



NSW Government Response

Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety
(Staysafe) Inquiry into Reducing Trauma on Local
Roads in NSW

December 2021

Contents

NSW Government response to recommendations	3
Recommendation 1	3
Recommendation 2	3
Recommendation 3	4
Recommendation 4	4
Recommendation 5	5
Recommendation 6	5
Recommendation 7	5
Recommendation 8	6
Recommendation 9	6
Recommendation 10	6
Recommendation 11	7
Recommendation 12	7
Recommendation 13	7
Recommendation 14	8
Recommendation 15	8
Recommendation 16	8
Recommendation 17	9
Recommendation 18	9
Recommendation 19	9
Recommendation 20	10
Recommendation 21	10
Recommendation 22	10

NSW Government response to recommendations

Recommendation 1

That the NSW Government consider whether local government should have a legislated role and responsibility for road safety.

Supported in Principle

Existing legislation provides scope for council's role in delivering safe communities, including road safety. As part of the upcoming NSW Government 2026 Road Safety Action Plan (2026 RSAP), immediate priority will be given to supporting local government stewardship of road safety.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework is embedded in the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and outlines the formal system through which councils in NSW are required to develop, document and report on their Plans (including a Community Strategic Plan).

The Act outlines that IP&R by councils 'should manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively' (s.8C(h)). Councils must also have regard to relevant state and regional plans (which includes transport and road safety) when developing their Community Strategic Plan.

The enabling actions in the 2026 RSAP will build capability in councils to improve integrated road safety planning under the current legislative frameworks and identify any further opportunities to strengthen these responsibilities.

Recommendation 2

That the NSW Government review all existing state government road safety infrastructure funding programs to ensure they are meeting the strategic needs of local government in reducing road trauma on local roads.

Supported

The NSW Government is committed to the ongoing review of road safety infrastructure programs to ensure they are aligned to delivering optimal road safety outcomes, including on local roads.

In the 2018/19 Budget, the NSW Government announced \$1.9 billion in funding over five years to support delivery of the 2021 Road Safety Plan. Funding included \$640 million to the Saving Lives on Country Roads initiative, which delivers infrastructure safety upgrades outside of metropolitan areas and \$180 million for the Liveable and Safe Urban Communities program which focuses on safety upgrades for vulnerable road users. Funding available to local governments ranged from \$50 million in 2018-19 to \$190 million in 2022-23.

There are also a number of NSW Government programs that provide local governments with funding to improve road infrastructure, which can deliver road safety benefits. These programs include, but are not limited to the Stronger Communities Fund, Fixing Country Roads, Regional Road Block Grants, Regional Road Repair program, Fixing Local Roads and Fixing Country Bridges program. Additionally, the NSW Government Walking and Cycling Program provides funding to local government to improve walking and cycling outcomes, through improving infrastructure for pedestrians and bike riders.

As part of the 2026 RSAP, the NSW Government will consider options to further enhance road safety infrastructure programs, noting the safety risks on local government roads.

Recommendation 3

That Transport for NSW, as a priority, review the administrative requirements involved in local government road infrastructure funding applications and consult with local government to co-design the application process and reporting requirements.

Supported in Principle

The NSW Government makes road safety infrastructure funding available to local governments through a competitive merit-based process. This process is designed to provide all local governments an opportunity to apply for funding while also prioritising resources toward projects that will achieve the best safety outcome.

The NSW Government will review the administrative requirements for local governments making applications for targeted road safety infrastructure programs.

As part of the 2026 RSAP, the NSW Government will also consider increasing risk assessments on the local road network, consistent with internationally accepted methodology. This will assist local governments to identify and prioritise high risk roads for treatment. The responsibility will remain with local governments to identify the need within their area and make an application to the appropriate funding program.

Recommendation 4

That the NSW Government make representations to the Australian Government to establish the proposed national road safety fund.

Supported in Principle

The Australian and NSW Government hold regular forums to discuss ways to improve road safety, including the funding of projects. The NSW Government is also actively contributing to the National Road Safety Strategy and National Road Safety Action Plan, in collaboration with the Australian Government.

As part of the Australian Government's commitment to improving road safety, \$3 billion has been committed to the National Road Safety Program over three years from 2020-21¹. The funding supports the fast roll out of lifesaving road safety treatments on rural and regional roads and greater protection for vulnerable road users, like cyclists and pedestrians, in urban areas.

The Australian Government also provides funding to local governments through a number of programs including the Roads to Recovery grants program, Bridges Renewal Program, Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program and Black Spot Program².

The NSW Government will use existing processes and the new National Road Safety Strategy and action plans for the decade 2021–30 to highlight NSW road safety priorities, including infrastructure needs.

¹ <https://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/about/national-initiatives/road-safety-program.aspx>

² <https://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/about/local-initiatives/black-spot-program/index.aspx>

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government improve the collection and dissemination of data to local councils regarding incidents that occur on local roads on at least a quarterly basis.

Supported

NSW has one of the most comprehensive crash data information resources in the world. It draws on a range of sources including NSW Police Force crash reports, licensing and infringements, vehicle registration, NSW Health hospital data and drug and alcohol test results, NSW Ambulance Service data, State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) Compulsory Third Party claims information, Lifetime Care and Support cases, vehicle safety features dataset and road conditions.

Data visualisations, using this data set, have been made available online to councils and the general public in NSW since 2015 on the TfNSW Centre for Road Safety website, to support and encourage evidence-based road safety planning.

As part of the 2026 RSAP, options are being considered on how to provide sustained support and build capability across councils to maximise the effective use of the data that TfNSW provides. This will include looking at ways to develop better data tools or resources over the longer term and make these available in response to council needs and emerging knowledge bases.

Recommendation 6

That the NSW Government improve mechanisms for councils to access a wider range of local road safety incident data.

Supported

TfNSW is currently identifying practical ways it could improve access and use of data in the short term. Enhancing the transparency and access of crash data will be an ongoing priority of the new 2026 RSAP.

As part of the 2026 RSAP, options are being considered to provide sustained support and build capability across councils to maximise the use of the data that TfNSW provides. This will include opportunities to develop better data or resources over the longer term and make these available in response to council needs.

Recommendation 7

That the NSW Government examine ways to better integrate community strategic plans into the Government's regional transport and other State strategic plans.

Supported

Supporting local government to embed road safety in business as usual is key to NSW achieving our Towards Zero targets of zero fatalities and serious injuries on the NSW road network by 2050.

Enabling actions such as the learning and collaboration platform will be considered as part of the 2026 RSAP to upskill councils and build capability to better integrate road safety within wider council strategies, provide a stronger basis for councils to embed Safe System approaches and adopt a Towards Zero vision for their local communities.

Better integration of strategic plans is a key focus of the TfNSW Strategic Transport Planning. Under Planning for Places, TfNSW aims to collaborate with a range of stakeholders including customers, councils and other government agencies, to integrate transport and land use planning and support the growth of successful places as identified in Future Transport 2056.

TfNSW is currently reviewing the Future Transport Strategy and its supporting Greater Sydney and Regional plans. TfNSW is committed to collaboration and co-design approach and engages with all levels of government in its strategic planning.

Recommendation 8

That Transport for NSW and the Department of Education explore opportunities for road safety officers to support the Road Safety Education Program in the wider community, particularly in rural and regional areas.

Supported

The Road Safety Education Program (RSEP), funded by TfNSW, provides professional support to teachers and classroom resources for students in NSW from early childhood through to Year 12. Road safety education specialists support rural and regional schools and early childhood services through the upskilling of teachers, and by providing advice on road safety education programs. Road safety is taught in NSW schools and through the Early Years Learning Framework in early childhood services. Local government Road Safety Officers in rural and regional areas also provide road safety education to the community.

TfNSW will work with the Department of Education, Catholic Schools NSW, The Association of Independent Schools NSW and Kids and Traffic, to explore further opportunities to enhance road safety education for children and young people, particularly in rural and regional areas.

TfNSW will work with local governments and the NSW education sectors to create a framework and guidelines that clearly outline each agencies responsibility and how they work together to support teachers and families. This will ensure effective collaboration between local governments and the education sectors in order to maintain consistent road safety messages, enhance road safety around schools, and avoid duplication of effort.

Recommendation 9

That Transport for NSW review and examine the Local Traffic Committee model and assess any benefits of broadening its role and/or membership.

Supported

Supporting local government stewardship of road safety in their local communities has been identified as a key focus of the new 2026 RSAP.

The NSW Government is examining opportunities to strengthen local government's role in funding, planning, designing and operating safe local road networks. This will include examining the Local Traffic Committee model. As part of the Future Transport Review, the NSW Government will consider the membership of Local Traffic Committees.

Recommendation 10

That Transport for NSW ensure all road safety campaign related information is provided to local councils and road safety officers in a timely manner.

Supported

Local councils – particularly Road Safety Officers (RSOs) – rely on creative assets, marketing information and campaign resources from TfNSW to implement their local road safety initiatives. This includes photos and artwork, as well as brochures, pamphlets and merchandise, for example to promote education around specific road safety issues, such as safety around schools.

TfNSW, as part of the 2026 RSAP, is exploring establishing an online library that will improve access to core road safety assets and resources - designed with the flexibility to expand over time to cater for a range of local needs.

Recommendation 11

That Transport for NSW examine additional ways to support local council staff, particularly engineering staff, to develop their knowledge, and expertise about the Safe System approach.

Supported

Increasing delivery of Safe Systems training for planners and road managers, particularly to support local council staff by developing sustainable, more accessible and ongoing training approaches will be considered as part of the 2026 RSAP. This will focus on safe system assessment, road safety audits and treatments types for high crash locations - which Austroads has identified as priority training areas in the Guide to Road Safety.

TfNSW currently hosts a monthly Active Transport Community of Practice with state and local government participation focussed on planning and delivering walking and cycling infrastructure.

The NSW Movement and Place Learning and Development program will also provide a framework for local government staff to develop knowledge and expertise in road safety. It includes eLearning modules on implementing the Movement and Place approach, application of safety-related built environment indicators and the importance of collaboration with stakeholders to embed safety elements in a project or plan.

Recommendation 12

That Transport for NSW develop additional guidelines and resources for local council staff involved in the planning, delivery and maintenance of road assets, particularly for conducting road safety audits.

Supported

Increasing education and training on the Safe System approach and road safety requirements for state and local road authorities who are responsible for road management is a commitment in the current 2021 RSP and an ongoing initiative in the new 2026 RSAP.

A key goal of the 2026 RSAP will be to upskill road safety officers at every level in areas such as safe system assessment, road safety audits and the treatment of crash locations.

Recommendation 13

That the NSW Government work with local councils to review the need for additional rest areas on the road network, and, where necessary, upgrade existing rest areas to provide separate parking for heavy vehicles, or install additional rest areas.

Supported

As part of Objective 4 of the NSW Freight and Ports Plan 2018-2023 - *Creating a safe freight supply chain, involving safe networks, safe transport, safe speeds and safe people* - the NSW Government has committed to the development of a rest stop framework to assist future decision making around the planning, provision and management of rest stops. Further consideration of upgrading and expanding rest areas on the road network will be considered as part of the delivery of this commitment.

Recommendation 14

That the NSW Government explore ways to better work with local councils and communities when planning and installing road safety infrastructure around schools.

Supported

Road safety issues around schools are managed by both state and local government agencies. TfNSW provides many road safety infrastructure measures around schools, including:

- installation of new school zones – at new schools and new direct access points
- installation of all 40km/h school zone signs, school zone flashing lights, patches and dragon's teeth markings
- operating times of 40km/h school zones
- traffic signals

The school zone flashing lights program is one of the vital road safety programs funded through the Community Road Safety Fund. The NSW Government has ensured that every school in NSW has at least one set of school zone flashing lights, and additional flashing lights are in place at more than 500 schools across NSW that have multiple busy entrances, to further protect children travelling to and from school. In total, more than 6,500 school zone flashing lights are in place across NSW to warn motorists when they are about to enter a 40km/h school zone.

The NSW Government will continue to build on safety measures around schools and will explore how to work with local governments and communities to enhance safety around schools.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Government conduct a review of the objectives, funding levels, guidelines and duration of the Local Government Road Safety Program.

Supported

The Local Government Road Safety Program (LGRSP) is a partnership between TfNSW and participating local councils in NSW. The program was established in 1992 and provides funding and support to encourage local governments to prioritise road safety in their planning and service to the community.

As part of the 2026 RSAP, TfNSW will review the Program to realign the objectives, program design and funding parameters of the LGRSP to achieve the best road safety outcomes for NSW. This review will focus on ensuring funding resources are used to effectively incorporate road safety targets in local strategic planning processes, integrate the Safe System approach across council and build partnerships with local communities.

Recommendation 16

That the NSW Government consider funding specific road safety officer roles for local government joint organisations under the Local Government Road Safety Program, in addition to the funding available to each council for a road safety officer.

Supported

As part of the 2026 RSAP, the LGRSP will be reviewed to identify opportunities to enhance the Program by potentially realigning the objectives, program design and funding parameters.

Consideration will also be given to providing local government joint organisations access to Road Safety Officers to resource their road safety planning, to support development of network safety plans, and to support community engagement.

Recommendation 17

That the NSW Government consider addressing different local government area sizes and populations in future revisions of the Local Government Road Safety Program, to ensure councils with larger populations and areas are supported by an adequate number of road safety officers.

Supported

The NSW Government supports an evidence and risk-based approach to determining the allocation of funding and resources to ensure road safety outcomes are achieved in areas of high risk and high need.

As part of the 2026 RSAP, the LGRSP will be reviewed and funding allocation and the numbers of road safety officers will be considered against relevant factors, including trauma trends and population needs.

The review will also consider the benefits of targeting resources to high-need council areas, including potentially through support for Aboriginal-identified positions to support culturally appropriate and community-led road safety initiatives.

Recommendation 18

That Transport for NSW review the induction, training, and ongoing support opportunities provided to road safety officers, and examine ways to improve networking between road safety officers across NSW.

Supported

Road safety in NSW is a shared responsibility and the best safety outcomes are achieved with an integrated network of dedicated road safety professionals across all levels of government. The NSW Government acknowledges the benefits and opportunities that a connected network of RSOs have in sharing lessons and skills across the state.

Under the 2021 RSP, the length of contracts offered to RSOs was extended from a one-year to a three-year contract. This extension has allowed for greater certainty for RSOs and local governments and for the retention of skilled staff.

As part of the review of the LGRSP, the NSW Government will consider the induction, training and ongoing support and networking opportunities provided to RSOs.

Recommendation 19

That Transport for NSW continue to support local councils to introduce 40 and 30 kilometre an hour speed zones in areas of high pedestrian activity.

Supported

TfNSW has completed an evaluation of permanent 40 km/h zones in high pedestrian activity areas, local traffic areas and school zones. The evaluation found that there was no fatal crashes in High Pedestrian Activity Areas and 50 per cent reduction in fatal crashes in other permanent 40 km/h zones. TfNSW has also worked in partnership with a number of local governments to introduce area wide speed zones at high risk locations.

TfNSW has worked with a number of local councils to implement 30km/h speed zones in high pedestrian zones, and continues to monitor the benefits that lower speeds offer.

The NSW Government will continue to support local governments to introduce 40km/h speed zones and work with local governments who seek to implement 30km/h speed zones in appropriate places.

Recommendation 20

That Transport for NSW improve its business processes to streamline investigation, simplify assessment criteria and speed up the approval of local government requests to lower speed limits.

Supported

Speeding is the biggest single factor involved in road deaths, contributing to around 40 per cent of road fatalities each year in NSW. Speed limits are one of the simplest and most proven strategies for controlling and regulating driving speeds, and reducing road trauma.

TfNSW is currently revising the NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines. TfNSW is committed to strengthening the role of local government in funding, planning, designing and operating safe local road networks. As part of the 2026 RSAP, consideration will be given to streamlining processes to better support local government requests to lower speed limits in line with revised Speed Zoning Guidelines.

Recommendation 21

That Transport for NSW raise awareness of motorcycle rider safety as a vulnerable road user in local government planning and assessment in a similar way to other vulnerable road users.

Supported

TfNSW recognises that motorcyclists account for 19.5 per cent of the fatalities on local and regional roads, the second highest percentage after drivers. Improving motorcyclist safety is the core goal of the Ride to Live education campaign, and TfNSW also sponsors and promotes Motorcycle Awareness Month. These measures are aimed not only at motorcyclists but are also intended to increase broader community awareness of the vulnerability of motorcyclists.

Key actions in the 2026 RSAP will focus on building the capability of local government staff to support greater awareness of motorcyclist safety in local government planning. This includes increasing delivery of Safe System training for planners and road managers, and development of an integrated, online collaboration platform to share resources.

Recommendation 22

That the NSW Government develop additional strategies to improve driver behaviour with vulnerable road users on local roads.

Supported

As part of the 2021 RSP, \$180 million was allocated to the Liveable and Safe Urban Communities program, which aims to increase liveability and safety in urban communities through infrastructure safety upgrades for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

The NSW Government has been trialling a number of changes to the network to improve road safety for vulnerable users. These include changes to traffic signalling to provide additional time for less mobile pedestrians to cross and reductions in pedestrian crossing wait time to reduce the temptation to cross against the light. These and other measures will continue to be implemented where they can deliver road safety benefits.

The NSW Government also remains focussed on increasing driver compliance with speed limits and has recently expanded the mobile speed camera program, which includes mobile camera sites on local roads where vehicles and vulnerable road users typically mix.

In addition to the education campaigns delivered by the NSW Government and supported by local governments, the NSW Government will continue to develop strategies in partnership with local governments to improve the behaviour of drivers on local roads.