



2012 ACRS Conference News

The Governor-General, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, in an opening address to the 2012 ACRS Conference in Sydney encouraged delegates to continue to work to reduce road trauma locally and globally.

Ms Bryce said it was commendable that road safety expertise in Australia was being extended to our neighbours and the world to help reduce the 1.3 million deaths and 50 million serious injuries happening every year from road crashes.

The College Conference, with a theme “*A Safe System: Expanding the reach!*”, heard from national and international speakers, and discussed the potential to act to assist road users often overlooked in mainstream road safety program – including pedestrians, cyclists, heavy vehicles, motorcyclists & rural and remote communities. The national “Diamond Road Safety Award” for an innovative road safety program sponsored by the College and 3M was also announced.

The Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Catherine King MP also addressed the Conference.

Keynote speakers included: Dr Anne T. McCartt, Senior Vice President, Research, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Arlington, Virginia USA – “Can technology help teens be safer drivers?”; Emeritus Professor Mary Sheehan AO FACRS, CARRS-Q Faculty of Health –

“The challenges for rural and remote road safety: nothing new really but what can we do about them?”; Mr Nigel Robinson, Manager Aboriginal Programs, Roads & Maritime Services NSW – “Road Safety Challenges for Aboriginal Communities”; Mr David Healy FACRS Co Vice-President ACRS (National) and immediate past Victorian Chapter Chair – “Heavy Vehicles: safety and profit—friends or foes?”

The National President of the College, Mr Lauchlan McIntosh AM, in his opening address reminded delegates that the work of many in road safety from the community, government, business and academia had helped reduce road deaths by over 100,000 in the last 40 years.

He said “While over 33,900 currently die and are seriously injured on our roads in Australia, if we all continue to take a safe system approach with safer roads, safer cars, safer drivers and safer speeds we should expect to reduce that number to at least 17,000 by 2020 and then hopefully to zero. New technologies in cars alone will help reduce crash rates by 50% in this decade.”

Delegates to the Conference came from across Australia and New Zealand and also the USA, South Africa and Fiji.

Conference opening messages

Opening message from the College Patron the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO

The Governor-General, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, in her opening address to the Australasian College of Road Safety Conference in Sydney, encouraged delegates to continue to work to reduce road trauma locally and globally.

“As your Patron, I’m inspired by the incredible amount of work being done in road safety across Australia and in our international region. I congratulate the College for creating such a collaborative and inclusive environment to decrease the road toll further.

We know that road safety is a vital issue globally, and the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety gives a much needed focus for action around the world. But there is no room for complacency.

View the full video opening message from our Patron here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Huqpacb_gso

Opening address from the Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport, Hon Catherine King MP



The Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport, Hon Catherine King MP, provided an opening address to delegates, and applauded the Australasian College of Road Safety for its commitment to improving road safety for all users.

“Since record keeping commenced in 1925, over 180,000 Australians have died on our roads, with the cost of road crashes to the Australian economy estimated to be at \$27 billion a year,” Ms King said.

“Annually, 1300 Australians die in road crashes, and 32,000 are seriously injured. Together with organisations like the Australasian College of Road Safety, the Australian Government is committed to reducing death and injury on our roads.”

Parliamentary Secretary King outlined the Government’s agenda but stressed that the goal is a shared responsibility.

“As Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport, I have particular responsibility for promoting and implementing the Australian Government’s road safety initiatives,” Ms King said. “There is much we can, and must, do as a nation to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on Australia’s roads.”

“Improving road safety for all road users is something I feel very strongly about,” Ms King said. The Australian Government is firmly committed to a long term agenda for road safety improvement through the actions recommended in the National Road Safety Strategy.”

Read the complete opening address here: http://www.minister.infrastructure.gov.au/ck/speeches/2012/KS06_2012.aspx

Conference wrap up

Some Reflections on the Conference

*by Harry Camkin
Deputy Chair, NSW (Sydney) Chapter Executive, ACRS*

(Mr Harry Camkin, FACRS, presented a summation of the conference for delegates during the closing plenary session)

I was privileged to be invited to “wrap up” the College’s 2012 conference, and in so doing I was able to commend the quality of the many papers and keynote presentations that made a very worthwhile contribution to “expanding the reach” of the Safe System philosophy [1]. I also chose to express some disappointment at what I saw were shortcomings in the scope of the dialogue over an otherwise very constructive two days. These related essentially to the limited amount of discussion on strategic and policy elements of road safety planning that, if fully developed alongside “Safe Systems” in National and State Strategies, could be highly instrumental both in extending the application of this principle, and in facilitating progress towards the overall goals of those Strategies. Thus was missed an opportunity to broaden the focus of the expertise of the road safety community to other elements of the National Road Safety Strategy.

Having had time now to reflect on that summary and the implications of those shortcomings, I welcome the opportunity to offer some more constructive commentary on, firstly, the need to ensure that strategic and policy-level issues are more adequately addressed in the College’s program of conferences and seminars, and secondly, the pressing need to promote many of the policy issues that are identified in current National and State Strategies, but left hanging in the air in the absence of action to progress them.

Conference and Seminar Programs

There is strong competition from professional associations and other organisations for pre-eminence in the promotion of road safety, as there is for the sources of presentation and publication of research papers and other treatises on the subject. While this should not be discouraged, if the College is to be recognised as a major purveyor of expertise from research and operations to policy advice, it needs to demonstrate its capability across this field. Hence this conference's organisers' two-fold objective of building on the success of the College's preceding conference [2] by embellishing the implementation of Safe Systems, and by progressing development of other policies that would maximise the benefits of the strategic planning approach.

Discussion within the College in relation to the National Strategy for 2011-20, including contributions to its Journal [e.g. 3-5], has strongly advocated the pursuit of additional policies to supplement the Safe Systems philosophy. But few participants took the opportunity to address policy or strategic planning issues in their presentations. With hindsight, it is evident that the theme "Expanding the Reach" gave little indication of an objective of seeing how to build strategically on the contribution of "Safe Systems" to the National Strategy, as well as how best to extend its application.

It is suggested that future seminar and conference organisers need to be more specific in stating their objectives and desired outcomes for their programmes, rather than leaving interpretation of the theme to the participants. (As a member of the organising committee for this conference, *mea culpa*.)

Safe Systems – Plus and Beyond?

The elements of Safe Systems are not new to road safety practice. Rather it is their utilisation within a principle that recognises that a degree of redundancy is necessary to allow for the fallibility of both human beings and their manufactured systems. Nevertheless, the success of current National and State Strategies will undoubtedly depend upon how well we are able to further develop and implement both these elements and their framing in accordance with this principle, and the conference made its contribution to this.

But similarly there is very little new in the reference in current strategies to other important principles such as:

- exposure management – from traffic demand to separation of incompatible elements of traffic,
- cost-effectiveness – an element of prioritisation in the application of limited resources both to alternative crash countermeasures and to other programs on the social agenda,
- macro-economic policy - issues such as taxation review, motor vehicle industry, road pricing, even emissions trading, which all have potential to influence road safety in the long run,[6]
- shared accountability and synergy – recognition that many strategies have objectives that align with those of other sectors, such as environment, transport, health, work safety, national productivity, etc, and vice-versa,
- identifying "Lead Agencies" - with accountability for executing the Strategies, and with sufficient authority to harness those synergistic benefits,
- training and capability - development of the capacity of all major players to make the contribution envisaged and expected of them,
- a strategic research program to ensure that adequate resources are available for research that is focussed on progressing the Strategy, and
- marketing of the Strategy itself.

Most of these were mentioned in one way or another in many of the national and state Strategies since 1990. They are also generally intrinsic to road safety advocacy internationally, not least the benchmark work by Howard et al [7] and including the U.N.'s International Decade of Action for Road Safety. Sadly, few of them have progressed far beyond being indicated as a principle or policy yet to be developed. Even the final Action Plan of the 2000-10 National Strategy, commendable as it was in promoting Safe Systems, failed to advance any of these issues. (It is pleasing however to note recent action to work with the National Health and Medical Research Council to establish a National Road Safety Research Strategy, and the College's involvement in this.)

For a while, the most optimistic of us thought that perhaps the National Road Safety Council established in the final years of the 2000-10 National Strategy would take up some of these issues. But none of them appeared on its published list of priorities, its focus being on the tactical level of activity.

It is noteworthy that the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure (SCOTI) established by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) with responsibility for national transport and infrastructure issues makes no reference to the National Road Safety Strategy in its Terms of Reference [8].

Have scores of contributors to our planning strategies merely rubber-stamped these as mother-hood statements, or did they really think they were not worth pursuing? Are they too hard, are they politically inappropriate, will they forever be paid mere lip-service? Or are they just awaiting

a champion – perhaps a re-vamped and independent Road Safety Council with a charter to explore policy issues and promote the National Strategy to all stakeholders? Perhaps a pre-eminent public health advocate who will remind us that prevention is better than cure and that removing the burden of road trauma from the health sector will free up resources for other pressing needs?

Or perhaps a Productivity Commission report quantifying the impact of traffic crashes on national productivity and the consequent opportunity costs to other government and private sector programs?

Maybe we need all of these.

Can the College help?

The College can claim amongst its membership a wide range of skills from research and development through practice and strategic planning to policy analysis. We have academics, consultants, and practitioners highly regarded in Australasia and internationally for their capabilities. It is doubtful however if the College as yet has the credibility, or the resources, and we're probably lacking in the necessary marketing and lobbying skills to advance such an agenda on our own.

Road Safety doesn't appear amongst the priorities of COAG, nor even evidently those of SCOTI, so we probably need, as Mooren [9] has suggested, an assembly of political, bureaucratic, and "technocratic" expertise to elevate it to a level of government priority synonymous with its impact on the community and on other government and private sector activities, as indicated above.

But could we not as a widely-representative road safety community encourage an initiative by our National and Chapter Executives to explore opportunities to ensure that these shortcomings don't languish forever in the "too hard" basket?

References:

1. "Conference Wrap": ACRS Weekly Alert No. 40, C Howe
2. "A Safe System – Making it Happen", Melbourne, 2011
3. ACRS. ACRS comments on the draft NRSS. Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety 2011; Vol 22 No. 1.
4. McIntosh, L. From the President. Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety 2011; Vol 22 No. 3
5. Jiggins, S. How important is community support to the NRSS. Journal of the Australasian College of Road Safety 2011; Vol 22 No. 4
6. Hughes, B. Government Policy: The Accidental Effect on Road Safety. ARSRPE Conference 2010. ACRS website database: <http://acrs.org.au/publications/conference-papers/database/>
7. Howard et al. Towards Zero: Ambitious Road safety Targets and the Safe Systems Approach. OECD/ITT. 2008.
8. www.scoti.gov.au

9. Mooren, L. The politics of road safety ARSRPE Conference 2010. ACRS website database <http://acrs.org.au/publications/conference-papers/database/>

Feedback post-conference

Feedback on the conference from Mr Brian Connor AM FACRS - Letter to ACRS National Office, National Executive and NSW Sydney Chapter

I write to thank you and all of your team for the Conference last week and for inviting me to be a part of it. Congratulations to all concerned on its great success. As a result of this experience I have much to think about.

In a way I felt like a faded Olympic athlete as I look back on what has been achieved over the years. As one of the original College members said to me 'after what it was like in those early days in Armidale, and look at all this that is happening'. This is testimony to the work of many dedicated people.

I believe that you had it right when you chose the 'systems approach' as your theme. All the keynote addresses were excellent and it was most pleasing to see the involvement of the Governor General and Hon Catherine King MP.

Mention was made of the Haddon Matrix on several occasions and I believe that this was very appropriate in that it encouraged our attention towards all aspects of the mix which make up the tragedy of road trauma. There is no doubt that we are making very rapid advances in some parts of this frame of reference - especially in terms of new technology in automobiles. I realise that there is much more to come in this area. Likewise the ANCAP program must be applauded.

We have not done so well, however, in terms of understanding how behaviour may be modified in the traffic system. I have always maintained that this is partly the result of short-term funding contingent on our relatively brief electoral cycles. It may ultimately be in the area of behavioural change that we will discover the greatest cost-benefit reward.

In a world of rapid change the constants are in our failures. It was evident from the Conference that we still have more work to do with data collection, bicycle strategies, rural road safety and finding a place for traffic safety education in an already overcrowded school curriculum. Restriction of speed limits must remain a focus.

Specific issues from the concurrent sessions included work being done to help disadvantaged groups, migrants, those with special needs and teenagers; the development of local community road strategies and their evaluation; the acknowledgement of dangers associated with pulling trailers; the peak incidence of serious rural road trauma in the afternoon; the expansion of the traffic offenders program

in Blacktown (Sydney); new road trauma support services in Western Australia and the dilemma faced over competing environmental and safety concerns in relation to road side trees. Driver distraction is becoming increasingly a major problem - especially as we focus on the special needs of young drivers in the traffic system.

The work being done on indigenous road safety requires particular commendation. This has long been a source of great social disadvantage for this section of the community. Now restorative justice processes for traffic offences need to be included as part of these programs rather than incarceration.

Internationally Australia is making its contribution to global road safety efforts through its contributions via AusAID. We can also reduce our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions through the encouragement of lower speed limits for heavy vehicles. There are exciting developments in the USA in relation to technological review of the way young people drive.

We heard of progress being made with State strategies - especially in Victoria and the recent announcement of a road safety strategy for New South Wales. Likewise great progress is being made in New Zealand. Unfortunately it seems that the National Road Safety Council is to be disbanded in November of this year.

After conferences such as these we should remind ourselves of the more translational research where what we know is implemented as best practice. Greater input from the medical profession would help in this regard.

Our College is optimally placed to give authority to traffic safety deliberations in Australia. We have outstanding leadership and the capacity to promote networking amongst road safety professionals. Not only do we award Fellowships but we can provide a continuing and supportive framework of fellowship amongst each other. Perhaps the last words should come from our latest Fellow, Lori Mooren, who wrote in the definitive year of 1991 on her return from a Healthy Communities conference in Sweden "The main area to be improved in Australia is to shift away from the government ownership towards community ownership of safety/injury prevention". Perhaps that could be a focus for future deliberations.

I look forward to hearing of the College's Olympic flame being lit yet again in a year's time in another part of our nation as we all work together to promote a safer Australia.

Finally, I would like to pay special tribute to Teresa Senserrick and her team in the New South Wales Chapter of our College. They did a mighty job. I hope they feel their efforts were well rewarded.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dr Brian Connor AM FACRS

Have your say. The ACRS Journal provides a medium for the expression of views and the sharing of information about road safety. Readers are welcome to submit letters for consideration for publication in the Letters to the Editor section of the journal. Letters may be on any road safety issue and should be no more than 600 words in length. Write to the Managing Editor at PO Box 198, Mawson, ACT 2607 or email journaleditor@acrs.org.au. Views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the ACRS.

Fellowship Award 2012

2012 Fellowship awarded to Lori Mooren



ACRS President Lauchlan McIntosh announced that Lori Mooren was declared this year's Fellow at the ACRS Conference dinner held in Sydney on the 9th of August, 2012. This is the highest honour the College bestows and was awarded in recognition of Lori's long-standing and active practice and leadership in some of Australia's major road safety agencies. Lori has played a significant role in advocacy that has led to successful implementation of major road safety initiatives in Australia and on a global scale.

Since 1989, Lori has worked in a number of roles and capacities in road safety. She began in a road safety campaign manager role at the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW, coordinating public education messages with other actions, especially traffic enforcement operations. She progressed in the NSW Government to a senior policy role and achieved the lowest road toll for the State in 1998 since records began. Since this time she has continued to work in consulting, research and advocacy roles aiming to reduce the incidence and severity of road trauma.

Lori has been active as a past member of the National Executive and of the Sydney Chapter. She also participates internationally as an active member of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration.

3M-ACRS Diamond Road Safety Award 2012



The 3M-ACRS Diamond Road Safety Award calls for any road safety practitioner from the public or private sector (which typically includes but is not limited to individuals or teams of road engineers, contractors, road safety officers, road safety equipment manufacturers, asset managers, town planners, etc.) to submit highly innovative, cost-effective road safety initiatives/programs that they have recently developed that stand out from standard, everyday practice and deliver significant improvements in road safety for the community.

A wealth of applications was received this year for the 3M-ACRS Diamond Road Safety Award ranging from government, council, private company and community groups, including service providers, regulatory bodies and advocacy groups. The diverse projects nominated included several targeting components or all aspects of the safe system to improve safety in certain regions or specific high-risk roads or road features (such as roundabouts); not only focusing on vehicle occupants but also pedestrians and cyclists. Several creative design and technology initiatives also featured, such as innovative signage targeting child pedestrians, use of automated number plate recognition technology to identify unregistered vehicles or drivers without a valid licence; and a number of vehicle advances, including intelligent speed adaptation technology, a trip

recording device to assist learner drivers, and an automatic traffic cone placement device for trucks. One state-wide initiative sought to improve access to driver licensing for remote residents, particularly in remote indigenous communities, while others covered a range of educational programs and activities. These included initiatives targeting the high-risk groups of young drivers, motorcyclists, older drivers and drivers with dementia, as well as promotion and assistance with selecting and fitting child safety seats, and initiatives in the niche area of mining sites (including high visibility signage and workshops on key road safety risks).

With such a competitive and diverse range of submissions, all commendable initiatives, choosing a winner was tough, as acknowledged by the ACRS President, Lauchlan McIntosh, who announced that such calibre demonstrated the valuable contribution that road safety projects are making to the Australasian community. Only one winner could be selected and in the end the award went to **Transport of Children and Youth with Additional Needs (TOCAN)**. TOCAN represents a unique partnership that provides a regular forum for learning, discussing and problem solving issues relating to the transport of children and youth with additional needs, providing the impetus for individual members to instigate research, actions and advocacy. Through their collaboration and dedicated effects, TOCAN identified significant gaps in the quality of restraints available for those with additional needs, falling short of Australasian Standards, as well as a lack of knowledge of these seats and Standards among paediatric occupational therapists. Further, as many as one-quarter of families of children with additional needs were found not to purchase the child restraints recommended by therapists. TOCAN continues in its advocacy efforts to raise awareness of government and industry of the issues relating to transporting children with additional needs.

The Award was presented to TOCAN at the conference dinner and accepted by team leaders, Barbara Minuzzo from the Royal Children's Hospital and Helen Lindner from VicRoads on behalf of the 10 team partners, including representatives from the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, Britax Childcare, the Australian Child Restraint Resource Initiative, the Victorian Paediatric Rehabilitation Service Group at Latrobe University, Autism Victoria and the Association for Children with a Disability (ACD). Congratulations to TOCAN were also delivered in the pre-recorded opening speech of the conference by the College Patron, the Governor-General Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO, which can be viewed at: http://youtube/Huqpacb_gso.