



New Road Safety Initiatives

A concerted campaign is underway to improve safety on Queensland's vast road network following the worst Easter road toll in Queensland in over 20 years. The Safer Roads, Safer Queensland forum was held on April 10, towards launching a new road safety strategy and action plan in the following month. The forum brought together road safety stakeholders (such as the RACQ, Police, Bicycle Queensland, Motorcycle Riders Association, CARRS-Q and Queensland Trucking Association) to share their expertise on ways to address the spike in road trauma, both now and into the future. Minister for Main Roads and Road Safety Mark Bailey said "Road safety is everyone's responsibility. We can talk until we're blue in the face, but what we really need is action. We need to commit to a strategy and plan of action that will make a real difference. Let's look at what works, what can work better and what steps need to be taken to curb this spike in the state's road toll."

The following download provides a summary of the key themes and suggestions at the forum : <http://acrs.org.au/wp-content/uploads/QLD-forum-key-outcomes.pdf>. This is a highly recommended read.

The new Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan was subsequently launched on May 20. While the media focus has been on double demerit points to target texting and mobile phone-using drivers, the range of initiatives is much wider than that. Others include :

- increasing the number of Police vehicles with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)
- expanding training for Road Policing officers to help them better detect and deter criminal activities such as drug driving
- formation of a Citizen's Taskforce
- more engagement with children on road safety issues
- motorcycle safety campaigns (including licensing reforms in this area)
- and a youth road safety innovation challenge aimed at 16 to 24 year olds.

<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2015/5/20/double-demerit-points-to-target-texting-drivers> has the full media statement.

On May 28, as an initial first step, the Government reinstated a key road safety awareness program for young drivers, the Road Attitudes Action Planning program (RAAP), which saw Fire Services staff visit schools to spread the road safety message. Running from 1998 to 2012, each year around 30,000 senior students received a presentation about the dangers they face behind the wheel. So far this year, around a quarter of fatal crashes have involved a driver or rider under the age of 25.

But will any of these initiatives work, or is it just a twist on previous programs? Interestingly, there was no representation from peak motor enthusiast bodies at the April forum, despite the fact that our involvement had been offered at the March MOCC meeting with DTMR. This point will be raised again at the June meeting (set down for Wednesday June 24). We clearly have a lot to offer, but are some of our solutions (e.g. better driver training, more motorsport venues) a bit hard to swallow? Recently, it seems every couple of weeks the latest hoon bust is on the news. Police have even been saying "the message is not getting through". The message is there, but where is the solution?



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