

ACT Road Safety

ACTION PLAN

2005 – 2006



CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	1
THE SPECIAL ROLE OF THE NRMA - ACT ROAD SAFETY TRUST	2
REVIEW	3
ACHIEVEMENTS ARISING FROM THE 2003 – 2004 ACTION PLAN	6
KEY ISSUES	7
Use of seat belts	8
Speeding	9
Drink driving	10
Older drivers	11
THE 2005 – 2006 ACTION PLAN	13
SAFER VEHICLES	14
SAFER ROADS	15
SAFER ROAD USERS	17
Inattention whilst driving	17
Speeding	18
Drink driving	20
Drug driving	20
Seatbelts	21
Crashes involving ACT vehicles and drivers in NSW	21
SAFER SYSTEMS	23
Road crash data	23
Education	23
Driver training	24
Enforcement	26
Road Trauma and Emergency Medicine	26
Cross border issues	26
APPENDIX	
A: Summary of actions for 2005–2006	28
B: List of projects approved by the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust for 2004–2005	31

BACKGROUND

The **ACT Road Safety Action Plan** is the functional component of the ACT Road Safety Strategy 2001-2005. While the Strategy is an aspirational policies and principles document, the Action Plan is flexible and designed to achieve and monitor the goals and targets outlined in the ACT and National Road Safety Strategies.

The aim of the Strategy is to reduce deaths and injuries on ACT roads.

The ACT and National road safety strategies centre on:

- continuing existing effective measures;
- enhancing and/or achieving wider implementation of measures with further potential;
- introducing new measures consistent with the following strategic objectives:
 - improved road user behaviour;
 - improved safety of roads;
 - improved vehicle compatibility and occupant protection;
 - the use of new technology to reduce human error;
 - improved equity among road users;
 - improved trauma, medical and retrieval services;
 - improved road safety policy and programs through research of safety outcomes; and
 - the encouragement of alternatives to motor vehicle use.

The Action Plan comprises a set of priority projects intended to achieve specific road safety outcomes. The Plan is a whole of government plan including projects across ACT Government agencies, community groups and the private sector. The Action Plan is a living document intended to respond to new issues and priorities as they arise.

Although the Department of Urban Services is the lead agency and has primary responsibility for many actions, a range of other agencies and community organisations play important roles in ensuring the Plan is successfully implemented.

A summary of identified actions in the Plan is set out in Appendix A.

THE SPECIAL ROLE OF THE NRMA – ACT ROAD SAFETY TRUST

A critical stakeholder in the promotion of road safety in the ACT is the NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust. With a charter to enhance road safety for the benefit of the ACT community, this statutory public charitable trust has contributed some \$15 million towards innovative road safety initiatives since it was established in 1992. The Trust is recognised as an invaluable community participant in ACT region road safety.

While the Trust has a wide focus with its funding initiatives, it continues to give high priority to younger drivers who are over-represented in crash statistics. Two key areas of current research relate to:

1. the potential for early childhood learning to influence road safety; and
2. better understanding and influencing the risk taking behaviour of young male drivers.

The aging of the population is also recognised as an issue which will require increased focus.

The Trust supports research and other initiatives through a targeted grants program: the grant recipients for 2004 - 2005 are listed at Appendix A.

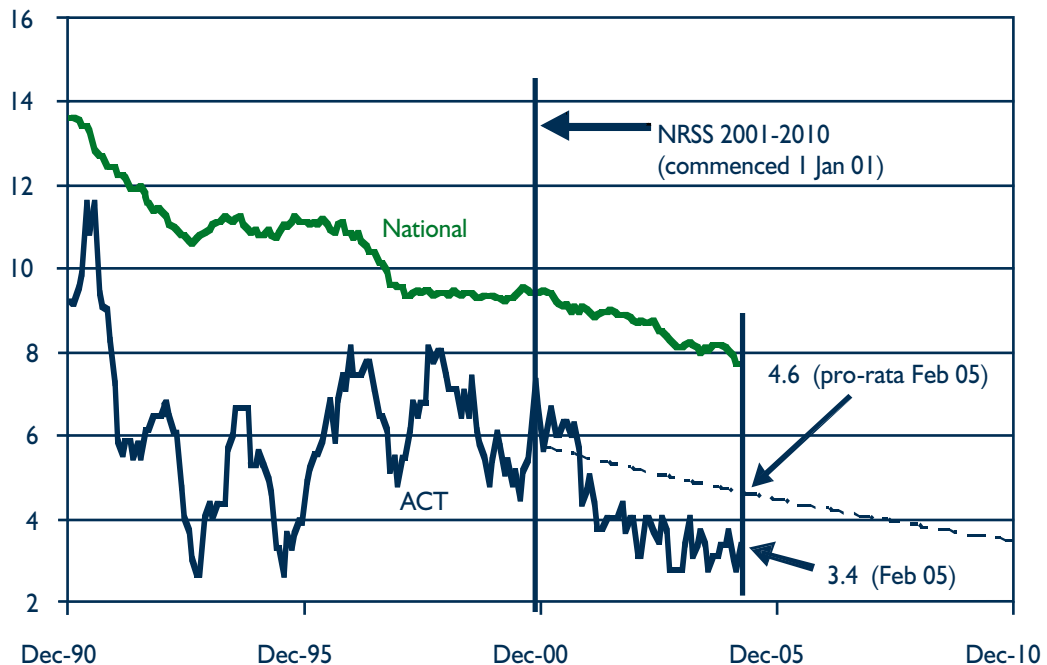
REVIEW

The ACT has, traditionally, relatively low crash rates compared to other jurisdictions. This is due, in part, to our good road system, our urbanised environment, and our relatively modern vehicle fleet. Notwithstanding these advantages, the ACT has managed to reduce its key road crash indicators by around 50% over the last five years. Detailed below are crash statistics for the ACT for the period 1999 – 2004.

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Fatalities	18	18	16	10	11	9
Casualties	750	661	606	405	387	350
Fatalities/100,000 Population	6.13	5.79	5.15	3.09	3.4	3.09

ACT road crash death rates are compared to the national average in the following graph.

Australian Capital Territory



The ACT has performed well with reductions in the order of 50 per cent across fatalities, serious injuries and fatality rates over the last five years. Absolute numbers will vary, particularly in areas like fatalities because the numbers are so small, but the trends across all indicators are very encouraging.

2003 Road Crash Data

- There were 8288 'on-road' recorded traffic crashes in 2003 that involved 15757 vehicles and resulted in 387 casualties including 11 fatalities and 138 persons admitted to hospital.
- In about 34% of all casualties, the victims were people younger than 30 years of age. The single most vulnerable group seems to be those aged between 20 and 24 accounting for nearly 14% of all casualties.
- Males account for 54% of all casualties.
- Pedestrians account for around 6% of all casualties, with 78% of these younger than 24 years of age. Two pedestrians were killed in 2003.
- The most frequent accident-type is the 'rear end collision' (46% of all crashes). In terms of severity, the 'right-angle collision' type is the most frequent, (28% of all casualty crashes).

(Source: ACT 2003 Road Traffic Crashes in the ACT)

These trends continued in 2004*. Preliminary data indicates that of the nine fatalities, four were drivers, three pedestrians and two motorcycle rider/pillion passengers. Casualty numbers are also down on 2003 numbers with 350 people receiving medical treatment and of those, 125 people admitted to hospital.

To date in 2005 there has been a significant increase in the number of fatalities on ACT roads. Within the first five months 11 fatalities have been recorded. Four of these being motorcycle crashes, three pedestrians, one bicyclist and three drivers.

The ACT has, in line with other jurisdictions, adopted the National Road Safety Strategy 2001-2010 and associated Action Plans. The Strategy provides a framework that complements the road safety strategies of State, Territory and local governments.

The target of the strategy is to reduce the annual number of road fatalities per 100 000 population by 40 per cent, from 9.3 in 1999 to no more than 5.6 in 2010. The rationale behind the strategy is to identify measures that have been shown to work and for these to be then implemented on a national basis.

The Strategy identifies action across a range of areas and this is reflected in the ACT's road safety action plans. The ACT has, for example:

- Continued to give attention to safe road design and the elimination of black-spots;
- Reviewed and revised training and licensing requirements for young drivers;

* detailed information on the characteristics of 2004 road crash data will be published separately later in 2005.

- Implemented, after an extensive trial, a 50km/h default urban speed limit;
- Introduced nine fixed red-light and speed cameras, with an additional two cameras commencing operation in late 2005;
- Introduced five mobile speed vans; and
- Provided advice to older drivers and their health professionals about fitness to drive issues.

ACHIEVEMENTS ARISING FROM THE 2003 –2004 ACTION PLAN

Major achievements under the previous Action Plan include:

- The evaluation and subsequent refinement of the **Road Ready** Learner Licence program.
- The introduction of a **50kmh urban default speed limit** on 1 June 2003.
- Maintaining the **Mobile Speed and Fixed Red light/speed** camera program.
- The provision of information to assist medical professionals advising **older drivers** about safety issues.
- The ACT Government is an active member of the Australian **Bicycle** Council which discusses cycling issues with groups, such as the ACT Bicycle Liaison Group (ACTBLG) and ACTBLG Capital Works Sub committee. Action has been taken on each of the main objectives outlined in *Australia Cycling – The National Strategy 1999-2004*.
- A number of projects were completed aimed at providing smoother **traffic** flow and increased safety.
- High crash locations were identified and assessed for treatment under the ACT's **Black Spot** program.
- Ongoing **liaison with community groups** and other bodies with an interest in road safety including active participation in the ACT Chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety and the Traffic Liaison Committee.

A progress report on the National Road safety Strategy *National Road Safety Strategy 2001-2010 Progress Report* is available on-line at <http://www.aaa.asn.au/directions/directions%201-03/NRSS.htm>

KEY ISSUES

An environmental scan has been conducted to identify areas that appear to represent particular problem areas. The scan looked at crash data from the ACT Roads Asset Management System database and community attitude research that is being used as a road safety performance indicator by police.

The community attitude research is conducted by AC Nielson and administered by the Australasian Centre for Policing Research (ACPR) on behalf of all Australian police agencies. The survey covers a diverse range of issues addressing community satisfaction with police services; perceptions of safety or otherwise either at home or out and about during the day or at night; perception of the risk of becoming the victim of a range of offences; and the degree of compliance with appropriate driving behaviours (speeding, drinking, seat belts, medication, over-tiredness).

The ACPR makes the majority of the data available to the Productivity Commission as the Commission provides the Secretariat to the Steering Committee on the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision which publishes an annual report (the 'Blue Book') in February of each year. The latest report is available online at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/rogs/2004/index.html>.

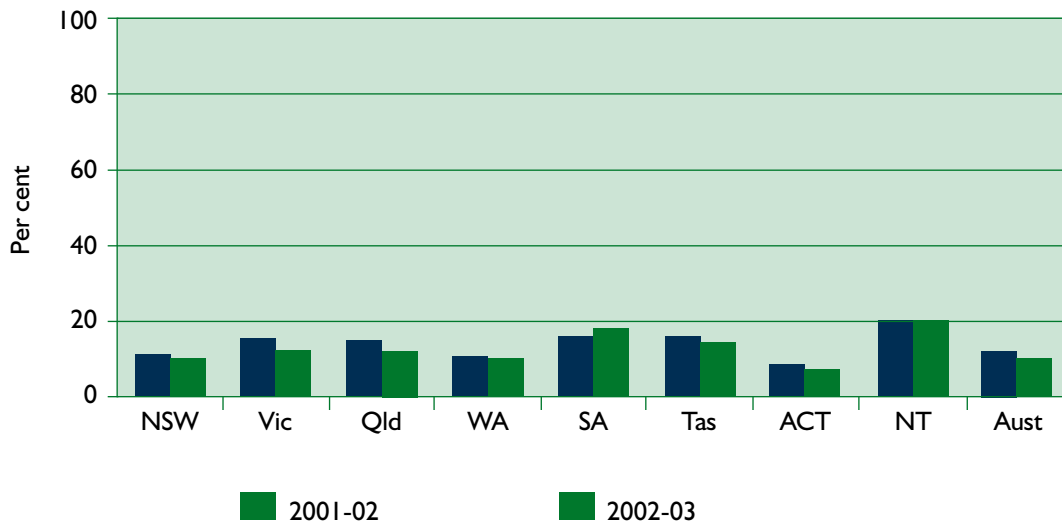
The problem areas that emerge from the national and ACT data are:

- people aged between **20 and 24** are the single most vulnerable age group accounting for nearly 14% of all casualties (ACT);
- the most frequent accident-type is the '**rear end collision**' making up 50% of all crashes (ACT);
- around 11 per cent of vehicle occupants are reporting that they do not wear a **seatbelt** (National);
- nearly 62 per cent of drivers report that they regularly exceed the **speed** limit by 10km/h or more (National);
- around 10 per cent of drivers indicated that they had driven when possibly over the 0.05 **blood alcohol limit** (National).

Use of seat belts

Nationally in 2002-03, 11.1 per cent of people who had driven in the last 12 months said they 'sometimes' or more often ('half the time', 'most of the time' or 'always'), travelled in a car without wearing a seat belt (compared with 13.0 in 2001-02). In the ACT, 9.1 per cent of drivers fell into this category. Compared with 2001-02, the use of seat belts was higher in all jurisdictions except SA, which recorded a slight decline in seat belt use.

People who had driven in the last 12 months and 'sometimes' or more often ('half the time', 'most of the time' or 'always') travelled in a car without wearing a seat belt^{a, b}



^a Data for 2001-02 are based on responses from people aged 18 years or over, whereas data for 2002-03 are based on responses from people aged 15 years or over.

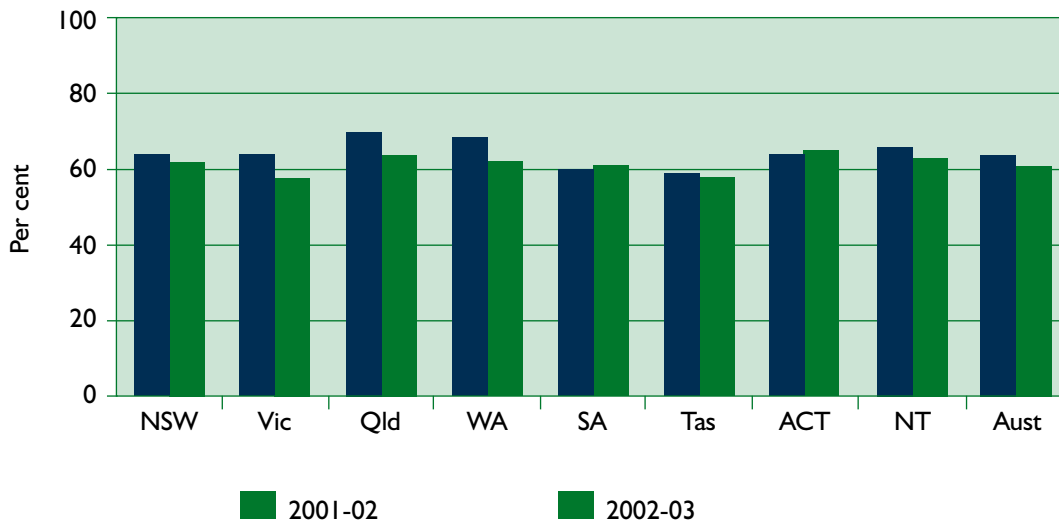
^b The 2001-02 survey data contains some minor weighting errors.

Source: ACPR National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing (unpublished); table 5A.59.

Speeding

Nationally in 2002-03, 61.7 per cent of people surveyed who had driven in the last 12 months reported travelling more than 10 kilometres per hour above the speed limit 'sometimes' or more often ('half the time', 'most of the time' or 'always'). This compares with 66.5 per cent in 2001-02. In the ACT, this figure rose to 68.2 per cent. Compared with 2001-02, all jurisdictions experienced declines in speeding, except SA and the ACT, which recorded small increases.

People who indicated that they had driven in the last 12 months more than 10km/h above the speed limit 'sometimes' or more often ('half the time', 'most of the time' or 'always')^{a, b}



^a Data for 2001-02 are based on responses from people aged 18 years or over, whereas data for 2002-03 are based on responses from people aged 15 years or over.

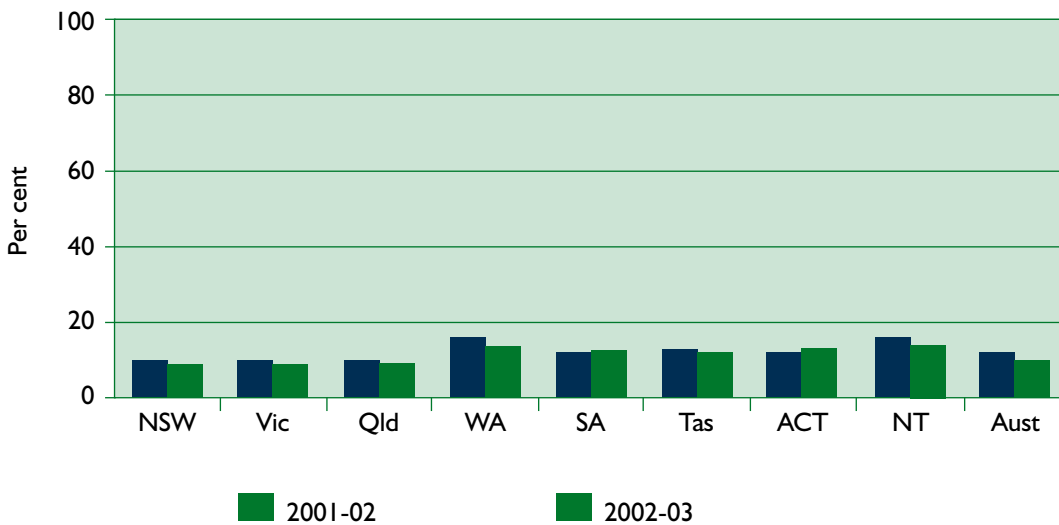
^b The 2001-02 survey data contains some minor weighting errors.

Source: ACPR National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing (unpublished); table 5A.60.

Drink driving

Nationally in 2002-03, 9.6 per cent of people surveyed who had driven in the last 12 months indicated that they had 'sometimes' or more often ('half the time', 'most of the time' or 'always') driven when possibly over the 0.05 blood alcohol limit (compared with 11.0 per cent in 2001-02). Compared with 2001-02, all jurisdictions recorded a fall in the self reported level of drink driving, except SA and the ACT, which experienced small increases.

People who indicated that they had driven in the last 12 months when possibly over the 0.05 alcohol limit 'sometimes' or more often ('half the time', 'most of the time' or 'always')^{a, b}



^a Data for 2001-02 are based on responses from people aged 18 years or over, whereas data for 2002-03 are based on responses from people aged 15 years or over.

^b The 2001-02 survey data contains some minor weighting errors.

Source: ACPR National Survey of Community Satisfaction with Policing (unpublished); table 5A.61.

Older drivers

'Australian Capital Territory: Population Projections' indicate that over the next five years (to 2009) our older driver population (65+) will increase by at least 1 per cent, while the number of younger drivers (16+) on our roads will slowly decrease. This data suggests that continued attention will need to be given to older drivers.

The following table demonstrates the number of elderly drivers on ACT roads from 1999 to 2003. This information confirms that numbers of elderly drivers are increasing each year in the ACT.

Table demonstrating number of aged drivers in ACT since 1999

Age	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
65	1680	1741	1858	1978	2200
66	1404	1539	1558	1643	1731
67	1433	1404	1538	1555	1639
68	1304	1441	1412	1542	1558
69	1349	1310	1454	1417	1530
70	1293	1360	1312	1448	1423
71	1208	1182	1198	1176	1264
72	1102	1205	1182	1197	1176
73	1069	1108	1208	1171	1188
74	1058	1061	1105	1204	1168
75	1001	1069	1065	1099	1197
76	788	842	898	914	923
77	729	763	802	847	866
78	659	698	721	761	798
79	559	621	662	673	718
80	360	523	581	620	635
81	324	327	484	528	576
82	282	290	298	432	470
83	241	253	264	270	392
84	175	206	224	227	241
85	158	145	181	193	196
86	120	132	123	166	163
87	76	93	114	104	142
88	44	58	74	83	79
89	32	35	50	63	70
90+	42	54	59	80	111
TOTAL	18490	19460	20425	21391	22454



THE 2005 – 2006 ACTION PLAN

The specific time frame for many projects and the need to balance resource demands means that the action plan will be a two year 'rolling' plan, which will be reviewed on a regular basis. This will allow incorporation of new projects and the results of the evaluation of completed projects.

Current road safety programs will continue in parallel with the Action Plan, although review and upgrading of existing activities will be a key element in the plan.

The Road Safety Action Plan complements the National Road Safety Action Plan and follows a similar structure. The National Road Safety Action Plan for 05-06 identifies a range of specific initiatives grouped into four broad areas:

- **Safer Vehicles**
- **Safer Roads**
- **Safer Road Users**
- **Safer Systems**

SAFER VEHICLES

Because of long lead times for vehicle safety improvements, there are limited options for new initiatives that will impact significantly before 2010 – the final year of the current national strategy. Almost all of the predicted savings up to 2010 in the National Strategy were from vehicle improvements already implemented or scheduled.

Consumer information about vehicle safety is available from the Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) at <http://www.aaa.asn.au/NCAP/ozindex.htm> and from crashworthiness ratings based on analysis of crashes on Australian roads (for used vehicles). Greater awareness and understanding of these ratings among both corporate and individual vehicle purchasers would enable more informed consumer decisions, and provide incentives for industry to supply more vehicles with advanced safety features. This could lower the price of features currently available as options. Decisions made by corporate vehicle purchasers flow through to the used car market, and thus affect the safety characteristics of the broader fleet.

Overseas research indicates that in-vehicle Intelligent Speed Adaptation systems (which provide feedback to the driver when local speed limits are exceeded, and can even be set to prevent speeding) have large potential safety benefits (and the potential for reductions in fuel consumption and emissions). A trial is already being conducted with fleet vehicles in Australia.

Action	Agency
Raise consumer awareness about the relative safety of various vehicle types through promotion of the ANCAP ratings;	DUS
Continue to ensure vehicles used on ACT roads comply with safety standards upon registration renewal. Rely on random on-road and carpark inspections and at time of registration transfer.	DUS
Heavy Vehicles - Implement, as appropriate for this jurisdiction, strategies listed in the Heavy Vehicle Safety Strategy being coordinated by the National Road Transport Commission.	DUS

SAFER ROADS

Improving the safety of roads is the single most significant achievable factor in reducing road trauma. Further investment in safer roads is highly justified on both social and economic grounds. Road investment improves road safety through general road improvements—typically, ‘new’ roads are safer than ‘old’ roads—as well as through treatment of black spots.

- the National Strategy

Traditionally, the consideration of road safety matters in the strategic transport and land use planning has been adequate in Canberra. This is mainly due to the high level of land-use/transport integration. This has resulted in a well defined road hierarchy (excluding pre-1960's districts), and a limited amount of “ribbon development” retail centres. This has been a major contribution to the ACT's status of lowest fatalities/per head population (ACT: 3.4 fatalities per 100,000, AUSTRALIA: 8.1 fatalities per 100,000). Of course the limited amount of rural travel in the ACT by ACT road users is also a factor.

Several plans and policies require consideration of road safety matters, however in recent years the level of general consideration is variable and sometimes inadequate. This appears to be due in part to current urban design concepts, e.g “permeable road networks”. The *Territory Plan* and the *National Capital Plan* set out the statutory land use policies (zoning) for the ACT.

Integrated land use and transport planning will seek to maximise accessibility and transport efficiency, reduce energy consumption, support the preferred pattern of development, promote safety, safeguard environmental quality, and reduce Greenhouse gas emissions.

Development will be planned to encourage use of public transport, walking and cycling, including commuter cycling. Routes will be reserved for an enhanced inter-town public transport system. Requirements for vehicle parking will be related to commercial needs and transport policy objectives. (The Sustainable Transport Plan – <http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/plandev/tp-intro/index.htm>)

A planned hierarchy of roads will be maintained in order to promote road safety, protect the amenity of residential and commercial areas, and facilitate the efficient movement of major traffic flows and heavy vehicles.

The provision for cyclists on arterial roads over the last 10 years has been a fundamental change in network provision for cyclists. This followed research that provided a better understanding of cyclist needs. Previously off-road shared paths (“cycle paths”) were considered adequate for commuters and longer trips.

Evaluations of black spot programs have shown them to be highly effective, with a very favourable benefit/cost ratio.

Black spot programs address problems in particular locations. Some fixable problems in the road environment are more diffuse, but safety levels can be improved considerably by ‘mass application’ of remedial measures. A number of measures are available that can be cost effective when appropriately targeted. Compared with new road construction, these are generally relatively low cost measures, but highly effective in safety terms.

Treatments with a high safety benefit include:

- clearance of roadside hazards, or use of barriers to reduce the hazard
- shoulder sealing, audible edge lining, night-time delineation
- replacement of intersections by roundabouts
- programs to minimise the risks posed by utility poles (installing slip based poles and frangible poles, running power lines underground where possible, relocating poles away from curves and intersections, and placing them outside ‘clear zones’ on straight sections of road)
- separation of road users - centre barriers, pedestrian precincts, bike tracks etc.

Many of these treatments can meet the selection criteria for black spot programs in some locations, but there is scope for substantial further safety improvements from more broadly based mass action programs.

A similar approach can also be applied to area-based treatments, particularly when focusing on pedestrians or other vulnerable road user groups in urban areas. Such an approach can be particularly effective if used in the developing outer suburbs of Canberra. These are considered using the Department of Urban Services, Traffic Warrant System. The System establishes an objective basis for allocating limited funds for traffic management works by targeting problem streets and locations based on assessment of accidents, speed, volume, through traffic and land use.

Action	Agency
Review ACT high crash locations for Black spot treatments	DUS
Provide road markings, road furniture and road maintenance with motorcyclist and bicyclist safety in mind	DUS
Review and upgrade safety-related road improvement and maintenance programs including the use of the Traffic Warrant System	DUS

SAFER ROAD USERS

As noted earlier, driver behaviour continues to be a major focus in this Action Plan. Particular areas that need to be addressed include:

- Inattention whilst driving;
- Speeding;
- Drink-driving;
- Drug-driving;
- Seat-belt wearing; and
- Interstate accidents involving ACT drivers

Inattention whilst driving

Drivers need to stay alert for the entire time they are behind the wheel. This requires drivers to scan the road environment, process information and make decisions about the primary task of driving. However, keeping drivers' minds on the road is easier said than done. All motorists engage in potentially dangerous distracting activities whilst driving. Drivers can be distracted in many ways. Some of the most common distractions occur when changing controls, talking, eating/drinking, grooming, other passengers, reading/writing, using the mobile phone and smoking.

Recent research has indicated that driver inattention contributed to 27% of crashes in 2003 in Queensland. Inattention, as a contributor to fatal crashes, is occurring at a higher rate each year.

Every distraction leads to delays in driver reactions, increases the likelihood of missing potential hazards and compromises safety.

With the rapid increase in the use of mobile phones, this form of distraction has highlighted the injury risk posed by the practice. Research recently published in the Medical Journal of Australia noted that there is increasing evidence that the use of a hand-held mobile phone while driving increases the risk of a traffic accident. This behaviour represents a preventable cause of injury. The risk of collision while using a mobile phone is increased 4-fold, compared with a 2-fold increased risk when driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.06%. The study also found that the risk of a fatality is increased 9-fold when using a mobile phone.

Action	Agency
Development of intervention strategies targeted at inattention whilst driving	DUS / ACT Policing

Speeding

Travel speed affects the severity of crashes, as well as the risk of involvement in a crash.

Travel speed and relative risk

Speed	Relative Risk
60	1.00
65	2.00
70	4.16
75	10.60
80	31.81
85	56.55

(Source: Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW)

There is evidence from an extensive body of research (summarised in a PowerPoint presentation at: <http://www.transport.act.gov.au/roadtransportroad-safety/speedandspeeding/speedandspeeding.html>) that even small reductions in vehicle speeds result in a marked reduction in the number of road fatalities and serious injuries.

Community attitude surveys show growing public understanding of speed risks, and majority support for quite strict approaches to speed management, however, this is still well short of the profound change in public attitudes to drink driving that developed over the last two decades.

There is still a widespread belief that only speeds well in excess of current limits (or prevailing speeds) are dangerous. Australian research has provided direct evidence that speeds just 5 km/h above average in urban (60 km/h) areas, and 10 km/h above average in rural areas are sufficient to double the risk of a casualty crash: roughly equivalent to the increase in risk associated with a Blood Alcohol Concentration of 0.05. The evidence also indicates that although 'moderate' speeding (within 10 or 15 km/h of the posted limit) is far less risky than more extreme speeds, it makes a comparable contribution to serious road crashes because it is so common.

Speed enforcement programs backed by extensive publicity were a major factor in the substantial national reduction in road fatalities (37%) that occurred between 1989 and 1997. The introduction of a 50km/h default urban speed limit has contributed to reductions in crash rates over the last couple of years. Recent experience from Victoria demonstrates the impact of speed on crash rates. Since 2002, Victoria has shown fatality rate reductions in the order of 16%. The reduction in fatalities in Victoria for 2003 (64 fatalities,) constitutes most of the total national reduction of 81 fatalities over the same period. The start of this

downturn in Victoria coincided with the introduction of stricter speed enforcement measures, including reduced enforcement tolerances.

These have tended to have a greater impact in metropolitan areas than country areas as shown by the following data. Comparing 2003 Victorian data with 2002 shows:

- Metropolitan deaths decreased by 43 (23%) from 186 to 143, and country deaths decreased by 21 (10%) from 211 to 190;
- Deaths among the more vulnerable road user groups decreased significantly, including motorcyclists (from 56 to 38) and pedestrians (from 58 to 41);
- Fatalities in the lower speed zones – 50kmh, 60kmh and 70kmh – fell from 138 to 106, a decrease of 23%;
- Deaths per 100 million kilometres travelled dropped from 0.77 to 0.69, the lowest on record.

Compliance with speed limits is still far from perfect, and better compliance would cut road deaths significantly. The National Strategy notes the need for enforcement and education initiatives to promote the public perception that compliance ‘everywhere, all the time’ is the best way of avoiding penalties and improving safety.

Action	Agency
Review current speed camera policy to provide a more flexible and responsive method to determine appropriate sites based on known crash and speeding data.	DUS
Explore benefits of continuous (automatic) speed enforcement on high volume roads, and other roads with high crash rates.	DUS ACT Policing
Review current intersection crash data to ensure most efficient allocation of red light cameras	Traffic Liaison Committee
Conduct high profile enforcement campaigns targeting unsafe behaviours	ACT Policing
Motorcycle safety: examine safety of riders given increasing numbers of crashes for this group	DUS Motorcycle groups
Promote improved interaction between motorcyclists and motorists through awareness and education campaigns	DUS Motorcycle groups

Drink-driving

As noted in the National Road Safety Action Plan for 2005-2006, all jurisdictions have had success in reducing the contribution of alcohol to road trauma, however, about 26 per cent of driver and rider fatalities still have a blood alcohol concentration above the legal limit.

This figure varies considerably among jurisdictions, which suggests that there is some scope for further gains through identification and application of best practice approaches to deterrence.

As noted in the National Plan, although there is scope for more strategic deployment of resources available for drink driving deterrence programmes, this is an area where 'working smarter' is no substitute for working hard. Effective deterrence depends on convincing potential offenders that offences are very likely to be detected and punished. This perception cannot be maintained without intensive enforcement.

Action	Agency
Review Road Transport (Alcohol & Drugs) Act for administrative and operational improvements, in conjunction with AFP & DPP	DUS / ACT Policing

Drug driving

In terms of substance impairment, alcohol is the biggest single contributor to road trauma; however, recent information from the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine indicates that other drugs warrant further examination and action. Victoria has recently introduced trial of random roadside drug testing.

The development of effective drink and drug driving strategies is hampered by inadequate data on alcohol and drug involvement in serious crashes. Routine blood sampling and drug testing are currently limited to fatally injured drivers, but need to be applied consistently and extended to all drivers involved in fatal or serious crashes.

Action	Agency
Monitor developments in other jurisdictions to address incidences of drug driving	DUS / ACT Policing

Seatbelts

The overwhelming majority of motorists buckle up when they take to the roads. However, seat belt usage rates amongst those vehicle occupants killed remains a serious issue. Over recent years, approximately one in every five motor vehicle occupants killed on our roads was unbelted, with a higher proportion of rear seated passengers killed in accidents unbelted, compared to drivers and front left passengers.

Crashes involving ACT vehicles and ACT drivers and riders in NSW

In November 2004 the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust commissioned ARRB Consulting to undertake an analysis of crashes involving ACT registered vehicles and ACT licensed controllers (drivers and riders) in NSW for the period 1999-2003. The NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust released this report in May 2005.

ARRB Consulting investigated 3,453 crashes in NSW that involved ACT registered vehicles or ACT licensed controllers. Of the 2,346 ACT controllers involved in those crashes 43 were involved in fatal crashes, 926 were involved in injury crashes and 1,377 were involved in non-casualty (tow away) crashes. In terms of deaths and injury, 19 ACT controllers were killed and 543 sustained injury.

The table below shows that between 1999 and 2003 the ACT recorded the lowest average annual road fatalities in Australia. It also shows that the number of people killed on ACT roads proved lower than the average killed on NSW roads in crashes involving an ACT controller.

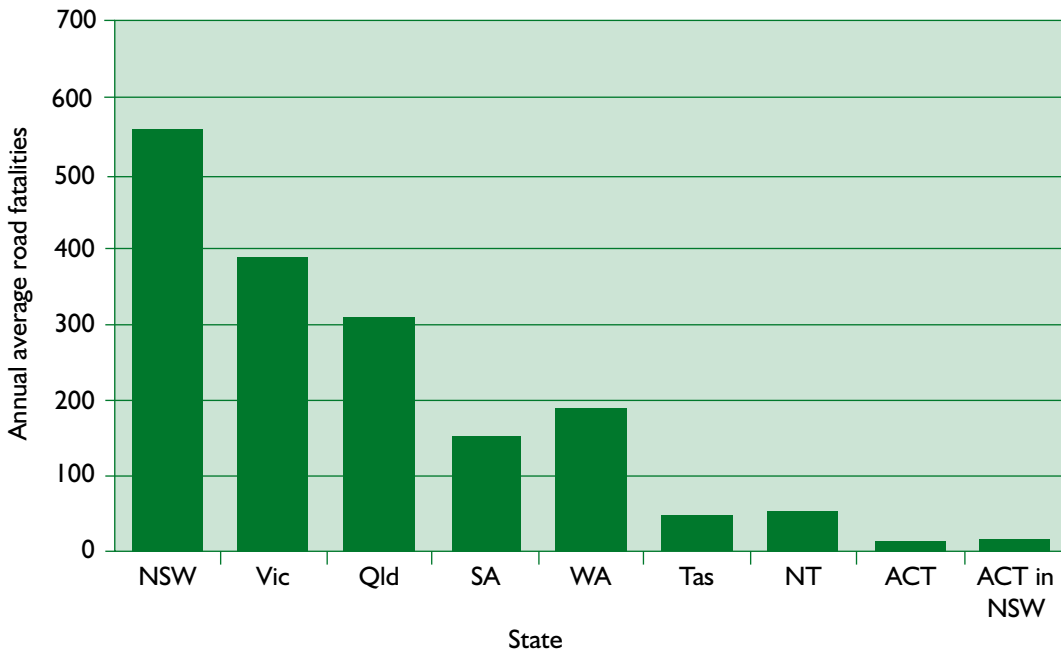


Figure 1: Average annual road fatalities (1999-2003) [Australian Transport Safety Bureau 2003], pg6 ARRB Consulting Report on Crashes involving ACT vehicles and ACT controllers in NSW 1999-2003 for the NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust

Key findings of the report include the following:

- The number of fatal crashes in the ACT was approximately the same as the number of fatal crashes in NSW involving ACT vehicles/controllers;
- Large number of injury crashes occurred in NSW;
- The highest concentration of crashes occurred in the Sydney Metropolitan area particularly pedestrian and intersection crashes. This suggests that ACT drivers are not adequately prepared for the demands of Sydney traffic and the road environment;
- The Hume and Kings Highways had the highest number of crashes of the main routes investigated. In that context, twenty percent of fatal crashes occurred on the Kings Highway, which also had the highest holiday fatality rate and the highest single vehicle crash rate;
- A greater number of buses, trucks and motorcycles were involved in fatal crashes than cars; and
- A greater percentage of male controllers (70%) were involved in crashes than female controllers (30%).

The ARRB Consulting Report provides eleven recommendations. The first recommendation identifies that a major effort should continue to be put into addressing crashes outside the ACT, as there has only been a minor shift in injury crash patterns involving ACT vehicles and controllers, and fatal crashes continue to be a problem.

Action	Agency
Examine key issues arising from the ARRB Consulting Report on Crashes Involving ACT Vehicles and ACT Controllers in NSW 1999-2003 and develop strategies to address.	DUS

SAFER SYSTEMS

This section covers areas such as data collection, education, enforcement and trauma management that contribute more broadly to a safer road system.

Road crash data

The development of effective road safety policies and programs relies on sound data and critical research and analysis. The maintenance of effective road safety programs requires an ongoing program of monitoring and evaluation. The ACT will continue to review and enhance data collection and support a focussed national and local research program. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects is essential to provide cost-effective road safety outcomes.

Education

Educating road users about the relative risks associated with road crashes and measures to improve their own safety is a critical component of this Plan. A range of agencies are involved in road safety education programs as illustrated by the following sections.

Road safety education in ACT schools

Develop and implement school road safety programs: Kenny Koala Primary school program; Mentoring Road safety Kit for Colleges, High Schools and Primary Schools; Road & Alcohol Safety: Peer Education in Colleges Tour (RASPECT), Travelsmart and the NRMA Roadzone activities (upper secondary).

Safe driving reminders

Educate road users about the risks associated with using the road system. Promote safe behaviours such as seat belt wearing, helmet wearing for cyclists and motorcyclists, and compliance by all road users with the Road Rules. Reinforce the risks associated with drink-driving, fatigue and speeding. Make information available to all members of the community that explains the rationale behind the National Road Safety Strategy.

Television advertising

The NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust is the main sponsor of road safety television advertising in the ACT. The Trust has actively engaged with road safety authorities in other jurisdictions and has obtained permission to use high quality advertisements for screening in our local area. This approach has resulted in making available commercials that would have been beyond the capacity of this jurisdiction to produce. Recent campaigns have been focussed on speed and drink driving.

Driver training

The ACT system of driver training is based on a cutting-edge program called Road Ready. Road Ready is a four-stage program that operates over a period of around three years. The stages are:

1. Preparing Your Pre-learner for Driving

This is a program for parents and their pre-learners, where kids are introduced to driving as co-pilots and are made aware of the basic principles of hazard perception.

2. Learner Licence Program

All applicants for a learner licence must undertake a fifteen hour course which is aimed at establishing safe attitudes and behaviours in new drivers. The learner licence program provides young people with an understanding of the concepts of risk, identifies a range of risks which they might face in their driving careers, and provides them with a range of strategies to address these risks when they confront them. The program promotes the need for extensive practice, and applicants must pass an electronic road rules test. Nearly all ACT high schools deliver the learner licence program in Year 10 (15 year olds). An external provider, Freebott Pty Ltd, delivers the same program as the schools to older applicants and persons coming from other states or overseas. The program is delivered separately for people from non-English-speaking backgrounds by the Canberra Institute of Technology.

3. Learning to Drive

Learner drivers are issued a two year licence. They must spend at least six months on the learner licence, and be at least 17 years old before being eligible to undertake the provisional licence test. In reality, most youngsters get their learner licence close to their 16th birthday and are on their learner licence for around 15 months. They are eligible to obtain a learner licence at 15 years 9 months. The decision to take the learner licence age back from 16 years to 15 yrs 9 months was adopted to provide a seamless transition from the learner licence course to the learning phase. Resources are provided to parents/carers and the learners to give them a range of driving practice activities. The need for 50-100 hours of supervised practice during the learner licence period is strongly promoted.

4. Provisional Drivers

ACT provisional drivers are on a three year provisional licence. They are required to display their P plate for 3 years, are subject to a 4 demerit point limit before loss of licence, and a 0.02BAC limit. However, drivers who successfully undertake the Road Ready Plus course are eligible to cease displaying their P plate, and have their demerit point allocation increased to eight. This facilitated workshop draws on the principles of the Swedish Telecom study and insight training concepts.

Road Ready Plus is a voluntary course for provisional drivers. They must have at least six months driving, because the course relies on their use of their initial experience as solo drivers to learn from each other.

The Road Ready program has been the subject of extensive evaluation – copies of evaluation reports are available online at: <http://www.transport.act.gov.au/road-transportroadsafety/youngnovicedriversafety.html>.

Key findings stated that:

- About 50% of Road Ready participants are reporting doing commentary driving prior to getting their Learner Licence – a practice that is likely to significantly increase not only the safety of young drivers, but also of their parents according to many comments received during the evaluation.
- Road Ready participants are reporting significantly higher levels of practice driving prior to completing their licences and are receiving significantly fewer infringements than learner drivers before the course began.
- Participants are staying on their Learner Licence for longer. Australian and international experience suggests that longer time spent in a training mode leads to significant long-term increases in road safety for young solo drivers.
- Road Ready Plus is a well accepted program which is enjoyed by the majority of participants.
- Participants stated they achieved great insight into their driving and the driving of others.
- The use of facilitated peer discussions has proven to be an excellent way to engage young people.
- Consideration should be given to amending the Road Ready Plus program with more targeted pre-course activities and a four hour workshop.
- Criteria for assessing successful completion of the course needs to be further developed. Noting that such criteria should not translate into a barrier to attending.

Motorcycle training

The ACT system of rider training requires the learner to either hold a current drivers licence or complete the Road Ready Course and pass the road rules knowledge test. The compulsory learner rider course involves a nine hour course held over two half days. The course covers both theoretical and practical aspects of motorcycling.

The provisional licence assessment test can be undertaken after holding a learner's licence for at least three months.

If an applicant fails the provisional licence assessment test, they are required to undertake the Pre-provisional licence training course which involves seven hours

of theoretical and practical activities. A subsidy to cover the cost of the course is met by the Government. Any learner motorcycle rider can choose to complete the pre-provisional course to enhance their skills and road craft awareness.

Action	Agency
Implement recommendations of the Road Ready Plus evaluation	DUS
Evaluate and, if appropriate, improve motorcycle rider training and licencing requirements	DUS

Enforcement

A key ingredient in reducing road trauma is ensuring compliance with applicable rules and regulations. Consistent and regular enforcement is important in fostering a positive road safety culture.

Enforcement will utilise Intelligence Lead Policing methodologies to identify and target problematic areas at pre-determined times of the day that will produce the greatest impact.

Enforcement agencies will endeavour to identify and implement 'best practice', in particular, advances in technology.

Road Trauma and Emergency Medicine

Provide support for the Chair of Road Trauma and Emergency Medicine work in the area of road trauma and road safety. The Chair was established and funded by the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust and has a major role in identifying and implementing best practice in trauma management. The Chair has also had an active role in initiatives to improve ACT's road crash data systems to better identify the contribution of various crash types to trauma outcomes.

Cross border issues

The Australasian College of Road Safety has expressed concern about the need to adopt a broader regional perspective in relation to road trauma: the ACT typically is concerned about what happens within our borders and NSW, similarly, is focused on its jurisdiction. This focus tends to ignore the reality of both ACT and NSW motorists regularly driving, and crashing, 'over the border'. In response to this the College and the NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust hosted a road safety seminar on the 12 May 2005 with the theme being Cross Border Road Safety Initiatives.

This theme builds on earlier research commissioned by the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust (Cairney and Gunatillake, Crashes involving ACT vehicles outside the ACT, 2000). The study found on average, as many fatalities occur to ACT registered drivers or vehicles outside the ACT as happen within it. To update this

useful research the NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust commissioned ARRB Consulting to undertake an analysis of crashes involving ACT registered vehicles and ACT licensed controllers (drivers and riders) in NSW for the period 1999-2003. The NRMA – ACT Road Safety Trust released this report in May 2005. Further information on the key findings of this report can be found on page 22.

APPENDIX A

Summary of actions: 2005-2006

Action	Agency
Raise consumer awareness about the relative safety of various vehicle types through promotion of the ANCAP ratings.	DUS
Continue to ensure vehicles used on ACT roads comply with safety standards upon registration renewal. Rely on random on-road and carpark inspections and at time of registration transfer.	DUS
Heavy vehicles - Implement, as appropriate for this jurisdiction, strategies listed in the Heavy Vehicle Safety Strategy being coordinated by the National Road Transport Commission.	DUS
Review ACT high crash locations for Black spot treatments.	DUS
Provide road markings, road furniture and road maintenance with motorcyclist and bicyclist safety in mind.	DUS
Review and upgrade safety-related road improvement and maintenance programs including the use of the Traffic Warrant System.	DUS
Development of intervention strategies targeted at inattention whilst driving	DUS / ACT Policing
Review current speed camera policy to provide a more flexible and responsive method to determine appropriate sites based on known crash and speeding data.	DUS
Explore benefits of continuous (automatic) speed enforcement on high volume roads, and other roads with high crash rates.	DUS / ACT Policing
Review current intersection crash data to ensure most efficient allocation of red light cameras	Traffic Liaison Committee
Conduct high profile enforcement campaigns targeting unsafe behaviours	ACT Policing

Action	Agency
Review Road Transport (Alcohol & Drugs) Act for administrative and operational improvements, in conjunction with AFP & DPP.	DUS / ACT Policing
Monitor developments in other jurisdictions to address incidences of drug driving.	ACT Policing / DUS
Motorcycle safety: examine safety of riders given increasing numbers of crashes for this group	DUS Motorcycle groups
Promote improved interaction between motorcyclists and motorists through awareness and education campaigns	DUS Motorcycle groups
Examine key issues arising from the ARRB Consulting Report on Crashes Involving ACT Vehicles and ACT Controllers in NSW 1999-2003 and develop strategies to address.	DUS
Implement recommendations of the Road Ready evaluation.	DUS
Evaluate and, if appropriate, improve motorcycle rider training and licencing requirements	DUS

APPENDIX B

List of projects approved by the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust for 2004–2005

Grant Recipient

Australian Academy of Science: Development of a topic on “Driving Under the Influence of Drugs” and posting it on the Academy’s website *Nova: Science in the News*.

ARRB Transport Research: Review existing early childhood road safety resources in Australia to assess their suitability for trialing in the ACT. This project is Stage 2 of an overall strategy to research the potential for early childhood learning to influence road safety.

ARRB Transport Research: Conduct an analysis of traffic offence data by young novice drivers and undertake a telephone survey to collect information on risk taking behaviour by young drivers. This project is Stage 2 of an overall strategy to better understand the risk taking behaviour of young drivers – particularly male.

ARRB Transport Research: Contribution towards the cost of presenting a paper on risk taking behaviour by young male drivers at the Australasian Road Safety Conference in Perth in November 2004.

Monash University Accident Research Centre: Undertake research into the factors that heighten the crash risk of older female drivers in the ACT and the development of countermeasures.

Smithworks Consulting with SMEC Australia: Conduct a survey and focus groups of ACT college students, as well as focus groups involving parents and stakeholders to determine feasibility and practicality of introducing certain restrictions on young drivers such as passengers restrictions during certain hours.

YWCA of Canberra: Contribution towards the continuation and expansion of the Walking School Bus Program currently running at Majura and Theodore primary schools. Funding will assist with the purchase of fluorescent vests and publicity including brochures and a web page.

Monash University Accident Research Centre: Undertake research into self-regulatory behaviour, travel patterns and crash risks of older drivers that will include a comparison of data from ACT, NSW and Victorian drivers.

Grant Recipient

Abbott Freeth and Associates: Develop and deliver a two hour pilot program, using a harm minimization approach, for disadvantaged youth many of whom drive at high risk e.g., unlicensed, un-registered vehicles and often under the influence of alcohol/drugs.

ACT Policing: Replacement of the fifty bicycles and helmets used to demonstrate safe cycling behaviour at the Belconnen Bicycle Demonstration Centre and assistance towards the transport costs for primary schools visiting the Centre.

NatRoad Pty Ltd: Funding for a television campaign aimed at increasing the awareness of motorists of appropriate road safety behaviour when interacting with heavy vehicles, such as refraining from cutting in when approaching traffic lights.

Rotary Club of Belconnen: Contribution towards the costs associated with the Young Driver Challenge Program for the next two years. This annual Program is aimed at increasing the awareness of P Plate drivers in ACT colleges of the skill slippage that usually occurs in the first two years of solo driving.

Community Programs Association: Funding for a road safety education program that will assist people with disabilities complete the **Road Ready Program**. Funding includes a contribution towards half the cost of a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

Kidsafe ACT Inc: Purchase of an initial supply of specialized restraints for disabled children for hire by parents on the advice of the child's doctor or therapist.

Kidsafe ACT Inc: Free child restraint checking service at selected locations throughout Canberra.

Alcohol and Drug Foundation ACT: Implementation of the best practice NSW Sober Driver Program for persons convicted of or facing drink driving charges. The program aims to build skills, knowledge and strategies that will assist drivers not to re-offend.

Yass Valley Council: Contribution towards the costs (1) associated with the development of a television campaign to educate motorists on safe travel on unsealed rural roads in the Yass Valley region and (2) presentation of a conference paper on the campaign at the Australasian Road Safety Conference in Perth in November 2004.

NSW Police Service – Queanbeyan Police: Contribution towards the development of a road safety video on risk taking behaviour by young drivers for use in (1) regional NSW high schools by Police Youth Liaison Officers and (2) in ACT colleges by the AFP Crime Prevention Team. The Canberra Raiders Rugby League team has agreed to participate in the video and school visits.

Grant Recipient

Monash Ageing Research Centre: Delivery of three seminars to ACT doctors and other health professionals on issues surrounding older driving safety.

Environment ACT: Contribution towards a community awareness campaign on the dangers of kangaroos crossing roads utilizing radio and television advertisements as well as the back of ACTION buses.

Department of Education, Youth and Family Services: Contribution towards a pilot project for Year 11 college students and teachers that will provide facilitation training skills on risk reduction for road safety in relation to alcohol and other drugs. A one-day seminar will be a key component of the program.

