

## ROAD SAFETY REFERENCE GROUP

Notes of Meeting - 21 October 1996

Attached for reference are the notes of the Reference Group meeting held on 21 October 1996.

Please note that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 5 December 1996 commencing at 10.00 am.

A preliminary Agenda will be distributed in the near future.

Bob Ungers  
31 October 1996



# ROAD SAFETY REFERENCE GROUP

MEETING NO. 7

21 OCTOBER 1996

## In Attendance:

David Anderson

Daryl Byrne

Ian Cairns

Damien Codognotto

Peter Doupe

David Healy

Frank McDermott

Catrina Mulderry

David Russell

Roger Sanders

Jennifer Elkington Smith

Peter Vulcan

Ted Vincent

## Apologies:

Terry Alford

Helen Conley

Alistair Cumming

Tim Daly

Tony James

Jim Jarvis

Ray Judd

Peter Knowles

Murray Lane

Morrie Lester

Bill Whitehead

## Agenda Item No. 1 - Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.

### Actions from previous minutes:

#### (i) Progress Report to the Minister for Roads and Ports

David Anderson noted the transmittal of the progress report to the Minister for Roads and Ports, copies of which had been provided to members.

#### (ii) Motorcycle Safety Issues

Damien Codognotto commented that the need for responsible advertising of motorcycles remained an important issue.

There had been significant progress made recently by the Austroads' project group developing road environment guidelines for motorcyclists with a first draft prepared.

## Agenda Item No. 2 - Reports to the Reference Group

It was noted that implementation of the current Road Safety Priorities Program was proceeding as scheduled.

## Agenda Item No. 3 - Issues for Discussion

### (i) January - October 1996 Road Toll Trends

David Healy distributed the Road Fatalities Bulletin as at 20 October, highlighting factors associated with the 5% increase in the road toll, particularly:

- single fatalities ( up 10%)
- male fatalities ( up 9 %)
- drivers and passengers ( up 12% and 13%)
- country and Melbourne (up 6% and 4%)
- 18 - 29 year age group (up 33%)

A high level of booze bus ( and patrol car) drink-drive enforcement was under way in both Melbourne and rural areas in response to the 1996 upturn in driver fatalities.

Ian Cairns provided the following statistics on breath tests undertaken to the end of September this year:

Booze Bus	1,023,000
Preliminary Breath Tests	900,500

These figures were 12% up on last year. Roger Sanders noted that drink-drive enforcement in rural areas would be maintained at high levels to the end of the year.

Members discussed the possible underlying reasons for the increased number of drivers detected at RBT stations who are over .05 BAC, for example, whether this reflects a change in enforcement approaches or more drink-driving associated with an improving economic situation.

David Healy commented that although the situation required close monitoring, the overall road toll trend was relatively stable; however the incidence of drink drive fatalities amongst drivers under 21 was of concern, highlighted by a sharp increase over the last year. This suggested that "P" plate drivers were not being influenced by recent campaigns.

Peter Vulcan drew attention to the adverse impact of changes to the requirements to take blood alcohol samples from road accident victims admitted to hospital. A valuable tool for measuring changes in the incidence of drink driving had been lost. Frank McDermott also commented on developments in this area, noting that little could be accomplished without the support of the College of Emergency Physicians.

Members agreed that two actions would be appropriate:

- explore further the problems associated with the taking of blood alcohol samples from road casualties admitted to hospital;
- undertake some detailed analysis of the incidence of drink driving detections amongst "P" plate drivers.

**ACTION:**

►Explore issues associated with hospital blood alcohol testing.

(David Anderson)

►Analyse drink drive statistics for “P” plate drivers for the next meeting.

(Ian Cairns)

**(ii) Development of January - June 1997 Road Safety Priorities Program**

David Anderson encouraged members to contribute to the development of the program by identifying projects to be undertaken by their organisations and providing suggestions for the distribution list for the program when finalised. A request to do so will be forwarded to members within a few days following the meeting.

Ted Vincent noted the stage reached in the development of the program with the release date to be at the end of November. The draft design for the explanatory program booklet was noted.

Damien Codognotto commented on forthcoming events (e.g. motorcycle grand prix and others) which provided good opportunities for promotional activity. David Anderson suggested that the issue could be dealt with by the Motorcycle Safety Forum.

**ACTION:**

►Write to member organisations seeking nomination of projects under the program and suggestions for the distribution list. (Ted Vincent)

►Motorcycle Safety Forum to consider forthcoming promotional opportunities. (Ted Vincent/Motorcycle Safety Forum)

**(iii) Impaired/Older Drivers**

Mike Regan, Manager - Road User Branch attended the meeting and presented an overview of the key issues, encompassing:

- driver involvement in casualties by age groups
- ageing trends in the population
- nature of impairments affecting driving
- management issues
- re-testing procedures (Victoria and other States)
- program directions and current activities
- options for consideration

In relation to Safe Drive ( a seminar/discussion program with appropriate materials) David Anderson re-inforced the need for a marketing plan, currently being developed, so that it can reach the large audience which makes up the older driver age group. The seminar package was available for use by other agencies and groups.

Frank McDermott commented on the potential use of the medical practitioner network to distribute promotional information. Peter Doupe indicated that the RACV was pilot testing a 1½ hour educational program which would be promoted through its magazine.

Peter Vulcan commented on the links between impairments and safety and the need to avoid implementing programs which could not be justified.

David Anderson noted that alternative licensing procedures were under consideration such as shorter licence renewal periods for older drivers, with an overall emphasis on education, awareness and information approaches.

In addition to the Safe Drive Medical program and the Austroads' Fitness to Drive project, an Older Drivers Handbook was being developed. TAC and Victoria Police activity in relation to older drivers was noted for example a small campaign conducted through pharmacists and the discussion of impairment issues in the Police submission to the drugs inquiry.

Catrina Mulderry drew attention to difficulties which some individuals had experienced with the application of current licensing procedures. David Anderson undertook to seek further information on these cases.

Members thanked Mike for his comprehensive coverage of the older/impaired drivers issue.

**ACTION:**

► **Further information to be sought on individual difficulties with licensing procedures.** (David Anderson/Catrina Mulderry)

**(iv) Red Light Camera Program**

Mike Tziotis - Road and Environment Safety presented an outline covering the significance of cross-traffic crashes, the purpose of the Red Light Camera (RLC) program and summary results of evaluations of the effectiveness of red light cameras in Victoria and other States. A preliminary evaluation recently undertaken of the current RLC sites operated in Victoria indicated that cross-traffic crashes were reduced by 85%.

A current review of the program at these intersections is also under way which will seek to identify a new red light camera technology able to achieve:

- more effective enforcement of red light running;
- recording of the incidence and speed of red light runners;
- transportability.

Mike Tziotis also suggested that a report on the future direction of the program

arising from the review could be provided by David Richardson of the Traffic Camera Office at the next meeting.

Members thanked Mike for his informative presentation.

**ACTION:**

- ▶ **Arrange presentation by the Traffic Camera Office at the next meeting.**  
**(Bob Ungers/TCO)**

## **Agenda Item No. 4 - General Business**

### **(i) Accident Blackspot Program**

David Anderson advised members that the Federal Government had confirmed the funding of a national accident blackspot program with the allocation nationally of \$36 million per annum for four years (total \$144million). Victoria's allocation will be some 25% (\$34 million).

The arrangements proposed by the Federal Office of Road Safety for obtaining community input in the development of State works programs were noted.

### **(ii) Enforcement of Bicycle Helmet Wearing**

Frank McDermott drew attention to the difference in penalty levels for non-wearing of bicycle and motorcycle helmets.

Roger Sanders pointed to the large number of young offenders involved which would make the effective enforcement of a high penalty level extremely difficult.

It was agreed that the issue of bicycle safety should be put on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

**ACTION:**

- ▶ **Bicycle safety to be listed on the agenda for the next meeting. (Bob Ungers )**

### **(iii) Uncovered Trailers - Hazards to Motorcycle Riders**

Damien Codognotto drew attention to the hazards presented to riders from uncovered loads on trailers particularly trucks (car trailers as well). David Anderson suggested that the issue could be raised at transport industry seminars being conducted on a periodic basis.

**ACTION:**

- ▶ **Arrange for the issue of uncovered loads on trailers to be discussed at a forthcoming transport industry seminar.**  
**(VicRoads)**

## **Agenda Item No. 5 - Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 5 December, 10.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. at VicRoads, 60 Denmark Street, KEW.

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