

From: roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au on behalf of [Office of Road Safety](#)
To: [RoadSafetyStrategy](#)
Subject: National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 - have your say submission - Michelle McLaughlin [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Date: Sunday, 21 March 2021 9:51:03 PM

Submitted on Sun, 2021-03-21 21:50

Submitted values are:

Name

Michelle McLaughlin

Organisation

Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation

Email

[REDACTED]

State

NSW

Which area/s of the draft Strategy are you commenting on (select all that apply):

Targets for reducing deaths and serious injuries , The social model , Infrastructure planning and investment , Regional roads , Vulnerable road users , Other/not listed

What is your primary area of interest in road safety?

Child pedestrian safety and community education around the fact that children are very vulnerable road users due to their physical, perceptual and cognitive limitations to the age of 10-12 years of age. Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation was established in 2014 following the tragic death of Tom McLaughlin aged 4 years on a family holiday at Macmasters Beach NSW. A coronial inquest was held the same year to address 'holiday time' road safety awareness in areas particularly where roadways look different (lack infrastructure like-kerb/gutter, pathways, line marking, designated crossing points) in their appearance and are confusing/dangerous for children who are not from rural or coastal areas. To that end and in view of lack of infrastructure in many rural and coastal areas of Australia, the LBDF has partnered with 63 LGAs in 4 Australian states on cost effective community signage awareness campaign using government endorsed road safety messaging -Slow Down Kids Around and Hold My Hand to target all road user groups at busy holiday periods where there are seasonal population spikes sometimes 3-4 times the normal population level which increases the risk profile in these areas for crashes-fatalities and injuries to occur.

What road safety issues are the most important to address?

Current data from The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare indicates that the most common cause of death of children aged 1-14 years is land transport accidents or road trauma. This is because obviously our children are very vulnerable road users and the community require greater awareness to the fact that all children must have their hand held until the age of 10 years because they have significant cognitive, perceptual and physical limitations around roadways because their hearing (accurately pinpointing the origin of sound), judgment of speed and distance (higher thinking skills), peripheral vision, reflexes as much slower to halt than an adult and their stature/size or height inhibits them from being seen by oncoming drivers. Added to this young children are fast, unpredictable and live in the moment/focusing on fun and much less on the dangers of the roadway around them. Holding hands with children aged 10 years and younger around roadways, carparks and driveways is just as important and lifesaving as placing a seatbelt on them in a vehicle.

What do you believe are the strengths of this draft Strategy?

Consultation with 52 stakeholders is very good in terms of a collaborative approach for this draft National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030. However, Little Blue Dinosaur Foundation having collaborated with local and state governments for a period of 7 years would seek to be listed as a 'participating stakeholder organisation' engaged for future revisions of the NRS Strategy and Action Plan.

Is there anything important that you think is missing from this draft Strategy?

Page 18 add to Vulnerable Road Users -specifically document the cognitive, physical and perceptual limitations of young children. The community must know the rationale behind WHY they need to give extra care to children. When you look around our community more often we see young children not being adequately restrained by way of hand holding by the parent or carer. Many children under the age of 10 years can be seen on a daily basis walking, riding or scootering to school unaccompanied by an adult carer. Promotion of consumer information disseminated through schools and hospitals reinforcing the need and rationale of close supervision/hand holding of children 10 years and younger. Improve speed limit management in areas where children are likely to be near traffic- around recreational areas, parks and beaches to 30kph where if a pedestrian is hit they have a 90% chance of survival. It seems that a default suburban speed limit of 50kph where many children reside is incompatible with life if they are hit by a vehicle with at that speed there is a 10% chance of survival. Tom McLaughlin was hit at 53kph by a 4WD at Macmasters Beach and his death was instant.

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