

**“Going For Zero”
The SE Road Safety Strategy**

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Introduction

“Going for Zero” is the working title of the first regional road safety strategy in South Australia. A title that matches the aspirational goal set by the South East (SE) community of **achieving a fatality free year in the South East (aka Limestone Coast) by the end of 2010.**

The development of the strategy arose directly from the community’s concern about the level of trauma on their roads. With three out of four serious road casualties in the Limestone Coast suffered by local residents, a severe brake is applied on the development of our community transmitting a painful human cost for parents, children, friends, work colleagues and team mates.

Community members rallied after a spate of fatalities and turned to their Councils for assistance and through the SE Local Government Association (SELGA) they had a way of engaging the wider SE community and working with State and Federal Governments to implement a Regional Road Safety Strategy.

In February 2008, The Minister for Road Safety, the Hon Carmel Zollo MLC launched the Strategy announcing that funding under Community Road Safety Program would be made available over three years to support SELGA and the SE achieve their goal.

Methods

Road Safety is a shared responsibility. The success of the South East Road Safety Strategy relies on the support and active involvement of South East Councils and the communities they represent, everyone who can make a difference and improve the safety of our community.

This strategy has built upon the existing framework of Community Road Safety Group’s (CRSG’s) in the South East of South Australia. The strategy does not replace the work of existing CRSG’s serving Mount Gambier, Wattle Range, Tatiara and the newly formed Robe and Kingston groups but a strategy that complements their important work by concentrating on stronger road safety coordination mechanisms between Local Government and CRSG’s and the development of coordinated whole of region projects.

A consultation process involving open discussions in Mount Gambier, Kingston, Millicent, Naracoorte and Bordertown led to the setting of 7 actions central to implementation of the strategy. Priority has been given to measures that are:

- Cost effective based on evaluation and research
- Aimed at major behavioral problems and contributors to the road toll,
- Likely to engage the community in efforts to improve road safety,
- Consistent with national and statewide programs.

A Steering Group comprising members from each of the CRSG’s, representatives from SAPOL, Emergency Services and SELGA has the task of driving the strategy, developing an annual plan that has a regional focus that connects to and does not duplicate the work of individual CRSG’s. This group maintains linkages with the SA Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure at a regional and State level and is able to link in with other sectors of the community through schools, regional media, sporting and service clubs to extend its influence.

Results and Discussion

The Seven South East Road Safety Priority Actions are:

1. Stronger road safety coordination mechanisms will be established between Local government and CRSG's.
2. The development of whole of region projects through better coordination.
3. DTEI will concentrate infrastructure safety investment that is available on key corridors where road trauma is most concentrated.
4. SAPOL will, in collaboration with communities toughen policing of restraints and drink and drug driving and ensure that the new speed enforcement tolerance is rigorously enforced.
5. Local Councils will in consultation with residents and businesses, and with DTEI, consider the speed limits they want to apply through townships.
6. DTEI will work with local Councils and schools to investigate the extent to which Safe Routes to School can be extended within the region.
7. SELGA will prepare an annual progress report.

The Strategy also recognizes that speed limits need to be monitored as an integral part of safer conditions for road users.

Conclusions

The SE Road Safety Strategy in the space of 3 months has achieved a level of coordination that did not exist previously.

This volunteer group continually draws in new ideas from communities and individuals that are weighed against the 7 priority actions, resulting in implementation on a regional level or referred to CRSG's for action at a community level.

The collaboration and communication between CRSG's, Police, Emergency Services, Local Government and the State Government under the mantle of this Strategy has the real potential of reducing the number of fatalities and serious injuries in the South East by 2010.

References

1. South East Road Safety Strategy, 2008
2. South Australian Road Safety Action Plan 2008-2010
3. SE Road Safety Steering Group