

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ROAD SAFETY VIDEO AND RESOURCE PACK “Corrugations to Highways”

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The scope of the problem

From reviewing the documented road crash statistics involving Aboriginal people, it can be clearly seen that there is a demonstrated need for road safety authorities to develop specific interventions to enhance the current strategies being implemented throughout Australia.

In States with a high Aboriginal population the following statistical evidence is provided as part of the basis for the development of the National Aboriginal Road Safety Video and Resource Pack.

Western Australia

The death rate of Aboriginal people from road crashes is 35 per 100,000 population compared with only 14 per 100,000 population for non-Aboriginal people.

The reported rate of hospitalisation for Aboriginal people (1988 to 1996) is nearly three times that for non-Aboriginal people. The actual hospitalisation rate for Aboriginal is almost certainly even higher, as some Aboriginal people admitted to hospital may have been recorded as being non-Aboriginal.

Aboriginal people also have higher rates of hospitalisation from road crashes across all age groups compared with non-Aboriginal people. For those aged 45 to 64 the rate is more than four times that for non-Aboriginal people and for those aged up to fourteen years the rate is nearly three times as high.*

**Statistics quoted are from the research document: Cercarelli, L.Rina. 1999 Road Crash Hospitalisations and Deaths in Western Australia involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, 1988 to 1996, Road Accident Research Unit, Department of Public Health, University of Western Australia.*

Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory Aboriginal people represent 27% of the population, however Aboriginal people account for over 45% of the Territory's fatalities.

South Australia

In South Australia Aboriginal people represent 1.4% of the States population. In the period 1991- 1999, 68 fatal crashes involving Aboriginal people were recorded resulting in Aboriginal people representing 4% of the States fatalities.

The reported rate of injury crashes for Aboriginal people (1991-1997) was 452 or 3% of the State's crashes.

This is the known scope of the problem, however due to reporting processes, especially for hospitalisations – the extent of the issue could be even greater than recorded.

Consultation with Aboriginal communities

Anecdotal evidence provided by Aboriginal Communities and road safety and other injury prevention agencies working with Aboriginal communities in all States suggest that the issue of road trauma and Aboriginal people is even greater than the statistical evidence presents.

Advice and some preliminary evidence suggest that the issue of road safety is becoming more and more important to Aboriginal communities. This can be supported by the number of community based and Police operated road safety and motor driver licencing programs which are being requested by communities and that are experiencing both a high rate of participation and achievement of objectives.

Background to the development of the resource

National meetings to discuss Aboriginal Road Safety issues were held in Alice Springs (1997) and Darwin (1999) and were attended by representatives from Australian State Road Safety Agencies as well as Community based Project Managers and personnel.

At each of these meetings, requests and recommendations for the development of a multi-media resource that could assist Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Community Police Liaison Officers, Community Health Workers, State, Regional and Local Agencies with road safety charters to promote, educate and enforce

road safety in Aboriginal communities as well as to Aboriginal people along with the need for a National Strategy and the need for better communication and transfer of successful programs and projects, were tabled.

The outcomes of these meetings are being progressed by the newly formed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aboriginal Road Safety Working Party that is chaired by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB).

However, the need for the development of a multi media resource to assist in the variety of Aboriginal road safety educational, training and community development programs that were being implemented in such States as Western Australia, Northern Territory and South Australia was seen as a high priority by groups such as the WA Police Service, RoadWise, The Northern Territory University Remote Driver Training Program and the South Australian Police.

To this end a meeting was held in Alice Springs, July 2000 to discuss and investigate the practicability of such a resource. The meeting was attended by representatives from:

- Northern Territory Department of Works & Transport
- Northern Territory University
- Western Australian Police Service
- South Australian Police Service
- Queensland Department of Transport
- RoadWise – The Local Government Road Safety Strategy and Community Road Safety Program for Western Australian.

This meeting investigated the need for the development of a video resource and included advice from Aboriginal Community Police Officers (ACPOS)(NT) and Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers (APLOS) (WA) as well as evidence based research provided on the matter, from road safety agencies currently working with and in Aboriginal Communities, on the issues of road safety education and licencing matters.

The outcome of this meeting was that a video/multi-media resource be produced to provide information on road safety issues relating to Aboriginal communities.

Applicability of resource to be utilised by other State/Territory jurisdictions

The original meetings held to discuss the proposal of the resource included representation from some of the key stakeholders from the State's and Territory's that were currently involved in developing and delivering road safety programs involving metropolitan based, rural and remote Aboriginal people.

A program timetable was developed at the meeting held in 2000 to ensure progress of the project. This was due to the need for the development of the resource to assist current Aboriginal road safety programs, being greater for some agencies than others.

At the deadline for commitment, only South Australia, the Northern Territory and Western Australian agencies confirmed their financial support and involvement in the project.

This resulted in the filming schedule being limited to those States and the Northern Territory due to financial constraints. This included filming of local landmarks and involved local Aboriginal people in each participating area in the production and development of the resource to encourage ownership and empowerment

However, it has always been the philosophy of the project team, that the resource could be used and shared by any State or Territory agency or Aboriginal service throughout Australia in the promotion and education of road safety issues.

As the project progressed many contacts were received by the Project Team Manager from individuals from agencies including Transport, Police, Education and Health that are delivering road safety services to Aboriginal communities in places such as Far North Queensland and the Pilbara region of WA to the Western Desert communities. .

To this end, the development of the resource endeavoured to ensure that both the script and vision would be as all encompassing as possible and could be easily adapted to reflect individual State and Territory differences.

Further discussion with the network of non financial entities that have shown interest in the resource, have clearly indicated that they would be enthusiastic to be provide comment and suggestions regarding the adaptation of the resource to encompass their State/Territory individual Road Traffic Act requirements.

This would involve further consultation with each of the key Stakeholders in those jurisdictions as well as network members, to ensure equity and to make sure that the resource has a National applicability.

Aim of the Project

The project team agreed that the video resource material could be used in a variety of ways to assist in the delivery of the identified road safety needs of Aboriginal communities.

The resource specifically addresses the following objectives identified in the National Road Safety Strategy (2000-2005)

- Strategic Objective 5 – Improve equity among road users
- 5.1 – Action Area: Develop and implement programs targeted at road user groups for whom road safety is a particular concern.
 - ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People***
Develop culturally appropriate road safety programs.

Through consultation with members of Aboriginal communities in WA, NT and SA and from advice from ACPLOS, APLOS and members of the Police Services involved in delivering road safety programs and enforcement operations, it was suggested that for the resource to achieve its intended aims it must engage the following values:

- Involve only Aboriginal people. This is to promote the idea that it is an issue that is important to Aboriginal people and that Aboriginal people need to recognise road safety as a serious community issue that they can do something about it, to reduce the risk of death or injury to their family and friends.
- Employ a bottom up approach, as indicated in the above point, rather than an enforcement or “big stick” attitude – that is, if you don’t act in a road safe manner the worst thing that can happen is the Police will enforce it. (No Police, ACPLO’S or APLO’S feature in the footage. This is to ensure this philosophy, however the script (voice-overs by Aboriginal people) includes advice on the requirements of road users in line with Road Traffic codes.
- That any emerging issues and attitudes that are considered important to Aboriginal people would be included in the resource. This was also to encourage empowerment and ownership and to adopt a proactive approach.

How the resource is being used

It is anticipated that the resource will be engaged in the following manner:

- Used as a complementary training resource in Aboriginal Road Safety Training and Licencing and Community Awareness programs by a variety of agencies including Police, Community Road Safety programs, Education services, driver training and community health services.
- To provide resource ideas and real life examples of successful culturally relevant road safety programs that address road safety issues experienced by Aboriginal people in remote communities.

The major focus of the resource is to be used as an educational/teaching intervention. The resource will be used in conjunction with remote driver training programs and Aboriginal Road Safety Awareness courses undertaken by the State agencies and services.

The secondary focus of the resource is to be used as a road safety promotional tool to raise awareness of road safety issues effecting Aboriginal people. The resource may be used as a stand alone (continuous play) or through community television communications to support individual State’s Road Safety Education Programs and Priority Programs.

The Project Team

Whilst the resource was initially discussed by the agencies identified above, the final project team that confirmed their participation included:

- Northern Territory University – Remote Driver Training Program
- South Australian Police Service
- Western Australian Police Service

- RoadWise – the Local Government Road Safety Strategy for Local Government and Community Road Safety program for WA.

All of the above agencies have extensive networks in Aboriginal communities and are currently involved in delivering a variety of road safety projects, program, activities and campaigns in conjunction with the target group.

The project team have expertise, knowledge and a proven track record in the areas of:

- Driver Training
- Motor Driver Licencing
- Road Safety Awareness
- Police operations
- Community development and community participation

Due to the experience of the team members and their current road safety work, enlisting support from Aboriginal people to not only become involved, but also to promote community ownership and empowerment, and to encourage advocacy for the project was enabled.

Strategic Partners

To ensure that the video resource would achieve the desired objectives and to also encourage ownership and usage by relevant road safety agencies and related industries the following strategic partnerships have been formed in the production of the resource:

- St John's Ambulance Australia (Road trauma management at the scene of a crash including management of suspected spinal injuries)
- Driver Training Schools (NT)
- Institute of Aboriginal Development (NT)
- Warring Garri Corporation (WA)
- Fitzroy Crossing Inn (WA)
- Mutujuli Community (NT)
- Halls Creek Community (WA)
- Kununurra Community (WA)
- Ceduna community (SA)
- Goolarie Television (WA)

Road safety agencies throughout Australia have recognised the significance of the issues of Aboriginal people and the numbers of people being killed and seriously injured on our roads.

Many successful road safety projects have been developed by the various States and Territories to assist in addressing the specific concerns relating to the high numbers of Aboriginal people involved in road crashes.

This program has been developed, through advice from Aboriginal people, to complement these programs and to provide an additional resource to add value to road safety projects.

In the development of this resource we have endeavoured to follow these intentions:

Ensuring that it is essential to recognise the Aboriginal way of doing things

All segments of the video were shot in remote or isolated communities in WA, SA and the NT and involve only Aboriginal people, so that they can demonstrate the road safety messages in a culturally appropriate and realistic manner.

Technical advice was offered from local Police and road safety agencies during the filming, however no segment was set-up.

Each segment was filmed true to life, to reflect the Aboriginal way of doing things and the way of life in each of those communities.

For instance, you may see in the cycling segment, that some of the Aboriginal children are not wearing closed in shoes, which of course, is an important safety feature to keep feet from injury. Discussion with the young Aboriginal people who feature in this segment, revealed that, they rarely wore shoes.

(If they could help it!) And some of them even played football barefoot!

Due to their advice, we decided to film it as it was, but in the summary at the end of the segment pointed out that wearing closed in shoes was the best way to keep feet from being injured.

Whilst this may not sit well with some of the road safety purists, the Project Team were convinced that to ensure that we were being true to what the Aboriginal people who had provided their advice and support to the project, we would deal with the real life road safety issues as recommended by them.

Recognise and minimise the Local/Regional/State differences

Consultation regarding the development of a Nationally applicable Aboriginal road safety video resource presented a number of cultural issues that, at first, seemed to be insurmountable and would rule out the possibility of such a resource becoming a reality.

However, further investigation and consultation with Aboriginal communities involved in some of the road safety projects being delivered by the various State agencies throughout Australia, revealed that the idea of a Aboriginal Road Safety resource involving only Aboriginal people to give road safety messages to other Aboriginal people was not only a great idea, but something that everyone wanted to be involved in!

In fact, we had far more Aboriginal communities wanting to be involved in the project than we could accommodate.

The issue of Local/Regional/State differences was not considered a major problem or in fact a problem at all by any of the Aboriginal people involved in the shooting of the video.

The differences that were of concern and that needed to be addressed were more to do with Road Traffic Codes and the ways the different road safety agencies conducted their core business in each State rather than cultural issues.

Having overcome these obstacles, what we are presenting in this program is an Australian first and is considered a starting point, for Aboriginal people and Road Safety agencies to continue to work together to address the issue of Aboriginal people being involved in road crashes and reduce the numbers of people who are being killed and seriously injured.

The project team hope that this program will not only provide life saving information, but will also present both Aboriginal people and road safety agencies with the opportunity to build on this first attempt. With the ultimate aim, to make available, better, more effective, culturally appropriate and most importantly culturally owned resources and programs to save lives on our roads.

Support and encourage Community participation and ownership

The only philosophy that this project ever had was to ensure that Aboriginal people were involved and owned this resource.

The total content of the project involved only Aboriginal people, apart from the identification of the major causal factors associated with death and injuries of Aboriginal people from road trauma, and the organisation and actual filming of segments.

It is the ideas, suggestions and advice of Aboriginal people that form the total project.

It is their voices, their actions, their involvement and their support that you will see.

This program is all about Aboriginal people promoting road safety to Aboriginal people.

What is included in the program

The program is based on the video – Corrugations to Highways. The video features 10 separate segments on road safety covering the following issues:

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Trip Planning
- Driving to the conditions including Speed, road conditions, road rules

- Getting a Drivers Licence and registration of vehicles
- Travelling in Open Load Space
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Restraint use including Child Restraints
- Basic First Aid at the scene of a crash/Management of a suspected spinal injury

Each segment runs for approximately 3-5 minutes.

The video can be used as a complementary tool by Police, Aboriginal Liaison Officers, Community Health workers, Driver Trainers and Instructors, Teachers, Road Safety Officers or anybody that wants to explain the things that we can all do to keep safe on our roads.

A range of questions and activities are offered to help group leaders identify the key issues presented in the segments. The group leaders may choose to conduct all or just some of the activities, or tailor make the resource to complement their existing programs, depending on the needs of the Aboriginal people in their group.

Target market

The Aboriginal Road Safety Video is suited for all Aboriginal people, from young children to adults.

The resource has been segmented so that group leaders can choose which sections they wish to show their group.

This allows the flexibility for providing an all-encompassing road safety program, or a highlighted program targeting specific issues.

Group leaders can tailor make the program to suit their needs.

For example, if a primary school teacher just wishes to teach Pedestrian and cycling to students, they can utilise only those segments and activities.

Or if a Police Officer is undertaking a comprehensive Road Safety Course or Motor Drivers Licence Course they may wish to cover every segment.

Evaluation of resource

It is intended that the effectiveness of the resource will be evaluated using the following measures:

Process – Measured against the reach of the project – how many agencies order the resource, how many communities, Aboriginal projects utilised the resource?

Were the users satisfied with the resource? Are there any major things that we missed in the development? How could we do it better for the next resource?

Impact– What is the medium term effectiveness of the intervention. Has it added value to existing programs? Has it encouraged development of more effective programs? has it instigated demand for new road safety initiatives by and for Aboriginal people?. Has it assisted the core business of the agencies implementing road safety programs in Aboriginal communities?

Formative– How can we use the information relating to the resource to develop more effective road safety programs and resources– who do we need to involve in this future development?

The evaluation component has not been included in the budget, however it is anticipated that RoadWise will assist in undertaking preliminary surveys and will endeavour to source additional funding sources to enable further evaluation and research to be undertaken on the effectiveness of video resources to assist current road safety programs and interventions and to raise awareness and create demand for further development of culturally appropriate road safety projects.

Progress to date

The National Aboriginal Road Safety Video Resource Pack was officially launched in May 2002 in:

- Port Augusta – South Australia
- Alice Springs – Northern Territory
- Darwin – Alice Springs
- Broome – Western Australia

Each launch gained extensive media coverage resulting in large numbers of requests for the video resource.

The resource is only being made available via a written order form. The order form requests the agency to identify how they intend to use the resource as well as to document any road safety programs that they are currently delivering that address aboriginal road safety issues.

This has allowed us to develop an extensive database of contacts and programs dealing with road safety for Aboriginal people. This database will be beneficial in our evaluation processes.

As at 29th July 2002, 395 video packs have been distributed to 90 different agencies throughout Australia.

Further information

For further information regarding the Aboriginal Road Safety Video please do not hesitate to contact Julie Parsons, RoadWise Manager, The Western Australian Local Government Association on 08 9213 2054 or mobile 0417 950 358 or email jparsons@walga.asn.au