

TOSSERS – A Coordinated Road Safety Effort

Mr Tony McCann
Regional Services Manager
Department for Planning and Infrastructure
PO Box 68
Geraldton WA 6531

Phone 08 9956 0112
Fax 08 9956 0131
Email tony.mccann@dpi.wa.gov.au

Ms Mel O'Brien
Regional Road Safety Officer
RoadWise
PO Box 21
Geraldton WA 6531

Phone 08 9965 0155
Fax 08 9921 8570
Email roadwise@greenough.wa.gov.au

Introduction

In 2002 a workshop was held by the Office of Road Safety in Perth which involved all regional stakeholders with an interest in road safety.

It was at this workshop that TOSSERS was born. It was identified that the link missing in addressing road safety in the Mid West was a co-ordinated strategic approach to address whole of region issues. The workshop identified the deficiencies in the delivery of road safety programs throughout the region and the need to lift road safety as a priority in regional development in the Mid West.

Some of the deficiencies identified throughout agencies included:-

- a depth of statistical information, but lack of information sharing between the agencies
- a lack of regional ownership of road safety issues. We are *told* what the issues are and what the strategies are for our region – we weren't deciding for ourselves
- agencies having their own reporting requirements which limits their capacity for a whole of region strategic approach.
- duplication and ineffective use of resources because of the lack of co-operation and coordination between agencies
- limited advocacy role from the region
- out of date data and strategy direction

There was a lack of cohesion amongst the key stakeholders and a lack of direction and collaboration for a whole of region approach to road safety. From this workshop, it was identified that information sharing, statistical analysis and creating a broader network would form the basis of the group. The key stakeholders were very supportive of moving forward together and that working together would not only have positive outcomes for road safety in the region, but also have a flow on affect for other regional issues.

Membership

Members of the group are those that have regional influence and decision making capabilities - hence the word TOSSERS. This stands for **The Operational Support System Encouraging Road Safety**.

By combining the resources of major stakeholders in road safety (DPI, RoadWise, Health, MRWA, Police, RACWA, Education, Local Government and Regional Road Group) we have been able to achieve a coordinated effort in enhancing the delivery of road safety strategies to reduce road trauma within the Mid West region.

Because of the structure of the group we now have the capacity to influence regional decision making and policy setting in favour of a strategic regional road safety perspective.

Which way is the way ahead?

It was identified at the conception of TOOSERS that the group is more strategic than operational.

The operational duties are predominantly carried out by RoadWise – through the Regional Road Safety Officer and the committees throughout the region.

RoadWise is The Local Government & Community Road Safety Program for WA. With road safety officers throughout the state in each region, RoadWise provides a community road safety network with partnership between local government and communities.

RoadWise provides support for the implementation of Arriving Safely – The State Road Safety Strategy for Western Australia throughout the state by providing community advocacy and carrying out hands on projects to educate community members and change their attitudes and behaviours towards unsafe driving practices.

By having the TOSSERS it provides a link from those communities to a higher level which can then progress to a state level to influence policy decisions.

Not only does TOSSERS provide support for community-based RoadWise projects, but also one of its main functions and successes is providing the advocacy, influence and resources for these key RoadWise functions.

Early on it was identified that agencies had their own road safety core functions and separate reporting requirements. By having this collaborative approach we have been able to combine these efforts and resources to maximize the impact that each project has had within the community.

The vision statement 'Government and non government agencies will work to enhance the delivery of road safety strategies in the Midwest Region' was agreed at the formation of TOSSERS. *(See Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference)*

For this vision to come to fruition it was essential the group:-

- shared their information and statistics
- prioritise road safety issues based on that shared knowledge
- effectively use resources available to all agencies
- collaborate initiatives
- seek additional resources
- create a stronger advocacy for road safety
- assist agencies to address core responsibilities

So how far have we travelled?

Since its inception, TOSSERS have met several times per year to discuss regional operations and have also had some major success along the way.

1. Information Sharing

Tim Glennister, Mid West Regional Manager for Main Roads WA, provided some excellent Main Roads statistical data that the TOSSERS analysed in collaboration with existing data that had been provided previously. *(See Appendix 2 – Speed Profiles on Mid West Roads)*

This analysis in turn provided the impetus for the WA Police Service Midwest Gascoyne District Office to change their regional traffic operations to create a dedicated traffic unit to address the road safety issue of speeding throughout the region on identified roads as a result of the breakdown of all the combined data and input provided through all stakeholders.

2. Advocacy

The group has actively endorsed and promoted Arriving Safely: The Road Safety Strategy for Western Australia 2003 – 2007 to all road safety stakeholders within the region. We have encouraged any road safety activities that compliment the road safety strategy.

We have provided strong advocacy in the favour of road safety in the development of the Geraldton Regional Centre Strategy Plan which addresses various growth scenarios and their impact on transportation and land use.

Through the make up of the group we have advocated for government and non-government departments to adopt workplace road safety strategies and also to actively promote the current Road Safety Council state-wide community education campaigns throughout various local media outlets as they occur.

TOSSERS continue to influence regional strategic directions in the interest of road safety. Whether this is in the planning of transport corridors or the development and implementation of Country Pathways we are there, banging the drum in favour of road safety.

The advocacy that is provided by members of the TOSSERS have also assisted in the successful grant applications made by RoadWise and other groups throughout the region to secure approximately \$78,787.00 in funding through the Local Government and Community Road Safety Grants Program for 2003/2004.

By having a broad range of members within TOSSERS, who in turn are representatives on other committees and working parties throughout their organisations, we are able to have road safety placed on many different agendas. Two examples of this are Joanne Blayney from the Midwest Murchison Population Health Directorate who not only is a representative on the group, but also the chair of the Child Restraint Working Party, member of Geraldton / Greenough RoadWise Committee and on the MMM committee (Move Motivate Midwest Committee which encourages an increase in physical activity amongst the community). Cr Stuart Chandler from the Shire of Irwin is the local government representative on the group who also sits on the Regional Road Group and the Shire of Irwin RoadWise Committee. Cr Chandler has placed road safety on the agenda of local community service group Lions International. The Dongara/Denison Lions group have been instrumental in the continuation of the Driver Reviver program at Arrowsmith on the Brand Highway for the past 2 years.

3. Resources and Networks

The combination of the key agencies working together for the common goal has also provided additional benefits to the community, but more importantly a strong network for the RoadWise Regional Road Safety Officer.

Mel O'Brien who is the current Regional Road Safety Officer believes that this network is imperative for the continuation of the delivery of consistent road safety service to the region in the event of a change of staff for any of the organisations from within the group. By having this structure (TOSSERS) already in place any new officer or person with an interest in road safety has this avenue to pursue the topic of road safety.

Although the group is focused more strategically than operationally, they have been involved in several road safety projects run by RoadWise throughout the region.

Some of these include:-

- Red Hill Winery Project
- SAM – Speed Alert Mobile
- Mt Magnet Races – “You’re Never Gonna Know if You Don’t Go and Blow” Project
- Belt Up Ute Muster – 2004
- Operation Road Runner – Meekatharra Police – which worked in conjunction with STEP funding (*STEP - Strategic Traffic Enforcement Program*)

Where to from now?

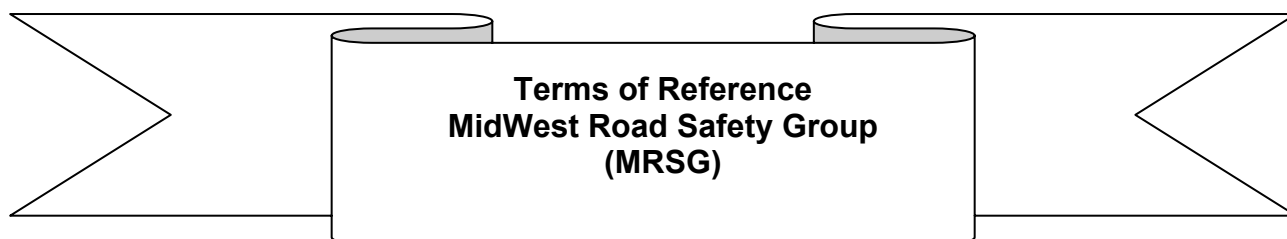
The group knows that there is a long way to go to achieve the goal of reducing road trauma on Mid West roads. To do this, TOSSERS believe the best way forward is to continue along the path of emulating the State Road Safety Council direction.

The group has received endorsement from ROSCOS – Road Safety Council Officers Support Group to request an independent chairperson for the group. An independent chair has the ability to be open and honest and represent the community and not one government’s instrumentality in delivering road safety.

By having an independent chair for the group there is the ability to advocate without the fear of political and bureaucratic intervention. We will also be able to channel media from key stakeholders within the group relating to road safety matters into one strong voice that is identified as the voice of road safety for the region.

In conclusion, TOSSERS will continue to ensure that local governments and all agencies with decision making capabilities adopt road safety principles in all activities and make sure that the people of the Mid West know that there is a committed group of people working to reduce the amount of road trauma on Mid West roads.

Appendix 1



Vision statement:

Government and non-government agencies will work to enhance the delivery of road safety strategies in the MidWest Region.

Purpose:

The MidWest Road Safety Group (MRSG) will:

- review the 1999 *MidWest Way Ahead* document
- communicate local/agency initiatives and information
- communicate concerns and issues to the state office (ORS and Road Safety Council)

Group membership:

AGENCY	POSITION
WA Police Service	Commissioned Officer and OIC Traffic Operations
Main Roads WA	Regional Manager
Department for Planning and Infrastructure	Regional Coordinator – also Chairperson of this group
Public Health (Dept of Health)	Director of Public Health and Injury Prevention Coordinator
Department of Education	District Manager, Operations
RoadWise	Regional Road Safety Officer
RAC	Regional Manager
Local Government – Regional Road Group	Chairperson of Regional Road Group
Office of Road Safety	Policy and Strategy Branch representative

Chairperson:

To be undertaken for a 12 month period, then rotated.

Minute taker to be provided by the Chairperson's agency.

Regional DPI Regional Coordinator will undertake the Chair's role for 2003.

Quorum:

A quorum will include four (4) representatives from the Group membership listed above, plus the chairperson (i.e. a minimum of 5 at each meeting, including the chairperson).

Proxy:

A nominated proxy must have the capacity to commit resources and make decisions on behalf of the agency.

Regional boundaries:

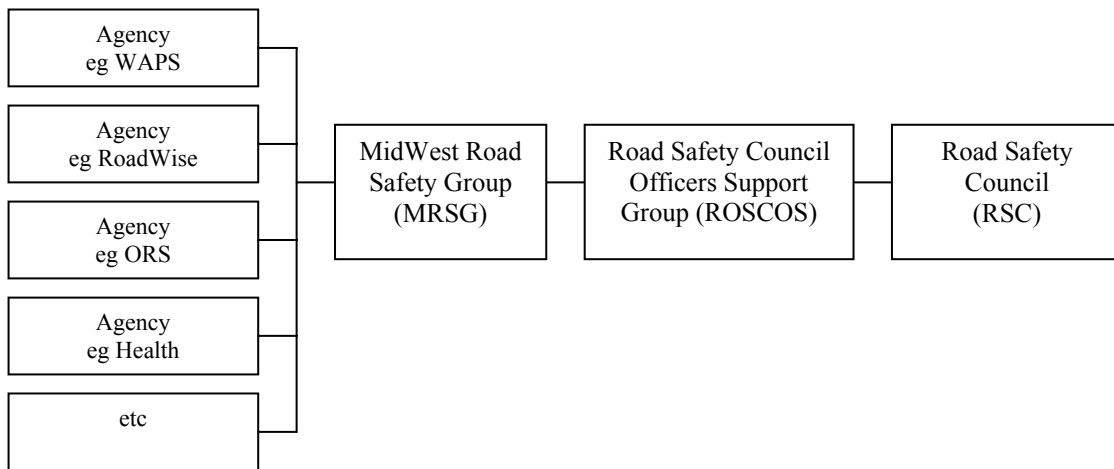
The MidWest Regional Road Safety area is bound by Kalbarri to the north, Leeman/Greenhead to the south and Perenjori/Meekatharra/Sandstone to the east.

Guest speakers:

Guest speakers will be invited to speak at meetings where appropriate.

Reporting structure:

The following reporting structure will be used, where appropriate.



Agenda:

The Chairperson will send the agenda and attachments, one week prior to the meeting. Minutes will be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting.

Meetings:

Meetings to be held 5 times a year in these months:

January, March, June, August and October

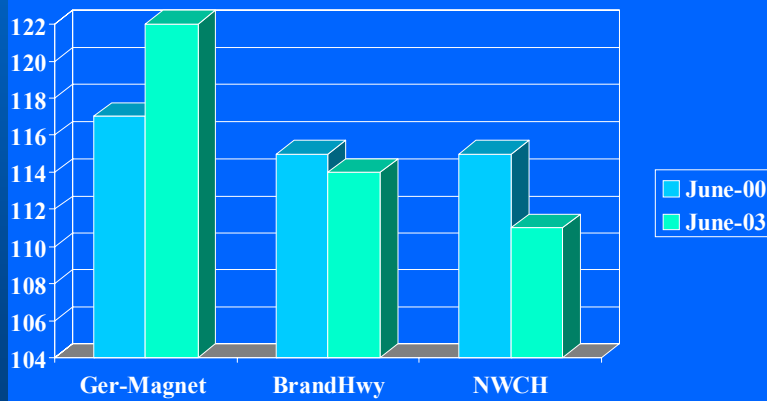
Meeting dates and venue to be decided by consensus at the preceding meeting.

Review:

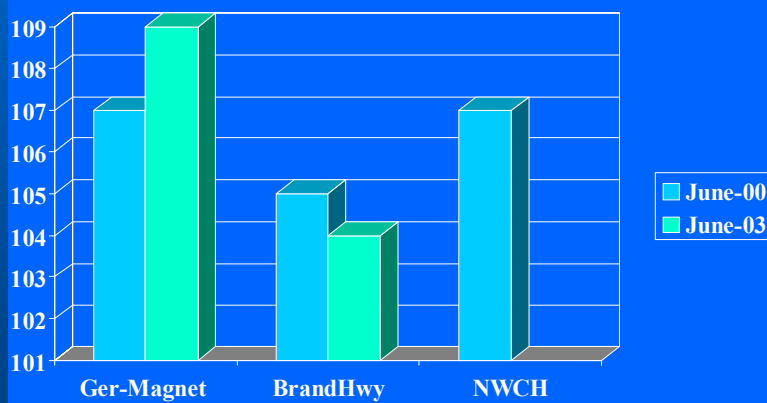
The MRSNG will review the core role and function of the group and further need for the group, in August 2003.

Appendix 2 Speed Profiles on Midwest Roads

85th Percentile speeds Midwest permanent speed sites

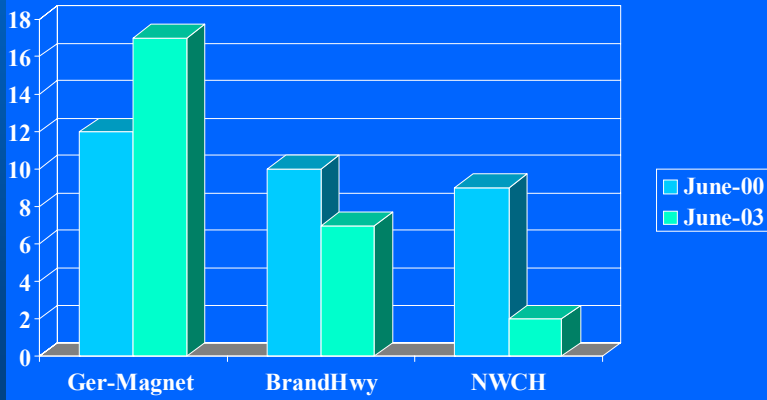


85th Percentile speeds Midwest Trucks and articulated vehicles



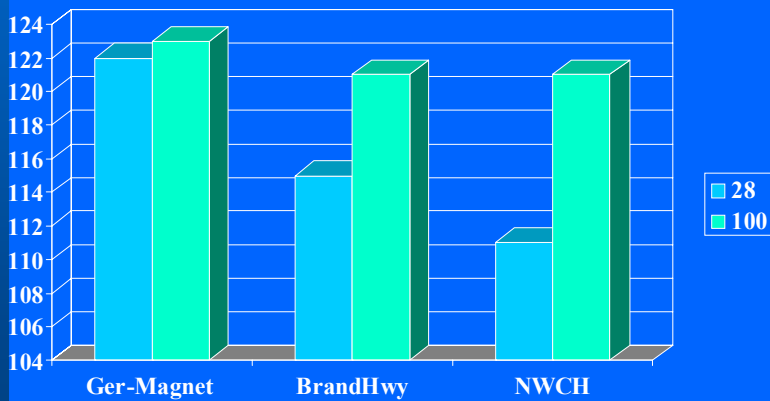
% > 120 kph

Cars and 2 axle vehicles

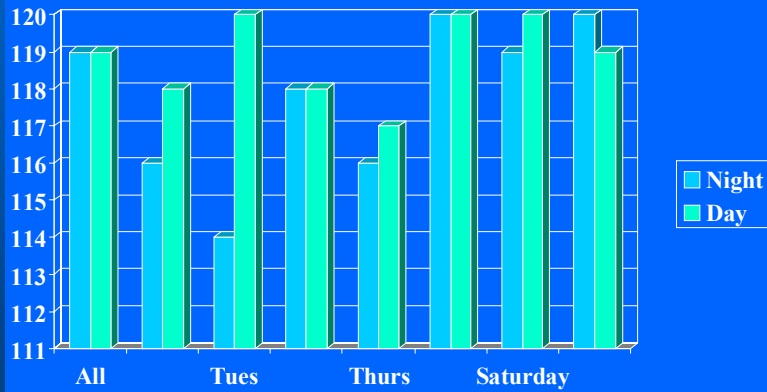


85th Percentile speeds

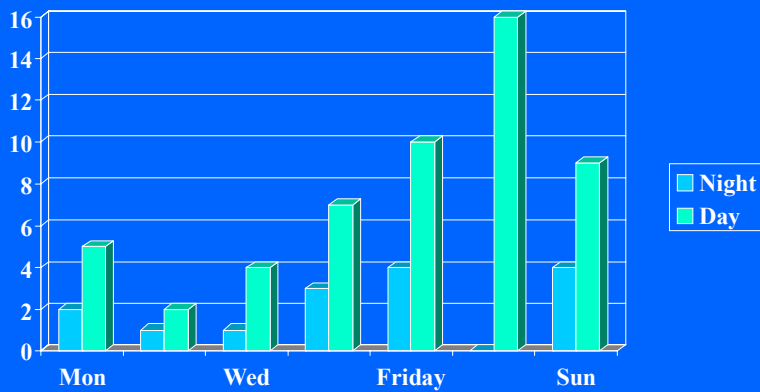
Distance from Geraldton



85th Percentile speeds Brand Highway near Eneabba



cars >140kph Brand Highway near Eneabba



Conclusion

- Significant percentages of vehicles are speeding in all classes of vehicles.
- Sites 100 kms and greater have higher percentages of excessive speed.
- More serious infringements during the day [6am to 6pm] than at night.
- Higher level of serious infringements on weekends.



AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Tony McCann

- Regional Services Manager for the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, Mid West
- Inaugural member of the Geraldton / Greenough RoadWise Committee
- Initial chairperson of the TOSSERS – aka Chief TOSSER
- Heavily involved in regional development throughout the Mid West
- Influential in bringing road safety to the forefront of many regional projects

Mel O'Brien

- RoadWise Regional Road Safety Officer for the past 3 years, covering 18 local government authorities and 7 RoadWise committees
- Involved in the conceptual and implementation of TOSSERS
- Radio announcer for Batavia Coast FM
- Strong advocate for road safety through many sporting affiliations