

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO
THE IMPACT OF ROAD SAFETY
BEHAVIOURS ON VULNERABLE
ROAD USERS

MARCH 2025



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Road Safety Partners acknowledge and pay respect to Elders and all Victorian Aboriginal communities. We honour and respects Traditional Owners, past and present, and value the rich culture and history of the First Peoples of this land.

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INTRODUCTION

The Victorian Government welcomes the final report of the Inquiry into the Impact of Road Safety Behaviours on Vulnerable Road Users, chaired by Mrs Alison Marchant MP, and wishes to thank the members of the Legislative Assembly Economy and Infrastructure Committee (the Committee) for their diligence throughout the Inquiry.

The substantial contributions of stakeholders and community members are also acknowledged and valued and is evidenced by the volume of submissions and number of hearings held.

The significant number of lives lost in 2019 prompted the previous parliamentary inquiry into the increase in Victoria's road toll. Sadly, this trend has continued post-pandemic, with 295 lives lost in 2023 – the highest annual figure in Victoria since 2008. An increase is also being felt at a national level, with Australia as a whole reporting 7 per cent more lives lost in 2023 than in 2019.

Victoria's population continues to grow, which places added pressure on the road transport network and increased exposure to the potential for road trauma. To accommodate safe and sustainable growth, we know we need to increase active and public transport as a mode share. This means we must also work even harder to better protect the unprotected (pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists) and our most vulnerable – children, older people and those with a disability.

The Victorian Government notes the Committee's finding of a decline in responsible behaviours among road users, particularly among drivers in the Melbourne metropolitan area. The ongoing community concern for risky behaviours including aggression and tailgating, distractions, speeding and impaired driving, is also shared by government.

Additionally, the Victorian Government has considered the report findings, including all 56 recommendations. Of these, the Victorian Government supports 54 recommendations (17 in full, 12 in part and 25 in principle) while one is under review and one is not supported.

The Victorian Government commends the Committee for acknowledging the need for a holistic approach to road safety, noting behavioural measures are an important element but, on their own, will only go so far to addressing the issue. Under the Safe System approach, in addition to safe road users, the key pillars also span across road design, safe travel speeds and safe vehicles that protect both the occupants and other road users.

The Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 sets an ambitious target to halve lives lost by 2030 and to achieve zero road trauma by 2050. The Strategy's second Road Safety Action Plan was released in December 2024 and is delivering an investment of more than \$1.1 billion, including \$350 million for new initiatives, to continue the Victorian Government's commitment to halving deaths and significantly reducing road trauma by 2030. This investment will deliver lifesaving road safety infrastructure such as safety barriers on rural and urban roads, reduce the risk of crashes at high-speed rural intersections, and deliver safety improvements for pedestrians at high-risk signalised intersections. It will also support efforts to reduce illegal mobile phone use and seatbelt non-compliance through an expansion of mobile phone and seatbelt detection camera technology.

While the legacy of the pandemic and record population growth have presented us with new challenges, the Victorian Government remains committed to a Safe System approach and the 2050 vision of zero road trauma. We will continue to monitor trends, prioritise evidence-based solutions and remain open to new approaches. But we cannot achieve these ambitious 2030 and 2050 goals alone; everyone has a role to play to help make Victorian roads safer.

RECOMMENDATION 1

The Victorian Government develop a road user hierarchy system to provide guidance so that all road users understand their responsibility towards others' safety on the road.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government acknowledges that more needs to be done to protect our most vulnerable and unprotected road users – pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) has implemented the *Movement and Place Framework*, which recognises streets not only keep people and goods moving, but are also places for people to live, work and enjoy. When planning and developing the transport network, we need to balance the needs of both 'transport' users and 'place' users and design for a mix of transport modes that are appropriate to how the road and places are used by communities. Movement and Place classifications are grouped into road and street types that have similar land-use activities and share similar combinations of users and each type varies according to a modal hierarchy. This planning approach ensures that people are ultimately at the centre of transport planning and our most vulnerable road users can be prioritised early.

The Victorian Government notes the Committee's finding of the UK Highway Code introduced in 2022, which prioritises and guides road users based on their level of vulnerability in traffic. DTP will work with the road safety partners to investigate this approach for a Victorian context.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Victorian Government continue to promote and plan for active transport and report the proportion of the transport budget allocated to active transport.

This recommendation is supported in part.

Active transport is central to an easy, affordable and sustainable transport system and can support broader health, environmental, social and economic benefits for the Victorian community. The Victorian Government is committed to investing in active transport improvements across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Victoria's Climate Change Strategy sets a target of net zero emissions by 2045. To help achieve this the *Transport Sector Emissions Reduction Pledge* aims to increase active transport mode share to 25 per cent by 2030. In support of this pledge, DTP is leading the development of an active transport strategy to establish the strategic direction to guide planning and investment to improve the walkability and cyclability of neighbourhoods throughout Victoria.

Victoria's Housing Statement, announced in September 2023, includes initiatives for major reforms to Victoria's planning system. It will help promote and plan for active transport such as walking, cycling, and the use of public transport through a variety of integrated measures and policies by encouraging mixed-use developments, updating zoning laws, investing in bike lanes and pedestrian paths, integrating public transport, and offering incentives for developers.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving safety for people walking, bike riders and micromobility users, and has invested significantly in active transport as part of a \$20.7 million investment in the *2024-2025 State Budget* for critical public and active transport. In addition to this, the Victorian Government recently announced an investment of nearly \$22m for nine active transport projects in growth areas as part of a \$401 million Growth Area Infrastructure Contributions (GAIC) investment.

As active transport is integrated into most transport projects, and all major transport infrastructure projects, it is impractical to separate out and report on the specific costs of these elements within broader infrastructure projects.

Recognising the significant population growth to come and the myriad benefits of active transport as noted by the Committee, the Victorian Government will continue to strive to create more walkable and bike-friendly environments across Victoria.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Victorian Government continue to invest in public transport to make it a more attractive option, and ensure public transport stops, interchanges and connections are incorporated into planning.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government acknowledges the Committee's finding that a modal shift from private vehicles to public transport helps create safer environments for vulnerable road users, and has a clear planning direction to improve the existing public transport network by encouraging a modal shift from motor vehicles to trains, trams, buses, and active transport.

Investment in public transport, including planning for public transport stops, interchanges and connections, also aligns with the direction set out in *Victoria's Bus Plan* and *Melbourne's Tram Plan*.

Victoria's Bus Plan aims to achieve a better customer experience through bus stops and interchanges designed to match the streets they are located in, making a positive contribution to attractive and accessible transport precincts.

The upgrading of tram stops is a key component of *Melbourne's Tram Plan* and a response to providing more inclusive and equitable access to tram travel for all passengers, and a pathway to deliver a universally accessible tram network. Improving accessibility, safety and the user experience will increase travel options and opportunities and ensure the tram system is a desirable mode of transport for all.

Most people access public transport services by active transport. To create vibrant, healthy, and connected communities, it is essential to integrate active transport modes, such as walking and riding, with public transport while ensuring that local streets are attractive, safe, connected and designed for all users. A well-connected active transport network that links seamlessly with Victoria's bus, train, and tram services encourages more people to use public transport and to walk or ride for their short everyday trips, fostering active living and reducing reliance on private vehicles.

In June 2024, the Victorian Government announced draft statewide housing targets for Melbourne and Victoria. This growth will increase demand for transport, adding an estimated 13 million daily trips to Melbourne's network. To accommodate this, new transport infrastructure will be needed. In the short term, investments in bus networks are recommended to improve local access and connect residents to railway stations, supporting projects like Metro Tunnel.

Long-term projects, such as the Suburban Rail Loop, will also enhance public transport accessibility. The Level Crossing Removal Project and upgraded signalling will improve service frequencies and capacity on rail lines, enabling additional services on other lines. Upgrades to key transport hubs will enhance intermodal connectivity and movement within station precincts. Integrating and maximising land use around these improvements will promote a modal shift as businesses and people seek locations close to public transport.

Victoria's commitment to promoting and planning for public transport is evident through various initiatives. *Victoria's Bus Plan* focuses on planning a higher-frequency and more connected bus network that offers greater freedom and choice in travel, with more direct, faster, frequent, and reliable journeys. The *Transport Accessibility Strategic Framework* supports the public transport network to be inclusive and accessible for all Victorians. The *Accessible Public Transport Action Plan* aims to reduce barriers to accessing public transport and invests in new and upgraded transport infrastructure to benefit everyone. The forthcoming active transport strategy will have a focus on safely integrating active transport access to public transport stops and interchanges. Additionally, the *Principal Public Transport Network* outlines the routes where high-quality public transport services are or will be provided, enhancing the overall connectivity and efficiency of the transport system.

The provision of funding for these upgrades is provided as part of the Victorian Budget process.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Victorian Government convene a vulnerable road users' advisory group to share lived experiences and to contribute to the development of road safety interventions.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government recognises the significant benefits of adopting a co-design approach to gather lived experiences and deliver fit-for-purpose solutions. Depending on the circumstances, an advisory group may not always be the most appropriate strategy. At times, engagement may need to be more specific and tailored for the individual circumstance, and at other times, needs to canvas the views of a broad range of people.

The Accessible Transport Advisory Committee and the engagement process for the *Transport Accessibility Strategic Framework* are a good example of a successful co-design practice. A diverse range of stakeholders, including people with disabilities, were invited to participate in a series of workshops held from October 2021 to May 2022 to help gather insights on barriers and opportunities for transport.

Other recent examples of how lived experiences have been incorporated to help shape road safety include:

- **Motorcycling Community Engagement Panel (MCEP):** MCEP is a collaborative initiative aimed at improving road safety for motorcyclists. It brings together motorcyclist representatives, safety advocates, and transport authorities to provide insights and recommendations on policies, infrastructure, and educational campaigns.
- **Safe Routes to Schools:** These programs involve parents, students, schools, and local councils in designing safe travel routes for children. Community input is essential in identifying hazardous areas and developing effective safety measures.
- **Older Road User Stakeholder Reference Group:** The Older Road User Stakeholder Reference Group is a co-design initiative focused on enhancing road safety and accessibility for older adults. Comprising representatives from senior organisations, advocacy groups, healthcare professionals, and transport experts, the group advises on policies, infrastructure design, education campaigns, and research projects. Its collaborative efforts lead to improved transport services and safer road environments tailored to the specific needs of older road users.
- **Hooning Community Reference Group:** This group served as a platform for engaging with communities affected by hooning activities, ensuring their voices are heard in the development of strategies to address this issue.

The Victorian Government remains committed to engaging with the community and incorporating lived experiences through various co-design approaches.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The Department of Transport and Planning revise its Speed Zoning Policy to streamline changes to speed limits on a case-by-case basis.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government notes the Committee's finding that it should be easier for councils to lower speed limits, particularly for 30km/h speed zones in settings where there is a high volume of pedestrians and cyclists.

It is recognised that safe speed limits protect our most vulnerable road users. Not only are safe speed limits a fundamental component of the Safe System approach to help achieve our 2050 vision of zero road trauma, but also key in helping to achieve broader government objectives to increase active transport, enhance liveability and improve public health and wellbeing.

DTP periodically reviews the *Victorian Speed Zoning Policy* to ensure it meets current standards and community expectations. The current edition (Edition 2, released December 2021) allows local governments to trial 30km/h speed limits. These trials are evaluated on a case-by-case basis, helping to gather insights to shape future policy decisions regarding 30km/h speed limits in Victoria.

The most recent policy and guideline updates offered clearer guidance to local governments on appropriate speed limits for various road environments. The updates also streamlined the process by removing certain requirements, such as the need for traffic calming measures to support a 40km/h speed limit in urban areas.

The Victorian Government recognises a number of successful trials, and the growing community appetite for safer speeds. The Victorian Government also acknowledges that local councils are increasingly seeking a less onerous way to introduce 30km/h zones. The findings of the Inquiry and 30km/h trials will be considered as part of the next review and update to the *Speed Zoning Policy*. The Victorian Government will also continue to explore ways to help reduce red tape and ensure the *Speed Zoning Policy* most effectively meets community needs and supports vulnerable road user safety.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The Department of Transport and Planning review the Speed Zoning Technical Guidelines with a view to minimising suburban rat running and reducing speed limits around school precincts and on arterial roads with activity centres.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government supports the intent of the recommendation to help minimise motorists 'rat running' and reduce speeds in schools and activity centres. This is consistent with the Movement and Place Framework, where residential streets should be prioritised for people while motor vehicles are encouraged on connector roads.

The Victorian *Speed Zoning Technical Guidelines* provide operational guidance for local and state government authorities on setting speed limits on Victorian roads. The current edition of the guidelines (Edition 2, published in December 2021) allows councils to apply a 40km/h speed limit to local areas to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety or residential amenity. This can be used to discourage rat running and to support reduced speed limits around school precincts. The current guidance enables a minimum length of 400 metres for 40km/h activity centre speed limits to provide a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

DTP periodically reviews the guidelines to ensure they reflect current practices and expectations. In response to the findings of the Inquiry, the minimum length for activity centre speed limits will be considered as part of the next review.

Default speed limits work to minimise the need to install signs on thousands of roads. Under the Victorian *Road Safety Road Rules 2017*, the default speed limit for built up areas is 50km/h. There are currently more than 29,000km of local streets in built-up areas in Victoria with a default 50km/h speed limit. The risk of serious or fatal injury increases exponentially with increasing speed. There is a 90 per cent probability of a pedestrian or cyclist being killed when struck by a vehicle at 50km/h – compared with a 10 per cent probability at 30km/h. Under the *National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030*, a key action is to develop a national guide for best practice and consistent speed limit setting to prevent trauma among vulnerable road users, which may include a review of the default speed in built-up areas. The Victorian Government will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth and other states and territories to deliver priority actions under the national strategy.

A multi-disciplinary approach is needed to achieve safer speeds, including physical infrastructure, enforcement, education and awareness. Supporting measures such as physical traffic-calming infrastructure and speed enforcement can further assist in deterring 'rat running' and reduce travel speeds in these locations. The Safe Local Roads and Streets Program is investing \$210 million on local roads to design and deliver safer infrastructure upgrades for communities, including traffic calming infrastructure and safer speeds. Under the new Transport Accident Commission (TAC) funded Safer Travel Speeds Program, \$10 million is also being invested to help make arterial roads safer by funding posted speed limit reductions and supporting safety treatments.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Department of Transport and Planning promote the benefits of slower speed zones to the public to raise awareness and increase acceptance of the need to protect vulnerable road users through safer speed limits.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government will continue efforts to raise awareness and understanding of the role speed plays in road safety, to help increase acceptance of the benefits of safer speeds for all road users. The importance of engaging the community on the benefits of lowering speed has also been recognised at a national level at the inaugural National Road Safety Conference, hosted by the Australian Government in April 2024.

DTP receives a significant volume of requests from local councils and communities to reduce speed limits each year, and this figure is growing. This trend suggests that local communities are increasingly embracing lower speeds to help achieve safer neighbourhoods and improved liveability – especially around schools and activity centres.

The road safety partners regularly use social media campaigns to raise awareness on the benefits of safer travel speeds around vulnerable road users. For example:

- In 2023 and 2024, DTP's 'School's Back' campaign used social media channels, and those of key stakeholders, to remind drivers of the importance of slowing down in school zones before the beginning of the school year.
- In early 2024, DTP ran a campaign to promote the importance of slowing down through worksites to ensure the safety of both roadside workers and drivers.
- TAC's 'Humans of the Road' campaign urged drivers to consider the safety of roadside workers and first responders, and slow down when passing them.

DTP promotes the benefits of safer speeds when communicating with local communities about speed limit changes being implemented in their area. DTP also provides key messaging content and support to local councils to deliver important safety messages in their community, including messaging to schools around school crossings.

The road safety partners will continue ongoing efforts to raise awareness and engage the community on the significant role that speed non-compliance and speed settings play in road safety. Victoria Police will also continue to focus on speeding as a lead contributing factor to road trauma.

RECOMMENDATION 8

The Victorian Government place greater emphasis on the safety of vulnerable road users in future road and urban infrastructure design and strategies.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving road safety for vulnerable road users through both strategic planning and urban infrastructure design. *The Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* explicitly recognises vulnerable and unprotected road users as a key strategic focus area and sets a 2030 goal to improve outcomes for these road users.

The new DTP Road and *Roadside Safety Policy* was released in May 2024 to ensure that all new road projects or major upgrades embed Safe System principles. The *Road and Roadside Safety Policy* is based on six principles aimed at ensuring high safety standards in new infrastructure projects. These principles help guide design and construction to minimise road user injuries and fatalities by creating a forgiving road system that reduces collision severity. For vulnerable road users, the policy emphasises that the road environment should aim to be designed in ways that separate vulnerable road users from vehicles, through use of separated cycling facilities, or signal phasing that provides greater separation in time between pedestrians and vehicle movements.

In Victoria, the Movement and Place Framework can also guide decisions around transport mode priority and future corridor planning to reduce safety conflicts, such as those between vulnerable road users and heavy vehicles as well as manage competing demands to ensure appropriate safety levels.

Victoria's Housing Statement supports increasing the supply of homes in locations well-connected to public transport and close to jobs and services. This promotes active transport – like walking, cycling, and public transport – through integrated measures and policies, such as encouraging mixed-use developments, updating zoning laws, investing in bike lanes and pedestrian paths, integrating public transport, and offering incentives for developers.

As land use changes, the Victorian *Speed Zoning Policy* allows for speed limits to be revised to reflect local community needs. These efforts demonstrate the Victorian Government's ongoing commitment to the future safety and wellbeing of vulnerable road users across Victoria.

RECOMMENDATION 9

The Transport Accident Commission review the Local Government Grant Program to ensure it is meeting the needs of the community.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government recognises the importance of supporting local councils to help achieve its strategic road safety goals. The Victorian local road network comprises approximately 87 per cent of the state's roads and accounts for around 40 per cent of fatalities and serious injuries.

The \$1.8 million TAC Local Government Grant Program is an annual program which provides Victorian local government areas (LGAs) with opportunities to enhance road safety in their communities. This program supports projects aligned with the *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* that incorporate Safe System principles to reduce crashes, particularly those involving pedestrians and cyclists. The program offers LGAs matched grant funding of up to \$100,000 for small pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects. The program was recently reviewed, with findings showing that the program is effective at funding safety initiatives that have a positive benefit-cost-ratio and collectively contribute to improved road safety. Some minor improvements to the delivery model were noted in the review and these were implemented in the 2023/2024 program.

Leveraging from the experience of working closely with LGAs, TAC, in partnership with DTP, is also delivering the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program, which is investing \$210 million on local roads to design and deliver safer infrastructure upgrades for communities, including traffic calming infrastructure and safer speeds. Running over four years from July 2023 until June 2027, each Victorian council is allocated up to \$2 million through a non-competitive process to implement prioritised road safety projects. The impact of the program will be evaluated at its conclusion.

The Victorian Government remains committed to reviewing and enhancing the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program to ensure it effectively meets the needs of the community and contributes to the overall safety of Victorian road users.

RECOMMENDATION 10

The Victorian Government report on the implementation status of accepted Victorian Coroners' recommendations relating to road fatalities.

This recommendation is not supported.

The Victorian Government recognises the important role of coroner's recommendations in contributing to reducing the number of preventable road deaths and the promotion of public health and safety.

Under the *Coroners Act 2008 (Vic)* if a public statutory authority or entity receives recommendations made by a coroner, a written response must be provided within three months. The written response must specify a statement of action (if any) that has, is or will be taken in relation to the coronial recommendations. The Coroners Court of Victoria must publish the response on the internet. The Coroners Court generally publishes responses to recommendations every six months. Often recommendations have been implemented before the time of publication. The Coroners Court also publishes an annual Recommendations Report collating all recommendations made over a 12-month period and the status of responses received.

It is acknowledged that for more complex actions, such as road infrastructure delivery, extensive preliminary work may be required before an action can be fully implemented. This work can include for example, feasibility assessments, funding proposals, scoping and development work, and delivery.

DTP is planning for a new fatality review process to more systematically investigate lives lost on arterial roads. The objective of DTP's fatal crash review process is to adopt a more consistent organisational approach to better understand why the fatal crash and fatality occurred, document and analyse trends, and understand what could be implemented to prevent future fatal crashes. This new program will help to identify and address road safety issues in a timelier manner and will complement other activities underway to help identify systemic road safety risks.

While the Victorian Government understands the intent of this recommendation, the introduction of an additional reporting mechanism is not supported at this time. Investment in the delivery of a fatal crash review process will support a more effective approach to identifying and addressing systemic road safety issues on the arterial road network. The Victorian Government will continue to provide advice on the status of coronial recommendations where requested.

RECOMMENDATION 11

The Victorian Government explore incentives for the purchase of safer vehicles that score five stars in the vulnerable road user protection category of ANCAP's vehicle safety test.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government supports policies and programs to encourage the purchase of safer vehicles designed to minimise injuries to vulnerable road users and vehicles fitted with crash avoidance technologies.

Collaborating with the Australian and state and territory jurisdictions, DTP contributes to the development of new vehicle standards to protect vulnerable road users. One of these new standards is Australian Design Rule (ADR) 98/01, which has mandated Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) with a pedestrian detection feature in new vehicles since August 2024. The Victorian Government also continues to support vehicle safety ratings programs such as the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) and Used Car Safety Ratings that put greater emphasis on vulnerable road user protection. These programs also apply to sports utility and commercial utility vehicles. TAC operates the highly popular [howsafeisyourcar.com.au](https://www.howsafeisyourcar.com.au) website, which presents a range of vehicle safety information in a consumable way to build knowledge and encourage safer vehicle purchases.

ANCAP's star rating system evaluates vehicle safety in four areas of assessment, including vulnerable road user protection. For a vehicle to be awarded an overall 5-star rating, it must achieve minimum performance standards in all four areas of assessment, ensuring safety for both occupants and other road users, including vulnerable road users. This holistic approach means that it would be neither practical nor effective to incentivise vehicle purchases based on the results of one single assessment area. ANCAP has announced that from 2026 it will move away from the current four-pillar system that focuses on road user types. The new assessment scheme will categorise tests according to the four distinctive phases of a potential crash. Therefore, an individual vulnerable road user score will not be published following the implementation of these changes.

Under Victoria's first *Road Safety Action Plan*, the unsafe2safe Program is currently investing \$6.9 million to remove old, unsafe vehicles from the road and incentivise young drivers in regional Victoria to transition into a newer, safer vehicle. Learnings from this trial program and its evaluations will yield insights and help inform the Victorian Government's future strategies to encourage safer vehicle purchases. The Victorian Government fleet policy also requires vehicles to have the highest 5-star safety rating and fitment of crash avoidance technologies to improve the safety outcomes of other road users.

RECOMMENDATION 12

The Department of Transport and Planning trial the use of Variable Message Sign boards in high-risk locations to increase compliance with road rules and remind drivers to check their behaviour.

This recommendation is supported in part.

Research suggests that Variable Message Signs (VMS) can influence driver compliance and contribute positively to road safety at locations they are deployed, by increasing the perceived risk of detection. Their effectiveness may be dependent on numerous factors such as the appropriateness of the messaging, the conditions under which VMS is deployed, and whether the VMS is coupled with supportive measures such as a visible police presence. There is, however, evidence suggesting that some motorists do not perceive VMS to be particularly effective, and VMS may be seen to be overused or potentially distracting for motorists. The placement of a VMS board is also dependent on suitability, which can sometimes restrict their locations.

For over a decade, a VMS project has been delivered in partnership by DTP, Victoria Police and TAC to target motorist behaviour during high risk and peak periods of road use, including over public holidays and long weekends. VMS boards are deployed to support road safety policing operations with tailored messaging associated to enforcement and safe driver behaviour.

DTP's Road Safety Community Grants Program provides funding to support the use of Speed Advisory Trailers and VMS in agreed locations that communicate approved road safety messages and speed awareness campaigns.

TAC's Local Government Grant Program also provides funding for local governments to purchase VMS boards. VMS are part of wider public education approach that uses roadside messaging to communicate with road users. In addition, many TAC campaigns have an out-of-home signage component, especially the highly effective 'Anywhere, Anyone, Anytime' enforcement campaign. To ensure their effective use in promoting road safety, TAC has developed guidelines emphasising the importance of clear, concise messaging and proper placement to maximise visibility and impact on driver behaviour.

The Victorian Government will continue to invest in the deployment of VMS to support road safety efforts. However, additional investment is not warranted at this time until more compelling evidence exists on the effectiveness of VMS in increasing compliance. The need for supportive measures to maximise VMS effectiveness must also be carefully considered as part of this.

RECOMMENDATION 13

The Victorian Government work with Victoria Police to continue regular detection and work with the Transport Accident Commission around publicity for roadside alcohol and drug testing.

This recommendation is supported in full.

A strong mixture of overt and covert police enforcement, including roadside testing coupled with strong publicity, is a highly effective approach to help support compliance and deter risky behaviour.

The key role that enforcement and a high perceived risk of police detection plays in creating general deterrence (as per the Committee's Finding 23), is outlined in Victoria Police's new *Road Policing Strategy 2024-2028*.

Victoria Police will maintain its commitment to alcohol and drug testing in line with set *Service Delivery Budget Paper 3 (BP3)* targets and in support of a commitment to general deterrence as a key pillar of its strategic focus.

TAC currently provides funding towards enhancing strategic police enforcement activities above business-as-usual service delivery. This is supported with a significant investment in public education by the TAC to promote the likelihood of detection and its consequences. Research indicates this is the most effective approach to traffic enforcement. Victoria Police will continue to work closely with TAC on public messaging campaigns and strategic investment in enhanced road safety enforcement.

RECOMMENDATION 14

The Department of Transport and Planning develop an education campaign to raise awareness of the effectiveness of road safety cameras in reducing road trauma and the ways in which Victorians can get more information about the camera system.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government supports the promotion of road safety cameras, acknowledging they are a highly effective and essential part of the enforcement system to deter speeding, red-light camera running and more recently, seatbelt non-compliance and illegal device use. Education campaigns, which are led by TAC, can also play an important role in helping to enhance the deterrence effect of the cameras.

The Victorian road safety partners will continue to collaborate to help promote the benefits of road safety cameras. The *Road Safety Camera Program* within the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) oversees the management of Victoria's road safety camera network. DJCS's remit extends to managing and promoting the Cameras Save Lives website through which community members can submit any queries in relation to road safety cameras. The website includes information to demonstrate how Victoria's road safety camera systems operate at a high standard of integrity, accuracy and transparency. This ensures continued public confidence in the road safety camera system and assists in bringing about positive behavioural change.

TAC reinforces the effectiveness of the road safety camera program through targeted campaigns, for example the *Anywhere, Anyone, Anytime* enforcement campaign. TAC will continue to look to develop public education messaging to motivate compliant behaviour and inform the community about the deployment and use of different types of camera enforcement.

The Road Safety Camera Commissioner monitors the integrity, transparency, accuracy, reliability and efficiency of the road safety camera system to enhance community confidence in the system. To understand public perceptions and attitudes towards the road safety camera system, the Commissioner conducts a triennial survey of the community. The insights gained from these surveys can be used to help track improvements over time and identify areas for further enhancement.

RECOMMENDATION 15

The Victorian Government continue the implementation of the Mobile Phone and Seatbelt Detection Camera technology and implement an education campaign about the dangers of distracted driving and not wearing seatbelts correctly.

This recommendation is supported in full.

While over 97 per cent of Victorian drivers report wearing a seatbelt when driving, it is alarming that 26 vehicle occupants who died in motor vehicle crashes in 2023 were not wearing a seatbelt. The illegal use of portable devices by drivers is also widespread, with over 65,000 offences detected between July 2023 and August 2024 through the Distracted Driver and Seatbelt Camera Program.

The Victorian Government recognises the significant road safety benefits of automated enforcement technology to help supplement finite police resources in detecting and deterring risky behaviours, including seatbelt non-compliance and illegal mobile phone and other portable device use.

The *Road Safety Camera Program* within DJCS oversees the management of Victoria's road safety camera network. Under Victoria's first *Road Safety Action Plan*, funding was provided for DJCS to trial and implement mobile phone and seatbelt detection camera technology across the state. The *Distracted Driver and Seatbelt Camera Program* subsequently commenced enforcement on 1 July 2023.

As part of the second *Road Safety Action Plan*, there will be further investment in the expansion of mobile phone and seatbelt detection camera technology across the state. The Victorian road safety partners, led by DJCS, will also explore opportunities to raise awareness about distracted driver cameras and inform Victorians about the camera system.

Messaging about mobile phone and seatbelt enforcement forms part of TAC's *Anywhere, Anytime, Anyone* campaign. This multi-faceted, multi-year campaign includes sub-campaigns that focus on camera-based detection of non-seatbelt wearing and mobile phone use while driving.

As noted in recommendation 14, the Road Safety Camera Commissioner monitors the integrity, transparency, accuracy, reliability and efficiency of the road safety camera system to enhance community confidence in the system. To understand public perceptions and attitudes towards the road safety camera system, the Commissioner conducts a triennial survey of the community. The insights gained from these surveys can be used to help track improvements over time and identify areas for further enhancement.

All road safety partners will support the outcomes of this recommendation by contributing to community awareness and communication campaigns as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 16

The Victorian Government develop an awareness campaign on the avenues available to report dangerous driving incidents.

This recommendation is supported in part.

The Victorian Government notes the Committee's finding that public awareness of mechanisms to report dangerous driving incidents may be limited.

Community members have the option to report such incidents by calling Triple Zero if they are life-threatening or require immediate police response.

Crime Stoppers Victoria collaborates closely with Victoria Police to offer an alternative reporting mechanism. This confidential reporting avenue allows reports to be submitted online or via telephone. With an increasing number of people using dashcams and recording devices, Crime Stoppers also encourages the sharing of footage through their online platform.

Crime Stoppers regularly launches campaigns targeting various crime prevention themes, including road safety, and promotes the use of online reporting for dangerous driving incidents across multiple channels.

In alignment with broader initiatives, Crime Stoppers collaborates on campaigns emphasising road safety awareness to educate the community and deter dangerous driving behaviours, such as the *You Never Know Who's Watching* initiative, detailed further on the Crime Stoppers Victoria website. During critical periods such as holidays, Crime Stoppers uses social media to issue timely road safety warnings.

Crime Stoppers employs diverse platforms and strategies to engage the Victorian community, including an active presence on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and others. Engagement also occurs through news articles and community events, and 'community call outs' are conducted to help locate specific individuals.

Crime Stoppers remains dedicated to facilitating public reports on concerning driving behaviours, underscoring the importance of immediate threats to community safety being reported directly to emergency services via Triple Zero.

RECOMMENDATION 17

The Transport Accident Commission continue to explore ways to co design a comprehensive digital media strategy for its road safety campaigns with young people that utilises the targeting capabilities of digital platforms.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government acknowledges the powerful role digital marketing can have in promoting road safety among young people. Its success hinges on relevance and engagement. Co-designing marketing strategies with young people ensures that the messages resonate, and the mediums are effective. By harnessing the creativity, insights, and influence of young people, digital marketing campaigns can have the potential to improve road safety behaviours.

When developing any campaign, the TAC first considers the target audience, the key messages, and then identifies the channels best able to reach and influence those audiences with those messages. Digital media is a key channel used as part of its public education initiatives. As a result, the TAC has a detailed digital media strategy and has been conducting targeted digital media campaigns, many aimed at and informed by young drivers, for over a decade.

TAC will continue to build on its comprehensive digital media strategy targeting young people, and other audiences, through various digital media channels such as video, online display, social media (including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok), paid search and relevant websites.

TAC road safety campaign messages reach these audiences through the various targeting options available on these platforms such as demographic (age, location, gender), contextual/interest (youth focused websites, pages, categories) and content (on TAC-owned web properties). In addition to ongoing optimisations in channel selection and targeting within those channels, TAC, along with its creative agency, also produces bespoke creative assets that are more relatable to young people and the environment that they live in.

An example of the above is for the recent *Driving tired? Wake up to yourself* campaign where TAC created additional videos assets showcasing instances where a student may be fatigued from late-night studying and the associated risks. This video was advertised on social media targeted at 18-30 year olds, across student interest categories with education levels of 'at university full-time, at university part-time, and post-grad' and time-targeted to 5 to 9 am and 11 to 4 pm.

TAC continues to support digital projects targeting young drivers, including the *Split Second* Program that invites young people to design and lead road safety content that is shared across social media platforms. TAC also runs the Vanessa Program which uses various platforms to share and interact with young people via peer-to-peer road safety messaging.

RECOMMENDATION 18

The Transport Accident Commission conduct and publish an evaluation of its Road to Zero experience for year 9-11 students.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government has developed a comprehensive whole-of-school-community approach to road safety education, which comprises a suite of age-appropriate resources and programs for students, teachers, school leaders and parents. One of these programs is the TAC's *Road to Zero Education Complex*.

The *Road to Zero Education Complex* opened in August 2018 and was developed by TAC in partnership with Melbourne Museum. The Complex includes an interactive gallery space as well as dedicated learning studios where secondary school student's complete curriculum-based road safety education programs. The *Road to Zero Education Complex* is part of a broader suite of new programs within the Victorian Government's whole-of-school-community approach to road safety education.

In 2019, Road to Zero underwent a comprehensive program evaluation. The evaluation involved analysing feedback from students, teachers and visitors as well as usage data for all areas of the Complex. Overall findings indicated that students found the program highly engaging, teachers valued and would highly recommend the curriculum programs, and both students and visitors improved their road safety knowledge and awareness after attending Road to Zero.

A summary of the findings is available at www.roadtozero.vic.gov.au/.

DTP and the road safety education Victoria partners will evaluate the overall impact of the suite of road safety programs in Victorian secondary schools once all new programs have been implemented and have had sufficient time to operate, with the report expected in 2028.

A best practice review of current education approaches will also be commissioned to ensure that the Victorian Government and the education sector can make informed decisions regarding the appropriateness and value of road safety education programs.

RECOMMENDATION 19

The Department of Transport and Planning explore how an online educational module on vulnerable road users and relevant road rule changes could be used at various touchpoints, for example, licence or registration renewals.

This response is supported in principle.

Victoria has a long history of supporting driver education. The Victorian road safety partners support and encourage road users of all ages to understand and comply with road laws, and to behave safely on our roads. This is achieved through various ways including the Graduated Licensing System, driver education programs, as well as coordinated communications and law enforcement campaigns, educational material, and publications. One example of these initiatives is Road Rules Education Online, an interactive resource available to road users to reinforce their understanding of key Victorian road rules and safe driving behaviours.

The Victorian Government notes the Committee's finding that licence and registration renewals could provide a regular opportunity to convey road safety messages and remind all drivers of their responsibilities towards vulnerable road users. DTP will explore further opportunities to increase driver awareness, including working with VicRoads Registration and Licensing Services to investigate how the renewal notice process could be used to reinforce important safety messages and road rules.

RECOMMENDATION 20

The Victorian Government road safety partners review the process for determining individuals' fitness to drive.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Committee's final report concluded that consideration could be given to introducing a mandated medical review process in light of Victoria's ageing population and noted that some Australian jurisdictions have a regular age-based medical assessment process in place.

Victoria's current driver licensing policy recognises that medical conditions can affect drivers of all ages. The medical review process is based on national Assessing Fitness to Drive Guidelines. These guidelines acknowledge that, while advanced age alone is not a barrier to safe driving, age-related physical and mental changes should be proactively managed with the goal of enabling older people to drive for as long as it is safe. Victoria's existing policy also follows extensive research and investigations undertaken by Government after coronial investigations included recommendations on this topic.

The current medical review process is a community-based model requiring drivers to self-report an existing or new medical condition to DTP Medical Review. While it is mandatory for drivers to self-report, there is no mandatory requirement for medical professionals to report a driver. Community members, including family, health professionals, Victoria Police, and others can, however, report a driver anonymously to the DTP Medical Review if they have concerns about an individual's driving. Receipt of a report requires DTP to assess an individual's fitness to drive under the *Road Safety Act 1986* (Vic). More complex cases are assessed by health professionals acting in medical case manager roles or escalated to an expert medical panel.

A range of resources has been developed in conjunction with health professionals to reinforce their role in advising drivers about how their medical condition can impact their driving, and their requirement to report to the DTP Medical Review. The DTP online medical report, which is designed to support health professionals to complete patient fitness to drive assessments in a timely and robust manner has also facilitated reporting.

For drivers aged 75 years and over, Victoria issues licence renewals every three years instead of 10 years. This approach gives older drivers regular and more frequent prompts at licence renewal time to self-assess their ability to drive safely.

While a formal review of the fitness to drive process is not supported at this time, the Victorian Government recognises fitness to drive as an increasingly important issue. The Victorian Government will continue to regularly monitor evidence and developments in this space through dedicated working groups to support continuous improvement.

RECOMMENDATION 21

The Victorian Government continue to improve the systems and integration of the state's road safety datasets and ensure timely publication of these data.

This recommendation is supported in full.

Across the Victorian Government, multiple departments and agencies collect and analyse road safety data. The Victorian Government is committed to publishing timely, detailed, and accessible road safety data to inform strategy, policy, and project development, and to support transparency around the occurrence of road trauma and prevention efforts.

This includes continuing to improve and update on a monthly basis, the Victorian road crash datasets available on Victoria's open data portal to provide the latest information on road trauma in Victoria. Data published via this portal includes information derived from the Victoria Police Traffic Incident System (TIS) which integrates data from DTP licence and registration and TAC recorded hospitalisation status.

The Victorian Government is also improving and expanding its reporting methods and data accessibility, including publishing reports and interactive tools on lives lost, injuries and TAC claims. DTP will release a new annual road trauma report, as part of a previous commitment in the whole-of-government response to the Inquiry into the increase in Victoria's road toll. In addition to road crash datasets, the Victorian Government will continue to review, update and publish other road safety datasets fit for publication under relevant privacy requirements and other data release considerations. This will include for example, the release of road safety risk-rating data on the open data portal.

Significant effort continues across the road safety partnership to improve road safety data through established committees, working groups, projects, and work programs. *Victoria's Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* acknowledges the need to optimise road safety data, systems, and governance to support the delivery of the strategy and progress towards road safety targets. The road safety partnership is developing a data optimisation roadmap and data governance model for Victorian road safety data. This aims to enhance safety monitoring, analysis, and performance measurement, whilst ensuring compliance with privacy policies and laws.

The *Data Linkage Project* involves linking data from various sources, such as the TIS, the DTP's Road Crash Information System (RCIS), TAC personal injury claims data, Department of Health hospital emergency and admissions data, and Ambulance Victoria attendance data. The project team is working on a 15-year linked dataset, with future phases aimed at establishing an ongoing linkage program and broader data-sharing opportunities.

The Victorian Government extends this commitment to improved sharing of road safety data between Victorian government departments and with the Commonwealth, having developed and signed a data-sharing agreement between all Australian states and territories and enabling the development of the national minimum road-crash dataset.

RECOMMENDATION 22

The Transport Accident Commission investigate opportunities for vulnerable road users to self report minor crashes or near miss incidents.

This recommendation is supported in part.

The Victorian Government recognises the merit of supplementing existing road trauma data with other information sources to help build a more comprehensive picture of the nature and extent of certain road safety problems to guide decision making. Quality and timely data are essential for helping to identify high-risk locations and prioritising road safety investment.

The collection and management of data relating to non-injury crashes and near-miss incidents are not within the legislative remit of the TAC, but this data is collected via research activities undertaken by TAC and other road safety agencies.

As noted in recommendation 21, the road safety partners are delivering a *Data Linkage Project* which will help to overcome vital gaps in the current road crash dataset by supplementing existing police-reported crash data with other sources such as hospital and ambulance attendance data.

There is an existing online avenue available for the public to self-report road safety concerns via the VicRoads website. This information can be used to supplement existing information sources to further understand road safety problems on the arterial road network.

Through the Motorcycle Safety Levy (MSL), DTP will launch a new survey to gather motorcyclists' perspectives on road safety hazards and safety concerns. This survey will encourage Victoria's motorcycling community to identify safety risks and provide detailed location information to help inform future investment.

The Victorian Government will continue to explore technological solutions to supplement existing crash data for targeted road safety issues as needed, ideally through naturalistic studies or other innovative methods that do not need to heavily rely on self-reporting.

One such trial of technology was delivered by TAC, The Light Insights Trial. This trial was initiated in partnership with the iMOVE Cooperative Research Centre and Deakin University. This trial utilised advanced technologies built into bicycle lights to enable the collection of data and self-reporting related to near miss events and surrogate safety measures. Since the initial trial in 2023, the technology has been used in partnership with local governments and universities to further understand its uses and benefits.

DTP is also undertaking a pilot program that involves deploying video analytics to gather pedestrian and cyclist near-miss data at signalised intersections. An objective of this small pilot project is to evaluate how effective and useful near-miss data is for future road safety planning.

Advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) may also offer new ways to predict and mitigate fatal and serious injury risks on the road network in future.

RECOMMENDATION 23

The Department of Transport and Planning prioritise the delivery of accessible tram stops.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

Melbourne's Tram Plan, which outlines the Victorian Government's vision for the tram network, recognises the importance of tram stops providing a safe and accessible user experience. Upgrading tram stops is a key component of the Plan and a response to providing more inclusive and equitable access for all passengers. DTP has dedicated project development and delivery teams to support the upgrade and delivery of accessible tram stops and realise the Victorian Government's vision under the plan.

Since 2014, 98 level-access tram stop platforms have been built, and there is a further pipeline of six stop upgrades fully funded. 28 per cent of Melbourne's more than 1,600 tram stops have been upgraded to provide level access.

DTP in partnership with Yarra Trams has recently built 12 new accessible tram stops along La Trobe Street between Docklands and Spring Street and has plans to upgrade stops along Gertrude and Smith streets in Fitzroy and Collingwood, and High Street in Thornbury and Northcote. The provision of funding for these upgrades is provided as part of the Victorian Budget process.

The Victorian Government takes its obligations under the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport seriously and understands the potential for accessible tram stops to act as a traffic calming measure that can protect vulnerable road users and reduce the risk of pedestrians being struck by a motor vehicle when boarding or alighting a tram.

RECOMMENDATION 24

The Department of Transport and Planning develop and implement mechanisms to detect, penalise and deter motorists driving past stopped trams when passengers are boarding and alighting.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government is continuously looking for new ways to improve safety for tram passengers, including improving driver behaviour around trams. This includes better educating drivers about relevant road rules, such as through the *When a Tram Stops, You Stop* safety campaign. This campaign saw Yarra Trams and the DTP leverage advertising on trams, tram stops, roadside billboards, digital and radio to remind motorists of the requirement to stop alongside a tram picking up or dropping off passengers.

Several mechanisms exist to detect, penalise and deter motorists driving past stopped trams when passengers are boarding or alighting. In addition to Victoria Police's routine enforcement of these road rules, the public is encouraged to report instances of cars passing stationary trams or any breach of the road rules to Crime Stoppers. Compliance with road rules is reinforced by cooperation from tram drivers, who record the details of vehicles witnessed to have disobeyed the road rules surrounding stationary trams by reporting them to the Yarra Trams operations centre. All data collected by the operations centre is passed onto Victoria Police for action.

The Safe System approach to road safety acknowledges that people will inevitably make mistakes when using the road network. To support implementation of this philosophy, regular announcements are played on-board trams to help remind passengers to watch out for vehicles when disembarking and to promote awareness among passengers. Tram drivers are also trained to watch for cars passing stationary trams, and if possible, delay opening the tram doors until it is safe to do so. Where vulnerable road users, trams and other vehicles mix, safe speed settings are also an important consideration. Road markings have also been implemented at some tram stops to provide additional reminders that they are approaching a tram stop.

RECOMMENDATION 25

The Department of Transport and Planning seek feedback from councils and the community on the locations of signalised crossings that give pedestrians too little time to safely cross, and program crossing times at these spots to ensure pedestrians of all abilities have enough time to cross safely.

This recommendation is supported in part.

DTP reviews the timings of signalisations as part of the signal network optimisation program. These reviews consider timings for all modes and movements through a signalised intersection, including pedestrians.

DTP proactively works with key stakeholders including councils, to address signal timing concerns including timings allocated to pedestrians. Enquiries received from the public are reviewed as a part of this process.

The entire metropolitan network has been classified using the Movement and Place framework. The strategic importance of all road-based modes of transport, including general traffic, freight, pedestrians, cyclists, buses and trams has been assessed at all locations. This framework informs how signal green time is allocated for various modes and movements.

Signal engineers undertake a detailed review of the timings and then determine what is possible through signal changes. When making the changes, engineers consider:

- stakeholder feedback
- public enquiries/feedback
- Movement and Place classifications for all modes and movements
- quantitative and qualitative data collected.

Through a partnership with the iMOVE Cooperative Research Centre, current research within the Australian Integrated Multimodal Ecosystem (AIMES) testbed aims to develop a model that can utilise real-time feeds of all mode movements and optimise the signal control to minimise safety risks and maintain efficient traffic flow. Melbourne University has installed advanced mobility sensing devices at multiple intersections within a six square-kilometre zone in the Melbourne central district. These sensors include high-definition cameras connected to edge-computing devices, induction loops, Light Detecting and Ranging (LIDAR) sensors, Dedicated Short-Range Communication (DSRC) devices, mobile wi-fi detectors, and Bluetooth. The project will enable the detection, classification, and registration of vehicular traffic movements and vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists) crossing or waiting at intersections with high precision and in real-time.

The DTP is also participating in an Austroads project, *Guidance for Pedestrians and Related Treatments at Signalised Intersections*. The goal of this project is to update best practice guidance on pedestrian and related treatments at signalised intersections, with a focus on the needs of 'slower' vulnerable road users. This includes reviewing current guidance on pedestrian walking speeds and crossing times, aiming to update national standards to reflect evolving best practices. The project covers several key areas, including ensuring accessibility for all individuals walking or wheeling through signalised intersections and reassessing the time allocated for safe crossing. The findings from this project will inform a future review of DTP's design guidance and practices concerning pedestrian crossing timings.

RECOMMENDATION 26

The Department of Transport and Planning review intersections commonly used by vulnerable road users and assess if treatments such as timed pedestrian protection would benefit.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government understands this recommendation is referring to timed pedestrian protection whereby turning traffic is held back either by a red turn arrow or delayed start while the green pedestrian signal is displayed.

DTP regularly reviews the operation of intersections for both safety and efficiency. Intersections are reviewed in response to community and stakeholder (typically councils, Victoria Police or advocacy groups) requests, network reviews, crash history at a particular location, or the identification of a systemic safety risk.

Changes to signal operations for vulnerable road users are a common treatment funded through state and federal road safety programs administered by DTP. Treatments typically implemented include proven solutions to reduce crashes for vulnerable road users such as pedestrian and cycling head starts or turn controls for vehicles.

Through Victoria's second *Road Safety Action Plan*, the Victorian Government is investing in safety improvements at more than 100 high-risk signalised intersections across the state over the next four years to further improve pedestrian safety.

DTP also trials new and innovative treatments which are evaluated for their road safety benefits to determine if they are suitable for wider implementation. In 2024 DTP in partnership with TAC launched the Vulnerable Road Users Safety Signal Phasing Program. This program will upgrade at least 10 signal sites to enhance pedestrian and cycling safety at intersections. The planned treatments include pedestrian and cycling head starts, fully controlled left turns, and infrastructure improvements at high-traffic pedestrian and cycling routes.

DTP's new *Road and Roadside Safety Policy* is designed to embed Safe System principles into new road infrastructure projects. The policy includes requirements that new and upgraded signalised intersections must not allow filter right turns across vehicles and pedestrians, and that as a minimum, pedestrian head starts must be provided at left-turns. This policy will apply to all state-managed arterial roads. DTP will work with local councils to encourage adoption on local roads.

RECOMMENDATION 27

The Department of Transport and Planning review arterial roads to ensure there are regular pedestrian crossings linked to public transport stops, activity centres and schools.

This recommendation is supported in part.

The DTP has several initiatives underway to support the provision of safe pedestrian crossing facilities on arterial roads to meet local community needs.

The Safe System Pedestrian Infrastructure Program commits \$23 million to improve pedestrian safety across the state by investing in upgrades at locations where pedestrian crashes have been identified, there is a high risk and there is high demand for a pedestrian crossing facility. Pedestrian improvement projects on arterial roads and around schools are also being delivered through joint state and federal funding as part of the Commonwealth Road Safety Program 2023-25.

In addition, in appropriate environments, 40 km/h speed limits are being implemented to create safer crossing environments in high pedestrian areas. 30 km/h zones have been trialled in a regional city centre and in an inner Melbourne suburb with high areas of pedestrian and cyclist use to prioritise the safe and free movement of pedestrians.

DTP is currently reviewing design guidelines for bus stops to ensure safe pedestrian crossings are included in new bus stop plans.

DTP is also developing a new pedestrian risk rating and forecasting tool, an innovative solution for predicting and visualising high-risk pedestrian areas using various data sources. Currently in the early planning stages, the project aims to identify areas of high pedestrian risk to inform state and local government planning and future road safety investments.

RECOMMENDATION 28

The Victorian Government review and educate road users about the road rules relating to drivers giving way to pedestrians at unsignalised intersections.

This recommendation is supported in part.

DTP is nearing completion of an initial review of the pedestrian road rules, which includes rules relating to drivers giving way to pedestrians at unsignalised intersections. The outcomes of this review will inform next steps.

The Road Rules Education Online platform provides the latest road rule content to help Victorian drivers better understand safe driving and sharing the road. DTP also uses social media to continually educate road users around give way rules.

TAC will explore the development of social media messaging through available social media channels to support this recommendation. Victoria Police will continue to support road safety messaging and share insights on road user behaviour trends with road safety partners to help guide future work.

This recommendation is also closely related to recommendation 1, which recommended establishing a road user hierarchy similar to the UK's Highway Code introduced in 2022. The Victorian Government, through DTP, will investigate this approach for a Victorian context.

RECOMMENDATION 29

The Victorian Government support the development of an education program humanising bike riders and normalising their presence on the road that includes motorists experiencing the perspective of bike riders.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government supports efforts to legitimatise all vulnerable road users and to address poor attitudes held by some motorists towards cyclists. Both DTP and TAC provide funding through Community Road Safety Grants Programs that focus on cyclist safety and provide opportunities for the development of other education programs or initiatives within this space, drawing on best practice approaches.

TAC, through the Community Road Safety Grants Program, has previously supported a collaborative project to create a campaign that humanised cyclists as members of the community.

DTP is also funding three organisations to develop and deliver localised cyclist safety and awareness campaigns under the 2024-2025 grant program.

TAC will explore the development of new social media messaging for use through existing media channels to support this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION 30

The Department of Transport and Planning place a greater emphasis on sharing the road safely with bike riders in driver training and testing.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

DTP is committed to evidence-based driver testing and training as a part of the Graduated Licensing System. This includes an emphasis on driver behaviour as well as knowledge and skills necessary to be a safe driver. DTP ensures that materials for knowledge and competency testing to gain access to the road network is appropriate to help contribute to achieving the vision of zero road deaths by 2050. This includes an emphasis on sharing the road with vulnerable road users such as cyclists.

Training and testing materials include specific information focused on sharing the road safely with cyclists. The key resources to gain a learner permit and probationary licence are the learner permit test online, the *Road to Solo Driving* handbook and myLearners app. All resources and associated learner permit tests include modules and questions about sharing the road with cyclists, knowledge of which is also tested in the practical on-road drive test as part of graduating to a probationary driver licence. Information focused on cyclists includes safe passing distances and separated bicycle lanes. The interactive and engaging material in the learner permit test online has also been developed to be available for all drivers through road rules education online.

Noting that extensive information already exists in the licensing materials to support safe driving behaviour around cyclists, DTP will continue to ensure that materials are updated regularly as part of future routine updates to road safety awareness materials.

RECOMMENDATION 31

The Department of Transport and Planning continue to promote the installation of protected bike lanes in inner and middle Melbourne.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government is committed to delivering safer roads for cyclists in inner and middle Melbourne and across the whole of Victoria.

The *Victorian Cycling Strategy* outlines a strategic direction to improve safety using the Safe System Approach. All cycling projects undertake a Safe System assessment, and in some contexts this requires the installation of protected bicycle lanes. The Victorian Cycling Strategy will be replaced by a new active transport strategy. The new strategy will continue and build upon the strategic direction to enhance cyclist safety using the Safe System Approach.

Under DTP's new *Road and Roadside Safety Policy*, new or upgraded projects on certain strategic cycling locations (C1 and C2 routes) must have at minimum a physically separated cycling lane from vehicles or a reduced vehicle operating speed of 30km/h.

Over the past decade, the Victorian Government has delivered around 320 kilometres of new and upgraded walking and cycling paths and lanes.

All major projects as part of the Big Build are required to consider the delivery of active transport improvements as part of their delivery scope. The Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA) and its predecessor the Major Transport Infrastructure Authority has delivered around 200 kilometres (this includes the St Kilda Road Bike Lanes), with a further 200 kilometres planned through to 2035 including significant projects such as the Veloway along Footscray Road and other cycling and walking improvements being delivered in conjunction with the West Gate Tunnel Project.

Additionally DTP has delivered around 120 kilometres of new paths and lanes

In 2021, DTP began trialling new and improved pop-up bike routes across key inner-Melbourne suburbs to make it easier and safer for people to ride to and from the CBD and within their local area. The trial, which has now ended, highlighted that separated and protected bike lanes made bike riders and drivers feel safer in sharing the road. DTP is currently working with local councils to determine which routes will be made permanent, to improve safety for all road-users, encourage more people to ride bikes and create better connections to the CBD and local activity centres.

The Safe Local Roads and Streets Program is investing \$210 million on local roads to design and deliver safer infrastructure upgrades for communities which can include traffic calming infrastructure, safer speeds and cycling projects. The TAC Local Government Grant Program also provides funding to LGAs for small pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects which might include protected bike lanes, offering matched grant funding of up to \$100,000 per project. Over the past ten years, the program has helped LGAs improve their infrastructure design to protect vulnerable road users in line with Safe System principles.

DTP continues to work with the inner Melbourne councils, including the City of Melbourne and the City of Yarra, in progressing their bike lane program and delivering new protected bike lanes under trialled or permanent conditions, to improve safety and infrastructure and support more people to ride bikes.

DTP continues to work with local councils to prioritise investment in Strategic Cycling Corridors (SCC) as opportunities arise through council investment and with state government delivery agencies to provide active transport facilities alongside major rail and road projects. Delivering a complete SCC network will require progressive development over time, in partnership with LGAs and other key stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATION 32

The Department of Transport and Planning support the creation of cycling infrastructure on all new major roads or when upgrading existing major roads.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

All major transport projects are required to consider the inclusion of active transport in their scope. The extent is determined by the context, project type and funding availability.

The Movement and Place Framework is a strategic tool used in urban planning to balance and optimise the different roles that roads and streets play in a city. It helps guide the creation and improvement of infrastructure, including the development of cycling infrastructure on major roads if applicable.

Under DTP's new *Road and Roadside Safety Policy* new or upgraded projects on certain strategic cycling locations (C1 and C2 routes) must have at minimum a physically separated cycling lane from vehicles or a reduced vehicle operating speed to 30km/h. The policy mandates cycling facilities on routes that have strategic importance and can be safely used, rather than on every route. Currently, there is no policy requirement for cycling treatments at intersections. However, these should be reviewed to provide safety treatments in line with *VicRoads Traffic Engineering Manual Volume 3: Design Guidance* for strategically important cycling corridors, cycling project performance indicator descriptions and targets set out in the *Movement & Place Cycling Guidance Note*, and any Safe System assessment recommendations.

The Victorian Government disagrees with the Committee's finding that until protected bike lanes are installed, sufficiently wide, sealed road shoulders are an acceptable interim measure for separating bike riders from motor vehicles, especially on peri-urban and regional roads. Sealed shoulders are included in road safety programs to help reduce the risk of loss of control and lane departure crashes; they are not considered sufficient for bicycle safety and do not align with Safe System principles. Consequently, sealed shoulders are not regarded as cyclist safety improvement projects under existing road safety infrastructure programs.

RECOMMENDATION 33

The Department of Transport and Planning require state and local government issued construction permits to incorporate mitigation strategies to protect the safety of vulnerable road users around the site.

This recommendation is supported in part.

Construction sites may pose risks to vulnerable road users, and DTP has dedicated teams responsible for assessing and managing temporary disruptions on the road network caused by construction activity.

Legislative requirements and guidance on how to safely manage vulnerable road users around construction sites is set out in the *Road Safety Act 1986*, the *Road Safety Traffic Management Regulations 2019* and the *Road Management Act 2004*. Under section 99A(3) (a) of the Road Safety Act, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP), which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in regulation 35 of the *Road Safety Traffic Management Regulations*, must be in operation. Additionally, as industry best practice guidance, DTP has incorporated the Austroads Guide to Temporary Traffic Management into the *Road Management Act*. Together this suite of documents provides guidance to effectively and safely manage vulnerable road users at work sites.

The mitigation strategies included in each TMP will vary on a case-by-case basis depending on the road environment of the impacted area, road user risk, road speed, and the time of day of the disruption. Accordingly, the types of mitigation strategies in a TMP may vary from detour routes to lower speed limits. It is the principal contractor's responsibility to review any subcontractors documentation (including, for example, the TMP, risk assessments, and safe work method statements) to ensure compliance and safety requirements are met.

DTP authorises the use of temporary traffic control devices (TCD) under the *Road Safety Traffic Management Regulations*, by reviewing the suggested dates, times, locations, impacts to the network and the use of specific TCD, via the Memorandum of Authorisation (MOA) process.

Any company that wishes to implement, remove or alter a TCD; and/or apply for an MoA, must be accredited to do so via DTP's Planning Accreditation Scheme. This scheme demonstrates a company's knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in the acts and regulations. Once an MOA has been authorised, DTP has a separate team responsible for monitoring compliance with the permit.

DTP has also actively addressed the safety risk to vulnerable road users of the increasing volume of heavy vehicles around construction sites. Partnering with Transurban, Bicycle Network, TAC and the Municipal Association of Victoria, DTP delivered the Construction Trucks and Community Safety Project (CT&CS Project) to promote model contract clauses and supporting materials developed to help the construction industry protect vulnerable road users travelling near worksites and around construction trucks.

Resources developed under the CT&CS Project are available online. The resources provide state and local government and the construction industry with model contract clauses and tools to better manage and improve the delivery of construction projects with vulnerable road users in mind. Examples include a human impact route assessment (HIRA) tool to help plan routes to remove or reduce interactions with vulnerable road users and a range of model clauses to include in construction contracts. The model contract clauses cover truck safety features, truck driver training, temporary traffic management and route selection to emphasise the importance of keeping vulnerable road users safe during construction periods.

DTP has actively promoted the work of the CT&CS Project to industry and local government. The model clauses are embedded in all state major construction project contracts executed as part of Victoria's Big Build. At a local government level, councils have engaged with project initiatives and demonstrated a commitment to improve their ways of working.

DTP is a contributing member of Construction Logistics and Community Safety Australia (CLOCS-A) and has established CLOCS-A standards that are to be embedded into industry and construction partners' practice. CLOCS-A has introduced three levels of truck safety standards (bronze, silver and gold) for heavy vehicles, as well as other requirements regarding truck driver training, logistics and communications. It also accredits businesses that reach the standards required. CLOCS-A complements the CT&CS Project, with both projects aiming to achieve better safety outcomes for vulnerable road users at construction sites.

RECOMMENDATION 34

The Department of Transport and Planning prioritise the development of the strategic cycling corridor network in metropolitan and regional Victoria.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

All Victorians should be able to choose to walk or ride a bike as an easy, safe and sustainable way to travel, especially for neighbourhood trips to schools, stations, shops and parks. As Victoria continues to grow it is recognised that our transport network needs to enable more people to walk and cycle for everyday trips.

The *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-2028* aims to get more people on bicycles by delivering a safer, lower-stress, better-connected network, prioritising investments in SCCs and building a more inclusive cycling culture. The SCCs are the 'arterials' of the cycling network and are intended to offer people on bikes of all ages and abilities safe and connected cycling routes, linking to destinations such as major activity centres, employment precincts and transport hubs. These routes have been mapped in consultation with relevant local councils.

The Strategy includes a goal to prioritise investment in the SCC network and focuses on providing safe infrastructure for the 'interested but concerned' cohort, which includes over 60 per cent of the community, to enable more women, children, and seniors to cycle for their daily transport needs.

The provision of funding for these upgrades is provided as part of the Victorian Budget process. The Victorian Government invested \$61.6 million in 2023-24 to improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians, bike riders and drivers, and committed \$21 million in 2024-25 for public and active transport upgrades across Melbourne. Additionally, the Victorian Government is continuing to deliver a \$70 million TAC-funded program to implement cycling corridor safety treatments on routes with a high number of cyclist serious casualties.

To support the growing number of cyclists and improve the existing bicycle network within and around the greater metropolitan area, DTP is continuing to develop and implement the SCC network. Delivering a complete SCC network will require progressive development over time, in partnership with local government and other key stakeholders. In some instances, it will be preferable to provide improvements to local or recreational cycling routes to provide better transport options until major investment in the SCC network can be realised. DTP will continue to actively seek opportunities and to engage with local communities and councils to determine future priorities for investment, to deliver cycling links that offer the highest potential to get more Victorians moving by bike. Any future SCC proposals will need to be considered for funding in a future program and considered in a state-wide context.

RECOMMENDATION 35

The Department of Transport and Planning work with councils to map existing and approved cycling infrastructure across Victoria in order to identify opportunities to link and connect cycling infrastructure projects.

This recommendation is supported in part.

DTP previously undertook extensive engagement with local councils across Victoria to identify and map the SCC network which outlines key cycling routes across the State. This map is available through the transport website along with open data sources. It identifies the aspirational cycling network for progressive improvement over time as opportunities and funding arise.

While cycling is permitted on most roads, each local council has its own approach to sharing more important municipal routes with their local community. DTP has recently completed a project mapping all cycling infrastructure across the 31 LGAs of metropolitan Melbourne, including the SCC network. This data will soon be available through the Victorian Government open data portal. DTP is also working to extend this mapping to major regional centres. The map shows existing cycling infrastructure, and DTP is supportive of local councils continuing to plan for additional infrastructure on their local networks.

To better consider the needs for progressive development of the SCC network DTP has been mapping the type of existing infrastructure provisions on the SCC network. This work continues to be expanded and shared as it is completed. This will include mapping the suitability of the infrastructure provision based on its context, through a level of stress metric that is outlined in the *Victorian Cycling Strategy* and will be included in the forthcoming active transport strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 36

The Department of Transport and Planning update the community on progress on the Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–2028.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–2028* contains two overarching goals: to invest in a safer, lower-stress, better connected network, and to make cycling a more inclusive experience. There are existing mechanisms that help to provide the community with an update on progress under the *Victorian Cycling Strategy*. For example, DTP's annual report provides an update on key road safety achievements and performance measures for vulnerable road users, including the number of cycling projects completed. The DTP regularly implements actions across the portfolio to ensure that cycling outcomes consistent with the *Victorian Cycling Strategy* are integrated into decision making and project lifecycles. This includes regular reviews across the portfolio to identify outstanding or priority areas of concern requiring additional attention

As the Victorian Cycling Strategy will be superseded by a forthcoming active transport strategy which will cover walking, cycling and micromobility, the Victorian Government will consider details about progress reporting as part of the strategy's development.

RECOMMENDATION 37

The Victorian Government support the development of an education campaign humanising motorcycle riders and normalising their presence on the road and through regular campaigns place a greater emphasis on sharing the road safely with motorcyclists.

This recommendation is supported in part.

The Victorian Government maintains its commitment to supporting initiatives that encourage mutual vigilance between riders and drivers and that fosters a culture of sharing the roads safely.

Developed and executed in partnership with MCEP, Motorcyclist Awareness Month is held every October and emphasises the importance of sharing the road with motorcyclists. TAC has supported this initiative with a range of activities including a partnership with the Moto GP as well as social media and activations.

The Committee's findings and recommendation will also be considered as part of the development of a new state-wide Motorcycle Safety Framework primarily funded through the MSL. The Framework will provide a suite of coordinated and targeted initiatives aimed at reducing motorcycle fatal and serious injury crashes. The Framework is being developed through a comprehensive and collaborative approach including research into the effectiveness of current and emerging countermeasures, a review of frameworks and strategies in Australian and international jurisdictions, and stakeholder workshops.

RECOMMENDATION 38

The Department of Transport and Planning place a greater emphasis on sharing the road safely with motorcyclists in driver training and testing.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

DTP is committed to evidence-based driver testing and training as a key aspect of the Graduated Licensing System. DTP emphasises sharing the road with motorcycles and other vulnerable road users as a key focus in driver training and testing in Victoria. Instilling safe driver behaviours as well as road rule knowledge and driving skills are considered necessary for the development of safe drivers.

Training and testing materials include specific information focused on sharing the road safely with motorcycles. The key resources to gain a learner permit and probationary licence are the learner permit test online, the *Road to Solo Driving* handbook and myLearners app. All resources and associated learner permit tests include modules and questions about sharing the road with a range of vulnerable road users, knowledge of which is also tested in the practical on-road drive test as part of graduating to a probationary driver licence. Training materials focused on motorcycles include scanning for motorcycles, overtaking motorcycles, lane filtering, and handling characteristics that drivers should be aware of for motorcycles, such as quick acceleration. The interactive and engaging material in the learner permit test online has also been developed to be available for all drivers via road rules education online.

The Victorian Government supports the intent of this recommendation. Noting that extensive information already exists in driver training and testing, the Victorian Government will continue to support drivers to share the road safely with motorcyclists through Motorcyclist Awareness Month, safety initiatives funded under the MSL and the TAC partnership and activation activities with the Moto GP. Enhancements focused on safe driving around motorcycles will also continue to be considered during future routine road safety awareness material updates.

RECOMMENDATION 39

The Victorian Government road safety partners actively promote motorcycle safety measures such as MotoCAP and the Motorcycle Crash Card to motorcycle riders, focusing specifically on commuter and gig economy riders.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government continues to promote and invest in improvements to motorcyclist safety and programs such as MotoCAP and the Motorcycle Crash Card.

DTP and TAC have funded *MotoCAP* since 2018. Prior to 2018, TAC worked in partnership with Transport for NSW to develop the program and testing protocols. Funding has been used for the purchase, testing and rating of motorcycle protective gear and to promote the program to all motorcycle and motor scooter riders.

The Victorian road safety partners have also actively and strategically promoted *MotoCAP* and the *Motorcycle Crash Card* via various engagement initiatives, which have been positively received by the riding community. In 2022 and 2023, the Motorcycle Crash Card was promoted during Motorcyclist Awareness Month and at the Phillip Island MotoGP events, where over 100,000 cards were distributed to riders. Through its partnership with MotoGP, TAC has also promoted motorcycle protective clothing and MotoCAP at the event. This has included specific promotion of MotoCAP and hosting the MotoCAP chief scientist at the expo stand to engage directly with attendees.

DTP continues to support the distribution and promotion of Motorcycle Crash Cards through its road safety partnerships team, its existing networks and through support provided by the Motorcycling Community Engagement Panel members. Work performed by DTP's road safety partnerships team allows the Victorian road safety partnership to promote motorcycle safety and awareness through engaging with local stakeholders. The Community Road Safety Grants Program provides a further opportunity for councils, schools and not-for-profit organisations to apply for funding to deliver programs or initiatives focussed on improving and raising awareness of motorcycling safety.

MotoCAP and the Motorcycle Crash Card universally benefit all motorcycle riders, including commuter and gig economy riders. However, recognising some of the more unique challenges experienced by gig economy riders, DTP is investigating gig economy rider safety to gather insights into their safety and the influences that lead to unsafe outcomes. DTP will also explore options to promote safety messages more actively among commuter riders as part of the development of a new statewide Motorcycle Safety Framework, funded through the MSL.

RECOMMENDATION 40

The Department of Transport and Planning promote a separate mechanism for motorcyclists, bike riders, micromobility and e scooter users to self report conditions of roads that might affect their safety.

This recommendation is supported in part.

Motorcyclists, bike riders and micromobility users are more susceptible to road surface imperfections. DTP's Transport Victoria website has an existing online self-reporting tool that connects to the VicRoads website allowing road users to report non-urgent road-related issues, including conditions such as faded line marking, potholes or fallen signage. At a local level, many councils use technology that allows users to report road incidents or hazards via their phone.

Through the MSL, DTP will launch a new survey to gather motorcyclists' perspectives on road safety hazards and safety concerns. This survey will encourage Victoria's motorcycling community to identify safety risks and provide detailed location information to help inform future investment.

To help improve road safety for motorcyclists travelling on popular motorcycle routes, DTP is also trialling the Motorcycle Enhanced Maintenance Scheme (MEMS), which will seek to deliver enhanced inspections of select high-risk popular motorcycle roads during the riding season. During this two-year trial funded through the MSL, a selected trial route will undergo fortnightly inspections, have road surface issues fixed in a shorter time, have lower tolerance levels for road surface issues, and be swept of debris more frequently.

Improvements are also being made to the coding of e-scooter crashes and injuries through the Victoria Police Traffic Incident System to capture more complete data on this vulnerable road user cohort.

TAC, through the Light Insights Trial, has trialled the benefits of technologies which measure road surface roughness. This trial was initiated in partnership with the iMOVE Cooperative Research Centre and Deakin University. This trial utilised advanced technologies built into bicycle lights to enable the collection of data and self-reporting related to near miss events and surrogate safety measures. Since the initial trial in 2023 the technology has been used in partnership with local governments and universities to further understanding of its uses and benefits.

RECOMMENDATION 41

The Victorian Government review e-scooter regulations following its trial.

This recommendation is supported in full.

Victoria's e-scooter regulations were reviewed as part of making e-scooters permanently legal throughout Victoria and ending the e-scooter trial. The Victorian Government introduced tougher penalties and new e-scooter rules, as well as committing to mandate new safety enhancing technologies for share hire operators to increase compliance with the rules and improve safety.

Victoria's e-scooter regulations were developed in consultation with Victorian road safety partners, with safety as the key priority. The safety of pedestrians as vulnerable road users was of utmost importance, which is why Victoria was the first jurisdiction to ban riding e-scooters on footpaths. Victoria was also the first jurisdiction to set the maximum speed limit to 20km/h and has the strongest alcohol and drug riding prohibitions. Riders must wear a helmet, and the use of high-speed devices (devices capable of more than 25km/h) is prohibited.

At the conclusion of the trial, fines were increased for riding on the footpath, not wearing a helmet, carrying a passenger, underage riding, drinking alcohol while riding and speeding. New offences with significant fines were also introduced for riding as a passenger and not wearing a helmet as a passenger.

To increase compliance with the regulations and increase safety the Victorian Government has announced that share hire e-scooter operators will need to be prequalified by DTP to operate in the future, requiring operators to meet minimum standards that include the use of compliance enhancing technology such as footpath detection to reduce footpath use, cognitive reaction testing to reduce drink riding and technologies designed to increase helmet use.

Victoria will continue to advocate to the Australian Government to use import restrictions to limit the availability of e-scooters capable of speeds above 25km/h, which are illegal to use on public infrastructure throughout Australia.

DTP will continue to monitor the use of e-scooters and other micromobility devices, advising the Victorian Government on any persistent or emerging safety issues that may require further consideration.

RECOMMENDATION 42

The Department of Transport and Planning develop an education campaign to reach all road users including schoolchildren about road rules relating to e-scooter use.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government acknowledges that the rapid rise in e-scooter usage has outpaced public awareness of relevant regulations, contributing to crashes or near misses. Educating all road users, including schoolchildren, can help foster a clear understanding of e-scooter rules and promote a culture of safety and responsibility as the transport landscape evolves.

As part of legalising e-scooter use and ending the trial in October 2024, DTP and the TAC developed and delivered a two-stage e-scooter safety campaign, the first of its kind in Victoria. The first stage was a functional campaign informing the community about legislative changes including the new and changed penalties. The second stage was a behavioural campaign which targeted high-risk and illegal e-scooter behaviours, highlighting the dangers of these behaviours and providing a rationale for the e-scooter laws. This stage of the campaign also included information targeting parents via digital media, discouraging the purchase of e-scooters as Christmas presents for children under 16 years.

The Victorian Government also works with schools and councils to ensure parents, guardians, and children are aware of e-scooter rules. Information on e-scooters is available on the Road Safety Education Victoria website, which is a hub of educational activities and resources relating to road safety.

During the e-scooter trial a number DTP e-scooter awareness campaigns have been run across various channels (e.g., radio broadcast and digital, out-of-home advertising, digital display, and social media) to deliver both high-level and focused messages on specific rules and behaviours, such as minimum passing distance and illegal footpath riding. Campaign materials are also available in Arabic, Hindi, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese and Vietnamese.

RECOMMENDATION 43

The Victorian Government add the words 'Pass wide and slow' on diamond road signs alerting drivers to horses in the area and review the need to specify a lower speed limit when motorists pass horses in the road rules.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The DTP's current traffic signage standards do not include the installation of warning signs specifically intended to remind motorists of Victorian road rules, such as the requirement to allow a minimum passing distance. Austroads' *Guide to Traffic Management Part 10: Traffic Control and Communication Devices* (AGTM10-19) emphasises using warning signs only where potential hazards may not be immediately apparent to approaching drivers. Signs aimed at promoting improved driver behaviour or educating drivers about road rules typically come in the form of temporary community road safety signs or banners.

Victorian crash data indicates that road crashes involving horses (ridden or drawn) represent a very low proportion of total road trauma. Given the small scale of the problem, and the localised nature of the issue, revising state-wide road rules to specify a lower speed limit for interactions with horses is not supported.

Very targeted awareness and education materials may be more appropriate in this instance and could be introduced in regions where horses are commonly ridden or near equestrian facilities. Such awareness campaigns could help to emphasise the importance of passing horse riders safely and include information about the dangers of passing horses too closely or at high speeds, as well as practical tips for safe interactions with horses on the road.

Additionally, LGAs could adopt existing wildlife warning signs (e.g. W5-V111 for horses) to notify drivers of their presence in specific areas and incorporate guidance on this issue into their specific equestrian strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 44

The Victorian Government work with industry and unions to address the unique challenges of transport workers, including truck and bus drivers, couriers and gig delivery workers and review the training provided for gig delivery workers.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The road is the workplace for many Victorians who drive or ride a vehicle to deliver goods and provide services. The increase in online shopping, ride-share, and food delivery services has seen the highest ever number of vehicles being used as a workplace on Victorian roads.

Given this, the first Action Plan under the *Victorian Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030* aims to improve the safety of delivery riders. This is being achieved by undertaking research with gig platforms and gig riders to better understand what impacts the safety of riders in the on-demand workforce. This is part of a \$1 million investment to develop best practice policies and deliver education and safety initiatives that will positively influence the safety of gig riders.

Victoria has significantly influenced policy and legislative reforms nationally to provide important protections for gig workers. Gig workers and road transport owner drivers will soon be able to pursue matters in the Fair Work Commission and seek the support of the Fair Work Ombudsman in relation to their rights and protections including minimum standards orders. The *Victorian Owner Drivers and Forestry Contractors Act 2005* will continue to provide support to people who run small businesses transporting goods through information provision, requiring the use of written contracts and dispute resolution.

The *Tip Truck Owner Driver Policy* provides minimum rates of pay for tip truck owner drivers working on construction projects funded by the Victorian Government. It aims to improve economic certainty for tip truck owner drivers and remove financial incentives to engage in unsafe practices to secure work. This is intended to contribute to better safety outcomes for all road users.

WorkSafe Victoria is also implementing a *Fatalities Prevention Strategic Approach – Transport 2023-2026*, which involved considerable stakeholder engagement with industry, government agencies and unions in development of the strategy. The focus of the strategic approach is for transport industry road freight and delivery, including public transport and all industries who operate or engage with on-road heavy vehicles (>4.5 tonnes). Key focus areas for interventions include vehicle maintenance, loading and unloading and human factors such as mental health and distraction. While the gig economy in relation to heavy vehicles is currently out of scope for this strategic approach, the strategy captures truck and bus drivers and couriers.

RECOMMENDATION 45

The Victorian Government road safety partners work with Australia Post to implement safety measures to improve the safety of its delivery officers such as flashing lights on its delivery fleet.

This recommendation is under review.

The Victorian Government acknowledges the vulnerability of motorcycle riders, with motorcycles representing 3.3 per cent of all registered vehicles yet comprising 18.4 per cent of lives lost over the past 5 years (2019-2023) in Victoria. As noted in recommendation 44, changing consumer patterns have resulted in the highest ever number of vehicles now being used as a workplace on Victorian roads.

Under the *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021*, the installation of lights not expressly authorised in Australian Design Rules or regulations is prohibited. However, amber flashing or rotating lights are permitted for Special Use Vehicles to warn other road users of potential road hazards. This currently includes vehicles carrying or escorting oversize loads, road maintenance vehicles, tow trucks, and garbage trucks. These vehicles pose risks to other road users due to their operations or their presence in hazardous positions.

The DTP will review the fitment of amber flashing lights on postal vehicles based on their technical merits and supported evidence and data. Expanding the use of these lights may alter public perception of their meaning and dilute their association with road hazards.

While there are alternative methods to enhance the visibility of riders that are already permissible, it is worth noting that the postal vehicles and their riders currently benefit from high-visibility colouring. To gain a deeper understanding of the current risks associated with postal delivery riders, further information and data is needed, particularly regarding the circumstances that resulted in collisions.

Enhanced conspicuity and other strategies to support motorcycling as an occupation will also be considered as part of the development of a new state-wide Motorcycle Safety Framework, funded through the MSL. The Framework will provide a suite of coordinated and targeted countermeasures aimed at reducing motorcycle and motor scooter fatal and serious injury crashes. The Framework is being developed through a comprehensive and collaborative approach including research into the effectiveness of current and emerging countermeasures, a review of frameworks and strategies in Australian and international jurisdictions, and stakeholder workshops.

RECOMMENDATION 46

The Victorian Government review the road rules in relation to the speed motorists should travel at when passing a tow truck or emergency roadside vehicle with flashing lights.

This recommendation is supported in full.

Road Rule 79A was first introduced in Victoria in 2017. It introduced a 40km/h speed limit when approaching and passing a stationary or slow moving police vehicle, emergency vehicle, enforcement vehicle or escort vehicle with flashing red, blue or magenta lights or sounding an alarm. Most Australian jurisdictions have implemented similar rules, although the specific requirements vary across jurisdictions.

The Victorian Government agrees with the Committee's finding that even when the requirement to slow down exists, not all motorists will follow the road rule. The current evidence suggests that overall awareness of the road rule remains poor, and among those that are aware, compliance is low.

The Victorian Government will undertake a review of *Road Rule 79A*. As part of this review, the Government will assess whether the Rule should be expanded to capture roadside assistance workers and tow truck operators. Awareness and compliance of the road rule will also need to be further understood as part of the review.

RECOMMENDATION 47

The Victorian Government explore options to support older drivers in regional Victoria with access to newer, safer cars to replace their older vehicles.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government recognises that older vehicles are overrepresented in Victorian crash statistics and accelerating the uptake of newer safer vehicles – especially for our most vulnerable drivers at both ends of the age spectrum – is a key strategic objective.

The Victorian Government is undertaking a study to test the assumptions about barriers for older drivers to drive newer, safer vehicles. The project will provide a deeper understanding about the characteristics of older drivers in Victoria and explore the barriers and enablers among this cohort to accept, access, adopt, and use vehicles with newer safety technologies. The study is not limited to regional Victoria.

The outcomes of this research will provide valuable information as we continue to explore evidence-based options for getting our most vulnerable drivers into the safest vehicles.

TAC will also be launching a new senior road user resource hub in early 2025, which will provide tailored information about vehicle safety for seniors, as well safe travel advice and feedback.

RECOMMENDATION 48

The Victorian Government work with councils to improve traffic calming measures around school precincts to encourage more parents to allow their children to walk or ride to school.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government fully supports the Committee's finding of the importance of improved safety around school precincts to encourage safe active travel, reduce traffic congestion and improve children's overall health and wellbeing.

The Victorian Government will continue to provide technical guidance and funding support to councils to help promote walking and cycling as safe modes for children travelling to and from school.

DTP offers guidance to councils on appropriate traffic calming and speed zones to support walking and cycling. This includes Victorian-specific supplementary guidance to Austroads' *Guide to Traffic Management Part 8: Local Street Management and the Victorian Speed Zoning Technical Guidelines*.

In addition to guidance on traffic engineering treatments, the Victorian Government delivers funding programs to support implementation on local streets including school precincts.

These programs include the:

- *Safe Local Roads and Streets Program*, which is investing \$210 million on local roads to design and deliver safer infrastructure upgrades for communities, including traffic calming infrastructure and safer speeds.
- *Safe System Pedestrian Infrastructure Program*, which is investing \$23 million to make pedestrians safer at locations and along routes with high pedestrian numbers and a high-risk of pedestrian crashes, including routes to schools.
- *TAC Local Government Grants Program*, which regularly provides funding to support councils to improve the safety of infrastructure around schools.
- DTP Community Road Safety Grants Program's *Safe Routes to School* program, which encourages local councils and schools to improve road safety around pick-up and drop-off times, and to create safe walking, cycling and scooting routes to school.
- *Federal Black Spot Program*, which targets road locations where crashes are occurring, or are at risk of occurring, by funding safety measures such as raised safety platforms.

The Victorian Government also continues its long-standing partnership with local councils to fund school crossing supervisors under the School Crossing Supervisor Program. The Program's partnership model acknowledges that state and local governments share accountability for road safety under the *Road Management Act 2004* (Vic) and the *Transport Integration Act 2010* (Vic). The Program is visible in local communities and highly valued by parents, carers and guardians of children and young people travelling to and from school, contributing positively to local community behaviours and perceptions of road safety.

Through the Victorian Government's whole-of-school community approach, new initiatives are being developed to commence in 2025 for students starting primary and secondary school. Targeting Prep and Year 7 parents and students, the programs will provide key information about safe active travel, enabling parents to support and encourage their children to walk or ride to school safely.

RECOMMENDATION 49

The Department of Transport and Planning explore further education programs and campaigns aimed at kindergarten and primary school aged children and their families.

This recommendation is supported in full.

The Victorian Government invests in road safety education. The Road Safety Education Victoria partnership delivers evidenced-based programs, resources, and interventions to enhance safety for kindergarten and primary school-aged children and their families by supporting a whole-school approach to road safety.

The School Engagement Project, delivered by DTP in partnership with the TAC, enables officers to collaborate with schools and the sector to provide tailored road safety education support, and the Road Safety Education Victoria website serves as a central resource hub, offering a wide range of curriculum-aligned materials such as lesson plans, units of work, assessments, and additional support for teachers.

Starting Out Safely is an example of one of the partnership's programs. Starting Out Safely is Victoria's early childhood road safety education program which aims to get children, parents, carers, and early childhood educators working together to guide children's learning in being and becoming safe and independent road users. TAC fund and co-ordinate this program which is delivered by the Early Learning Association of Australia.

At a primary school level, Victoria supports the delivery of established education programs such as *Bike Ed* (for students in Years 1–8) and *Safe Journeys to School* (Year 6) to develop students into safe and autonomous travellers by using practical lessons that can be applied beyond the school grounds. Delivery of these programs is supported by:

- The School Crossing Supervisor Program, which is developing content and messaging to support local councils in educating drivers, parents and carers to drive safely in the school environment.
- The Community Road Safety Grants Program, which supports Safe Routes to School in addition to locally tailored innovative road safety programs designed to meet the needs of local schools.
- Bike Ed Instructor training for teachers.
- New initiatives for Prep and Year 7 parents and students to provide information about safe active travel, enabling parents to support and encourage their children to walk or ride to school safely.

RECOMMENDATION 50

The Victorian Government continue to explore options to support parents and caregivers to correctly install baby and child car restraints.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The Victorian Government acknowledges that correctly fitted child restraints can help save young lives or significantly reduce the risk of serious injury. Ensuring that parents and carers receive straightforward and consistent advice on how to install restraints correctly is an important step in achieving this.

The primary program for safe child restraint use in Victoria is the TAC-funded Starting Out Safely Program. The program targets early childhood educators, maternal child health nurses, kindergarten teachers, parents and carers. The program provides information about safe restraint use via the Car Seats Saves Lives initiative. Car Seats Saves Lives provides online video tutorials in 13 languages and flyers in 22 languages on how to buy, fit and use child restraints and booster seats.

In addition to Starting Out Safely, the Victorian Government supports parents and carers through the:

- Road Safety Education Victoria website, which provides a one-stop hub of educational activities and resources on road safety aimed at educators, parents and carers, students, and young drivers. The hub provides trusted, evidence-based resources.
- Child Restraint Evaluation Program (CREP), a consortium of government agencies and child safety organisations committed to improving safety for children travelling in vehicles. As part of the evaluation process, ease of use is a key criterion to support parents and carers to correctly install and adjust their child restraint.
- Nursery Equipment Program (NEP). The NEP supports eligible families facing vulnerability by providing safe nursery equipment. Eligible families referred to the NEP by a Maternal Child Health Nurse may receive a child car restraint or cot ensemble. All equipment provided through the NEP adheres strictly to Australian Standards and equipment is delivered and installed by suitably trained and experienced installers.

Working with community organisations is another way the Victorian Government engages with parents and carers to help keep children safe in vehicles. Through the Road Safety Grant Program, TAC provided support to charity Big Group Hug to continue to provide child restraints to families in need. As part of this work, TAC is working with Big Group Hug to develop a fit-for-purpose checklist to support inspections of used child restraints to determine if they are suitable for donation or redistribution. TAC has also supported the charity Mobility and Accessibility for Children in Australia (MACA) in their work focussed on special purpose child restraints.

RECOMMENDATION 51

The Victorian Government advocate the Australian Government mandate the fitting of quiet road transport vehicles with Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems to improve safety for blind and vision impaired pedestrians.

This recommendation is supported in full.

Quiet vehicles pose an increased risk to vulnerable road users, especially those who are visually impaired. These risks can be mitigated by technologies such as Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems (AVAS), which emit audible sounds to alert vulnerable road users to the presence of vehicles and reduce the risk of collisions.

DTP in collaboration with the Australian Government and other jurisdictions recently introduced new regulations requiring quiet road transport vehicles to be fitted with AVAS.

DTP was supportive of, and advocated for, the mandate of AVAS on electric and hybrid vehicles during the Australian Government's open consultation process in 2023. DTP provided feedback to the Australian Government on the draft ADR 113/00 prior to its release. In early 2024, AVAS was mandated for new model electric and hybrid vehicles from 1 November 2025 through ADR 113/00.

DTP will continue to work closely with the Australian Government in advancing vehicle technologies aimed at enhancing the safety of vulnerable road users.

RECOMMENDATION 52

The Department of Transport and Planning ensure that the needs of people with disability are taken into consideration when designing and placing road signs.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

Traffic signs in Victoria are designed and installed in accordance with the national Australian Standards AS1742 Series. The standards specify principles and procedures for determining the need for, and the selection, testing and design of, graphic symbols which may be used on signs.

Consistent with the Australian Standards, Victorian traffic signs are designed to ensure that they only communicate necessary messages, are highly visible, and do not clutter the road network. Signs must align with Victorian legislation and be designed to provide national harmonisation and familiarity for interstate driving. Any traffic signage that is considered difficult to understand or process should be investigated on a case-by-case basis through discussions with the relevant road authority.

The Committee's final report noted the use of painted speed signs on roads. This practice is generally not adopted in Victoria and across Australia. This is because research indicates that road signs continue to be the best form of communication to drivers. Painted speed signs on roads can cause confusion to motorists when temporary lower speed limits are in place, for example during road maintenance activity.

Standards for pedestrian wayfinding signage are governed by DTP's *Master Style Guide*, which applies to signs on or around the public transport network. The Guide has been developed in consultation with DTP's dedicated Accessibility and Customer Information teams. It is regularly updated based on user testing to ensure best practice regarding efficacy of the messaging, information hierarchy, reading distances and colour contrast requirements for vulnerable road users. The signage suite includes elements to be read by drivers at speed, as well as signs to support pedestrians undertaking journeys on public transport or needing directional assistance to station facilities or connecting services. DTP will continue to update the Guide regularly to ensure it aligns with best practice considering the needs for vulnerable road users engaging with the public transport network.

RECOMMENDATION 53

The Department of Transport and Planning make greater use of variable message sign boards to notify drivers of changed conditions and hazards on regional freeways and arterial roads.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

DTP plays a critical role in supporting the management of significant incidents and emergencies in Victoria, providing resources at the state, regional, incident and field level to support emergency management. A range of signage including VMS are used to support messaging.

As noted under recommendation 12, research suggests that VMS can influence drivers' behaviour and contribute positively to road safety at locations they are deployed. Their effectiveness may be dependent on numerous factors though, such as the appropriateness of the messaging, the conditions under which VMS is deployed, and whether the VMS is coupled with supportive measures. VMS boards are placed at suitable and strategic locations to maximise their effectiveness. These considerations can sometimes restrict where they are placed.

DTP will continue to invest in the coordinated deployment of available VMS assets. The deployment of VMS for transport network management is part of DTP's planning and operations processes. Some VMS are deployed under available funding for road maintenance. Other VMS are deployed as part of capital improvements through road business case submissions and deployment will be constrained by funding limitations.

The use of VMS must be planned strategically however, so their presence is not normalised and to ensure the efficacy of their messaging is not diluted. To help prevent this from occurring, DTP has guidelines to stipulate a hierarchy of messages to ensure each VMS is being used to its greatest effect and in line with its primary purpose.

RECOMMENDATION 54

The Transport Accident Commission run a targeted campaign for regional roads, highlighting the factors contributing to fatalities, including speed, distractions and variables of regional roads.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

There is a disproportionately high level of road trauma in regional Victoria. It is often assumed that people who are unfamiliar with the road are most likely to be killed on regional Victorian roads. However, over the past eight years, approximately 80 per cent of those who died on regional roads were residents of regional Victoria. Most of these crashes on regional roads were single vehicle crashes and occurred on roads where the speed limit is 100km/h.

At impact speeds of 70km/h and above, it is highly likely vehicle occupants will be seriously or fatally injured. With the high proportion of roads with speed limits of 100-110km/h in regional areas, there is an increased likelihood that crashes on regional Victorian roads will be fatal.

Currently, DTP undertakes seasonal campaigns to support drivers during periods of significant risk, such as snow and ice, as well as during harvest season when drivers are more likely to encounter large slow-moving vehicles on regional roads, 24 hours a day. The TAC also partners with AFL Victoria and Country Racing Victoria to provide targeted messaging and initiatives about safe road use for rural Victorians.

Recognising that more targeted messaging is required to influence driving behaviours in regional Victoria, the TAC has undertaken formative research to be used in the development of a campaign to target road trauma in regional areas. This research is being used to identify the behaviours, messaging, and channels that can best target and influence the disproportionate levels of regional road trauma in Victoria, and will inform the development of a new campaign.

RECOMMENDATION 55

The Victorian Government prioritise regional road treatments for vulnerable road users, including working with regional councils on high-speed roads and intersections, aimed at supporting safer road behaviours.

This recommendation is supported in part.

From 2019 to 2023, 80 per cent of the pedestrian and cyclist deaths and serious injuries in Victoria occurred in metropolitan Melbourne. In regional Victoria, 59 per cent of pedestrian and cyclist deaths and serious injuries occurred in regional cities and a further 20 per cent in towns. The vast majority of pedestrian and cyclist fatal and serious injuries in Victoria are sustained in speed zones of 60km/h or lower. Therefore, although pedestrian and bicyclist serious trauma can occur anywhere in the state, the trauma problem is strongly concentrated in urban environments.

As such, DTP's investment in vulnerable road user treatments prioritises those within lower and mid-speed urban environments throughout metropolitan and rural Victoria. Typical treatments include providing safe crossing points such as pedestrian-operated signals and wombat crossings, and treatments to create safer speed environments.

To ensure regional towns and cities are prioritised for investment, Victorian and Commonwealth road safety programs typically include funding criteria which ensures smaller regional shires and councils can compete effectively for funding with larger metropolitan councils. For example, the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program is investing \$210 million on local roads to design and deliver safer infrastructure upgrades for communities, including traffic calming infrastructure and safer speeds. The program will support all local governments to build capacity and capability to deliver safer local roads. Since 2023, DTP and TAC have facilitated 67 workshops with local councils through the program. By March 2025, all Victorian councils will be included.

Under the Commonwealth Government's Federal Black Spot Program administered by DTP, at least 50 per cent of projects must be in regional Victoria.

On high-speed roads, the vulnerable road user group most at risk are motorcyclists. Motorcyclists are more susceptible to injury on these roads due to the high crash forces involved in travel on high-speed roads and the unprotected nature of motorcycling. Victoria's MSL aims to improve motorcyclist safety on high-speed rural roads through investment in treatments including motorcycle-friendly barriers, underrun protection, sealing bell mouths and shoulder sealing, and curve delineation. As part of the MSL, Victoria is running the world-leading MEMS trial. Under the MEMS trial, two regional motorcycle routes will receive greater levels of maintenance inspection and interventions. The trial will be evaluated to determine if increased investment on popular motorcycle routes can be justified as an intervention.

RECOMMENDATION 56

The Department of Transport and Planning expand the L2P program to enable newly arrived migrants over the age of 21 to obtain supervised driving practice.

This recommendation is supported in principle.

The TAC L2P Program supports high-risk learner drivers under the age of 21 to complete the minimum 120 hours of driving practice required to obtain a driver licence. The program is managed by DTP and program delivery relies extensively on partner organisations providing in-kind and philanthropic support and the volunteering of mentor drivers, in addition to TAC funding of approximately \$9 million per year.

In some circumstances, learners from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities aged between 21 and 23 are eligible to apply for the program if they meet the eligibility criteria and can demonstrate a high need for the program. Revised prioritisation criteria will also see refugees receive additional priority in the eligibility assessment process if they present other measures of disadvantage.

The program's operating and funding model means that it is not possible to extend program eligibility to newly arrived migrants over 21 years of age. However, alternative approaches to supporting this cohort are being explored through a review into the gaps and needs of young people from CALD communities and high-risk young people in Victoria to help inform what level of support older learner drivers require.

Where newly arrived migrants cannot be supported via the L2P Program, assistance may be available as part of the Road Safety for New Arrivals Program. Funded under the Community Road Safety Grants Program, this initiative supports newly arrived migrants and people from CALD backgrounds who are over the age of 21 to increase their road safety knowledge and skills. Program participants may receive up to two professional driving lessons.

ACRONYMS AND TERMS

ADR	Australian Design Rules
AEB	Autonomous Emergency Braking
ANCAP	Australasian New Car Assessment Program
AVAS	Acoustic Vehicle Alerting Systems
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CLOCS-A	Construction Logistics and Community Safety Australia
CREP	Child Restraint Evaluation Program
CT&CS Project	Construction Trucks and Community Safety Project
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
DSRC	Dedicated Short-Range Communication
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
GAICS	Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution Scheme
LGA	Local Government Area
LIDAR	Light Detection and Ranging
MACA	Mobility and Accessibility for Children in Australia
MCEP	Motorcycling Community Engagement Panel
MEMS	Motorcycle Enhanced Maintenance Scheme
MOA	Memorandum of Authorisation
MSL	Motorcycle Safety Levy
NEP	Nursery Equipment Program
RCIS	Road Crash Information System
SCC	Strategic Cycling Corridor
TAC	Transport Accident Commission
TIS	Traffic Incident System
TMP	Traffic Management Plan
VMS	Variable Message Signs

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