

# Contributed Articles

## Motoring Matters - For Every Australian

The Australian Automobile Association and Australia’s motoring clubs represent some 6.5 million members in a range of different forums at regional, state, national and international levels. With the Federal election imminent, AAA has developed a campaign strategy to advocate on a number of major issues to motorists and all road users - **Motoring Matters for All Australians**.

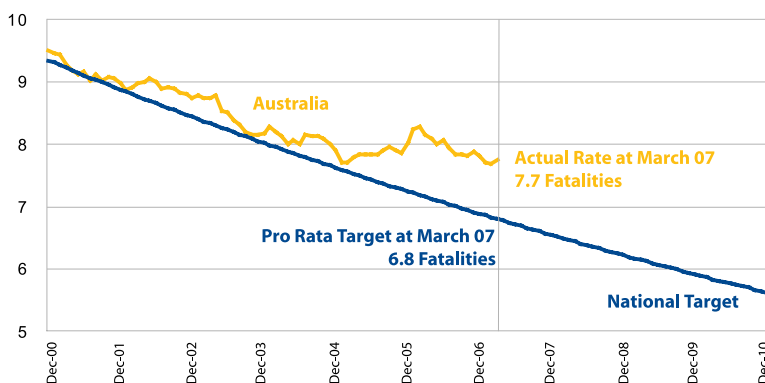
*This article was supplied by the Safer Roads Program.*



Following is the Motoring Matters strategy.

Motorists are a strong lobby. There is a car in almost every Australian household - roads permeate all aspects of our society and represent the major arteries of modern society, playing a crucial role in local, regional and national economies. Five people die every day on Australian roads - which is a national tragedy in economic and human terms.

**Road Fatality Rate vs National Target**  
(fatalities per 100,000 population)



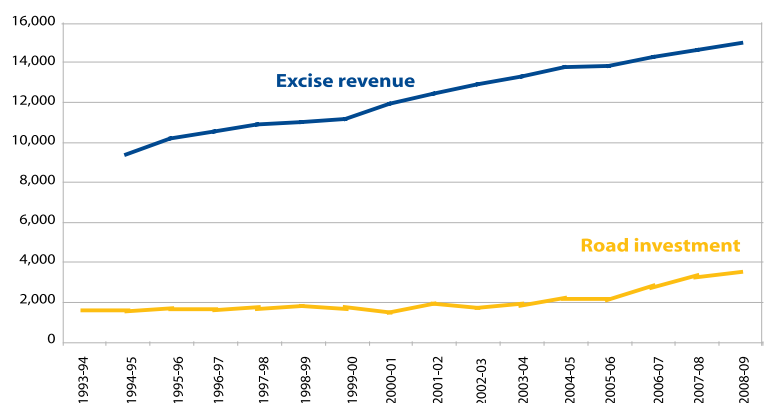
The Australian Automobile Association and Constituent motoring clubs represent the interests of more than 6.5 million members, their families and, further, the motoring public. We act as the principal consumer advocate on Australian road safety matters at the local, State, national and international level.

In the lead up to and during the election, AAA will be promoting its election dossier – **Motoring Matters** – and seeking to enlist broad support from the electorate and political parties.

AAA believes in a systems based approach to road safety – safer drivers in safer cars on safer roads. This philosophy adopts the holistic approach incorporating the various elements to preventing road trauma and underpins AAA’s strategic aims and activities.

The economic and social importance of a safe, well constructed and maintained road system in Australia cannot be questioned. Investment in roads can reduce vehicle operating costs and travel times; leading to greater productivity benefits and incomes for the nation. There are many strategic road investments on the drawing board which will benefit Australia. For every \$1 invested, the economy reaps a return of up to \$5 (CEDA Infrastructure Report 2005).

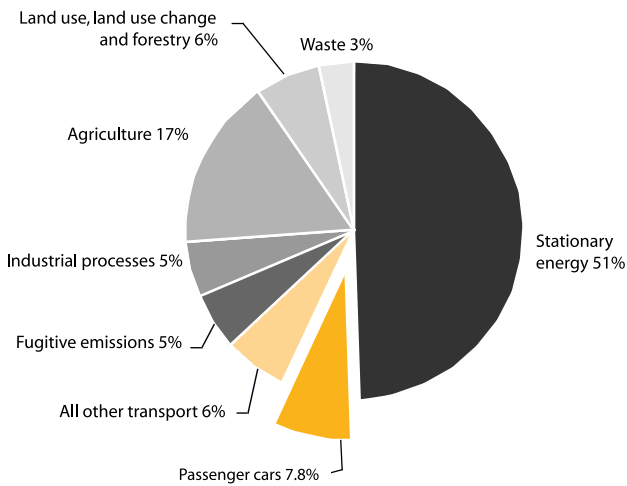
**Commonwealth Fuel Excise Revenue vs Road Investment (\$ million)**



Source: Commonwealth Budget Papers

The 2007 Federal Budget outlined a major funding boost for road infrastructure through AusLink 2 of \$22.3 billion for road and rail infrastructure without allocating for specific projects. While well received, AAA and the motoring Clubs believe this allocation will fall short of the \$25 billion a year it has long advocated – equivalent to 12cpl out of the 38cpl taken in fuel excise.

### Australia's Greenhouse Gas Emissions By Sector, 2005



Source: Australian Greenhouse Office, National Greenhouse Gas Inventory, 2005

Investment in roads also improves road safety outcomes, with associated benefits in terms of improved quality of life, lower health and welfare costs and lower insurance premiums. The cost of road crashes and trauma to the Australian economy is currently estimated at \$17 billion a year (Aust Centre for Economic Research on Health, UQ).

The importance of ensuring adequate real-world driver training and tuition – particularly for our young drivers – is also a major AAA issue and one which will be pursued with major political parties. AAA believes there is a strong role to be played by parents and carers in this training process and this needs to be recognised nationally. Climate change and greenhouse gas emissions will be prominent themes in the election campaign. Passenger car emissions contribute only 7.8% of total greenhouse gases (National Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2005). The Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics estimates the avoidable costs of congestion for Australian capital cities totaled approximately \$9.4 billion in 2005 (BTRE Working Paper 71, 2007). Reducing this congestion will deliver economic benefits and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A commitment to **Motoring Matters** will reduce costs to motorists.

AAA is seeking commitment to a range of appropriately funded national programs which will deliver better road infrastructure benefits – these in turn will deliver better regional and national economies, a better environment (reduced congestion, less fuel and fewer emissions), consequent lower costs for motorists and, most importantly, lower road fatalities and trauma in line with the National Road Safety Strategy targets.

Motoring Matters builds on the relationships established in Canberra to advocate for further Federal Government investment in roads and related issues through policies and program funding that produce safer drivers in safer cars on safer roads.

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### Motoring Clubs: 'Important' Roles

| Role  | Total Important |
|---|-----------------|
| Improving the safety and condition of roads | 92%             |
| More petrol tax spent on roads              | 91%             |
| Testing the safety of cars                  | 91%             |
| Driver training and education               | 90%             |
| Putting motorists' views to government      | 90%             |
| Monitoring petrol prices                    | 88%             |
| Reduce tax on petrol                        | 86%             |
| Reduce environmental impact of cars         | 84%             |

Source: AAA National Survey of Motorists' Attitudes, ANOP 2007

## What Motorists Say

AAA undertakes regular polling to determine motorists' views and attitudes to a range of motoring issues. In 2007, AAA's fifth detailed survey of these attitudes in eight years included motorist's views on the motoring clubs' "important" advocacy role on a range of issues.

## What We Want

- AAA and Constituent Clubs are seeking the following commitments from political parties contesting the next Federal election:
- That the Federal Government increase road investment in AusLink 2 (2009/10 to 2013/14) to at least \$25 billion. This is equivalent to 12cpl raised from the 38cpl fuel excise;
- Strong project management that delivers projects on time and on budget;
- Increased funding for the Commonwealth's Black Spots program to \$100 million a year, through to the end of AusLink 2 in 2014;
- Introduction of family oriented programs to help learner drivers receive adequate real world driving experience;
- Ensure that every new car sold in Australia has at least the same level of safety as equivalent models overseas;
- Government to partner with motoring clubs on specific programs to address climate change, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars;
- Reform of fuel taxation which will result in fuel being cheaper for motorists and their families. By acknowledging and investing in the programs Australian motorists want, all Australians benefit in the following ways:

## Why We Want it

- AAA and Constituent Clubs believe there are good reasons for political parties to support Motoring Matters:
- Road transport plays a significant role in economic growth;
- Road upgrades can lead to lower vehicle operating costs, improved travel times, improved safety and reduced environmental costs;
- There is currently a significant backlog of road projects;
- The Black Spot Program is highly effective with a return of \$14 for every \$1 invested;
- ANOP research consistently shows 9 out of 10 motorists believe the amount of petrol tax spent on roads is inadequate;

- AAA's road rating program, the Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP), has star rated the AusLink network and 51% is rated 3 stars out of 5, which is unacceptable;
- The build up of urban congestion in some Australian cities increases the level of greenhouse gas emissions and raises the costs of motoring for drivers;
- Increasing fuel prices impact upon family budgets;
- Australia is lagging well behind the target set under the National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS).

## How We All Benefit

By acknowledging and investing in the programs Australian motorists want, all Australians benefit in the following ways:

### • Economy

Reduced vehicle operating costs  
Reduced travel time  
More efficient road infrastructure  
Higher productivity and incomes

### • Environment

Reduced congestion, leading to lower fuel use  
Reduced impact on climate change from vehicles  
Reduced air pollution

### • Road Safety

Reduction in road fatalities, injuries and trauma  
Lower human and social cost  
Reduced impact on Australia's health system  
Contributes to achieving NRSS targets

### • Motoring Costs

Lower vehicle running costs  
Improved mobility  
Equity between truck and car road user charges