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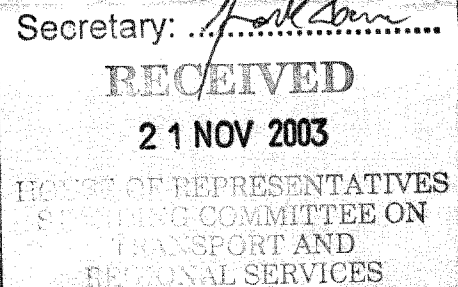
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Dear Sir

### INQUIRY INTO NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY

In response to the invitation by the Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services regarding National Road Safety, the South Australian Government is pleased to provide comment.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry.

The Government of South Australia firmly believes that inquiries into road safety such as this are of major importance in addressing road safety issues, by bringing together and comparing information from a variety of sources, to address areas of commonality in road safety that may be evident.

The DTUP has prepared the following submission in accordance with the headings and structure of the terms of reference provided.

- 1. Review the strategic objectives, priority areas and proposed measures in the National Road Safety Strategy 2001 – 2010, and the National Road Safety Action Plans for 2001 and 2002 and for 2003 and 2004 and consider whether these remain appropriate.***

With the exception of comments below on school based road safety education South Australia considers that the strategic objectives in the National Road Safety Strategy address the primary road safety issues.

South Australia considers that the priority areas and measures that have been progressively identified through biennial national road safety action plans have largely been the appropriate measures needed in the initial years of the national strategy to bring about reductions in the road toll.

The two year cycle for the National Action Plan provides an opportunity for review of progress to date and for the inclusion of new or modified road safety initiatives.

#### School Based Road Safety Education

The National Road Safety Strategy 2001-2010 is clear on the need for young road users to be educated in road safety in order to develop knowledge and attitudes that lead to responsible behaviours on the roads. The process includes parents, school-based training and novice driver training. The Strategy also acknowledges the fact that education is needed to develop an understanding of why certain behaviours are safe or unsafe. The Strategy recognises the need for government, non-government and community involvement and participation in projects to address road safety issues.

However, the Action Plans 2001–2002 and 2003-2004 provide little direction for states and territories in terms of educating children and young people about road safety matters.

The focus areas contained in the Action Plans highlight community education and development of programs but do not specifically comment on the role schools could play in educating young people and school communities.

There are specific focus areas within the Action Plans that could be improved by making links with road safety education programs for schools, and links with other relevant national and state strategies, for example, those relating to drugs and alcohol.

#### ***2. Identify any additional measures or approaches that could or should be adopted by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, local government and non-government agencies and bodies (including industry) to reduce road trauma.***

##### Intelligent Transport Systems

Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) have the potential to bring about major improvements to road safety.

Such systems or devices include the following:-

- alcohol interlock,
- seat belt warning or interlock,
- speed warning device,
- Intelligent speed adaption system,
- fatigue warning and vehicle shut-down device
- crash avoidance system,
- tailgating warning or control system,
- vehicle tracking devices,
- route navigation units,
- smartcards combining licences, vehicle access and vehicle operation,

These systems have the potential to significantly reduce and in some cases virtually eliminate a number of behavioural issues that significantly contribute to the size and severity of their road toll.

None of these systems are awaiting discovery or the development of enabling technology. The systems exist and they are beyond the prototype stage. Some of the systems exist as marketable products. Some are becoming installed by some vehicle manufacturers in luxury-end models of their vehicle ranges.

Understandably, there are commercial interests and certain confidentialities involved with some of the devices. The progressive introduction of the devices into new vehicles is associated to a degree with the cost of implementation and competition between manufacturers in a healthy industry.

It is contended that Australia is missing an opportunity to speed up the introduction of many of these devices to all new vehicles manufactured and sold in Australia. The Australian public is missing an opportunity to use the latest technology to reduce road trauma.

There are two alternatives for speeding up the introduction of ITS devices in new vehicles. Firstly through the regulatory approach involving the introduction of new Australian Design Rules (ADRs).

A second approach is through Government-led collaboration with Australian and overseas vehicle manufacturers. Australian manufacturers are part of the Australian community and there appears to be an opportunity to foster the voluntary increase in the speed with which ITS equipment is installed in all new vehicles sold in Australia. The provision of some incentives may be possible based on the likely benefit resulting from the uptake of the ITS devices.

#### Additional School Based Road Safety Initiatives

There are a number of areas where schools could play a further role in road safety education.

- Support for community education activities to support road safe behaviours involving active engagement and participation of young people.
- Young people researching, auditing, monitoring and promoting road and travel safety.
- Students and young people being involved in community forums and road safety groups.
- Senior students mentoring younger children.
- Ensuring students have equitable access to information, resources and support, and implementing special programs, for example, for young people at risk
- Promoting partnerships in school communities between parents, educators, students and the broader community recognising that road safety is a whole of community issue.
- Enhance initiatives that improve safety of students on route to and from school and using school buses (over the past two years significant improvements have been implemented in South Australia).

It is considered desirable for these issues to be considered at a national level through the appropriate forums.

Uniform Scheme for Licensing of Drivers and Riders

Statistics show that young drivers and riders aged between 17 and 25 years are significantly over-represented in crashes and offence areas such as speeding and drink driving.

The period of training leading up to the time that a young person acquires a full licence, and the following few years of driving, are critical to the development of satisfactory driving skills and responsible attitudes towards use of the road and other road users.

The process of learning to safely and responsibly drive a vehicle is essentially identical across all Australian States and Territories. However, among the jurisdictions there are significant differences in the law, training approach and processes associated with the acquisition of a licence.

There is considered to be a strong case to investigate and develop a national model for driver training and licensing including legal requirements, training and processes – and for all States and Territories to adopt the model.

I trust this information is of assistance to the Committee, and look forward to the release of a final report on the inquiry.

Yours sincerely



Michael Wright MP  
**MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT**

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