

Contributed articles

UN Decade of Action for Road Safety

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Following from the launch of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety in 2011, the Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety has developed a NSW Road Safety Strategy for 2012-21. This is a ten year blueprint to reduce death and serious injury on NSW roads by more than 30 per cent.

The development of the strategy has been in close collaboration with the NSW Road Safety Advisory Council, established for the NSW Government to consult with on major road safety developments, and therefore ensuring the strategy has substantial support for its implementation over the decade. Through the development of the strategy, it was identified that there were a number of specific sub-strategies which required attention. This led to development of the NSW Motorcycle Safety Strategy, NSW Pedestrian Safety Strategy and NSW Aboriginal Road Safety Strategy (both of which are currently under development).

The NSW Government is focusing its attention and resources to where the road safety issues are. Road safety data analysis and modelling undertaken to inform the strategy identified the four main crash types on NSW roads, which include vehicle to vehicle head-on, run off-road on straight or curves, intersection crashes and vehicle to pedestrian crashes.

The complexity of the NSW population is also a factor in a range of measures to address the safety of the community, where one third of the population resides in regional rural areas, but account for two-thirds of all fatalities. There are a range of possible factors that also contributed to this, including access to services and remoteness. Therefore the strategy will focus to address safety in rural NSW.

Addressing serious injuries is a major theme of this strategy. A successful data linkage project (Commissioned to the Transport and Road Safety Centre at the University of NSW) found between 2005-2009 that around 26 per cent of all injuries during this period were deemed serious. This detailed data will now allow road safety experts to undertake further analysis to inform the development and revision of current programs to address serious injuries.

Other areas of focus over the next decade include working with and developing closer partnerships with local governments, acknowledging the important role local government plays in delivering services to their local communities. Technologies will also play a key role in addressing road safety – be it through improved vehicles, systems, or infrastructure. Continued integrated enforcement activities will focus on addressing behaviours that lead to crashes and fight to address unacceptable behaviour and attitudes. Addressing post crash response and trauma treatment, highlighting the importance of safer vehicles and positive prevention road safety education will all play a part in improving road safety.

Over the last two years there have been many significant road safety initiatives delivered that will go towards achieving our common goal of reducing road related trauma. Some of these briefly include:

- NSW Speed Camera Strategy;
- Development of a Safer Driver Course for Learner Drivers;
- NSW Audit of Speed Zones (Nominated by the community)
- Breakdown Safety Measures, including the Glove Box Guide;
- Road Rules Awareness Week;
- Continued Enhanced Enforcement Operations;
- Motorcycle Response Team in the Sydney CBD;
- Plan B anti-drink driving advertising;
- Kings Highway Route Review;
- Implementation of the Road Toll Response Package;
- Serious Injury Data Linkage; and
- Heavy Vehicle Safety Technologies Guide.

Overall, the strategy presents an exciting opportunity for road safety professionals in NSW to continue their great work in improving road safety.