



# SEEING RED ON ROADS

## Roadmap for the next New South Wales Government

March 2011



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## About NRMA Motoring & Services

NRMA Motoring & Services (NRMA) comprises around 2.3 million Members across New South Wales (NSW) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT).

Today, motor vehicles remain the dominant form of transport for people in NSW, in fact 74% of people polled in a 2010 survey for NRMA stated that they are regular car users (everyday or most days).

The main reasons given for using a vehicle include shopping, and seeing friends and family. Just over half of the respondents used their vehicle to commute to work.

The survey showed that NRMA is by far the most widely trusted organisation with the knowledge to address motoring issues, followed by the NSW Police, with the NSW Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) ranking third.

For more than 90 years, NRMA has represented the interests of motorists in relation to road safety, road funding, and other relevant public policy issues. NRMA advocates for safety improvements for road users, focussing on the three key themes of safer roads, safer road users, and safer vehicles.

Since NRMA formed in 1920, there have been 29 State Elections. In each of these, NRMA has played an important role ensuring that the needs of its Members and motorists right across NSW are heard.

In this, the 55th State Election in NSW, NRMA's role is as important as ever before.

## Why People are Seeing Red on Roads

### *NRMA President Wendy Machin*

The March 26 election is one of the most significant in recent years.

The next Government will have an enormous job on its hands ensuring that the state's roads and transport infrastructure can meet the needs of our growing population.

Representing more than 2.3 million Members, NRMA Motoring & Services is playing a key role in the election, campaigning on issues that matter to motorists.



Until the M4 East Extension, F6 Extension, and F3 to Sydney Orbital are constructed, Sydney's road network will remain unfinished and unworthy of one of the world's greatest cities.

Regional highways like the Princes, Pacific, and Newell are notoriously unsafe.

The next Government will need to look for new ways to improve road safety and respond to the community's desire for more clearly marked highway patrols without reducing front-line resources.

It will need to continue to make the state's licensing system fairer without sacrificing safety and crack down on those irresponsible drivers who continuously break the law.

Over the next four year term plans will need to be adopted that will improve the mobility for the state's ageing population and encourage the take up of alternative fuels and technologies.

These challenges are important to our Members and this document outlines how the next NSW Government can use its first term to deliver results worthy of our great state.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Wendy Machin'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

## **Priorities for the Next NSW Government**

### **Sydney's Missing Motorways**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to:

- providing a clear timeline for constructing the M4 East Extension from Concord to the Sydney CBD,
- duplicating the M5 East motorway and widening the M5 West motorway within the next term of Government,
- constructing the F3 to Sydney Orbital Link,
- constructing the F6 extension, and
- working with the Australian Government to secure funding for these four key road projects to complete the Sydney Orbital Road Network.

### **Regional Highways**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to upgrading key regional highways to provide a safer environment for all road users and to improve the efficiency of passenger and freight movements in regional NSW.

#### **Regional Highways Road Safety**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to a second stage of the Road Toll Response Package to address regional road safety.

#### **Pacific Highway**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government, in conjunction with the Australian Government, to increase funding to the Pacific Highway to ensure that it is completed by 2016.

#### **Princes Highway**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to:

- a full duplication of the Princes Highway between Berry and Bomaderry,
- completion of the Victoria Creek Alignment,
- completion of the Dignams Creek Alignment, and
- a complete plan to ensure proper road alignment from Jervis Bay to the Victorian border.

#### **Oxley Highway**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to make a commitment to fund safety improvements on the Oxley Highway.

#### **Newell Highway**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit the necessary funds to address safety issues and to increase the number of overtaking lanes and rest areas for the benefit of both heavy and local vehicles. NRMA also recommends that the Newell Highway speed limit be returned to 110kph with appropriate safety measures in place.

## **Cutting Congestion**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to funding a congestion management strategy for Sydney.*

## **More Effective Enforcement**

### **Police Presence**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to a substantial increase in the number of police including 200 extra Highway Patrol Officers and visible, marked highway patrol vehicles, as the most effective way to deter poor driver behaviour.*

### **Police Enforcement Bays**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to considering the installation of police enforcement bays as part of all major highway upgrades, to assist the Police in reducing the road toll in NSW.*

### **Hypothecation of Traffic Fine Revenue to Road Safety**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit that the hypothecation of traffic fine revenue will be legislated within the first term of Government.*

### **Cameras Not to be Operated by Local Government**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to ensuring that speed limits and speed enforcement will remain the responsibility of the NSW Government.*

### **Visibility of Enforcement Cameras**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to annual audits of all camera sites and to working with NRMA to achieve general improvements to signs and to highlighting the actual cameras themselves.*

### **Point-to-Point Speed Cameras**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to reaffirm the commitment made by both major parties that point-to-point speed cameras will only be used to monitor heavy vehicles.*

### **Review of Speed Zoning Guidelines**

*NRMA want the next NSW Government to commit to reviewing the RTA speed zoning guidelines in consultation with NRMA.*

### **Reliable and Accurate Enforcement Cameras**

*NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to ensuring that enforcement cameras are regularly inspected, calibrated, and that the most up to date technology is used.*

## **School Safety**

### **Flashing Lights at School Zones**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to extending the current flashing lights program.

### **Annual Audit of School Zones**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to adopt a regular program of annual audits of school zones to identify any maintenance or operational issues.

### **New Fluorescent School Zone Signs**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to \$2.5 million to replace all school zone signs across the State with fluorescent yellow green signs to ensure road safety is enhanced and to provide consistency for motorists.

### **Seat Belts in School Buses**

NRMA wants the NSW Government to commit to ensuring the fitting of seat belts complying with Australian Design Rule 68 in all buses used at any time to transport school children.

## **Local Roads**

### **Increased Funding for the State Black Spot Program**

NRMA asks the next NSW Government to commit funds to match the Australian Government's recent Nation Building doubling of Black Spot funding.

### **A State Roads to Recovery Program**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to matching the Federal Roads to Recovery Program, significantly assisting Councils with achieving better outcomes for their communities.

## **Alternative Fuels**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to assist in addressing the fuel crisis by:

- drastically increasing investment in and service quality of our public and active transport systems,
- purchasing vehicles for its fleets with low fuel consumption and/or alternative technology that does not demand fossil fuels,
- encouraging the introduction of natural gas fuel for vehicles, including the establishment of a natural gas vehicle (NGV) refuelling network,
- introducing incentives in reduced stamp duty and registration costs for low environmental impact vehicles, and
- establishing a plan to have an electric vehicle charging and hydrogen refuelling network in place in at least the Greater Sydney Region by 2020 to accommodate the electric powered and fuel cell powered vehicles that will be available by then.

### **Alternative Fuel Vehicles**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to a whole-of-government approach to encourage the take-up of alternative fuel vehicles.

## **Motorcycle Safety**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government, in conjunction with key motorcycle stakeholders including NRMA, to develop a strategic plan within 12 months to reduce motorcycle fatalities and injuries and ensure that motorcycles are recognised in transport policy and planning and in road design, construction, and maintenance.

## **Delivering Mobility to our Ageing Population**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to develop and implement a transport and mobility plan for our ageing population.

## **Tougher Laws for Drink and Drug Driving**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to introducing tougher laws for drink and drug driving.

## **Young Drivers**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to reducing young driver fatalities and injuries on NSW roads and provide more education and training. In addition, NRMA wants the NSW Government to work with the Australian Government to promote keys2drive.

## **Effective Road Safety Stakeholder Relations**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to the NSW Road Safety Advisory Council.

## **Fuel Price Boards**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to working with the Australian Government to introduce uniform price boards for all fuel sold at petrol stations.

## **Minimum Safety Standards**

### **Minimum Safety Standards for Government Fleets**

NRMA wants the NSW Government to adopt strict guidelines to ensure that:

- all government fleet passenger vehicles have a five-star Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) rating, and
- all government fleet commercial vehicles have a minimum four-star ANCAP rating until 2012 and a five-star rating thereafter.

### **Stars on Cars**

NRMA wants the NSW Government to commit to establishing a “Stars on Cars” program in NSW.

## **Roads and Traffic Authority**

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to assess the current responsibilities of the RTA and consider restructuring it to deliver better outcomes in relation to its road building responsibilities, safety, and traffic management.

## Sydney's Missing Motorways

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to:

- **providing a clear timeline for constructing the M4 East Extension from Concord to the Sydney CBD,**
- **duplicating the M5 East Motorway and widening the M5 West Motorway within the next term of Government,**
- **constructing the F3 to Sydney Orbital Link,**
- **constructing the F6 Extension, and**
- **working with the Australian Government to secure funding for these four key road projects to complete the Sydney Orbital Road Network.**

NRMA asks that the next NSW Government commit to a timetable to build these four pieces of critical road infrastructure, along with a life cycle plan to maintain and enhance the entire Sydney Orbital Road Network.

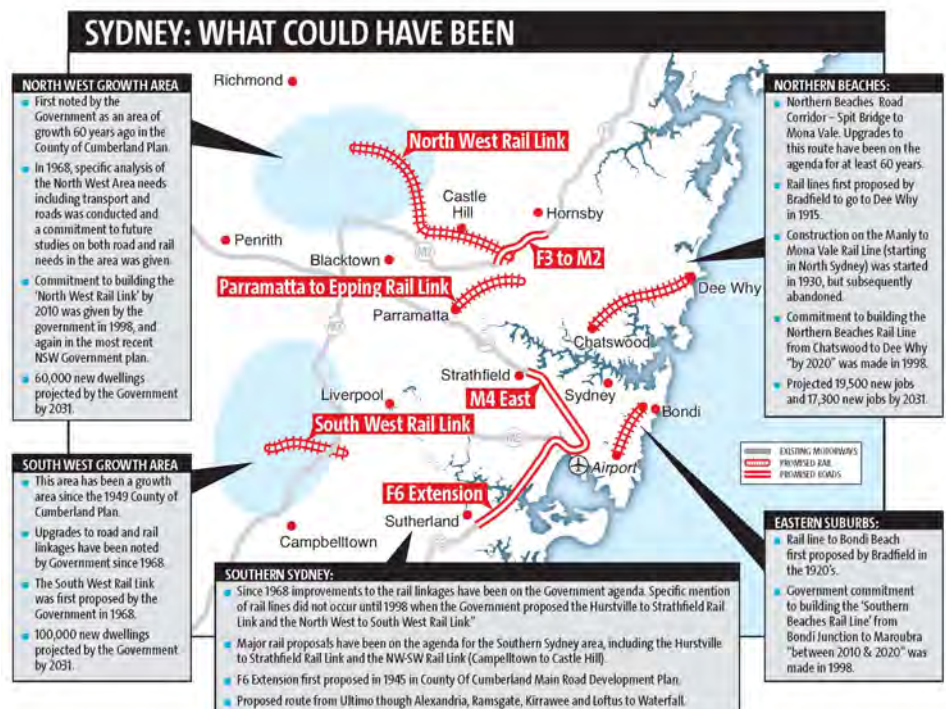
The Greater Sydney Region is facing increased congestion problems and the growth in passenger and freight movements will soon exceed the capacity of road and rail infrastructure in many areas.

Sydney has benefited significantly from the building of the Orbital Road Network; however, key sections of the motorway network are still not completed. Major roads like the M4 motorway extension, F3 to Sydney Orbital Link, and the F6 freeway extension, have been on the drawing boards of successive Governments for decades.

Both the M5 West and M5 East Motorways are in urgent need of widening and duplication to serve the massive expansion of Sydney Port and Airport and the South West Growth Centre, and to alleviate the significant traffic congestion and impact on communities such as Bexley.

There is no one 'fix' to reducing congestion and whilst it is not possible to build our way out of congestion, it needs to be recognised that a well-connected road network and integration with other transport modes is the key to ensuring people and goods can move around.

These projects are necessary to boost the competitiveness of NSW and Sydney, to accommodate future population and economic growth, and are critical to ensuring that the community, and goods and services, can keep moving.



## ***New Plan to Transform Sydney's West***

### ***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to completing the M4 East Extension from Concord to the Sydney CBD.***

A new study commissioned by NRMA has found that the cost of two of Sydney's most critical transport projects could be recovered by the revitalisation of Parramatta Road over a 25-year period.<sup>1</sup>

The NRMA study, conducted by internationally renowned Urban Planner Ed Blakely (Blakely Global) and engineering firm Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM), found that construction of the 8.5 kilometre M4 East Tunnel from Concord to the Sydney CBD could reduce travel times across the inner-west by up to 30 minutes and significantly ease traffic along Parramatta Road.

The project would enable the next NSW Government to reduce traffic lanes on Parramatta Road and re-zone the district within the parameters of existing zoning laws. Stamp duties and other state revenues collected from the revitalisation of Parramatta Road would cover the cost of the M4 East over 25 years and fund light rail along Parramatta Road to the city.

The NRMA study conservatively estimates the cost of constructing the M4 East, light rail along Parramatta Road, and the costs of local public works along Parramatta Road to be up to \$7.38 billion.

Total revenues over a 25-year period could reach \$10.8 billion through state taxes such as stamp duty and land tax.

This approach could allow the next Government to borrow against future revenue streams. It is one of the funding options NRMA would like the next Government to consider.

In addition to building the M4 East Extension, the NRMA study considered the introduction of a light rail and public transit network along the Parramatta Corridor.

The rejuvenation project will see improvements made to the public domain, streetscapes, the inclusion of cycle ways and pedestrian pathways and could create another 23,000 apartments in the area.

The completed motorway will halve travel times for motorists travelling through the inner-west and ease congestion on Parramatta Road, freeing up the Government to transform Parramatta Road – one of the most congested and financially under-utilised corridors in Sydney, delivering real benefits to inner-west residents and local businesses.

This project will help solve Sydney's congestion, provide new public transport options for commuters, and generate significant economic and social benefits for the community.

An Auspoll survey commissioned by NRMA also found that the completion of the M4 East Extension is seen as a vote winner among those living in the key Western Sydney seats along the corridor, and has widespread support among those residents who live in the inner west, who are most likely to be impacted during the construction.

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<sup>1</sup> Blakely Global and Sinclair Knight Merz. (2010). *M4 East Extension - Road to the Future*. Sydney: NRMA Motoring & Services.

The NRMA study highlights that the cost of the M4 East Extension, if borne by the State Government, could be recouped by a number of revenue streams including stamp duty, land tax, parking levies on new units, special rates for investment properties and or the sale of bonus floor space on top of existing buildings.

The sources are estimated to generate over \$10 billion in public revenue over 25 years that would not otherwise be available without the extension.



## Regional Highways

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to upgrading key regional highways to provide a safer environment for all road users and to improve the efficiency of passenger and freight movements in regional NSW.***

NRMA is concerned that there is a tendency for the NSW Treasury to be focused on the short-term fiscal position of the State, when there are significant longer-term economic efficiencies resulting from major transport projects. There is a real danger that investment by other States and increasing congestion in Sydney in particular will mean that NSW will become less competitive and the economy will suffer.



### ***Regional Highways Road Safety***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government, in conjunction with the Australian Government, to commit to a second stage of the Road Toll Response Package to address regional road safety.***

The Road Toll Response Package is a \$170 million investment in road safety across NSW over a five year period. The Road Toll Response Package targets speeding with a range of measures, and includes a range of road improvement, behavioural and enforcement measures.

Road crashes cost Australia a staggering \$17.85 billion in 2006, which was 1.7% of our GDP.<sup>2</sup> In 2009, car occupants accounted for some 84% of road deaths.<sup>3</sup> Nearly two thirds are killed outside urban areas with

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE). (2009). *Road Crash Costs in Australia 2006, Report 118*. Canberra.

<sup>3</sup> Roads and Traffic Authority. (2010). *Road Traffic Crashes in New South Wales: Statistical Statement for the year ended 31 December 2009*. North Sydney.

many deaths concentrated on regional roads and on the forgotten local road network.<sup>4</sup>

Out of the 183,000 kilometres of roads in NSW, the RTA manages a mere 17,724 kilometres of State Roads and 3,000 kilometres of regional and local roads. Local Councils manage the rest of the road network, which amounts to more than 162,000 kilometres.<sup>5</sup>

Safety improvements on regional highways have resulted in dramatic reductions in both fatalities and injuries on these highways; however, limited funding has meant that many problems have not been addressed.

Specifically, NRMA is seeking a commitment to:

- an additional \$50 million towards the successful regional 'Highway Safety Audit' program,
- an additional \$50 million towards the successful 'Safety Upgrades on High Crash Areas' program,
- an injection of \$20 million to resurrect the Princes Highway safety improvement program that lapsed at the end of the 2007-08 financial year, and
- a commitment to a rolling program of audits and associated funding as opposed to one-off events.

These audits and programs are critical to providing much needed safety improvements at strategic locations along regional highways such as new wire rope safety barriers, climbing and overtaking lanes, bridge widening, and shoulder improvements, to reduce the risk of motorists running off the road and of head on collisions.

## ***Pacific Highway***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government, in conjunction with the Australian Government, to increase funding to the Pacific Highway to ensure that it is completed by 2016.***

Both major political parties and successive NSW and Australian Governments have committed to the people of NSW to provide a minimum dual lane divided carriageway between Hexham near Newcastle and the Queensland border by 2016. For this commitment to be honoured, funding for planning, design, and construction of the highway upgrades must be increased.

NRMA has consistently highlighted the ongoing cost to the community resulting from the road toll along the highway.

This road is important for local communities, for interstate travellers, and is the major interstate freight corridor between Sydney and Brisbane. Planning approval has been obtained for a number of sections on the NSW North Coast and it is essential that the remaining work be completed by 2016 to minimise the number of crashes and delays for motorists and to achieve the maximum economic benefits for both the NSW and Australian economies.

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4 *Ibid.*

5 New South Wales Auditor-General. (2006). *Performance Audit: Condition of State Roads: Roads and Traffic Authority of New South Wales*. Sydney.

## Report on the Princes, Oxley and Newell Highways

A recent study undertaken by the ARRB Group on behalf of NRMA has analysed road link, crash, and traffic volume data for the Princes, Oxley, and Newell Highways.<sup>6</sup> These Highways are significant roads in the NSW network and provide vital links between communities, major rural towns, and regional cities. These highways provide not only social connectivity, but are economic arteries for tourism and the distribution of goods and services throughout NSW, interstate, and overseas markets.

NRMA has long been an advocate for investment in road infrastructure to provide better and safer motoring for its Members, the general motoring public, and the road transport industry. By analysing road crash and traffic volume data, NRMA seeks to identify the potential for priority action to address deficiencies on the NSW road network and, where possible, to identify remedial action that has improved the safety of a road.

### Princes Highway

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to:**

- **a full duplication of the Princes Highway between Berry and Bomaderry,**
- **completion of the Victoria Creek Alignment,**
- **completion of the Dignams Creek Alignment, and**
- **a complete plan to ensure proper road alignment from Jervis Bay to the Victorian border.**

The Princes Highway links Melbourne and Sydney via the coast. It begins in Sydney and is the lifeline for local communities along the coast including Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama, Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, and Bega Valley.

The highway is also an important interstate and intrastate transport corridor as well as serving an ever-increasing number of commuter and recreational trips. When a crash occurs, and results in the road being severed, we are quickly reminded of the importance of this route and of the lack of alternatives for traffic.

The ARRB Group analysis clearly found that much of the Princes Highway presents a considerable risk to motorists. While the collective risk results for the Princes Highway indicate improvement, a large proportion of the Princes Highway remains in the medium/high and high risk bands. In terms of the number of crashes, the Princes Highway crash data for the links in the study, indicate the following:

Period	Fatal	Injury
2000-2004	60	712
2005-2009	35	608
Change	-41.7%	-14.6%

Unfortunately, the Highway suffers from a poor safety record and many sections are in urgent need of upgrading and targeted safety works. A mass action program to install measures such as wire rope safety barriers would help to reduce the number of head-on and off-road crashes.

<sup>6</sup> ARRB Group Ltd. (2011). *Risk mapping and performance tracking for the Newell, Oxley and Princes Highways in NSW*. Sydney: NRMA Motoring & Services.

In contrast to the Pacific Highway, no major party has yet to commit to upgrade the Princes Highway to an acceptable level of safety.

According to the NSW Government, undertaking the required works on the Princes Highway from Wollongong to the Victorian border would cost an estimated \$1 billion.<sup>7</sup> The economic benefits that would flow from this investment will easily exceed this investment.<sup>8</sup>

The economic benefits would include:

- Reduced crash costs — avoided crash costs are estimated to be \$137 million over 30 years.
- Reduced costs of congestion — full B-Double access has the potential to reduce truck trips by approximately 133,000 truck trips per year in 2035.
- Productivity gains — estimated productivity gains of around \$39 million per annum in 2035. This represents nearly four per cent of transport operating costs in and out of the Bega Valley, Eurobodalla and Shoalhaven regions.
- Travel time savings — estimates exceed \$200 million in 2035.
- Travel time reliability – reducing the amount of single lane carriageway.

In addition to the above benefits, upgrades to the Princes Highway would improve economic, trade, and commercial opportunities for the region. An improved highway would expand the market reach of existing local businesses and facilitate greater access to a greater variety of labour skills. This would improve the competitiveness of the area's industries and communities.

Furthermore, Princes Highway funding will also enhance the attractiveness of the NSW South Coast as a growing tourist destination.

A number of shorter-term priority projects could be funded in the 2011-12 Budget, including:

- \$20 million to fund six climbing lanes on the F6 at Mount Ousley (part of the National Network) to improve safety and prepare for slow moving trucks associated with the expansion of Port Kembla.
- \$20 million to resurrect the Princes Highway safety improvement program to fund urgently needed safety improvements such as wire rope safety barriers. The previous program lapsed at the end of the 2007-08 financial year.
- Completing the remaining 8-kilometre section of the Princes Highway to provide four lanes from Nowra to Forest Road (approximately \$60 million).
- Accelerated implementation of the Victoria Creek Deviation and Dignams Creek Deviation.
- Additional funding commitments for the Gerringong to Bomaderry section.

## **Oxley Highway**

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government make a commitment to fund safety improvements on the Oxley Highway.**

The Oxley Highway is in urgent need of upgrade to support the growing needs of Northern NSW. Population growth on the Mid North Coast region has put additional pressure on the Oxley Highway with motorists

7 NRMA Motoring & Services. (2008, August 10). Media Release. *NRMA Welcomes Premier's \$1 billion Statement for the Princes Highway*. Sydney.

8 NRMA Motoring & Services. (2005). *Princes Highway Audit*. Sydney.

utilising this link to the New England and western regions of NSW.

This is a state road that connects Port Macquarie with the New England Highway via Walcha.

It requires:

- Bridge Widening.
- Road realignment and sharp turns straightening.
- Road capacity expansion.

In March 2010, the current State Government committed the RTA to undertake a safety audit of the Oxley Highway. This review has not yet commenced and it is unclear how much of the \$50 million funding commitment for highway safety audits will be left for the Oxley.<sup>9</sup>

The ARRB Group study found that the Oxley Highway has persistently higher risk areas, indicating a general increase in the collective risk. The length of the Oxley Highway in the medium/high and high bands has more than doubled between 2000-2004 and 2005-2009. In terms of the number of crashes, the Oxley Highway crash data for the links in this study indicate the following:

Period	Fatal	Injury
2000-2004	7	170
2005-2009	12	165
Change	+71.4%	-2.9%

## ***Newell Highway***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit the necessary funds to address safety issues and to increase the number of overtaking lanes and rest areas for the benefit of both heavy and local vehicles.***

***NRMA also recommends that the Newell Highway speed limit be returned to 110kph with appropriate safety measures in place.***

The Newell Highway safety review that the RTA undertook in 2009 identified a large number of required safety improvements, however, limited funds has meant that many of these issues have not been addressed.

The Newell Highway is NSW's longest highway at 1,060km but in spite of this, only 86km of overtaking lanes exist.<sup>10</sup> It is the major road freight link between Melbourne and Brisbane and a vital road for moving freight across Australia. It also contributes to and supports development in regional NSW.

A 2008 NRMA road audit found that trucks represent one in two vehicles on the highway between West Wyalong and Parkes and Narrabri and the Queensland border.<sup>11</sup> The clear lack of overtaking lanes on the

<sup>9</sup> The Hon David Campbell MP, Minister for Transport and Roads. (2010, March 29). Media Release. \$170m Road Toll Package & Mobile Cameras to Improve Road Safety. NSW Government.

<sup>10</sup> Parsons Brinckerhoff. (2008). *Newell Highway Route Performance Review*. Sydney: NRMA Motoring & Services.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

highway makes it dangerous for all motorists.

The audit report also found that 60 fatalities were recorded between 2002 and 2006, and that 47 per cent of all crashes were single vehicle crashes. More than 30 per cent involved a heavy vehicle. It also identified six black spots, with three located in Dubbo.

In addition, a 2008 Austroads report identified a real lack of rest areas along the Newell Highway finding significant gaps between major rest areas on the Newell Highway between Dubbo and Moree, and between Parkes and Dubbo.<sup>12</sup>

This is a serious concern given the high volume of trucks using the Highway. Up to 30 per cent of fatal heavy vehicle crashes are linked to fatigue<sup>13</sup> and the infrastructure has not been provided to enable truck drivers to comply with new fatigue legislation. It should also be noted that with the reduction in the speed limits from 110 kilometres per hour to 100 kilometres per hour, longer journey times will occur, which will inevitably result in higher levels of fatigue.

NRMA believes that the emphasis should be on improving road infrastructure, rather than lowering speed limits. NRMA is concerned that reducing speed limits is seen as a cheaper alternative to the infrastructure improvements needed on regional roads.

It should also be pointed out that in a recent RTA Safety Review of the Newell Highway the fatigue factor for crashes on this highway was higher than other country highways.<sup>14</sup>

The ARRB Group study found that the Newell Highway is showing a general improvement in the collective and individual risk rating. However, this improvement has come from the medium rating rather than the medium/high and high ranges. In terms of the number of crashes, the Newell Highway crash data for the links in this study indicate the following:

Period	Fatal	Injury
2000-2004	36	366
2005-2009	37	315
Change	+2.8%	-13.9%

<sup>12</sup> Austroads. (2008). *Audit of Rest Areas Against National Guidelines*. Sydney.

<sup>13</sup> Department of Transport and Regional Services. (2002). *Fatigue-Related Crashes: An Analysis of Fatigue-Related Crashes on Australian Roads Using an Operational Definition of Fatigue*. Canberra.

<sup>14</sup> Roads and Traffic Authority. (2009). *Newell Highway Safety Review*. Sydney.

## Cutting Congestion

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to funding a congestion management strategy for Sydney.***

The task of keeping Sydney moving for Transport NSW, the RTA, and for road-side assistance providers, such as NRMA, is enormous, with over 11 million trips made every day across Sydney. Sydney's roads carry the brunt of the 11 million journeys made every day across Sydney and congestion is increasing rapidly. It has long ceased to be a 'peak hour' problem, with congestion now existing for much of the day and also causing significant delays at weekends.

It is clear that motor vehicle usage remains the dominant form of transport for people in NSW, with a recent NRMA survey of Sydney residents finding that 74% of respondents used a car everyday or most days.

The NRMA survey also found that whilst just more than half of the respondents (54%) use their vehicle to commute to work, 93% of respondents used cars to go shopping, 81% to visit or go out with family, 81% to visit or go out with friends, 60% to go on holiday, and 38% to take kids to school.

Encouraging people to use alternative modes of transport instead of the car is an important tool to manage congestion, improve individual health, and help the environment. But public transport will never be able to offer the same flexibility and level of personal comfort as a car.

There are a number of relatively quick and easy initiatives that the next NSW Government can implement to help manage congestion on Sydney's roads. NRMA is seeking an extension of the current 'pinch point' program and an additional funding commitment of \$100 million towards managing Sydney's congestion problem, including targeted improvements to assist to the way the RTA currently operates.

## More Effective Enforcement

Effectively enforcing road rules is an important part of any government's road safety strategy.

Enforcing road rules needs to be more than just about increasing the use of enforcement cameras. Any successful enforcement strategy needs well-resourced and highly visible police patrolling our roads.

### **Police Presence**

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to a substantial increase in the number of police including 200 extra Highway Patrol Officers and visible, marked highway patrol vehicles, as the most effective way to deter poor driver behaviour.***

NRMA has long campaigned for a more visible police presence on NSW roads to act as a deterrent to drivers speeding or engaging in other illegal driving activities.

Enforcement cameras can only detect speeding. Speed is just one factor in road crashes. For example, many people killed or injured on our roads are not wearing seat belts, are driving recklessly, tired, or are driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

More police on our roads means that more of these types of offences or inappropriate driver behaviour can be detected and stopped.

Nothing drives home the safety message harder than having a police officer pull you over and issuing an on-the-spot fine as opposed to receiving a fine in the mail weeks later.

NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to more police, including 200 extra highway patrol officers. These extra officers must also be given the resources they need to do their job properly. The increase in highway patrol numbers must be part of an overall recruitment of new police, and not be achieved by removing existing police from other duties.

This can be funded by hypothecating traffic fine revenue to road safety initiatives.

### **Police Enforcement Bays**

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to considering the installation of police enforcement bays as part of all major highway upgrades, to assist the Police in reducing the road toll in NSW.***

Police safety bays are simply an area set aside for police enforcement next to the highway that are protected from traffic by crash barriers. They would provide means for the NSW Police Highway Patrol to operate from a safe environment to undertake a whole range of duties such as speed enforcement and automatic number plate recognition to identify stolen or unregistered vehicles and unlicensed drivers.

Since 2007, NRMA has called for the NSW Government to provide dedicated safety bays at intervals along NSW highways such as the Pacific Highway to allow the NSW Police to safely monitor motorists.

Since this time, police lay-bys or safety bays have been adopted in Queensland. However, they have only recently been adopted in NSW, with a new enforcement bay and five enforcement pads for police patrol vehicles to be safely positioned planned for Picton Road.

This can be funded by hypothecating traffic fine revenue to road safety initiatives.

### **Traffic Fine Revenue**

Overall revenue from traffic fines is forecast to generate around \$300 million this financial year.

It is important that the NSW enforcement camera program has credibility with the motoring public and in particular to avoid any implication of revenue raising. This includes fixed and mobile speed cameras, safety (speed / red light) cameras and other cameras such as Bus Lane cameras. NRMA surveys reveal that public opposition for infringement cameras reduces if the camera revenue is redirected back as increased funding for road safety.

A recent survey of NRMA Members found that 69% of Members would be more likely to support mobile speed cameras if the revenue raised was directed back into road safety initiatives.

Camera revenue is already hypothecated to some extent in Queensland, Western Australia, and Victoria and the information is made publicly available. These states divide the revenue hypothecation between road safety initiatives to prevent future crashes, and to frontline health and emergency services.

### **Hypothecation of Traffic Fine Revenue to Road Safety**

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit that the hypothecation of traffic fine revenue will be legislated within the first term of Government.**

NRMA has consistently called for revenue raised from traffic fines, in particular enforcement cameras (whether fixed or mobile) to be hypothecated to specific road safety measures such as funding road infrastructure improvements, education, and increased highway patrol resources according to the following formula:

Road Improvements	40 percent (\$110m*)
More and Better Resourced Highway Patrols	40 percent (\$110m*)
Road Safety Education	20 percent (\$55m*)

\*Based on 09/10 traffic fine revenue earned by the NSW Government

NRMA believes that if the next NSW Government is serious about reducing the road toll then there is strong justification for traffic fine revenue to be used as extra funding for road safety – not simply a substitution for existing funding.

An independent panel, including representatives of NRMA and the NSW Police Association, should be established in order to ensure that the hypothecation of traffic fine revenue is adequately allocated and expended on road safety measures and is made publicly available.

## ***Cameras Not to be Operated by Local Government***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to ensuring that speed limits and speed enforcement will remain the responsibility of the NSW Government.***

To help ensure the speed camera program is not seen as a revenue raising exercise, it is important that the setting of speed limits and speed enforcement remains the responsibility of the NSW Government and is not delegated to local government.

## ***Visibility of Enforcement Cameras***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to annual audits of all camera sites and to working with NRMA to achieve general improvements to signs and to highlighting the actual cameras themselves.***

NRMA is concerned that the current warning signs that have been installed at many camera sites are insufficient to warn motorists of the existence of cameras.

Fundamentally, the purpose of a warning sign is to warn and inform motorists and properly positioned signs can help to increase safety and reduce the NSW road toll by encouraging motorists to comply with the law.

Currently, too many warning signs are obscured from the view of passing motorists, particularly on multi-lane roads. NRMA believes that signs should also be located on the median or cantilevered above the road on multi-lane roads. NRMA believes the RTA should proactively use infringement data from cameras to identify which lane of traffic is incurring the most infringements and to then address this safety problem. Too often, the same cameras top the list as the top revenue earners in the State without action being taken to address what is clearly a fundamental problem with the road environment.

## ***Point-to-Point Speed Cameras***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to reaffirm the commitment made by both major parties that point-to-point speed cameras will only be used to monitor heavy vehicles.***

Both major parties have committed to not using point-to-point cameras on cars, but after reports that the RTA supported a limited introduction of them<sup>15</sup>, NRMA wants the next NSW Government to reaffirm the commitment that point-to-point speed cameras will only be used to monitor heavy vehicles.

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15 Aston, H. (2010, December 19). *RTA plans for point to point speed cameras*. Retrieved February 4, 2011, from Sydney Morning Herald: <http://smh.drive.com.au/roads-and-traffic/rta-plans-for-point-to-point-speed-cameras-20101218-191bd.html>.

## ***Review of Speed Zoning Guidelines***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to reviewing the RTA speed zoning guidelines in consultation with NRMA.***

In an ideal world, no motorist would be caught speeding on NSW roads, and yet speed enforcement is necessary to catch offenders. However, NRMA believes that it is imperative that motorists are given clear guidance on what the speed limit is – and in sufficient time to be able to react accordingly.

The current RTA speed zoning guidelines were developed without consulting with NRMA. NRMA believes that there would be significant benefits for motorists if these guidelines were revised in consultation with NRMA. This will help to ensure the speed zoning guidelines reflect not just technical standards but are also developed from a motorist's perspective.

## ***Reliable and Accurate Enforcement Cameras***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to ensuring that enforcement cameras are regularly inspected, calibrated, and that the most up to date technology is used.***

In order to continue to build community confidence that cameras are being used for road safety, NRMA believes that all enforcement cameras must be regularly calibrated and inspected. It is important that this process is transparent and the results are made publicly available and endorsed by an independent panel.

Given that the technology industry is moving rapidly, the onus is on the next NSW Government to ensure that the most up to date technology is used for enforcement cameras.

## School Safety

### *Flashing Lights at School Zones*

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to extending the current flashing lights program.**

The infringement revenue collected from school zone cameras has increased significantly since the NSW Government committed \$46.5 million in 2007 to install flashing lights at a limited number of school zones.

NRMA is seeking a commitment to extend the current flashing lights program to encompass additional schools, using funding from the NSW Government's stated May 2006 commitment to hypothecate infringement revenue collected from school zone cameras to road safety projects.

Specifically, NRMA would also like to see a commitment to extend the flashing lights program to encompass all schools on arterial roads and explore ways by which flashing lights could be installed at all school zones. NRMA believes alternative technologies could be employed to reduce the costs of installing flashing lights (as outlined in NRMA's 2009 submission to the NSW Audit Office Performance Audit into Road Safety).

In contrast to the NSW Government's \$46.5 million flashing lights program, Victoria has installed 800 electronic speed signs outside 250 schools on all roads with a speed limit of 70km/h and above and on the busiest 60km/h roads. The Victorian program announced in July 2009 cost \$13.6 million.

### *Annual Audit of School Zones*

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to adopt a regular program of annual audits of school zones to identify any maintenance or operational issues.**

Annual audits would help to identify issues observed during NRMA's 2009 School Zone Audit such as trees growing across school zone signs, faded traffic signs, changes required to parking signs, and whether upgrades are required to pedestrian crossings. Audits should also include an evaluation of any available data such as speed surveys and infringement data.

NRMA would like joint annual audits undertaken by the RTA's local traffic committee representative, Council's traffic engineer and road safety officer, the school principal, a representative of the school Parents and Citizens' Association and the NSW Police.

### *New Fluorescent School Zone Signs*

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to \$2.5 million to replace all school zone signs across the State with fluorescent yellow green signs to ensure road safety is enhanced and to provide consistency for motorists.**

A 2009 NRMA School Zone Audit identified how a large number of signs have reached, or are now nearing, the end of their useful life. The current NSW Government agreed to adopt NRMA's proposal for fluorescent

school zone signs, however, there has been no commitment to replacing all school zone signs with the new fluorescent colour. This has resulted in large inconsistencies in the type of signs on the roads and the full road safety benefits of the new signs have not been realised.

In 2009, NRMA estimated that the cost to replace all school zone signs across the State would be \$3 million based on an average replacement cost of \$130 per sign. A figure of \$2.5 million may be more appropriate now given that some signs have already been replaced.

### ***Seat Belts in School Buses***

***NRMA wants the NSW Government to commit to ensuring the fitting of seat belts complying with Australian Design Rule 68 in all buses used at any time to transport school children.***

The need is greatest in buses used on high-speed roads, such as the Princes and Pacific Highways.

NRMA suggests the following implementation plan:

- **New Buses** – From 1 January 2012 require new buses to be used for school routes, where any part of the route has a speed limit of 80 kilometres per hour or above, be fitted with seat belts complying with ADR 68. From 1 January 2015, require all new buses to be used for school routes to be so fitted.
- **Existing Buses** – Require a phased-in retrofit program for existing buses used for school routes, where any part of the route has a speed limit of 80 kilometres per hour or above, be fitted with seat belts complying with ADR 68. This will require a change to the NSW School Student Transport Scheme bus contracts, which currently do not allow a decrease in capacity, so bus owners cannot apply for subsidy funding. This program to reach completion by 31 December 2014 and by end 2016 requires all existing buses used for school routes to be so fitted.

## Local Roads

The draft National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 states that more than 50% of serious casualty crashes happen on local roads.<sup>16</sup> Much more investment needs to go into the local road network to achieve a reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes in NSW.

### ***Increased Funding for the State Black Spot Program***

***NRMA asks the next NSW Government to commit funds to match the Australian Government's recent Nation Building doubling of Black Spot funding.***

NRMA is a strong supporter of the existing Federal Black Spot program. It has generated benefits far in excess of its \$45 million a year costs with an overall benefit cost ratio of 14:1.

The program generates benefits for national, state, and local roads and in particular is a key source of funding by which Local Government may implement road safety improvements.

The next NSW Government needs to place a much greater emphasis on evaluating the program to ensure that the types of safety treatments being used by individual Councils are actually achieving the desired results.

NRMA wants the NSW Government to ensure that a prerequisite for obtaining Black Spot funding is a commitment from Councils to maintain any infrastructure funded under the Black Spot program, such as line markings and signs, to ensure the Black Spot treatment has lasting benefits.

### ***A State Roads to Recovery Program***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to matching the Federal Roads to Recovery Program, significantly assisting Councils with achieving better outcomes for their communities.***

Funding provided under the current Federal Roads to Recovery Program is not intended to replace existing Council spending on roads or State and Territory Government assistance to Councils for local road construction or maintenance.

Local Councils nominate the projects to be funded. Councils have so far used the funding to repair and upgrade approximately 34,000 road sites.

In NSW, the Roads to Recovery Life of Program Allocation is \$96,800,000 per financial year until 2013-14.

The Roads to Recovery Program operates uniformly across Australia. Under current arrangements, each Council is guaranteed a share of the total available funding. Under simple administrative procedures whereby spending decisions are made locally and reported to the government, funding is paid directly from the Australian Government to each Council. Much of the administration is via the internet.

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16 Australian Transport Council. (2010). *National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 - Draft for Consideration*. Canberra.

If the NSW Government were to match the Federal Roads to Recovery funding for the current program, it would significantly assist Councils with achieving better outcomes for their communities.

Indeed, if the NSW Government were to match the Federal Roads to Recovery funding for the life of the current program (i.e. 2011-12 to 2013-14), it would have the benefit of accelerating road improvements in every community across NSW.

The cost to the NSW Government would be \$96,800,000 per year, or \$290,400,000 for the life of the program.

Beyond the current program, NRMA would like the NSW Government to consider renewing this commitment to match the Federal Roads to Recovery program, subject to its continuance by the Australian Government.

## Alternative Fuels

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to assist in addressing the fuel crisis by:**

- **drastically increasing investment in and service quality of our public and active transport systems,**
- **purchasing vehicles for its fleets with low fuel consumption and/or alternative technology that does not demand fossil fuels,**
- **encouraging the introduction of natural gas fuel for vehicles, including the establishment of an Natural Gas Vehicle refuelling network,**
- **introducing incentives in reduced stamp duty and registration cost for low environmental impact vehicles, and**
- **establishing a plan to have an electric vehicle charging and hydrogen refuelling network in place in at least the Greater Sydney Region by 2020 to accommodate the electric powered and fuel cell powered vehicles that will be available by then.**

While many Alternative Fuels issues are the responsibility of the Australian Government, the NSW Government also has a part to play. For example, the NSW Government can influence both the makeup of the vehicle fleet and the types of vehicles offered to the market through their buying power. Government vehicles are sold into the second-hand market after two or three years and the expression of a clear preference for clean and safe vehicles can influence vehicle manufacturers to supply them.

The NSW Government should establish policies that will ensure that the fleet averaged carbon emissions of new Government vehicles purchased in 2015 is no higher than 140 grams per kilometre CO<sub>2</sub>, and no higher than 95 g/km by 2025.

The NSW Government should also show leadership by being an early adopter of alternative technologies such as plug-in hybrid, electric and fuel cell vehicles when they are available.



The Government should also start planning now for the introduction of fuel cell vehicles running on hydrogen, which several manufacturers have committed to producing in large numbers by 2015. This will require the establishment of at least a basic hydrogen refuelling network in the Greater Sydney Region by 2020.

NRMA continues to support the widespread use of biofuels in vehicles suitable for them but believes that biofuels need consistent supportive legislation at both state and federal levels, as well as longer timeframes for adoption and competitive production.

Continuing to rely on oil to power our cars will not only have a big impact on our hip pockets, it will also continue to have impacts on the environment. Transport accounts for about 15 per cent of all greenhouse gas emissions in Australia, has been growing at a rate of 1.5 per cent annually since 1990, and is expected to be 78

per cent above 1990 levels by 2020 without a serious coordinated effort to reduce emissions.<sup>17</sup>

Australia is falling behind the rest of the world in the uptake of alternative fuels and technologies. The Swedish Government declared a goal in 2006 of phasing out fossil fuels in the transport sector by 2020, France hopes to have two million electric cars on the road by 2020 and the United Kingdom is aiming for all cars sold from 2020 to be either electric or hybrid powered.

## ***Alternative Fuel Vehicles***

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to a whole-of-government approach to encourage the take-up of alternative fuel vehicles.***

NRMA would like the Government to commit to the following whole-of-government measures to encourage the take-up of vehicles powered by environmentally friendly fuel sources:

- change the NSW Government Car Leasing Fleet Strategy Plan to encourage the take-up of environmentally-friendly vehicles where appropriate,
- alter registration and other state business charges such as insurance levies and CTP insurance to provide incentives for NSW Government agencies to use electric vehicles, and
- invest in battery charging stations in NSW.

NRMA believes that encouraging the take-up of these vehicles by government agencies will in turn increase the flow on effect of these vehicles in the wider fleet.

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17 Bureau of Transport and Regional Economic (BTRE). (2005). *Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Australian Transport: Base Case Projections to 2010*. Canberra.

## Motorcycle Safety

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government, in conjunction with key motorcycle stakeholders including NRMA, to develop a strategic plan within 12 months to reduce motorcycle fatalities and injuries and ensure that motorcycles are recognised in transport policy and planning and in road design, construction, and maintenance.***

This strategic plan should include:

- The undertaking of a Motorcycle Demonstration Project to show what can feasibly be achieved in terms of improving safety for motorcycles on a section of NSW road.
- The Motorcycle Demonstration Project should be evaluated in conjunction with the same stakeholders to determine which aspects should be considered for use elsewhere, for example, in key locations across NSW where there is a history of motorcycle crashes or where motorcycles are likely to leave the road.
- A section of the Old Pacific Highway to the north of Sydney between Cowan and Somersby be considered for the Motorcycle Demonstration Project, due to its high motorcycle usage rates.
- The NSW Government providing a professional development course, similar to VicRoads' "Making Roads Motorcycle Friendly", open to all those involved in traffic and road safety, road design, construction, and maintenance to demonstrate issues from a motorcyclist's perspective and help improve motorcycle safety. It is vital for motorcyclists that the road surface has adequate grip and is free from defects and obstructions, such as loose stones, oil spills, slippery pavement markings, slippery crack sealings.
- The RTA should also appoint a motorcycle policy adviser within its Road Safety Directorate to provide strategic advice on motorcycle issues, including safer roads.

Further to the strategy, the NSW Government should propose that the Australian and other state and territory governments develop an independent star rating program to test, rate, and promote motorcycle protective clothing available in Australia, and the NSW Government should undertake a targeted education campaign to promote the benefits of wearing motorcycle protective clothing.

## Delivering Mobility to our Ageing Population

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to develop and implement a transport and mobility plan for our ageing population.***

The State's population is projected to increase from 6.75 million people in 2006 to almost 8.7 million people in 2031. A significant proportion of the increase will be people aged 65 and older, and those over 85 years will increase at an even faster rate. By 2031, almost two million over 65-year olds will make up one-fifth of the population in NSW.

By 2012, the NSW Government should develop and implement a transport and mobility plan for an ageing population.

This must include the following:

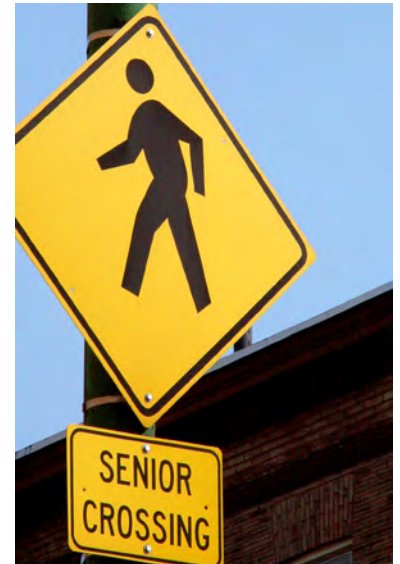
- Ensure that all new and existing transport infrastructure projects and services take into account the transport and mobility needs of older people.
- A requirement that all government decisions relating to transport infrastructure development and service delivery must include an ageing impact statement.
- Strategies to allow people to drive for as long as they are safe to do so.
- Evidence based actions to improve the accessibility of transport and mobility for older non-drivers at local and State levels.
- A regional component to ensure that all forms of transport and mobility are integrated at a regional level.
- A communication strategy that includes providing transport and mobility information about:
  - transport options that are available to help people maintain their existing level of mobility when they stop driving; and
  - planning for future transport and mobility needs as part of people's retirement plan.

The plan must be a whole of government strategy with a review undertaken every three years with published performance results. This should also include a report on the positive economic impact from the increased mobility of the ageing population. The plan should identify funding sources for each initiative.

NRMA believes that all major infrastructure projects should also be required to have an ageing impact statement, to ensure that all projects take into account the mobility needs of our ageing population.

NRMA believes that the transport and mobility needs of the ageing population in NSW must be addressed. For the ageing population of NSW, cars represent freedom, self-reliance, and mobility. This generation of older drivers is especially more reliant on a car to get around – whether it is to go shopping, visiting family and friends, or getting to medical appointments.

Driving is an integral part of peoples' lives – it is the key to their independence and freedom – they can go shopping, visit friends and relatives, and go to medical appointments. It enables them to maintain social contacts and participate in community activities. It is a key contributor to peoples' quality of life.



The degree to which older people are reliant on their car will affect their resistance to reducing or stopping driving altogether. The consequences of not having the freedom to get around in their car are enormous for older people.

The location where Australians choose to live as they age will be important. As people get older they are choosing to have a sea or tree change, when suddenly being dependent on alternative transport for access to basic services can be a major problem.

The coastal towns north of Sydney and Newcastle are beginning to see large growth in older residents, to illustrate the magnitude of these trends, the South Eastern region is projected to have a 134% increase in the population over 65 years, in comparison to an 83% increase for Sydney. This reinforces the need to start planning and implementing alternative transport options for people who are living in regional and rural areas.

NRMA believes that there is a great need to prepare for the mobility and transport needs of our ageing population.



## Tougher Laws for Drink and Drug Driving

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to introducing tougher laws for drink and drug driving.**

NRMA believes that drivers found guilty of drink driving or drug driving should receive an appropriate punishment.

Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs are some of the most serious road safety offences that a driver can commit. However, currently an offender may be granted leniency under Section 10 of the *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999* and have their conviction dismissed without receiving a minimum disqualification period.

In 2009, alcohol was a contributing factor in:

- 59% of fatal crashes on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights,
- 24% of all fatal crashes,
- 8% of injury crashes, and
- 6% of all crashes.<sup>18</sup>

At least 6% of all motor vehicle drivers and motorcycle riders who were killed or injured in 2009 had an illegal blood alcohol concentration. Forty-eight per cent of these casualties were in the high range (0.15g/100mL or more).

According to the RTA, almost 40% of drivers who face Court for low range drink driving (blood alcohol concentration of 0.05 to less than 0.08) receive a Section 10 from a magistrate. While these drivers are found guilty by the Court no conviction is recorded and they escape punishment. NRMA believes this statistic is unacceptable and drivers who are caught drink driving should receive an appropriate punishment.

It is also evident that some drivers who are caught driving with the presence of a drug also do not receive any form of punishment. During the period from 22 January 2007 to 31 May 2008, 23% of drivers who returned a positive test result to a roadside drug test had received a Section 10.<sup>19</sup>

NRMA believes that drink and drug driving are serious offences and all drivers who are caught should receive an appropriate punishment.

<sup>18</sup> Roads and Traffic Authority. (2010). *Road Traffic Crashes in New South Wales: Statistical Statement for the year ended 31 December 2009*. North Sydney.

<sup>19</sup> Bryant, P., Stevens, M., & Hansen, G. (2009). *Review of NSW Roadside drug testing*. Australasian Road Safety Research Policing and Education Conference. Sydney.

## Young Drivers

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to reducing young driver fatalities and injuries on NSW roads and provide more education and training. In addition, NRMA wants the NSW Government to work with the Australian Government to promote keys2drive.***

Twenty per cent of all drivers and motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes in NSW were young persons aged 17-25, but this age group accounted for only 14% of licence holders.<sup>20</sup>

NRMA believes that the next NSW Government must be at the forefront in reducing the young driver road toll and should provide more education and training for young drivers.

It is critical that young people are equipped with the right competencies and the right attitude that will help them be safer drivers. Learner drivers should be exposed to as wide a range of driving environments as possible before they are eligible to obtain a provisional licence.

In addition, NRMA believes that the NSW Government should work with the Australian Government to promote keys2drive. keys2drive is an Australian Government funded program that provides learner drivers and their parents/supervisors with a free driving lesson with an accredited professional driving instructor.

## Effective Road Safety Stakeholder Relations

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to the NSW Road Safety Advisory Council.***

NRMA believes that road safety is a shared responsibility. By road safety stakeholders working effectively together we can contribute to safer roads, safer cars and safer driving behaviour with the ultimate aim of reducing the road toll in NSW.

The NSW Road Safety Advisory Council has recently been re-established and NRMA believes that this Committee with help foster relationships between road safety stakeholders. The next NSW Government must commit to the continued operation of the NSW Road Safety Advisory Council which includes regular planned meetings of the Council and regular reporting on the status of agreed actions.

## Fuel Price Boards

***NRMA wants the next NSW Government to commit to consulting with the Australian Government to introduce uniform price boards for all fuel sold at petrol stations.***

NRMA has investigated the need to incorporate new legislation into the federal *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* to have uniform price boards for all fuel sold at petrol stations. NRMA would like the NSW Government to consult with the Australian Government to bring about this change.

<sup>20</sup> Roads and Traffic Authority. (2010). *Road Traffic Crashes in New South Wales: Statistical Statement for the year ended 31 December 2009*. North Sydney.

## Minimum Safety Standards

### *Minimum Safety Standards for Government Fleets*

**NRMA wants the NSW Government to adopt strict guidelines to ensure that:**

- ***all government fleet passenger vehicles have a five-star Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) rating, and***
- ***all government fleet commercial vehicles have a minimum four-star ANCAP rating until 2012 and a five-star rating thereafter.***

NRMA believes that fleet safety in organisations must be addressed. Road crashes are one of the most common causes of work-related deaths in Australia. Employers have a duty of care to ensure the health and safety of their employees and to do all they can to prevent or reduce the risk of occupational injury arising from vehicle use.

The NSW Government is one of the largest fleet operators in the state. It can play a significant role by ensuring that its fleet is one of the safest in the country.

It is in a unique position to set an example for all fleet operators about the importance of vehicle safety when purchasing fleet vehicles as well as ensuring the safety of its employees.

When the time comes for the fleet vehicles to be turned over, government fleet vehicles will enter the second hand market where everyday Australians will be able to purchase the safest second hand cars.

### ***Stars on Cars***

**NRMA wants the NSW Government to commit to establishing a “Stars on Cars” program in NSW.**

NRMA supports the establishment of a “Stars on Cars” program in NSW, displaying the ANCAP crash test rating on new vehicles in dealers’ showrooms.

## Roads and Traffic Authority

**NRMA wants the next NSW Government to assess the current responsibilities of the RTA and consider restructuring it to deliver better outcomes in relation to its road responsibilities.**

### Background

The current structure of the RTA dates back over 20 years ago and the RTA now has responsibility for a range of diverse responsibilities including driver licensing, vehicle registration, traffic management, road safety education, and road rules, as well as actual road construction and maintenance.

When introducing the legislation to create the RTA in November 1988 the then Minister for Transport stated the purpose for its structure:

*This will harmonise and co-ordinate for the first time the interests and regulations of the driver, the vehicle and the road building organisation...The principle rationale for this amalgamation is that in reality the road network has relevance only when it is considered in relation to the vehicles which use that network and the drivers who operate those vehicles.*

*This clearly calls for an integrated approach to the construction, maintenance, and development of the road system, together with regulation of the vehicles and the drivers which make up this total system, while recognising the need for a broad oversight so that the total system – roads, vehicles and drivers – is optimised for maximum community benefit.<sup>21</sup>*

### The Problem

NRMA believes that, after nearly two decades of operation, the current RTA structure has managed two of the three components referred to above – drivers and vehicles – relatively well.

However, the RTA's record on the remaining component – road infrastructure development, construction, and maintenance – has not been an outstanding success. Some instances where RTA's road management and planning have been less than ideal include:

- The avoidable excessive delays of over eight hours on the F3 Freeway in April 2010 when the contra-flow system was not used.
- The decision to reduce the speed limit on the Newell Highway from 110kph to 100kph, without public consultation, rather than spending money on long overdue infrastructure upgrades.
- M5 East – Unrealistic concept design for tunnel and connections. Traffic volumes exceed capacity on a daily basis. Closures of the M5 East Tunnel due to computer failures and accidents in July and September 2008 caused extensive delays and traffic gridlock. Expected reduced congestion benefits for adjacent roads have not been realised.
- Cross-City Tunnel – Unrealistic concept design for the tunnel and changes made to surface roads. Traffic volumes have not met expectations since it opened. Closure of non-tolled local road alternatives caused major controversy. Community consultation during the life of the project was inadequate. Expected public transport and pedestrian benefits have not been realised.
- Visit of the ocean liners *Queen Mary II* and *Queen Elizabeth II* – this planned event caused gridlock in the Sydney CBD in February 2007 due to a failure to anticipate the large number of spectators and put suitable traffic management arrangements in place. There are numerous examples of unplanned

21 The Hon Bruce Baird MP, Minister for Transport. (17 November 1988). *New South Wales Legislative Assembly Hansard*, (p. 3642). Sydney.

incidents that have not been effectively managed by the RTA's Transport Management Centre.

NRMA is also concerned about inadequate planning for “upcoming” major road projects, such as those in metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW. NRMA has previously mentioned that improved forward planning is needed to leverage Australian Government funding and minimise project costs. The NSW Government’s inability to secure Infrastructure Australia funding due to poor quality submissions cannot continue.

### How to Fix It

NRMA believes it is now time for the NSW Government to assess the current responsibilities of the RTA and should give consideration to restructuring it to deliver better outcomes in relation to its road responsibilities.

Specifically, NRMA proposes that the RTA be restructured as follows:

1. Retain road-related components as the core functions of the RTA, including road planning, construction, maintenance, and traffic management.
2. Transfer responsibility for its driver and vehicle-related components to another agency such as the Ministry of Transport. This includes driver licensing, vehicle regulation and registration, operation of motor registries, tolling, road rules, road safety education, and other front-end customer services and products.

In relation to the first point, separating front-end customer services away from road specific functions will allow RTA to entirely focus on the road system, with faster planning and implementation of road projects.

In relation to the second point, the NSW Ministry of Transport already manages a number of items including the School Student Transport Scheme, other travel concessions, bus and coach regulation, and taxi and hire car regulation. It could also assume responsibility for road-related front-end customer services such as driver licensing, vehicle registration, motor registries, road rules, and road safety education.

NRMA believes that having RTA solely focussed on delivering improved road infrastructure and traffic management will deliver better road transport outcomes for the State.

A number of other Australian and overseas jurisdictions have already implemented similar arrangements.

Jurisdiction	Driver and vehicle-related components	Road-related components
Western Australia	Department of Transport	Main Roads Western Australia
Australian Capital Territory	Road Transport Authority	Department of Territory and Municipal Services
California	California Department of Motor Vehicles	California Department of Transportation
New York	State Department of Motor Vehicles	State Department of Transportation
United Kingdom	Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency	Highways Agency
Canada	Ministry of Transportation	Transport Canada



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