



**Australian Government**

Government Response to the  
Joint Select Committee on Road Safety  
report:

*Driving Reform: final report for the Inquiry  
into Road Safety*

October 2023

## Introduction

On 25 March 2022, the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety tabled its Final Report *Driving Reform: final report for the Inquiry into Road Safety* in the Commonwealth Parliament. The report was the culmination of extensive engagement with the road safety community Australia and deep consideration of the complex issues which surround road safety. The Committee's report included 61 recommendations to improve road safety, with responsibility for those recommendations sitting across governments, industry, charities and the whole community. The Australian Government very much appreciates the work of the Committee in producing its report.

All governments in Australia have made clear their commitment to improve road safety through their agreement to the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30 (Strategy) and its National Road Safety Action Plan 2023-25 (Action Plan). Governments have a collective responsibility for the strategic direction and implementation of national road safety objectives and priorities. While many of the levers for road safety are controlled by state, territory and local governments, the Australian Government has a facilitating and influencing role and is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of actions and priorities; funding infrastructure investment to improve road safety outcomes; and regulating first entry of road vehicles into the Australian market.

In August 2019, Australian, state and territory ministers agreed, through the former Transport and Infrastructure Council (now the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting), that the National Road Safety Strategy would position Australia towards a 'Vision Zero' target, with no person being killed or seriously injured from a road crash, by 2050.

The Infrastructure and Transport Ministers Meeting (ITMM) also agreed that in order to be successful in reducing road trauma over the decade, the Strategy must reach beyond traditional transport solutions and that road safety can no longer be viewed solely as a transport issue. To achieve this, ITMM agreed to adopt a social model approach to extend road safety solutions into other sectors such as health and social services, law enforcement, education, justice, planning and industry. Underpinning the Strategy and Action Plan, the social model approach aims to foster a shift in road safety culture across Australian society to position road safety as everyone's responsibility.

Many of the Committee's recommendations relate to areas outside the Australian Government's responsibility, however where there are links to work already agreed through the Strategy and/or Action Plan, the Australian will endeavour to raise the recommendations with state and territories. Australian, state and territory road safety ministers also met in May 2023 to discuss national road safety challenges and opportunities.

The Australian Government remains committed to working with state, territory and local governments to reduce road trauma across the Australian community, in partnership with road safety stakeholders, First Nations communities, business, unions and the not-for-profit sector. Every single Australian plays a part in improving road safety and reducing road trauma.

## Australian Government Response to the Recommendations

### Committee Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that a cabinet minister for road safety be appointed. A key responsibility of the minister should be reporting to the Parliament on an annual basis in relation to the performance indicators in the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030 (NRSS 2021–30) and on progress in relation to the goals and priority actions in the NRSS 2021–30 and associated Action Plans.

Response:      Noted

The Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government is the Cabinet Minister responsible for road safety. The Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Transport is responsible for road safety program implementation.

The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed a governance structure for the Action Plan, which includes an ongoing Intergovernmental Steering Committee on Road Safety (Steering Committee) comprising representatives from Australian, state and territory government agencies, and the Australian Local Government Association. The Steering Committee will meet quarterly and report to ITMM through the Infrastructure and Transport Senior Officials' Committee (ITSOC).

The Steering Committee will be responsible for developing the Annual Progress Report on the National Road Safety Action Plan, which will include the progress made by all governments on their commitments in the Action Plan, for consideration by ITMM.

### Committee Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options to establish an advisory body for the Office of Road Safety, comprising road safety experts and professional organisations.

Response:      Noted

At the September 2022 ITMM, ministers agreed that ITSOC will engage with industry stakeholders twice a year on behalf of ITMM to ensure ministers have access to quality advice from industry.

The Australian Government will also hold two Ministerial Roundtables on Road Safety each year, and a number of state and territory governments are hosting their own stakeholder consultations to support the development of their Action Plans. Senior government officials will also engage with road safety experts and stakeholders as needed through the Intergovernmental Steering Committee on Road Safety and the Road Safety Data Working Group.

### Committee Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to agree a mechanism for the sharing of road safety data between jurisdictions.

Response:      Agreed

As part of the Action Plan, all governments have agreed to formalise data sharing arrangements through an Intergovernmental Data Sharing Agreement by mid-2023, and to develop a National Road Safety Data Collection and Reporting Framework and minimum national dataset by late 2024.

Road safety policy, programs and decision-making across all governments is informed through a wide range of sources, including crash, infrastructure, vehicle, enforcement and health-related datasets. Generally, state and territory governments are responsible for collecting the data through state and territory road traffic authorities, police and health systems.

The Australian Government currently receives a broad range of road safety data from the states and territories, including on crashes, rest area locations, traffic volumes and infrastructure conditions. A range of information is published by the Australian Government to assist stakeholders in accessing and interrogating road safety data, such as the interactive National Crash Dashboard.

The Australian Government will continue to identify available datasets and data gaps, and develop strategies for obtaining new datasets to aid in measuring progress under the Strategy and to inform decision-making. Data sharing and publication will continue to be cognisant of meeting privacy requirements, particularly with regard to the privacy of health and law enforcement information.

#### **Committee Recommendation 4**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options to encourage fitment of event data recorders across the Australian vehicle fleet, and to enable access to the data by police.

Response:      Agreed in principle

There are a number of complex issues relating to the fitment of event data recorders (EDRs) and the subsequent access to and use of the data generated by EDRs, including data ownership and privacy issues.

The Australian Government will work with state and territory governments to consider whether to introduce an Australian Design Rule (ADR) to mandate the fitment of EDRs, and identify the additional frameworks which would need to be amended to enable the use of EDR generated data.

#### **Committee Recommendation 5**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and other stakeholder to investigate options for a national crash review framework and road crash database.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government has committed \$24 million from 2019–25 to support road safety research and the development of new road safety technologies. Examples of funded projects include:

- University of Adelaide funded to conduct in-depth, no-blame investigations of crashes involving trucks to produce a substantial dataset of in-depth no-blame truck crash investigations in Australia, and analyse these crashes to identify the common contributing factors and the interventions that show the most potential to prevent or mitigate these crashes; and

- Monash University to identify the systemic factors that contribute to crash causation in the road freight transport industry and to develop and evaluate a systems-thinking crash investigation tool.

The Australian, state and territory governments have also agreed to develop a National Road Safety Research Framework (Research Framework) to co-ordinate and prioritise national road safety research by late 2024.

The Australian Government established the National Road Safety Data Hub (Data Hub) in October 2020 to deliver nationally consistent, credible and consumable data and information to support the prevention of fatal and serious injuries on Australian roads. This includes access to an interactive National Crash Dashboard to share data from the Government's National Crash Database. Discussions are continuing with states and territories to expand the data and information available through the Data Hub.

#### **Committee Recommendation 6**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options for regular public reporting on road trauma statistics, including on rates of change.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government currently publishes a broad range of road safety data and statistical publications, and established the National Road Safety Data Hub in October 2020 to deliver nationally consistent, credible and consumable data and information to support the prevention of fatal and serious injuries on Australian roads.

Under the Action Plan, all governments have agreed to develop a National Road Safety Data Collection and Reporting Framework and National Minimum Dataset by late 2024.

#### **Committee Recommendation 7**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and research institutions to develop and implement a national road safety research strategy.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed, through the Action Plan, to develop a Research Framework to coordinate and prioritise government road safety research, by late 2024.

#### **Committee Recommendation 8**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and other stakeholders such as Austroads to support development of nationally consistent guidelines and standards for road infrastructure which:

- align with the movement and place approach;
- incorporate Safe System principles;

- ensure safety for all road users, with a focus on vulnerable road users;
- optimise access for people with disability;
- prioritise human factors design and risk management;
- make provision for active travel infrastructure; and
- encourage safe speeds.

Response:      Agreed

Austroads conducts research on safe road design, and develops and publishes a range of guidelines on safe road infrastructure. The Australian, state and territory governments fund Austroads and provide policy and strategic direction through the Austroads Board.

#### Committee Recommendation 9

The committee recommends that the Australian Government:

- Include measures to increase safety at level crossings in the National Road Safety Strategy 2021 – 2030; and
- work with state and territory governments and the National Rail Safety Regulator to investigate opportunities to improve the safety of level crossings, including through targeted investment.

Response:      Noted

The Strategy is an agreement between the Australian, state and territory governments, and amendments require agreement by all governments. The Australian Government will discuss this recommendation with state and territory governments.

As announced by ITMM in February 2022, the Australian Government is working with states and territories on the new National Level Crossing Safety Strategy, led by the National Level Crossing Safety Committee, and supported by the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator. The strategy will drive nationally coordinated action to improve safety at level crossings.

The Australian Government will invest \$180.1 million starting from 2022-23 to make railway level crossings safer in regional areas nationwide. This includes \$160 million from 2023–24 to 2026–27 for up to 80 per cent of the cost of delivering priority level crossing upgrades. The Australian Government will work with states and territories to ensure that the highest risk sites around Australia will be targeted for upgrades.

The program will holistically improve safety at level crossings by funding:

- up to 80 per cent of the cost of lower-cost level crossing safety protections, such as upgrades that will change level crossings from passive to active (e.g. by installing boom gates, additional lighting and signals);
- improved data collection and risk assessment for level crossings (Level Crossing Safety Data Improvement Project);
- research into and trials of new level crossing technologies and safety measures (Level Crossing Safety Research and Innovation Project);
- a program to further build skills and understanding of safe driving around level crossings.

A broad range of lower-cost level crossing treatments will be included, since each level crossing is different and the treatments that make that particular level crossing safer are specific to that crossing. For example, projects may include installing or upgrading boom gates, lights and signals, or works to improve visibility and line-of-sight for motorists and train drivers. It may also include works to improve roads leading to level crossings such as rumble strips.

#### Committee Recommendation 10

The committee recommends that the Australian Government review the National Land Transport Act 2014, to ensure that it enables funding for projects which capture entire road corridors, including infrastructure which supports safe active travel.

Response:      Noted

The *National Land Transport Act 2014* (the Act) enables the Australian Government's investment in land transport infrastructure projects across Australia.

In March 2022, the National Land Transport Regulations 2022 (the Regulations) were introduced to clarify and expand the eligibility of land transport infrastructure projects under the Act, including infrastructure that supports safe and active travel. The Regulations provide additional items under the definition of road, railway, and construction in relation to a railway or road.

These additional items include the following, noting such items must be associated with a road to be eligible under the Act:

- off-road pedestrian and cycle pathways;
- bus stops;
- car parks;
- amenities at rest areas; and
- electric vehicle charging facilities.

#### Committee Recommendation 11

The committee recommends that the Australian Government continue the Road Safety Program over the life of the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030 and increase the funding available under that program.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government has committed funding to the Road Safety Program (RSP) over five years from 2020-21. Since the establishment of the RSP the operating environment has changed and there is no longer an urgent need for short-term stimulus projects. Following feedback from states and territories, the RSP will be redesigned to acknowledge delivery challenges and also allow for more transformational road safety works to be delivered, with funding extended to 2024-25.

#### Committee Recommendation 12

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to review and investigate ways of improving funding arrangements for infrastructure and road safety programs, with a focus on:

- providing longer-term, sustainable funding to road safety projects to enable more effective project and workforce planning;
- identifying priority areas for targeted investment, based on factors such as predicted crash risk;
- increasing the amount of funding dedicated to safety improvements on and around regional, rural, and remote roads;
- establishing categories of funding dedicated to specific types of road safety improvements, with a focus on safety for vulnerable road users;
- allocating additional funding to local government, balancing autonomy for local government with oversight of road safety outcomes; and
- prioritising safety for all road users without unduly limiting the funding available for critical infrastructure upgrade.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government is working, in consultation with state and territory governments, to develop a national Infrastructure Policy Statement (Statement). The Statement, currently under development, will do two important things. It will clearly define the Australian Government's land transport investment role – as a leader in nation building and productivity enhancing infrastructure. Secondly, it will identify the principles and objectives that underpin our future investments in transport projects and will help guide Infrastructure Australia's advice to government. This policy statement is still being finalised, in consultation with states and territories, but it will ensure the Commonwealth is focused on projects that increase productivity and the resilience of our freight networks, and support safer, better connected cities and regions.

It is anticipated that the Statement will underpin our shared vision to build a better, more connected Australia by ensuring the national infrastructure investment pipeline is well targeted to nationally significant, productivity enhancing projects, with positive impacts for market capacity, decarbonisation, and more streamlined and resilient supply chains.

Section 18 of the National Partnership Agreement on Land Transport Infrastructure Projects (NPA) provides the objectives for co-funded transport infrastructure investment. The safe system principles are one aspect of a larger set of objectives; focusing on safety, productivity, connectivity and employment opportunities provided by land transport projects.

The NPA provides indicators to achieve these objectives under Section 36, including improvements in road safety as measured by the expected reduction in casualty and fatality crashes as the result of the projects funded through the Agreement.

As part of a Project Proposal Report submission, the Australian Government asks a proponent to outline:

- Key benefits and outcomes of the project (such as safety improvements)
- Number of avoided crashes (average annual figures)
- Number of avoided serious injuries (average annual figures)
- Number of avoided fatalities (average annual figures)
- Present and future values of Crash Reduction benefits (in dollars)

Although not mandatory, proponents can bolster their achievement of safe system principles through the submission of supporting documentation such as safety audits and historical crash statistics.



In addition, by late 2023 the Australian Government will develop an assessment and evaluation framework specifically for the delivery of road safety upgrades it funds.

#### **Committee Recommendation 13**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government make all funding for road safety and road infrastructure projects conditional on the provision of data on road safety outcomes. Where practicable, this should include provision of data on the star rating of the relevant road.

Response:      Agreed in principle

Through the Infrastructure Investment Program, the Australian Government invests in transport infrastructure projects to realise a number of economic, safety and or community benefits. Where relevant, the Government seeks information from proponents on overall safety benefits of a project as part of project assessment and approval processes under the NPA, including the expected reduction in casualty and fatality crashes.

To participate in the RSP, state and territory governments are required to provide data on pre and post upgrade risk network ratings, traffic volume and mix, and monthly fatal crash and serious injury data, prior to final payments being made. Privacy considerations, coherence and completeness of data sets supplied by jurisdictions are currently significant impediments to the creation of national data sets and their analysis. The Australian Government is working with states and territories to overcome these issues.

#### **Committee Recommendation 14**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government publish star ratings for all roads on an ongoing basis.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government is not responsible for conducting or procuring star ratings for roads or assessing the safety of all roads, as this is the responsibility of state, territory and local governments.

#### **Committee Recommendation 15**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate the feasibility of developing a tool to allow road users to plan journeys according to safety, using star ratings as a basis.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government is not responsible for conducting or procuring star ratings for roads or assessing the safety of all roads, as this is the responsibility of state, territory and local governments. The Government has committed \$24 million from 2019–25 to support road safety research and the development of new road safety technologies.

#### **Committee Recommendation 16**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) to enhance ANCAP testing protocols, with a particular focus on:

- implementing protocols to assess human-vehicle interfaces; and
- safety for cyclists, pedestrians, and motorcyclists.

Response:      Noted

ANCAP is an independent organisation. While the Australian Government jointly (with states and territories) provides funding to support vehicle testing, ANCAP's testing protocols are independent of government decision making and guided by international testing standards.

#### **Committee Recommendation 17**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments, the Monash University Accident Research Centre, and the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) to:

- increase alignment between ANCAP safety ratings and Used Car Safety Ratings (UCSR); and
- develop and implement campaigns to increase awareness of UCSRs as a measure of used vehicle safety.

Response:      Noted

Both ANCAP and Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC), who estimate and develop the UCSR, are independent organisations. While the Australian Government jointly provides funding to support the development of vehicle safety ratings, the alignment of safety ratings is the responsibility of ANCAP and MUARC. Through the Action Plan, the Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to continue to fund both ANCAP the UCSR as part of the Vehicle Safety priority actions.

#### **Committee Recommendation 18**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government develop, publish, and implement a roadmap for mandating proven vehicle safety features by regulation.

Response:      Agreed

The Action Plan identifies a three-year roadmap of the new safety related ADRs which the Australian Government will consider legislating, subject to regulation impact statement outcomes and international developments.

These safety-related ADRs include:

- Lane Keep Assist Systems for light vehicles
- Acoustic Vehicle Alert System for electric vehicles
- Lane Departure Warning Systems for heavy vehicles
- Reversing Detection Systems – cameras, sensors, and/or close-proximity rear-view mirrors

- Driver drowsiness and inattention warning systems in both light and heavy vehicles
- Intelligent Speed Assistance for both light and heavy vehicles
- Enhanced devices for indirect vision, blind spot information systems, and side underrun protection on heavy vehicles

#### Committee Recommendation 19

The committee recommends that the Australian Government review policy and guidance applicable to regulatory impact assessments associated with Australian Design Rules and other road safety matters, with a view to increasing the priority afforded to road safety outcomes.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government will undertake a review of the ADR process to prioritise vehicle safety features and reduce the time to introduce new ADRs, by late 2023.

#### Committee Recommendation 20

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with road safety stakeholders to develop, publish, and implement guidance on best-practice fleet purchasing policy. Guidance should at a minimum specify that all vehicles purchased or used for work purposes must have a five-star safety rating with a recent date stamp.

Response:      Agreed in principle

Through the Action Plan, all governments have agreed to fund and promote the National Road Safety Partnership Program (NRSP), promote Safe Work Australia's national approach to improving work health and safety in the road transport industry, and fund workplace road safety awareness campaigns.

In relation to work health and safety (WHS), the Government notes that under the WHS laws a person conducting a business of undertaking (PCBU) must ensure the health and safety of workers and other persons while workers are at work. PCBUs must do all that is reasonably practicable to manage the risks associated with the use of vehicles within the workplace.

The Australian Government notes that the Austroads' *Vehicles as a Workplace: Work Health and Safety Guide (Vehicles as a Workplace)*, which has been implemented by some jurisdictions, has guidance for businesses to consider vehicles that are purchased or used for work purposes have a five-star safety rating.

The Australian Government will also implement Austroads' *Vehicles as a Workplace* in Australian Government agencies.

#### Committee Recommendation 21

Building on recommendations of the previous Joint Select Committee on Road Safety, the committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state, territory, and local governments to ensure that fleet policies for all levels of government:

- require vehicles purchased under salary sacrifice agreements have a five-star safety rating with a date stamp no older than three years;
- require vehicles used for work purposes to have a five-star safety rating with a date stamp no older than six years; and
- extend to all persons engaged in the public sector, including senior executives and parliamentarians.

Response:      Agreed in principle

The Australian Government has agreed to commence implementing Austroads' *Vehicles as a Workplace* Guide (the Guide) across the Commonwealth Fleet from mid-2023. The Guide identifies that:

- ANCAP ratings are continually reviewed and are displayed with a date stamp to attempt to keep pace with developments and to ensure that star ratings reward the most effective technologies:
- Some vehicles with an older date stamped rating will not have been tested to the latest, most stringent, standards; and
- Fleet policies that require vehicles to have the most recent 5-star rating, or alternatively no more than three years old, would ensure that safety performance is maximised.

Currently, the Commonwealth Fleet Vehicle Selection Policy (Policy) includes a requirement for Commonwealth Fleet Vehicles to have a five-star ANCAP safety rating at time of order. Under the latest ANCAP protocols, vehicle models with a date stamp greater than six years will no longer maintain their rating, and ordering of these vehicles would no longer comply with the Policy. The Policy balances a range of considerations, including safety, value for money and the environment, as well as the operational vehicle requirements of Commonwealth entities. The Policy is mandatory for non-corporate Commonwealth entities and applies to vehicles owned or leased by the Commonwealth for work purposes. Other Commonwealth entities, such as corporate Commonwealth entities and Government Business Enterprises are encouraged to adhere to the Policy, including the requirement for 5-star ANCAP safety ratings. Noting the Policy's existing safety criteria, the adoption of the principles outlined in the Guide will increase the safety credentials of the Commonwealth fleet.

The Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal is responsible for determining the provision of Commonwealth leased private-plated vehicles to federal parliamentarians. Individual Commonwealth entities are responsible for setting and administering the policies relating to Executive Vehicles Schemes and privately-owned vehicles used for work purposes. Parliamentarians and all Commonwealth entities are encouraged to apply the Policy to their vehicle selection. The Policy does not apply to salary sacrifice agreements as these arrangements are administered by individual Commonwealth entities.

The Australian Government and the state and territory governments have a commitment to ANCAP, demonstrated through funding contributions, and include ANCAP rating requirements in their fleet policies. The state and territory governments have agreed to implement the Guide in their fleet policies.

#### **Committee Recommendation 22**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to:

- identify and remove tax-based barriers to the purchase of newer, safer vehicles; and
- investigate opportunities to provide incentives for the purchase of newer, safer vehicles, with a focus on supporting lower-income road users and people in regional, rural, and remote areas.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government will raise this recommendation with the state and territory governments, and notes there are limited examples of state and territory taxes or charges (e.g. stamp duties/registration fees) acting as a specific barrier to newer and safer vehicles being purchased.

As part of the Action Plan, the Australian Government has agreed to commence investigating opportunities to reduce average fleet age in regional communities in 2023.

#### **Committee Recommendation 23**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to review measures at the state and territory level to regulate the use of e-scooters and other micro-mobility devices, with a view to ensuring the safety of riders, pedestrians, and other road users.

Response:      Noted

State and territory governments are responsible for regulating the use of e-scooters and other micro-mobility devices. Infrastructure and Transport Ministers endorsed the National Transport Commission's (NTC) policy for personal mobility devices (PMDs) in November 2020, and amendments to the Australian Road Rules (ARRs) to include PMDs were endorsed by ministers on 30 May 2021. The ARRs are a model law and, as such, each state and territory is responsible for adopting the ARRs into state and territory road laws to take legal effect.

#### **Committee Recommendation 24**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government support actions to increase uptake of vehicle safety features with measures to increase public awareness and understanding of how the features operate, with a focus on autonomous and semi-autonomous systems and the risks of disengagement from the driving task.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government has agreed to examine and conduct research into the effectiveness of new vehicle safety technologies. The Government has committed \$24 million from 2019–2025 to support road safety research and the development of new road safety technologies. Funded projects include:

- the University of Newcastle to investigate how long an operator can stay engaged in an automated vehicle (AV) when they are not actually driving to support future regulation of journey length for AVs;
- the University of New South Wales to increase the competency and confidence of older drivers in the use of advanced vehicle technologies;
- the Queensland University of Technology to explore safety issues arising from fundamental changes of the driver's role in AV from an active controller to a passive supervisor, with associated risks of inattention, reduced situational awareness, and human errors;
- the Queensland University of Technology to examine barriers associated with the uptake and acceptability of Advanced Rider Assistance Systems.

In addition to the measures above, the Australian, state and territory governments and the National Transport Commission are working to introduce a regulatory framework for the safe and legal

deployment of Autonomous Vehicles (AVs), creating obligations on entities responsible for automated driving systems to ensure they operate safely on Australian roads.

In February 2022, ITMM agreed to establish a Commonwealth Automated Vehicle Safety Law and regulator, supported by a general safety duty. This is a national approach to regulating AVs when they are commercially deployed on our roads ('in-service') and is currently projected to be operational by 2026.

The new national law will be supported by state and territory laws and on-road enforcement activities to regulate human users of automated vehicles, including humans that take over the driving task on request (referred to as a fallback-ready user) and passengers. This complementary framework will ensure that AVs are regulated when automated driving systems are either engaged or disengaged. The AV framework currently includes requirements for the provision of education to users of AVs including how to safely engage, operate, override or disengage an automated driving system.

#### Committee Recommendation 25

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the Aboriginal Community-Controlled sector to identify opportunities for investment in programs which:

- increase access to safer vehicles and proven safety features; and
- build capacity around vehicle maintenance and safe vehicle use.

Response:      Agreed in principle

Road safety policy and programs for First Nations communities must be aligned with the needs of, and co-designed with, First Nations communities. Under Priority Reform 1 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, implementation of government programs should be done in genuine partnership with First Nations people, through establishing policy and place-based partnerships and shared decision-making. This is reflected in the Strategy, which acknowledges the need for strong partnerships to be established and working to reduce the over representation of First Nations people in road trauma.

The Aboriginal Community-Controlled sector (ACCs) and First Nations peak organisations, in partnership with local, state and territory governments, are well placed to engage First Nations communities and identify barriers to accessing current programs and opportunities for investment to increase road safety. Any approach to improving vehicle maintenance, repair and registration should be place-based and consider the other social determinants of health. Approaches that stress the importance of using a capacity-building process when working with First Nations communities and of embracing of First Nations perspectives on health and injury will be important.

The Government will build trusted relationships with First Nations organisations and communities to jointly develop culturally appropriate countermeasures to close the gap for First Nations people by reducing their overrepresentation in road trauma. The specific countermeasures will be identified collaboratively with First Nations communities and the First Nations Community-Controlled sector to target the most relevant countermeasures in particular communities and regions, as is agreed in the Action Plan's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People priority. This will include ensuring road safety education programs funded by the Australian Government include a focus on improving learning and access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as well as foundational road safety messaging for communities.

#### **Committee Recommendation 26**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments, the insurance industry and other road safety stakeholders to investigate opportunities to reform motor vehicle insurance and to develop a roadmap towards policy and law reform.

**Response:**      Noted

The Australian Government will raise this recommendation with the state and territory governments, who are responsible for compulsory third-party insurance.

#### **Committee Recommendation 27**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government support the deployment of average speed cameras for all vehicle types by:

- working with state and territory governments to develop and agree a roadmap for increasing numbers of average speed cameras across the road network;
- making infrastructure and road safety funding conditional on state and territory governments extending the coverage of existing average speed cameras to all vehicle types; and
- making funding for projects on major roads and highways conditional on the deployment of average speed cameras for all vehicle types.

**Response:**      Noted

This is a matter for states and territories.

Under the Action Plan, the Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to develop a national best practice speed management guideline by 2024. The Government will consider this recommendation through this process.

#### **Committee Recommendation 28**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government ensure that actions to reduce speed limits and implement enforcement measures are accompanied by community consultation, with a focus on emphasising the safety benefits of these measures to community members.

**Response:**      Noted

The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to develop a national best practice speed management guideline by late 2024. State and territory governments are responsible for changing and enforcing speed limits.

#### **Committee Recommendation 29**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and police agencies to develop and implement a national enforcement strategy targeting driving under the influence

of drugs. This should involve the development of a national drug testing standard and research on reliable, accurate testing methods.

**Response:**      Agreed in principle

The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to develop a national best practice drug driving guideline in consultation with police agencies by late 2024. The Government will consider this recommendation through this process.

#### **Committee Recommendation 30**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to develop and implement national standards for road safety education in schools. The standards should have a core focus on enabling students to identify, understand, and respond to road safety risks, and on sharing roads safely with other road users.

**Response:**      Noted

State and territory governments, are responsible for both school education and road safety education.

#### **Committee Recommendation 31**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to increase the extent to which new drivers are required to demonstrate key competencies before receiving a learner or provisional licence. The committee also recommends that the following be embedded within the training framework for all drivers:

- Sharing the road safely with other users, with specific competencies focused on sharing the road safely with heavy vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.
- Driving on roads outside of metropolitan areas, with a focus on driving on rural and remote roads.
- Responding to risks and building a personal 'risk profile'.
- Hazard perception, awareness, and response.

**Response:**      Noted

State and territory governments are responsible for driver licensing.

#### **Committee Recommendation 32**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to harmonise licensing requirements and associated restrictions as far as possible. As part of this process, the committee considers that requirements and restrictions with the greatest impact on road safety outcomes should be identified, with national implementation of such measures supported.

**Response:**      Noted

State and territory governments are responsible for driver licensing.



### **Committee Recommendation 33**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments, motorcycle associations and other stakeholders to investigate potential changes to motorcycle licensing requirements which will improve safety without unduly discouraging motorcycling as a transport choice.

**Response:**      Noted

State and territory governments are responsible for driver licensing.

### **Committee Recommendation 34**

Building on the work of the previous Joint Select Committee on Road Safety and noting proposed actions in the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030, the committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the Aboriginal Community-Controlled sector to identify priority funding areas. These should have a focus on removing barriers to licensure and enabling access to culturally safe, appropriate road safety education.

**Response:**      Agreed in principle

The Australian Government will work with ACCs and First Nations peak organisations, in partnership with local, state and territory governments, remove barriers to licensure and enable access to culturally appropriate road safety education. First Nations communities and organisations are best placed to develop community-led strategies to address road safety. The importance of partnerships, co-design and community led programs is recognised in the Action Plan.

### **Committee Recommendation 35**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and relevant peak bodies to:

- develop national guidance for the identification and assessment of at-risk drivers by occupational therapy driving assessors (OTDAs); and
- explore opportunities to subsidise access to assessments conducted by OTDAs—for example via existing health and disability programs.

**Response:**      Noted

State and territory governments are responsible for driver licensing, including the assessment of at-risk drivers.

### **Committee Recommendation 36**

Building on recommendations of the previous Joint Select Committee on Road Safety, the committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate opportunities to support road safety campaigns that:

- encourage drivers to regularly evaluate their driving ability, including by self-referring for testing if necessary; and

- improve perceptions of vulnerable road users, with a particular focus on pedestrians, cyclists, and delivery riders.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government is providing \$8 million from 2019-2025 in grants for road safety awareness, education and collaboration initiatives. The Government is currently funding:

- Traffic Management Association of Australia's "Your Speed is Our Safety Campaign" to deliver a sustained national awareness media campaign about operating safely around road workers; and
- Amy Gillett Foundation to reduce road trauma in the cities of Sydney, Brisbane and Perth areas with the Sharing Roads Safely driver training course that increases awareness of safe interactions between heavy vehicle drivers and vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists).

The Australian Government has committed \$47.1 million in funding from 2016-17 to 2025-26 to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to administer the Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative (HVSİ). The HVSİ funds practical projects to improve heavy vehicle safety nationally. Round 7 funded projects, included:

- Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association to promote the use of telematics data from heavy vehicle electronic stability control systems to encourage safer driver behaviour in the livestock transport industry and reduce the incidence of truck roll-over crashes.
- Queensland Trucking Association for a pilot program to deliver a Safer Heavy Vehicle Driver Training Program, to enhance road safety outcomes.

The Australian Government is investing in projects that contribute to the heavy vehicle industry's productivity, as well as its safe, sustainable and efficient operation. To date, the Government has invested in 132 projects over the first 7 rounds of HVSİ.

#### **Committee Recommendation 37**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and research organisations to develop and implement a national framework for evaluating the effectiveness of road safety campaigns.

Response:      Noted

The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to develop a Research Framework to co-ordinate and prioritise road safety research, by late 2024. This will be supported by conducting a review of road safety research being undertaken/commissioned by Australian, state and territory governments to develop a national road safety research picture by mid-2023.

#### **Committee Recommendation 38**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government partner with the Aboriginal Community-Controlled sector to increase investment in road safety campaigns which aim to improve safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

**Response:**     Agreed in principle

The Australian Government aims to build trusted relationships with First Nations organisations and communities to jointly develop culturally appropriate campaigns to close the gap for First Nations peoples by reducing the number of First Nations peoples' road related deaths and serious injuries. The specific campaigns will be identified collaboratively with First Nations communities and the First Nations Community-Controlled sector to target the most relevant countermeasures in particular communities and regions. As part of the Action Plan, from mid-2023 the Government will also ensure road safety education programs funded by the Government include a focus on improving learning and access for First Nations communities.

#### **Committee Recommendation 39**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government, working with the Office of Road Safety and Safe Work Australia, investigate mechanisms to encourage public and private sector entities to develop, publish and implement individual road safety strategies, including by providing support and guidance as needed.

**Response:**     Noted

WHS laws are largely harmonised across jurisdictions through a set of uniform laws, known as the model WHS laws. All jurisdictions except Victoria have implemented the model WHS laws, although Victoria has similar laws in place. The implementation of WHS laws and their enforcement is the responsibility of governments within their respective jurisdiction.

Safe Work Australia has developed and published guidance material on managing traffic risks at a workplace, including work on or near a public road. The Australian Government will encourage Safe Work Australia to promote the use of this and other guidance relating to safe traffic management.

In mid-2023 the Australian Government will commence promoting Safe Work Australia's national approach to improving WHS in the road transport industry, as well as funding and promoting the NRSP's work of supporting Australian businesses in developing a positive road safety culture.

#### **Committee Recommendation 40**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state, territory, and local government to develop a nationally consistent approach to the collection of data on crashes involving vehicles driven for work purposes.

**Response:**     Agreed

The Australian Government acknowledges that vehicles are the workplace of tens of thousands of Australian workers.

The Australian Government will commence research into data relating to workplace crashes and near misses when the road is part of the workplace in late 2024, and establish a baseline for workplace fatalities involving a vehicle by late 2025.

The Government notes that the information published by Safe Work Australia on fatalities and injuries involving vehicles driven for work purposes uses the Type of Occurrence Classification System (TOOCS), which provides a nationally consistent framework for coding workers' compensation claims and workplace fatalities. The TOOCS is used by various organisations, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and State/Territory regulatory bodies, to code work-related injuries data.

#### **Committee Recommendation 41**

The committee recommends that the Office of Road Safety work with Safe Work Australia to improve reporting of data on work-related fatal and serious injuries involving road and vehicle use.

**Response:**      Agreed

The Australian Government will commence research into data relating to workplace crashes and near misses when the road is part of the workplace in late 2024, and establish a baseline for workplace fatalities involving a vehicle by late 2025.

#### **Committee Recommendation 42**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state, territory, and local government, and road safety stakeholders with relevant expertise, to develop and publish best-practice national guidance on ensuring safety for road workers around construction sites. This should include implementation of enforcement measures such as speed cameras.

**Response:**      Agreed in principle

The Australian Government works with state and territory governments, unions and employer groups, through Safe Work Australia, to develop and publish best-practice national guidance on ensuring safety for road workers around construction sites. Safe Work Australia has published traffic management guidance for construction work which provides information on how to manage risks that may arise from traffic movements at a construction site. The Government will continue to work with Safe Work Australia to encourage promotion and use of the guidance.

In mid-2023 the Government will commence promoting Safe Work Australia's national approach to improving WHS in the road transport industry, as well as funding and promoting the NRSP. State and territory governments have agreed to review traffic management policies, with particular attention to speed limits at roadwork sites and their enforcement.

#### **Committee Recommendation 43**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options to make funding for infrastructure projects conditional on funding recipients adopting:

- measures to ensure the safety of road workers at the site; and
- standards to protect all road users in construction activities.

**Response:**      Agreed

The Australian Government will mandate that the Construction Logistics and Community Safety Australia Standard and/or ISO 39001 Road Traffic Safety Management Systems be applied to construction projects and programs which it funds, by late 2025.

#### **Committee Recommendation 44**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government invest in targeted campaigns to increase public awareness of the importance of road worker safety, with a focus on encouraging drivers to lower speeds around work sites and increasing hazard awareness.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government is providing \$8 million from 2019-20 to 2024-25 in grants for road safety awareness, education and collaboration initiatives. The Government is currently funding Traffic Management Association of Australia's "Your Speed is Our Safety Campaign" to deliver a sustained national awareness media campaign about operating safely around road workers.

The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to continue to fund workplace road safety awareness campaigns from mid-2023 as part of the Action Plan. Governments have also agreed to fund and promote the NRSP's work of supporting Australian businesses in developing a positive road safety culture through the Action Plan.

#### **Committee Recommendation 45**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with Safe Work Australia and other relevant stakeholders to support implementation of the Guide to managing work health and safety in the food delivery industry, and other guidance on managing health and safety obligations as appropriate, with a particular focus on platform-based organisations in the rideshare and food delivery sectors. As part of this work, the committee considers that the Australian Government should support organisations to strengthen safety measures, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and measures for reporting safety risks.

Response:      Agreed in principle

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring WHS protections for all forms of work, noting that WHS in Australia is legislated and regulated separately by the Australian, state and territory governments, with compliance and enforcement the responsibility of respective WHS regulators.

WHS laws are largely harmonised across jurisdictions through a set of uniform laws, known as the model WHS laws, which capture arrangements in the gig economy. All jurisdictions except Victoria have implemented the model WHS laws, while Victoria has similar laws in place.

The Australian Government notes the efforts of jurisdictions and organisations to improve safety in the food delivery industry through measures such as the 2021 National Safety Principles for Food Delivery Platforms and New South Wales' (NSW) WHS Amendment (Food Delivery Riders) Regulation 2022. The Government continues to monitor the implementation of these measures as it works with Safe Work Australia and its membership on a harmonised approach to support strengthened WHS measures.

Safe Work Australia is an independent statutory tripartite policy body that develops and maintains the model WHS laws. In December 2021 Safe Work Australia published guidance on managing the risks in

the food delivery industry, with materials specifically directed at platform organisations, delivery workers and food outlets. This national guidance incorporates elements of NSW's Guide to managing work health and safety in the food delivery industry. The guidance clarifies that platform organisations are persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU). As PCBUs, platforms must do everything that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of their workers, including delivery riders who carry out delivery services for the platform organisation. Food outlets who partner with platform organisations and in limited circumstances, delivery riders who carry out their own business, may also be PCBUs.

The guidance includes a non-exhaustive list of key control measures for platform organisation to manage risks for their workers, including delivery workers. The guidance also provides advice on the requirement to consult with workers and their health and safety representatives so far as is reasonably practicable. As workers are most likely to know about the risks of their work to their health and safety, platform organisations must give their workers an opportunity to share their ideas, express any safety concerns, and contribute to the decision-making process on safety issues. PCBUs must also consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with other PCBUs who have a duty in relation to the same matter, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Safe Work Australia completed a review of the model WHS incident notification framework in September 2022 to address any gaps in coverage and ensure notification requirements are clear for PCBUs. The recommendations of the review are subject to a regulatory impact analysis process, which will include public consultation. Safe Work Australia's work is ongoing.

Safe Work Australia has also researched effective ways to communicate with food delivery workers to further strengthen WHS awareness in the industry. In May 2023, Safe Work Australia launched its 'deliver yourself home safely' campaign, which aims to raise awareness of WHS in the food delivery industry through public relations and digital and social marketing. The campaign includes a range of accompanying educative materials including checklists, posters, videos, fact sheets and infographics covering WHS rights and duties, hazard identification, risk management and workers' compensation. Safe Work Australia is also undertaking a stocktake of gig economy activities to assist in identifying gaps and priority areas to inform further projects relevant to the gig economy.

The Australian Government remains committed to addressing working conditions of gig economy workers who are engaged as independent contractors. Consistent with this commitment, the Australian Government will seek to extend the powers of the Fair Work Commission to enable it to inquire into 'employee-like' forms of work, such as platform-based work in the rideshare and food delivery sectors, and determine what rights and obligations should apply to better protect them from exploitation.

#### **Committee Recommendation 46**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options to further clarify responsibility for workplace health and safety in the gig economy, with a particular focus on persons who drive or ride for work purposes. As part of this process, the committee considers that the Australian Government should explore the feasibility of adopting chain of responsibility arrangements for gig economy work.

**Response:**      Agreed in principle

The Australian Government notes that there is already significant overlap between chain of responsibility requirements and the duties found in WHS laws. Under WHS laws, platform organisations are persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) that have a primary duty of care to ensure

the health and safety of their workers so far as is reasonably practicable. Food outlets who partner with platform organisations and in limited circumstances, delivery riders who carry out their own business, may also be PCBU's.

WHS laws apply a broad concept of 'worker' that encapsulates anyone who carries out work. This means that each PCBU has a duty to take all reasonably practicable measures to ensure the health and safety of its workers, including delivery riders engaged to perform delivery services in the gig economy. The duty applies irrespective of whether the workers are employees, independent contractors or employees of contractors. They are all considered 'workers' under section 7 of the model WHS Act and are all owed this duty. Duties are also owed to 'other persons' whose health and safety may be impacted by the conduct of the business or undertaking.

The principal advantage of chain of responsibility arrangements is that they provide clarity on who holds safety duties, and these duties are indivisible, cannot be reassigned, and are shared by everyone in the chain. Similar duties, with similar restrictions, exist under model WHS laws and are already applicable to the gig delivery industry. The Government notes that Safe Work Australia is currently undertaking work to provide greater clarity on WHS duties in the gig economy. This is in response to recommendation 5 of the Review of the Model WHS laws (the Review). The Review found that confusion arises in the interaction of the principles contained in sections 13-17 of the model WHS Act, particularly in non-traditional work settings such as labour hire, outsourcing, franchising and the gig economy. The principles in sections 13-17 provide that a duty cannot be transferred to another person, a person can have more than one duty, more than one person can have the same duty at the same time and require management of risks.

Ministers with responsibility for WHS agreed that Safe Work Australia develop a model Code or other practical guidance on how PCBU's can meet the obligations associated with the principles contained in sections 13-17 of the model WHS Act. Agreement was also made to include examples of processes for PCBU's to work cooperatively and cohesively to discharge their duties. This is in the context of the section 46 duty to consult, cooperate and coordinate with other duty holders. Safe Work Australia's work is ongoing.

#### **Committee Recommendation 47**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate options to expedite mandatory fitment of proven safety features to heavy vehicles. Autonomous emergency braking and conspicuity markings should remain a key focus in the short term.

**Response:**      Agreed

The Australian Government has recently released a package to encourage the uptake of newer, safer heavy freight vehicles by allowing wider vehicles with a prescribed set of safety systems. This is usually referred to as the Safer Freight Vehicles reforms. The safety features include enhanced devices for indirect vision, blind spot information systems, side underrun protection and conspicuity markings, in addition to advanced emergency braking and electronic stability control.

Advanced Emergency Braking and Electronic Stability Control will be mandated through the ADRs on:

- new model heavy vehicles
- new buses
- new goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes.



#### **Committee Recommendation 48**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to investigate options to incentivise the purchase of newer, safer heavy vehicles and increase their affordability.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government will raise this recommendation with the state and territory governments. As part of the Action Plan, the Australian Government has agreed to commence investigating opportunities to reduce average fleet age in regional communities in 2023. The Australian Government has also agreed to work with the National Road Safety Partnership Program and industry to promote the adoption of heavy-vehicle fleet purchasing policies encouraging inclusion of safety technologies.

#### **Committee Recommendation 49**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state, territory, and local governments, and with other stakeholders such as the National Truck Accident Research Centre, to improve the collection of data on crashes involving heavy vehicles. The committee considers that this should involve the development of mechanisms to collect data on:

- the 'ancillary' heavy vehicle sector;
- the driver at fault in crashes, if this can be established;
- crashes that do not involve fatal or serious injury, and may not involve very significant amounts of financial damage; and
- vehicle type, age, and relevant safety features.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government will co-ordinate work to gain insights from heavy vehicle telematics data and implications for heavy vehicle safety by early 2024. The Government will continue to work with the states and territories to collect and publish road safety data, including the National Crash Dashboard and statistical reports on fatal crashes involving heavy vehicles.

#### **Committee Recommendation 50**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to support development and implementation of safety management systems by heavy vehicle operators, including through widespread adoption of the NHVR's 9 Step SMS Roadmap.

Response:      Noted

At the August 2022, ITMM agreed to progress a set of legislative and non-legislative reforms to the Heavy Vehicle National Law. Through the review of the Heavy Vehicle National Law, the Australian Government is working with state and territory governments, industry, the NHVR and the NTC, to lead the development of reforms.



Key reform propositions include a new certification scheme, enhancing the existing National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme and include as part of any scheme, a requirement for a baseline Safety Management System.

#### **Committee Recommendation 51**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government investigate opportunities to make funding for infrastructure conditional on plans to install appropriately designed heavy vehicle rest areas.

Response:      Noted

Through the Infrastructure Investment Program, the Australian Government invests in transport infrastructure projects to realise any number of economic, safety and/or community benefits. Where appropriate, road projects may receive funding for off road rest areas in conjunction with investment road projects.

The Government invests in transport infrastructure projects that have been prioritised by states and territories. State, territory and local governments are responsible for reviewing the provision of Heavy Vehicle Rest Areas (HVRA) across their network, and designing and implementing new and upgraded rest area facilities.

#### **Committee Recommendation 52**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government commission an audit of existing rest areas in partnership with the heavy vehicle industry and recreational sector to identify gaps in the provision of quality facilities to guide future infrastructure investment decisions across all levels of government.

Response:      Noted

State, territory and local governments are responsible for reviewing the provision of HVRA across their network, and designing and implementing new and upgraded rest area facilities.

#### **Committee Recommendation 53**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state, territory and local governments, and the private sector, to investigate opportunities to co-locate rest areas with existing facilities, underpinned by joint funding arrangements.

Response:      Noted

State, territory and local governments are responsible for reviewing the provision of HVRA across their network, and designing and implementing new and upgraded rest area facilities. Through the Action Plan, the Government will build and upgrade heavy vehicle rest areas to ensure drivers have the facilities they need to rest, recuperate and return safely home, including through the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program.

In delivering the Rest Area Program, the Government will be working side by side with truckies and industry experts to deliver a suite of heavy vehicle rest areas across the country. Truckies will be at the table, providing their expert advice for the targeted rest area projects. The Heavy Vehicle Rest Area steering committee, which includes four industry representatives and five truck drivers, held its inaugural meeting in February 2023.

#### **Committee Recommendation 54**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and with stakeholders with engineering expertise to develop guidelines on designing rest areas which facilitate sharing between heavy and recreational vehicles without compromising the ability of heavy vehicle drivers to rest.

Response:      Noted

State, territory and local governments are responsible for reviewing the provision of HVRA across their network, and designing and implementing new and upgraded rest area facilities.

In 2019, Austroads released updated guidelines on the provision of HVRAs, to assist road managers to assess HVRAs and plan related HVRA infrastructure. The guidelines provide context regarding the importance of route planning to heavy vehicle operators, to meet fatigue management regulations, types of HVRAs and good design principles.

#### **Committee Recommendation 55**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments and with industry stakeholders to ensure that initiatives to increase the number and quality of rest areas consider multiple use issues.

Response:      Noted

State, territory and local governments are responsible for reviewing the provision of HVRA across their network, and designing and implementing new and upgraded rest area facilities.

The Australian Government is aware of the capacity constraints and associated safety complications of HVRAs being utilised by light, medium and heavy rigid recreational users. State, territory and local governments are responsible for appropriate enforcement of HVRA usage.

#### **Committee Recommendation 56**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments across the transport and education portfolios to develop and implement targeted campaigns to promote the heavy vehicle sector as a career and as an employer of choice.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government is aware of the workforce and labour challenges present in the transport and logistics industry. An ageing workforce poses a major challenge for the future of the industry, combined with difficulty in attracting new workers and retaining existing workers.

The heavy vehicle industry is impacted by existing reputational status, lack of clear entry points and career pathways through the industry; working conditions and practices that do not match lifestyle aspirations; and, remuneration and its perceived relationship to the demands of the job.

Through the HVSI, the government is investing in:

- Kickstart Training Academy Steady State - Heavy Vehicle Simulator and Training Program
- Women in Trucking Association - Foot in the Door program will link licenced, inexperienced female heavy vehicle drivers with training organisations and employers

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) delivers a range of initiatives that promote the heavy vehicle sector as a career and support employers to attract employees, particularly into entry level roles. Workforce Australia includes a Jobs Hub page for Logistics Warehousing and Transport where individuals can find industry and career information. The industry is also supported by a national Employer Liaison Officer for Transport, who works closely with employers and peak bodies to raise awareness about heavy vehicle sector careers, connect employers with people who are looking for work, and co-design pre-employment and training pathways using available labour supports.

In addition, industry and employers can access bespoke programs such as Workforce Specialists and Launch into Work. Under these initiatives they can co-design with the department, and other stakeholders, tailored approaches to recruit, prepare and employ participants from the government's employment services. The guiding document for the Workforce Specialists initiative, the Workforce Connections: Workforce Specialist Project Framework (the Framework), identifies Transport, Postal and Warehousing as an industry with workforce needs and opportunities for job seekers, and specifically highlights drivers as an in-demand occupation.

Under the Launch into Work program, DEWR works with businesses that have entry-level job opportunities to co-design and deliver pre-employment projects. Businesses select the participants for the project they run to ensure they are the right fit, and deliver a co-designed project to build the skills the participants need to start employment. The program is open to businesses from all industries. Businesses with heavy vehicle operator roles in transport and logistics; and construction are engaging with the program.

#### **Committee Recommendation 57**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and industry to support development and uptake of programs focused on physical and mental health in the heavy vehicle sector.

**Response:**     Agreed

The Australian Government will continue to fund the HVSI to support implementable, value-for-money projects that deliver tangible improvements to heavy vehicle safety. The Government has committed \$47.1 million in funding from 2016-17 to 2025-26 to the NHVR for HVSI. On 22 November 2022, HVSI Round 8 opened for applications, focusing on investments in driver or supply chain skills and training, vehicle safety technologies and improvements, or heavy vehicle educational tools and resources.

#### **Committee Recommendation 58**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government support targeted campaigns for heavy vehicle drivers, focused on identifying the early warning signs of health issues and acting as necessary.

Response:      Agreed

The Australian Government will continue to fund the HVSI to support implementable, value-for-money projects that deliver tangible improvements to heavy vehicle safety. Round 7 of the HVSI, funding was provided for the Road Hazard Identification and Avoidance Program. Developing 'Road Hazard Avoidance Training Program', focusing on: navigating road networks, hazard perception and awareness, driving to weather conditions, the importance of conducting pre-starts and fatigue management, mental health awareness around working in an isolated environment, importance of movement breaks and physical activity while driving long distances.

#### **Committee Recommendation 59**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government develop and implement mechanisms to collect and publish reliable, accurate data on suicide in the road transport system.

Response:      Noted

The Australian Government will continue to work with states and territories to enhance road safety data collection and publishing, while addressing privacy requirements and national consistency within reporting. Under the Action Plan, the Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to develop a National Road Safety Data Collection and Reporting Framework by late 2024.

#### **Committee Recommendation 60**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government amend the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030 to include a priority area focused on improving and delivering national consistency in post-crash response and care. This should be accompanied by actions focused on:

- Building the capacity of trauma services.
- Increasing the availability of mental health support.
- Obtaining reliable, accurate data on post-crash response, and improving data linkage efforts.
- Supporting and building the capacity of first responders.
- Improving the quality and timeliness of post-crash responses in regional, rural, and remote areas.
- Supporting post-crash care outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, including increasing investment in Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisations.
- Appropriate reporting of road trauma in the media.

Response:      Noted

The Strategy is an agreement between the Australian, state and territory governments, and amendments require agreements across governments. The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to conduct a mid-term review of the Strategy to make sure the focus is where it needs to be, and redirect or refine the priorities where required. The Government will consider this

recommendation in the mid-term review, noting that state and territory governments are responsible for post-crash response and ongoing healthcare.

Most media content that is broadcast in Australia is regulated by co-regulatory codes of practice developed by broadcasting industry sectors in accordance with the Broadcasting Services Act 1992. This co-regulatory system recognises the importance of television and radio content reflecting community standards. Generally, these codes seek to balance protections for audiences from potential harmful content while providing the opportunity for broadcasters to present newsworthy content in the public interest. For example, the Commercial TV Code of Practice requires that free-to-air broadcasters must not include material in news or current affairs programs which is likely to seriously distress or seriously offend a substantial number of viewers.

Australia's print news media operates under a self-regulatory framework, where the Australian Press Council (APC) assesses complaints for most industry participants. The APC publishes a statement of principles which are binding on all publications subject to its jurisdiction which includes News Limited, Fairfax Media and most of the major news websites in addition to the principal union for employees in the media industry, the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance.

#### **Committee Recommendation 61**

The committee recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments, the heavy vehicle sector, and other road safety stakeholders to support national rollout of first response training for heavy vehicle drivers. The committee considers that this training should be included as an action item in the National Road Safety Strategy 2021–2030.

Response:      Noted

The Strategy is an agreement between the Australian, state and territory governments, and amendments require agreements across governments. The Australian, state and territory governments have agreed to conduct a mid-term review of the Strategy to make sure the focus is where it needs to be, and redirect or refine the priorities where required. The Government will consider this recommendation in the mid-term review.

The Australian Government has previously provided funding to the Northern Territory Road Transport Association's *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow* program to gather evidence on the impact on heavy vehicle drivers of being the first responder at a road accident site, and trial the delivery of five Stop the Bleed training workshops for heavy vehicle drivers.

The Government will continue to fund the HVSI to support implementable, value-for-money projects that deliver tangible improvements to heavy vehicle safety.