

Integrating safe system principles throughout TMR's business

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Abstract

Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has developed a Road Safety Management Plan (RSMP) to embed safe system principles and culture throughout the organisation. The Road Safety Management Plan is designed to put road safety at the forefront and will result in road safety-focused decision making and network level thinking.

The RSMP will facilitate the implementation, within TMR, of a Safe System approach to managing road safety. Senior leadership commitment and the supportive framework provided by the National Road Safety Strategy, the Queensland Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan are necessary to its success.

Background, Method and Conclusions

The Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015–21 is the first time a Queensland Government has committed to a vision of zero road deaths and serious injuries. The strategy is firmly based on Safe System principles and is framed by the guiding vision that no person should be killed or seriously injured on Queensland's roads.

Safe Systems guiding principles are centered on human physical frailty, that people make mistakes and the transport system must accommodate for these, without resulting in death or serious injury. The four pillars featured in Safe System philosophy are safe roads and roadsides, safe speeds, safe road users and safe vehicles. Queensland's safe system approach encourages transport users to be alert and compliant, while aiming to reduce the severity of crashes through protective infrastructure treatments, speed reductions, improved driving behaviours and vehicle safety features.

The supporting Road Safety Action Plan 2017–19 delivers and supports significant long-term improvements to the safety of Queensland's road transport system, especially through strategic investment in infrastructure safety, safer road users and capacity building work. While there are dedicated road safety programs to deliver on many of these actions, the majority of TMR's business activities prioritise other outcomes. Opportunities exist to prioritise the delivery of safety improvements through these business activities.

ISO 39001 Road Traffic Safety is an international standard, providing a tool to help organisations reduce the incidence and risk of death and serious injury related to crashes. This standard identifies elements of good road safety management practice, focusing on road safety management objectives and targets, and guides the planning of activities that will help realise road safety goals by using a Safe System approach.

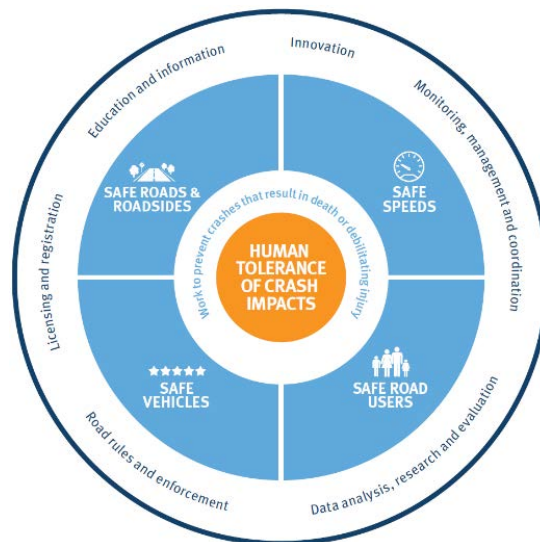


Figure 1 Safe System approach (Department of Transport and Main Roads QLD, unpublished, adapted from WA Government, 2008)

In 2016, TMR identified the requirement of a road safety and management plan and policy to help steer the department towards its vision. The primary aim of the RSMP is to provide direction to achieve safety outcomes and benefits of strategic importance, working towards Vision Zero. It will influence the organisational setting, business process and implementation of projects, as well as research activities.

The RSMP involves reviewing existing TMR processes to ensure that Safe System principles and approaches are embedded in all department activities, at all stages of a road lifecycle, including planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, error correction, hazard reduction/elimination, major upgrading, renewal and program management.

In 2017, Queensland's road toll resulted in 247 fatalities and over 6,000 hospitalisations. The trend over the past 5 years suggest we will fall well short in achieving our target reduction of less than 200 fatalities and 4,669 hospitalisation by 2020.

The RSMP will instill into all relevant TMR policies and strategies the focus on minimising crash severity outcomes through embedding the Safe Systems approach across the transport infrastructure investment programs. Collectively working towards alignment with ISO 39001, Road Safety Management will further aid in TMR's achieving its objective of *delivering road infrastructure and technology treatments to effectively reduce the risk of road trauma on Queensland's road network*.

Implementing a RSMP will require road safety professionals to work with other subject matter experts, owners of organizational policies, business processes, systems, technical standards and guidelines to review existing business activities. Through this collaboration further opportunities will be identified to deliver safety outcomes within current investments. Implementing this plan will change the way TMR delivers road safety outcomes and further enhance the organisational road safety culture and capability of the department.