

comprehensive approach to improving rider safety and mobility in Victoria. Some of the key actions and projects that are currently being delivered have been identified in this paper. A partnership between the agencies and departments involved in its delivery, the Victorian Motorcycle Advisory Council, motorcycle

industry, rider clubs and associations as well as local government will be critical to the successful implementation of the plan.

Further information on the strategic action plan can be found at [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/ptwplan](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/ptwplan)

## Report on Moscow Road Safety Conference

By Lauchlan McIntosh, Chairman ANCAP Australasia Ltd, and President Australasian College of Road Safety

This is a summary of an address given by Mr McIntosh at a Seminar **Crunch Time - National Road Safety Strategy towards 2020** held at the George Institute for International Health, Level 7, 341 George Street, Sydney on 9 December 2009, following his attendance at the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety. 19-20 November 2009, Moscow, Russia. (Mr McIntosh attended the Moscow conference by invitation from the Russian Federation)



*Plenary session at the Moscow conference.*

### Proposal for a ‘Decade of Action’

In November 2009, Ministers and senior officials from 160 countries met in Moscow and agreed to propose to the UN General Assembly that a Decade of Action for Road Safety be declared early next year.

The aim of the proposal is to save 5 million lives in the decade as well as save 50 million from being maimed or seriously injured in road crashes. This was a real target, and agreed as possible.

Ministers and Secretaries of State from countries such as the USA, UK, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, Brazil, South Africa, Mexico, Chile, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cameroon, Morocco, Ghana and Uganda to name a few, as well as senior officials from the World Bank, OECD, the WHO, and companies such as Michelin, Shell, IRF and a range of NGO’s attended.

Australia was thanked for providing financial support for the conference, but it was disappointing that the other mention of Australia was that our previous good ranking in the road safety performance tables had fallen in recent years.

Australia has a target to reduce our road crash fatality rate by 40% in this current decade (ending this year). Surprisingly Australian State and Federal Ministers a decade ago watered down a target from a recommended 50% to 40%. Given the current political demands for long term target setting over carbon emissions it is interesting that no one in the community and certainly none of their representatives in the State and Federal Parliaments appear to have noticed our failure to meet road safety targets this decade.

Since January 2001 over 14,000 people have lost their lives in Australia in road crashes; that is 1300 lives above the watered down target. This generated an additional cost to Australia of around \$15bn or \$1.5bn every year this decade. That is the additional cost! The dollars are terrible but of course the tragedy of this additional trauma is even worse.

The Conference in Moscow was something of a standard international “high level meeting”. A plenary session with over 20 individual Ministerial presentations led by Russian President

Dmitry Medvedev and a series of panel sessions on partnerships, policy, health sector contributions, safe road users, safe road infrastructure, safe vehicles, improving data; where around 40 different speakers outlined solutions.

## An International Tragedy

The overall picture drawn to the 1500 delegates from around the world (including three from Australia) was of the relatively unnoticed international tragedy with 1.3 million deaths and millions of injuries per annum from road crashes. Passionate ministers emphasised the tragedy is rapidly increasing; currently road crashes are the largest cause of premature death for young people and described by many as an epidemic. The costs to GDP were recognised at 2-4 % in many countries (equivalent or higher than the current Global Financial Crisis) and that 50% of trauma beds in hospitals are filled with road crash victims.

Many speakers said that unlike the climate change issue, road safety solutions are predictable. We understand and agree on the problems, and the antidotes and solutions are well known. The call for a Decade of International Action on Road Safety to reduce fatalities by 5 million began with identification of the seriousness of the problem over a decade ago and over that time many governments, agencies and specialists had worked to build workable solutions.

There were offers of financial support for improving road safety in developing countries; the Bloomberg Foundation has offered \$US125m to help road safety programs in 10 countries. The Secretary of State for Transport in the USA said that the US House of Representatives had already agreed to support the call for the Decade of Action.

Australia has yet to decide what it will do. Australia has a tradition of taking positive steps internationally in a range of policy areas, and we have a history of political leaders offering

policy leadership positions based on our own particular experiences.

The Moscow meeting was a watershed in bring together senior world leaders who not only recognised the need to reduce unnecessary road trauma in the developing world, but who could see that working together could help reduce road trauma in all countries.



*The ACRS President, Lauchlan McIntosh with Mr. Hiroshi Goto from the National Association for Victims Aid in Tokyo (who run Japan NCAP) and Professor Claes Tingvale, the Chairman of EuroNCAP at the Moscow Conference*

Australia will be asked to support the Moscow Declaration for a Decade of Action for Road Safety in March 2009. Our community should demand that our politicians become as passionate as some of the Ministers in Moscow. We need to encourage them to take the leadership role both in the developing world and in Australia. We need in Australia an independent review of why we have failed our road safety targets, we need to know why some States have better results than others, and we need to be committed to all working together to really make a difference. No one should die or be injured unnecessarily in road crashes.

## Recent Progress in Implementing the Safe System Approach

*By Blair Turner, Peter Cairney, Chris Jurewicz & David McTiernan ARRB*

### The Safe System Vision

The Safe System approach has now been adopted by each jurisdiction within Australia, and is likely to be at the core of the new national road safety strategy.

Based primarily on the Swedish 'Vision Zero', and the Dutch 'Sustainable Safety' approaches, the Safe System approach recognises that humans as road users are fallible and will make mistakes. There are also limits to the kinetic energy exchange which humans can tolerate (e.g. during the rapid deceleration associated with a crash) before serious injury or death occurs.

A key part of the Safe System approach requires that infrastructure be designed and managed to take account of these errors and vulnerabilities so that road users are able to avoid serious injury or death on the road.

Although the Safe System vision is clear within Australia, and there is general agreement about this, the approaches that might be taken to achieve this vision are less obvious. Advice is required regarding infrastructure options for achieving Safe System outcomes; on appropriate speed management strategies; and on ways to maximise the alertness and compliance of road users.