



NRMA Federal Budget Submission

2023–24

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Key Recommendations

Infrastructure & Services Development

1. **Commit funding to support metropolitan and regional road and transport priority projects as identified by the NRMA (pages 5 to 7).**
2. **Commit to establishing a long-term, sustainable funding program to ensure all 537 councils across Australia can maintain their local roads to a satisfactory standard.**

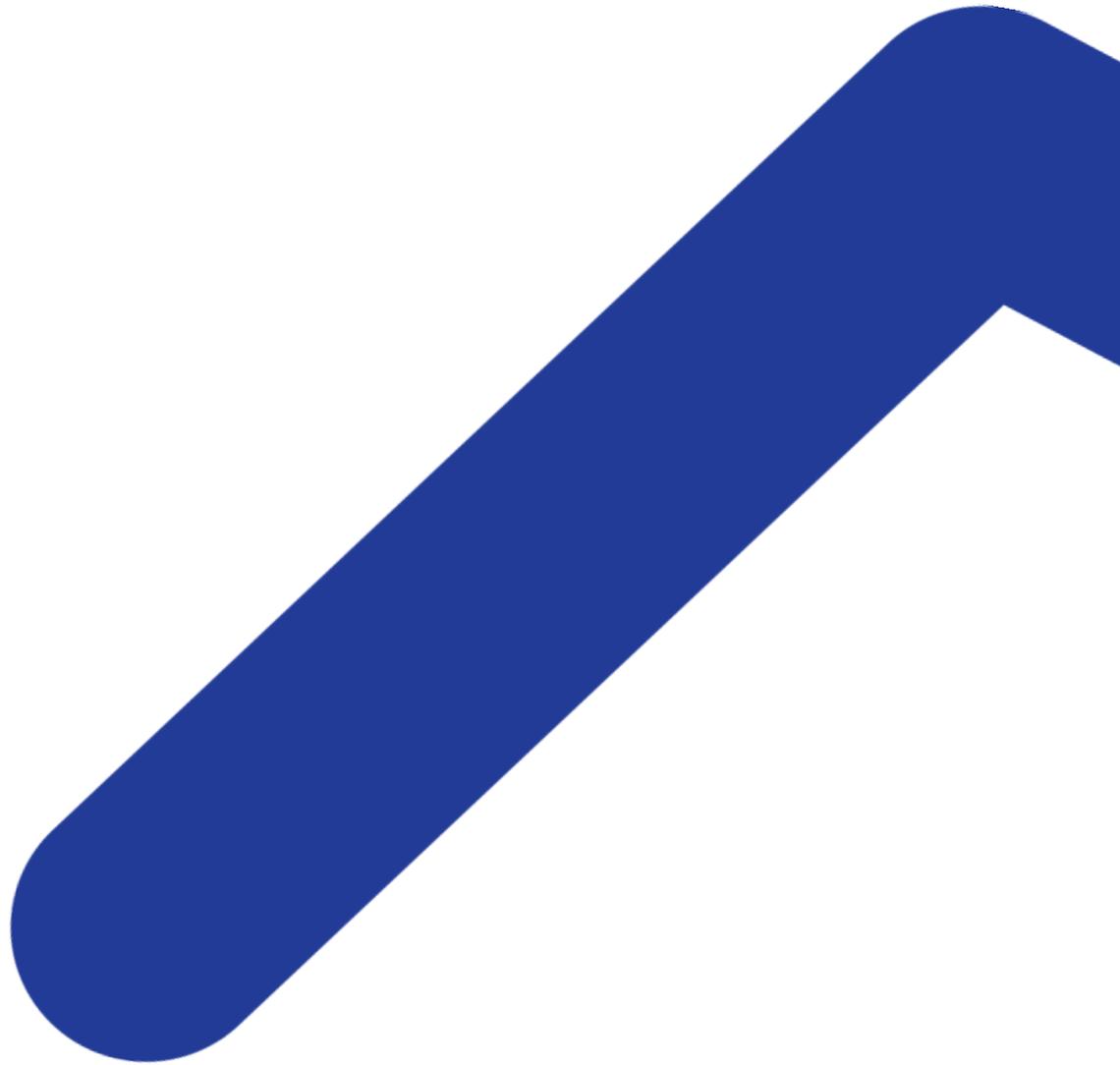
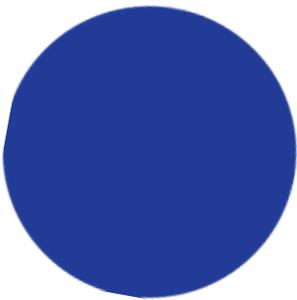
Road Safety

1. **Significantly bolster the National Road Safety Data Hub to better highlight road safety-related issues at the national level.**
2. **Provide additional funding for the National Black Spot Program and the Roads to Recovery Program over the forward estimates.**
3. **Increase the number of driver rest stops and significantly improve the amenities offered.**

Transport Technology

1. **Provide additional funding to expand the number of EV fast charging stations throughout Australia, including funding for renewables to supplement regional and remote areas.**
2. **Explore opportunities and commit funding for EV-related policies and initiatives as identified by the NRMA (page 13).**
3. **In collaboration with industry and academia, trial 5G along a major highway to enable vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-communications testing in a real-world setting.**

Infrastructure & Services Development



Metropolitan

The provision of nationally significant transport and associated infrastructure and services is required to meet our increasing travel and freight needs in densely populated centres. The safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout metropolitan areas underpins mobility, encouraging economic activity and improved liveability.

Roads

The NRMA has identified priority road projects for metropolitan New South Wales:

- M6 Motorway (partial funding for Stage 2 and 3 – Kogarah to Loftus).
- A3/A6 works package to improve north-south corridor capacity between the Parramatta and Georges Rivers.
- Outer Sydney Orbital Road (M9) corridor preservation to enable future multi-modal use (motorway, freight rail line and passenger rail line).
- Beaches Link (partial funding) to advance the project beyond design and planning.
- Heathcote Road Upgrade – The Avenue to Princes Highway.
- Henry Lawson Road upgrade.
- Homebush Bay Drive upgrade.
- New Hawkesbury River Crossing at North Richmond
- Western Sydney growth roads:
 - Badgerys Creek Road upgrade.
 - Elizabeth Drive upgrade.
 - Fifteenth Avenue extension.
 - Appin Road improvements.
 - Mulgoa Road Intersection upgrades at Jamisontown.
 - The Horsley Drive upgrade at Horsley Park from M7 Motorway to Cowpasture Road.

Transport

The NRMA has identified priority transport projects for metropolitan New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory:

- Canberra Light Rail Stage 2B.
- Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 funding allocation to ensure the commencement of pre-construction works.
- Outer Sydney Orbital Rail (M9) corridor preservation to enable future multi-modal use (motorway, freight rail line and passenger rail line).
- Western Sydney Freight Line corridor preservation and intermodal terminal connection.

Regional

Regional NSW produces around one-third of the state's gross product through agriculture, manufacturing, financial services, mining, energy, hospitality and tourism.

Despite being one of the most diverse economies in Australia, many regional NSW towns are facing declining populations, reduced visitation, and a lack of funding and investment for infrastructure and services development – all at a time when many areas are recovering from natural disasters.

The NRMA wants regional communities to flourish and supports the NSW Government's 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW and associated funding through the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund.

The NRMA supports the following regional priority projects from corridor preservation through to funding and/or financing, planning and construction.

Aviation

The NRMA welcomes the release of the Aviation White Paper which will underpin the long-term policies to guide the next generation of growth and innovation in the aviation sector.

It is essential that Australia has a sustainable, long-term policy plan and funding model to enhance regional connectivity and grow communities in regional Australia.

Regional aviation acts as a major and critical support for regional transport, tourism, business, health and employment. A strong regional aviation policy – supported by communities, industry stakeholders and governments – will help ensure that regional aviation remains efficient, competitive and sustainable into the future.

Quality airports and airfields and associated infrastructure that are built to consider resilience and the impact of future weather events are needed over the long term to ensure social and economic development throughout the regions.

Faster Rail

The NRMA welcomes the Australian Government's recent commitment of \$500 million for planning and corridor works to progress high speed rail between Newcastle and Sydney.

The delivery of faster or high speed rail between major centres on the east coast will almost certainly be required to meet population growth projections and future travel demands.

In conjunction with other governments, corridor preservation, investigation and planning works for faster or high speed rail to support gateway cities, including Sydney, Canberra, Newcastle, Gosford and Wollongong, will support the provision of high capacity transport services between major residential and employment centres.

High speed rail between Newcastle and Sydney will better connect the Hunter region and could complement the growth area of Western Sydney with a connection to the Sydney Metro network.

Local Roads

The NSW road network is around 185,000 km in length, with approximately 80 per cent classified as local roads. These roads are managed by councils.

While federal and state funding has increased in recent times, a significant shortfall still exists to bring the NSW road network up to a satisfactory standard to support passenger and freight safety.

The NSW funding backlog stands at \$ 1.9 billion in 2020–21. An unprecedented wave of wet weather events over the past three years is placing increasing pressure on road conditions and compounding the need for a sustainable funding solution to support long-term maintenance and safety. The lack of surety around federal and state funding for roads is an issue that requires attention now.

A long-term funding program is required across all 537 local government councils across Australia to ensure a safe and efficient local road network for all road users.

Roads

The NRMA has identified priority road projects for regional New South Wales:

- Princes Highway Upgrade Program from Jervis Bay to the Victorian border (partial funding) to improve project business case for the NSW Government.
- Newell Highway works package to support safe and reliable HPV access and use, including Flood Mitigation works.
- New England Highway bypasses at Singleton, Muswellbrook and Tenterfield to improve passenger and freight movement through these towns.
- New England Highway works package between Wingen and Branxton to support freight movements to the Port of Newcastle.
- Barton Highway Improvement Strategy (partial funding) to support duplication works and improve safety and efficiency.
- Kings Highway works package (partial funding) to further improve the east-west corridor between the ACT and the NSW South Coast.
- Mitchell Highway works package (partial funding) to improve safety and efficiency between Bathurst and Dubbo.
- Picton Road upgrade (four-lane divided highway with provision to upgrade to six lanes).
- Forbes Iron Bridge upgrade.
- Monaro Highway upgrade between Williamsdale and Cooma.
- Mount Ousley Interchange upgrade.

These road projects together will assist in transforming the safety and efficiency of major regional roads throughout NSW. While investments have been committed to these assets, greater funding is required to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

The NRMA supports these projects because faster, safer and more enjoyable travel between regional and metropolitan areas will be a key driver of future economic growth for the regions.

Road Safety



National Road Safety Plan

The NRMA strives for a future where the road toll is zero, and with the National Road Safety Plan due for renewal, an opportunity exists to improve governance and safety outcomes.

Successive reviews of national road safety performance have identified the Commonwealth's lack of leadership as a leading cause of Australia's failure to achieve road trauma reduction targets. The 2018 Australian Government-commissioned *Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-20* found strong national leadership essential if the failings of that Strategy are not to be repeated.

The first key finding of the subsequent 2019 *Review of National Road Safety Governance Arrangements* was: *"The Australian Government has not provided sufficiently strong leadership, coordination or advocacy on road safety to drive national trauma reductions."*

The timely and consistent provision of national data is the area in which the Commonwealth can deliver leadership and effect the greatest change to Australian road safety outcomes.

Our past tells us a lot about our future – data is critical in order for industry and government to determine the main causes, locations and treatments to address trends in the road toll.

Significant work has occurred in NSW to improve road trauma data, with TfNSW matching data from NSW Health, the State Insurance Regulatory Authority, iCare NSW and the NSW Police Force. This provides a more holistic picture of serious injuries on NSW roads.

Australia needs a national system for highlighting road safety-related issues, and that is why **the NRMA supports the significant bolstering of the National Road Safety Data Hub**. Today, the National Road Safety Data Hub is not even remotely able to "assess the effectiveness of road safety efforts by all Australian governments", as promised; nor has it "put Australia on a path to achieve zero fatalities and serious injuries by 2050."

There is no public information for how the National Road Safety Data Hub plans to obtain, collate and analyse data that will be required to fulfil its stated aims. The National Road Safety Data Hub compares unfavourably with similar services provided elsewhere within the transport portfolio and elsewhere within government.

Programs

The NRMA supports the Australian Government's increase in funding for the Roads of Strategic Importance Program to connect regional communities and businesses with domestic and international markets. While this is the underlying intention of the program, road and infrastructure upgrade works also support improved safety outcomes.

The National Black Spot Program and the Roads to Recovery Program are more specifically aimed at safety, and **the NRMA supports greater funding for these programs over the forward estimates**.

In NSW, more than \$1.5 billion has been committed by the NSW Government in response to the NRMA's *Funding Local Roads* report. While this funding will help improve the standard of roads across the state, more is needed to combat fatalities and serious injuries caused on regional roads.

Rest Stops

Fatigue is one the three biggest killers on NSW roads, contributing to 19 per cent of crashes. The limited number of rest stops along our major highway corridors, particularly in regional and remote destinations, act as a barrier to encouraging driver revival and cause competition between caravans, RVs and heavy vehicles.

Many rest areas and truck stops lack important features, including showers, clean toilets, power, lighting, CCTV and Wi-Fi, making them uninviting places to stop. The amenity of these stops needs to be improved to aid discovery of our regions and encourage people to take a break from driving.

The location of these rest stops, the amenities offered, and even the ability to book spaces and receive real-time information through app-based technology could encourage greater usage.

The addition of EV charging at rest stops should also be considered to support recharging as more EVs enter the Australian vehicle fleet.

Transport Technology



Electric Vehicles & CAVs

EVs are in the final stages of transitioning to become more than a competitive rival to the mature and well-established internal combustion engine vehicle.

In the coming years, the cost and infrastructure obstacles which have kept EVs exclusive and beyond the reach of mainstream consumers are likely to disappear.

The moment has arrived for Australia to decide what role it wants to play as a manufacturer, researcher, supplier and consumer.

The NRMA has worked closely with government, industry and community over many years to improve policy settings and education pertaining to EVs. NRMA public policy documents can be found at www.mynrma.com.au/company/public-reports.

Fast Charging Infrastructure

According to the International Clean Council on Transportation, the availability of a widespread charging network has a positive correlation with EV uptake.

Under the 'Medium Scenario' of CSIRO's 2022 postcode-level Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) ownership projections, there is predicted to be more than 2.5 million BEVs on Australian roads by 2030.

In Norway, the ratio of DC fast chargers to BEVs is approximately 1:75; in the UK, it's approximately 1:90; and in the US, it's approximately 1:100.

The NRMA submits that Australia needs to maintain, at a minimum, its current ratio of approximately 1:130, with a potential target of 1:100.

In overseas jurisdictions, in recognition of the poor economics associated with procuring, installing and operating DC fast chargers in advance of higher levels of use, many governments provide grants and rebates to support build costs (up to 75 per cent of total capital in the UK, Canada and California).

In the medium term, there will likely be significant demand for DC fast charging and AC charging in urban areas where there is a higher density of population and a higher proportion of EV owners that do not have access to off-street parking and AC charging.

If congestion levels at individual charging sites become too high, this may deter other consumers from purchasing EVs, thereby hindering the rate of EV uptake. Congestion in a specific geographic area can be alleviated by either establishing additional charging sites or expanding the number of charging bays at existing sites. Ideally, charging sites will be established with excess space so that they can expand over time to meet increasing demand.

In addition to charging in urban areas, a continued focus on the provision of DC fast charging and AC charging throughout regional Australia is critical to ensuring that all Australians can benefit from the transition to EVs. **The NRMA views the provision of a rationalised and equitable public fast charging network as the highest priority transport efficiency initiative.**

Policy and regulatory measures available often vary between vehicle categories, reflecting different use cases, regulation and demand. In addition to light vehicles, the Australian Government should identify and plan infrastructure investment to facilitate the charging of heavy vehicles and emerging mobility technology, specifically micro-mobility.

Other

The NRMA supports the Australian Government:

- Further reviewing taxation arrangements for EVs, including exempting EVs from LCT.
- Establishing EV procurement policies, including fleet targets, and equipping government car parks and buildings with EV charging infrastructure to facilitate the management of fleets.
- Providing subsidies to the private sector to incentivise bulk domestic EV fleet orders.
- Working with states and territories to streamline building approvals for EV charging infrastructure to ensure easy installation of home charging in apartments and in rental homes, as well as charging infrastructure in car parks and other public locations.
- Establishing an inter-governmental working group to develop a national plan for the rollout of charging infrastructure, and to work with energy suppliers to manage network capacity, support a co-ordinated rollout, and minimise network constraints.
- Providing low interest loans for EV home chargers, potentially through existing resources such as CEFC or ARENA funding, to assist in reducing upfront cost pressures.
- Supporting enabling works and/or provision of low interest loans for installation of highway and destination EV charging infrastructure, potentially through existing resources such as CEFC or ARENA funding to support private investment in charging sites.
- Developing education campaigns about ultra-low fuel consumption vehicles and information about EV charging infrastructure availability, as consumers informed about EVs are more likely to purchase.

CAV Readiness

EVs will underpin Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) technology. In addition to infrastructure investment, a workforce with the appropriate skills to meet our mobility needs of the future will be critical. The development of STEM programs in collaboration with TAFE colleges and universities should be a priority given future electric vehicle uptake projections.

As well as charging infrastructure and skills readiness, 5G connectivity, improved signage and clearer road markings will be necessary for the proper use of CAVs, particularly in remote areas.

In collaboration with industry and academia, **the NRMA supports a trial of 5G along a major highway (e.g. the Hume Highway) to enable car manufacturers, self-driving technology companies, start-ups and other private and public organisations to test vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) and vehicle-to-communications (V2X) in a real-world setting.**

This type of trial would provide important learnings and help to prepare Australia for the future of mobility, which will increasingly be electric, connected and automated.

