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22 March 2021

Office of Road Safety
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Submitted on: <https://www.officeofroadsafety.gov.au/nrss/have-your-say>

Submission on the draft National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30

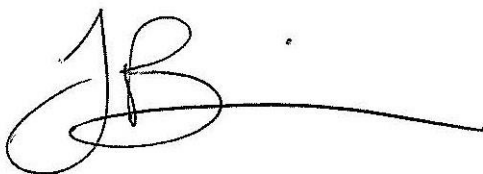
The Institute of Public Work Engineers Australasia, NSW and ACT Division (IPWEA) has prepared this submission to the Office of Road Safety.

The submission provides our response to the draft National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide further detail on the issues raised within this submission.

Please do not hesitate to contact Arjan Rensen on 04 2053 1500 or email arjan.rensen@ipweansw.org in relation to this submission.

Yours faithfully,



Ms Francine Binns
CEO IPWEA NSW and ACT



Mr Grant Baker
President IPWEA NSW and ACT

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Draft National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30

Submission by

IPWEA NSW and ACT

22 March 2021

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I. IPWEA NSW and ACT

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia NSW and ACT Division (IPWEA) is the leading professional association representing Engineers and Public Works Officers engaged in public works and engineering, with the majority of members working in, or providing services to, local government.

IPWEA is a charity with the purpose of advancing the public works excellence in Australia, particularly in NSW and ACT by:

- conducting and publishing research into improvements to the processes used in public works and services to enhance NSW and ACT Communities
- working with government at all levels to ensure that the interests of the community are represented in regard to the public decision-making process relating to public works and services, and
- providing a forum for all people engaged in the public works to discuss best practice and enhancing the future of NSW and ACT Communities.

IPWEA has adopted a mission to enhance the quality of life of NSW and ACT communities through excellence in public works and services. This is achieved through our professional association that effectively informs, connects, represents and leads public works professionals.

II. Background

The draft National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30 (Strategy) has been published by the Office of Road Safety. Interested parties have been invited to provide comments.

Currently, around 1,200 people are killed each year on our roads, and almost 40,000 are seriously injured. The draft Strategy for 2021-30 sets targets to reduce these numbers over the next 10 years, setting us on the path to achieve Vision Zero (zero deaths and serious injuries) by 2050.

The strategy aims to reduce the rate of deaths from road crashes per 100,000 population by at least 50 per cent by 2030 to 689 and to reduce the rate of serious injuries from road crashes per 100,000 population by at least 30 per cent by 2030 to 33,373 (interim target).

The draft Strategy supports strong governance, transparency and accountability by all levels of government, and adopts a social model approach to deliver road safety actions, mapping out a path to foster a road safety culture across Australian society.

The draft Strategy has three key themes: Safe Roads, Safe Vehicles and Safe Road Use. Speed management is embedded within all three themes. These themes represent a continued commitment to the safe system approach and aim to strengthen all elements of our road transport system through improvements under each.

Documents made available by the Office of Road Safety:

- Draft National Road Safety Strategy:
[National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 \(officeofroadsafety.gov.au\)](https://www.officeofroadsafety.gov.au/national-road-safety-strategy-2021-30)
- Supporting documents including a series of fact sheets with further information on the topics covered in the Strategy are also available
[Resources and fact sheets | Office of Road Safety](#)
- Summary report: Targeted consultation with key stakeholders on policy priorities August 2020:
[A NEW NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY 2021 to 2030 \(officeofroadsafety.gov.au\)](https://www.officeofroadsafety.gov.au/a-new-national-road-safety-strategy-2021-to-2030)
- Frequently asked questions:
[Frequently Asked Questions | Office of Road Safety](#)

III. IPWEA response

1. Role of local government

IPWEA welcomes the recognition of local government in the delivery of the national road safety strategy.

Local government is the level of government most closely related to the community. Communities will always turn to councils to express concerns, share ideas, make complaints or ask for help.

The vast majority, around 85%, of the road network is operated by local government. The implementation of the Strategy will only be successful if local government is properly equipped – including adequate funding, resources, skills and capabilities – to deliver their part of the Strategy.

Councils as road authorities have the full range of responsibilities in relation to public roads as required of all road authorities. In NSW specifically, this is specified under Section 7 of the NSW Roads Act 1993. We understand it to generally be the case in other jurisdictions across Australia.

In NSW, Councils also have a duty of care under the Civil Liability Act 2002 to take precautions against any risk of harm.

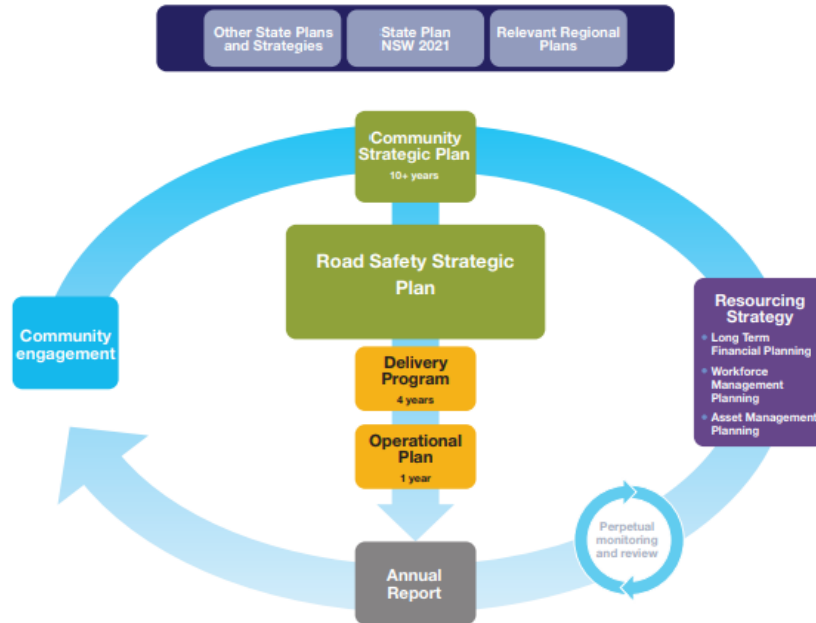
Together with Transport for NSW (TfNSW), councils owe a duty of care to all road users by maintaining the highest safety standard that is practical for the road network under its care. Best practice is to implement the most cost-effective treatments that are feasible to address safety issues.

Recommendation: provide local government with the means to deliver the Strategy (see recommendations 2, 3 and 4)

2. Integrating Road Safety Strategic Plans

IPWEA has developed a guide to developing council road safety strategic plans ([A Guide to Developing Council Road Safety Strategic Plans - Roads & Transport Directorate \(roadsdirectorate.org.au\)](https://roadsdirectorate.org.au)). The purpose of the guide is to assist local councils in developing road safety strategic plans and integrate them into the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF).

The Guide is based on ‘best practice’ methodology developed through systematic investigation, consultation and feedback on the experiences of a number of NSW councils. These councils represented a range of large and small, rural and urban local government areas (LGAs) that had developed and implemented road safety strategic plans.



The IPRF recognises that most communities share similar aspirations: a safe, healthy and pleasant place to live, a sustainable environment, and opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for education and employment, and reliable infrastructure. It also recognises that council plans and policies should not exist in isolation - that they are inter-connected.

This framework allows NSW councils to draw their various plans together, understand how they interact and get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically and sustainably for their community today and into the future.

Council Road Safety Strategic Plans should link council and community activities in the achievement of road safety objectives within the broader framework of the council’s Community Strategic Plan.

This also brings the Council Road Safety Strategic Plan in line with the planning and reporting cycle required by the NSW Office of Local Government. The incorporation of Road Safety Strategic Plans into the IPRF, elevates the importance of road safety as a broader community issue, requiring a whole-of-community response, and triggers important reporting mechanisms, achieving transparency and an informed community.

The development and implementation of integrated local road safety planning could be a crucial tool to achieving the road safety outcomes required under the Strategy.

IPWEA recognises the value of integrating road safety in current practices as a means to achieve the goals set out in the Strategy. However, integrating road safety in IPRF’s will lead to additional costs for local government. To avoid cost shifting additional funding and resources should be made available.

Recommendation: provide funding and resources to assist local government to develop and implement road safety strategic plans.

3. Funding for local government

The funding available to local government across Australia and specifically in NSW, is insufficient to maintain local roads to the standard required to deliver safe, efficient and resilient road and bridge infrastructure and by extension safe, efficient and resilient transport services to the community.

The Road and Transport Directorate, a collaboration between IPWEA NSW and ACT and LGNSW, has been collecting asset performance data for NSW Local Government since 2006 (<https://www.roadsdirectorate.org.au/road-asset-benchmarking-project>).

The latest report shows that the current funding arrangements in NSW are inadequate to deliver safe, efficient and resilient road and bridge infrastructure to the community on an on-going basis into the future and are not sufficiently large enough to enact either specific or isolated road safety treatments and improvements, or wider network-based approaches. Of significance is the deteriorating condition of timber bridges on local roads, which poses a significant risk with the potential to isolate local communities and introduce long detours on roads of lesser standard in regional, rural and remote areas. The current funding gap in NSW is estimated to be \$350M annually.

The results of the NRMA's Rate Your Road survey have been released ([Rate your road: Survey results | The NRMA \(mynrma.com.au\)](#)), indicating a link between the rate and cost of road trauma and poor road quality, particularly in rural areas.

The report found the road trauma cost in rural and regional areas could be almost double the amount of that in metropolitan areas, due to a lack of investment in road safety infrastructure.

Evidence provided by the Roads and Transport Directorate and the NRMA suggests that increasing funding for local roads could be a cost-effective contribution to achieving the Strategy.

Recommendation: increase funding for the maintenance of roads operated by local government.

4. Skills and capacity in local government

The latest benchmarking report from the Roads and Transport Directorate (see section 3) identified a decline in engineering capacity in local government. This is most prominent in regional and rural areas.

The Office of Road Safety's consultation paper also addressed the need to build engineering capability in local councils and to ensure stronger engagement on road safety between the state and local government sectors.

IPWEA has been discussing opportunities to create a talent pool in regional and rural areas with the NSW Government and councils. A current lack of funding and resources compromises progress.

IPWEA can offer a recent partnership with TfNSW, as a model to develop the capability within councils across NSW to address road safety. Such partnerships between the various levels of government will be crucial to address skills and capacity in local government.

IPWEA notes the recent legislation enacted in NSW, requiring professional engineers to be registered to undertake professional engineering work. The requirement to be registered provides

the trigger for practicing professional engineers to maintain and build their capabilities and skill set through the completion of a minimum standard of continuing professional development.

At present, the operation of this requirement is limited to professional engineers who are involved in multi-storey, multi-dwelling residential construction (Class 2 buildings). However when this is broadened in scope to include engineers practicing in public works, it will see a consistent requirement across the eastern seaboard of Australia.

Such a requirement, and scheme, should operate at the national level, to drive consistency in capability and skill sets in professional engineers responsible for managing, operating and maintaining road networks, and remove barriers to the movement of skilled professional engineers between states and territories.

Recommendation: introduce programs to increase skills and capacity in local government, particularly in regional and rural areas.

Recommendation: introduce a national professional engineer registration scheme.

5. Risky road use

National and international research suggests that human behaviour is a contributing factor in 90% of crashes. In the current draft Strategy, all human behaviour is grouped into the priority area 'risky road use', including speeding, distraction, fatigue and other human factors.

Effective strategies for speeding, distraction, fatigue and other human factors are different and specific to each contributing factor. Programs to influence human behaviour include education, enforcement, human centric design and best practice speed limits.

Grouping the human behaviour in only one priority area does not reflect the importance of the various contributing factors in crashes.

Furthermore, it is important to recognise that local government, as the closest level of government to community, are best placed to develop tailored programs to meet the specific needs of local communities, reflecting demographics such as age, cultural and linguistic diversity, socio-economic and other relevant factors.

Local government does not currently have the funding necessary to develop such programs. The funding of such programs, needs to be recognised and made available as a critical component to address risky road use.

Recommendation: to include speeding, distraction, fatigue and other human factors as separate priority areas in the Strategy, each with their unique strategy for improvement.

Recommendation: that the Strategy recognises that local government is best placed to develop and deliver tailored programs to their communities to address risky road use.

6. Collaboration

Collaboration between organisations will assist in achieving the goals set out in the Strategy. IPWEA collaborates with the following organisations to improve safety on local roads:

- Local Government NSW
- NSW councils
- Transport for NSW
- Australian Institute of Traffic Planning and Management (AITPM)
- Australian College of Road Safety (ACRS)
- Engineers Australia (EA)
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS)
- University of NSW (UNSW)
- University of Sydney
- Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

7. Training and education

IPWEA is committed to continue to deliver training and education to public works professionals and better integrate road safety in the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF).

Current training courses include:

- **Conduct Road Safety Course:** The objective of this course is to explain the purpose and procedures followed in Road Safety Audits.
This course is intended to provide participants with the following education outcomes specific to conducting road safety audits. Participants who successfully complete the Conduct Road Safety course can apply for registration with Transport for NSW on the Register of Road Safety Auditors (www.roadsafetyregister.com.au).
<https://www.ipweansw.org/events/conduct-road-safety-course-22-23-march-2021>
- **Road Safety Strategic Planning**
This course has been designed to assist Local Councils to develop road safety strategic plans and integrate them into the Local Government integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.
[Road Safety Strategic Planning - Online Course - 12 April - IPWEA \(NSW\)](#)
- **Lead Road Safety Audits**
This accredited course covers the skills and knowledge required to lead an audit team as they undertake a road safety audit. RSALRA110 Lead Road Safety Audits.
[Lead Road Safety Audits - IPWEA \(NSW\)](#)