



**NRMA**  
**NSW Budget**  
**Submission**

**2021–22**

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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 8).**
2. **Commit funding to progress planning and delivery of faster rail between gateway cities, including Sydney, Newcastle, Gosford, Wollongong and Canberra (ACT).**

### Road Safety

1. **Bolster funding for road safety and associated programs and commit to the delivery of critical road infrastructure through Restart NSW, the Regional Growth Fund and the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund.**
2. **Increase the number of driver rest stops and significantly improve the amenities offered.**
3. **Provide additional funding to guarantee that Police Highway Patrol have the adequate resourcing they need to carry out their programs and duties effectively.**

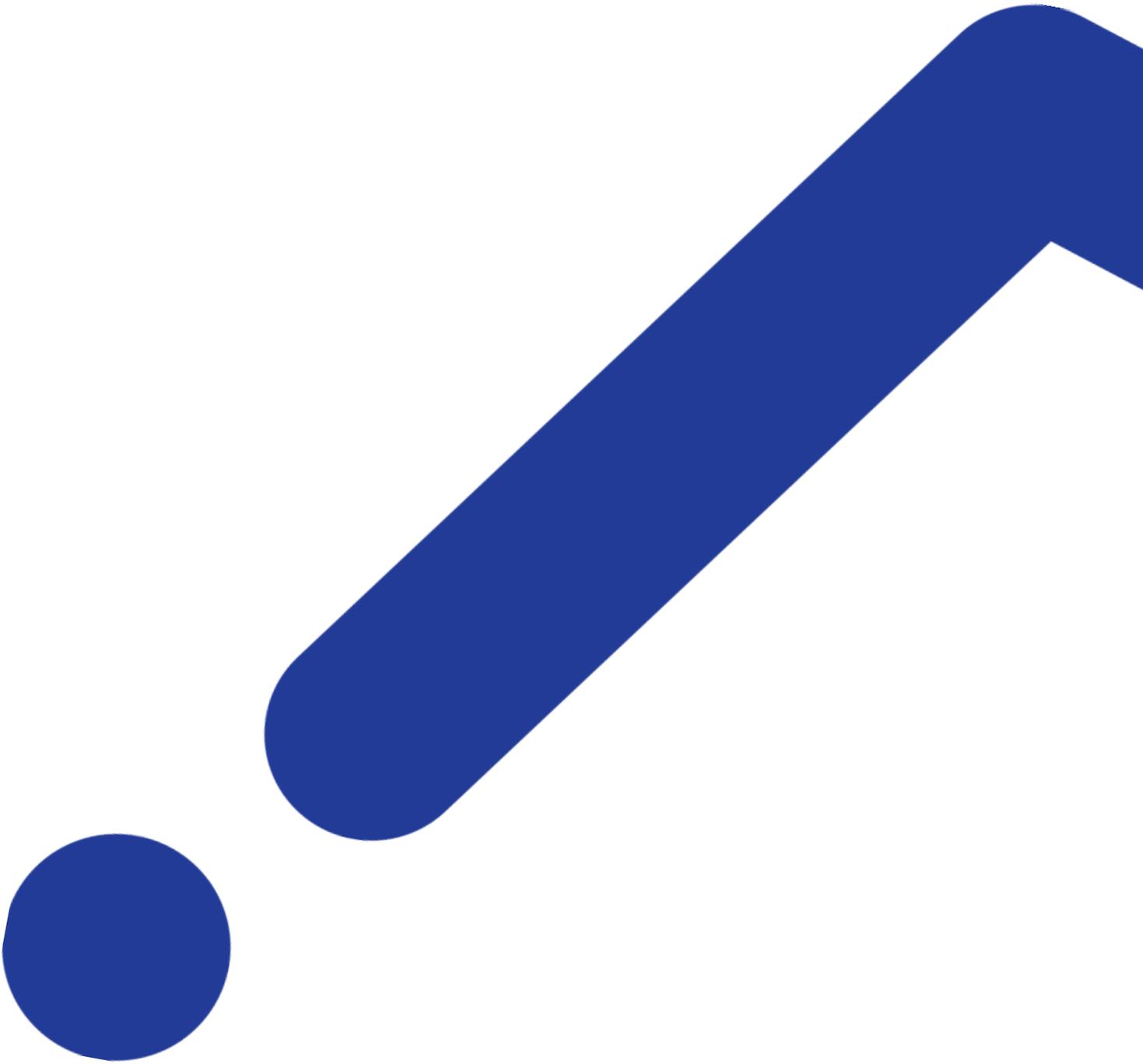
### Tourism

1. **Increase funding for Destination NSW by \$40 million over the next two years to aid further recovery in the regions and Sydney tourism market.**
2. **Provide incentives, low-interest loans and resourcing to expedite strategic tourism infrastructure projects being brought to market by the private sector and local councils for investment.**

### Transport Technology

1. **Provide funding to facilitate the installation of non-proprietary and open use electric vehicle charging infrastructure, particularly in regional NSW.**
2. **Establish a fund to incentivise private fleets to transition to electric vehicles.**
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 NRMA acknowledges and commends the NSW Government's record spend on transport and associated infrastructure.

The safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout metropolitan areas and densely populated centres underpins mobility, encouraging economic activity and improved liveability.

The following identified metropolitan projects together will transform Sydney's motorway and transport networks and play a key role in combatting road congestion, which according to Infrastructure Australia's 2019 Audit, could cost Sydney more than \$15 billion per year by 2031.

## Roads

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

- A3/A6 works package to improve north-south corridor capacity between the Parramatta and Georges Rivers.

*The Stacey Street and King Georges Road corridors (broadly between the M4 and M5) are consistently identified as congested road corridors. With a major M4–M5 connection a long term 2056 vision, these corridors require enhanced medium term capacity improvements.*

- M6 Motorway (funding for Stage 2 and 3 – Kogarah to Loftus).

*The M6 corridor requires accelerated planning for Stage 2 and 3 to ensure that disruption is minimised in the medium term, particularly around the Kogarah area.*

- Outer Sydney Orbital Road (M9) corridor preservation to enable future multi-modal use (motorway, freight rail line and passenger rail line).

*Growth and transformative infrastructure in Western Sydney will bring forward the requirement for the M9. While the corridor has been identified, environmental approvals and advanced planning is required to ensure the project can be delivered in the medium term.*

- Sydney Gateway to advance the WestConnex to Sydney Airport/Port Botany project beyond design and planning.

*The Sydney Gateway project is a critical part of the vision for an integrated motorway network with significantly improved access to the Sydney Airport precinct. Congestion on the network in proximity to Sydney Airport is significant and creates economic and social costs.*

- Western Harbour Tunnel (WHT) and Beaches Link to advance the project beyond design and planning.

*The critical WHT and Beaches Link project is part of the vision for an integrated motorway network with improved access to the Inner West, Lower North Shore and Northern Beaches regions. While early works for WHT are due to commence late 2020, funding allocations for the full project will provide certainty and lead to the establishment of a construction schedule.*

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## Transport

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

- Outer Sydney Orbital Rail (M9) corridor preservation to enable future multi-modal use (motorway, freight rail line and passenger rail line).

*The M9 corridor is largely a greenfield corridor, and current best-practice dictates that transport corridors are reserved with multiple modes in mind. The reservation of the corridor should incorporate road, as well as dual passenger and freight rail, to ensure future proofing.*

- Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2.

*Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 is critical to unlocking the benefits of Stage 1 and improving transport network integration. Supporting emerging medium and high density communities around Melrose Park, Wentworth Point and Ermington with light rail will significantly improve the amenity of these areas and also allow residents and visitors to access Sydney Metro.*

- Sydney Metro West to advance the project beyond design and planning.

*Sydney Metro West is one of the most significant public transport projects in Australia and is critical to improving access and transport efficiency across Greater Sydney, particularly around Parramatta, Sydney Olympic Park and The Bays. While \$6.4 billion has been reserved for the project, the 2028 completion timeline has slipped and should be reaffirmed.*

- Western Sydney Airport Rail (Metro) corridor preservation to enable future metro between Parramatta/Westmead and Western Sydney Airport.

*It is imperative that Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport is supported by quality public transport. A Sydney Metro connection will ensure that arriving and departing passengers have the option of utilising world-class transport to access Greater Sydney.*

- Western Sydney Freight Line corridor preservation and intermodal terminal connection.

*Rail freight in Western Sydney is currently encumbered by passenger rail and is subject to peak hour curfews. The Western Sydney Freight Line will ensure that freight can move unencumbered at all times, maximising the efficiency and productivity of the rail network.*

## Regional

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

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. In addition to this major initiative, the NRMA supports federal funding for the regions aimed at improving transport connectivity, road safety and tourism opportunities.

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

### Connectivity to Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong

Inland NSW connectivity improvements to Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong will be required to support future population and freight growth and visitation to the regions.

The NRMA supports exploring both road and rail opportunities to determine a forward agenda for infrastructure works, including road upgrades, rail upgrades, safety enhancements and associated efficiency works.

Consistent with corridors identified by Transport for NSW, funding for exploratory works and planning should include the Great Western Highway, Bells Line of Road, Golden Highway, Lachlan Valley Way, Castlereagh Highway and Mid-Western Highway, as well as rail corridors Main Western, Dubbo–Newcastle, Cowra lines, and Gulgong to Maryvale.

### Faster Rail

The delivery of faster 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 rail to support gateway cities, including Sydney, Newcastle, Gosford, Wollongong and Canberra (ACT), will support the potential provision of high capacity transport services between major residential and employment centres.

Faster Rail between the identified gateway cities complements the High Speed Rail Phase 2 Study, which suggests that optimal staging for east coast high speed rail commences with the delivery of Sydney–Canberra services.

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## Build Back Better

The NRMA commends the NSW Government for committing \$1 billion to rebuild impacted communities across NSW, and supports funding being made available for vital infrastructure, including roads, rail lines, health and educational facilities, and associated support infrastructure. In this regard, the NRMA supports the 'Build Back Better' concept to post-disaster infrastructure rebuilding and recovery to bolster community and economic resilience to future disasters.

The NRMA also commends the \$170 million NSW Drought Stimulus Package for regional NSW.

In addition to these packages, the NRMA supports bolstered disaster assistance funding through the 2021–22 Budget to facilitate the clean-up, repair or renewal of public and private infrastructure and services, including homes, businesses, community facilities and non-tangible services.

Bolstered disaster assistance funding should be made available to impacted individuals, businesses and communities, and should be in addition to the NSW Government's Disaster Relief Grants which are primarily targeted at individuals on low income.

## Roads

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

- Barton Highway Improvement Strategy to support duplication works and improve efficiency.
- Kings Highway works package to further improve the east-west corridor between the ACT and the NSW South Coast.
- Mitchell Highway works package to improve safety and efficiency between Bathurst and Dubbo.
- Muswellbrook bypass – New England Highway to improve safety and travel times for freight movements.
- New England Highway works package between Wingen and Branxton to support freight movements to the Port of Newcastle, as well as a bypass for heavy vehicles at Tenterfield.
- Newell Highway works package to support safe and reliable HPV access and use, including flood mitigation works and a bypass for heavy vehicles at Coonabarabran.
- Pacific Highway upgrades (Coffs Harbour Bypass and extension to Raymond Terrace).
- Picton Road upgrade (four-lane divided highway with provision to upgrade to six lanes).
- Princes Highway Upgrade Program, particularly between Nowra and the Victorian Border into Gippsland, to improve safety, congestion and freight productivity.

These significant road projects together will assist in transforming the safety and efficiency of major regional roads throughout NSW. While meaningful investments have been committed to these assets, particularly over the past decade, greater funding is required to futureproof these roads to support 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.

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# Road Safety



## Programs

In the NRMA's *Funding Local Roads* report, analysis of council financial statements for 2016–17 showed the local road infrastructure backlog increased to \$2.2 billion, with the regional council road infrastructure backlog increasing \$115 million to \$1.7 billion.

The unsatisfactory condition of road assets, along with limited asset management, highlighted an alarming trend of councils struggling to deliver acceptable road conditions.

There is a significant overrepresentation of crashes on regional and local roads. Over the period 2013–17, the regional and local road network accounted for 68.9 per cent of all fatalities and 77.6 per cent of all injuries, costing the NSW economy \$3.9 billion.

In response to *Funding Local Roads*, the NSW Government committed more than \$1 billion to help clear the council roads maintenance backlog, replace NSW's worst timber bridges, and reclaim up to 15,000 kilometres of council-owned regional roads.

While this funding will help to improve the standard of roads across the state, it should be considered a short term measure. Ultimately, more needs to be done to ensure long term sustainability to help combat fatalities and serious injuries on NSW roads.

In particular, funding and maintenance works for regional and local roads needs to be sustainable. Without an effective, long term plan, pressure on these roads will continue to intensify, jeopardising safety and asset productivity.

The development of a long term funding and maintenance plan, including the provision of road safety treatments, should include all levels of government and industry stakeholders, and acknowledge that the road funding system in its current form consists of disparate funds and grants.

## Community Road Safety Fund

New research conducted by the NRMA in September 2020 found strong support for revenue collected from fines being directed into improving the state's roads and into more road safety education in schools to keep children safe.

The survey of 1,200 NRMA Members found 76 per cent support the establishment of an independent committee to determine where the CRSF's annual revenue (more than \$250 million) is spent.

The NRMA's *It's Not Fine* report found the top road safety initiatives for funding are:

- Upgrade roads to be safer (59 per cent).
- Road safety education in schools (43 per cent).
- More mobile phone detection cameras (36 per cent).
- More drug driving tests (33 per cent).

Key recommendations from the NRMA's *It's Not Fine* report include:

- Establish an independent committee to determine where CRSF revenue is spent.
- More transparent, detailed and public reporting on programs funded and their effectiveness.
- More education around the CRSF to inform the public of its purpose.

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## Rest Stops

Fatigue is one of 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 NRMA's *Dead Tired* report highlights expanded and improved rest stops as one key initiative to help combat driver fatigue on NSW's roads.

**The NRMA is supportive of a greater focus on driver fatigue, including the provision of additional funding to increase the number of rest stop areas and amenities offered to drivers.**

## Police Funding

New research conducted by the NRMA in December 2020 found overwhelming support for the role of marked Police Highway Patrol cars in driving down the state's road toll.

The survey of 1,141 NRMA Members found 82 per cent believe an on-the-spot penalty notice or warning from a Police Officer was the most effective way to change bad driver behaviour.

The survey also found 68 per cent believe there should be more Police Highway Patrol cars on the state's roads.

Seeing Police Highway Patrol cars on the road has a significant impact on a drivers' behaviour with:

- 59 per cent more conscious of driving within the speed limit.
- 53 per cent are generally more careful about their driving behaviour.
- 46 per cent are more alert to obeying the road rules.

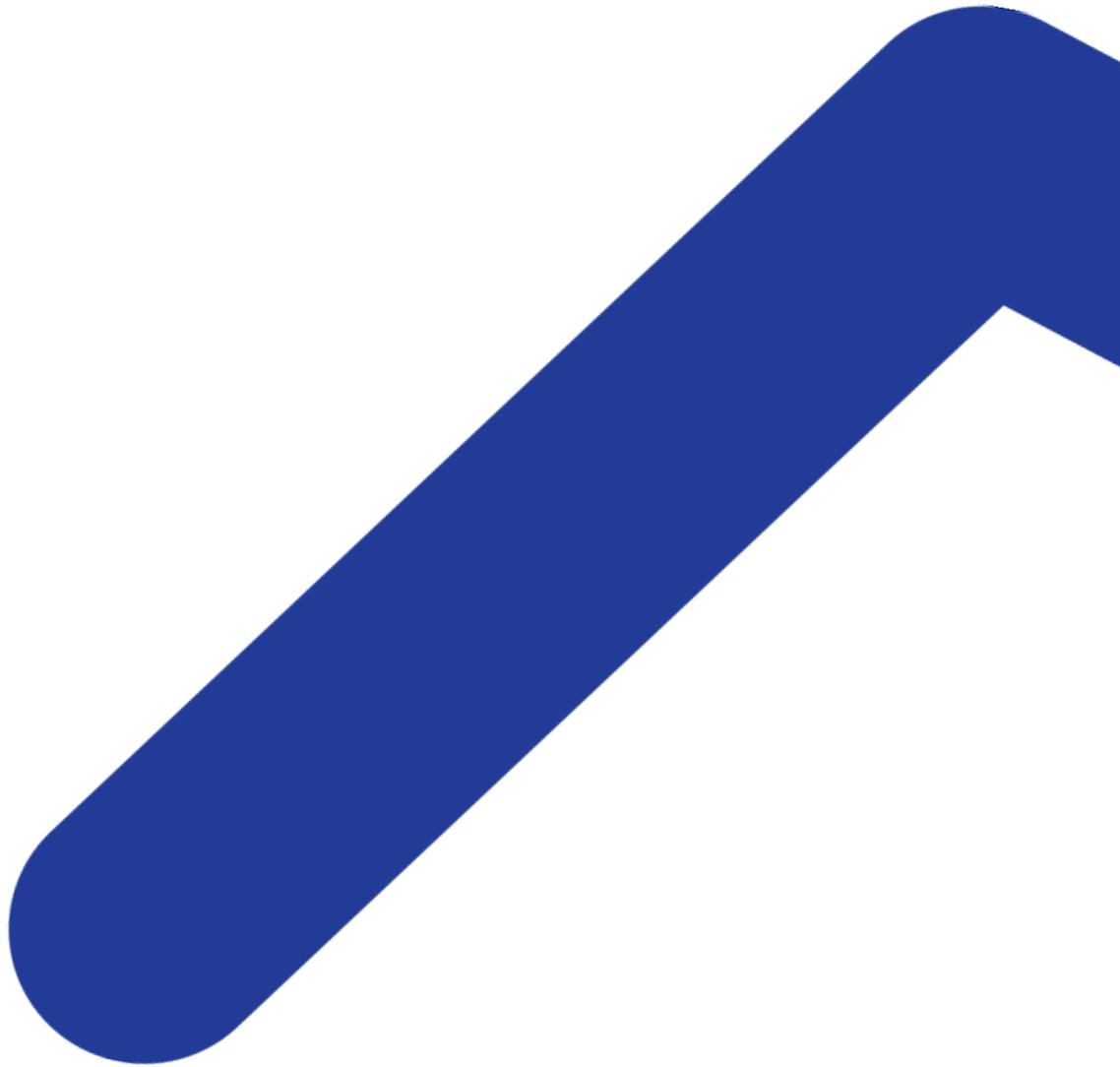
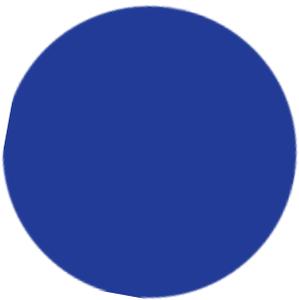
Despite a significant impact on traffic volumes in the middle of 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, the number of people who've lost their lives on NSW roads is way too high.

Policy makers agree that we want to save lives. If we are to see a meaningful reduction in the road toll we need to increase the number of Police Highway Patrol cars on our roads and the amount of hours they are patrolling the streets.

**The NRMA supports funding that guarantees Police Highway Patrol having the adequate resourcing they need to carry out their programs and duties effectively.**

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# Tourism



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## Road to recovery

Tourism contributes \$38 billion to Gross State Product. It employs 296,000 people and supports 112,000 tourism businesses in regional and metropolitan NSW.

The State has set the ambitious target of growing total visitor expenditure to \$65 billion and regional expenditure to \$25 billion by 2030.

Achieving these targets will require a consistent and concerted effort by Government and industry to rebuild confidence in the sector and generate excitement for travel to regional and metropolitan destinations.

The industry continues to struggle in the aftermath of the Black Summer bushfires and COVID19, with the sector not expected to return to pre-COVID levels until 2023-24<sup>1</sup>. Domestic tourism will continue to be the cornerstone of recovery while trans-Tasman and international travel restrictions remain in place.

The NRMA sees there being three core areas of focus: continuing to support the regions through drive tourism, recovery stimulus and promotion, revitalising Sydney as a major gateway and core destination for localised and interstate travel, and accelerating investment and re-build efforts of essential tourism infrastructure necessary to attract visitors to the regions.

## Destination NSW

Destination NSW and its Destination Networks will continue to play a critical role growing the visitor economy by attracting domestic interstate, and eventually trans-Tasman, travellers through the promotion of the state's unique places, experiences and events.

While international travel restrictions remain in place, regional destinations will be the first point of call for many Australians seeking to get away as travel confidence and restrictions improve.

However travel demand and the subsequent recovery of regional destinations will not be homogenous. Regions close to state borders or outside driving distance of Sydney or major regional gateways will take longer to recover. Similarly, overcoming the perception that Sydney is 'closed' to visitors following outbreaks has also impacted the speed of recovery.

The NRMA believes that continued support to sustain tourism in these communities is critical given the systemic impact of natural disasters and COVID-19.

Given the importance of tourism to our metropolitan, regional and local communities, a **\$40 million increase in funding for Destination NSW should be provided over the next two years to aid further recovery in the regions and Sydney tourism market.**

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<sup>1</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2021) COVID-19 recovery for the tourism sector: how are we tracking?, p.5

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Specifically, funding should be provided to:

- **Revitalise Sydney tourism** – Sydney suffered a 66% loss in visitor expenditure compared to 30% across the regions as a result of COVID19<sup>2</sup>. Building on ‘*Sydney Love It Like You Mean It*’ and Tourism Australia’s ‘*City Breaks*’ campaign, additional funding should be provided to revive day trip activity, and encourage visitation to Sydney’s attractions and extended weekend stays. The recent tourism support package including \$100 vouchers for CBD accommodation is a positive measure to incentivise travel.
- **Re-energise the Night Time Economy** through bespoke events, campaigns and partnerships, giving the hospitality sector and attractions new opportunities to engage with visitors.
- **Trans-Tasman gateway** – promote Sydney as the trans-Tasman gateway and actively promote extended stays in NSW when trans-Tasman travel resumes.
- **Continued support for regional tourism** through the extension of stimulus packages such as ‘*Dine & Discover NSW*’ from June 2021 and beyond focusing on regions hardest hit by bushfires, floods and border closures.

## Infrastructure

Visitor facilities and attractions, walking trails, navigational signage and other critical tourism infrastructure have been severely impacted by recent disasters.

To expedite recovery and encourage new innovative product being brought to market, the NRMA supports **the provision of incentives, low-interest loans and resourcing to expedite projects being brought to market by the private sector, Joint Organisations (JOs) and local councils for investment.**

While recovery funding has been made available in affected Local Government Areas (LGAs) by both the NSW and Australian Government, some councils have struggled to bring relevant projects forward due to the resourcing required to complete applications.

Further, private sector operators willing to invest or rebuild assets face considerable delays and red tape associated with building in areas affected by natural disasters. Smaller tourism operators often face difficulty securing funds to re-invest or bring new product to market.

Incentives, low interest loans and matched funding programs should be considered to expedite rebuild efforts of critical visitor infrastructure in priority regional areas such as the South Coast, Mid North Coast and the Blue Mountains, with consideration given to iconic tourism infrastructure that could play a major role in incentivising domestic visitation and creating local employment opportunities in the regions.

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<sup>2</sup> Deloitte Access Economics (2021) COVID-19 recovery for the tourism sector: how are we tracking?, p.10

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# Transport Technology



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## Electric Vehicles

Moving from internal combustion engines to electric vehicle technology will result in nationally significant fuel and maintenance cost savings, and environmental benefits. The NRMA supports the transition to electric mobility and has developed policies aimed at accelerating vehicle adoption.

Some of the key barriers that currently exist include access to charging infrastructure, high vehicle purchase prices, model availability, and the distance vehicles can travel on a single charge.

It is expected that the distance vehicles can travel will improve with technological advancements, and that vehicle prices will reduce as production scale increases and the cost of batteries reduces.

### Fast Charging

The NRMA commends the NSW Government's *Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Plan*, which is an important first step in supporting electric mobility. The Plan will importantly improve access to fast charging infrastructure across the state, supporting the regions to transition to electric light vehicles.

The NSW Government's *Empowering Homes* and *Regional Community Energy* programs will also support the regions to transition to zero to low emissions vehicles.

The NRMA is doing its part to support electric mobility and has committed a minimum of \$10 million to build one of Australia's largest electric vehicle fast charging networks.

### Destination Charging

In addition to 'fast' charging, which is primarily designed as a mid-journey charge, 'home' and 'destination' charging is required to support motorists at the end of their journey.

Destination charging is particularly important as the prospect of off-street charging is not practical for people that live in accommodation with no parking. In order for electric vehicles to be useable in all scenarios, the establishment of charging infrastructure on public assets should be considered.

In the first instance, government buildings representing end-of-journey destinations such as car parks, offices, hospitals and transport hubs will require direct government investment in charging.

In addition to government buildings, **the NRMA supports the establishment of grant funding to facilitate the installation of privately-funded, non-proprietary and open use electric vehicle charging infrastructure on public and private land, particularly in regional NSW.**

Public charging infrastructure is often desirable but not feasible. As an example, retail high streets often rely on on-street parking to service customers, and while large establishments can invest in charging infrastructure, this type of initiative is simply out of reach for many small businesses.

Using third party installations as a model, governments should develop consistent, transparent and effective processes for assessing proposals for privately-funded charging infrastructure.

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## Fleets

Government and private vehicle fleets can have a meaningful impact on the provision of more affordable electric vehicles to the second-hand market.

The NRMA proposes that governments adopt 25 per cent fleet targets by 2025–26. In addition to these minimum targets, consideration should be given to the purchase of electric vehicles in all scenarios.

Aside from government fleet targets, **the NRMA supports policies and government funding to incentivise private fleet purchases.**

While government fleet targets are important, private fleets collectively represent a larger portion of the NSW vehicle fleet and can potentially have a greater impact on vehicle affordability.

Business Members of the NRMA have shown strong interest in transitioning private vehicle fleets to electric or hybrid, however the current high purchase prices have a significant impact on feasibility.

Government funding and incentives to encourage the transition of private vehicle fleets in the short term will result in more opportunities for organisations to genuinely consider the purchase of electric vehicles.

## CAV Readiness

Electric vehicles will underpin Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) technology, which has the potential to significantly improve road safety.

With an unacceptable road toll, we need to identify the ‘seatbelt’ of the future. We need to test and trial new technology, including CAVs, to understand their application and impact.

Not too long ago, seatbelts were considered a major technological advancement. Today, the seatbelt is joined by the likes of anti-lock brakes, airbags, electronic stability control, lane change assist, adaptive cruise control and autonomous emergency braking.

In addition to electric vehicle charging infrastructure, 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 could be led by the Smart Innovation Centre and would provide important learnings to help prepare for future mobility, which will increasingly be electric, connected and automated.

In addition to physical infrastructure and technology trials, 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 and the unwavering focus of industry to progress CAV technology and use.

