



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications

Office of Road Safety: Update Nine – May 2020

Road Safety During COVID-19

It is perhaps too early to draw conclusions between road fatality data and the impacts of COVID-19, but the Office of Road Safety is concerned about reports from state and territory policing agencies of increased speeding offences during COVID-19, especially for those motorists caught exceeding speed limits by 45km/h or more.

This period of reduced activity on our roads presents an opportunity for higher speeds, meaning the crashes that do occur are likely to be more serious. Increased drink and drug driving offences have been detected by police, as well as other risky behaviours such as not wearing seat belts.

The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics has released its [April 2020 fatality figures](#).

There was a total of 75 road deaths during the month of April 2020. The current figure is 25.3 per cent lower than the average for April over the previous five years. While we have observed a reduction in road fatalities in the weeks during this period of non-essential travel, the change is in line with fewer vehicles on the road.

The Office of Road Safety is monitoring the situation closely, and will keep the conversation going with our state and territory counterparts as more data becomes available. If you have any information you would like to share on this topic, please contact us at officeofroadsafety@infrastructure.gov.au.

Transport and Infrastructure Senior Officials' Committee

The 18th Transport and Infrastructure Senior Officials' Committee (TISOC) meeting took place via teleconference on 29 April 2020. A key item on the agenda was the development of the next National Road Safety Strategy, due to be finalised later this year. A new Strategy for the decade to 2030 provides us with a very important opportunity to make this decade the one in which we make great steps towards the target of zero deaths on our roads.

Senior officials from state, territory and local government discussed a number of issues related to road safety, including drink drive policy frameworks, driver distraction, roadside advertising and the development of key performance indicators for the next National Road Safety Strategy.

Outcomes from TISOC will be considered for endorsement by state and territory Transport and Infrastructure Ministers at the 13th Transport and Infrastructure Council meeting held via telepresence on 5 June 2020.

For more information on the development of the National Road Safety Strategy, please contact the team by email at officeofroadsafety@infrastructure.gov.au.

Fatality Free Friday

The Australian Government is proud to support the Australian Road Safety Foundation's (ARSF) campaign for Fatality Free Friday, a national day of action scheduled for 29 May 2020. The day is an annual event designed to focus public attention on road safety and encourage all road users to think and drive safely.

The first Fatality Free Friday was held in Australia on 27 April 2007, coinciding with the United Nations Global Road Safety Week.

As the Minister for Road Safety, the Deputy Prime Minister the Hon Michael McCormack MP features in the launch [video](#) for Fatality Free Friday. To sign the ARSF pledge, visit the [website](#).

Road Safety Innovation Fund and Driver Reviver Site Upgrades

Applications for the **Road Safety Innovation Fund** have recently closed, and the Office of Road Safety is currently evaluating proposals received.

The fund will provide \$12 million over four years from 2019-20 to target innovating projects addressing priority areas including improving road safety in regional and remote areas, reducing driver distraction and drug driving, improving safety for vulnerable road users, and supporting road safety research and initiatives specific to the Australian context.

Announcements of successful projects are expected in early June.

The Australian Government has also committed to providing \$8 million in capped grants over two years to help upgrade existing **Driver Reviver** locations. The Government is providing \$3 million for Round 1 to enable site owners to purchase variable message signs to promote awareness for operational Driver Reviver sites.

Next financial year, the Government will spend another \$5 million for the second round of grants for a wider scope of on-site upgrades, prioritising bushfire affected sites, and fitting out new sites.

Grant guidelines have been published on [GrantConnect](#) and are open until 5 June 2020.

Biggest reform to Australia's vehicle standards legislation in over 30 years

The Road Vehicle Standards (RVS) legislation, which is replacing the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989*, will provide a strong, modern regulatory platform for vehicle standards, that will maintain and improve vehicle safety, provide more choice for specialist and enthusiast vehicles and be responsive to emerging technologies.

The first module of **ROVER**, the new IT system that supports applications made under the RVS legislation, launched successfully on 6 May. This means individuals and organisations are now able to apply for a testing facility approval under the RVS legislation.

The department is now working towards implementing the next provisions of the RVS legislation to commence: the ability to apply for a component type approval in ROVER (anticipated for release in the third quarter of 2020) and external stakeholder engagement is well underway.

For further information, please visit our [RVS legislation implementation](#) webpage or contact the team at RVSAimplementation@infrastructure.gov.au.

Road Safety Events Calendar

The Office of Road Safety recently released a calendar of events. The calendar is a one-stop-shop for promotion of road safety events being hosted by organisations across Australia, and can be viewed on our [website](#).

For any feedback on the calendar, or if you have an event you would like added, please email officeofroadsafety@infrastructure.gov.au.

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<https://www.officeofroadsafety.gov.au/>