in NSW 2013/14 to 2018/19<sup>93</sup>**

Road classification	Fatal Crash	Serious Injury Crash	Moderate Injury	Other/Unk Injury	Total
Local	611	10170	14176	7635	32592
Regional	368	5437	7544	5140	18489
State	995	12960	19416	14658	48029
<b>Total</b>	<b>1974</b>	<b>28567</b>	<b>41136</b>	<b>27433</b>	<b>99110</b>

- 3.11 Preliminary data on the Centre for Road Safety website for the period 2018 to 2020 also indicates that casualty rates for both fatalities and serious injuries are falling (see **Tables 2 and 3**). However, statistics in the Road Safety Plan 2021 indicate that challenges in reducing road trauma remain in certain areas (see **Table 4** below).

<sup>90</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [17](#).

<sup>91</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [17](#).

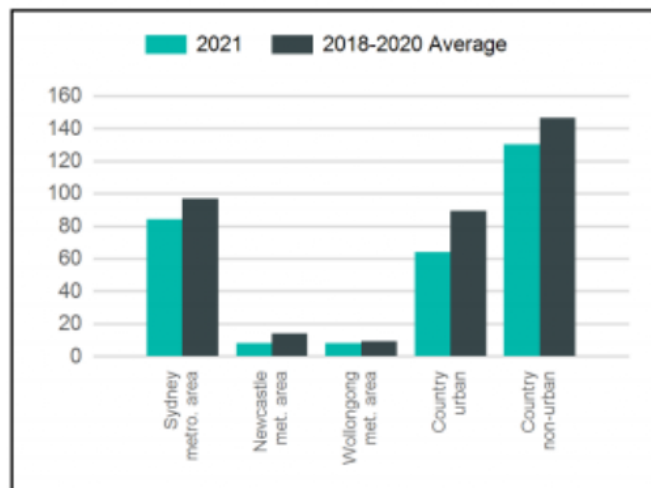
<sup>92</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [18](#).

<sup>93</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [18](#).

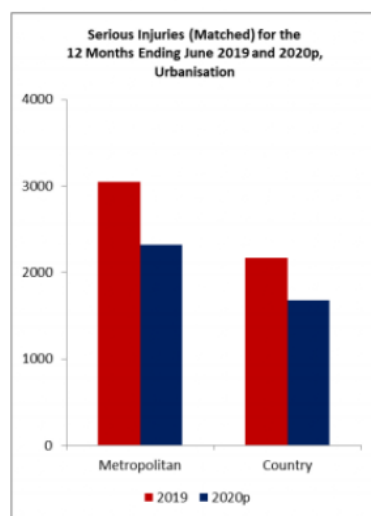


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**Table 2: Number of Fatalities for 12 months ending May 2021, by urbanisation<sup>94</sup>**



**Table 3: Serious injuries for the 12 months ending June 2019 and 2020 by urbanisation<sup>95</sup>**



<sup>94</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Monthly Bulletin of Preliminary Traffic Crash Data February 2021](#), p. 8, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>95</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, [Quarterly Bulletin of Serious Injury Crash Data Quarter ending June 2020 \(preliminary\)](#), June 2020, p. 9, viewed 15 June 2021.

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Table 4: The road trauma challenge in NSW<sup>96</sup>



## Cost of road trauma

- 3.12 Research undertaken by the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA) and Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales indicates that:
- the annual average cost of lives lost and injuries in NSW totalled \$5.4 billion for the period 2013-17, and
  - over the period 2013-17, the local and regional road network accounted for 68.9 per cent of all fatalities and 77.6 per cent of all injuries, costing the NSW economy \$3.9 billion. Regional communities shouldered the majority of this cost (\$2.6 billion).<sup>97</sup>
- 3.13 Stakeholders argued that these statistics are unacceptable given the impact crashes have on families, the community and the healthcare system.<sup>98</sup> According to the NRMA, the unsatisfactory condition of road assets and reduced maintenance, along with limited asset management, highlighted the alarming trends of councils struggling to deliver acceptable conditions.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>96</sup> [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), p. 8, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>97</sup> [Submission 12](#), Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales, p. 3.

<sup>98</sup> For example, [Submission 11](#), Institute for Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), p. 13; [Submission 19](#), National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA), p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> [Submission 19](#), NRMA, p. 2.

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## Committee comment

### Finding 3

**Local councils are a vital partner in the NSW Government's efforts to reduce trauma and improve road safety on local roads.**

- 3.14 Local councils play a crucial role in working to reduce trauma on local roads, and we have found that local government is a vital partner of the NSW Government to achieve improved safety on local roads.
- 3.15 The Committee also commends the work of local councils in delivering road safety initiatives through programs such as the LGRSP and in maintaining safe conditions on local roads.

### Quality of local road safety data

- 3.16 Several stakeholders expressed concerns about road accident data, particularly relating to access and interpretation, that make addressing road safety difficult for local government.
- 3.17 Prior to 2000, Section 8 (3) of the *Traffic Act 1909* required a road crash in NSW to be reported to the police when any person was killed or injured or property damage over \$500 was sustained. On 1 December 1999, that Act was replaced by new traffic legislation. This included the adoption of the Australian Road Rules that a crash is only required to be reported to police where a person is killed or injured; when drivers involved in the crash do not exchange particulars; or when a vehicle involved in the crash is towed away.
- 3.18 Since October 2014, NSW Police are not required to attend or investigate crashes in which a vehicle is towed away where no-one is injured or killed. These crashes are now required to be self-reported via the Police Assistance Line.<sup>100</sup>
- 3.19 We were informed by Port Stephens Council that councils rely heavily on crash data when analysing/reviewing the local road network. Council use this data to identify the locations that need design treatments and when preparing grant funding applications. Having up-to-date and accurate figures would aid councils in knowing where crashes are occurring, enabling them to prioritise road upgrades, address areas with known risks, and support in applications for funding.<sup>101</sup>
- 3.20 Other concerns regarding road safety data collection on local roads included:
- Crash data supplied through TfNSW or the NSW Centre for Road Safety is not always up-to-date and does not always reflect that actual incidents do occur on local roads. Local assistance may be provided by State emergency services or the Rural Fire Service, but there is no mechanism that is adopted across all emergency personnel for the recording of incidents<sup>102</sup>

<sup>100</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Road Traffic Casualty Crashes in New South Wales: Statistical Statement for the year ended 31 December 2018](#), p. 7, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>101</sup> [Submission 29](#), Port Stephens Council, p. 2.

<sup>102</sup> Mr Ben Howard, Acting Chair, Transport Technical Committee, Central NSW Joint Organisation & Director, Works and Services, Parkes Shire Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 50.

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- crash cause analysis is not reported: done thoroughly it will provide information to reduce crashes; done superficially it leads to irrelevant measures and failure to improve crash rates.<sup>103</sup>
- 3.21 IPWEA (NSW) argued that crash data should more clearly distinguish the road authority with responsibility for the site of crashes. They stated this could provide a more accurate level of reporting and guide the flow of road safety related funding and resources in the future. IPWEA have previously raised concerns about similar issues, including:
- the lack of data regarding the severity of crashes which limits local councils' ability to calculate the costs of crashes and prioritise treatments
  - crash locations are not always pinpointed as this data may not always be entered by police at the scene of the crash. This makes it difficult to accurately determine the cause later on, and
  - underreporting of crashes, especially off-road, as many people do not want police involved.
- 3.22 IPWEA argued that these issues continue to inhibit the ability of councils and policy makers to make informed decisions and develop strategies to address road safety.<sup>104</sup>
- 3.23 IPWEA believes that improving the collection and reporting of detailed crash data will foster a better understanding of the extent of crash related injuries. They recognised that the Centre for Road Safety has improved the availability of crash data over the past few years, but believe there is a need for ongoing staff training so that all councils have an understanding of what data is available and how it can be used.<sup>105</sup>
- 3.24 The Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) told the Committee that NSW is leading the way with hospital matching of crash data and hospital records, and that this has provided a really good, rich source of information about the severity of crashes. ARRB had also identified incidents when people have been admitted to hospital but there is no police record of the crash.
- 3.25 ARRB believes there is significant opportunity to improve how data is collected and collated. Data could be integrated so that the health, police and road management authorities have a better picture.<sup>106</sup>
- 3.26 Insurance companies, and auto repairers, were also highlighted by stakeholders as potential sources of road accident data. While police and emergency services may not always attend an accident, an insurance claim to cover the cost of damage to a vehicle is often submitted following a non-serious accident. We heard that this data could also help to better inform authorities.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>103</sup> [Submission 10](#), National Motorists Association Australia, p. 3.

<sup>104</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 17.

<sup>105</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 17.

<sup>106</sup> Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 12.

<sup>107</sup> For example, [Submission 26](#), Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Snowy Valleys Council and NSW Police: Snowy Valleys Sector.

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- 3.27 Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, ARRB, indicated to the Committee at a public hearing that the ARRB would not necessarily support all crashes being directly reported to local government. Mr McTiernan indicated that this could burden councils with more administration which they are inadequately resourced for. Mr McTiernan argued that councils need better quality road safety and crash data to better complete their work on local roads, rather than being the collators of that data.<sup>108</sup>
- 3.28 Several other stakeholders also made recommendations regarding a need to improve the collection and distribution of road safety related data. For example:
- The National Motorists Association Australia (NMAA) recommended that the consolidated results of crash cause evaluations, both primary and secondary, should be published.<sup>109</sup>
  - The NRMA made two related recommendations:
    - publicly available and easily accessible local road network crash data would assist in determining the number and type of crashes that occur on local roads, and where investment is needed the most, and
    - publishing road safety audit results would improve transparency and provide industry with an additional and important source of information to guide policy and advocacy.<sup>110</sup>
  - IPWEA (NSW) recommended that local government should continue to work with TfNSW, NSW Police and NSW Health to improve the quality and quantity of crash data being reported.<sup>111</sup>
- 3.29 It should be noted that calls for improved road safety data collection were also made during the Parliament of Australia's Joint Select Committee on Road Safety October 2020 inquiry into Improving Road Safety in Australia. That Committee made several recommendations, including that:
- the Australian Government work with the states and territories to develop a plan and timeline for the harmonisation of data, including definitions, relating to casualty crashes, road safety ratings and speeding across the network. Such data should be published regularly
  - the Australian Government work with state, territory and local governments to collect accurate data on the current condition and rate of change of Australian roads
  - the [Federal] Office of Road Safety assist in the facilitation of research to identify the incidence, frequency and type of driver distraction in crash data, and
  - the [Federal] Office of Road Safety work with states and territories to expand crash data collection and reporting on the incidence, frequency and type of driver distraction.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Mr David McTiernan, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 12.

<sup>109</sup> [Submission 10](#), NMAA, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup> [Submission 19](#), NRMA, p. 2.

<sup>111</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 18.

<sup>112</sup> Joint Select Committee on Road Safety, [Improving Road Safety in Australia](#), Parliament of Australia, October 2020, Recommendations 2, 9, 15 and 16, pp. xi-xiii.

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**Committee comment****Recommendation 5**

**That the NSW Government improve the collection and dissemination of data to local councils regarding incidents that occur on local roads on at least a quarterly basis.**

**Recommendation 6**

**That the NSW Government improve mechanisms for councils to access a wider range of local road safety incident data.**

- 3.30 As outlined above, concern was expressed by stakeholders such as the NRMA, ARRB and IPWEA (NSW Division) that there is a need to improve the collection and dissemination of crash data by using sources such as first responders. Concern was also expressed that data published by the Centre for Road Safety was often out of date.
- 3.31 Concern was also expressed about the need for all local councils to have access to accurate and comprehensive crash data to inform their decisions regarding projects on roads within their responsibility. If crash data is an important element for prioritising work and funding allocations, then it needs to be improved.
- 3.32 In terms of data collection, evidence presented to the inquiry indicates that the current methods of crash data collection and its availability can limit councils' ability to identify and address priority areas. It is also apparent that this is an issue across Australia, considering similar recommendations regarding improved crash and road safety data have been made by the Australian Parliament's Joint Select Committee.

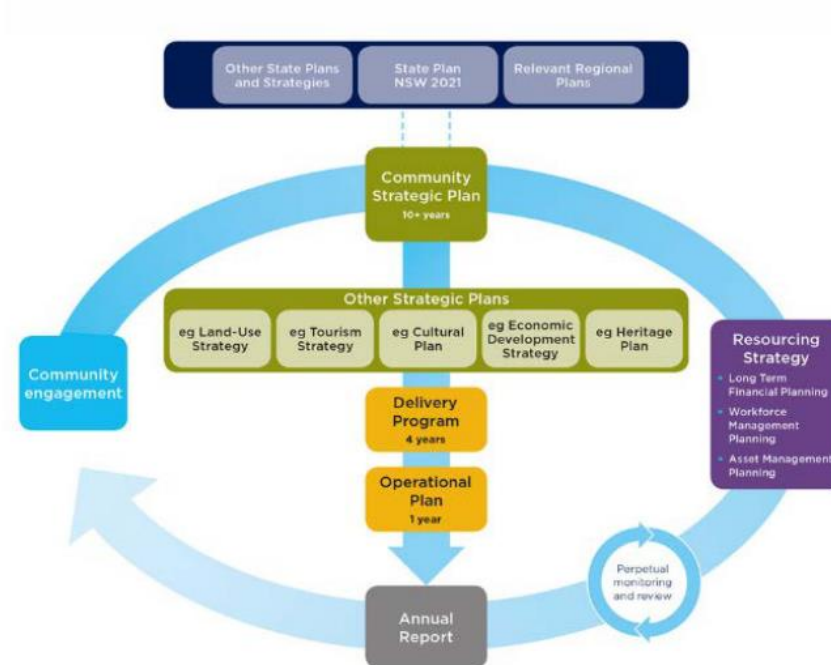
**Local council planning****The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework**

- 3.33 Local councils are required to undertake their planning and reporting activities within the NSW Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF). The focus of the IPRF is the 10-year Community Strategic Plan (CSP), which is used to develop council's four-year Delivery Program and 12-month Operational Plan.
- 3.34 The NSW Government submitted that the IPRF provides an opportunity to integrate road safety objectives and actions into the broader framework of a council's Community Strategic Plan (see the figure 2 below).



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Figure 2: The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.<sup>113</sup>



3.35 Several submissions provided examples of how the integrated approach is being used by local councils. For example:

- Inner West Council's approach highlights road safety and stated that '[a]ddressing vehicle speeds, crossing opportunities for pedestrians, road layout, intersection design and operation and road user awareness will improve safety and reduce the severity of future crashes.'<sup>114</sup>
- Lake Macquarie City Council recognises road safety is a shared initiative. The Council is refreshing its approach to infrastructure planning and delivery and removing red tape by developing 'living' planning frameworks that respond to changes. The Council advocated for a shift away from 'single issue' infrastructure grant funding towards integrated and collaborative approaches that see funding distributed consistently across the state.<sup>115</sup>
- Wingecarribee Council told the Committee that with limited funding and resources, it is important to plan road safety effectively:

Traditionally the role of road safety was confined to road engineering but now the focus has moved to finding the optimal balance between behavioural and

<sup>113</sup> NSW Government, Office of Local Government, [The Integrated Planning and Reporting \(IP&R\) framework](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>114</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 38.

<sup>115</sup> [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 2.

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engineering solutions, and therefore, education and enforcement also play a significant role in improving road safety...<sup>116</sup>

- Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) told the Committee that a collaboration of state, federal and local entities had helped them to navigate the framework, share advice and look for opportunities to reduce duplication and optimise service delivery.<sup>117</sup>

3.36 CNSWJO also noted that Strategic Road Safety Plans will be mandatory in 2021 and training in their development is funded by TfNSW and underway through support from the IPWEA (NSW). CNSWJO submitted that review of these plans by a cross jurisdictional group such as the Regional Integrated Transport Group (RITG) will optimise outcomes.<sup>118</sup>

**Issues regarding Community Strategic Plans**

3.37 CNSWJO commented that the road safety strategic framework is complex and difficult to navigate, although this is improving under the Future Transport 2056 approach. CNSWJO noted that councils had tried engaging the NSW Government in the development of Community Strategic Plans (CSPs) with little success because integrated planning is largely ignored by all other state agencies. They suggested that an integrated strategic approach possibly through the Regional Transport Plan or through the RITG is needed to better engage agencies.

3.38 A State strategic plan that follows a council's CSP would also enable councils to filter in other strategic plans, such as the road safety plan, instead of using individual plans.<sup>119</sup>

3.39 Several other councils also raised concerns about planning processes. For example, Blacktown City Council said they experienced problems where planning decisions by other departments impacted their ability to meet their own infrastructure needs. For example, decisions taken by:

- NSW Planning regarding greenfield developments with narrow roads that make it hard for large vehicles to use
- NSW Department of Education regarding new school sites that do not allow for 'kiss and drop' facilities or staff parking and traffic movement, and
- TfNSW where it is difficult to get traffic signals and pedestrian crossings approved in new release areas.<sup>120</sup>

**Committee comment**

**Recommendation 7**

**That the NSW Government examine ways to better integrate community strategic plans into the Government's regional transport and other State strategic plans.**

<sup>116</sup> [Submission 28](#), Wingecarribee Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>117</sup> [Submission 31](#), Central NSW Joint Organisation, p. 3.

<sup>118</sup> [Submission 31](#), Central NSW Joint Organisation, p. 3.

<sup>119</sup> Ms Jenny Bennett, Executive Officer, Central NSW Joint Organisation, Mr Ben Howard, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, pp. 50, 53.

<sup>120</sup> [Submission 18](#), Blacktown City Council, p. 3.

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- 3.40 The Committee commends the NSW Government's efforts to reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries on the state's roads. While indications that the number of fatalities and serious injuries across NSW is on a downward trend are welcome, work needs to continue towards decreasing the number of lives lost.
- 3.41 We also note that the NSW Government is committed to reducing road trauma through its Road Safety Plan 2021. We commend the state priority target of reducing road trauma by at least 30 per cent from 2008-2010 levels by 2021.<sup>121</sup>
- 3.42 The Committee notes the commentary provided during the inquiry about the financial cost of road trauma, and the impact that road trauma has on the state's economy. While saving lives and preventing injuries must always be the key focus of road safety efforts, the economic cost of fatalities and injuries cannot be ignored.
- 3.43 A common theme in evidence was that the incorporation of road safety into the NSW Government's Integrated Planning Framework through CSPs is a useful planning tool for councils. However, suggestions were made that this integration needs to extend across all government agencies to avoid conflict between their planning decisions and those of councils. It was also suggested that there could be better engagement between CSPs and the NSW Government's regional transport and other state strategic plans.

### Road safety and school communities

- 3.44 The NSW Government provides funding for road safety education in schools through its \$5 million Road Safety Education Program, which has two components:
- In partnership with the Association of Independent Schools, Catholic Schools NSW and the Department of Education, road safety is taught in the learning area of Personal Development, Health and Physical Education to all students from Kindergarten to Year 10. Ten Department of Education road safety officers (RSOs) are located around NSW; and
  - The *Kids and Traffic* Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program, delivered in partnership with Macquarie University, provides professional development workshops, road safety education information, resources, advice and other strategies to families or carers of young children, educators, support services and peak early childhood and road safety organisations. Information is also provided to state and local government, including RSOs.<sup>122</sup>
- 3.45 The program also works within the Safe System framework to reduce the number of casualties of children and young people, and to develop long-term safe behaviour, knowledge and attitudes to road safety.
- 3.46 According to the LGRSP guidelines, delivery of road safety education programs within the classroom is the role and responsibility of teachers who are the most

<sup>121</sup> NSW Government, Towards Zero, Road Safety Plan 2021, [NSW's road safety targets](#), webpage, viewed 11 June 2021.

<sup>122</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Annual Report 2018-2019 - Volume 1](#), 21 December 2019, p. 45; Centre for Road Safety, [Road safety education](#), webpage; Department of Education, [Road safety education in NSW public schools](#); NSW Government, Towards Zero, [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), 'School road safety education', updated April 2021, Version 2.1, p. 47, viewed 15 June 2021.

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appropriate providers of health and safety education programs in schools. However, the guidelines encourage RSOs and the Road Safety Education specialists to work collaboratively to support schools in resolving issues and promoting positive road safety behaviours through curriculum (Road Safety Education specialists) and engaging the community (RSOs).<sup>123</sup>

3.47 The LGRSP guidelines also state that:

To avoid duplication and confusion of roles between the education sectors and councils, TfNSW will not fund projects or initiatives developed to deliver school education programs, lessons, materials, events/workshops to students and/or teachers within schools.<sup>124</sup>

**Committee comment**

**Recommendation 8**

**That Transport for NSW and the Department of Education explore opportunities for road safety officers to support the Road Safety Education Program in the wider community, particularly in rural and regional areas.**

- 3.48 The Committee believes that RSOs are ideally placed to support the road safety message being taught through the Road Safety Education Program to parents and community members. The Committee is concerned that while RSOs are often the road safety experts on issues in their local area, they can be prevented from effectively working on some road safety issues that impact local schools.
- 3.49 The Committee sees an opportunity for the Department of Education to work with TfNSW to review the role of RSOs and their relationship with local schools, and for the two agencies to examine the Road Safety Education Program to ensure that the skills and experience of RSOs are drawn on where appropriate.

**Local community engagement in road safety**

- 3.50 Local roads are a vital part of local communities; they connect citizens with the services and activities that are part of their daily routine.
- 3.51 A theme in several submissions to this inquiry was that more engagement with the local community in the planning and delivery of road safety initiatives would enhance their success.
- 3.52 As noted by the IPWEA (NSW), there are a wide range of community representatives that have an interest in delivering road safety initiatives. These include first responders, local state and federal members of parliament and local government councillors, local clergy, hospitals, schools, service and sporting clubs, local businesses, freight operators and bus and public transport operators.<sup>125</sup>
- 3.53 IPWEA commented that, while none of these groups were qualified road engineers or asset managers, they have views on causes and risk – information that needs to be collated and considered when managing the local road network. Because of this, IPWEA argued that it is critical that local road authorities engage with these

<sup>123</sup> [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), p. 46, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>124</sup> [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), p. 46, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>125</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 21.



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organisations to ensure that the widest possible range of inputs is considered when developing a Road Safety Strategic Plan.<sup>126</sup>

- 3.54 The Amy Gillett Foundation stated that it is essential to involve the community in road safety if meaningful gains are to be realised in this area. The Foundation commented:

While our culture about road safety – and attitudes about whether it is an important or urgent issue – requires clear, government policy and action, it also requires people to be involved and engaged in the process.<sup>127</sup>

- 3.55 Other stakeholders noted that road authorities need to be fully aware of community expectations when planning road safety initiatives.

- 3.56 Mr Michael Savage, Technical Resources Manager, IPWEA, commented at a public hearing that 'if all our roads were up to what the community expects as a satisfactory standard, we would have a reduction in the road death toll'.<sup>128</sup>

- 3.57 The ARRB explained that increased involvement of local communities would improve identification and prioritisation of road safety issues unique to each community:

While there are many common road safety problems and a formula approach can be applied to many solutions, there will be specific concerns (and responses) in a small regional community that are different to a regional centre, and perhaps 'poles apart' from those in metropolitan areas.

Experience shows that engaging local communities in road safety planning and delivery creates a greater sense of ownership of the problem, and investment in the solution. Perhaps a shortcoming of the road safety approach of the past is that the community has not been well and widely integrated into the development of solutions. This is changing, and it can make a program more sustainable and influence more people to address the underlying issue.<sup>129</sup>

- 3.58 Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) submitted that road safety initiatives implemented by local community groups would have a stronger chance of success if they had local government support and were included into council wide road safety strategies. This could ensure they were best practice and evidence based approaches. QPRC also noted that road safety projects implemented by local communities would assist in fostering a general road safety culture in the community.<sup>130</sup>

- 3.59 BusNSW called for a consistent and simple process for the local community, including parents and citizens committees, to provide feedback to council and other stakeholders on local road safety matters.<sup>131</sup>

<sup>126</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 22.

<sup>127</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 2.

<sup>128</sup> Mr Michael Savage, Technical Resources Manager, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 3.

<sup>129</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 6.

<sup>130</sup> [Submission 9](#), Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, p. 8.

<sup>131</sup> [Submission 32](#), BusNSW, p. 4.

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- 3.60 The George Institute for Global Health stated that while local communities and representatives are well-placed to identify and deliver programs there are barriers to involvement of local communities. The Institute argued:

Effective action by local communities and their representatives to address road trauma on local roads likely requires increased levels of 'road safety literacy' across NSW communities.<sup>132</sup>

- 3.61 Wollongong City Council submitted that there are significant gains to be made in harnessing the power of local communities in tackling road safety, mainly from a behavioural perspective.<sup>133</sup>

- 3.62 Wingecarribee Shire Council also suggested that a combination of collaborative and consultative processes among key community stakeholders is paramount to identifying key road safety issues, gaining community support and generating practical solutions.<sup>134</sup>

### Community based road safety programs

- 3.63 The NSW Road Safety Plan 2021 states that the delivery of road safety initiatives, including grassroots projects across local communities, is critical to reducing the road toll.<sup>135</sup> The NSW Government coordinates several community focused road safety programs, which were outlined in its submission, and are discussed below.

#### The Community Road Safety Fund

- 3.64 Since its establishment in 2013, the Community Road Safety Fund (CRSF) has delivered a range of programs designed to save lives and prevent serious injuries, using money raised from speed camera offences. Examples of road safety initiatives under this fund include:

- Graduated Licensing Scheme reforms
- public education campaigns
- Safer Roads Program
- new and used car safety ratings and vehicle research, and
- flashing lights at schools.<sup>136</sup>

- 3.65 In its submission, the NRMA noted that in November 2011, their organisation tabled a petition of 13 500 signatures in the NSW Parliament in support of the hypothecation of fine revenue from driving offences to fund road safety. The CRSF was subsequently announced in June 2012 to improve road safety and make fine revenue allocations more transparent.

- 3.66 The NRMA believes that while the CRSF allowed the creation and progression of a number of important initiatives and programs since 2013, its administration could be more transparent.

<sup>132</sup> [Submission 13](#), The George Institute for Global Health, p. 6.

<sup>133</sup> [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 4.

<sup>134</sup> [Submission 28](#), Wingecarribee Shire Council, p. 2.

<sup>135</sup> [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), 'Road safety delivery through partnerships', p. 27, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>136</sup> [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), 'The Road Safety Plan 2021 builds on what has already been delivered through the Community Road Safety Fund', p. 26, viewed 15 June 2021.



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- 3.67 Their submission recommended the establishment of an independent committee to assist TfNSW consider prospective initiatives under the CRSF. This would provide a greater level of confidence in how fine revenue is allocated and the value of initiatives.<sup>137</sup>

**The Community Road Safety Grants Program**

- 3.68 The Community Road Safety Grants Program provides grants of up to \$5 000 (plus GST) for local community road safety projects, such as educational projects to increase road safety awareness in specific communities. A limited number of more substantial road safety grants are also available, with funding up to \$30 000 (plus GST). The objectives of the program are to:

- facilitate opportunities for community organisations to work with their communities to improve road safety
- develop and implement local projects that improve road safety, and
- contribute to achieving targets in the NSW Road Safety Plan 2021.<sup>138</sup>

- 3.69 Funded community groups often work closely with RSOs to implement their projects. For example, the Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation received several Community Road Safety Grants to support the implementation of its Holiday Time: Hold My Hand campaign. This campaign uses the strategic distribution of posters, banners, noticeboard insets, and other signage, at key tourist hot spots and thoroughfares to raise driver and pedestrian awareness to keep children safe on and near roads.<sup>139</sup>

- 3.70 The Committee heard that since the grants program began in 2015-16, more than \$1.6 million has been allocated to 137 projects, including road safety support for refugees, migrants and other culturally and linguistically diverse groups.<sup>140</sup>

**Local Traffic Committees**

- 3.71 TfNSW is the legislated body responsible for the control of traffic on all roads in NSW, but delegates certain aspects of the control of traffic on local and regional roads to councils. For example:

- TfNSW retains responsibility for speed zoning and traffic signals on all roads across NSW
- councils can only authorise the implementation of certain traffic control facilities and prescribed traffic control devices on roads and road related areas within their area of operations, and
- councils are not empowered to authorise traffic control lights.<sup>141</sup>

- 3.72 As mentioned above, the delegation to councils limits the types of prescribed traffic control devices and facilities that councils can authorise, and imposes certain conditions on them. One of these conditions requires councils to obtain the advice of TfNSW and the police prior to proceeding with any proposal. This is

<sup>137</sup> [Submission 19](#), NRMA, pp. [2](#), [7](#).

<sup>138</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Community Road Safety Grants: Guidelines for Applicants - Round Five 2019-20](#), 'Objectives', p. [4](#), viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>139</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [43](#).

<sup>140</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [43](#).

<sup>141</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [12](#).

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achieved by councils establishing a Local Traffic Committee (LTC), meetings of which are attended by TfNSW staff.

- 3.73 LTCs are an established way for traffic and road safety issues to be considered at a local level. TfNSW outlined the role of LTCs in its submission:

Local Traffic Committees are primarily a technical review and advisory committee, and generally deal with issues such as traffic and parking. The Local Traffic Committee considers the technical merits of proposals, ensuring that current technical guidelines are considered, and provides recommendations to Council for decision. The Council must refer all traffic related matters to the Local Traffic Committee prior to exercising its delegated functions.<sup>142</sup>

- 3.74 The LTC is an advisory body only, having no decision-making powers. It is described as 'primarily, a technical review committee that is required to advise a council on traffic related matters referred to it by council.'<sup>143</sup>

- 3.75 Local Government NSW (LGNSW) told the Committee that TLCs meet on a regular basis, typically monthly, and that they are open to members of the public to attend:

Councils have a standing open invitation to members of the public wanting to attend and speak at these committees to raise any issues or concerns that they might have with items either on an official agenda, or as other business. Minutes of these meetings are typically published on council websites. Councils also provide general contact details online and elsewhere where members of the public are able to raise concerns about the full range of matters that affect community living, including road safety matters.<sup>144</sup>

- 3.76 Cr Linda Scott, President of LGNSW, indicated to the Committee that LTCs operate differently in different councils, and that the current LTC system is quite complex:

They are a collaboration between the State and local governments, and I think that whilst they all operate within a similar framework, they all operate quite differently. I would add to my earlier comment that the current system is quite complex...

I think the solution is to better align the funding for roads where there are safety problems, and we know that is, from all the evidence, on local roads—rather than on State and Federal roads. And it is also to work hard to reduce the complexity around the local traffic committees, to make sure that there is recognition of the fact that the time frames for these kinds of approvals are far too long, and there is monitoring of this by councils and local governments to create solutions that work.<sup>145</sup>

- 3.77 Representatives from Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Snowy Valleys Council also explained at a public hearing how the LTC process worked in their LGA. The Councils' RSO, Mr Anthony Carroll, explained:

Each council has its own traffic committee. I have the luxury of having eight traffic committees a year. The Cootamundra-Gundagai approach—they have been doing the regular traffic committee meetings for longer, so they have a more teamed approach.

<sup>142</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 42.

<sup>143</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, [Traffic Committees](#), viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>144</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW, p. 10.

<sup>145</sup> Cr Linda Scott, President, Local Government NSW, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 41.

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Snowy Valleys were not as regular. Now that they are becoming more regular and more predictable, more issues are being raised.

The way that issues are brought to the traffic committee is usually members of the public raise issues, they go into the council reporting system and then a report is made to a traffic committee. The usual process is, the first time it is raised it is just a notification that it is an issue, and then the second time we have a report made up on how we are going to treat it.<sup>146</sup>

- 3.78 Wingecarribee Shire Council also discussed the Council's LTC in their submission to the inquiry:

Local communities may notify Council of road safety and other hazards via a notification system which allows Council addressing the issues... Council's Local Traffic Committee (LTC) comprises of a Councillor, Council staff, and representatives from TfNSW, the Police, and Local State Members of Parliament. Informal advisors including local bus and taxis operators are invited to participate in the LTC meeting. LTC assists in the delivery of road safety programs by providing professional recommendations on certain road safety issues and regulatory traffic management.<sup>147</sup>

- 3.79 The NSW Government advised that LTCs are required to be made up of four formal members: one council representative (any councillor or council officer); one representative of the NSW Police Force; one representative of TfNSW; and one state member of parliament or their nominee.<sup>148</sup> Notably, the NSW Government stated in its submission to the inquiry:

As existing governance bodies the Local Traffic Committee role could be examined to assess any benefits of broadening its role and/or membership.<sup>149</sup>

- 3.80 The Committee heard evidence that LTCs do not always incorporate a council's RSO as part of its proceedings. Ms Fiona Frost, RSO, Blacktown City Council, indicated that at Blacktown the RSO did not attend LTC meetings, while at other councils RSOs did attend their LTC.<sup>150</sup>

- 3.81 The Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW raised concerns about the lack of involvement of the school community in road safety planning around schools. They previously raised this issue in their submission to the 2011 Staysafe Committee inquiry into school zone safety. Their 2011 submission stated that little notice is given by the government to the actual needs of the school community, and their 2020 submission reported that there is little sign that this general pattern had changed.

- 3.82 The Federation commented in its submission to this inquiry:

Generally, however, matters relating to school road safety are inherently local, so a one-size-fits-all solution that addresses all, or even most, problems is not feasible. One of the most effective steps the NSW Government can take is to ensure that local school parents have as much say as possible in these matters.

<sup>146</sup> Mr Anthony Carroll, Road Safety Officer, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Snowy Valleys Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 5.

<sup>147</sup> [Submission 28](#), Wingecarribee Shire Council, p. 4.

<sup>148</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 42.

<sup>149</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 43.

<sup>150</sup> Ms Fiona Frost, Road Safety Officer, Blacktown City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 17.

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A viable way of achieving this is to require parent representation on the Local Traffic Committee (LTC) of each local government area, where a matter involves roads or traffic near a school.<sup>151</sup>

Committee comment

**Recommendation 9**

**That Transport for NSW review and examine the Local Traffic Committee model and assess any benefits of broadening its role and/or membership.**

- 3.83 There is no doubt that better engagement with local communities about road safety is crucial if we are to reduce trauma on local roads.
- 3.84 The Committee supports the comment from TfNSW that the Local Traffic Committee role could be examined to assess any benefits of broadening its role and/or membership.
- 3.85 The Committee heard a significant amount of commentary about the importance of community engagement. We also heard evidence regarding the need for improved 'road safety literacy' across the community. While the efforts of the NSW Government and local councils to date to engage local communities are welcome, the Committee recommends that TfNSW examine additional ways for local communities to be better engaged in road safety issues, and participate to a greater degree in improving safety on their local roads.
- 3.86 The Committee supports increased opportunities for community members and groups to be involved in LTCs, and recommends that TfNSW work with local councils to explore opportunities for representatives of local school communities and other community groups to participate in LTC discussions on a regular basis.

**Other ways to engage local communities in road safety**

- 3.87 In its submission, the NSW Government noted that localised communication plays a critical role in raising the profile and importance of road safety.
- Local community activity has the ability to be more targeted and reach a variety of local road user groups that mass media cannot typically access. It can facilitate strong connections with local community groups and foster two-way communication that strengthens community engagement with road safety messages.<sup>152</sup>
- 3.88 Their submission lists a range of measures that can be used to engage the community in road safety, for example,
- through social media
  - having a presence at local events (eg fetes, local agricultural shows, car exhibitions, child restraint workshops, festivals and community events) to connect with people face-to-face and distribute useful road safety information
  - local partners (eg businesses, councils and libraries) where opportunities exist to share information across their community channels, and
  - through local schools.<sup>153</sup>

<sup>151</sup> [Submission 17](#), Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW, pp. 3-4.

<sup>152</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, pp. 42-43.

<sup>153</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, pp. 42-43.

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- 3.89 BusNSW recommended that local government should place a stronger emphasis on the material developed for the TfNSW 'Safety Town' website, to assist the community to better embrace safety messages. The use of crowdsourcing may also facilitate problem solving.<sup>154</sup>
- 3.90 In its submission, QPRC commented that social media is a useful tool used by local communities in building a community approach to road safety. For example, local communities often host resident Facebook pages and use these to post about road safety concerns for the benefit of the community.<sup>155</sup>
- 3.91 However, Blacktown City Council told the Committee that there were challenges in engaging the local community in LGRSP initiatives because of limits imposed by TfNSW:

We are not allowed to advertise extensively and that can be a problem. There are quite strict limits on what we can do. For example, we are limited as to how we can use artwork. I understand that some of that is copyright. I have had that explained to me in the past. However, there are often times when you want to take a piece of artwork and adapt it to something that suits the local community and that is not allowed.<sup>156</sup>

**Overseas trained drivers**

- 3.92 Concern was expressed to the Committee that many long-term residents that learnt to drive overseas were unfamiliar with the NSW road rules and expectations on road safety issues such as use of seatbelts, use of protective car restraints for babies and children along with understanding the rules of intersections.<sup>157</sup>
- 3.93 Blacktown City Council has worked with its multicultural community to raise awareness of driver and pedestrian safety. One of the issues that Council has promoted is greater awareness of child road safety, especially the use of child safety restraints in cars. However much work needs to be done.<sup>158</sup>
- 3.94 Blacktown City Council also noted that, as penalties such as demerit points do not apply on international licences, they do not serve as a deterrent for unsafe driving. For long-term residents or arrivals, not those visiting as tourists, there was a particular need for road safety education and assistance in aiding them to understand the road rules, expectations and environment for driving in NSW.<sup>159</sup>

**Committee comment**

**Recommendation 10**

**That Transport for NSW ensure all road safety campaign related information is provided to local councils and road safety officers in a timely manner.**

- 3.95 The Committee welcomes the road safety campaign efforts conducted by TfNSW. However, the Committee is concerned following some evidence received during

<sup>154</sup> [Submission 32](#), BusNSW, p. 5.

<sup>155</sup> [Submission 9](#), Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, p. 8.

<sup>156</sup> Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 14.

<sup>157</sup> [Submission 18](#), Blacktown City Council, pp. 2-3; Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, pp. 18-19.

<sup>158</sup> [Submission 18](#), Blacktown City Council, p. 3; Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 18.

<sup>159</sup> [Submission 18](#), Blacktown City Council, p. 3; Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, pp. 18-19.



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the inquiry which indicates that councils and RSOs only find out about relevant communications and road safety campaigns after they have already been initiated and rolled out.

- 3.96 The Committee sees social media as an excellent way to strengthen engagement by reaching local road users who do not regularly access other forms of media, or who are not directly involved with community groups.
- 3.97 The Committee encourages TfNSW to work more closely with councils on social media and other road safety communication campaigns that they conduct. TfNSW should ensure councils are well informed of these campaigns, in the interests of avoiding any unnecessary duplication of effort and to streamline local road safety communications or activities by councils. TfNSW needs to ensure that councils and RSOs are informed of road safety campaigns and communications in a timely manner.
- 3.98 The Committee heard evidence that the limits on RSO use of advertising can impede the ability of RSOs to communicate with their local community. The Committee also recommends that TfNSW review the advertising and outreach limitations placed on RSOs to ensure RSOs can advertise and circulate communications to their local community.
- 3.99 The Committee encourages TfNSW to improve engagement with migrant communities, whether broadly at a state level program or through local community road safety programs, on road safety education to improve overseas trained drivers understanding of NSW road rules and road safety.
- 3.100 The Committee also encourages TfNSW to consider any methods and communication to improve the understanding about NSW road rules and road safety for any overseas temporary entrant with an international driver licence who is driving on NSW roads.

### Parliament of Australia inquiry into improving road safety in Australia

- 3.101 On 1 August 2019, a Joint Select Committee on Road Safety was appointed by the Parliament of Australia to inquire into improving road safety in Australia.
- 3.102 The Committee inquired into areas that are relevant to this Committee's inquiry, specifically:
- the impact of road trauma on the nation, including the importance of achieving zero deaths and serious injuries in remote and regional areas
  - measures to ensure state, territory and local government road infrastructure investment incorporates the Safe System approach principles, and
  - road trauma and incident data collection and coordination across Australia.<sup>160</sup>
- 3.103 The final report, tabled on 30 October 2020, made several recommendations calling on the Australian Government to work with states and territories on several issues, including:

<sup>160</sup> [Improving Road Safety in Australia](#), 'Terms of Reference', p. 1, viewed 11 June 2021.



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- ensuring that all existing road safety programs are designed to implement Safe System approach principles across all government policy areas, including health and education
- ensuring that funding avenues are identified that specifically support local councils to attract and retain the relevant skills and expertise required for development of all aspects of road safety policy, infrastructure and maintenance
- improvements in data collection and dissemination, and
- introducing compulsory first aid training as a condition of receiving a learner's permit or renewing a driver licence.

3.104 The report also recommended that the Parliament of Australia establish a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Road Safety.<sup>161</sup> In its submission to the inquiry, the NSW Government had suggested that such a committee could be a non-partisan approach to road safety at a federal level.<sup>162</sup>

**Committee comment**

The Committee welcomes the establishment of a Federal Office for Road Safety, and encourages the NSW Government to work closely with the Federal Office to improve road safety across the state. Combined with the national road safety fund, the Committee looks forward to seeing the positive impact the Federal Office has on leadership in road safety matters across the country.

<sup>161</sup> [Improving Road Safety in Australia](#), p. 58, viewed 11 June 2021

<sup>162</sup> Joint Select Committee on Road Safety, [Improving Road Safety in Australia](#), Parliament of Australia, webpage, Submissions received by the Committee, [Submission 50](#), Transport for NSW, p. 17, viewed 18 June 2021.

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## Chapter Four – Enabling local government to improve road safety

### Local council road safety expertise

#### Training in road safety for council engineers and other infrastructure related staff

- 4.1 The Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) commented that there is a limited level of expertise and training among local government staff. Council engineers and planning staff tend to work across broad areas rather than specialise, particularly in regional councils.<sup>163</sup>
- 4.2 ARRB submitted that the way to ensure that councils have access to persons with the correct skills, particularly in engineering and road design, comes down to the undergraduate training and education of engineers and practitioners.
- It is not just an engineering solution, but also involves town planners and decision-makers in council, whether they be elected officials, general managers or managers. There needs to be a broad awareness of their roles and responsibilities with road safety.<sup>164</sup>
- 4.3 The Amy Gillett Foundation also submitted that a recent review of all undergraduate civil engineering degrees identified that there is a significant gap in road design education, and almost no content on cycling infrastructure.<sup>165</sup>
- 4.4 Their submission also noted that Transport and Main Roads in Queensland run a short course on Designing for Pedestrians and Cyclists, and suggested that this should be adopted nationally as a model for upskilling engineers.<sup>166</sup>
- 4.5 The National Motorists Association Australia (NMAA) also recommended:
- that training for council traffic engineers be improved so that they can make better assessments of proposals; and
  - that councillors be given a better appreciation of traffic matters during their induction period.<sup>167</sup>
- 4.6 The Committee heard evidence that councils can face difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Lake Macquarie City Council said their area was a resource focused region, making it hard to attract qualified staff. As a result, Council are developing their own staff rather than try external recruitment.<sup>168</sup>
- 4.7 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Snowy Valleys Council also told the Committee that staff sometimes only stayed with Council long enough to build

<sup>163</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 8.

<sup>164</sup> Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 10.

<sup>165</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 7.

<sup>166</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 7.

<sup>167</sup> [Submission 10](#), National Motorists Association Australia, p. 8.

<sup>168</sup> Mr Dan Hughes, Government Relations and Policy Advisor, and Mr Brendan Callander, Acting Manager Asset Management, Lake Macquarie City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 12.

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their skillset before moving on to more attractive and higher paid positions. They submitted that one possible solution was for councils to use resources employed by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and in other government departments.<sup>169</sup>

#### Road safety audits

- 4.8 A road safety audit is a formal examination of proposed or existing roads and road related areas from the perspective of all road users with the intention of identifying road safety deficiencies and areas of risk that could lead to road crashes.<sup>170</sup>
- 4.9 Several stakeholders commented that although road safety audits are an excellent way to identify problems, they are resource intensive and expensive. In particular:
- many local governments, particularly in rural and regional areas, do not apply for funding for road safety initiatives because they lack access to the road safety auditors who can perform the road safety audits needed for the application. In many instances the costs of obtaining this expertise is not perceived as viable as funding is not guaranteed due to the competitive nature of the application process, coupled with high demand from other councils
  - training was also needed in the Safe System approach, design and implementation
  - assistance from TfNSW could be provided either in-kind or through funding to complete road safety audits so that councils are better able to address road risks
  - having access to full-time resources employed by TfNSW would save councils salaries and the need to train staff, and
  - attracting and retaining technical staff is an industry-wide problem.<sup>171</sup>
- 4.10 IPWEA (NSW) told the Committee that they had approached TfNSW with a proposal to offer training to all councils to improve skills and capacity in road safety auditing. The aim of this training was to provide the skills for council staff involved in development assessment, asset management and road maintenance to look at the network from a different perspective. As a result of this collaboration, training in road safety auditing was completed by staff from 122 of the 128 councils across NSW.<sup>172</sup>
- 4.11 IPWEA also recommended that road safety auditing be encouraged by developing guidelines and providing resources for road authority staff involved in all phases of the planning, delivery and maintenance of road assets. This would identify issues before they became black spots, and tailor maintenance and reconstruction works to current safety standards.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Mr Matt Stubbs, Manager Technical Services, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, and Mr Heinz Kausche, Executive Director, Infrastructure, Snowy Valleys Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 6.

<sup>170</sup> NSW Government, Transport Roads & Traffic Authority, Centre for Road Safety, [Guidelines for Road Safety Audit Practices](#), p. 6, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>171</sup> For example, Mr Matt Stubbs, and Mr Heinz Kausche, [Transcript of evidence](#), pp. 5-6; [Submission 12](#), Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales, p. 4; [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, pp. 3, 4.

<sup>172</sup> [Submission 11](#), Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), p. 18.

<sup>173</sup> [Submission 11](#), IPWEA (NSW), p. 20.

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#### Committee comment

##### Recommendation 11

**That Transport for NSW examine additional ways to support local council staff, particularly engineering staff, to develop their knowledge, and expertise about the Safe System approach.**

##### Recommendation 12

**That Transport for NSW develop additional guidelines and resources for local council staff involved in the planning, delivery and maintenance of road assets, particularly for conducting road safety audits.**

- 4.12 The Committee considers that road safety audits are an important and useful part of road network management, and is concerned that some local councils may find it difficult to conduct these audits.
- 4.13 The Committee encourages the Government to work towards developing council capacity to conduct local road safety audits, either through training programs for council staff, or sharing resources already located in organisations such as TfNSW and other government agencies.
- 4.14 Suggestions were also made to include road safety as part of the programme of study for civil engineering courses. The Committee supports an increased focus on road safety in tertiary engineering courses where appropriate. The evidence received about the lack of staff who are experienced in road safety is noted, and the Committee would like to see road safety become an area of study completed by more engineering graduates.
- 4.15 Evidence also suggests that more can be done to improve the knowledge of council staff about Safe System approach principles and the importance of road safety in their local areas. The Committee also notes suggestions that local councillors could be provided with assistance in this area. We strongly encourage TfNSW to examine better ways to ensure council staff, particularly engineering staff, are more aware of Safe System approach principles, and understand how important road safety is to the work of a local council.

#### Heavy vehicle related infrastructure

##### Fatigue management and rest areas

- 4.16 The National Road Transport Association (NatRoad) told the Committee that suitable road infrastructure, including rest areas for heavy vehicles, is a critical component of enhancing heavy vehicle safety outcomes. NatRoad submitted that it was vital that all roads, including local roads, are upgraded for the expected increase in freight over the next decade.<sup>174</sup>
- 4.17 Natroad was particularly concerned about the lack of heavy vehicle rest areas on local, state and federal roads. Also of concern was these facilities, when built, are often overcrowded by recreational vehicles such as campervans and caravans.<sup>175</sup>

<sup>174</sup> [Submission 4](#), National Road Transport Association, p. 5.

<sup>175</sup> Mr Warren Clark, Chief Executive Officer, National Road Transport Association, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 16.

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- 4.18 Mr Warren Clark, Chief Executive Officer, NatRoad, told the Committee that council willingness to provide rest facilities had been mixed, with some opposed to trucks parking within their borders. Others could see the value and the money that having somewhere to stop brings to a town. Mr Clark indicated he would like to see more engagement with rural towns and the provision of proper facilities where drivers can pull up and safely take their required breaks.<sup>176</sup>
- 4.19 At the public hearing, Mr Sal Petrocchio, Chief Executive Officer of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, told the Committee that a tiered approach to rest areas is something that his agency is going to urge state agencies to consider as part of broader transport planning requirements. Mr Petrocchio echoed the sentiments expressed by NatRoad that more quality rest stops were need for heavy vehicle drivers.<sup>177</sup>
- 4.20 BusNSW agreed that rest areas have an important role to play in managing driver fatigue. The provision of rest areas with adequate lighting, shelters and toilets allows all road users to take breaks, helping to avoid fatigue-related accidents.<sup>178</sup>

**Access issues for heavy vehicles on local roads**

- 4.21 There are two broad types of heavy vehicles: general access which can access almost the entire road network and restricted access vehicles that require a permit issued by road managers such as state and local governments to use certain roads or enter specific areas. When approving a request for access to a local road or rest area, road managers need to consider whether the road infrastructure or area is suitable for heavy vehicles. Road managers also need to consider reasonable community expectations, including concerns about the safety risk posed by large vehicles and increased congestion.<sup>179</sup>
- 4.22 Several councils provided the Committee with examples of how they regulate heavy vehicle restrictions on their local roads.<sup>180</sup>
- 4.23 In its submission, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) told the Committee that a core part of the NHVR's work is with road managers in assisting them to provide consent for Performance-Based Standard (PBS) heavy vehicle access to the local road network and ensuring that access is safe for the community.<sup>181</sup>

<sup>176</sup> Mr Warren Clark, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 16.

<sup>177</sup> Mr Sal Petrocchio, Chief Executive Officer, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2021, p. 22.

<sup>178</sup> [Submission 32](#), BusNSW, p. 2.

<sup>179</sup> Productivity Commission Inquiry Report, [National Transport Regulatory Reform](#), 'Heavy vehicle access decisions by road managers', Report No. 94, Australian Government, 7 April 2020, p. 196, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>180</sup> For example, [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 4; [Submission 26](#), Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Snowy Valleys Council and NSW Police: Snowy Valleys Sector, p. 5.

<sup>181</sup> [Submission 20](#), National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, pp. 2, 3. Performance-Based Standard vehicles are designed to perform their tasks as productively, safely and sustainably as possible, and to operate on networks that are appropriate for their level of performance. PBS vehicles are tested against 16 stringent safety standards and 4 infrastructure standards to ensure they fit the existing road network and are safe. The scheme has been in operation since October 2007. & National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, [Performance-Based Standards \(PBS\)](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.



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- 4.24 Natroad suggested that all road designs, building and other infrastructure upgrades should be required to take into account heavy vehicle considerations such as access and room to manoeuvre for large combinations.<sup>182</sup>
- 4.25 NatRoad also suggested that education about sharing the road with heavy vehicles be incorporated into training courses for learner drivers. Better coordination between the government and the industry in terms of safety campaigns would also lead to better outcomes for road users.<sup>183</sup>

#### Bus infrastructure on local roads

- 4.26 BusNSW told the Committee that there is often little acknowledgement among councils of the role that buses play within their local communities. Engagement of local bus operators on local road safety issues also varied widely between councils.
- 4.27 Particular areas of concern included competition for space on local roads and little compliance with school zone speed limits. BusNSW also submitted that there was a need for a mandatory requirement in the Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines that local bus operators be consulted when changes to roads are being planned, and for an audit to be undertaken of all bus stops on local roads to determine where a safety upgrade is needed.<sup>184</sup>

#### Committee comment

##### Recommendation 13

**That the NSW Government work with local councils to review the need for additional rest areas on the road network, and, where necessary, upgrade existing rest areas to provide separate parking for heavy vehicles, or install additional rest areas.**

- 4.28 The Committee considers the provision of suitable rest areas for heavy vehicle drivers an essential tool in managing fatigue, particularly in rural and remote areas. The Committee also strongly feels that rest areas are important for drivers of other vehicle types too, and that more can be done to ensure all drivers have access to sufficient rest areas.
- 4.29 The Committee also believes that there are safety benefits in providing separate parking areas for heavy vehicles.
- 4.30 The Committee is of the view that it is important for the NSW Government and local councils to engage with representatives of the heavy vehicle industry when planning rest areas. The Committee encourages the participation of heavy vehicle industry representatives in any future review of the number of rest areas provided on the NSW road network.

#### Road infrastructure around schools

- 4.31 In its submission, the NSW Government noted that the Department of Education works with councils through the School Infrastructure NSW (SINSW) program to

<sup>182</sup> [Submission 4](#), National Road Transport Association, p. 5.

<sup>183</sup> Mr Warren Clark, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 20.

<sup>184</sup> [Submission 32](#), BusNSW, pp. 2-3.



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develop and upgrade school and road safety infrastructure, and to deliver infrastructure to allow for a range of student options in travelling safely to and from school.<sup>185</sup>

- 4.32 The NSW Government recently undertook a \$5 million infrastructure Safety Around Schools Program to improve pedestrian safety on local roads around schools. A total of 140 projects were delivered before the end of the 2017-18 financial year, including new fencing, footpath improvements, raised crossings, kerb extensions, pedestrian refuges, new signs and splitter islands at roundabouts. Additional flashing lights for schools with multiple entrances were also provided via the school zone flashing lights program.<sup>186</sup>
- 4.33 Some stakeholders expressed concerns that schools are often built or enlarged without consideration of road safety issues. These issues include providing on-site parking for school staff, safe access for parents and students in the form of 'kiss and drop' zones, and school bus stops, and other efforts to prevent road congestion around schools during drop-off and pick-up times.<sup>187</sup>

**Committee comment**

**Recommendation 14**

**That the NSW Government explore ways to better work with local councils and communities when planning and installing road safety infrastructure around schools.**

- 4.34 The Committee last examined the issue of safety around school zones in its 2011 inquiry into school zone safety. At that time, the Committee found that there was still room for improvement in the way school zones are managed. It made a series of recommendations to improve the use of road safety infrastructure and treatment selection, to enhance road safety education programs and to better target road safety messages.<sup>188</sup>
- 4.35 While some of the issues identified by the Committee in the 2011 report have been addressed by the NSW Government, evidence presented to this inquiry indicates that problems still exist. The Committee recommends that the Government ensure that local councils and communities are adequately consulted when road safety infrastructure is planned or installed around schools. Consideration of potential road safety impacts should be prioritised at the planning stage of any new school facility.

<sup>185</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 47.

<sup>186</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, Schools, [Keeping our students safe](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>187</sup> For example, Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 15; [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 3; [Submission 17](#), Federation of Parents and Citizens Association of NSW, pp. 2-4.

<sup>188</sup> Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety (Staysafe), [Inquiry into School Zone Safety](#), 'Chair's Foreword', Report 1/55, Parliament of New South Wales, March 2012, p. v, viewed 15 June 2021.

## Chapter Five – Local Government Road Safety Program

- 5.1 The Local Government Road Safety Program (LGRSP) is a partnership between Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and 80 participating councils. Starting in 1992, the program forms a significant part of the support the NSW Government provides to local councils to assist with safety on local roads.
- 5.2 The Committee received a significant amount of evidence regarding the LGRSP, particularly the role of road safety officers (RSOs) in councils, whose positions are partly funded by the LGRSP. This chapter examines the LGRSP and the role of RSOs and discusses stakeholder views regarding possible areas for improvement.

### Overview of the program

- 5.3 The LGRSP is managed through a Program Funding Agreement (PFA) between TfNSW and the participating council which sets out the responsibilities of both parties for delivery of the program. Participating councils also develop a three-year Road Safety Action Plan outlining the programs, projects and activities they will deliver to address local road safety issues.
- 5.4 The LGRSP objectives are to:
- raise the profile of road safety within local government areas (LGAs)
  - consult with internal council stakeholders, particularly through the Local Traffic Committee and relevant local businesses, other government agencies and community organisations
  - deliver regional, state and national road safety initiatives within the local context
  - develop, implement and evaluate evidence-based projects aimed at improving road safety in local communities
  - promote, encourage and support the adoption of the Safe System approach to road safety and integrate this within the strategic planning framework for local councils, and
  - facilitate the involvement of local businesses, other government agencies and community groups/clubs in community road safety.<sup>189</sup>
- 5.5 Under the LGRSP guidelines:
- councils can choose to receive up to 50 per cent funding contribution to the salary of a RSO, plus up to a maximum of 35 per cent of on-costs such as award leave conditions. The funding contribution from TfNSW is capped at \$64 600 per annum.
  - RSOs are also provided with an annual funding allocation of \$9500 to deliver road safety campaigns in their local community as well as \$1500 to cover the

<sup>189</sup> NSW Government, Towards Zero, [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), Updated April 2021, Version 2.1, p. 2, viewed 15 June 2021.

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- cost of advertising Graduated Licensing Scheme workshops run by councils, and
- councils choosing not to employ a RSO can apply for individual road safety project funding (a grant) up to 50 per cent of the cost. This can include an human resources component for the cost of personnel to plan and deliver the project.<sup>190</sup>
- 5.6 At the public hearing on 14 August 2020, Mr Bernard Carlon, Executive Director of the Centre for Road Safety, TfNSW, said the NSW Government was investing around \$5.85 million in the LGRSP in the 2020-21 financial year.<sup>191</sup>
- 5.7 According to the submission from the NSW Government, as of 1 January 2020 there were 76 full-time RSOs in NSW. Forty-eight councils did not have a RSO, while 80 had a RSO (full or part-time), with some of these positions shared between councils.<sup>192</sup> Further information about the role of RSOs is outlined below.

## Concerns about the program

### Funding cycle

- 5.8 Broad feedback from local councils and other stakeholders to this inquiry indicated general support for the LGRSP. The Committee was told that the program provides opportunities for councils to form partnerships with various community stakeholders, and benefits can be seen in the successful implementation of road safety behavioural programs across communities.<sup>193</sup>
- 5.9 However, concern was expressed by the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) that the program had not changed in its format or focus since it started, remaining a model for part funding for RSOs in councils that choose to participate.<sup>194</sup>
- 5.10 Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) told the Committee that the requirement to create a three-year Road Safety Action Plan was introduced in 2014 with minimal planning or allowance of lead time to adapt from a one-year to a three-year action plan program. The Council felt that there was little consideration given to how the new three-year action plan would link with a council's existing integrated planning, and after six years, this was still the case. QPRC also stated that minimal guidance is provided to RSOs by TfNSW on how the required three-year action plan can link with a council's Road Safety Strategic Plan (if the council has one).<sup>195</sup>
- 5.11 Local Government NSW (LGNSW) told the Committee that LGRSP had helped raise the profile of road safety in many areas but that 'feedback from our councils indicates that these RSOs are underfunded. Because of this they are unable to make a significant impact on road safety outcomes.'

<sup>190</sup> [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), p. 8; Submission 17, [Local Government NSW](#), p. 8.

<sup>191</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, Executive Director, Centre for Road Safety & Maritime Safety, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 44.

<sup>192</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 39.

<sup>193</sup> [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 4; [Submission 28](#), Wingecarribee Council, pp. 3-4.

<sup>194</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 5.

<sup>195</sup> [Submission 9](#), Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, p. 5.

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- 5.12 LGNSW supported a review to the program to properly fund and appoint RSOs for a three-year period. LGNSW suggested this would foster the development of long-term road safety outcomes and culture. LGNSW supported an increase to the LGRSP funding allocation to help councils better contribute to the Safe People pillar of the Safe System approach.<sup>196</sup>
- 5.13 LGNSW added that some councils had applied for a RSO under the program but had not received approval from TfNSW. In other cases, councils had inadequate resources to prepare and submit an application for an RSO position, and others could not afford to fund 50 per cent of the RSO's annual salary.<sup>197</sup>
- 5.14 IPWEA (NSW) recommended that the NSW Government increase its support for the LGRSP, and that the program be developed as a genuine two-way collaboration between local government and RSOs.<sup>198</sup>
- 5.15 Other stakeholders expressed similar views, for example:
- positive and proactive road safety work is happening at local government level delivered through LGRSP RSOs. However, councils are often under-resourced to deliver road safety campaigns that significantly impact road users. This work could be extended and improved with additional funding and resources being made available to councils.<sup>199</sup>
  - increased funding for the program would allow councils to continue working with local communities to address safety on local streets and provide greater penetration of community behavioural programs.<sup>200</sup>
  - while the program is effective in reducing trauma on local streets, it needs to be maintained. Funding needs to be increased to address the road safety challenges and the complexity and importance of the road user interactions. Additional programs, such as focusing on behaviour change, need to be initiated.<sup>201</sup>
- 5.16 According to the LGRSP guidelines, from July 2021 it is proposed that PFAs be issued to councils every four years to give greater certainty and ensure road safety goals can be integrated into councils' four-year strategic planning and budget cycles. To begin this transition, councils were offered new PFAs in December 2018 covering the financial years 2019-20 and 2020-21 to align with current cycles and the NSW Road Safety Plan 2021.<sup>202</sup>
- 5.17 During the public hearing, Mr Carlon from the Centre for Road Safety also told the Committee that the LGRSP funding arrangements were now being aligned to a longer-term framework by gradually extending the life of individual projects over one, two and three years. Mr Carlon suggested this would give councils certainty to design and implement projects over a longer timeframe.<sup>203</sup>

<sup>196</sup> Cr Linda Scott, President, Local Government NSW, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 35.

<sup>197</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW p. 9; Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 35.

<sup>198</sup> [Submission 11](#), Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW), p. 5.

<sup>199</sup> [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 4.

<sup>200</sup> For example, [Submission 3](#), City of Sydney, pp. 4-5; [Submission 24](#), Wollongong City Council, p. 4.

<sup>201</sup> [Submission 3](#), City of Sydney, pp. 4-5

<sup>202</sup> [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), p. 9.

<sup>203</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 44.

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- 5.18 At the public hearing, Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, ARRB, said he reviewed the program when he joined ARRB to identify potential areas for change and improvement. That review found that:

While there are many good examples of community-focused work considering important road safety messages to change community attitudes and inform them about their contribution to road safety, only some councils have adopted elements of road safety into their organisation and embedded them as business as usual.<sup>204</sup>

**Committee comment****Recommendation 15**

**That the NSW Government conduct a review of the objectives, funding levels, guidelines and duration of the Local Government Road Safety Program.**

- 5.19 A common theme in evidence presented to this inquiry is that while the LGRSP is a valuable road safety program, it is underfunded and inadequately supported by TfNSW. We heard that a review into whether the program's level of funding meets the expectations of stakeholders and provides value-for-money is required. The Committee supports this view.
- 5.20 The Committee believes that the LGRSP is a useful program which has had success in reducing trauma on local roads. However, we agree with those stakeholders who stated that as the LGRSP has not been reviewed for several years, it may no longer be meeting the current needs of local government.
- 5.21 The Committee recommends that a thorough review of the program should be conducted, to assess whether the program still meets the needs of local councils and communities and to identify areas for improvement.

**Program limitations**

- 5.22 The guidelines for the LGRSP outline partner roles, funding, developing and reviewing Road Safety Action Plans, developing project applications, reporting requirements, project areas, advertising, sponsorships and road safety resources and merchandise.
- 5.23 Ms Fiona Frost, RSO, Blacktown City Council said that Blacktown had been part of the LGRSP process for over 20 years, with good and bad experiences. The good aspects were the opportunities to work with the community to provide projects that were specifically targeted to their community.
- 5.24 However, Ms Frost indicated that strict limitations imposed by the LGRSP guidelines hindered what councils could do with funding and how LGRSP projects could be formed. There were also limitations on advertising and on the ability of councils to adapt artwork provided by TfNSW to suit the local community.<sup>205</sup> Ms Frost indicated that there was a significant workload for one RSO at her council,

<sup>204</sup> Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, pp. [7-8](#).

<sup>205</sup> Ms Fiona Frost, Road Safety Officer, Blacktown City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. [15](#).



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and that an additional RSO to work alongside her would be beneficial, as the council area has both a large multicultural population and 142 schools.<sup>206</sup>

- 5.25 We also heard comments from other stakeholders who indicated that the administration of the LGRSP by TfNSW could be improved. For example, Mr Ben Howard, Acting Chair, Transport Technical Committee, Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO), told the Committee most road safety officers in their area look after a couple of councils. Where the strains are is the consistency in the administration of the whole LGRSP program, and how it is administered by TfNSW in each individual council area. Some refocusing is needed as there are inconsistencies between councils as to which projects receive funding.<sup>207</sup>
- 5.26 Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC) were concerned that the disproportionate amount of administration required to process and acquit small grant applications under the LGRSP makes them unattractive.<sup>208</sup>
- 5.27 Although LMCC does not participate in the LGRSP, they had been successful in seeking funding under the NSW Government's Walking and Cycling Program. They suggested that LGRSP guidelines be changed to include funding for footpaths. Improvements to administrative processes could also be beneficial as the current program has councils competing not only with each other but also against TfNSW.<sup>209</sup>

### Program uptake

- 5.28 A significant number of NSW councils have chosen not to employ an RSO. We heard that 48 councils had chosen to fund road safety projects rather than employ a RSO, and that other councils had opted to fund projects under the NSW Government Safer Roads Program.<sup>210</sup>
- 5.29 The Committee heard that current LGRSP funding arrangements could make it difficult to fill an RSO position if the occupant left before the end of the contract period. Ms Frost told the Committee that a longer-term funding commitment would be welcomed.<sup>211</sup>
- 5.30 Mr Heinz Kausche, Executive Director, Infrastructure, Snowy Valleys Council told the Committee that the arrangement between TfNSW, Snowy Valleys Council and Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council was appreciated. However, finding funding for initiatives that come out of the shared arrangement was difficult.<sup>212</sup>
- 5.31 The Committee asked Mr Carlon whether there was any data that could indicate whether road safety outcomes differ between councils that do and do not participate in the LGRSP. Mr Carlon replied that, the effort of local councils is not necessarily driven by having a RSO and those who do not are still securing

<sup>206</sup> Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 15.

<sup>207</sup> Mr Ben Howard, Acting Chair, Transport Technical Committee, Central NSW Joint Organisation & Director, Works and Services, Parkes Shire Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 51.

<sup>208</sup> Mr David Hughes, Director Built and Natural Assets, Lake Macquarie City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 12.

<sup>209</sup> [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 5.

<sup>210</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 44.

<sup>211</sup> Ms Fiona Frost, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 14.

<sup>212</sup> Mr Heinz Kausche, Executive Director, Infrastructure, Snowy Valleys Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 4.



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significant funding in terms of local programs that are being delivered through the Safer Roads Program. Mr Carlon went on to say:

In 2015 we had around \$15 million which was being allocated in that Safer Roads Program to local councils. This year that will be \$68.2 million. We are providing resources to local government. Whether that is coordinated through RSOs, through their engineering services department or their planning department, there are councils that do have a strong commitment to the integration of road safety within their planning and the delivery of programs for their local community.<sup>213</sup>

- 5.32 LMCC is an example of a council which has chosen not to employ a RSO under the program. LMCC told the Committee that they had chosen not to have an officer because they believed it would be better to develop a regional network strategy. Mr Brendan Callander, Acting Manager Asset Management at LMCC, explained that:

We have chosen not to participate in having a road safety officer. That is on the basis that we believe it would be better served for a road safety officer to sit across the joint organisation of councils, and actually do that on a regional basis, to provide a strategic focus for us as a holistic network. We utilise our existing staff to undertake parts of the process of a road safety officer. At our council, being quite a large council, we do not believe one person can undertake that role holistically for us.<sup>214</sup>

- 5.33 Mr David Hughes, Director, Built and Natural Assets at LMCC, suggested that a RSO position would be better shared across the Hunter region to help prepare regionally consistent Road Safety Action Plans in partnership with councils.<sup>215</sup>
- 5.34 Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC) and Snowy Valleys Council share one RSO, who is half employed by TfNSW and a quarter by the two councils each. Mr Matt Stubbs, Manager, Technical Services at CGRC, told the Committee that in a typical week, the shared RSO for the two councils spends between 10 and 12 hours travelling over a distance of around 850 kilometres, spending one day in Gundagai, one day in Cootamundra, and then two days with Snowy Valleys Council. This sharing arrangement had implications for the amount of time the RSO could focus on one council.<sup>216</sup>
- 5.35 Mr Howard told the Committee that the Parkes Council RSO also looks after three councils, and that most RSOs within their district also look after a couple of councils. Mr Howard said that sharing RSOs across councils results in the consistent delivery of road safety programs.<sup>217</sup>
- 5.36 When asked how the recent round of council amalgamations had impacted on the number of RSOs in their area, Northern Beaches Council advised the Committee that the three merged councils (Pittwater, Manly and Warringah) originally had one RSO each. Following their amalgamation into the Northern Beaches Council,

<sup>213</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 44.

<sup>214</sup> Mr Brendan Callander, Acting Manager Asset Management, Lake Macquarie City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 12.

<sup>215</sup> Mr Brendan Callander, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 12.

<sup>216</sup> Mr Anthony Carroll, Road Safety Officer, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Snowy Valleys Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 4.

<sup>217</sup> Mr Ben Howard, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 51.

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one position was lost, together with the associated funding, even though the amalgamated council serviced the same local area.<sup>218</sup>

**Committee comment****Recommendation 16**

**That the NSW Government consider funding specific road safety officer roles for local government joint organisations under the Local Government Road Safety Program, in addition to the funding available to each council for a road safety officer.**

**Recommendation 17**

**That the NSW Government consider addressing different local government area sizes and populations in future revisions of the Local Government Road Safety Program, to ensure councils with larger populations and areas are supported by an adequate number of road safety officers.**

- 5.37 While the LGRSP has a positive impact on local road safety, we heard concerns that limitations imposed by the LGRSP guidelines can prevent councils from addressing priority road safety issues in their local communities. Concerns about a lack of consistency in the administration of the LGRSP and the disproportionate amount of administration required by councils for applications were also raised.
- 5.38 The Committee believes that a review of all elements of the LGRSP is a worthwhile exercise. It is clear from evidence presented to this inquiry that some councils prefer to use other road safety programs rather than the LGRSP, as these may better suit their local areas' needs.
- 5.39 The Committee is concerned that some councils may not participate in the LGRSP due to the cost of co-funding a RSO, or due to other administrative issues.
- 5.40 The Committee is of the view that there is a need to better align road safety programs across neighbouring councils. We are aware that some groups of councils jointly use an RSO to assist each council within their area, and consider that this can be a practical use of resources that can benefit smaller councils that may find it difficult to match the RSO 50/50 funding requirement.
- 5.41 The Committee encourages the NSW Government to support each joint organisation to employ a RSO. The Committee considers that the provision of dedicated regional RSOs would assist with cross-boundary road safety issues and projects that impact multiple councils within a region. While the LGRSP guidelines currently provide that groups of councils can join together to seek funding for a RSO, the Committee considers that these regional joint organisation RSO roles should be additional to the RSO positions that councils can already apply for.
- 5.42 The Committee also considers that some councils with very large populations and/or geographical areas can benefit from having more than one RSO. The Committee considers that TfNSW should ensure it assesses the size of LGAs (and

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<sup>218</sup> Ms Robynann Dixon, Road Safety Officer, Northern Beaches Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 33.

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their populations) when revising the LGRSP to ensure that there are adequate RSOs available for larger size councils.

**Role and function of road safety officers**

5.43 The LGRSP guidelines define the RSO role as to:

- plan, develop and implement evidence based local road safety projects as agreed with TfNSW and using the LGRSP database
- ensure project objectives are clear and can be evaluated to determine road safety outputs and outcomes
- support state-wide strategies and programs, as appropriate, to deliver road safety project activities to local communities
- submit Road Safety Action Plans through the LGRSP database for TfNSW approval
- demonstrate financial and in-kind contributions to projects
- report against project milestones, and
- report regularly on all projects/activities in the Action Plan.<sup>219</sup>

5.44 A standard role description for a RSO is also included in a council's Program Funding Agreement with TfNSW which sets the employment framework. The duties must also be developed in consultation with, and approved by, TfNSW. Councils are required to ensure that RSOs have suitable skills and experience to undertake the role.<sup>220</sup>

5.45 The ARRB told the Committee that RSOs funded under the LGRSP are typically employed as frontline staff rather than at management levels. ARRB indicated that their focus is generally on community education and awareness campaigns, with internal engagement determined by the support and commitment of each council. ARRB submitted that:

...RSOs are significantly constrained, although it does occur, in their ability to influence a Council's strategic planning process to embed road safety into its core business activity, or to shape the delivery of infrastructure programs, council policy, development control plans, development consent conditioning.<sup>221</sup>

**Lack of formal training and networking opportunities for road safety officers**

5.46 In its submission, the NSW Government stated that responding to local road safety issues requires council planners and practitioners to have a thorough understanding of the Safe System approach, the links between its pillars, and the range of road safety interventions available under them.<sup>222</sup>

5.47 The Committee heard concerns that councils do not always fully understand the Safe System approach, and that better training is required for councillors, planning staff and RSOs.

5.48 Mr Howard told the Committee that his Council has been involved in the LGRSP for about 18 years and that their direct day-to-day relationship with TfNSW was very

<sup>219</sup> [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), pp. 7-8, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>214</sup> [Local Government Road Safety Program Guidelines](#), pp. 7-8, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>221</sup> [Submission 33](#), Australian Road Research Board, p. 6.

<sup>222</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 30.

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good. Mr Howard indicated that the lack of formal training or formal qualifications for RSOs was an issue of concern, as it takes about 12 months to recruit and train an RSO to the point where they have a full understanding of their role and the program. Mr Howard said that training support was previously provided by TfNSW (including training and field trips for RSOs) but that this had not been offered for many years.<sup>223</sup>

- 5.49 Mr Anthony Carroll, RSO with Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council and Snowy Valleys Council told the Committee that he had been working in his role for 18 months and was still learning how the Local Traffic Committee worked and who the TfNSW contacts were. Mr Carroll felt that training was also needed on how to work with all stakeholders and access support and resources.<sup>224</sup>
- 5.50 Local Government NSW (LGNSW) said that their organisation was always trying to think of new ways to ensure councils have appropriate budgets for induction and training of staff, and for professional development. LGNSW works with the Australian Local Government Association to provide conferences that staff can attend and could work more closely with RSOs to support them and their professional development.<sup>225</sup>
- 5.51 LGNSW also submitted that RSOs must be included in the decision making processes with the Centre for Road Safety (CRS) at the strategic planning level. LGNSW advocated that the CRS should closely consult with councils and RSOs through information sessions and/or workshops to ascertain and understand where and how best to encourage a more strategic approach to road safety. LGNSW suggested that the feedback from these information sessions would assist TfNSW develop tailored workshops designed to support the development of road safety management systems or improvements that could be made to existing plans.<sup>226</sup>
- 5.52 QPRC told the Committee that, following amalgamation, their RSO position was placed in their design team working with road designers, engineers and town planners to implement road safety treatments in early phases of projects. QPRC believes that there are more areas within council that could benefit by including road safety earlier into processes. This would see road safety ingrained in standard operating procedures and enhance community road safety outcomes.<sup>227</sup>
- 5.53 The Committee asked Mr Carlon whether TfNSW had received feedback that RSOs should be appointed for longer periods. Mr Carlon replied that under the Road Safety Plan 2021, three-year contracts were now issued, where it had previously been annually.<sup>228</sup>

<sup>223</sup> Mr Ben Howard, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 53.

<sup>224</sup> Mr Anthony Carroll, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 6.

<sup>225</sup> Cr Linda Scott, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 38.

<sup>226</sup> [Submission 23](#), Local Government NSW p. 8.

<sup>227</sup> [Submission 9](#), Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, p. 9.

<sup>228</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 46.

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#### Committee comment

#### Recommendation 18

**That Transport for NSW review the induction, training, and ongoing support opportunities provided to road safety officers, and examine ways to improve networking between road safety officers across NSW.**

- 5.54 We consider that RSOs are an extremely useful and valuable resource that can be used by local councils when planning their road safety strategies and in improving local road safety. Because of their experience with the LGRSP, RSOs can also make a vital contribution to road safety infrastructure planning and to the work of local traffic committees. They represent an important link between the local community and the council.
- 5.55 From the evidence presented it is clear that councils who currently employ RSOs are concerned about the short duration of their appointment. While the Committee heard that, three-year contracts were now being issued under the Road Safety Plan 2021 for RSOs, the Committee also heard that RSOs were being placed on much shorter contracts. A real concern expressed during the inquiry was that RSOs lacked adequate job security and often underappreciated by TfNSW or by their own council.
- 5.56 It is also clear that improvement is needed in the day-to-day communications between TfNSW and RSOs, particularly about road safety campaigns and changes to road rules. It is essential that this information is provided in a timelier manner.
- 5.57 We heard that there are concerns about the need for an improved training program and better networking opportunities for RSOs. Stakeholders clearly felt that RSOs would particularly benefit from training in the preparation and implementation of action plans.
- 5.58 The Committee was told that an induction course for newly appointed RSOs previously existed, but that this had been discontinued. The Committee considers that RSOs across NSW would benefit from the reinstatement of this type of training course.<sup>229</sup>
- 5.59 The Committee also considers that while it appears that an informal network exists, where experienced RSOs mentor new appointees, a more coordinated and improved state-wide network of RSOs would greatly enhance the delivery of the LGRSP. It would also allow better collaboration and information sharing between officers who perform very similar roles. Advances in tele and video conferencing communication, and their more regular use since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, would make such a state-wide network easier for TfNSW to coordinate.
- 5.60 The Committee found that community engagement is important to improving road safety, and that this is particularly important regarding local roads managed by councils. The LGRSP provides opportunities for direct engagement with the community, either through initiatives run by RSOs or through other means by councils.

<sup>229</sup> Issue was raised during the Committee's informal roundtable discussion with road safety officers from a number of local councils that was held on 31 July 2020.



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- 5.61 The Committee strongly encourages TfNSW and councils across the state to support their RSOs to a greater degree, particularly in relation to their community engagement efforts. RSOs are a readymade resource for councils to engage their local communities, and for these officers to fulfil this role effectively, they need to be well resourced and supported.

## Chapter Six – Speed zones and vulnerable users on local roads

- 6.1 Local roads are places where different road users frequently mix. According to the NSW Government, over 1.1 billion trips a year in NSW are made on foot or by bicycle, including around 600 million trips associated with a public transport journey. Over a million people in NSW ride a bike at least once a week (13 per cent of the population) and 2.6 million people ride a bike at least once a year.<sup>230</sup>
- 6.2 Pedestrians and cyclists are considered vulnerable road users, as they have little or no protection in the event of a collision. Motorcyclists are also considered vulnerable, as their risk of being killed or seriously injured is higher in comparison to occupants of other vehicles.<sup>231</sup>
- 6.3 Pedestrians comprise 17 per cent of NSW fatalities and 9 per cent of all serious injuries, while cyclists comprise 16 per cent of all serious injuries. Most of these casualties occur on urban streets.<sup>232</sup>

### Speeding on local roads – local community impact

- 6.4 The NSW Government submission stated that speed is a factor in a large number of fatalities on local roads:
- Excessive or inappropriate speed is a factor in 44 per cent of fatalities on Local and Regional roads. This is higher than for fatalities on State roads (37 per cent).
- The incidence is higher for country Local and Regional Roads (50.5 per cent) than for metropolitan Local and Regional Roads (31 per cent) of excessive or inappropriate speed.<sup>233</sup>
- 6.5 The Safe System approach indicates that local and regional roads require lower speeds if vulnerable road users are to survive a collision. An evaluation of 40 km/h zones by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) found there was a 100 per cent reduction in fatal crashes in high pedestrian areas, when it compared the five years before and after the introduction of permanent 40 km/h zones between 2002 and 2015. There was also 50 per cent reduction in fatal crashes in other permanent 40 km/h zones.<sup>234</sup>
- 6.6 Depending on the road user mix, traffic volumes and safety infrastructure in the road environment, speed limit setting is one option to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on local and regional roads.<sup>235</sup>

<sup>230</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, [Walking and Cycling](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>231</sup> National Road Safety Strategy, [Motorcyclist safety](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>232</sup> NSW Government, Towards Zero, [Road Safety Plan 2021](#), 'Liveable and safe urban communities', p. 14, viewed 15 June 2021.

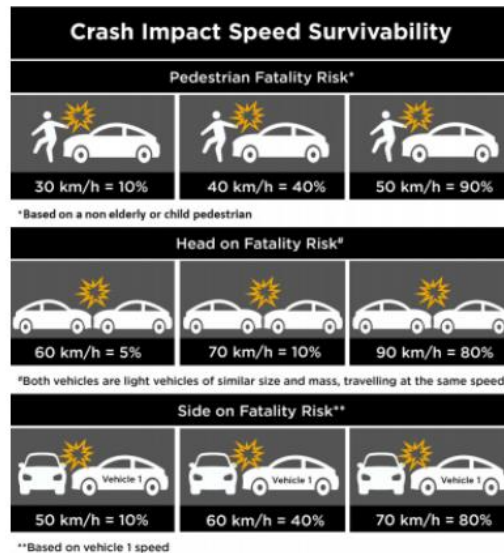
<sup>233</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 26.

<sup>234</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 10.

<sup>235</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 10.

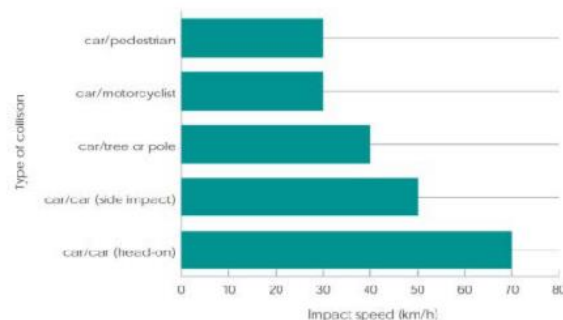
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Figure 3: Crash Impact Speed Survivability<sup>236</sup>



6.7 **Figure 3** above from the NSW Government shows that the speed a vehicle is travelling will impact the possibility of a crash occurring and the intensity of injuries if the crash occurs. **Figure 4** below shows the survivable impact speeds for different types of collisions.

Figure 4: Survivable Impact speeds for different crash scenarios (NRSS, 2011)<sup>237</sup>



6.8 The Amy Gillett Foundation also noted that higher speeds result in greater rates of injury and potentially death. The Foundation said the correlation between speed and survivability is already known in terms of the National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) and was explicitly included in the NRSS 2011. Lower impact speeds will result in a reduction in death and injury for pedestrians and cyclists.<sup>238</sup>

<sup>236</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 10.

<sup>237</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 10.

<sup>238</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 10.

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### Use of lower speed zones in urban mixed road user areas

- 6.9 One clear way to improve road safety for vulnerable users (particularly pedestrians and cyclists) is to use lower speed zones in high mix use areas.
- 6.10 Mosman Council submitted:
- One of the most important aspects of road safety is lower speeds. Speeds must be managed so that road users are not exposed to impact forces beyond their physical tolerance.
- ...Installing lower speed areas either 40km/h speed zones or 10km/h Shared Zones where there are high pedestrian movements e.g. shopping precincts.<sup>239</sup>
- 6.11 The City of Sydney told the Committee that currently about 55 per cent of the City's local streets are 40 km/h, and the City has a target to introduce 40 km/h speed limits to all of their local streets within the next five years. The primary challenge to this is the cost of building physical treatments that help drivers to drive at these lower speeds.
- 6.12 The City added that they support more flexibility for councils to apply 40 km/h limits on local streets. The City would also like to see greater consideration given to setting speed limits to balance the *safety and movement and place* qualities of an area. This would include speed limits lower than 40 km/h in some centres.<sup>240</sup>
- 6.13 At the public hearing, Mr Peter Warrington, Transport Manager for the City of Sydney, advised that a recently introduced 20 km/h speed limit on George Street in the Sydney CBD was working well:
- It seems to be working really well just because it is such a shared and unique environment of trucks accessing loading docks, people walking through there, people milling around, and then the light rail coming through at fairly regular intervals.
- It is understood that the low travel speed creates a safe and reasonably efficient environment given the land use and the place changes we are trying to achieve there.<sup>241</sup>
- 6.14 The Committee also heard about the value of a recently introduced 30 km/h speed limit in the Manly Beach area. This road area is shared by a mix of cars, significant numbers of pedestrians (including overseas tourists), and cyclists.<sup>242</sup> Northern Beaches Council reported there was some initial pushback to the speed limit change from residents, but they later felt it had improved road safety.<sup>243</sup>
- 6.15 Northern Beaches Council told the Committee they are developing a framework that will set speed limits on local roads based on the function of those roads within the network. The goal would be for the majority of local roads to move to a 40 km/h speed limit, with residential streets and other areas of high pedestrian traffic given a 30 km/h speed limit to enhance the safety of local streets. Roads that

<sup>239</sup> [Submission 30](#), Mosman Council, p. 2.

<sup>240</sup> [Submission 3](#), City of Sydney, p. 1.

<sup>241</sup> Mr Peter Warrington, Transport Manager, City of Sydney, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 24.

<sup>242</sup> Mr Philip Devon, Manager, Transport Network, and Mr Craig Sawyer, Executive Manager, Transport and Civil Infrastructure, Northern Beaches Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, pp. 31-32.

<sup>243</sup> Mr Philip Devon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 32.

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perform a local distribution and movement function would have a speed limit of 40 km/h, and sub-arterial roads would have a speed limit of 50 km/h. The focus would be more on the amenity rather than the rapid movement of vehicles along the road.

- 6.16 The Council also indicated that the speed zone determination process needs to be streamlined to allow the Roads Authority to be more responsive to the community in determining the local speed limits.<sup>244</sup>
- 6.17 Lake Macquarie City Council (LMCC) submitted that councils should be able to make determinations regarding speed limit changes on local roads, particularly in areas of high-pedestrian activity. LMCC said that alternatively, TfNSW could investigate business improvement initiatives to streamline investigation processes, simplify assessment criteria and quicken the processing of requests to lower speed limits. LMCC said that research continues to highlight the benefits of 40 km/h and 30 km/h speed limits (and associated road design), particularly in urban-residential areas.<sup>245</sup> Mr David Hughes, Director Built and Natural Assets at LMCC, stated:
- We know that reducing speed limits has little impact on journey times on local roads, but it can be the difference between life and death. Yet this is an area in which local government is hamstrung, needing the leadership and support of the New South Wales Government and some streamlined processes to be more effective.<sup>246</sup>
- 6.18 Penrith City Council said that it welcomes the expansion of lower speed limits in high pedestrian areas including city and town centres as well as around hospital precincts and schools.<sup>247</sup>
- 6.19 Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales, noted in their submission that reducing speed limits can significantly reduce accidents involving vulnerable road users provided adequate changes to road design and traffic calming measures are put in place. They also noted that such measures have only a marginal impact on traffic flow.<sup>248</sup>
- 6.20 The National Motorists Association Australia (NMAA) noted potential unintended negative consequences that could arise from reduced speed limits. For example, the perception of lower danger leads to risky behaviour when crossing a road.
- 6.21 The NMAA added that reducing limits on rural roads to below normal driver expectations induces boredom and fatigue, momentary sleep and inattention. The NMAA recommended that:
- speed limits be set in accordance with the principle that the safest speed is that at which 85 per cent of unrestricted cars drive at or below with due regard to speedometer accuracy, and

<sup>244</sup> [Submission 35](#), Northern Beaches Council, p. 2.

<sup>245</sup> [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 4.

<sup>246</sup> Mr David Hughes, Director Built and Natural Assets, Lake Macquarie City Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 10.

<sup>247</sup> [Submission 22](#), Penrith City Council, p. 4.

<sup>248</sup> [Submission 12](#), Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales, p. 5.



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- the minister responsible for road safety should appoint an external advisory body free of academic or public sector personnel. This body should include those with road user experience such as the NRMA, the NMAA and a legal practice with wide experience in road crash compensation matters.<sup>249</sup>
- 6.22 The Pedestrian Council of Australia (PCA) identified the introduction of 30 km/h zones in areas of high pedestrian activity as an action that had significant potential to reduce deaths and injuries for vulnerable road users.<sup>250</sup> Mr Harold Scruby, Chairman and CEO of PCA, told the Committee that most of New Zealand's cities are now 30 km/h, and that internationally, neighbourhood-scale speeds are being introduced with 30 km/h limits.
- 6.23 Mr Scruby described the move to 30 kilometre zones in areas of high pedestrian activity as the number one thing that can be done to save pedestrian lives on local roads:
- In areas of high pedestrian activity, 30 kilometres will be a major lifesaver.
- ...Please make it a recommendation: in all areas of high pedestrian activity, 30 kilometres. That is the number one thing we can do to save pedestrian lives and limbs and improve the access and amenity and community on local roads.<sup>251</sup>
- 6.24 The Amy Gillett Foundation also commented that in several European countries 30km/h zones are seen as an important component to 'liveable' streets where the safety priority is on the vulnerable road users, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as children and seniors. The Foundation identified 15 European countries which had implemented 30 km/h zones, and noted that 11 states in the United States of America had also implemented lower speed zones (20 miles per hour).<sup>252</sup>
- 6.25 WalkSydney submitted that 'if NSW is serious about the target of zero, reduced speeds are needed, supported by better use of traffic signals, more enforcement and street designs which put people first instead of cars'.<sup>253</sup>

**Speed enforcement on local roads**

- 6.26 The PCA commented on the lack of speed camera based enforcement of speed limits on local roads. At the public hearing, Mr Scruby commented that mobile speed cameras could be better used to improve safety on local roads and to reduce speeding on local roads:
- When was the last time you saw someone being booked for speeding in a local street? It does not happen. It is the highway patrol, they are out on the highways. We have got the technology to monitor the local streets. Shove a mobile speed camera in the local streets once in a while and do not tell people.<sup>254</sup>
- 6.27 Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board (ARRB), also commented on speed enforcement on local roads, and community attitudes to speed limits, during his appearance at a public hearing. He

<sup>249</sup> [Submission 10](#), National Motorists Association Australia, p. 10.

<sup>250</sup> [Submission 36](#), Pedestrian Council of Australia, p. 34.

<sup>251</sup> Mr Harold Scruby, Chairman and CEO, Pedestrian Council of Australia, [Transcript of evidence](#), 14 August 2020, p. 31.

<sup>252</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 12.

<sup>253</sup> [Submission 7](#), WalkSydney, p. 2.

<sup>254</sup> Mr Harold Scruby, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 33.

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noted that enforcement is very much about compliance, and there needs to be a fair degree of self-regulation and self-enforcement. His major concern was that the road environment should be appropriate to the speed limit and the design should communicate to the road user what is an appropriate and safe speed.<sup>255</sup>

- 6.28 In November 2020, the NSW Government announced changes to the state's mobile speed camera program, including increased enforcement hours, a reduction in high visibility livery on vehicles, and the removal of warning signs.
- 6.29 The TfNSW website indicates that mobile speed cameras will operate without warning signs with the intention of deterring speeding behaviour and reducing speed-related road trauma across the entire road network. Signage will remain at fixed speed and red light camera sites.<sup>256</sup>

**Committee comment**

**Recommendation 19**

**That Transport for NSW continue to support local councils to introduce 40 and 30 kilometre an hour speed zones in areas of high pedestrian activity.**

**Recommendation 20**

**That Transport for NSW improve its business processes to streamline investigation, simplify assessment criteria and speed up the approval of local government requests to lower speed limits.**

- 6.30 The Committee received strong evidence about the impact of speed on fatalities and casualty rates, particularly on local roads, for all road users.
- 6.31 The work already being done across NSW in relation to the introduction of lower speed zones in high pedestrian areas is welcomed. However the Committee notes the calls for the introduction of 30 km/h zones in areas of very high pedestrian road use, and the example of the introduction of such a zone by the Northern Beaches Council.
- 6.32 The Committee recommends that TfNSW support councils in their efforts to identify areas of high pedestrian road use, and to introduce 30 km/h zones in those areas where appropriate.
- 6.33 The Committee is concerned that the processes for lowering speed limits in urban areas is overly long and complicated. The Committee recommends that TfNSW investigate business improvement initiatives to streamline investigation processes, simplify assessment criteria and quicken the processing of requests to lower speed limits.
- 6.34 Consideration should be given to delegating or authorising local councils to make determinations regarding speed limit changes on urban local roads with areas of

<sup>255</sup> Mr David McTiernan, National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 9.

<sup>256</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Mobile speed cameras FAQs](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

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high-pedestrian activity. Such a delegation of authority would need local councils to demonstrate proposals that meet clear criteria, assessments and standards.

#### Finding 4

**The Staysafe Committee should examine the NSW Speed Zone Guidelines, and the processes impacting speed zone decisions, and the impact of speed zone signage on road safety, in a future inquiry.**

- 6.35 The Committee notes calls for a review of speed zone guidelines, the TfNSW determination process for the establishment of speed zones, and the involvement of councils in the identification of speed zone changes on local roads. It is clear that there is some frustration on the part of local councils regarding their ability to adjust speed zones on roads for which they are responsible. Evidence to the Committee indicated that the process to adjust speed limits can be complex and difficult.
- 6.36 In relation to enforcement, the Committee notes comments by stakeholders about the impact of speed cameras and enforcement of speed limits on road safety. The Committee notes the developments which occurred after the inquiry's public hearings in relation to the increased use of mobile speed cameras, and without warning signs, across NSW.
- 6.37 The Committee considers the use of mobile speed cameras without signage to be a significant development in the management of road safety in NSW.
- 6.38 Given the significance of speed on road safety, and the impact speeding can have on the community, the issue of speeding, particularly the processes by which speed zone decisions are made, should be the subject of a future inquiry by the Committee. This inquiry should also look at the impact of speed camera signage on road safety.

#### Other measures to improve the safety of vulnerable road users

- 6.39 The NSW Government advised the Committee that there are more fatalities among vulnerable road users on local and regional roads compared to state roads:  
  
In comparison with State roads, fatalities on Local and Regional roads are higher among vulnerable road users - motorcyclists (19.5 per cent versus 15.7 per cent), pedestrians (18.6 per cent versus 14.2 per cent) and pedal cyclists (3.6 per cent versus 1.5 per cent).  
  
Males accounted for the over-representation for motorcyclist and pedal cyclist fatalities, and females for the over-representation for pedestrian fatalities.<sup>257</sup>
- 6.40 The NSW Government also advised that casualties on local and regional roads were often people who resided in the same local government area where the incident occurred.  
  
Almost two-thirds (64 per cent) of all serious casualties on Local and Regional roads across NSW resided in the same Council as the crash. For some road user groups,

<sup>257</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. [20](#).

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pedestrians (71 per cent) and pedal cyclists (70 per cent), the percentage was even higher.

In contrast, only 41 per cent of serious casualties on State roads were residents of the Council area where the crash occurred.<sup>258</sup>

**Road user education campaigns and enforcement**

- 6.41 The need to better target road user education and enforcement campaigns was raised by several stakeholders. For example, the City of Sydney recommended that the NSW Government:
- review the current process of targeted enforcement programs, such as the Enhanced Enforcement Program, to ensure they are maximising trauma reduction on local roads, and
  - investigate the 'burden of care' and 'risk liability' legislation to greater protect vulnerable road users in urban areas.
- 6.42 The City also noted that one of the major risks for vulnerable road users on the local street network is drivers speeding. The City considers that enforcement programs such as the Enhanced Enforcement Program should be targeted so that all road users have accountability.
- 6.43 The City also commented that enforcement operations targeting cyclists and pedestrians seem disproportionate. The City called for greater emphasis in Safer People programs (behavioural change, education, enforcement and marketing) to reinforce the risks of even low level offences in these environments. The City also suggested that any campaign could focus on 'the most frequently breached' rules, such as drivers failing to give way to pedestrians when turning.<sup>259</sup>
- 6.44 Dr Marilyn Johnson, Research and Policy Manager, Amy Gillett Foundation, and Senior Researcher, Monash University, Institute of Transport Studies, pointed to the need for 'education and more socially focused cultural campaigns and discussions' regarding road safety, particularly in relation to cyclists. The Amy Gillett Foundation had been engaging regional local communities in Victoria to promote the benefits of cycling and to address areas of hostility towards cyclists.<sup>260</sup>
- 6.45 Bicycle NSW told the Committee that investment was needed in safe, separated infrastructure. This would allow most people to ride from where they live to education, work and community facilities. Bicycle NSW also added that engineered solutions are vital to encourage 'mode shift' and to reduce the chances that a mistake by a road user will lead to trauma or death. They also recommended that TfNSW incentivise alternatives to motor vehicle use and called for further efforts to reduce distracted driving through the mobile phone camera enforcement program.<sup>261</sup>

<sup>258</sup> [Submission 34](#), NSW Government, p. 21.

<sup>259</sup> [Submission 3](#), City of Sydney, p. 4.

<sup>260</sup> Dr Marilyn Johnson, Research and Policy Manager, Amy Gillett Foundation, and Senior Researcher, Monash University, Institute of Transport Studies, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 42.

<sup>261</sup> Ms Bastien Wallace, General Manager of Public Affairs, Bicycle NSW, [Transport of Evidence](#) 7 August 2020, p. 40.

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- 6.46 Northern Beaches Council told the Committee that there are issues with both pedestrian and bicycle safety in their area. The Council would also like to improve available sustainable transport options, particularly the use of bicycles.
- 6.47 The Council also indicated that there had been negative responses to published information about bike riding in the community. They suggested that broad behavioural change is needed before all users are willing to share the road.<sup>262</sup> Ms Robynann Dixon, RSO at the Council, reflected that TfNSW had indicated that measures to encourage safer bike riding has been deemed to be 'too big an issue'. The Council believed that a behavioural change for all road users is needed to address negative responses from the community to bike riding.<sup>263</sup>

**Pedestrian safety**

- 6.48 At a public hearing, Mr Bernard Carlon, Executive Director of the Centre for Road Safety, TfNSW, was questioned about an apparent increase in pedestrian fatalities in 2020 (in the period January to August 2020 there were 12 more pedestrian fatalities compared to the same period in 2019).
- 6.49 Mr Carlon explained that there had been a significant increase in pedestrian activity during the COVID-19 pandemic period. TfNSW was focussing particularly on the older age profile and the measures that need to be implemented both short and long term from an enforcement and design perspective to reduce the risk for pedestrians.<sup>264</sup>
- 6.50 In general terms, pedestrian risk-taking activity around mid-block crossings was evident, as well as alcohol affected pedestrians moving across roads inappropriately. High speed was also a factor at intersections.<sup>265</sup>
- 6.51 The NSW Government's Walking and Cycling Program is focused on these vulnerable road users. Under the program, funding is available to councils and state government agencies for infrastructure, such as segregated bicycle paths and lanes or, where appropriate, shared use paths. The Walking and Cycling Program is designed to:
- ensure walking and cycling are the most convenient option for short trips to key destinations and within centres
  - reduce congestion on roads and public transport networks by delivering projects that encourage walking and cycling mode shift
  - enable efficient, safe and reliable journey times by prioritising infrastructure that supports pedestrian or cycling movement on certain corridors, consistent with the Movement and Place Framework
  - deliver projects that make walking and cycling safe, comfortable and convenient transport modes that are accessible to a wide range of users, and
  - enable positive health, wellbeing, social and environmental outcomes.<sup>266</sup>
- 6.52 BIKEast commented on the Walking and Cycling Program in its submission:

<sup>262</sup> Mr Philip Devon, [Transcript of evidence](#), pp. 29-30.

<sup>263</sup> Ms Robynann Dixon, Road Safety Officer, Northern Beaches Council, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 30.

<sup>264</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, Executive Director, Centre for Road Safety & Maritime Safety, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 49.

<sup>265</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), pp. 49-50.

<sup>266</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, [Walking and Cycling Program](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.



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Currently, funding is allocated on an annual basis via the Walking and Cycling Program – based on annual submission by each local council across NSW. These means that 1 cycleway connection can take years and years to be built, resulting in disconnected paths and infrastructure, forcing people walking and cycling to continue mixing with fast traffic on the road, often in disconnected and confusing points of conflict.<sup>267</sup>

- 6.53 LMCC said that while it had been successful in obtaining funding under the program, their Council would 'welcome changes to the program guidelines to include funding for footpaths and suggest improvements to the administrative processes could also be beneficial.' LMCC also commented that the program involves councils competing with each other and with TfNSW for funding.<sup>268</sup>
- 6.54 Certain pedestrian cohorts can be considered particularly vulnerable, including the elderly, the young, and those who may be physically impaired.<sup>269</sup> The Council on the Ageing NSW (COTA) told the Committee that the length of time to cross at pedestrian crossings, vehicle speed and adequacy of the footpath network are some of the factors that prevent elderly people from walking around their community.<sup>270</sup>
- 6.55 COTA said that the vulnerability of older pedestrians is increased by factors such as visual acuity, physical frailty and reduced mobility. COTA called for a significant community shift to improve pedestrian behaviour in this cohort, and for further research with older pedestrians to develop strategies to encourage behaviour change, particularly when crossing local roads.<sup>271</sup>
- 6.56 BIKEast commented that the development of more accessible road infrastructure is often considered a low priority, or is paused until a road upgrade occurs:

There are strong policies in place to support safe accessibility for vulnerable road users such as the young, the elderly, and people with disabilities. However, these are considered low priority or have to wait until traffic intersection/road upgrades take place. Eg. Missing kerb ramps, long detours that cause fatigue, timings of crossing signals.<sup>272</sup>

#### Cyclist safety

- 6.57 Under NSW road rules, all drivers are required to leave at least one metre between their vehicle and a cyclist when passing them on roads with a 60 km/h speed limit and below. Drivers must leave at least 1.5 metres when passing a cyclist on roads with a speed limit over 60 km/h.<sup>273</sup>
- 6.58 Bicycle NSW submitted that, in every case of a fatality or serious injury involving a motor vehicle colliding with a cyclist, the vehicle was too close to the rider. They also stated that, despite this, enforcement of the minimum passing distance law remains incredibly low, while fines issued to cyclists for not having a helmet or bell

<sup>267</sup> [Submission 8](#), BIKEast, p. 4.

<sup>268</sup> [Submission 21](#), Lake Macquarie City Council, p. 5.

<sup>269</sup> National Road Safety Strategy, [Pedestrian and cyclist safety](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>270</sup> [Submission 2](#), Council on the Ageing (COTA) NSW, p. 1.

<sup>271</sup> [Submission 2](#), COTA NSW, p. 1.

<sup>272</sup> [Submission 8](#), BIKEast, p. 3.

<sup>273</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, FAQs, [Cycling Safety](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

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are very high. Bicycle NSW has repeatedly called for improved driver education and changes to learner driver resources to better reflect the minimum passing law.<sup>274</sup>

- 6.59 At a public hearing, the Committee asked Bicycle NSW for comment about how councils could improve the implementation of road safety measures that decrease the potential injury to cyclists on local roads. Bicycle NSW advised that Parramatta Council, the City of Sydney, and the City of Newcastle were implementing positive road safety project structures, including separated lanes and shared paths. Bicycle NSW indicated that improved physical separation and signage makes cycle ways safe for all users.<sup>275</sup>
- 6.60 The Queensland Government StreetSmarts website includes interactive information for motorists and cyclists on sharing the road, including the laws for when passing cyclists.<sup>276</sup> The NSW Centre for Road Safety website also includes information for drivers about sharing the road with cyclists, under their Go Together campaign.<sup>277</sup>
- 6.61 Mr Carlon also commented on driver awareness of rules about passing cyclists, indicating that driver awareness of the minimum passing distance regarding cyclists had improved. Mr Carlon said that while drivers are making efforts to increase the space given to bicycle riders, 'many bicycle riders still experience people passing them too close and too fast'. Mr Carlon suggested that while this driver proximity to bicycle riders remained a concern, increasing the minimum passing distance had significantly decreased the risk for bicycle riders on the road.<sup>278</sup>
- 6.62 Bicycle NSW proposed a recognition and reward program to recognise excellent safety standards for cyclists in road projects.<sup>279</sup> Bicycle NSW suggested that TfNSW, through the Centre for Road Safety, should 'develop a recognition scheme for safe practices and innovations that save lives in the road related environment.' According to Bicycle NSW, the scheme should involve an opportunity for the public to nominate organisations, local councils and individuals for road safety awards that focus on excellence, innovation and outcomes.<sup>280</sup>

#### Motorcyclist safety

- 6.63 The Motorcycle Council of NSW indicated that a significant number of motorcycle crashes occur on local roads, despite motorcycles average only representing one per cent of traffic flow.<sup>281</sup>
- 6.64 The Motorcycle Council advised that few local government resources are allocated to address motorcycle road trauma. They also commented that few local councils have adopted the Safe System approach to road safety, and councils are not proactive in reducing motorcycle hazards. The Council is concerned that 'it is incorrectly assumed motorcycle trauma is adequately addressed in general road

<sup>274</sup> [Submission 1](#), Bicycle NSW, p. 7.

<sup>275</sup> Ms Bastien Wallace, [Transport of Evidence](#) p. 42.

<sup>276</sup> Queensland Government, StreetSmarts, [Bicycle riders](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>277</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Centre for Road Safety, [Sharing the road for bicycle riders](#), webpage; [Go Together](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>278</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 51.

<sup>279</sup> Ms Bastien Wallace, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 41.

<sup>280</sup> [Answer to Question on notice](#), Bicycle NSW, p. 1.

<sup>281</sup> [Submission 6](#), Motorcycle Council of NSW, p. 4.

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safety messages.<sup>282</sup> They further noted that RSO's 'seem reluctant to address the issue of motorcycle trauma due to having limited experience in this area.'<sup>283</sup>

- 6.65 At the 7 August 2020 hearing, Mr Brian Wood, President of the Motorcycle Council of NSW, commented:

I do not think many road safety officers have had much experience with motorcycle issues. Those that have, I think, have been quite successful in approaching motorcyclists... I think, really, perhaps with the road safety officers, they need to have more training or more involvement about motorcycle safety issues.<sup>284</sup>

- 6.66 Mr Wood pointed to an example of positive local government engagement regarding motorcycle safety in the Hunter region:

Up in the Hunter a group there of road safety officers, they have got riders to go out and actually ride roads and then identify hazards that they are concerned about; you know, it has corners where the road is not perhaps up to scratch or there is gravel on the road or potholes. They have used local riders to go out and actually identify hazards and then they have gone out and addressed those hazards. That is where they are proactively working with those road safety officers...

Particularly again the ones in the Hunter produced a booklet, which has the underlying message of motorcycle safety but included in there is a number of maps of suggested rides.<sup>285</sup>

- 6.67 The Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Snowy Valleys Council and NSW Police: Snowy Valleys Sector submission also provided a positive example of how council engagement in motorcycle road safety had led to positive safety outcomes. They indicated that a Snowy Mountains Rider Safety Group had previously existed, and that motorcycle crash trends had decreased following implementation of safety strategies contributed to by the Rider Safety Group.<sup>286</sup>

**Committee comment****Recommendation 21**

**That Transport for NSW raise awareness of motorcycle rider safety as a vulnerable road user in local government planning and assessment in a similar way to other vulnerable road users.**

**Recommendation 22**

**That the NSW Government develop additional strategies to improve driver behaviour with vulnerable road users on local roads.**

- 6.68 The Committee was concerned to hear the evidence of the Motorcycle Council of NSW which indicated that local councils play 'virtually no role in addressing motorcycle trauma'. Data provided by TfNSW indicated that fatalities on local and regional roads are higher among motorcyclists. The Committee considers that there is significant potential for local government to work with communities and

<sup>282</sup> [Submission 6](#), Motorcycle Council of NSW, p. 4.

<sup>283</sup> [Submission 6](#), Motorcycle Council of NSW, p. 4.

<sup>284</sup> Mr Brian Wood, President, Motorcycle Council of NSW, [Transcript of evidence](#), 7 August 2020, p. 34.

<sup>285</sup> Mr Brian Wood, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 37.

<sup>286</sup> [Submission 26](#), Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Snowy Valleys Council and NSW Police: Snowy Valleys Sector, p. 6.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
Speed zones and vulnerable users on local roads

representative groups, such as the Motorcycle Council, to identify and deliver local road safety initiatives.

- 6.69 The Committee supports calls for a review of driver education campaigns and enforcement programs to increase awareness of vulnerable road users and better target poor behaviour by road users. The Committee agrees that there is a need to better target existing campaigns and programs, and encourages TfNSW to examine its road safety campaigns that focus on vulnerable road users. TfNSW should assess whether they are effective in meeting the needs of stakeholders.

### Training courses for learner drivers

- 6.70 The Amy Gillett Foundation told the Committee that urgent and immediate action is needed to revise and update the way that novice drivers are taught and tested about sharing the road with cyclists. They referred to a research project being undertaken by the Australian Research Council that focused on the education and training received by people in the early stages of driving such as pre-learner, learner and probationary drivers. That research found that, as it currently stands, existing driver education and training research in Australia does not focus on including cyclists in driver training curriculums.<sup>287</sup>
- 6.71 The Central NSW Joint Organisation also commented that more work on driver education is worthwhile.<sup>288</sup> The City of Sydney also strongly supported an increase in driver education, particularly targeting driver interaction with vulnerable road users on local streets.<sup>289</sup>
- 6.72 The NSW Road Users' Handbook contains some information about sharing the road with vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, motorised wheelchairs, motorcyclists and cyclists.<sup>290</sup> To get a learners permit, drivers in NSW need to show that they understand the road rules by passing a computer based Driver Knowledge Test based on the handbook. They also undertake a hazard perception test when applying for a provisional licence.
- 6.73 Learner drivers in NSW can also enrol in a Safer Drivers Course, which can provide a credit of 20 hours towards the driving hours required before they can receive a provisional licence. The course teaches learners how to reduce road risks and includes ways to develop safe driving behaviour.<sup>291</sup>
- 6.74 The Committee also notes that the NSW Government, along with local councils and community groups, runs free workshops around NSW for parents and supervisors of learner drivers. The workshops offer practical advice on how to help learner drivers become safer drivers.<sup>292</sup>

<sup>287</sup> [Submission 5](#), Amy Gillett Foundation, p. 25; see also [Cycle Aware](#).

<sup>288</sup> [Submission 31](#), Central NSW Joint Organisation, p. 4.

<sup>289</sup> [Submission 3](#), City of Sydney, p. 4.

<sup>290</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services, [Road Users' Handbook](#), 'Sharing with other road users', 2021, pp. 71-77, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>291</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services, [Safer Drivers Course](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>292</sup> NSW Government, Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services, [Supervising a learner driver](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
Speed zones and vulnerable users on local roads**ACT Vulnerable Road User Program**

- 6.75 The Committee notes that the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government delivers an optional course for learner drivers known as the Vulnerable Road User Program. The program is designed to keep young drivers, cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians safer on Canberra's roads. Successful completion of the course counts as ten of the required driving hours to obtain a provisional licence.
- 6.76 The program aims to give new drivers greater insight, awareness and respect for sharing the road with vulnerable users. The program also focuses on improving an understanding into the impact of road trauma on vulnerable road users and why this cohort are more at risk.<sup>293</sup>

**Committee comment**

- 6.77 The Committee notes evidence which indicates that learner drivers can often lack the skills and experience to safely share the road with vulnerable road users. The Committee considers that TfNSW should review opportunities for learner driver training on sharing the road with vulnerable users. The possibility for a specific learners course focused on vulnerable road users, similar to the Vulnerable Road User Program used by the ACT Government, should be examined by TfNSW.
- 6.78 We note that the Committee will also closely examine the support available for rural and regional learner drivers in its next inquiry. As part of that inquiry the Committee will also look at developments in driver training and testing that have occurred since the Committee last inquired into this issue in 2017.

**Proposal for a NSW Road Safety Commissioner**

- 6.79 At a public hearing, Mr Scruby from the PCA recommended that a Road Safety Commissioner for NSW be appointed, independent of the NSW Government. The PCA said that an independent road safety commissioner would 'take the politics out of road safety' and should have the same authority and independence as the Auditor-General and the Ombudsman.<sup>294</sup>
- 6.80 Mr Carlon from the Centre for Road Safety said that an independent road safety commissioner had not been considered by the NSW Government. Mr Carlon said that the Centre for Road Safety had a 'very comprehensive and transparent program of initiatives under the Road Safety Plan.'<sup>295</sup>

**The Western Australia Road Safety Commission**

- 6.81 The Committee notes that a Road Safety Commission (the Commission) dedicated to tackling road trauma was established in Western Australia (WA) in July 2015. In 2017 the Commission was moved into the WA Police Force as a business unit reporting to the Minister for Road Safety. The Commission is led by a Road Safety Commissioner who is appointed for a five-year term.
- 6.82 The Commission is responsible for reducing road trauma on WA roads by supporting the State Government's Driving Change – Road Safety Strategy for

<sup>293</sup> ACT Government, Open Government, [New training courses to help learner drivers](#), media release, 3 August 2020, viewed 15 June 2021.

<sup>294</sup> Mr Harold Scruby, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 34.

<sup>295</sup> Mr Bernard Carlon, [Transcript of evidence](#), p. 45.



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Western Australia 2020-2030 and a Safe System approach to road safety. The Commission adopted the responsibilities of the former Western Australian Office of Road Safety, and expanded its road safety scope.

- 6.83 The Commission also strives to improve road safety and reduce road trauma by working with key stakeholders in government agencies, the private sector, and with the community using engagement and education campaigns and grants. According to its website, the Commission also currently has partnerships with the WA Local Government Association through its RoadWise Program and with the Country Women's Association.<sup>296</sup>

**Committee comment**

The potential for a Road Safety Commissioner model in NSW would need to be examined in more detail for this Committee to come to a position on whether it would be beneficial for NSW. The Committee considers that this proposal could be examined in a future Staysafe Committee inquiry, as it would involve a significant change from the traditional management and administration of road safety issues in NSW.

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<sup>296</sup> Road Safety Commission, [Annual Report 2015-2016](#), Government of Western Australia, August 2016, p. 8; [Role of the Commission](#), webpage; RoadWise WALGA, [RoadWise Working together to prevent road trauma](#), webpage, viewed 15 June 2021.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
Terms of reference

## Appendix One – Terms of reference

The Committee will inquire into and report on reducing trauma on local roads in NSW with specific reference to:

- The role of local roads in road safety and trauma
- The effectiveness of existing road safety planning requirements, including in other jurisdictions
- Opportunities for improving road safety planning and management on local roads, including through the Local Government Road Safety and Community Strategic Planning
- The role of local communities and their representatives in identifying and delivering road safety initiatives to reduce trauma on local roads
- Other relevant matters.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
Conduct of inquiry

## Appendix Two – Conduct of inquiry

On 13 November 2019, the Committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW. Written invitations were sent to selected stakeholders and a media release was issued calling for submissions by 3 February 2020. The date for submissions was later extended to 20 March 2020.

The Committee received 36 submissions from government agencies, local councils, research bodies and academics and industry peak bodies. The full list of submissions appears in **Appendix Three**.

On 31 July 2020, the Committee held an informal roundtable with road safety officers from a number local councils who participated via videoconference.

The 2019-2020 Australian bushfire season and measures introduced to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the holding of public hearings until August 2020. Two hearings were conducted at Parliament House on Friday 7 August and Friday 14 August 2020. Most of the witnesses appeared via videoconference, while one witness appeared in-person.

Due to social distancing requirements the public gallery for the hearings was not open but the hearings were broadcast live on the Parliament's website. Witnesses who provided evidence at the public hearings are listed in **Appendix Four**.

Transcripts of the public hearings, together with submissions, answers to questions on notice and additional information, are available on the inquiry's [website](#).

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Submissions

## Appendix Three – Submissions

No.	Author
1	Bicycle NSW
1a	Bicycle NSW
2	Council on the Ageing (COTA) NSW
3	City of Sydney
4	National Road Transport Association
5	Amy Gillett Foundation
6	Motorcycle Council of NSW
7	WalkSydney
8	BIKEast
9	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
10	National Motorists Association Australia
11	Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW)
12	Transport and Road Safety Research, and the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales
13	The George Institute for Global Health
14	Wentworth Shire Council
15	Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries
16	Name suppressed
16a	Name suppressed
16b	Name suppressed
17	Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW
18	Blacktown City Council
19	National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA)
20	National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
21	Lake Macquarie City Council
22	Penrith City Council
23	Local Government NSW
24	Wollongong City Council
25	Wollondilly Shire Council

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Submissions

No.	Author
26	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Snowy Valleys Council and NSW Police: Snowy Valleys Sector
27	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
28	Wingecarribee Shire Council
29	Port Stephens Council
30	Mosman Council
31	Central NSW Joint Organisation
32	BusNSW
33	Australian Road Research Board
34	Transport for NSW
35	Northern Beaches Council
36	Pedestrian Council of Australia Limited
36a	Pedestrian Council of Australia Limited



Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Witnesses

## Appendix Four – Witnesses

Friday 7 August 2020, Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, NSW

Witness	Position and Organisation
Mr Mick Savage	Technical Resources Manager, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW)
Mr Arjan Rensen	Roads and Transport Directorate Manager, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW)
Mr David McTiernan	National Leader Transport Safety, Australian Road Research Board
Mr Alan Hay	NSW State Technical Leader, Australian Road Research Board
Ms Fiona Frost	Road Safety Officer, Blacktown City Council
Mr Richard Campbell	Manager, Access and Transport Management, Blacktown City Council
Mr Sal Petrocchio	Chief Executive Officer, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
Mr Phillip Devon	Manager, Transport Network, Northern Beaches Council
Ms Robynann Dixon	Road Safety Officer, Northern Beaches Council
Mr Craig Sawyer	Executive Manager, Transport and Civil Infrastructure, Northern Beaches Council
Mr Jason Antony	Vice-Chairman, Motorcycle Council of NSW
Mr Brian Wood	Secretary, Motorcycle Council of NSW
Mr Dan Kneipp	Chief Executive Officer, Amy Gillett Foundation
Dr Marilyn Johnson	Research and Policy Manager, Amy Gillett Foundation Senior Researcher, Monash University, Institute of Transport Studies
Ms Bastien Wallace	General Manager of Public Affairs, Bicycle NSW
Ms Jenny Bennett	Executive Officer, Central NSW Joint Organisation
Mr Ben Howard	Acting Chair, Transport Technical Committee, Central NSW Joint Organisation Director, Works and Service, Parkes Shire Council

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Witnesses

**Friday 14 August 2020, Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, NSW**

<b>Witness</b>	<b>Position and Organisation</b>
Mr Heinz Kausche	Executive Director Infrastructure, Snowy Valley Council
Mr Anthony Carroll	Road Safety Officer, Snowy Valley Council Road Safety Officer, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Mr Matt Stubbs	Manager Technical Services, Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Mr David Hughes	Director Built and Natural Assets, Lake Macquarie City Council
Mr Brendan Callander	Acting Manager Asset Management, Lake Macquarie City Council
Mr Thomas Boyle	Senior Transport Strategist, Lake Macquarie City Council
Mr Dan Hughes	Government Relations and Policy Advisor, Lake Macquarie City Council
Mr Warren Clark	Chief Executive Officer, National Road Transport Association
Mr Andrew Aspden	Manager of Transport Planning, City of Sydney
Mr Peter Warrington	Transport Policy Manager, City of Sydney
Mr Peter Wright	Road Safety Officer, City of Sydney
Mr Harold Scruby	Chairman/CEO, Pedestrian Council of Australia
Cr Linda Scott	President, Local Government NSW
Mr Bernard Carlon	Executive Director, Centre for Road Safety & Maritime Safety, Transport for NSW

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
Extracts from minutes

## Appendix Five – Extracts from minutes

### MINUTES OF MEETING 3

Monday 14 October 2019

Centre for Road Safety, 18 Lee Street Chippendale

#### Members present

The Hon Lou Amato (Chair), Mr Roy Butler, Mr Chris Gulaptis, Ms Wendy Lindsay

#### Officers in attendance

David Hale, Abigail Turingan

The Chair opened the meeting at 2.30 pm and invited officers of the Centre for Road Safety to make their presentation.

Following the presentation the Chair thanked the Centre for Road Safety, and opened the deliberative meeting at 4.40 pm.

\*\*\*

#### Apologies

Mr Stephen Bromhead, Mr Nick Lulich, The Hon Daniel Mookhey, The Hon Fred Nile, Ms Robyn Preston.

#### 1. Confirmation of minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Lindsay, seconded by Mr Gulaptis:  
That the minutes of meeting 2 held on 20 August 2019 be confirmed.

#### 2. Possible inquiry topics

The Chair referred to the presentation by the Centre for Road Safety, and particularly their advice concerning possible inquiry topics and the recommendations of the Committee's report 5/56.

Following discussion the members agreed that the following topics would be investigated and reported to the next meeting for consideration as possible inquiries:

- Trauma on local roads
- Older road users
- Serious injury crash responses
- Speed limits on regional roads

#### 3. Next meeting

The Chair closed the meeting at 4.55 pm. The next meeting will be held at 1.30 pm on Wednesday 13 November 2019.

### MINUTES OF MEETING 4

Monday 14 October 2019

Room 1136, Parliament House

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

**Members present**

The Hon Lou Amato (Chair), Mr Roy Butler, Mr Chris Gulaptis, Mr Nick Lalich, Ms Wendy Lindsay, The Hon Daniel Mookhey, Ms Robyn Preston (Deputy Chair)

**Officers in attendance**

David Hale, Cheryl Samuels, Mohini Mehta, Ilana Chaffey

The Chair opened the meeting at 1.35 pm.

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mr Stephen Bromhead and The Hon Fred Nile.  
The apologies were noted.

**2. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Lindsay, seconded by Mr Butler, That the minutes of Meeting 3 held on 14 October 2019 be confirmed.

**3. Correspondence**

The following correspondence was received and noted:

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**4. Presentation by Centre for Road Safety**

The confidential presentation by the Centre for Road Safety given to the Committee on 14 October 2019 was distributed and noted.

**5. Possible inquiry topics**

The Committee discussed the following possible inquiry topics:

- Older road users
- Serious inquiry crash responses
- Speed limits on regional and remote roads
- Reducing trauma on local roads in New South Wales.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded by Ms Lindsay, That the Committee conduct an inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in New South Wales with specific reference to:

- The role of local roads in road safety and trauma
- The effectiveness of existing road safety planning requirements, including in other jurisdictions
- Opportunities for improving road safety planning and management on local roads, including through the Local Government Road Safety Program and Community Strategic Planning
- The role of local communities and their representatives in identifying and delivering road safety initiatives to reduce trauma on local roads
- Other relevant matters.

And that:

The Committee advertises the inquiry on the Committee's website, invites selected stakeholders to make a submission, and that the Chair issues a media release, calling for submissions by close of business on Monday 3 February 2020.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

**6. General business**

\*\*\*

**7. Next meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 2.06 pm. The next meeting will be held at a date and time to be advised.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 5**

1.34 pm, Wednesday 1 April 2020

1254, Parliament House via teleconference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair)

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Stephanie Mulvey (via teleconference), Cheryl Samuels, Abigail Turingan (via teleconference)

**Apologies**

Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC and The Hon. Rev. Fred Nile MLC

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lalich, seconded by Mr Gulaptis:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 be confirmed.

**2. Correspondence**

\*\*\*

**3. Publication of submissions**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Preston, seconded by Mr Lalich:

- That the Committee authorise publication in full of the submissions numbered 1-15 and 17-34
- That the Committee authorise the partial publication, with name suppressed, of submissions 16, 16a and 16b

**4. Regional site visits and public hearings**

The Committee agreed to defer site visits and public hearings for the time being.

The Committee agreed that the secretariat:

- analyse the submissions for issues and themes and draft potential written questions to submitters and other stakeholders to obtain further evidence.
- to consider the use of written questions to witnesses and/or remote video conference hearings to progress the inquiry.

**5. Next meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 1.40 pm. The next meeting will be held at a date and time to be determined.



Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

#### **MINUTES OF MEETING No. 6**

11.08 am, Wednesday 6 May 2020

Jubilee Room, Parliament House and via teleconference and Webex

##### **Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC, and the Hon. Rev. Fred Nile MLC.

##### **Officers in attendance**

Benjamin Foxe, Tanja Zech, Elaine Schofield, Cheryl Samuels, Abigail Turingan.

##### **1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Preston, seconded by Mr Lalich: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2020 be confirmed.

##### **2. Correspondence**

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##### **3. Progress of the inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW**

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Ms Lindsay: That the Committee seek a private briefing via Webex with Transport for NSW and Local Government NSW.

##### **4. General business**

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##### **Next meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 11.23 am. The next meeting will be held at a date and time to be determined.

#### **MINUTES OF MEETING No. 7**

2.02 pm, Tuesday 26 May 2020

Room 1254, Parliament House and via teleconference and Webex

##### **Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP and the Hon. Rev. Fred Nile MLC.

##### **Apologies**

Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC

##### **Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Benjamin Foxe, Cheryl Samuels, Jacqueline Linnane, Abigail Turingan.

##### **1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Ms Preston: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2020 be confirmed.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW  
Extracts from minutes**2. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW**

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Ms Preston: That the Committee proceed with holding private Webex briefings with Transport for NSW and Local Government NSW at the conclusion of this deliberative meeting.

**Next meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 2.07 pm. The next meeting will be held at a date and time to be determined.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 8**

2.02 pm, Monday 22 June 2020

Room 814/815, Parliament House and by videoconference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC.

**Apologies**

Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, and the Hon. Rev. Fred Nile MLC.

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Benjamin Foxe, Cheryl Samuels, Jacqueline Linnane, Abegail Turingan.

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Lindsay, seconded by Mr Gulaptis: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2020 be confirmed.

**2. Correspondence**

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**3. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW**

The Committee received and noted a response by Transport for NSW (Centre for Road Safety and Maritime Safety) to questions asked at 26 May 2020 informal briefing, including further serious casualty and fatality statistics on local roads (by local government area and by financial year), and information on trends in local residents killed or seriously injured in their own local government area.

The Committee received and noted a late submission from Northern Beaches Council (submission 35).

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded by Ms Lindsay: That the Committee authorise the publication of submission 35 in full.

The Committee discussed further evidence and information options.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Bromhead, seconded by Ms Lindsay: That the Committee hold a round table discussion/briefing (private meeting not transcribed by Hansard) with several council road safety officers, with the date to be determined after the committee staff confirm availability with members' offices.

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

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Resolved, on the motion of Mr Bromhead, seconded by Mr Lalich: That the Committee hold two public hearings with dates to be determined after the committee staff confirm availability with members' offices.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Bromhead, seconded by Mr Lalich:  
That the Chair circulate a list of proposed witnesses via the secretariat to Committee members by 25 June; and  
That members respond via email with any additional suggestions or proposed changes to the witness list by 2 July.

**Next meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 2.12 pm. The next meeting will be held at a date and time to be determined.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 9**

9.04 am, Friday 31 July 2020

Room 814/815, Parliament House and by videoconference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, and Ms Wendy Lindsay MP.

**Apologies**

Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), the Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLLC, and the Hon. Rev. Fred Nile MLC.

**Officers in attendance**

Benjamin Foxe, Cheryl Samuels, Abigail Turingan.

The Chair opened the meeting at 9:04 am and invited officers from Blacktown City Council, Penrith City Council, Port Stephens Council, Wentworth Shire Council and Wollongong City Council to participate in a videoconference roundtable meeting with the Committee.

Following the conclusion of the roundtable meeting the Chair thanked the Council officers. After the Council officers left the meeting the Chair opened the deliberative meeting at 10:55 am.

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded by Mr Lalich: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2020 be confirmed.

**2. Correspondence**

\*\*\*

**3. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW****3.1 Late submissions**

A late submission was received from Mr Harold Scruby, Chairman/CEO of the Pedestrian Council of Australia (number 36). A supplementary submission from the Pedestrian Council of Australia was also received (number 36a).

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

## Extracts from minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Lindsay, seconded Mr Gulaptis: That the Committee authorise the publication of submission 36 in full, with inactive links to external websites.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Lindsay, seconded by Mr Gulaptis: That the Committee:

- i) authorise the publication of supplementary submission 36a, with names and emails of individuals other than the author of the submission redacted, and
- ii) that attachment A to supplementary submission 36a be kept confidential to the Committee, until the Secretariat confirms its current publication status with Transport for NSW, and reports back to the Committee on this status at a later deliberative meeting.

### 3.2 Correspondence regarding the public hearings

The following correspondence regarding the public hearings was received:

- i) From Dr Soufiane Boufous, Transport and Road Safety Research, School of Aviation, Faculty of Science, UNSW Sydney, declining to appear at the August public hearings, received 9 and 20 July 2020.
- ii) From Ms Joanne Wilson-Ridley, Road Safety Officer, Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, declining to appear at a public hearing, received 10 July 2020.
- iii) From Mr Harold Scruby, Chairman/CEO, Pedestrian Council of Australia, requesting an opportunity to address the Committee, received 20 July 2020.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lulich, seconded by Mr Gulaptis: That the Committee note the correspondence from Ms Wilson-Ridley and Dr Boufous.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Butler, seconded by Mr Lulich: That the Chair respond to Mr Scruby advising that he is invited to appear at a public hearing for a period of 30 minutes.

### 3.3 Public hearings

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded by Mr Lulich, that the Committee invite the following witnesses to give evidence at a public hearing:

- i) Snowy Valleys Council
- ii) Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
- iii) Lake Macquarie City Council
- iv) City of Sydney
- v) Northern Beaches Council
- vi) Blacktown City Council
- vii) Central NSW Joint Organisation
- viii) Local Government NSW
- ix) Transport for NSW
- x) National Road Transport Association
- xi) National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
- xii) Australian Road Research Board (ARRB)
- xiii) Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW)
- xiv) NRMA
- xv) Motorcycle Council of NSW
- xvi) Amy Gillett Foundation
- xvii) Bicycle NSW
- xviii) Pedestrian Council of Australia.

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

**Next meeting**

The Chair closed the meeting at 11.04 am. The next meeting will be held on Friday 7 August 2020, commencing at 8.50 am (public hearing) in the Jubilee Room and via Webex.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 10**

8.54 am, Friday 7 August 2020

Jubilee Room, Parliament House and by videoconference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, and the Hon. Rev. Fred Nile MLC.

**Apologies**

Mr Nick Lalich MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC.

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Benjamin Foxe, Cheryl Samuels, Abigail Turingan, Ilana Chaffey.

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded by Mr Lalich: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2020 be confirmed.

**2. Correspondence**

The following correspondence was received:

- a) \*\*\*
- b) From Mr Robert Giltinan, NRMA, advising that the NRMA will be unable to appear at a hearing on 7 August 2020, dated 31 July 2020.
- c) \*\*\*
- d) To Mr Harold Scruby, Pedestrian Council of Australia, from the Chair, advising of the Committee's decision to invite him to appear at a public hearing on 14 August 2020, sent 4 August 2020.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Bromhead, seconded Rev Nile: That the correspondence be noted.

**3. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW****a) Media**

Resolved, on the motion of Rev Nile, seconded by Mr Bromhead: That the Committee authorises the audio-visual recording, photography and broadcasting of the public hearing on Friday 7 August 2020 in accordance with the NSW Legislative Assembly's guidelines for coverage of proceedings for parliamentary committees administered by the Legislative Assembly.

**b) Transcript of evidence**

Resolved, on the motion of Rev Nile, seconded by Mr Bromhead: That the corrected transcript of evidence given on 7 August 2020 be authorised for publication and uploaded on the Committee's website.

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

**c) Answers to questions on notice**

Resolved, on the motion of Rev Nile, seconded by Mr Bromhead: That witnesses be requested to return answers to questions taken on notice within 2 weeks of the date on which the questions are forwarded to the witnesses, and that once received, answers be published on the Committee's website.

**d) Documents tendered during the public hearing**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded by Rev Nile: That documents tendered during the public hearing be considered by the Committee for publication at a deliberative meeting following the public hearing.

The Chair adjourned the deliberative meeting at 8.58 am.

**Public hearing**

The Chair opened the public hearing at 9:00 am. Witnesses attending via videoconference were admitted, and the broadcast via the Parliament's website began. The Chair welcomed the witnesses.

The following witness representing the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW) attending via videoconference was sworn and examined:

- Mr Mick Savage

The following witness representing the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW) attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

- Mr Arjan Rensen

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses representing the Australian Road Research Board attending via videoconference were affirmed and examined:

- Mr David McTiernan
- Mr Alan Hay

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness representing Blacktown City Council attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

- Ms Fiona Frost

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The following witness representing the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

- Mr Sal Petrocchio

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses from Northern Beaches Council attending via videoconference were affirmed and examined:

- Mr Phillip Devon
- Ms Robynanne Dixon



## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

- Mr Craig Sawyer

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses from the Motorcycle Council of NSW attending via videoconference were affirmed and examined:

- Mr Jason Antony
- Mr Brian Wood

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses from the Amy Gillett Foundation attending via videoconference were affirmed and examined:

- Mr Dan Kniepp
- Dr Marilyn Johnson

The following witness from Bicycle NSW attending in person was affirmed and examined:

- Ms Bastien Wallace

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses from the Central NSW Joint Organisation attending via videoconference were affirmed and examined:

- Ms Jenny Bennett
- Mr Ben Howard

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

**Next meeting**

The Chair closed the hearing at 4.02 pm. The next meeting will be held on Friday 14 August 2020, commencing at 9.00 am (deliberative meeting prior to the public hearing at 9.15 am) in the Macquarie Room and via Webex.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 11**

9.07 am, Friday 14 August 2020

Jubilee Room, Parliament House and by videoconference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Mr Roy Butler MP, Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair) and the Hon. Reverend Fred Nile MLC.

**By webex:** Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC.

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Benjamin Foxe, Cheryl Samuels, Abigail Turingan, Jennifer Gallagher, Ilana Chaffey.

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2020 be confirmed.

## 2. Correspondence

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That the following correspondence be noted:

- From Mr Robert Giltinan, NRMA, advising that the NRMA will be unable to appear at a hearing on 14 August 2020, dated 5 August 2020.
- From Dr Marilyn Johnson, Amy Gillett Foundation, providing a correction to page 12 of their submission to the inquiry (number 5) and requesting that submission 5 be updated, dated 7 August 2020.

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That submission 5 be updated and republished incorporating the correction to page 12 as provided by the Amy Gillett Foundation.

## 3. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

### a) Media

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That the Committee authorises the audio-visual recording, photography and broadcasting of the public hearing on Friday 14 August 2020 in accordance with the NSW Legislative Assembly's guidelines for coverage of proceedings for parliamentary committees administered by the Legislative Assembly.

### b) Transcript of evidence

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That the corrected transcript of evidence given on 14 August 2020 be authorised for publication and uploaded on the Committee's website.

### c) Answers to questions on notice

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That witnesses be requested to return answers to questions taken on notice within 2 weeks of the date on which the questions are forwarded to the witnesses, and that once received, answers be published on the Committee's website.

### d) Documents tendered during the public hearing

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Butler: That documents tendered during the public hearing be considered by the Committee for publication at a deliberative meeting following the public hearing.

### e) Submissions - Supplementary Submission 36a and Attachment A to 36a

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Gulaptis: That Attachment A to Supplementary Submission 36a not be published on the Committee's website.

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Mr Gulaptis: That the link in Supplementary Submission 36a to an external website hosting a copy of Attachment A remain active when published on the Parliament's website.

The Chair adjourned the deliberative meeting at 9.18 am.

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

## Extracts from minutes

**Public hearing**

The Chair opened the public hearing at 9.20 am. Witnesses attending via videoconference were admitted, and the broadcast via the Parliament's website began. The Chair welcomed the witnesses.

The following witness representing the Snowy Valleys Council attending via videoconference was sworn and examined:

- Mr Heinz Kausche, Executive Director Infrastructure

The following witness representing Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council attending via videoconference was sworn and examined:

- Mr Anthony Carroll, Road Safety Officer

The following witness representing Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

- Mr Matt Stubbs, Manager, Technical Services

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witnesses representing Lake Macquarie City Council attending via videoconference were affirmed and examined:

- Mr David Hughes, Director Built and Natural Assets
- Mr Brendan Callander, Acting Manager Asset Manager
- Mr Thomas Boyle, Senior Transport Strategist
- Mr Dan Hughes, Government Relations and Policy Adviser.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness representing the National Road Transport Association attending via videoconference was sworn and examined:

- Mr Warren Clark, Chief Executive Officer.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The following witnesses representing the City of Sydney attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

- Mr Andrew Aspden, Manager of Transport Planning
- Mr Peter Warrington, Transport Policy Manager
- Mr Peter Wright, Road Safety Officer.

Evidence concluded, the witnesses withdrew.

The following witness representing the Pedestrian Council of Australia attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

- Mr Harold Scruby, Chairman/CEO.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The following witness representing Local Government NSW attending via videoconference was affirmed and examined:

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

- Cr Linda Scott, President.

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

The following witness representing Transport for NSW attending via videoconference was sworn and examined:

- Mr Bernard Carlon, Executive Director, Centre for Road Safety & Maritime Safety

Evidence concluded, the witness withdrew.

**Next meeting**

The Chair closed the hearing at 4.01 pm. The next meeting will be held on a date to be determined.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 12**

1.41 pm, 25 March 2021

Room 1043

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair) Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, Mr Nick Lulich MP, the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane MLC, and the Hon. Reverend Fred Nile MLC.

**Apologies**

Mr Stephen Bromhead MP

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Cheryl Samuels, Abigail Turingan, Vanessa Gasiewski.

**1. Membership**

The Committee was advised that on 18 November 2020 the House resolved to appoint Mr Shaoquett Moselmane MLC to the Committee in place of Mr Daniel Mookhey MLC, discharged.

**2. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Preston: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2020 be confirmed.

**3. Correspondence**

\*\*\*

**4. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW****4a. Correspondence**

- i) Email from Mr Anthony Carroll, Snowy Valleys Council with attached copy of opening statement from appearance at public hearing on 14 August 2020, dated 14 August 2020.

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

- ii) Email from Mr Arjan Rensen, IPWEA with attached copy of IPWEA Asset Benchmarking Findings Report, dated 19 August 2020.
- iii) Email from Mr Jason Antony providing links to Facebook posts relating to Road Safety, dated 21 August 2020.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lalich, seconded by Ms Preston: That the opening statement from Mr Carroll be published on the Committee's webpage as an "other document".

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lalich, seconded by Ms Preston: That the Committee note the correspondence from Mr Rensen and Mr Antony and that the secretariat acknowledge each correspondence.

- vi) Email from Mr Bastien Wallace, Bicycle NSW, with attached copy of Bicycle NSW letter dated 31 August 2020, Safer Local Roads – Bicycle NSW Recommendations, and RTA Sustainable Transport Section briefing – Bicycle registration and cyclist licensing.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lalich, seconded by Ms Preston: That the letter from Bicycle NSW, dated 31 August 2020, be published in full on the Committee's webpage in place of the previously published answer to question on notice.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Lalich, seconded by Ms Preston: That the Committee accept the document Safer Local Roads – Bicycle NSW Recommendations as submission 1a and authorise its publication in full on the Committee's webpage.

**4.b Progress of the inquiry**

The Committee was provided with an update on the status of the draft report.

5. \*\*\*

6. \*\*\*

**Next meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 1.50 pm until a date and time to be determined.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 13**

10.04 am, 24 May 2021

Online via Webex and Room 1136, Parliament House

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Mr Roy Butler MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP (via Webex)

Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane MLC (Room 1136)

**Apologies**

Mr Nick Lalich MP, the Hon. Reverend Fred Nile MLC

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Kieran Lewis, Cheryl Samuels, Aaron Willey, Abigail Turingan, Vanessa Gasiewski

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Moselmane, seconded by Ms Preston: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 be confirmed.

**2. \*\*\*****3. General business**

\*\*\*

**Next meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 10.18 am until a date and time to be determined.

**MINUTES OF MEETING No. 14**

1.42 pm, 22 June 2021

Room 1136, Parliament House and by video conference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, Mr Nick Lalich MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane MLC, the Hon. Reverend Fred Nile MLC (in room 1136)  
Mr Roy Butler MP (by webex)

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Cheryl Samuels, Vanessa Gasiewski (in room 36)  
Abigail Turingan, Aaron Willey (by webex)

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Bromhead, seconded by Ms Preston: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2021 be confirmed.

**2. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW****2.1 Consideration of Chair's draft report**

By agreement, the draft report was considered in globo.

- Resolved, on the motion of Mr Bromhead that the following amendments be agreed to:
  - Paragraph 2.25 on page 17 be amended by inserting the word 'the' before 'COVID 19' and inserting the word 'pandemic' after 'COVID 19'.
  - Recommendation 5 on page 28 be amended by inserting the word 'local' before 'councils'.
  - Paragraph 5.40 on page 55 be amended by omitting '... joint organisations already use a ...' and inserting instead 'some groups of councils jointly use an ...' and;



## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

Inserting the word 'each' after the word 'assist' and omitting the word 'councils' after the word 'assist' and inserting instead the word 'council'.

- Recommendation 21, page 71 be amended by omitting the words 'work to' and the word 'the'.
- Resolved, on the motion of Mr Moselmane that Recommendation 5 on page 28 be amended by adding the words 'on at least a quarterly basis' after 'local roads'.
- Resolved, on the motion of Ms Preston, that a section be inserted in Chapter Three about overseas trained drivers, including the need to improve engagement with migrant communities and education about the need for a NSW licence and to improve the understanding of NSW road rules; and providing NSW road rules to all overseas temporary entrants to improve their knowledge of NSW road rules.  
The secretariat to finalise draft amendment and circulate the amendment to the Committee for review.
- Resolved, on the motion of Mr Gulaptis, seconded Reverend Nile: That the draft report as amended be the report of the Committee and that it be signed by the Chair and presented to the House.
- Resolved, on the motion of Mr Moselmane, seconded Mr Lalach:
  - That the Chair and committee staff be permitted to correct stylistic, typographical and grammatical errors.
  - That, once tabled, the report be posted on the Committee's website.

3. \*\*\*

4. **General business**

Nil

**Next meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 2.10 pm until a date and time to be determined.

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF MEETING No. 15**

10.05 am, 14 July 2021

All by videoconference

**Members present**

The Hon. Lou Amato MLC (Chair), Ms Robyn Preston MP (Deputy Chair), Mr Chris Gulaptis MP, the Hon. Reverend Fred Nile MLC, Mr Roy Butler MP

**Apologies**

Mr Stephen Bromhead MP, Mr Nick Lalach MP, Ms Wendy Lindsay MP, the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane MLC

**Officers in attendance**

Elaine Schofield, Kieran Lewis, Abigail Turingan

## Reducing trauma on local roads in NSW

Extracts from minutes

**1. Confirmation of minutes**

Resolved, on the motion of Reverend Nile, seconded by Ms Preston: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 be confirmed.

**2. Inquiry into reducing trauma on local roads in NSW****2.1 Consideration of Ms Preston's amendment**

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Preston, seconded by Mr Gulaptis: That the amendment, as circulated, be agreed to, and

- That the draft report as amended be the report of the Committee and that it be signed by the Chair and presented to the House.
- That the Chair and committee staff be permitted to correct stylistic, typographical and grammatical errors.
- That, once tabled, the report be posted on the Committee's website.

**3. \*\*\*****4. General business**

\*\*\*

**Next meeting**

The meeting adjourned at 10.10 am until a date and time to be determined.



# BUS ROUTE 172X ROAD SAFETY REVIEW

Final Report

9 JUNE 2021





Northern Beaches Council



## Quality Assurance

<b>Project:</b>	Bus Route 172X Road Safety Review		
<b>Project Number:</b>	SCT_00241		
<b>Client:</b>	Northern Beaches Council	<b>ABN:</b>	57 284 295 198
<b>Prepared by:</b>	SCT Consulting PTY. LTD. (SCT Consulting)	<b>ABN:</b>	53 612 624 058

Quality Information	
<b>Document name:</b>	Bus Route 172X Road Safety Review
<b>Prepared:</b>	Matthew Cen, Consultant Ravi Kaberwal, Principal Consultant
<b>Reviewed:</b>	Jonathan Busch, Associate Director
<b>Authorised:</b>	Jonathan Busch, Associate Director
	Signature:

Revision	Revision Date	Details
1.0	28 May 2021	Draft Report
2.0	4 June 2021	Final Draft Report
3.0	9 June 2021	Final Report

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Bus Route 172X Road Safety Review

Northern Beaches Council



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## Executive Summary

Bus Route 172X currently operates between Warringah Mall and Wynyard (in the Sydney CBD) via North Balgowlah. The route was introduced by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) in December 2020 as a consolidated replacement of several local and express bus routes.

Residents have raised several issues concerning safety, accessibility, and traffic congestion due to the recent changes with Northern Beaches Council and Transport for NSW. Residents have highlighted the section of the route between Wakehurst Parkway and Woodbine Street in North Balgowlah, where the high-frequency bus service operates along local roads, particularly. This section of the corridor consists of narrow streets which restrict bus manoeuvrability, which is compounded by the presence of parked vehicles on both sides of the road.

The route is currently host to a mix of fleet including articulated buses. The swept path assessment demonstrates that there are road safety issues with both the 12.5m rigid and 18m articulated bus in the corridor. Due to the constrained usable width of the corridor, travel is often constrained to one direction only with passing areas for waiting traffic.

Consequently, buses are not able to pass one another (or sometimes other private vehicles) except at select locations. As a result, bus drivers are required to coordinate with each other to pass one another. In some cases, buses need to reverse to create sufficient room for other buses to manoeuvre past them. These complex manoeuvres result in safety risks to residents and operational risks for the bus service. Even if all the on-street parking were to be removed, the operation of an articulated bus would still be unsafe along the corridor.

The condition of the pavement is poor, with pavement distresses along the entirety of the corridor. These included crocodile cracking, rutting and depression as the dominant mode of pavement distress. It is not possible to determine whether the cause of failure (or degree of contribution) is related to the presence of buses or increase in bus frequency. It is noted that given the age of the pavement and poor condition, ongoing use by heavy vehicles (including buses) without treatment will exacerbate the issues and accelerate pavement deterioration. The presence of the bus frequency would also increase the costs of pavement rehabilitation or frequency of rehabilitation works as the bus frequency increases the design load.

To address concerns along the study corridor four potential options have been developed and assessed. These options have been developed based on stakeholder feedback to balance the safety, amenity, and operational considerations of operating Route 172X through North Balgowlah.

Options include:

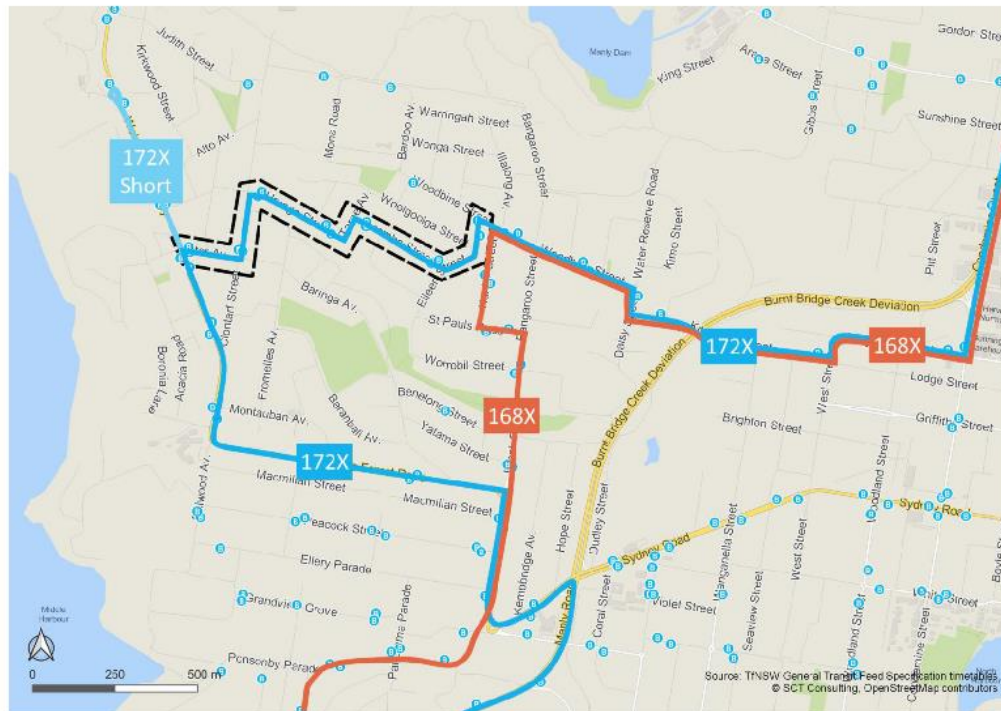
1. TfNSW's revised Route 172X operation, which includes a reduction in service frequency through the corridor and the reinstatement of Route 168X which operates adjacent to the corridor to supplement capacity through to Sydney CBD.
2. Community proposed scheme which builds on Option 1 to further reduce bus frequency through the corridor and restricts the bus fleet to 12.5m rigid buses. This scheme is intended to avoid (or minimise) the removal of parking.
3. Divert Route 172X to alternative east-west roads, potentially Judith Street and Manning Street, to remove buses from the current corridor.
4. Truncate Route 172X to Wakehurst Parkway which removes the bus route from local roads. Capacity and coverage are also provided by reinstating Route 168X to the east of the corridor.

Adjustments to kerbs to better fit buses were ruled out as the verge widths are too narrow to provide any substantial improvements.

Based on the multi-criteria assessment undertaken, options 2 and 4 resulted in more favourable outcomes compared to the current situation. Though it is noted, the assessment does not include service planning considerations as TfNSW declined to take part or provide input to the study. These planning considerations may include the rationale for operating a higher frequency or specific fleet for the wider benefit of the region.

Option 2 reduces the likelihood of safety risks by reducing service frequency and restricting bus length. This option could be further improved from a safety and operational perspective with the inclusion of limited parking removal around key constraints in the corridor. Though this study acknowledges the need for on-street parking in supporting the residential community, it recommends that parking removal to improve safety be investigated and the community notified of any relevant changes.

Northern Beaches Council



Based on all the factors, Option 2 is recommended. It provides the best balance, by retaining service coverage within North Balgowlah but also substantially improves road safety in the corridor. Reduction to a total number of services in the corridor of no more than four buses total (including school buses and the 172X) is recommended.

It is also recommended that footpaths be provided on one side of the roads traversed by the 172X and 168X to reduce road safety hazards. For all options where a bus is retained on the corridor, it is suggested the Council implement parking restrictions where the road rules do not allow drivers to park, notifying affected residents. Drivers (under the road rules) are not allowed to park within 10m of intersections or at bus stops, but these locations are not signposted. The provision of parking signage would reduce the risk of drivers parking in areas where they are not permitted and support safe driving in the corridor.

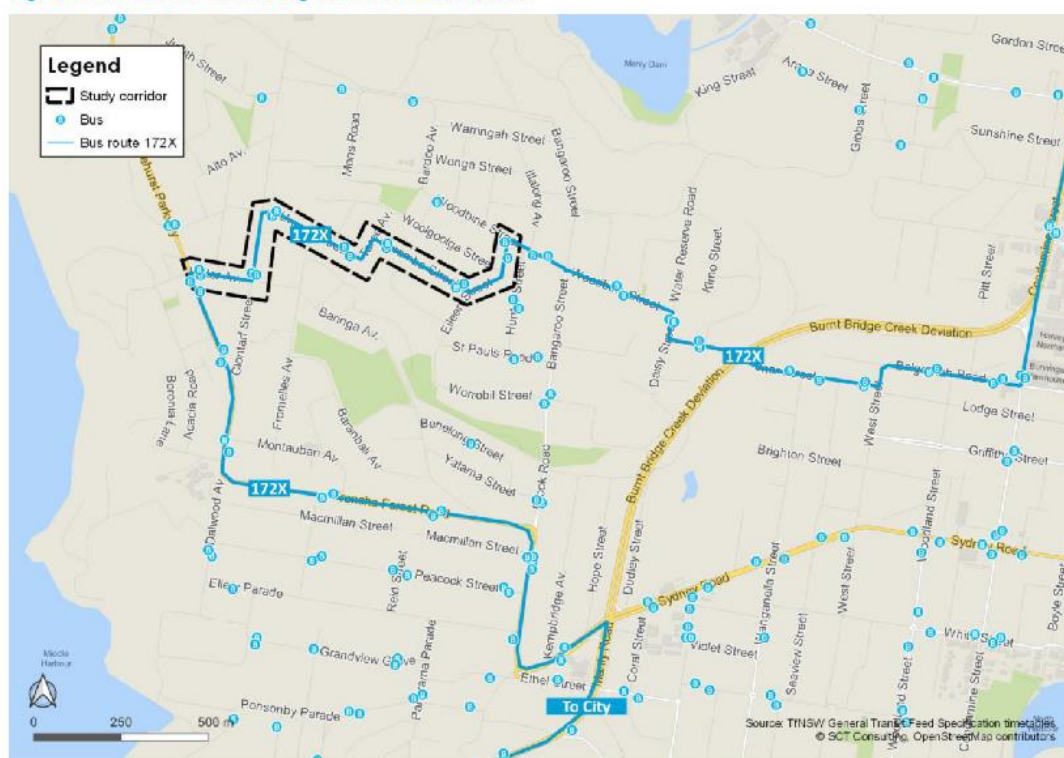
Regardless of the broader service planning imperative, the current proposal by TfNSW for the corridor is not appropriate. Further reductions in frequency and removal of all articulated buses are necessary for the safety of TfNSW's customers and the impacted residential community.

## 1.0 Introduction

Bus Route 172X currently operates between Warringah Mall and Wynyard (Sydney CBD) via North Balgowlah. The route was introduced by Transport for NSW in December 2020 as a consolidated replacement of several local and express bus routes.

SCT Consulting has been engaged by Northern Beaches Council to assess the implications of the route change in response to safety, accessibility and traffic congestion issues raised by residents. Specifically, the issues related to the section of the route between Wakehurst Parkway and Woodbine Street in North Balgowlah, where the bus operates along local roads (**Figure 1-1**). This section of the route is henceforth referred to as the “study corridor”.

Figure 1-1 Route 172X –North Balgowlah section of the route



### 1.1 Timetable changes (December 2020)

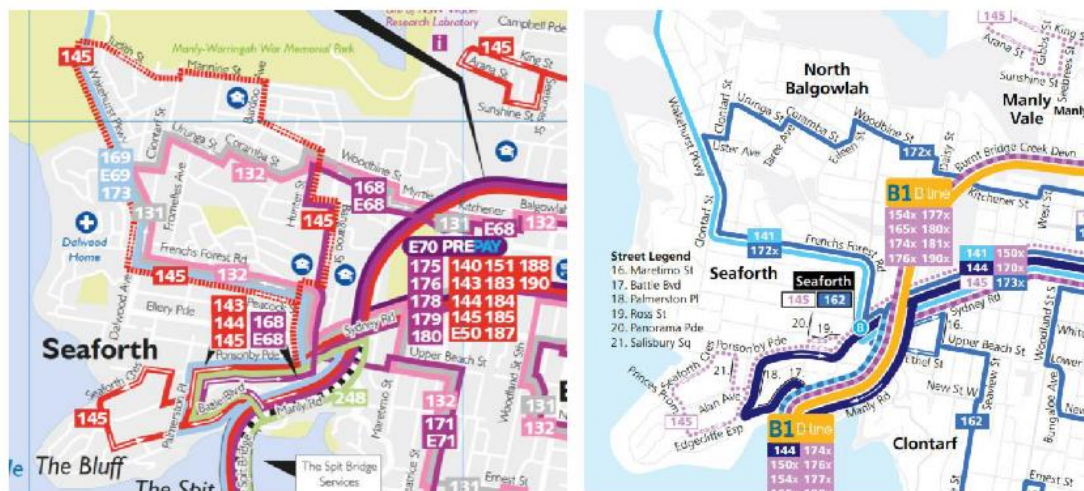
As illustrated in Figure 1-2, before December 2020, the wider study area was served by several routes including:

- Routes 131 and 132 which operated along the study corridor, connecting to nearby centres of Manly and Brookvale
- Routes 169, 169X (E69) and 173 which operated along Wakehurst Parkway through to North Sydney or Sydney CBD
- Routes 168 and 168X which operated to the east of the study area along Bangaroo Street through to North Sydney or Sydney CBD.

Following the timetable change in December 2020, routes were consolidated into a single service, Route 172X, operating through the study corridor. Key outcomes of this change were a reduction in coverage in the local area and increased bus frequency along Clontarf Street, Urunga Street, Coramba Street and Eileen Street, which form the corridor of this study.



Figure 1-2 Bus route map - North Balgowlah (Left: pre-December 2020 and Right: post-December 2020)



Source: Sydney Buses Region Guide for Northern Region (Region 8)

The Passenger Transport Act NSW (1990) No 39 states in clause 9D that *"it is a condition of an accreditation of an accredited service operator that carries on a public passenger service by means of a bus that the operator has, and implements, a safety management system that complies with the requirements of this section"*. The safety of the service is therefore critical to the accreditation of any bus service provider that services this corridor.

As TfNSW has declined to participate in this study, SCT Consulting is unable to comment on the rationale for Route 172X, including route choice, service frequency and vehicle fleet used. This is an important limitation in this study as it is surmised that there is a service planning rationale for the fleet, frequency and corridor that cannot be elaborated on.

## 1.2 Resident concerns

Residents affected by the introduction of Route172X and associated changes to other bus routes raised the following issues to the NSW Legislative Assembly in March 2021:

- A significant increase in the number of busses passing through the middle of North Balgowlah and the associated safety risks, especially to children;
- A significant reduction in peak period services and the accessibility of those services;
- The removal of services that directly connect with the North Sydney area; and
- A significant increase in traffic congestion around the Seaforth interchange area.

The petition was raised and submitted to request Transport for NSW to engage with the local community to review the bus routes.

As part of the project, SCT Consulting reviewed further community correspondence and attended community consultation in May 2021 to understand resident concerns and suggestions. Key considerations and feedback are summarised in **Appendix A**. The resident's preferred scheme is also included in this appendix for information.

### 1.3 Report purpose

The purpose of the report is to mitigate road safety concerns in the identified study corridor, considering the road environment and bus servicing. This report considers:

- **Section 2:** transport planning, traffic engineering and pavement conditions of the study area
- **Section 3:** potential options to address road safety issues highlighted in Section 2
- **Section 4:** conclusions of the study

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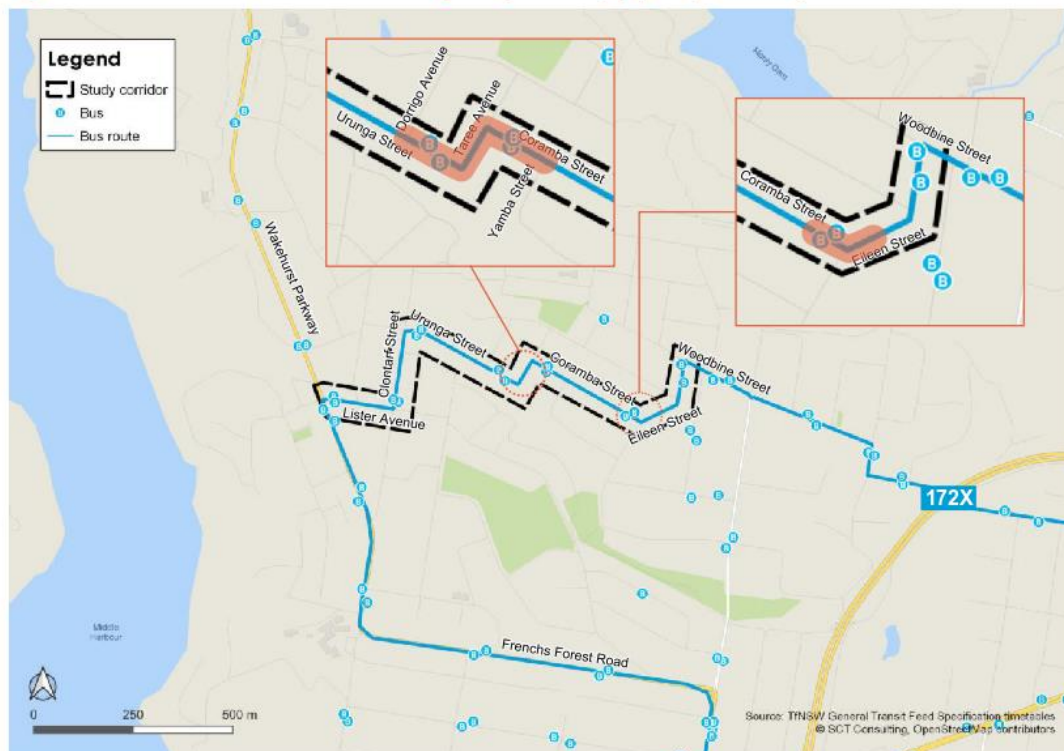


## 2.0 Review of the study corridor

### 2.1 Bus Route 172X alignment

Bus Route 172X currently operates through the study corridor between Wakehurst Parkway and Woodbine through several residential streets as shown in Figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1 Route 172X – section of the route through study corridor (key pinch points in red)



Though the entire study corridor consists of narrow streets which restrict bus manoeuvrability, there are several notable pinch points where buses experience particular difficulty navigating the geometry. The pinch points include (and highlighted in Figure 2-1):

- Section of the corridor between Dorrig Avenue and Yamba Street due to the quick succession of tight turns.
- The intersection of Coramba Street and Eileen Street due to the steep slope of Eileen Street and the presence of kerbside parking reducing the usable road width.

The subsequent sections in this chapter explore the safety issues of current bus operations throughout this corridor and the impact they may have on residents in the area.



Northern Beaches Council



## 2.2 Swept path assessment

Swept path assessment was conducted to assess the manoeuvrability of buses through the corridor and identify opportunities for buses to safely pass opposing vehicles or other buses. For the assessment, a 2.1m kerbside parking lane width was adopted and both rigid (12.5m) and articulated (18m) buses were assessed. This represents a typical parked car dimension based on *2890.5-1993 Parking Facilities Part 5: On-street Parking*. Key elements of the swept path analysis have been incorporated within this section, with the detailed swept path drawings included in **Appendix B**.

Overall, the narrow nature of the residential corridor restricts the ability of buses to pass one another throughout the corridor except at select locations. The presence of parked vehicles on both sides of the road further constrains the effective operating width of the corridor. Along Urunga Street and Taree Avenue, the combination of the narrow corridor and parked vehicles also restricts buses passing oncoming private vehicles.

An extract of the swept path through the corridor is shown in **Figure 2-2** at Lister Avenue. The overlap of the red eastbound path and blue westbound path illustrates the inability of buses to pass each other except at highlighted locations. As noted earlier, swept paths have been undertaken for the corridor and included in Appendix B.

Figure 2-2 Rigid (12.5m) bus swept path along Lister Avenue



Source: BTE Consulting, 2021

Based on findings of the swept path analysis, passing opportunities are limited to the following locations:

- Bus stops on Lister Avenue near Wakehurst Parkway
- Bus stops on Clontarf Street near Lister Avenue
- Bus stops on Urunga Street near Clontarf Street
- Bus stops on Coramba Street near Taree Avenue
- Intersection of Coramba Street and Yamba Street
- Bus stops on Coramba Street near Eileen Street
- Intersection of Eileen Street and Woolgoolga Street.

The outcomes of the swept path assessment are consistent with video footage<sup>1</sup> shared by residents showing buses reversing to or holding at passing locations to allow each other to pass. The inability of buses to pass each other is prevalent throughout the length of the corridor.

Bus movements are also a risk to vehicles parked along the study corridor. The narrow lane widths and bus manoeuvring requirements may result in parked vehicles being sideswiped by passing buses. Additionally, the tight radius corners in the road and narrow lane widths are not conducive for accommodating buses and their wider turning arcs comfortably. This is a particular issue evident along Urunga Street and Taree Avenue between Dorrig Avenue and Coramba Street as illustrated in **Figure 2-3**. Multiple vehicles are identified as impacted by bus movements. Given these vehicles are parked legally based on current permissions and signage, this presents a

<sup>1</sup> [https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHzqV4dZjk\\_KRsSK1llKxOV7LrtcnmN](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLHzqV4dZjk_KRsSK1llKxOV7LrtcnmN)

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considerable safety and operational risk. Evidence has been supplied of vehicle incidents by residents which is consistent with this analysis.

**Figure 2-3 Rigid (12.5m) bus swept path between Urunga Street and Coramba Street**



Source: BTE Consulting, 2021

Passing opportunities for articulated buses are even more scarce in the corridor and these buses would have increased difficulty navigating through Urunga Street to Coramba Street. **Figure 2-4** illustrates bus movements along this section and indicates tighter movement along Coramba Street. The extended length and wider turning path of the vehicle make pinch points more challenging to negotiate.

**Figure 2-4 Articulated (18m) bus swept path between Urunga Street and Coramba Street**



Source: BTE Consulting, 2021

Importantly, regardless of the presence of parked cars, the manoeuvring of the articulated buses is not compatible with oncoming traffic in Taree Avenue. If all the parking were theoretically to be removed, the articulated buses may be able to pass oncoming vehicles or buses on Taree Avenue. However, buses would cross into the opposing lane to negotiate the turns at Urunga Street and Coramba Street and may conflict with oncoming vehicles. This may require bus or car reversing manoeuvres on a public road, which is a road safety hazard.

The service planning need for articulated buses can't be confirmed with the data available. It may be the case that either due to bus crowding outside of the corridor or the need to supply articulated fleet to other routes, that the operator values supplying articulated buses on this corridor. Regardless of the service planning need, the corridor is not suitable for this vehicle type.

Overall, the swept path analysis highlights the restricted nature of the corridor and the limited number of passing opportunities available for opposing buses. These constraints pose a risk to both bus operations and the safety of other road users and residents. However it is noted, these risks can be mitigated depending on the frequency of buses, how often they are required to pass another bus in the opposing direction and the removal of the articulated fleet.



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## 2.3 Frequency

The 172X bus route operates with a high frequency during the AM and PM peak periods. **Table 2-1** below summarises the frequency of city inbound and outbound services throughout the day. This is approximately a service every eight minutes in the AM peak, and once every six minutes in the PM peak.

**Table 2-1 Frequency of Route 172X bus services**

Peak period	From	To	City inbound services	City outbound services
AM peak	6:00:00 AM	8:00:00 AM	14	2
Interpeak	8:00:00 AM	5:00:00 PM	18	12
PM peak	5:00:00 PM	7:00:00 PM	6	16
Off peak	7:00:00 PM	6:00:00 AM	6	9
Saturday	12:00:00 AM	12:00:00 AM	18	17
Sunday and public holidays	12:00:00 AM	12:00:00 AM	18	17

Source: Transport for NSW GTFS, 2021

School buses also operate in this corridor, with route 730n travelling along Urunga Street once between 7–8am and 3–4pm, and 614n also operating on the same route between 3–4pm.

Previously, the 132 bus service operated a similar route as the 172X with a noticeably lower frequency. Timetables from April 2020, summarised in **Table 2-2**, show the 132 bus route operated fewer services in both the AM and PM peak. The frequency equates to a service every 15 minutes during the AM peak and every 12 minutes during the PM peak. It is noted that access difficulties were already being experienced during the operation of Route 132.

**Table 2-2 Frequency of Route 132 bus services**

Peak period	From	To	City inbound services	City outbound services
AM peak	6:00:00 AM	8:00:00 AM	6	1
Interpeak	8:00:00 AM	5:00:00 PM	12	13
PM peak	5:00:00 PM	7:00:00 PM	5	4
Off peak	7:00:00 PM	6:00:00 AM	7	8
Saturday	12:00:00 AM	12:00:00 AM	19	20
Sunday and public holidays	12:00:00 AM	12:00:00 AM	18	19

Source: Transport for NSW GTFS, 2020

Overall, more than 20 additional bus services operate through the study corridor over a weekday with the new timetable. Most of this increase is during the AM and PM peak where frequency doubles with the 172X compared to the 132 (illustrated in **Figure 2-5**).

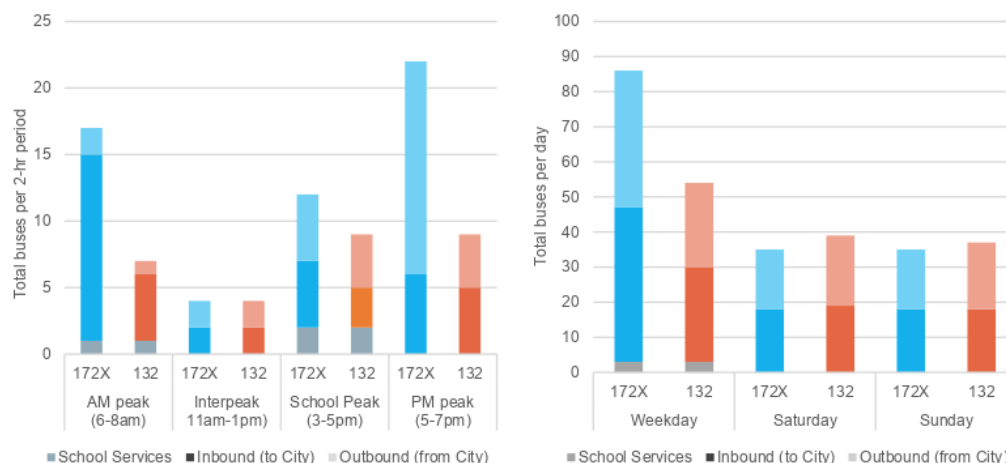
It is noted the increased frequency of services during the peak period may result in reduced wait times for residents. Though it is noted that residents were previously willing to walk further (including to Wakehurst Parkway or North Balgowlah shops) to access higher frequency services.

Overall, the current local road environment, as shown in the swept path assessment, is not able to safely accommodate the increased bus intensity. The increased frequency increases the likelihood of inbound and outbound buses using the narrow corridor at the same time increases. The impact and likelihood of this 'crossover' is discussed in more detail in **Section 2.4**.

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Figure 2-5 Comparison of peak period and daily frequency through study corridor



## 2.4 Crossovers

The narrow width of the road currently prevents buses travelling in opposite directions to safely pass each other in certain instances. The study corridor consists of primarily residential streets with private vehicles parked on either side of the road. In some instances, there is only one travel lane due to parking on both sides of the street and bus drivers are required to coordinate with each other to pass. These instances are referred to as "crossovers" in this report. Extreme scenarios require buses to reverse at intersections to create sufficient room for other buses to manoeuvre past them. The implications of crossovers (and associated manoeuvring) include safety risks to residents and operational risks for the bus service.

Crossover events are currently inevitable due to the bi-directional nature of Route 172X and the frequency of services. Currently, Route 172X services arrive approximately every four minutes during peak periods. At this frequency there is a high probability that a bus will enter the corridor while another is travelling in the opposite direction, resulting in a crossover. Analysis of the General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) was undertaken to calculate the number of crossovers based on the route timetable and is presented in **Table 2-3**. Crossovers are most common in the PM peak due to the combination of high-frequency peak (from City) services and regular contra-peak (to City) services.

Table 2-3 Crossovers during weekday peak periods

Weekday Peaks	From	To	Crossovers
AM	6:00:00 AM	8:00:00 AM	3
Interpeak	8:00:00 AM	5:00:00 PM	4
PM	5:00:00 PM	7:00:00 PM	8
Off peak	7:00:00 PM	6:00:00 AM	0

Source: Transport for NSW GTFS, 2021

The crossover locations were approximated by identifying when opposing services are expected to crossover based on the service timetable. Based on the analysis, crossovers are expected to be concentrated at either side of the corridors, at Lister Avenue and Eileen Street, as shown in **Table 2-4**. As this analysis was conducted using the timetable, the locations of crossovers may not reflect the actual operation of buses as services may run ahead or behind schedule.

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Table 2-4 Crossover locations according to timetable schedule

Section	Crossovers
Lister Avenue (TSN 209230/209229) – Clontarf Street (TSN 209228/209227)	6
Clontarf Street (TSN 209228/209227) – Urunga Street (TSN 209346/209345)	3
Urunga Street (TSN 209346/209345) – Urunga Street (TSN 2093184/209344)	0
Urunga Street (TSN 2093184/209344) – Coramba Street (TSN 209343/209342)	0
Coramba Street (TSN 209343/209342) – Coramba Street (TSN 209341/209340)	2
Coramba Street (TSN 209341/209340) – Eileen Street (TSN 2093183/209339)	6

Source: Transport for NSW GTFS, 2021

Timetable analysis indicates there should be no crossover instances along the worst section of the corridor, between Urunga Street and Coramba Street. However, observations of the corridor including footage shared by residents indicate this is not the case. Services running faster than schedule or more commonly delayed services result in crossover locations shifting along the corridor including the section between Urunga Street and Coramba Street.

In addition to crossovers, residents have also observed the bunching of services (in particular outbound services from Sydney CBD during the PM peak). This bunching compounds the impact of crossovers as buses (and other vehicles) may be required to pass several consecutive buses at a time. As such, there may be more than ten crossovers per hour in busy peak periods if services don't run according to timetable.

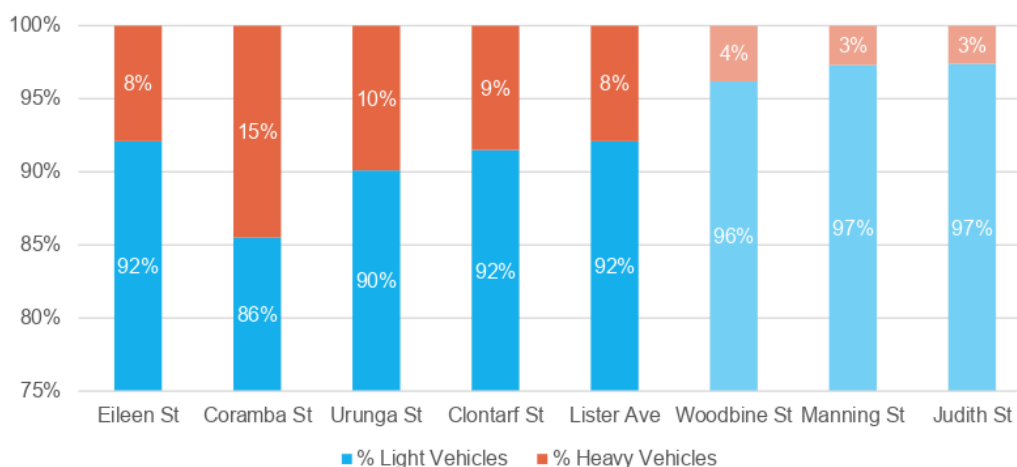
Ultimately the frequency of the 172X will inevitably lead to crossovers. To compound this issue the narrow geometry and constraints of the study corridor may also be delaying buses due to the limited manoeuvrability available to drivers. In these scenarios, bus operation will become increasingly delayed during peak periods as buses must coordinate and manoeuvre to safely pass each other.

## 2.5 Heavy vehicle proportions

The peak heavy vehicle proportions along some streets of the corridor are unusually high considering the surrounding residential land use. **Figure 2-6** highlights the average weekly heavy vehicle proportion for streets along the corridor.

Heavy vehicle proportion typically does not exceed 3-5% within residential areas. However, the entire corridor exceeds this threshold likely due to the presence of buses, with Coramba Street tripling the threshold. For comparison, Woodbine Street, Manning Street and Judith Street have a noticeably lower proportion of heavy vehicles which is more representative of residential areas.

Figure 2-6 Average weekly heavy vehicle proportion



Source: CFE Information Technologies, 2021



During peak periods, heavy vehicle proportions further increase in the peak direction of travel. In the peak direction for bus travel (westbound in the morning and eastbound in the evening), heavy vehicle proportion peaks at 15 per cent at Urunga Street and 30 per cent at Coramba Street. These proportions far exceed the norm for this function of road given the surrounding land use and intended function of the road.

The abnormally high presence of heavy vehicles may increase the risk of injury and property damage to other road users (including pedestrians) and property. The narrowness of the lanes places pedestrians and residents at risk of sideswipes by heavy vehicles when accessing their private vehicles or attempting to cross the road. Additionally, Eileen Street is denoted as an on-road cycleway, increasing the number of potentially vulnerable road users.

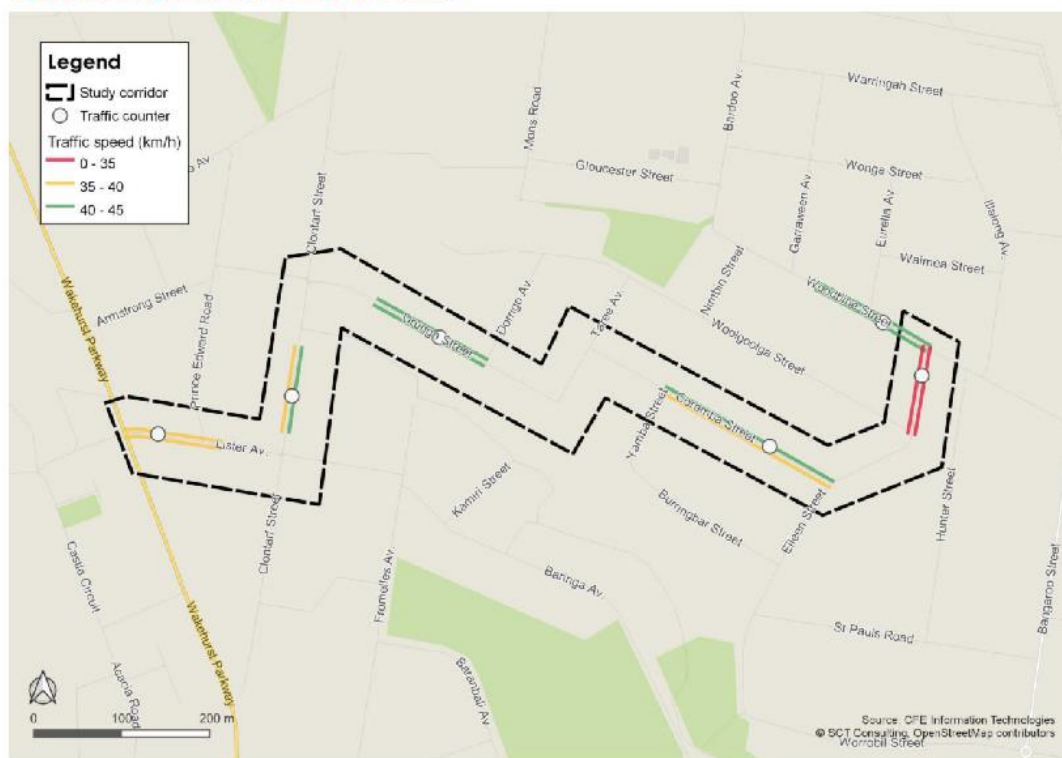
## 2.6 Road speeds

Traffic speeds along the corridor are typical for the surrounding residential area with a posted speed limit of 40 km/h. **Figure 2-7** shows average directional speeds at surveyed locations. Speeds across the corridor were generally observed to be approximately 40 km/h.

Slightly lower average speeds (approximately 34 km/h) were observed at Eileen Street near Woodbine Street. The lower average speed at Eileen Street may be caused by a combination of the delay to turn onto Woodbine Street, reduced sight distances around bend, slope and interaction with moving or stopped buses.

Vehicles may travel slower approaching or exiting the bend near Woolgoolga Street, and heavier vehicles may accelerate slower uphill, contributing to the lower observed speed.

**Figure 2-7 Average traffic speeds along the corridor**



## 2.7 Suitability of pavement for design load

A pavement assessment was conducted by MM Geomechanics on the 30th of April 2021 along the corridor. Findings of the assessment, included in **Appendix C**, identified pavement distresses along the entirety of the corridor. These included crocodile cracking, rutting and depression as the dominant mode of pavement distress.

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Eileen Street is the most severely affected location along the corridor, followed by Urunga Street. These locations potentially require in-situ stabilisation or total reconstruction to treat the damage. To a lesser extent, Coramba Street and Taree Avenue may also require similar treatment.

Potential causes of pavement distress could be any or a combination of the following:

- Age of pavement
- Inadequate pavement thickness
- Structural overloading.

It is not possible to determine whether the cause of failure (or degree of contribution) is related to the presence of buses or increase in bus frequency. It is noted that given the age of the pavement and poor condition, ongoing use by heavy vehicles (including buses) without treatment will exacerbate the issues and accelerate pavement deterioration. The presence of the bus frequency would also increase the costs of pavement rehabilitation or frequency of rehabilitation works as the bus frequency increases the design load.

## 2.8 Service planning

From a customer coverage perspective, the majority of North Balgowlah is within the walking catchment of an existing bus route and stop. As illustrated in **Figure 2-8**, the 400m straight line (or as the “crow flies”) distance, which generally adopted as a proxy for a 5 minute walk covers most of the region.

Without Route 172X, only a segment through the centre is no longer covered, illustrated in **Figure 2-9**. Therefore, the catchment of Route 172X significantly overlaps with other bus services. Consequently, Route 172X may not be required to operate through the study corridor from a customer perspective or at least not at the current frequency.

Additionally, a review of Opal patronage data for the study corridor and surrounds indicates that customer patronage does not warrant the additional service capacity delivered by the frequency or articulated vehicles to serve the immediate region. Therefore, it is likely the higher frequency is provided to serve locations further along the route and the use of articulated vehicles may be to manage and relocate the fleet to improve operational efficiency.

**Figure 2-8 Bus coverage (straight line 400m catchment)**

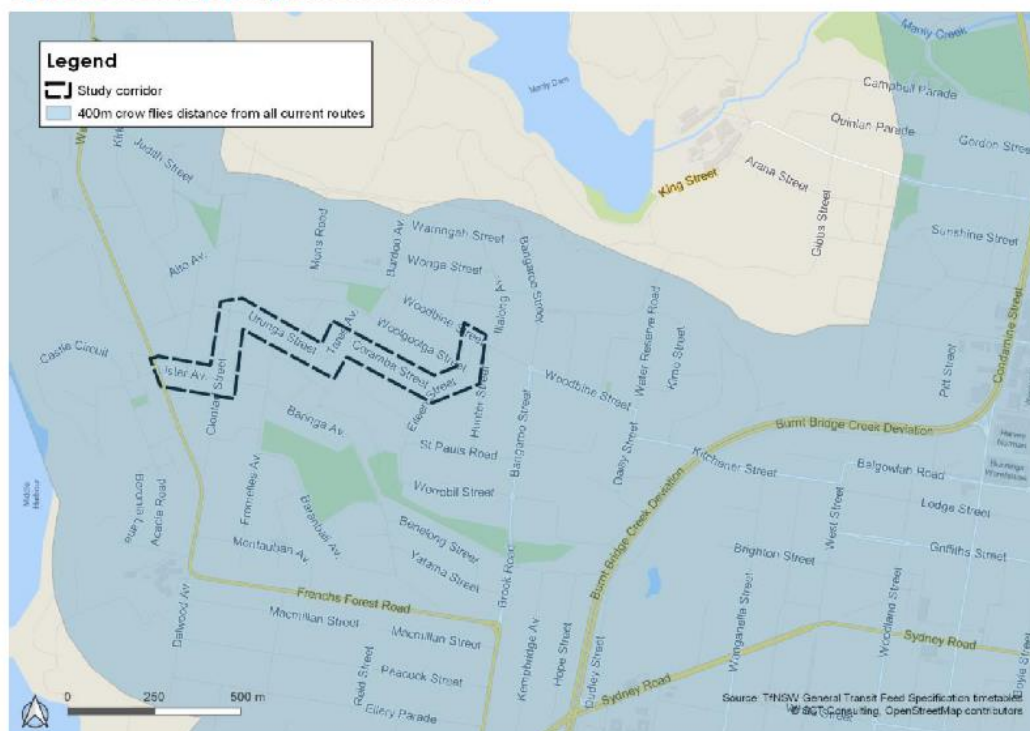
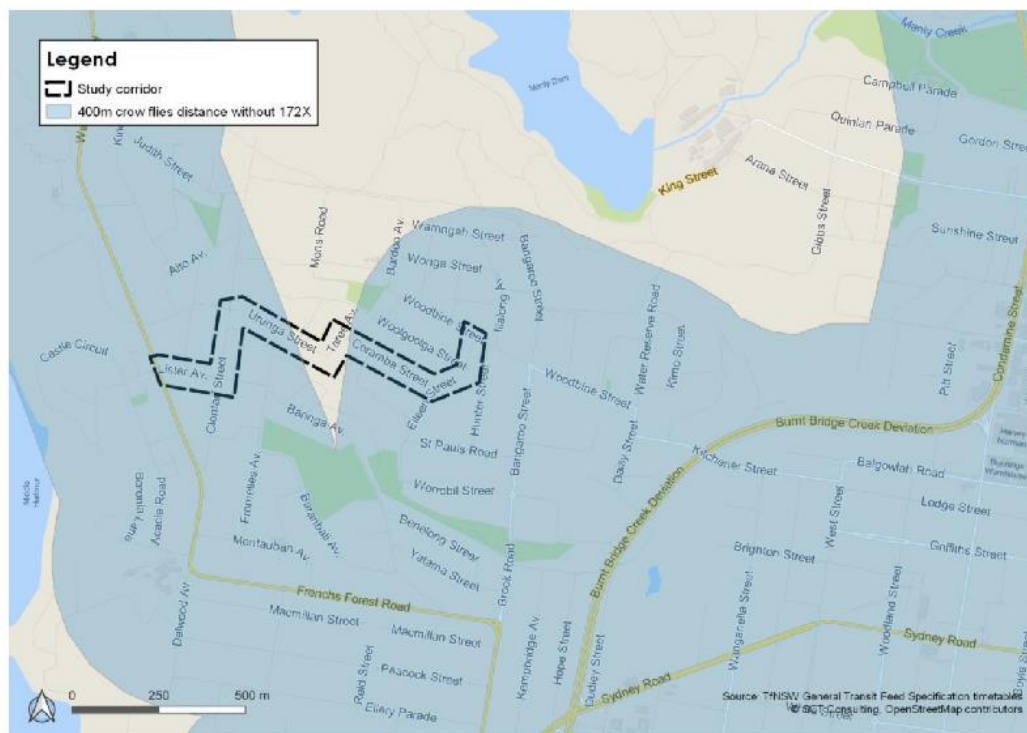


Figure 2-9 Bus coverage (straight line 400m catchment) without 172X



Hence, Route 172X provides an important bus service for customers in this area. Community consultation was undertaken May 2021 (summarised in **Appendix A**) indicated a variety of views on the bus operations. The community consultation included residents from the study area and potentially surrounding areas of North Balgowlah. Based on the consultation, a small proportion of residents were looking for the route to be retained with the current frequency while the majority sought for it to be reduced in frequency to be similar to the historic Bus Route 132 or removed entirely.



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## 3.0 Options

### 3.1 Overview

To address concerns along the study corridor four potential options have been developed and assessed. These options have been developed based on stakeholder feedback to balance the safety, amenity, and operational considerations of operating Route 172X through North Balgowlah.

Options include:

1. TfNSW revised Route 172X operation which includes a reduction in service frequency through the study corridor and the reinstatement of Route 168X and the short-running of some Route 172X services (from Wakehurst Parkway). Some parking restrictions are also required.
2. Community proposed scheme<sup>2</sup> which builds on Option 1 to further reduce bus frequency through the corridor and restricts the bus fleet to 12.5m rigid buses. This scheme is intended to avoid (or minimize) the removal of parking.
3. Divert Route 172X to alternative east-west roads
4. Truncate Route 172X to Wakehurst Parkway, North Balgowlah and re-instate Route 168X

The following sections discuss the development of these options and the comparative assessment of options, including the current conditions and pre-Dec 2020 conditions.

### 3.2 Options development

#### 3.2.1 Considerations

In developing the options for assessment, the following themes and ideas were considered based on stakeholder feedback and physical considerations:

- Bus operations
  - **Bus vehicle size:** Swept path analysis (**Section 2.2**) illustrates that articulated buses cannot operate through the study corridor.
  - **Bus service frequency:** minimising the occurrence of crossovers in the study corridor. In response to this feedback, TfNSW has provided a revised service frequency (discussed in Section 3.2.2) which reduces the risk of crossovers.
- Bus route
  - **One-way loop:** a loop option was considered but ruled out as not feasible as alternative routes within a very short walk (e.g. Dorrigo Avenue) are similarly constrained as the current 172X corridor. For instance, Dorrigo Avenue is narrower than Urunga Street, so not suitable for introducing buses.
  - Re-instate alternative routes to reduce (or remove) buses from the study corridor.
- Kerbside allocation
  - **Consider designating bus stops as bus zones:** If bus stops are retained in the study corridor, it is recommended the provision of bus zones to support existing bus stops be progressed. This bus zone would improve user safety, provide sufficient space for buses to draw in and out of bus stops and provide a gap for buses to wait if passing is required.
  - **Consider formalising no-stopping zones:** Currently, there are various locations along the corridor where parking is not legally permitted under the road rules. However, these locations may be unclear to drivers as there is no signage. Parking in these regions would impede manoeuvrability and safety in the corridor.

<sup>2</sup> It is noted the community preferred scheme also includes the reinstatement of Route 169 which previously provided additional capacity and service frequency adjacent to the study corridor along Wakehurst Parkway. However, it is not within the scope of this study to assess the viability or need of Route 169, or its potential benefits compared to Route 141 which currently operates along Wakehurst Parkway. It is recommended TfNSW engage with community to discuss opportunities.

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- Road space allocation
  - Widespread parking removal along the corridor was not considered feasible in a residential environment. From a safety perspective, kerbside parking provides an important buffer between vehicles and pedestrians, especially where footpaths are not provided on every street and limited building setback. Additionally, the limited setback restricts driveway parking to one vehicle, hence kerbside parking is relied upon by residents and visitors.
  - Kerb re-alignment to increase road width would be of limited benefit in the study corridor. The existing building setback is at or near minimum requirements, hence there is limited flexibility to increase road space by a sufficient margin to make a significant improvement for bus accessibility.
  - Kerb re-configuration (or trimming) to improve corner radius may help in select locations. However, the re-configuration would not result in sufficient additional space to offset the need for parking removal, hence of limited benefit for the study corridor. Additionally, the cost associated with utility relocation at some locations may be prohibitive.
- Footpath provision
  - A footpath should be provided, at least on one side of the road corridor, to reduce the number of pedestrians needing to walk along the road. It was observed that due to narrow verge widths and planting that most pedestrians were more comfortable walking along the road carriageway. Regardless of the bus servicing decisions, the provision of footpaths would reduce the road safety risk of pedestrians.

### 3.2.2 Transport for NSW revised proposal

Concurrently to this study Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has reviewed the operations Route 172X in response to community feedback. The feedback, from the North Balgowlah community, is consistent with the feedback documented in this study and focuses on the frequency of Route 172X in and around Urunga Street.

The TfNSW proposal includes three key changes:

- Reduction of service frequency in peak periods as summarised in **Table 3-1**
- Re-introduction of the Route 168X to offset the capacity reduction to City of the reduced 172X frequency.
- Prioritisation of rigid buses (up to 12.5m) over longer articulated buses (18m) for Route 172X.

**Table 3-1 Proposed Route 172X frequency for services using Urunga Street**

Direction	6-7am	7-8am	8-9am	9-10am	3-4pm	4-5pm	5-6pm	6-7pm
Inbound (to City)	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	2
Outbound (from City)	0	2	1	2	3	3	3	3
Total	3	5	4	4	6	5	4	5

Source: NSW Government (2021, May) *Have your say on the North Balgowlah bus route review*. My Sydney.  
[https://www.mysydney.nsw.gov.au/Have\\_your\\_say\\_on\\_the\\_North\\_Balgowlah\\_Bus\\_route\\_review](https://www.mysydney.nsw.gov.au/Have_your_say_on_the_North_Balgowlah_Bus_route_review). Date accessed: 24 May 2021

Based on the information provided by TfNSW (through MySydney website and correspondence), the reduction in frequency could be accommodated by starting two Route 172X services to City from Wakehurst Parkway and reinstatement of Route 168X via Bangaroo Street and Brook Road.

Overall, the TfNSW revised proposal:

- Reduces bus frequency along the study corridor to be roughly consistent with historical operations (with Route 132) during peak periods as illustrated in **Figure 3-1** where “172\*” denotes the revised service.
- Provides faster journey times to and from the City for North Balgowlah customers
- Maintains the overall service levels to and from the City for North Balgowlah and Seaforth customers through the combined capacity and frequency of Route 168X and Route 172X<sup>3</sup>.

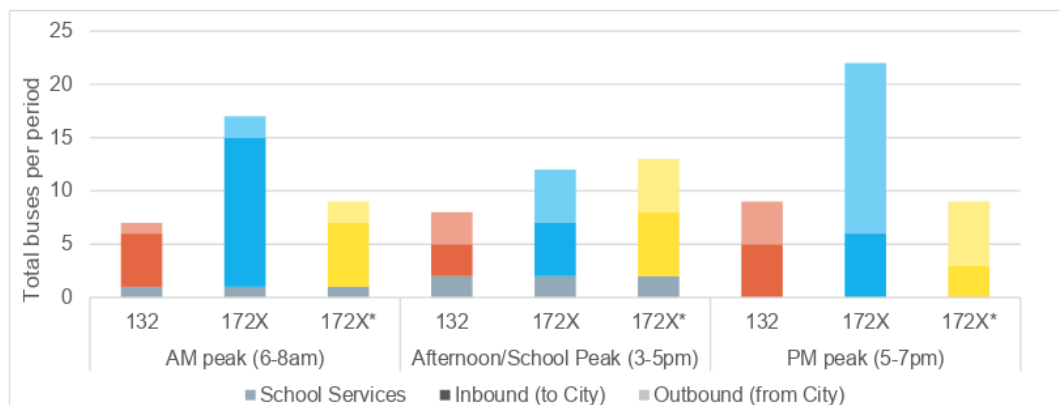
<sup>3</sup> Based on information provided on NSW Government (2021, May) *Have your say on the North Balgowlah bus route review*. This study has not assessed the capacity or service levels of buses outside the study area.



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Figure 3-1 Comparison of bus frequency (including school services) in the study corridor



A detailed service timetable has not been prepared by TfNSW for Route 172X at this stage. Consequently, analysis on the number of potential crossovers (or locations) has not been undertaken.

Though as evident from **Figure 3-1**, total services in the AM and PM peak are significantly lower compared to the current Route 172X operations. Hence it is likely crossover occurrences would reduce in these periods compared to the current operations.

During the afternoon (school) peak period, total services are slightly higher including up to 8 of services between 3pm and 4pm.

### 3.2.3 Assessment options

Based on the stakeholder feedback, physical considerations, review of existing conditions and Transport for NSW's revised Route 172X proposal, 4 options were developed and assessed in this document (as previously introduced in **Section 3.1**).

The breakdown and changes (compared to the current base) of each option is summarised in **Table 3-2**.

Table 3-2 Summary of options for assessment

Consideration	Base	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
<b>Bus operations</b>					
Frequency on local streets	Current	Current	TfNSW Revised	TfNSW Revised	-
The route through North Balgowlah	Current	Current	Current	Alternate	Removed
Fleet (vehicles)	No restriction	No restriction*	12.5m rigid buses only	12.5m rigid buses only	No restriction
Provision of other routes	-	Re-instate 168X	Re-instate 168X	-	Re-instate 168X
<b>Kerbside allocation</b>					
Bus stops/zones	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Removed
Parking reduction	-	Yes	No	No	No

Note (\*) The revised TfNSW proposal does not restrict the use of articulated vehicles through the study corridor, and only commits to "prioritising rigid over the bendy bus option" (NSW Government, May 2021). Hence the assessment assumes that there may still be articulated buses operating on the corridor, albeit at a reduced frequency and lower likelihood of two articulated buses needing to pass each other within the corridor.

### 3.3 Formalised parking and bus zones

As noted previously, throughout the study corridor there is limited signage to demarcate locations for legal parking. Subsequently, residents and visitors may be unknowingly parking vehicles in locations that are not permitted. Parking in these regions would impede manoeuvrability and safety in the corridor and may also have implications concerning insurance coverage in the event of an incident.

These areas generally include the approaches and exits to intersections and cul-de-sacs or similar where parking is not legally permitted within 10 metres (depending on the situation) of the adjacent road under road rules.

Residents have advised that they oppose any new parking restrictions. In the areas where the road network is most constrained, so too are dwelling sizes and lot boundaries. The homes that are located on Urunga Street and Taree Avenue have smaller setbacks and steep topography, with the hill sloping to the south. As illustrated in **Figure 3-2**, many of the driveways can only store one vehicle within the lot boundary to the house (approximately 6-8m). This results in a higher demand for on-street parking than in other streets of the corridor.

Some residents may also use the 4m nature strip controlled by the council to supplement their driveway length. However, this may not be possible with the provision of footpaths on one side of the road. As per the road rules, at no points should vehicles block footpaths, hence increasing the demand for on-street parking.

As illustrated in **Figure 3-2**, the footpath has only been shown on the northern side of the corridor based on the resident feedback and council advice. Though footpaths on both sides of the road are a preferable outcome for accessibility, it is noted that this is not always possible due to constructability.

**Figure 3-2 Limited building setback and associated constraints**



Base map source: SIX Maps

Places, where parking is currently not permitted, is illustrated in **Figure 3-3**. The lack of signage may result in resident and visitors parking throughout the corridor in potentially unsafe locations. Although parking in some existing locations is not allowed, users may not be aware.



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Figure 3-3 Potential current kerbside use



It is recommended that Council consult with residents on the imposing of parking restrictions limited to places where cars are not currently allowed to park. This would improve safety and reduce the risk of residents unknowingly deviating from road rules. The following parking restrictions are suggested for Council's investigation:

- At the approaches and exits to intersections and cul-de-sacs or similar where parking is not legally permitted (i.e. within 10 metres)
- At bus stops by providing a designated bus zone. Typically for a bus stop, a 30m length of kerbside is designated as a bus zone to provide sufficient space for buses to draw in and out of bus stops. These bus zones would improve user safety and have the added benefit of providing a gap for buses to wait if passing is required.

Based on road rules, the areas highlighted in **Figure 3-4** are identified as locations where parking is not allowed. It is recommended that the community be notified before implementing these changes.

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Figure 3-4 Indicative kerbside zones based on road rules

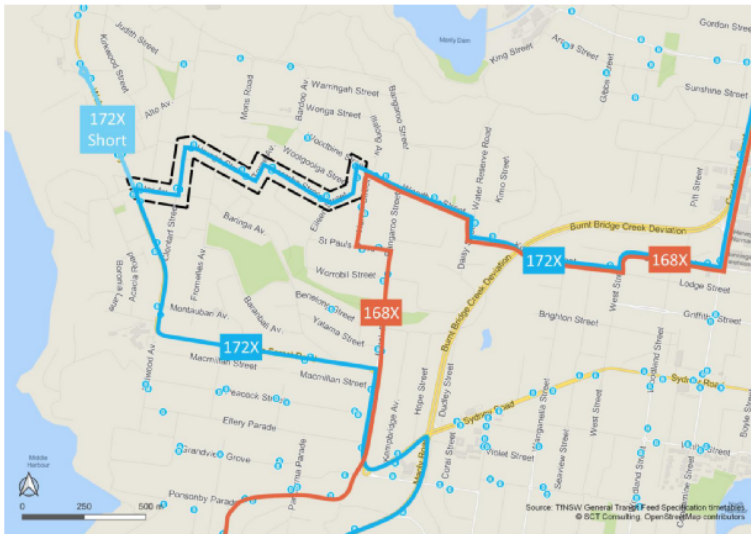
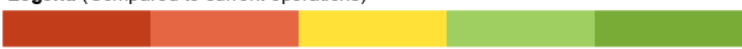




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### 3.4 Option 1: Revised Route 172X operations (TfNSW) with Route 168X and parking restrictions

Route map	Criteria	
	Customer coverage	Existing stops and route retained
	Service capacity (for North Balgowlah)	Decreased capacity through the corridor, however still sufficient for corridor based on Opal data.
	Service capacity (region to/from City)	Capacity supplemented by 168X and short-running 172X services
	Number of buses on local streets	Bus frequency in AM and PM peak reduced to half of the current frequency.
	Likelihood of bus crossover	Reduction during AM and PM peak hour, however potentially increased during school peak.
	Likelihood of complex bus manoeuvring	Articulated buses may still be used on the corridor and the likelihood of crossovers remains
	Parking impacts on local streets	Significant parking removal to safely accommodate 18m articulated vehicles
Service planning considerations		TfNSW has provided no information regarding implications on service planning
<b>Legend (Compared to current operations)</b> 		
Significant deterioration		No change
Significant improvement		

#### Considerations

Articulated buses cannot be safely accommodated within the project corridor even with significant parking removal. Issues such as the sight-distance restrictions at Taree Avenue may result in incidents or buses needing to reverse if vehicles are travelling in the opposing direction. This precludes the safe use of articulated buses within the corridor. To safely accommodate 12.5m buses, parking removal includes:

- 1 space on Lister Avenue (near Wakehurst Parkway)
- 3 spaces on Clontarf Street (near Urunga Street)
- 1 space on Eileen Street (near Woodbine Street)
- 6 spaces on Taree Avenue
- 2 spaces on Urunga Street (near Taree Avenue)

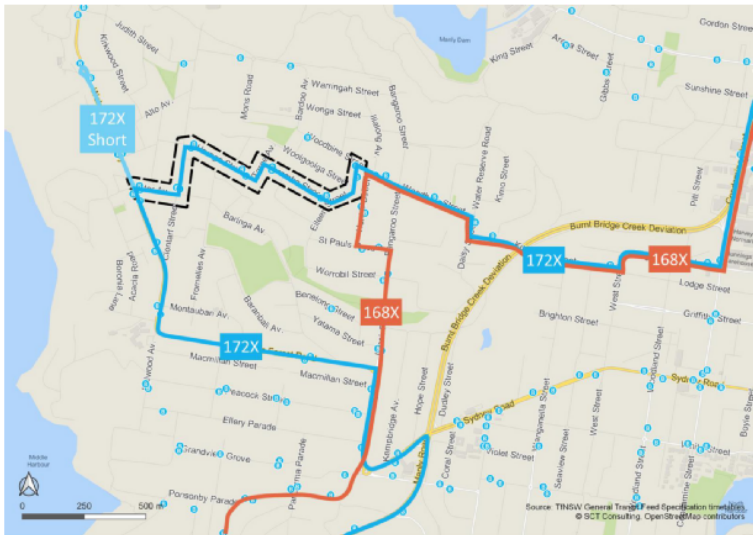
Use of the Seaforth Oval car park for short-running services has been considered to facilitate this and is included in **Appendix B**. It is noted the use of the car park may be problematic on weekends due to the heavy use of the parking for sport-related activities.



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### 3.5 Option 2: Community proposed scheme with further frequency reduction, fleet restriction and no parking restrictions

Route map	Criteria	
	Customer coverage	Existing stops and route retained
	Service capacity (for North Balgowlah)	Decreased capacity through the corridor, however still sufficient for corridor based on Opal data.
	Service capacity (region to/from City)	Capacity supplemented by 168X and short-running 172X services and re-introduction of 169X.
	Number of buses on local streets	Bus frequency in all periods reduced to at least half of the current frequency.
	Likelihood of bus crossover	Frequency reduced and services timetabled to reduce crossover likelihood to (or near) zero
	Likelihood of complex bus manoeuvring	Restriction to rigid buses reduces the need for complex movements (including reversing)
	Parking impacts on local streets	No parking removal (if adopted) bar those required by statutory requirements near intersections and bus stops
Service planning considerations		TfNSW has provided no information regarding implications on fleet
<b>Legend (Compared to current operations)</b>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 33%; height: 15px; background-color: #e67e22;"></div> <div style="width: 33%; height: 15px; background-color: #f1c40f;"></div> <div style="width: 33%; height: 15px; background-color: #27ae60;"></div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Significant deterioration</span> <span>No change</span> <span>Significant improvement</span> </div>		

#### Considerations

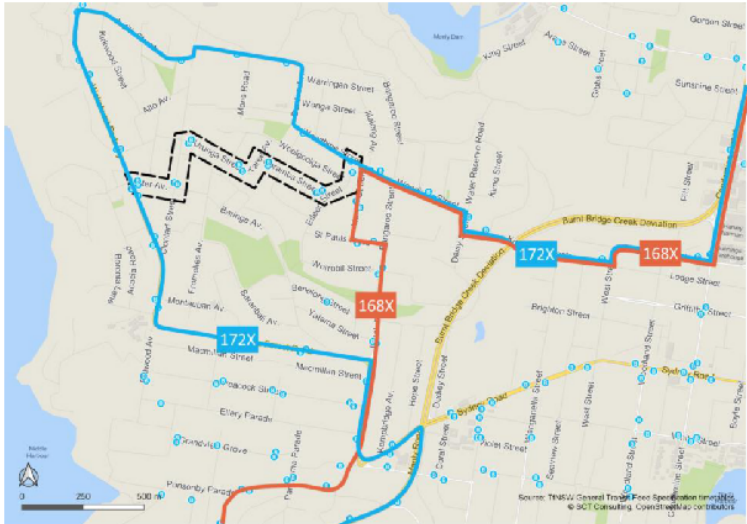

Further frequency reductions are necessary to reduce the risk of bus crossovers. The community is not posing any changes to parking as a part of this option. However it is noted, buses may be required to widen their turning path by crossing into the opposing lane to complete turning manoeuvres without impacting parked vehicles. Taree Avenue would still have constrained operations due to the narrowness of the lane and the presence of on-street parking.

Use of the Seaforth Oval car park for short-running services has been considered to facilitate this and is included in **Appendix B**. It is noted the use of the car park may be problematic on weekends due to the heavy use of the parking for sport-related activities. Residents would prefer re-instatement of the 169X, which uses Aquatic Drive to turnaround buses.

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### 3.6 Option 3: Divert Route 172X to alternative east-west roads

Route map	Criteria	
	Customer coverage	Coverage of North Balgowlah retained albeit slightly longer walk distance for nearest stop.
	Service capacity (for North Balgowlah)	Capacity through North Balgowlah retained
	Service capacity (region to/from City)	Capacity supplemented by 168X
	Number of buses on local streets	Buses are transferred to an alternative residential corridor. The proximity to Balgowlah North Public School may result in poorer community outcome.
	Likelihood of bus crossover	The proximity to the school (and associated drop-off and pick-up traffic) may result in an increased crossover with private vehicles.
	Likelihood of complex bus manoeuvring	Restriction to rigid buses and more passing opportunities reduces the need for complex movements (including reversing), albeit only slightly.
	Parking impacts on local streets	Parking removal (albeit limited) required on the alternative route to accommodate rigid buses
	Service planning considerations	TfNSW has provided no information regarding implications on fleet
<b>Legend</b> (Compared to current operations) 		
Significant deterioration      No change      Significant improvement		

Upper Clontarf Street between Judith Street and Manning Street present similar constraints to Taree Avenue (on current route). The narrow road and tight turns restrict bus manoeuvrability; hence it is recommended only 12.5m rigid buses be used. To accommodate rigid buses, 1 parking space on Upper Clontarf Street may need to be removed. Refer to Appendix B for swept path assessment.

A 3 tonne limit is signposted on Judith Street, Upper Clontarf Street and Manning Avenue, which would not permit a vehicle the size of a bus operating on the corridor. It is understood that TfNSW may seek exceptions for buses, though it would be inconsistent for Council to have a limit, yet buses use the corridor.

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### 3.7 Option 4: Truncate Route 172X to Wakehurst Parkway and re-instate Route 168X

Route map	Criteria		
	Customer coverage	Significant deterioration	Section of study corridor near Taree Avenue up to Manning Avenue is no longer within a 400m straight-line distance of bus routes. Hence some customers may need to walk further
	Service capacity (for North Balgowlah)	Significant deterioration	Capacity through corridor removed.
	Service capacity (region to/from City)	No change	Capacity supplemented by 168X and short-running 172X services
	Number of buses on local streets	Significant improvement	Only school buses operate within the corridor
	Likelihood of bus crossover	Significant improvement	No bus crossover expected as only school services operate.
	Likelihood of complex bus manoeuvring	Significant improvement	Restriction to rigid buses reduces the need for complex movements (including reversing)
	Parking impacts on local streets	No change	Bus stops would need to be retained for the school bus
	Service planning considerations	Significant deterioration	TfNSW has provided no information regarding implications on fleet
<b>Legend (Compared to current operations)</b> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="width: 33%; height: 15px; background-color: #c00000;"></div> <div style="width: 33%; height: 15px; background-color: #ffcc00;"></div> <div style="width: 33%; height: 15px; background-color: #008000;"></div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <span>Significant deterioration</span> <span>No change</span> <span>Significant improvement</span> </div>			
<b>Considerations</b> <p>Since regular route buses have been removed from the project corridor, no parking removal is required. School buses may still be required to widen their turning path by crossing into the opposing lane to complete turning manoeuvres without impacting parked vehicles. Some parking restrictions on Taree Avenue are still recommended to minimise the risk of incidents with parked vehicles and allow sufficient space for buses to pass private vehicles travelling in the opposite direction.</p> <p>Use of the Seaforth Oval car park for short-running services has been considered to facilitate this and is included in <b>Appendix B</b>.</p>			

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### 3.8 Summary of options

As summarised in **Table 3-3**, when considering customer, safety, and operational outcomes the following options result in overall more favourable outcomes compared to the current situation:

- Option 2: Community proposed scheme which incorporates Option 1, but includes further frequency reductions, restricts bus fleet to 12.5m rigid buses and no parking restrictions.
- Option 4: Truncate Route 172X to Wakehurst Parkway, North Balgowlah and re-instate Route 168X

It is noted that the analysis does not include service planning considerations for Transport for NSW and the bus operator. The rationale for route choice, service frequency and vehicle fleet used may be driven by factors outside the study area, however these potential considerations have not been included in the assessment since TfNSW has declined to participate or provide operational input into the study.

**Table 3-3 Comparison of existing operations and options**

Scenario	Current	Pre-Dec 2020	Options			
Considerations			1	2	3	4
Customer coverage						
Service capacity (for North Balgowlah)						
Service capacity (region to/from City)						
Number of buses on local streets						
Likelihood of bus crossover						
Likelihood of complex bus manoeuvres						
Parking impacts on local streets						
Service planning considerations						
Overall	-					

#### Legend

Significant deterioration	No change	Significant improvement			Unknown

Option 2 reduces the likelihood of safety risks by reducing service frequency and restricting bus length. This option could be further improved from a safety and operational perspective with the inclusion of improved parking signage around key constraints in the corridor. Though this study acknowledges the need for on-street parking in supporting the residential community it recommends parking removal to improve safety.

The community have noted that they would also prefer to re-instate Route 169X (or similar type of express, high frequency commuter service) to meet customer demand. Route 169X provided connectivity from the City to Manly via North Balgowlah, Frenchs Forest, and Warringah Mall. Re-instatement of this route improves access to Manly from North Balgowlah as well as providing connectivity to the Frenchs Forest Precinct. The community have noted the desire for a service to Manly. Though outside the scope of this study, it is noted the Route 141 provides currently provides connectivity to Manly and Frenchs Forest albeit infrequently (1 service per hour in each direction).

Option 4 represents the best outcome from a safety perspective on the local roads by truncating Route 172X to the main road (Wakehurst Parkway). Consequently, only 3 school services would operate through the study corridor, minimising the safety risk.

With Option 4, service capacity to and from the City and other key destinations is retained. However, North Balgowlah residents would be required to walk further to reach their closest bus stop on either Wakehurst Parkway (truncated 172X) or Woodbine Street (168X). This decrease in customer convenience slightly lowers the overall attractiveness of this option.

Based on all the factors, Option 2 is recommended. It provides the best balance, by retaining service coverage within North Balgowlah but also substantially improves road safety in the corridor.

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## 4.0 Conclusion

A review of the road safety of the 172X route in the western portion of North Balgowlah indicates that the current bus service is unsuitable for the road network due to the safety of road users. Buses navigate with difficulty in the corridor, needing to reverse in multiple sections due to the tight constraints. The increase of frequency above that of the 132 (April 2020) exacerbates these issues, with buses more frequently needing to pass one another.

The route is currently host to a mix of fleet including articulated buses. The swept path assessment demonstrates that both a 12.5m rigid and 18m articulated bus operate in the corridor with challenges – such as one way traffic only. However, even if all the parking were to be removed, the operation of an articulated bus would still be unsafe.

The condition of the pavement is poor, with pavement distresses along the entirety of the corridor. These included crocodile cracking, rutting and depression as the dominant mode of pavement distress. It is not possible to determine whether the cause of failure (or degree of contribution) is related to the presence of buses or increase in bus frequency. It is noted that given the age of the pavement and poor condition, ongoing use by heavy vehicles (including buses) without treatment will exacerbate the issues and accelerate pavement deterioration. The presence of the bus frequency would also increase the costs of pavement rehabilitation or frequency of rehabilitation works as the bus frequency increases the design load.

SCT Consulting evaluated potential options for the route, being TfNSW's proposal, the resident's proposal, relocating the route and removing the route. Of all the options, the residents' proposal has the best balance between retaining service coverage and navigational safety.

As TfNSW has declined to participate in this study, SCT Consulting is unable to comment on the rationale for Route 172X, including route choice, service frequency and vehicle fleet used. This is an important limitation in this study as it is surmised that there is a service planning rationale for the fleet, frequency and corridor that cannot be elaborated on.

Regardless of the broader service planning imperative, the current proposal by TfNSW for the corridor is not appropriate. Further reductions in frequency and removal of all articulated buses are necessary for the safety of TfNSW's customers.



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APPENDIX A

# Community consultation

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## APPENDIX B

# Swept Path Assessment

## APPENDIX C

# Pavement Reporting

