



VICTORIA'S ROAD SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2011–2012


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The background image shows a street scene. On the left, a large, thick tree trunk is visible. In the center and right, there is a building with a classical facade, featuring columns and a doorway. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting dusk or dawn. A person on a bicycle is blurred in the foreground, moving from left to right across the lower half of the image.

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01 INTRODUCTION

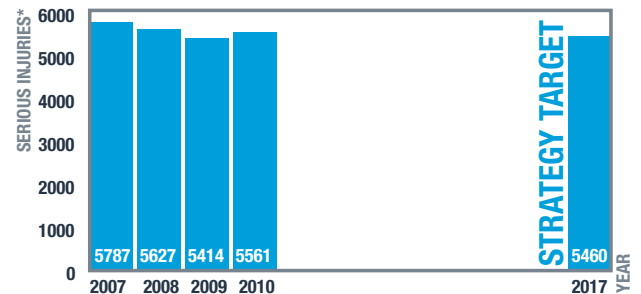
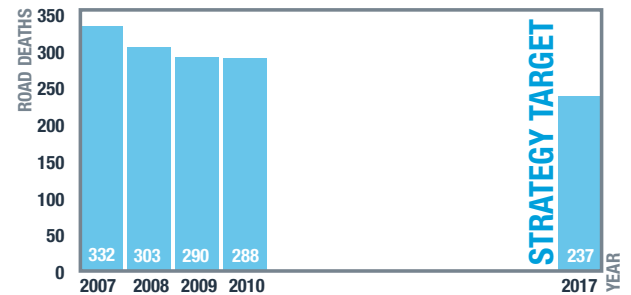
Nearly 300 people die and more than 5000 are seriously injured on our roads each year.

The cost of pain and suffering cannot be calculated, but the economic cost to Victorians is around \$3 billion annually.

The road safety effort in Victoria is coordinated and delivered under the *arrive alive 2008-2017* road safety strategy, which sets a target to reduce the road toll by 30 per cent by 2017.

The ten year arrive alive strategy is implemented through shorter term action plans. The 2008-2010 action plan delivered significant road safety improvements saving an estimated 115 lives and 759 serious injuries from 2007 as shown right.

This action plan seeks to deliver further road safety gains to all Victorians in 2011 and 2012 through a range of measures focused on tackling dangerous driving, the condition of country roads, and restoring public confidence in speed limits and enforcement.



* SERIOUS INJURIES FROM TAC HOSPITAL CLAIMS.



DELIVERING ROAD SAFETY IN VICTORIA

The road safety effort in Victoria is delivered through strong and coordinated partnerships between government and its agencies – VicRoads, the Transport Accident Commission, the Department of Justice and Victoria Police – and the wider community. Greater community participation in local road safety is being encouraged under

a new model for delivering road safety at the local level through the Victorian Community Partnership Program. More information about the program is available from vicroads.vic.gov.au

The community will be informed about key issues and trends in road trauma through regular updates to the media and stakeholders.

PARLIAMENTARY ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Parliamentary Road Safety Committee has played an integral role in advising and making recommendations to Parliament on road safety issues in Victoria since its inception in 1967.

The Committee considers a broad spectrum of issues and views, and seeks expert and community

opinions, resulting in the introduction of many road safety initiatives that have seen significant reductions in deaths and serious injuries on Victorian roads.

The Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into motorcyclist safety.

02 OUR APPROACH TO ROAD SAFETY

Under the Safe System, everyone has responsibility for reducing road trauma.

Victoria's approach to road safety is based on the Safe System. There are four key elements to the Safe System – road users, roads and roadsides, speeds and vehicles.

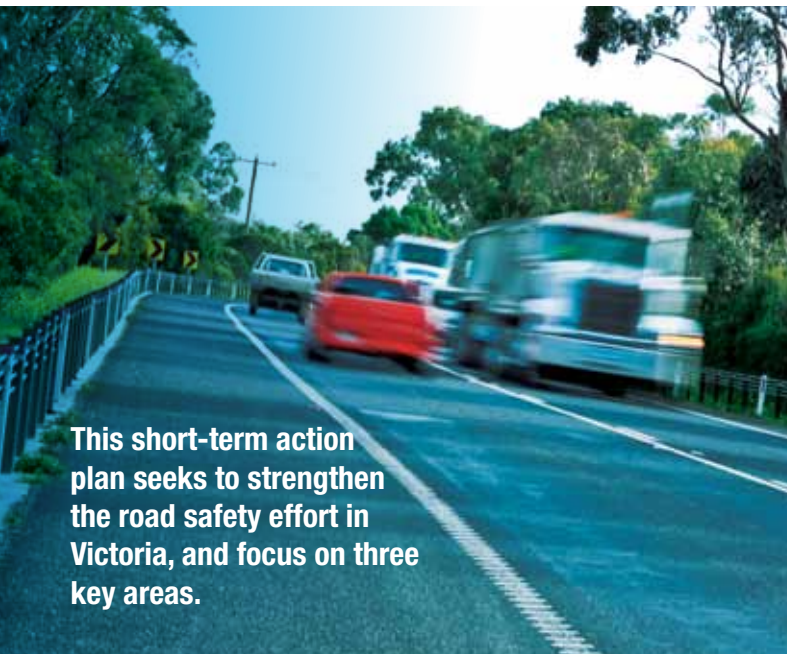
Put simply, a Safe System approach to road safety holds that road users who follow the road rules, adhere to appropriately set speed limits, drive safe vehicles, and travel on well designed and maintained roads, should not be seriously injured or killed.

Under the Safe System, everyone has responsibility for reducing road trauma.

Road authorities have a responsibility to design, build and maintain roads to a safe standard, and to set appropriate speed limits.

Road users have a responsibility to comply with the road rules and should respect the safety of all road users.

And Government must invest responsibly in road improvements, and put in place legislation that allows safety on our roads to be upheld and enforced.



This short-term action plan seeks to strengthen the road safety effort in Victoria, and focus on three key areas.



Deliver major improvements to regional highways, country roads and bridges

The \$160 million government allocation (over four years) to upgrade country roads will improve safety for rural and regional families and keep communities connected.

Major improvements to regional highways (\$140m) will boost safety for all Victorians on key freight routes.

To reduce two of our biggest crash types - run-off-road and intersection crashes - more than \$100m under the ongoing \$650m Transport Accident Commission (TAC) funded Safer Road Infrastructure Program will see further roadside improvements in regional Victoria and intersection improvements in outer metropolitan areas.

Restore confidence in speed zones and speed enforcement technology

Speed is one of the single biggest killers on the road. Reducing the incidence of speeding will be tackled from the ground up, starting with a review of speed limit setting and the operation of speed and red light cameras.



Target irresponsible road users who put the lives of others at risk

Dangerous and non-compliant road users will be caught using increased and more strategic enforcement informed by the newly created Road Policing Intelligence Unit.

An additional 1,700 police will be on the ground by the end of 2014 that will increase police presence on our roads.

Tougher sanctions under new hoon laws will see much harsher penalties for those who choose to put the rest of the community at risk. A high profile public education campaign will also be launched targeting irresponsible road users.

03 ROAD SAFETY PRIORITIES: 2011-2012



04 ROADS AND ROADSIDES

Regional highways, country roads and bridges

Major improvements on regional highways under a \$140m state government investment will target some of Victoria's most dangerous stretches, and a \$160m state-wide program of works will commence to improve country roads and bridges.

Actions

- Construct overtaking lanes on the Princes Highway west of Colac
- Commence the next stage of duplication on the Western Highway from Burrumbeet to Beaufort
- Improve country roads and bridges through a range of infrastructure treatments including bridge barriers, road surfacing and line marking
- Commence work on new road bypasses, including the Koo Wee Rup bypass
- Continue duplication of the Princes Highway East between Traralgon and Sale
- Improve the Princes Highway East between Longwarry and Traralgon, including treatments such as safety barriers and hazard removal (\$36m)

Rail level crossings

Statewide works are underway to improve safety at regional level crossings. Planning work will also commence to remove metropolitan level crossings under the \$379m Coalition Government plan to improve safety and mobility at Melbourne's rail crossings.

Actions

- Improve safety at regional level crossings. Up to an additional 75 crossings will be improved via a range of treatments, including installation of boom barriers and flashing lights, at a cost of \$33m over four years¹
- \$16.5m to commence planning to remove level crossings in Melbourne, starting with Mitcham and Nunawading
- Further develop collision warning systems to prevent crashes between trains and road vehicles, such as Radio Break-in Collision Warning Technology and Dedicated Short-Range Communication Technology

Further road improvements

The \$650m Safer Road Infrastructure Program² funded by the TAC (over 10 years from 2007) has already improved safety with a significant reduction in the number of run-off-road and intersection crashes. Preliminary evaluation of the Safer Road Infrastructure Program shows a 31 per cent drop in serious crashes at treated sites.

Actions

- Commence work on new road bypasses, including the Dingley bypass extension
- Improve safety at intersections through a range of treatments including traffic signals and roundabouts
- Reduce run-off-road crashes through a range of treatments, such as shoulder sealing, rumble strips, barriers and removal of roadside hazards
- Deliver road improvements under the Motorcycle Blackspot Program and along popular touring routes
- Increase on-road bicycle lanes and off-road bicycle paths along key routes in Melbourne and regional Victoria

¹ Attachment shows current projects

² Attachment shows current projects



ROAD SAFETY CAMERAS SAVE LIVES

The 2011 Auditor-General's review of Victoria's road safety camera system found that speed and red-light cameras are there for road safety and not to raise revenue.

The report found *"there is a high level of confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the equipment used in the road safety camera system."*

The Coalition Government requested that the Auditor-General review Victoria's road safety camera program as part of the commitment to providing greater integrity around speed and red-light cameras.

A full copy of the report is available at audit.vic.gov.au
The Government will continue to ensure that speed and red light cameras focus on improving safety.

05 SPEED AND SPEEDING

Speeding and travelling at inappropriate speeds are major contributors to road trauma.

Much work has been done in Victoria over the past decade to reduce speed limits that has resulted in some stretches of road having a high frequency of speed limit changes.

To improve compliance with speed limits, speed zones must be clear, logical and easy to follow. It is also important that road users have confidence in the speed camera system which plays a vital role in preventing road deaths and serious injuries.

Tackling speed relies on appropriate speed limits, credible enforcement, and all motorists taking responsibility for choosing travel speeds that are safe for the driving conditions.

Actions

- **Conduct a statewide review of speed limits in consultation with the community**
- **Appoint an Independent Road Safety Camera Commissioner to maintain the integrity of Victoria's road safety camera system**
- **Increase public awareness of speed enforcement, particularly through a statewide road safety sign program.**



TALK THE TOLL DOWN

Country road users are nearly four times more likely to be killed or seriously injured than road users in metropolitan Melbourne. The Transport Accident Commission's (TAC) Talk the Toll Down campaign launched in October 2011 seeks to improve safety for country road users by urging local regional people to talk to each other about staying safe on the road.

The TAC has partnered with 60 Victorian regional newspapers and publications to provide country people with editorial content about people in the community affected by road trauma, local road toll trends and road safety problem areas. Regional road safety forums will also be coordinated by local newspapers, involving the TAC, Victoria Police, local councillors and community members.

06 ROAD USERS/ROAD USER BEHAVIOUR

There are specific groups of road users and particular behaviours that significantly affect the risk of being killed or seriously injured on the road.

Young drivers, older road users, motorcyclists and heavy vehicle drivers are at most danger of being involved in a crash.

Speeding, drink and/or drug driving are shown to be the behaviours that cause most road deaths.

Strategic use of intelligence generated through the new Road Policing Intelligence Unit will seek to improve safety for the most vulnerable road users, and enforcement of tough new hoon laws will target irresponsible and dangerous driving.

Young drivers

While drivers aged 18 to 25 years continue to be over represented in the road toll, early outcomes of the Graduated Licensing Scheme indicate that the improved training and education requirements for new and learner drivers is effectively saving young drivers' lives.

Actions

- Continue the implementation of the new Graduated Licensing System for young drivers
- Provide support for young drivers to gain critical driving practice through the L2P Driver Mentor Program, targeting regional, culturally diverse and disadvantaged young people
- Trial a program as part of the P Drivers Project to assist P plate drivers aged 18-22 shift their driving behaviour to reduce their risk of being killed or seriously injured on the road. The P Drivers Project is one of the largest and most complex scientific studies undertaken in the world into young driver behaviour change.

Motorcyclists

Motorcycling is becoming an increasingly popular mode of transport and recreation, and alarmingly, motorcyclists are increasingly over-represented in the road toll.

Motorcyclists make up less than four per cent of registered vehicles, yet account for 14 per cent of the road toll. And, in 2010 there were 49 motorcyclist fatalities – the highest number since 2002.

Actions

- Provide comparative safety information about protective clothing for motorcyclists
- Target enforcement of unsafe motorcycling behaviour, including speeding, drink and drug driving, helmet wearing and unlicensed riding
- Launch a new motorcycle safety public education campaign.



Older road users

Drivers aged 75 years and above face a greater risk of being involved in a serious crash than most other road users when their low kilometres driven are taken into account. And, when they are involved in a crash they are likely to sustain more serious injuries and take longer to recover.

Older road users are most at risk of a crash at intersections, and the severity of injuries sustained is significantly affected by the safety features in the vehicles driven.

Actions

- Promote purchase of safe vehicles (new and used car safety ratings) and provide information about the importance of purchasing safe vehicles
- Improve intersection safety, particularly at complex intersections, through treatments designed to reduce potential crash conflicts
- Provide support for older drivers to make safe road use decisions through a range of initiatives, including:
 - a self assessment tool for older drivers, their friends and family to identify those potentially at risk, and
 - an advisory service that provides road safety advice for older road users

Heavy vehicle drivers

Heavy vehicles are disproportionately involved in crashes, representing 3 per cent of registered vehicles, yet being involved in 20 per cent of all fatal crashes. In 2010 the number of heavy vehicles involved in fatal crashes rose 55 per cent from 2009.

With the number of heavy vehicles on Victoria's roads expected to increase by 60 per cent by 2025, it is important we continue to develop and trial measures to improve the safety of heavy vehicles and their drivers.

Actions

- Trial fatigue alert technology with heavy vehicle drivers
- Promote the uptake of heavy vehicle safety features, including advanced braking technology, and seatbelt reminder systems
- Introduce a standard for workplace drug and alcohol testing in the freight industry
- Continue to enforce fatigue management laws



Hoons

Under tough new hoon laws, dangerous road users such as high level speeding offenders, repeat drug drivers, drink drivers, unlicensed drivers, and drivers carrying too many passengers will have their vehicles impounded for a minimum of 30 days.

Those convicted of hooning will be subject to fines of up to \$2,389, and repeat offenders will risk losing their vehicle permanently.

Actions

- Target dangerous drivers with new laws enabling vehicles of first time hoon offenders to be impounded for 30 days
- Introduce safety programs for hoons
- Introduce new vehicle overloading laws to target drivers who carry more passengers than a car is designed to transport
- Develop a public education campaign targeting irresponsible drivers

Drink and drug driving

Motorists who drink and/or drug drive are among the most dangerous and irresponsible on our roads and will face increased sanctions under the new hoon laws. Drink and drug drivers will also be targeted through workplace safety laws and increased covert drug and alcohol testing.

Actions

- More strategic drug driving enforcement in regional Victoria
- Introduce a standard for workplace drug and alcohol testing in the freight industry.
- Impound vehicles of repeat drink and drug drivers for a minimum of 30 days.

General enforcement

Enforcement is the single most effective measure to improve road user behaviour. As well as enforcing hoon laws, Victoria Police will undertake a range of road safety programs, including specific activities to address the 13% increase in country road deaths in 2010.

Actions

- Target unlicensed drivers and motorcycle riders with new Victoria Police Automated Number Plate Recognition technology
- Improve enforcement in regional Victoria under the Regional Victoria Road Trauma Reduction Strategy
- Target enforcement of dangerous cycling behaviour, such as failing to stop at traffic lights and being inadequately lit at night.

07 SAFE VEHICLES

The severity of injuries sustained in crashes is largely determined by the safety features of the vehicles involved.

In fact, Australasian research indicates that if everyone drove the safest vehicle in its class road trauma would be reduced by 30 per cent.

Improving the safety standards of vehicles purchased and driven by motorists with a high crash risk – young drivers, older drivers, heavy vehicle drivers and motorcyclists – will significantly reduce the incidence and severity of road trauma for all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Vehicle technology has the potential to dramatically improve road safety by reducing the severity of crash outcomes, and by reducing the likelihood of a crash. Vehicle safety features include Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA), where the vehicle ‘knows’ the speed limit via GPS technology that links to a speed zone database, which then informs the driver if they exceed the speed limit.

Actions

- Continue to inform and encourage consumers to purchase safe vehicles through support and promotion of the Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) and used car safety ratings
- Promote voluntary uptake of Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) devices
- Promote the uptake of heavy vehicle safety features within the heavy vehicle industry.

08 NEXT STEPS

To ensure that Victoria’s ten year *arrive alive* strategy responds effectively to the rapidly evolving road safety challenge and reflects the Coalition Government’s ambitious approach to road safety, the strategy is currently being reviewed.

Following an extensive program of community and stakeholder consultation, the strategy will be updated and released in 2012.



ROAD SAFETY MESSAGES ON NUMBER PLATES

Following extensive consultation with the community, Victoria's number plates will carry a road safety message. Reinforcing messages is an important part of road safety education. Placing road safety messages on number plates will be a constant reminder to drivers and riders to be accountable for safety on our roads.



vicroads.vic.gov.au



police.vic.gov.au



tac.vic.gov.au



justice.vic.gov.au

