

ROAD SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Road Safety Partners acknowledge and pay respect to Elders and all Victorian Aboriginal communities. We honour and respect Traditional Owners, past and present, and value the rich culture and history of the First Peoples of this land.

THIS ROAD SAFETY ACTION
PLAN WILL MAKE VICTORIAN
ROADS SAFER FOR ALL
ROAD USERS, KEEPING US
ON A PATHWAY TO HALVING
DEATHS AND REDUCING
SERIOUS INJURIES BY 2030



MINISTER'S FOREWORD

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Minister for Health Infrastructure



All Victorians deserve to feel safe and be safe on and around our roads.

Victoria is a leader in road safety and has a strong track record in introducing lifesaving road safety policies over the decades. However, people continue to die or be seriously injured on our roads.

Any death on Victoria's roads is a death too many. That's why the Victorian Government is committed to halving road deaths by 2030 and eliminating death from our roads by 2050. Road safety is vitally important in achieving these goals and keeping Victorians safe on our roads.

This is the second Road Safety Action Plan delivering on the vision and goals of the Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030.

It sets out the key work of our Road Safety Partners as we keep working towards our vision of zero deaths on our roads by 2050.

The number of lives lost and injuries on our roads is still unacceptably high.

Reducing road trauma is a complex challenge that we're tackling in many ways, responding to pressures like population growth, as well as changes in how and where we move around the network.

We're taking our lead from the internationally accepted Safe System approach to road safety.

It recognises that people will make mistakes and may have road crashes – but that crashes should not result in death or serious injury.

The Victorian Government remains committed to taking action to protect lives, improve safety and achieve the targets set out in its Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030, with work in this Action Plan focused across education, infrastructure, enforcement, policy and technology.

A significant amount of work has been done, and this plan continues our efforts. This Action Plan focuses on the following priorities:

- Improving safety across the network to reduce the risk of crashes happening and the tragic results when they do.
- Protecting vulnerable and unprotected road users including pedestrians, bicycle users, other active transport users and motorcyclists.
- Addressing risky behaviours such as speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs as well as distracted driving, driving while fatigued and not wearing seatbelts.
- Improving vehicle safety by encouraging the uptake of newer, safer vehicles, and continuing to collaborate on vehicle standards and regulation.

- Using research and data to inform and improve our approach to road safety, now and into the future.
- Engaging to drive change through working with all tiers of government, as well as the Victorian community.

Our Road Safety Partners – the Department of Transport and Planning, Department of Health, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Victoria Police and the Transport Accident Commission – work with and are supported by local governments and many stakeholders to improve the safety of our roads. I want to express my gratitude for all of their efforts.

Reducing road trauma is a shared responsibility. Success depends on everyone making safer choices and taking safer journeys on our roads.

I look forward to continuing to work with all Victorians on making our roads safe for everyone.

BEING AND FEELING
SAFE ON AND AROUND
OUR ROADS IMPROVES
LIVEABILITY WITHIN
OUR COMMUNITIES



OUR ROAD SAFETY GOALS

Our roads are integral connections between the places where we live, work and play.

For most Victorians, being on or near our road network is part of everyday life – as drivers or passengers, riders, cyclists, pedestrians, or users of public transport.

Crashes can happen to anyone, anywhere and anytime. It's our collective responsibility to make sure our roads are safe for everyone.

The *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030* sets out the vision of zero road deaths by 2050 with the following objectives:

- Ensure all Victorians are safe and feel safe on and around our roads.
- Halve road deaths and progressively reduce serious injuries by 2030.
- Embed a culture of road safety within the Victorian community.
- Deliver a suite of initiatives that are achievable and have an impact in the short term, but also prepare Victoria for the future.

We're delivering the strategy in three Action Plans. This approach allows us to adapt to changes in knowledge, the environment and the community over time.

We believe deaths and serious injuries on our roads are preventable, which is why we're working to reduce the risk and severity of crashes, while creating a culture of safety for all Victorian road users.

To change the future, we need to be working hard today. This is why the second of three Action Plans builds on the progress of the first plan and establishes the groundwork for further effort in the third plan.

Benefits beyond road safety

Being and feeling safe on and around our roads improves our quality of life and liveability within our communities.

Safer roads and roadsides support the independence of our most vulnerable citizens, so they can move safely while they are walking, using micromobility or other mobility aids, and moving to and from public transport.

Safer movement through local urban areas encourages participation in local economies.

Active transport has benefits for our physical and mental health, and safer roads and roadsides encourage more people to walk and ride for both transport and leisure.

Safer roads enable smoother and more reliable journeys. This benefits commuters, supply chains, improves fuel economy and reduces emissions.



VICTORIA POLICE



Victorian Road Safety Partners

This plan has been developed by the Victorian Road Safety Partners, who will act collectively to deliver its actions.

Each of the Partners focuses on different but complementary aspects of road safety:

- **Road Safety Victoria at the Department of Transport and Planning** leads the efforts of all road safety partners and leads the development and coordination of strategy, policy, programs and projects, working collaboratively with Road Safety Partners.
- The **Transport Accident Commission (TAC)** is a Victorian Government insurance agency that supports people injured in transport accidents, regardless of fault. The TAC plays a key role in promoting road safety through research, programs, campaigns, awareness raising and communications. The TAC invests in initiatives that effectively prevent road trauma.
- Compliance and enforcement support the regulation and operation of the network, with **Victoria Police** providing an active and visible police presence and enforcing unlawful behaviours, and the **Department of Justice and Community Safety** managing the Road Safety Camera Program and administration of judicial compliance.
- The **Department of Health** supports public health priorities, including prevention of injury and creating environments that promote physical and mental health, as well as the first response, medical and rehabilitation care for crash survivors.

We'll continue to work closely with other partners and stakeholders, including local government road managers, peak bodies and communities, to help us achieve our goals.

In developing this Action Plan, the Partners have considered a significant data and evidence base and inputs from Australian and international road safety experts. Our approach is in line with the internationally recognised Safe System approach to road safety, which requires a collective and coordinated response from various perspectives to reduce road safety risk.

The Safe System

The internationally recognised Safe System approach to road safety considers the network as a system of interactions between the road itself, people, vehicles and speeds.

The Safe System recognises that people will make mistakes and may have road crashes – but that crashes should not result in death or serious injury.

With that in mind, roads, speeds and vehicles should be designed to avoid crashes and to reduce the impact when they do.

The Safe System advocates for shared responsibility when it comes to safety on our roads – of those who design and manage the network, as well as those who use it.

We achieve a Safe System through:

- Safe roads
- Safe vehicles
- Safe speeds
- Safe people.



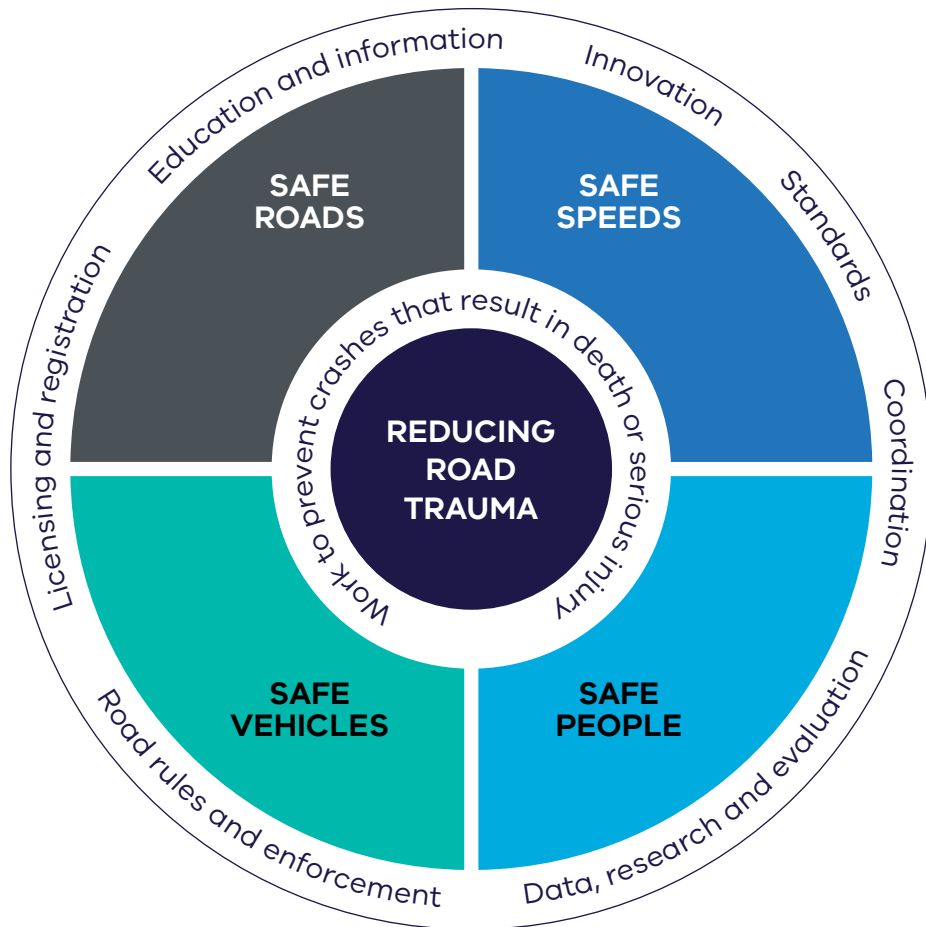
SAFE ROADS

Design, operation and maintenance of the road and roadside to reduce likelihood and severity of crashes.



SAFE VEHICLES

Safety features and technology in vehicles to limit the likelihood and severity of crashes.



SAFE SPEEDS

Speed limits, compliance and physical constraints resulting in safer speeds to limit the likelihood and severity of crashes.



SAFE PEOPLE

Road user behaviour, including licensing, education, enforcement and personal safety equipment.

ROAD TRAUMA DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE



THE ROAD TRAUMA CHALLENGE

Too many lives are lost on Victorian roads

In 2023, 295 people were killed on our roads – the highest number of lives lost in 15 years. Thousands more suffered serious and life-changing injuries.

Road trauma doesn't discriminate.

On Victorian roads:

- Every week around five people lose their life.
- Every day 15 people are hospitalised.
- Every week two people suffer severe brain injury.
- Every 18 days someone suffers a serious spinal injury.

Pressures on the network

In 1970, Victoria was the first jurisdiction to make wearing a seatbelt compulsory for all vehicle occupants. While we've come a long way since then, ending road trauma remains a significant challenge.

A growing population and changes to how we live, work and play influence how we use our roads and how long we spend on them. Other factors, including the legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic, rapid technological change, and the scale of the network mean we need to be responsive and strategic in our approach to improving road safety.

It is difficult to predict where and how the next crash will happen, which is why we all need to play our part in creating safe road environments across the state.

Population growth and change

Victoria's population is expected to reach around eight million by 2030 and 10 million by 2050.

The Victorian Government is planning to develop and grow new and existing precincts, activity centres and neighbourhoods across the state. This involves expanding and upgrading the road and public transport networks, new housing projects, and encouraging development beyond our cities and regional towns.

This results in more people using the network and changes expectations of how our roads should operate.

As Victorians age and younger people seek independence, they may use active, micromobility and public transport options, increasing the number of vulnerable users on the road network.

Scale of the regional network

At over 200,000 kilometres, the Victorian road network is large and spread out with many different road types. The Victorian Government manages 23,000 kilometres of freeways and arterial roads, with other roads, tracks and trails managed by local government or private freeway operators.

Road users on the regional network travel regularly across longer distances and at higher speeds.

Legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic

The impact of COVID-19 has changed how we use the road network.

These changes include:

- Fewer people commuting full time.
- People making shorter trips and moving more around their local area.
- Greater use of food and other delivery services.
- More people choosing active transport options including bicycles, e-scooters and e-bikes.



Technological influences on vehicles

Advances in technology inform our expectations about how vehicles perform, as well as how the network can support technological change. This includes safety capabilities both inside and outside the vehicle.

Recent technological advancements that require our consideration include:

- The growth of micromobility (like e-scooters and e-bikes). These are relatively inexpensive options that meet changed commuting and travel patterns, but their use results in a different type of vulnerable road user being on the network.
- Improvements to in-vehicle safety features, for example, the vehicle automatically responding to potential safety risks. While these features can improve safety, they are not a reason for drivers, riders and other road users to become complacent.
- A significant increase in the presence of larger vehicles on our roads, due to the growth in freight activity. While technological innovation has improved the safety features on these vehicles, their presence can increase the risk to other road users.
- Automated and connected vehicle technologies. These technologies present significant opportunities, but appropriate rules, regulations and conditions will be required so they can safely operate alongside older vehicles on the network, and to ensure other road users know how to interact with these vehicles.

- The increasing connectivity between our smartphones and other devices, to our vehicles and helmets, can increase driver distraction, and the risk of crashes for vehicle occupants and other road users.

Our behaviour plays a part

While most people use the road, those who choose to engage in unsafe behaviours place both themselves and others at risk.

We have seen increased experiences of risk-taking behaviour and more people driving tired or distracted.

Compliance, enforcement, campaigns and education are important ways to remind us to do the right thing on our roads and to discourage those who may choose unsafe behaviours.

We'll focus on the following:

- **Distracted driving**, including focusing on a mobile phone, device or navigation tool, operating the radio, talking to someone on the phone or interacting with a passenger can result in a momentary lapse in concentration and end in a crash.
- **Speeding** directly influences the risk of a crash, the time it takes to stop and the impact when a crash does happen. Driving just a little over the speed limit can lead to catastrophic outcomes.

- **Driving while impaired**, which includes the deliberate choice to get behind the wheel while affected by alcohol and other drugs, and also driving while fatigued, which impacts a driver's ability to concentrate and react to situations on the road.
- **Seatbelt use**, the benefits of which have proven time and time again over the last 50 years to save lives in crashes.

The road is there to be shared. Deliberate risk-taking is unfair to all road users.

Understanding behaviours on our roads

The TAC Road Safety Monitor is used to track and monitor road user behaviour and attitudes.

A number of respondents (10 per cent) said they drove while they might have been over the legal blood alcohol concentration limit, with three per cent driving while over the limit. Four per cent of respondents travelled as a passenger while not wearing a seatbelt, while three per cent didn't wear a seatbelt as the driver. One per cent of respondents admitted to driving after using illegal drugs.

The Road Safety Monitor gives us valuable insights that inform our continued efforts to instil a culture of road safety among Victorians.



Safety within the network

Roads and roadways also need to support safe movement, minimise risk and reduce the potential for tragic outcomes.

Given the scale of the Victorian road network, it is important to target our efforts to where they are most impactful. Key considerations that have informed the initiatives in this Action Plan are outlined here.

Roads and roadside safety

Risks differ depending on whether a road is a single or dual carriageway, if there's physical barriers between lanes or at the side of the road, or if a road has line markings.

On the road, the width of lanes, presence of shoulders and whether rumble strips are present influence the safety of a road. Curves and bends can also restrict visibility, which increases risk.

Roadside hazards that can increase risk include poles, trees and steep roadside environments, or where roads are unsealed and roadsides undefined.

Features that can improve safety include median and roadside barriers, walking and cycling paths, crossing facilities, signs, line markings and appropriate speed zones.

Land use and environment

The *Movement and Place in Victoria* framework informs how we think about the context and purpose of roads within particular environments, including who is using these roads and how, which in turn informs our approach to safety on different types of roads.

For example, roads intended for the efficient movement of goods and people between key locations and predominantly used by vehicles require different treatments than shopping strips with extensive pedestrian movement.

In another example, as semi-rural or industrial areas are urbanised, the safety needs of the roads change, requiring adjustments to infrastructure and speed regulation.

Interface with vulnerable and unprotected road users

Road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, scooter and e-bike riders, people using mobility aids, and motorcyclists, are more vulnerable than those protected by a vehicle.

Separating vulnerable road users from vehicles is preferable, but it's not always practical or possible, which is why other safety treatments may be needed.

Speed settings

The speed a vehicle is moving informs the likelihood of a crash happening and the severity of outcomes.

Managing speed isn't just about setting speed limits. Traffic calming (for example, speed humps) is effective in lowering speeds in places such as, shopping strips or other locations where people interact with traffic. Infrastructure such as barriers on freeways can reduce the risk and severity of crashes in higher speed environments. Speed management is also supported by compliance and enforcement measures through road safety cameras and police presence.

WE WILL IMPLEMENT
INFRASTRUCTURE
INITIATIVES THAT WILL
MAKE OUR ROADS SAFER



PRIORITIES OF THIS ACTION PLAN

The priorities of this Action Plan align with the Safe System approach to road safety and the objectives and goals of the *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030*.

Improving safety across the network

We'll take action to improve the safety of infrastructure and the environment to reduce the risk of crashes happening, and the severity of outcomes when they do.

We'll install the following infrastructure to improve safety:

- Road safety barriers at high-risk locations on the rural road network.
- Median and side safety barriers on divided urban roads on high-movement routes.
- Road safety infrastructure at priority rural intersections, including splitter islands and side road activated speeds.

We'll take the following actions to improve safety across the network:

- We'll update our Speed Zoning Policy and technical guidelines. The updated policy and guidelines will be informed by the feedback from local governments and communities.
- Through the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program we're working with local governments, as road managers and key partners in driving road safety, to fund and support projects that improve local road safety.
- We're rolling out a road and roadside safety policy to help align projects with the Safe System approach and to prioritise proven infrastructure and treatments in road design.

- Through the Commonwealth Road Safety Program and Federal Blackspot Program, we are working with our Commonwealth partners to deliver targeted road safety infrastructure solutions across the network.
- Responding to keen interest from local governments and their communities, we'll consider proposals for speed limit reductions in areas with significant interface between pedestrians and bicyclists and vehicles.



Protecting vulnerable and unprotected road users

We'll take action to support vulnerable and unprotected road users – pedestrians, cyclists, micromobility users and motorcyclists – to feel safe and be safe on and around our road network. We'll also keep our most vulnerable citizens safe – including children, young drivers and older people.

- We will improve the safety of signals at urban intersections that see a high interface between pedestrians and vehicles.
 - Talking to children and young people is an opportunity to embed a culture of safety among our most vulnerable citizens. Our early childhood, in-school and educational programs will continue to inform children, young people, and their families and teachers about how to be safe on and around our roads.
 - We will introduce initiatives to support positive learner-supervisor partnerships, build supervisor confidence and ensure alignment with our graduated licensing system.
 - Our L2P Program will continue to help learners who may not have access to a supervising driver, to gain the minimum experience required under our graduated licensing system by matching them with volunteer mentor drivers.
 - We will use compliance and enforcement to support safety for vulnerable and unprotected road users.
- We will continue to invest in motorcycle safety infrastructure improvements on priority routes.
 - Motorcyclists are particularly vulnerable on our roads, which is why we engage with them directly via the Motorcycling Community Engagement Panel to understand their needs. We're developing a strategic plan to support motorcycle safety initiatives. At the same time, we give motorcyclists advice about what critical safety features to look for when purchasing a motorcycle, and supporting safety assessments and ratings for protective motorcycle gear and helmets.
 - We're reviewing the Motorcycle Graduated Licensing System to improve outcomes for the motorcycling community.
 - We're rolling out programs to provide Safe System compliant infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians.
 - Our popular and practical Bike Ed program continues to educate children and adults about safe behaviours and how to share the road.
 - We have adopted minimum heavy vehicle safety requirements for construction trucks working on major government projects to protect vulnerable road users in and around sites.
 - Through a new Safer Motorcycling Grants Program, we will support innovative approaches to help improve motorcyclist safety.



Addressing risky behaviours

We'll take action to discourage and reduce risky and unsafe behaviours on our road network, with a focus on speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, distracted driving, driving while fatigued and seatbelt non-compliance.

- We'll extend the Distracted Driving and Seatbelt Camera Program that has been implemented to detect dangerous and distracted behaviours such as illegal portable device use and seatbelt non-compliance.
- Under the Road Safety Camera Program, we'll continue to deploy mobile road safety cameras anywhere, anytime across the road network and operate fixed road safety cameras in some of the highest risk areas on our roads.
- Active policing and information campaigns will support the Road Safety Camera Program by raising awareness and strengthening compliance.
- We'll support the introduction of new technology and the role of enforcement with public education campaigns.
- We'll continue to take an intelligence-led approach to identifying high-risk driving and enforcing our laws.

- Victoria Police will expand its road policing capabilities in rural areas through:
 - Intelligence-led deployment to enforce our laws against driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.
 - Visible patrols to support general deterrence.
- Intelligence-led approaches will target unauthorised driving, with enforcement measures that reduce the ability to re-offend.
- Victoria Police will continue to enforce speed limits in high-risk areas and promote general deterrence through high-visibility patrols, as well as targeting high-risk and recidivist drivers.
- Our behaviour change programs will continue to help people identify the underlying reasons why they have driven under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, and ways to reduce their risk of re-offending.
- Acknowledging the vulnerability of motorcycle riders as unprotected road users, we're working to better understand unauthorised (including unlicensed and unregistered) riding and how we can reduce unsafe behaviours.
- We are conducting a closed-circuit trial to investigate whether individuals who use medicinal cannabis can drive safely.

Improving vehicle safety

Ensuring the safety of people inside and near vehicles on our roads remains a key priority.

- We'll continue to develop and deliver innovative policies, education and trial programs to encourage the uptake of newer, safer vehicles, particularly among newer and older drivers and within corporate fleets.
- Connected and automated vehicles may help reduce driver error. We'll work with our jurisdictional counterparts to better understand their capabilities and how we can support their future operation on our network.
- We'll continue to work with the Commonwealth and our jurisdictional partners to accelerate the adoption of new safety standards into Australian Design Rules, with a strong focus on emerging technologies that can help prevent or mitigate crashes.
- We'll continue to support the work of the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP SAFETY) and the Vehicle Safety Research Group to better understand vehicle safety and inform consumers via [howsafeisyourcar.com.au](https://www.howsafeisyourcar.com.au).

Engaging for change

We'll work with our partners and stakeholders, including local government, peak bodies, workplaces, schools and communities to increase understanding of our shared responsibility and grow a culture of safety on our roads.

- We'll focus our efforts on working closely with local governments to understand their needs, help them embed Safe System principles into their work, and create change within their communities and on their local roads networks, through grants and other support.
- Road safety campaigns will continue to support compliance and enforcement activities, new initiatives and behaviour change.
- Partnerships with key communities and stakeholders will ensure we can directly reach priority audiences where they live, work and play.
- The TAC will continue its annual Road Safety Monitor and Motorcycle Monitor surveys to identify trends in behaviours and community attitudes towards road safety.
- We'll continue to support road safety education through programs at the Road to Zero education complex and Road Smart Interactive for secondary schools.
- We'll continue to partner with Amber Community to deliver free professional services and support to Victorians affected by road trauma.
- We'll continue to work with community groups and organisations to fund grants to develop and put in place road safety initiatives.
- Influencing policy development nationally and regionally (including New Zealand) is an integral role played by the Victorian Road Safety Partners. We'll engage closely with the National Road Safety Partnership Program, the National Transport Commission, Austroads and our jurisdictional and Commonwealth partners.

Research and data to inform and improve road safety

We'll collect, consider and share research and data, to better understand what's happening on our roads and how safety can be improved. We'll learn from others as we continue to design and deliver road safety initiatives.

- We'll work with the Monash University Accident Research Centre to continue the baseline research program, which brings together data and research to better understand road trauma and how different road safety approaches can reduce deaths and serious injuries. This research contributes to the development of our work program.
- We'll publish Victorian crash statistics and data on the open data portal and produce a visualisation tool for analysis.
- We'll routinely share crash data with the Commonwealth, to inform and improve road safety data and understanding at a national level.
- We're working to better understand the safety of the Victorian arterial road network using data and our network safety plans, to inform current and future road safety infrastructure needs, opportunities and initiatives.
- Emerging technologies may help us identify and assess fatigue. We're testing technologies to understand how they might work in real-world conditions and how they might help us address this kind of impaired driving.
- We'll establish a new fatal crash review team and process at the Department of Transport and Planning that aligns with the Safe System approach and world's best practice, to gain greater insights, learnings and outcomes that will help us reduce road trauma both locally at the crash site and across the wider network.

OUR GOAL IS TO END
ROAD TRAUMA ON
VICTORIAN ROADS



MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

We will monitor our progress against safety performance indicators that reflect our strategic targets.

These indicators reflect our goals of reducing fatalities and serious injuries on our road network and reaching zero road deaths by 2050.

Safe roads and streets

- Percentage of arterial road vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) that occurs on 4/5-star (or equivalent) roads.
- Percentage of rural divided road VKT that occurs on safe roads (5-star or 4-star with median-barrier).
- Percentage of rural high movement (M1/M2) arterial road VKT that occurs on safe roads (5-star or 4-star with median barrier).
- Percentage of lower movement arterial (M3) road length that has a safe speed limit.
- Percentage of rural local road length that has a safe speed limit.
- Percentage of urban street length that has a speed limit of 40 km/h or less.
- Percentage of intersections that are rated safe.

Vehicles

- Percentage of new cars sold in Victoria that are rated 5-star.
- Percentage of registered light vehicles that are older than 15 years.
- Percentage of light vehicles purchased for Victorian government fleet that are rated 5-star.

Speed

- Percentage of vehicles compliant with the speed limit on high movement arterial (M1/M2) roads.
- Percentage of vehicles compliant with the speed limit on mid movement arterial (M3) roads.
- Mean vehicle speed on arterial roads with 110 km/h speed limit.
- Mean vehicle speed on arterial roads with 100 km/h speed limit.

** M1/M2/M3 relate to Victoria's Movement and Place classification of road locations. Further information about the Movement and Place Framework can be found at vic.gov.au/movement-and-place-victoria.*

Impaired drivers

- Percentage of drivers exceeding the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit.
- Percentage of drivers detected using drugs.
- Percentage of drivers affected by fatigue.

Seatbelt and protective gear

- Percentage of people wearing seatbelts in light vehicles.
- Percentage of people wearing seatbelts in heavy vehicles.
- Percentage of motorcyclists always wearing full protective gear.



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ISBN 978-0-7311-9346-2 (Print)
ISBN 978-0-7311-9347-9 (pdf/online/MS word)

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