

## **Stop, Ask, Listen and Collaborate: Working Towards Zero with Local Government**

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### **Abstract**

Local Governments (LGs) are in a unique position to provide road safety authorities with insight into local factors that contribute to road trauma in their communities.

Victorian LGs are responsible for a significant portion of Victoria's road network. Approximately 30 per cent<sup>1</sup> of all fatalities in Victoria occur on LG roads.

The Transport Accident Commission (TAC), interested in exploring this knowledge as well as the resourcing capacities of each LG, stopped and listened to all 79 municipalities in Victoria. They told us how we could assist in their journey towards zero.

### **Background**

*The Inquiry into The National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020*<sup>2</sup> identifies road safety as a national problem that requires all three levels of government to be an active part of the solution.

A key focus of the TAC's engagement with LGs was to understand their local road safety issues and needs and identify how the TAC can support LGs to lead Towards Zero aligned road safety initiatives in their local communities.

### **Engagement Method**

#### ***Interviews with each LG***

Face to face interviews were undertaken with LG staff.

Questions asked by the TAC sought to understand existing LG landscape around: infrastructure and road user behaviours; extent of community engagement activities; depth of road safety and strategic planning, design and delivery capacity and capability; financial capacity to fund works; enablers and constraints of current external funding models; and understanding of the Safe System.

#### ***Workshops with LGs***

Workshops brought together LGs based on their geographic location. The workshops reviewed and confirmed the findings from Stage One, and then provided a forum for LGs to work together and discuss opportunities for improved safety on local roads.

### **Key findings from our consultations with LGs**

Consultation revealed that most LGs are delivering road safety initiatives, with some delivering quality road safety outcomes in their areas. On the other hand, many LGs are under resourced, lack understanding of Safe System principals and face issues with legacy infrastructure or other internal and external factors when trying to implement the Safe System. Workshops discussed challenges and opportunities including, but not limited to: risk based funding; improved timelines; training needs; resource support; and funding approaches from government agencies.

**What we learnt through the engagement process**

Every LG is unique. LGs are all keen to work together, discuss their road safety challenges, seek solutions to barriers, and share their successes. They experience varying levels of financial and resourcing capacity which directly influences their ability to implement Safe System outcomes.

Through the intensive consultation with LGs, significant knowledge and relationships have been developed. Ongoing communication and engagement by the TAC is crucial to maintain trust and ensure programs are supporting LGs to undertake road safety initiatives and develop their capacity and capability in delivering positive road safety outcomes.

**Conclusion**

Despite the significant number of barriers and impediments LGs face in the delivery of positive road safety outcomes, LGs eagerly engaged in the consultation process and were optimistic about the opportunities to overcome challenges. LGs stressed the value of working collaboratively with the TAC and other Government agencies to improve the delivery of road safety outcomes and initiatives aligned to the Towards Zero Strategy.

The TAC gained valuable insights into the unique barriers, impediments and enablers specific to each Victorian LG, and will continue to support and work with LGs across the system to achieve zero deaths and serious injuries on Victorian roads.

**References**

Crash Statistics 2013-2018 (2019, February 24) Retrieved from

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[https://roadsafety.gov.au/nrss/files/NRSS\\_Inquiry\\_Final\\_Report\\_September\\_2018\\_v2.pdf](https://roadsafety.gov.au/nrss/files/NRSS_Inquiry_Final_Report_September_2018_v2.pdf)