

16th March 2021

Submission to “The draft National Road Safety Strategy for 2021-30”

The draft strategy has an objective of 50% reduction in 2020 figures of road crashes and deaths from road crashes, with a vision zero road deaths by 2050. The 2011-20 strategy had as its target a 30% reduction in 2011 figures. This strategy failed to reach its target by 200 deaths.

In 2021 already in Queensland and Western Australia there has been a doubling of road deaths in comparison to 2020. Every other state has increased deaths in 2021.

The 2021-2030 plan has three key themes: Safe Roads, Safe Vehicles and Safe Road Use, Speed management is embedded in all three themes.

16th May 2021 is the start of the National Road Safety Week. I support Road Safety week and the work of the SARAH organisation by placing a yellow ribbon on my motor vehicle.

16th of May 2021 is also **100** Months since Suzanne Caudell, a traffic controller, was tragically and violently killed on the Bruce Highway, Marlborough Central Qld, by a truck speeding through road works. The system failed a traffic controller doing her job.

The next day, the 17th of May 2021, will be **42** months since Ken Altoft, also a traffic controller, was tragically and violently killed on the Bruce Highway, Sunshine Coast Qld by a speeding & drug influenced motorist through road works. Justice faded into the taillights.

8 days prior to the 16th May 2021, will be **68** months since Ben Smit, a traffic controller, was also tragically and violently killed on a regional road west of Brisbane, Redbank Plains, by a speeding & drug influenced driver through road works. His death failed to be investigated thoroughly.

The significance of the 16th of May 2021 continues, in Western Australia, traffic controllers were killed **11** months & **4** months previously, another 2 traffic controllers were seriously injured **2** months previous. In Victoria, **7** months prior, a traffic controller was killed whilst setting up for roadworks.

In Western Australia during the last two years, 3 traffic controllers have been killed.

Accurate data is unavailable but published research suggests each year, 50 deaths and 750 injuries at roadwork zones in Australia. Research also suggests a level up to 98% of motorists speed through roadwork zones.

Survivors of road crashes in work zones are left to contemplate a future with mental illness, pain & suffering as well as a lack of quality of life. Lives dramatically changed forever. The community has

moved on however the victims remain a statistic, numbers on a piece of paper for those tasked with the road safety of our nation.

Common factors exist in these fatalities, speed, and inattention. Motorists continually make up their own minds as to the speed they will travel on our highways and local roads.

The office of Road Safety and various State Governments all acknowledge speeding as the key element in reducing road deaths and trauma.

In the 100 months since Suzanne was killed, 100 people each month are still being killed on Australian roads & 100 people each day are still being admitted to hospital with injuries from road crashes.

\$2.5 billion month after month, the cost to the Australian economy from road crashes. There is the untold cost. The cost to victims and families from mental health trauma, pain and suffering and the loss of quality of life.

Hospitalizations in Australia, road crashes represent 12% of all admissions. In Australia, deaths from road crashes are in the top 3 causes of death for people aged between 1 and 44 (AIHW 2016 – 2018).

It is time for declaring a War on road crashes and speeding.

Point to Point cameras have proven successful in the UK in reducing deaths. Queensland has point to point cameras located on the Bruce Highway but have been nonoperational since installation. NSW has extensive regional network of point to point cameras, but they are only used to police speeds of heavy vehicles, not cars. Why?

The benefit of point to point speed cameras was made in the paper by CARRS; Qld QUT 2013, "Effects of average speed enforcement on speed compliance and crashes." The paper talks about reduction of speeds, with typical speeds at or below the speed limit.

Traffic regulations are only effective when almost all road users observe them. If 98% of people admit to speeding through roadworks, what does it say about our past and current road safety education process. Road safety education in our school system is paramount for any objective to reduce road crashes and deaths over the next decade.

If the judicial system provides leniency for offenders driving dangerously causing death, then where is the deterrent for speeding?

To mark 100 months since Suzanne Caudell was killed. I will be planting a frangipani tree at Marlborough. Frangipani flowers represent shelter and protection. Perfect symbols for a person who died whilst building better roads for all Australians.

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