

[REDACTED]

From: roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au on behalf of Office of Road Safety <roadsafetystrategy@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 23 March 2021 3:06 PM
To: RoadSafetyStrategy
Subject: National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 - have your say submission - Robert Chow [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: lgaq-submission---draft-national-safety-strategy-2021-30-v1.0.pdf

Submitted on Tue, 2021-03-23 15:04

Submitted values are:

Name

Robert Chow

Organisation

Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ)

Email

[REDACTED]

State

Qld

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

Targets for reducing deaths and serious injuries , The themes – safe roads, safe road use, safe vehicles and speed management , Data and performance management, Infrastructure planning and investment , Regional roads

What is your primary area of interest in road safety?

Infrastructure - assessment of high-risk parts of the road network, low-cost mitigation strategies, evidence based prioritisation.

What road safety issues are the most important to address?

All road safety issues that increases the risk of fatalities and injuries. Our submission focuses on the issues within the control of road managers.

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

The strategy highlights many of the emerging road safety issues and provides very practical themes and priorities.

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

As noted in our submission, while the Strategy acknowledges the capability gaps within local government it does not acknowledge the capacity issues. We do note that the draft Strategy is a high-level view and this may be addressed within future action plans.

Do you give permission for your submission to be published on this website following the end of the consultation period?

Yes



23 March 2021

Office of Road Safety
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LGAQ Submission – draft National Safety Strategy 2021-30

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the draft National Safety Strategy 2021-30.

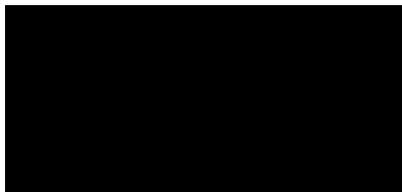
The attached submission focuses on the role of local government road managers as well as the need for improved data availability for better education, and increased funding for capability development and road safety assessments. It also focusses on the importance of all levels of government partnering together to achieve improved road safety outcomes.

Overall, the LGAQ is supportive of the draft National Safety Strategy and agrees with the themes and priorities provided within it. However, the Association is concerned that without adequate funding and resourcing accompanying the strategy, its intent will be difficult for member councils to achieve.

Our submission recommends the resourcing of a qualified team of road safety experts to assist councils in undertaking network safety plans and safe system assessments or road safety audits at high-risk locations. Those assessments could be prioritised using crash data history or the National Data Hub, and local government road managers could work with the qualified team of road safety experts to ensure capability development for local government employees. We propose this as a partnership with the State and local governments.

For further information or clarification of the LGAQ's submission, please feel free to contact [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Alison Smith

HEAD OF ADVOCACY

Draft National Safety Strategy 2021-30

LGAQ Submission

March 2021



Local Government Association of Queensland

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Connect Innovate Achieve

1. Executive Summary

Local governments are a key provider and manager of infrastructure including community facilities, roads and bridges, storm water management, water supply and treatment. The infrastructure and services provided by councils support the operation of regional economies and the communities they sustain. Councils are under constant pressure to expand and increase the number and range of services they provide as a result of rising community expectations, increasing demands from other levels of government and changes in standards and legislation.

Queensland is Australia's most decentralised state, and Queensland's 77 councils are stewards of approximately 81 per cent, or 150,407kms, of the state's vast road network. Furthermore, approximately 80 per cent of the local government-controlled road network is categorised as 'rural' in nature¹. The long-term trend, through to 31 December 2020, shows 51 per cent of fatal and serious injury (FSI) incidents occurred on the local government-controlled network².

2. The Local Government Association of Queensland

The Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) is the peak body for local government in Queensland. It is a not-for-profit association established solely to serve councils and their needs. The LGAQ has been advising, supporting, and representing local councils since 1896, allowing them to improve their operations and strengthen relationships with their communities. The LGAQ does this by connecting councils to people and places; supporting their drive to innovate and improve service delivery through smart services and sustainable solutions; and delivering them the means to achieve community, professional and political excellence.

3. LGAQ's Policy Statement

The LGAQ's Policy Statement 2020³ is a definitive statement of the collective voice of local government in Queensland. This statement identifies the position of local government in relation to a number of key issues. The key positions in relation to the Draft National Safety Strategy (Strategy) are highlighted below:

8.1.4 Road Safety

8.1.4.1 Road safety should be a priority of all spheres of government.

8.1.4.2 Local government is committed to collaborating with Federal and State government agencies to implement initiatives aimed at reducing regional road trauma.

8.1.4.3 Recognising that road safety is a shared responsibility, local government will establish road safety as a priority within the management of transport planning, land use and community planning processes.

¹ Queensland Government, Queensland Local Government Comparative Information 2018-19.

² Department of Transport and Main Roads, Crash Data Reporting 2015-2020

³ <https://www.lgaq.asn.au/downloads/file/183/2019-lgaq-policy-statement>

8.1.4.4 Local government calls on Federal and State governments to provide a share of revenue, information, and support to address local road safety issues including hypothecation of state revenue from traffic infringement fines on local roads.

8.1.4.5 Local government calls on Federal and State governments to recognise and respond to local road safety issues.

Draft National Safety Strategy 2021-2030

The LGAQ acknowledges the draft National Safety Strategy 2021-30 recognises the important role local government has as road managers of 81 per cent of the road network, and the importance of upskilling local government engineers in delivering road safety outcomes. As is evidenced by the LGAQ's Policy Statement, local government recognises that road safety is a priority and a responsibility for all tiers of government.

However, the LGAQ believes that simply addressing local government capability through the provision of resource materials – alongside the introduction of greater accountability measures - does not address the underlying issue of the insufficient resourcing and funding to undertake network safety risk assessments.

As feedback from one of the LGAQ's member councils stated regarding inadequate resourcing concerns: *"Considering the widely differing scale of local governments across Queensland and the nation, I would doubt there are very many councils (ourselves included) who would have sufficient people, time or funding to undertake road network safety risk assessments even if the Austroads framework is an "accessible low-cost method".*

In the absence of extra resourcing or funding needed to assess and address road safety issues, partnerships between State Government and local government to prioritise the available funding is important for ensuring improved safety outcomes.

An example of a beneficial partnership approach that resulted in improved road safety outcomes occurred in 2016/17 when Queensland's Department of Transport and Main Roads partnered with councils through the Queensland Roads and Transport Alliance to extend assessment of road safety risk using the Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP) to the local government-controlled road network.

While the LGAQ recognises that AusRAP is no longer the preferred assessment method, the LGAQ recommends a similar partnership approach that provides leadership, funding for resourcing and data collection and a consistent methodology, such as network safety plans or safe system assessments for high-risk locations.

Infrastructure Investment

The Australian Government's Black Spot Program (BSP) provides funding to address known locations with a history of repeat crashes (reactive basis) and locations posing significant risk as identified through a completed road safety audit (proactive basis).

While the BSP is highly regarded by councils that are able to access this vital source of funding, a large proportion of councils are simply unable to seek funding through the BSP, with the majority of these councils located in regional and remote areas.

For potential reactive projects (many of which are high risk locations) there is a lack of incidents to meet the requisite accident history. Similarly, for proactive projects many councils lack the capability and capacity to undertake the required road safety audits to even be eligible to apply for funding.

Many councils, especially in rural and remote areas, do not have staff who are qualified to undertake road safety audits or safe system assessments. The cost of completing such assessments through third parties is seen as prohibitive when applying to a competitive program, particularly considering the low cost of treatments for which funding is otherwise sought.

The LGAQ acknowledges, and supports, the role of the BSP in addressing locations where accidents frequently occur. However, the LGAQ recommends that future action plans include strategies to ensure local government are supported with their capability and capacity constraints and are not ignored when seeking funding on a proactive basis to address high risk locations on the local government-controlled road network.

4. Conclusion

Overall, the LGAQ supports the draft National Safety Strategy and agrees with the themes and priorities provided within it. The LGAQ looks forward to working with the Federal Government, State Government, and our membership to achieve improved safety outcomes.

To address the capability and capacity issues noted in our submission, the LGAQ recommends funding the assessment of the network in a prioritised manner. This could be achieved through the resourcing of a qualified team of road safety experts to assist councils in undertaking network safety plans and safe system assessments or road safety audits at high-risk locations.

Assessments could be prioritised using crash data history or the National Data Hub and local government road managers could work with the qualified team of road safety experts to ensure capability development for local government employees.