

Implementation of a Road Safety Package to address the NSW road toll

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After six consecutive years of reductions, the NSW road toll for 2009 increased by more than 20% on the previous year, although gains in NSW remain ahead of the slight downward trend for the rest of Australia (see Figure 1). In order to address this rise in road fatalities, a Road Safety Package was developed for implementation throughout NSW.

The Road Safety Package comprises a 5-year \$170 million program of road safety measures developed to support the State Plan Objective to improve road safety and reduce fatalities on our roads, and includes many of the actions identified at the Road Safety Roundtable held in Sydney in July 2009.

The Road Safety Package was developed in accordance with the Safe System Partnership approach to road safety, which encapsulates the requirements that those responsible build and manage to deliver a safe road environment, safe vehicles and safe travel speeds.

The Road Safety Package includes the following initiatives underpinned by the Safe System Partnership approach:

- Highway safety reviews and improvement works for six major highways, including the Great Western, Mid Western, Mitchell, Oxley, Sturt and New England Highways (following the clear success of these reviews in NSW [1])
- Safety works for high crash areas – wire rope barriers [2], audio tactile lines and widening of road shoulders on roads with a history of head-on crashes or vehicles running off road
- Targeted safety works for local roads identified on the basis of crash risk

- Increased funding for public awareness and education campaigns
- Heavy vehicle safety initiatives, including trialling of electronic work diaries ('log books')
- Pedestrian safety measures, including pedestrian fencing
- Initiatives to target repeat offenders, primarily speeding offenders
- A motorcycle safety strategy.

Concurrently, an outsourced Mobile Speed Camera Program – accompanied by an extensive public awareness campaign – will be re-introduced to address speeding on NSW roads, along with a 5% increase in speeding fines and activation of speed enforcement function on all 200 new safety cameras (red light/speed). Speeding remains a key contributing factor in road crashes, and reducing speeding behaviour will be a major step towards achieving an overall reduction in the NSW road toll.

These initiatives will be comprehensively evaluated.

References

1. Job, R. F. S., Graham, A. & Levett, S. (2007). Strategic road safety successes from multi disciplinary highway safety reviews. Proceedings from the 2007 Australasian Road Safety Research Policing and Education Conference, Melbourne, 17-19 October 2007.
2. Levett, S. & Job, R. F. S. (2009). Centreline treatment countermeasures to address cross-over crashes. Proceedings from the 2009 Australasian Road Safety Research Policing and Education Conference, Sydney, 10-13 November 2009.

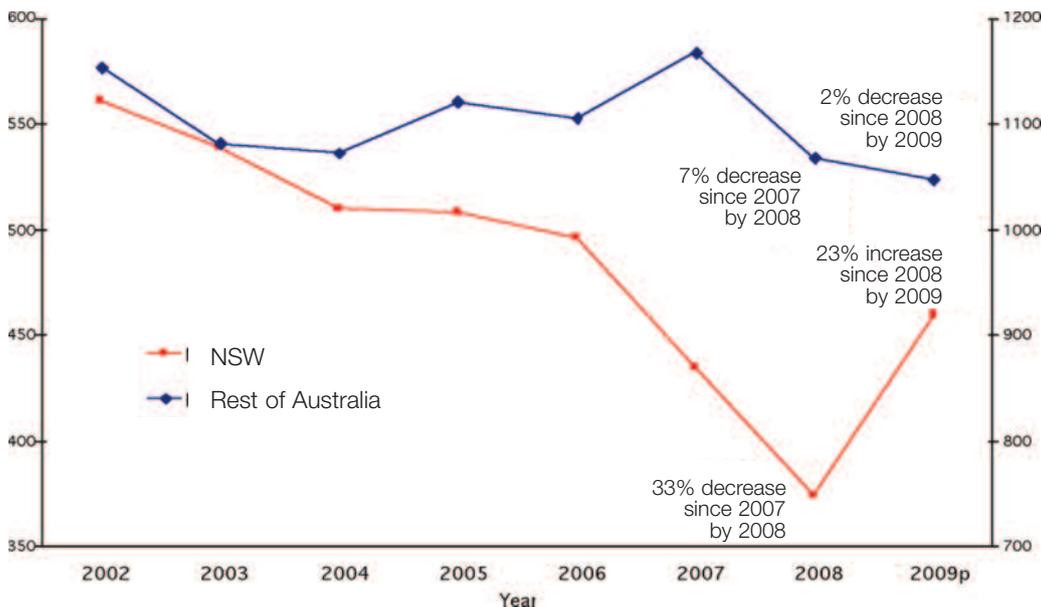


Figure 1. Recent trends in road fatalities in NSW and the rest of Australia