



TOWARDS ZERO

DETAILED DISCUSSION PAPER ON ROAD SAFETY IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
WORK WITH US TO KEEP TERRITORIANS SAFE ON OUR ROADS



We want your input

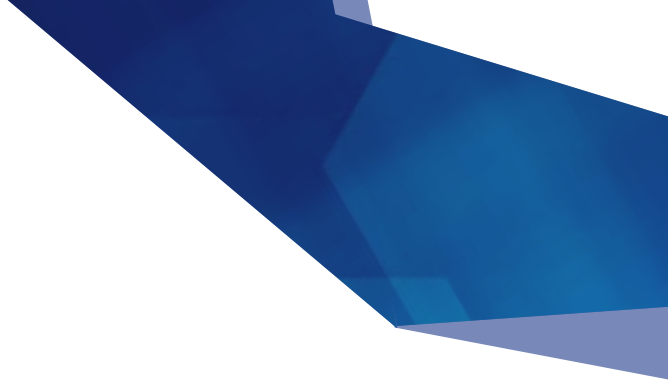
Road safety is everyone's responsibility.

We need your valuable input to help inform the development of a new Road Safety Action Plan for the Territory.

You can go online to www.haveyoursay.nt.gov.au to comment, complete a short survey or to find more information. You can also attend a forum near you.

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Introduction

This discussion paper has been prepared to help guide the development of a Road Safety Action Plan (the Plan) for the Northern Territory.

Our road fatality rate is at least three times the national rate and is comparable with developing nations. Road crashes impose far reaching human and financial costs on our society and affect us all.

The Plan will set a course of action to address the road toll over the next five years and will be informed by research based on evidence, input and ideas from stakeholders and all sections of the community.

This discussion paper aims to prompt input from stakeholders and to start the conversation about road safety by examining the causes of our significant road safety problems in the Northern Territory and proposing priority areas for action.

The Plan will be developed and implemented by Government agencies including the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, NT Police, Fire and Emergency Services and the Motor Accident Compensation Commission (MACC) in partnership with the community. We need input from all sections of the community to help find solutions to road safety problems that sadly touch us all.

Ultimately road safety is everyone's responsibility.

We have to take action now to achieve safer road use.

Proposed Vision

- ▶ A safer road transport system where no person is killed or seriously injured.

It is proposed that the Plan introduces the Vision Zero concept to the Northern Territory.

Vision Zero aims to inspire ownership of the Territory's road safety challenges and motivate Territorians to take action to use our roads more safely. It is about looking forward and creating strategies to take road safety to new levels and protect more lives. Vision Zero has been widely adopted in other jurisdictions across Australia and globally, to reduce significant road trauma.

The Plan will sit alongside Australia's National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020. The key goal of the National Strategy is to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on Australia's roads.

Goals

To unite Territorians to:

- Reduce death and serious injury on our roads.
- Cultivate a responsible culture and encourage everyone to do the right thing on our roads.
- Work together, share the responsibility and 'own' our need to improve road safety.

The Northern Territory Context

The Territory faces many unique challenges in delivering a road network that is safe for all road users. Approximately 70% of our 36,000 kilometres of roads are unsealed. Our geography and climate extremes create challenges for roads users and road managers.

The Territory has a small population of about 244,000 people who are widely dispersed across the main urban centres of Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs to very remote communities. Around 30% of the Territory's population is Indigenous, and nearly 80% of this Indigenous population lives outside of the greater Darwin area.

Accessing public transport, vehicle registration and driver licensing services is more challenging for people living in remote areas. People living remotely find it harder to keep their vehicles in good shape as they don't have the same access to mechanical services as those in urban areas. People living remotely are also more likely to be driving older vehicles and driving long distances on unsealed roads. These factors are just a couple of things which affect the safety of remote road users.

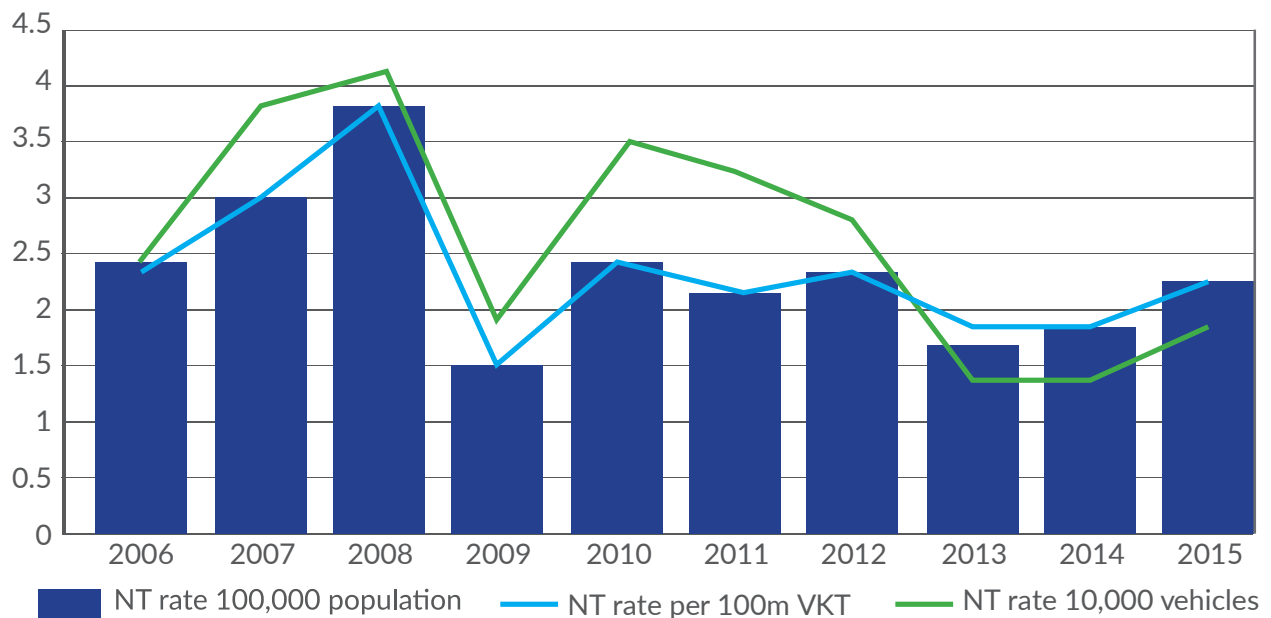
The Territory has the youngest median age, at 32 years, of any state or Territory in Australia. Nearly 60% of our Indigenous population is aged under 30. We need to improve road safety for young people, Indigenous people and those who live remotely, as they are our most vulnerable road users and figure highly in crash statistics.

The Facts

► On average each year in the Northern Territory, approximately 48 people are killed and 540 people are seriously injured on our roads.*

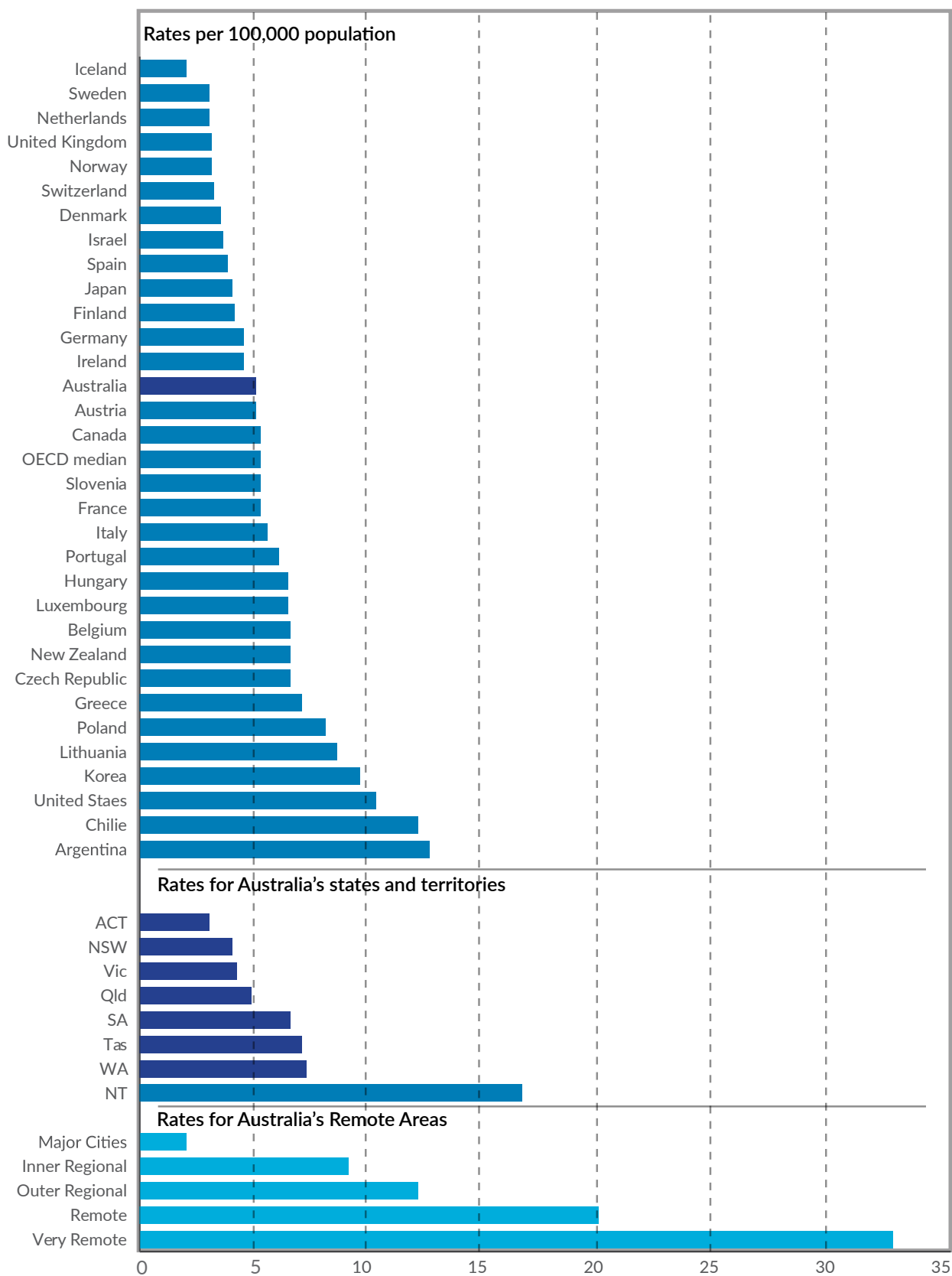
- Our road toll is at least three times the Australian rate.
- The Territory has the highest rate of road deaths per 100,000 population, per 10,000 registered vehicles and per 100 million vehicle kilometres travelled (VKT) in Australia.
- Remote and very remote areas in Australia face challenges in reducing road trauma, which is higher than in urban environments.
- The impact of road trauma reaches across our whole community. Each and every crash has devastating impacts on Territory families and communities, as well as far reaching financial costs.
- In addition to the irreplaceable loss of life and physical and mental trauma, there are other costs of road trauma, such as ongoing medical, legal, property damage, vehicle repair and replacement, and infrastructure costs.

Chart 1 - rate of road deaths per 100,000 population, VKT and registered vehicles (2006 - 2015)



**For the purpose of the data analysis in this discussion paper, road trauma in the Northern Territory is defined as the sum of fatalities and serious injuries, where a serious injury involves a hospital admission. Averages are based on the last ten years of data, (2006 - 2015). Unless otherwise stated, all data has been sourced from the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics' Vehicle Accident Database.*

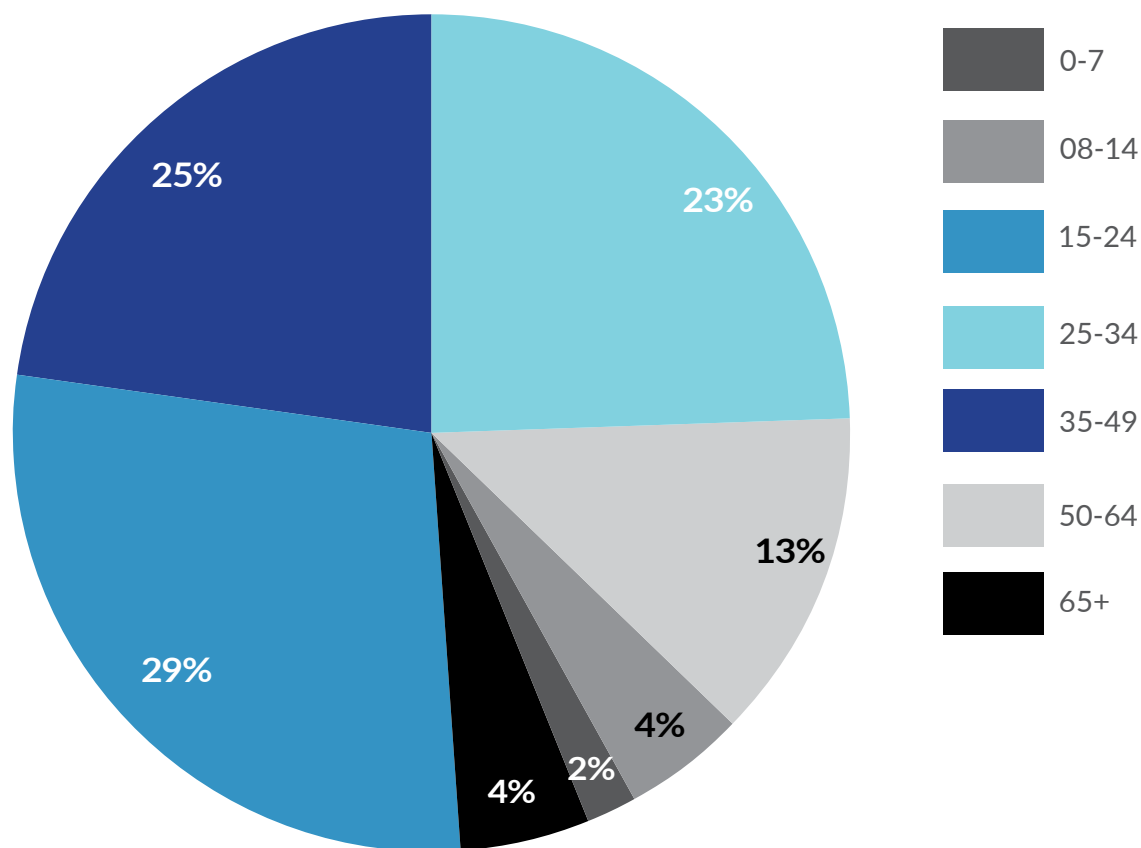
Chart 2 - Comparison of fatalities



(BITRE, 2014)

Who is involved in our road trauma?

Chart 3 - Age groups of fatalities and serious injuries (2006 - 2015)



Males are involved in nearly 71% of fatalities and females 29%.



Indigenous people are vastly over represented in our fatality statistics. Although only 30% of our population, they account for nearly 50% of our road deaths.



Pedestrian injuries make up about 9% of road trauma and are most prevalent in the Indigenous population 35-49 years of age.



Overseas and Interstate license holders make up 16% of fatalities.



Fatigued drivers are most likely to experience road trauma in daylight hours, on weekends and in higher speed zones.



Male motorcycle riders represent about 13% of our road trauma.



Unlicensed drivers are involved in 15% of road trauma crashes and this is increasing.



Cancelled or disqualified persons comprised 7% of drivers/riders involved in road trauma.



Learner and provisional licence holders represent 13% of our road trauma.

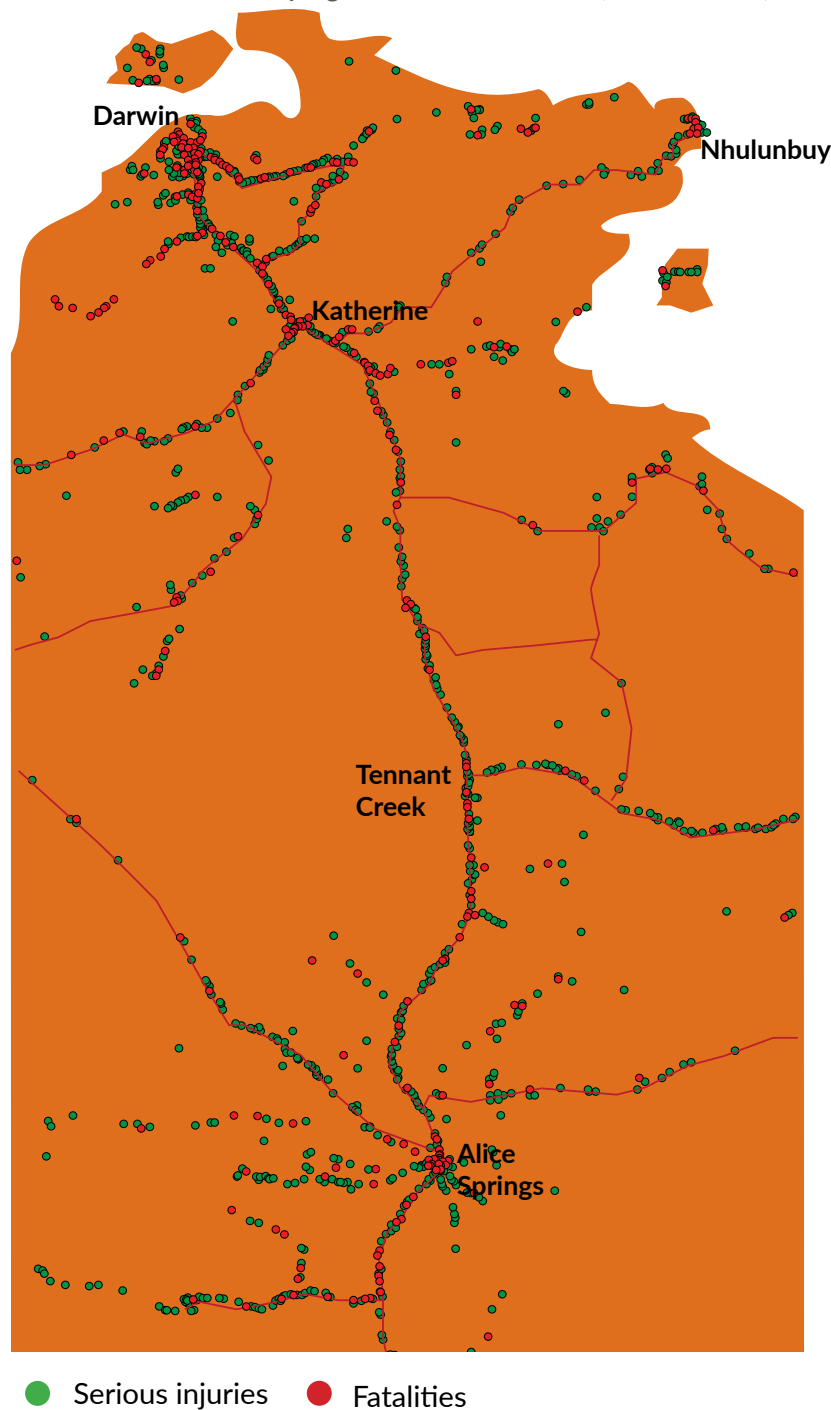


The average age of a vehicle at the time of a crash for the 2011-2015 period was 10.5 years. Indigenous people involved in road trauma are most likely to be travelling in older vehicles (15 years old). Non-Indigenous people involved in road trauma are more likely to be travelling in motor vehicles less than 2 years old.

Where and when are our crashes occurring?

- Around two thirds of our road fatalities and half of our serious injuries occur on roads outside of the Greater Darwin area (Palmerston, Litchfield) and Alice Springs urban areas.
- Pedestrian and motorcycle serious road trauma are mostly confined to urban areas.
- At the peak of the Dry Season the rate of crashes increases in the Northern Territory.
- Significant road trauma involving visitor drivers largely occurs outside the Greater Darwin area.

Map 1 - Location of Northern Territory significant road trauma (2006 - 2016)





Why are people crashing?





Over the last ten years, a large portion of our significant road trauma (fatalities and serious injuries combined) was related to one or more of the following major factors: alcohol, speed, not wearing a seatbelt and/or fatigue. These causal factors are our main focus for action and will be discussed in detail in later sections of this discussion paper.

When these causal factors are not involved in our road trauma, crashes may be attributed in whole or part to distraction, disobeying road rules, loss of vehicle control, un-roadworthy vehicles, not driving to conditions and not driving to skill level. The majority of crashes with no causal factor are single vehicle crashes where a vehicle has run off the road or overturned.

The Safe System approach to achieving better outcomes

The Plan will adopt the Safe System approach to improving road safety, which has been adopted worldwide to create better road safety outcomes. Safe Systems has been used to formulate the Global Plan for the United Nations Decade of Action 2011-2020 to improve road safety outcomes worldwide.

This approach looks beyond the road user and examines a range of elements which impact road safety:

-  Safe Road Users – encouraging safe, compliant behaviour through education, enforcement and regulation.
-  Safe Roads and Roadsides – designing and maintaining roads to reduce the risk and severity of crashes.
-  Safe Speeds – setting appropriate speed limits that complement the road environment.
-  Safe Vehicles – designing vehicles that protect occupants, lessens the likelihood of a crash and simplifies the driving task. This includes road infrastructure, vehicles, education and enforcement.

The Safe System approach requires everyone – including road controlling authorities, road designers, vehicle manufacturers and road users- to do their bit to make roads, vehicles and road use safer.



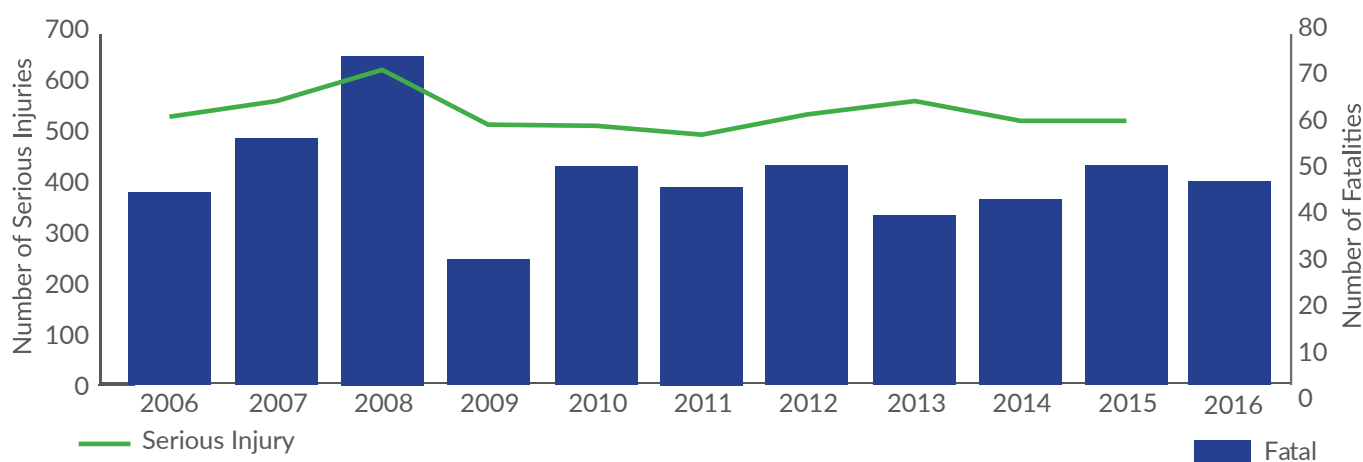
What has been done

The Northern Territory has implemented several key reform measures over the last ten years to reduce the road toll including:

- Complete banning of mobile phone use (hands free) while driving for Learner (L) and Probationary (P) drivers.
- A 6 month minimum learner driver (L Plate) period.
- A 2-year probationary (P Plate) period for drivers under 25.
- Legislation to restrain children under 7 years including baby seats for children under 6 months of age.
- Introduction of fixed speed and red light cameras.
- 130 km/h default speed limit on Stuart, Arnhem, Barkly and Victoria highways.
- 110 km/h default speed limit introduced on rural roads.
- Random drug testing for all drivers.
- Penalty increases for not wearing seatbelts and Driving Under Influence offences.
- Government subsidised urban and remote bus services.
- NT Government Fleet policy to promote purchase of ANCAP 5 star fleet vehicles.
- DriveSafe and DriveSafe NT Remote licensing programs for drivers.
- Improved road treatments and design taking into account vulnerable road users.
- Legislative changes to the MACC scheme to influence safer driving behaviour.
- Introduction of road safety curriculum resources.
- Significant investment in roads and infrastructure.

The Northern Territory road toll has dropped in recent decades. Between 1986-2005, an average of 60 people were killed each year on our roads. Between 2006-2015, the average annual toll reduced to approximately 50 killed each year. However the Northern Territory level of road trauma remains well above the national average.

Chart 4 - Northern Territory fatalities and serious injuries



(DIPL, 2017)



Proposed Plan for 2017-2022

Territorians' attitudes need to change. Generational change is required to fully address road safety and start the journey towards zero fatalities.

While road safety reforms and innovations have contributed to safer road use, progress has slowed. The next major improvements in road safety may be more challenging than the previous suite of measures introduced. We need to think differently about how we tackle this issue and adopt new technologies and interventions.

The Plan will focus on 5 key priority areas. It will include actions for the next 5 years, a review of existing programs and consideration of new measures and initiatives.

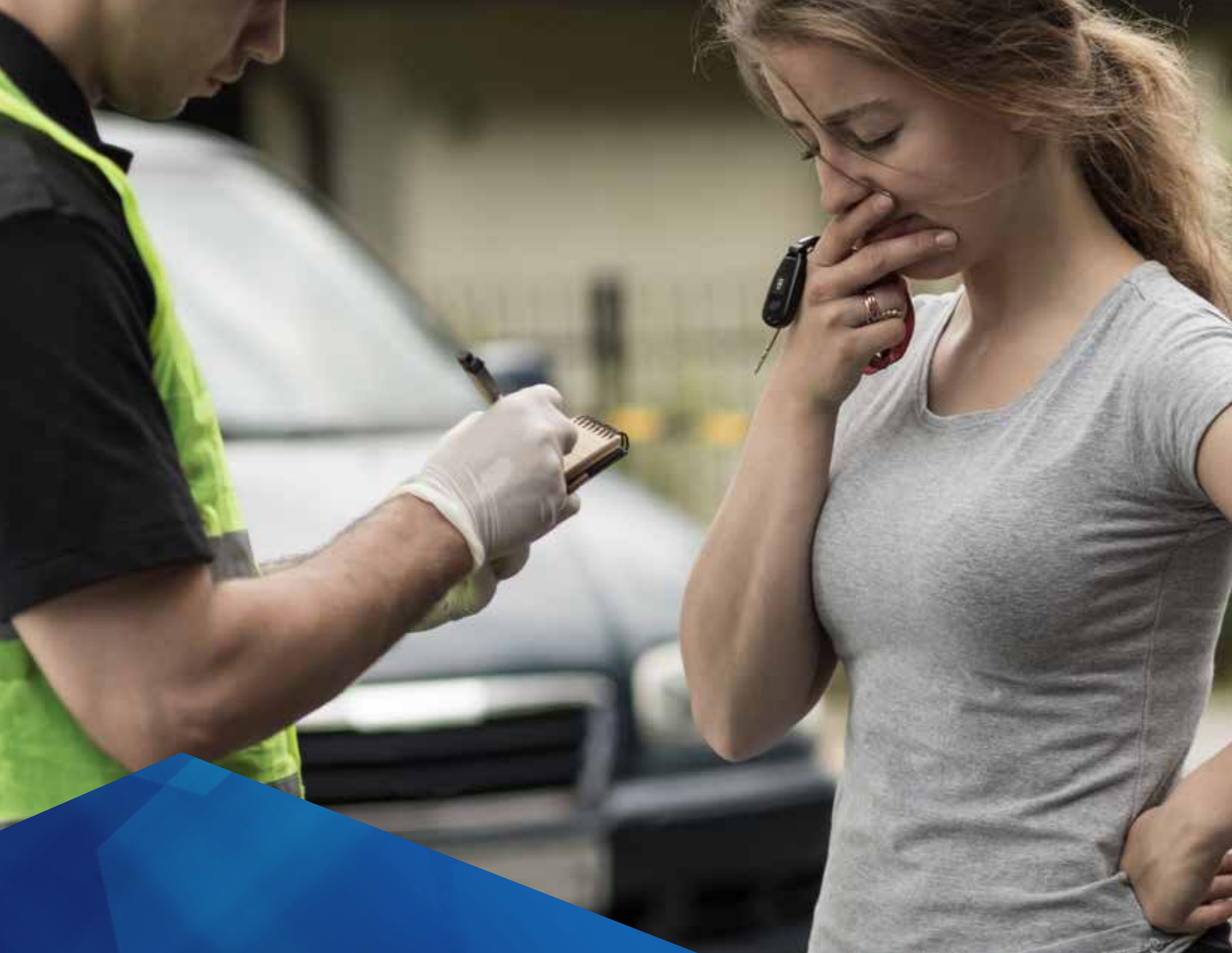
Implementation, Monitoring and reporting

The development and implementation of the Plan will be led by the NT Road Safety Executive Group (RSEG), which comprises the Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services, Northern Territory Treasury, the Motor Accident Compensation Commission (MACC) and the Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics. The RSEG is charged with delivering a coordinated approach to making our roads safer.

The RSEG will monitor and review the implementation of the Plan.

Key Priorities

1. Alcohol and Drugs
2. Seatbelts and Child Restraints
3. Speed and Driving to the Conditions
4. Roads and Roadsides
5. Vulnerable Road Users
 - 5.1 Indigenous
 - 5.2 Young Drivers
 - 5.3 Motorcyclists



1. Alcohol and Drugs

What we know

Alcohol is the most significant contributing factor to death and serious injury on our roads.

Approximately 44% of fatalities and 21% of serious injuries in the Northern Territory are alcohol related. Drinking alcohol and taking drugs reduces a person's judgement and their ability to concentrate and react quickly to changing situations.

For many Australians, having a drink is synonymous with relaxation, socialising, and good times. Alcohol use is accepted as an integral part of Australian life. Many historical and social factors contribute to the way in which alcohol is consumed today.

According to national data, residents of the NT consume the most alcohol per capita in Australia. The high rate of alcohol related road trauma in the Territory is a direct reflection of the misuse of alcohol. Repeat drink driving is a significant issue in the Northern Territory.

Approximately 40% of people charged with drink driving in the Northern Territory had a prior drink driving conviction. For high range drink driving offences, the re-offending rate increases to nearly 60%. Drivers who are unlicensed feature significantly as repeat drink drivers.

Drink driving is also associated with other risk taking behaviour, such as speeding and non-wearing of seatbelts.

Current and ongoing activities

The Northern Territory Government has implemented a range of measures to address drink driving and drug driving. These activities are considered essential ongoing measures:

- Targeted enforcement of drink and drug driving.
- School and novice driver education programs.
- Education through Indigenous licensing programs.
- Drink driving mass media campaigns.
- Driver education, licensing and the Back on Track Drink Drug Driver Program in the Darwin and Alice Springs prisons and some low security work camps.
- Support for regional and remote passenger transport services.
- Reinstatement of the Banned Drinker Register to limit the supply of takeaway alcohol to people who have two low range drink driving offences or a single mid range or high range offence.

What could be done?

Targeted campaigns and education

Reducing drink and drug driving is an area of road safety where other jurisdictions have made significant improvements. The message is not getting through to Territorians. We need to reconsider our approach to broad community education through our awareness campaigns and drink and drug driver education.

Options for consideration

- 1.1. Implement targeted awareness campaigns and programs which educate, for example, the recently launched 'Enough is Enough' MACC drink driving campaign.
- 1.2. Implement a Drug Driving awareness campaign.
- 1.3. Review and develop school resources to include both urban and rural material.

Facts

- Males comprise 70% of significant alcohol related trauma.
- About 60% of Indigenous road related fatalities can be attributed to alcohol.
- Trauma is more prevalent in urban areas.
- Alcohol and alcohol and speed are the most common contributing factors in fatal and serious injury crashes.

Drug Driving is an emerging and concerning road safety issue across Australia.

Illegal drug and misuse of prescription drugs can impact drivers by slowing reaction time, causing a distorted view of time and distance and reducing a person's ability to safely drive. Some drugs can stimulate the nervous system and can lead to a reduced attention span and the sudden onset of fatigue as the stimulant wears off.

The NT will continue to monitor the best approaches to drug driving testing and policy development to ensure that a testing regime is both appropriate and effective.

Address repeat drink drug driving

We need to address this issue through better education for drink drivers, broadening of current programs and developing new initiatives to make an impact in this area.

Options for consideration

- 1.4. Clamping/seizure of vehicles for repeat drink and drug drivers, taking into consideration impacts on regional and remote families.
- 1.5. Widen the Alcohol Ignition Lock program to increase access and participation.
- 1.6. Maximise uptake of Back on Track Drink Drug Driver offender program.

Enforcement

Targeted resources for Police Traffic Unit will allow for dedicated enforcement in areas where alcohol and drug related road trauma is most prevalent.

Options for consideration

- 1.7. Ensure appropriate dedicated traffic enforcement operations, especially in our regional areas.
- 1.8. Implement Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) limit for supervising drivers.
- 1.9. Consider loss of license at .05 BAC not .08 BAC, including direction to undertake drink driving and drug education.
- 1.10. Increase level of roadside drug enforcement testing.

Alternate transport

Options for consideration

- 1.11. Consider opportunities for expanding public transport options.



2. Seatbelts and Child Restraints

What we know

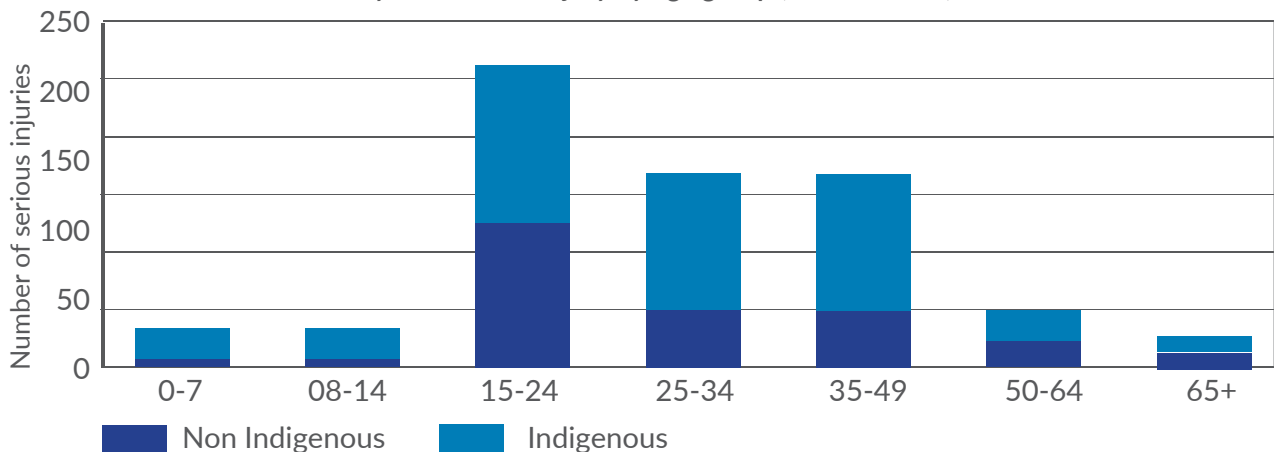
For many drivers, the benefits of wearing seatbelts are well known and widely accepted. Since the early 1970's, seatbelt wearing has been compulsory. Seatbelt wearing rates in Australia are among the highest in the world; however, 41% of fatalities in the Northern Territory are related to not wearing a seatbelt.

Wearing a seatbelt significantly increases your chances of surviving a crash by up to 50% and protects you from being seriously injured.

Research has shown that rural and remote locations have lower rates of seatbelt wearing. This can be attributed to a number of reasons:

- Vehicle overcrowding and inability for all passengers to have access to a seatbelt.
- Low perceived risk of having a crash close to home or driving around a community.
- Less understanding of the safety benefits of seatbelts.
- Less resources to enforce seatbelt use, meaning enforcement is inconsistent and there is less encouragement to buckle up and restrain children.
- Rural communities and towns may have a more informal approach to road safety as road networks are less complex and life is more relaxed.
- Children aged 0-14 are more likely to be unrestrained if the driver is unrestrained.

Chart 5 -Seatbelt fatality and serious injury by age group (2006 - 2015)



Choice and availability of vehicles in rural and remote communities also plays a significant part in how and when passengers and, importantly, children are suitably restrained. 13% of children under 15 involved in road trauma were not restrained. Overcrowding of vehicles remains a serious and ongoing concern in rural and remote areas.

One of the main groups of people failing to wear seatbelts are intoxicated drivers and passengers.

Research suggests that those who habitually fail to wear seatbelts are more likely to be involved in a crash and be charged with other offences including speeding and/or driving under the influence. As this group consciously ignores seatbelt laws, it could be assumed they don't respect road rules generally.

Facts

- Males comprise 70% of the seatbelt related road trauma and failure to wear a seatbelt is most prevalent in young people.
- Failure to wear a seatbelt is linked to impaired driving. Fatalities are more likely to occur on higher speed limited roads in rural and remote areas.
- Nearly 55% of Indigenous fatalities are attributed in whole or part to not wearing a seatbelt.
- Three out of four recent fatalities in children under 15 were not wearing seatbelts or were not restrained correctly.

Current and ongoing activities

- Targeted enforcement campaigns.
- School and community education programs, including in partnership with the Michael Long Leadership and Learning Centre.
- MACC partnership with Kidsafe to build capability in remote areas to fit child restraints.
- Working with community and health organisations to promote the use of child restraints.
- MACC child restraint pilot program in Borroloola, to educate and increase use of child restraints.

What could be done?

Targeted media campaigns

Road users need accurate, current, and culturally appropriate information to communicate the message that seatbelts and child restraints save lives.

A study on seatbelts in remote communities and regional areas asked how the road toll could be reduced. Respondents identified behaviours like speeding, drink driving and condition of road infrastructure as causes of serious injury and fatality. Seatbelts were not identified as a measure to reduce the road toll. The study also recognised that there had been no targeted campaigns in the regional and remote areas where the study had taken place.

Research has shown that a two-pronged approach will be more effective if there is enforcement to encourage people to start to use seatbelts and education to encourage them to continue to wear them. Media campaigns must be created with a consultative approach to ensure that there is 'cut through' of campaigns where maximum benefits can be obtained and messages will be effective.

Options for consideration

- 2.1. Deliver seatbelt and child restraint campaigns appropriately pitched at target audiences to create behaviour change.

Increase the use of child restraints in remote areas

Children up to the age of seven must be restrained in age and weight appropriate child restraints, however, statistics show that in rural and remote areas children in the age groups 0-7 and 7-14 are among the most likely to be unrestrained. This issue needs to be addressed through building awareness of the legal obligation for restraint use, and promoting the safety benefits of and increasing access to, child restraints in remote communities.

Options for consideration

- 2.2. Build capacity and support community based programs to increase access to child restraints in remote communities.
- 2.3. Investigate options to assist the provision of baby seats to new parents in the Northern Territory.
- 2.4. Establish a Road Safety Champions program to encourage seatbelt use (the Road Safety Champions program is explained in detail in the following Indigenous section of this discussion paper).



3. Speed and Driving to the Conditions

What we know

Speed is a contributing factor in over a quarter of road fatalities in the Northern Territory. The percentage of speed related crashes has been gradually increasing since 2008.

Facts

- Males comprise about 75% of speed related road trauma in the Northern Territory.
- About 90 percent of speed related trauma in the Territory involves by the 16-49 year old age group.
- 16-24 year olds are over represented in serious road trauma.
- 50% of speed related road trauma occurs in the urban environments of Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs.
- People still exceed the posted speed limit and drive too fast. This is attributed to drivers' poor understanding of the link between speed and the risk of crashing.

In any crash, speed determines the level of injury. Driving faster means you're more likely to be severely injured or killed. Slowing drivers down will be a key priority of the Plan.

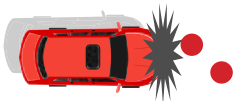

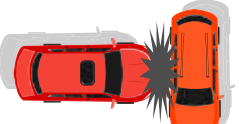

Evidence has shown that there are many reasons why crashes occur. Risk taking behaviour is one aspect, however many crashes occur from simple driver and rider errors including not keeping adequate distances between vehicles, failing to stop at traffic signals, lapses of concentration and distraction from technology and passengers.


Many parts of the Northern Territory road network become flooded in the wet season which presents challenges for communities which are cut off. Flooded causeways present significant danger for vehicles and pedestrians that attempt to cross.

Driving to the conditions is an important contributor to improving safety. It includes considering the road infrastructure, the vehicle standard, the driver's ability and the environment. Education and information on current road conditions can assist drivers to make good decisions.

As drivers and riders we cannot control everything on our roads and we cannot stop the unexpected. However, we can individually control how we drive and the speed we travel at. Speed limits set maximum speeds. Drivers and riders must travel at speeds that are safe and appropriate for the road environment and conditions.

Table 1 - Impact speed – Your chances of survival decrease significantly above these speeds

Car and tree/ pole crash		30-40 km/h
Car and pedestrian crash		20-30 km/h
Car and side impact crash		50 km/h
Car head on crash		70 km/h

- 
- Speeding may save you only a few minutes over your journey, but may cost you your life if you crash.

Current and ongoing activities

- Default speed limits of 50 km/h in many of our main urban centres, 110 km/h on unsealed roads and 130 km/h on our sealed highways.
- Periodic review of speed zones on the Territory road network.
- Speeding and road rule enforcement campaigns.
- Speed and red light cameras at high risk intersections.
- Speed cameras and Automated Number Plate Recognition fitted to Police patrol cars.
- Distribution of educational and trip planning material to tourism centres (multilingual travel plans).
- Promotion of free vehicle safety checks and safe driving practices, including sharing the road safely with heavy vehicles.
- Strengthening penalties for hooning including fines, accrual of demerit points, immobilisation, impounding, forfeiture or disposal of vehicles.

Approaches of other jurisdictions

Australia wide, speed is at the core of many road crashes. Concerted efforts are being made by all jurisdictions to review and implement measures to reduce the level of speed related crashes. Lowering speed by specifically targeting certain types of roads has made a significant difference to severity of crashes. It is reported that in Western Australia, the reduction of the urban default limit from 60 km/h to 50 km/h led to 20% fewer crashes.

Victorian road authorities are currently delivering an initiative to support drivers to understand what a safe speed is and the reasons for how speed limits are set. This aims to build community understanding about how crashes affect human bodies and that speeding only saves a small amount of time but increases your crash risk.

Other jurisdictions are also looking at other speed reduction measures including lowering speeds in areas where there is high pedestrian activity.

Jurisdictions have implemented double demerit points to encourage safe driving during high risk times of the year including long weekends and holiday periods. The Northern Territory currently has a demerit points scheme where points are accrued for prescribed traffic offences, to a maximum of 12 points over three years (full licence holders), and 5 points (provisional licence holders). However, the Territory currently does not double demerit points over high risk periods.

What could be done?

Implement appropriate speed limits and signage

Research shows that even driving a little bit slower reduces the risk of death and injury. Reviewing speed limits needs to take into account traffic flow, road function, geometry and black spot locations, with the aim of improving consistency and safety for all road users.

Options for consideration

- 3.1. Ensure consistent policy on speed limits across the Territory road network and continue to review speed limits to achieve improved outcomes for road users.
- 3.2. Continue to review and improve speed signage across the road network.

Technology, compliance and enforcement

New technology to monitor speed, compliance and enforcement plays an important role in the safety of all road users, no matter what the speed limit is. New technologies including Automated Number Plate Recognition and point to point cameras have the potential to increase the effectiveness of enforcement.

Options for consideration

- 3.3. Expand the use of variable speed limit signs and variable messaging technology.
- 3.4. Trial point to point speed cameras at high risk locations on our national highways.
- 3.5. Expand the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology, including installation of fixed cameras at strategic locations.
- 3.6. Review current red-light and speed camera locations and consider possible new locations.
- 3.7. Investigate double demerit points for certain offences to encourage safer driving over holiday periods.

Education and awareness

Managing speed is crucial to reducing the severity of crashes. Many drivers and riders choose speeds that are too fast for the road conditions, partly because they don't fully understand the possible outcomes.

Distraction is a serious road safety issue and is often the start of a chain of events that results in significant road trauma. Despite the serious nature of distraction, not all drivers understand the effects of being distracted by texting, talking, using other technology or passengers.

Options for consideration

- 3.8. Implement speed education and awareness campaign.
- 3.9. Implement driver distraction education and awareness campaign and review penalties for texting, talking on the phone and using technology while driving.
- 3.10. Implement education and awareness campaigns to promote driving to conditions, including the benefits of well-maintained vehicles, managing fatigue and taking appropriate rest breaks.
- 3.11. Investigate options that deter people crossing flooded and closed roads.
- 3.12. Review signage on major routes to provide better information on time and distance to overtaking lanes or destinations to better manage fatigue.



4. Roads and Roadsides

What we know

The Northern Territory road network is spread across a vast 1.3 million square kilometres.

A large proportion of the road network is unsealed, and the condition of many roads means that improvement works start from a low infrastructure base.

The Northern Territory has over 36,000 km of roads, more than 220 bridges, thousands of river and creek crossings, 55 roadside rest areas, 131 truck parking bays and 260 km of urban shared paths.

Current and ongoing activities

- Incorporating Safe System principles in road designs.
- Continuing to invest in roads to achieve road safety outcomes through general upgrades and the National Black Spot Program.
- Undertaking targeted road safety audits and speed limit reviews.
- Implementing a National Network Road Safety and Fatigue Management Program including: intersection upgrades, culvert widening, guardrails, audio tactile edge lines and the duplication of highways, where there is a high percentage of heavy vehicle traffic.

- Installing more audio tactile edge lines as a trial on the Stuart Highway at various locations (total length 200 km) and the Barkly Highway (100 km).
- Delivery of the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program including a road train assembly area in Darwin, pavement strengthening and widening on key routes and provision of new truck parking bays.
- Continual improvement to the road reporting website to better inform urban and remote travellers about road conditions.
- Working with Emergency Services to review crash sites where infrastructure improvements may be required either in the immediate vicinity of the accident or more broadly across the network by updating infrastructure standards or policies.
- Developing a 10 Year Infrastructure Plan.

What could be done?

Options for consideration

- 4.1. Targeted assessment and investment in infrastructure to improve road safety.
- 4.2. Complete a network risk assessment of the national highway network.
- 4.3. Integrate network and land use planning to ensure road access responds to planned future developments and provides effective connection and corridors.
- 4.4. Finalise the review of the Control of Roads Act to ensure activities in the road reserve aren't impacting on road safety.

Technology solutions

Options for consideration

- 4.5. Explore opportunities for the use of Intelligent Transport Systems, known as ITS, across our road network, such as real time messaging to drivers.
- 4.12 Expand the use of electronic variable message boards to provide road safety information.
- 4.13 Plan to ensure road networks can accommodate automated vehicles in the future.



5. Vulnerable Road Users

5.1 Indigenous road users

What we know

Indigenous people represent approximately 30% of the Northern Territory population but are over-represented in our road safety statistics and account for 50% of road fatalities. Indigenous males represent two-thirds of all Indigenous road trauma.

Facts

- Alcohol is the biggest contributing factor to Indigenous road trauma. Nearly 60% of Indigenous fatalities are attributed in whole or part to alcohol.
- 27% of Indigenous fatalities are speed related and 38% are related to failure to wear a seatbelt.
- Over 60% of road trauma involving Indigenous people involves an unlicensed, cancelled or disqualified driver. This unlicensed driving contributes to the over-representation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system.
- Pedestrians represent about 24% of Indigenous road trauma. Most of this trauma occurs in urban areas of the Northern Territory.

People living in remote regions face particular road safety challenges. This includes poorer road conditions, delayed access to medical services, increased road hazards and a need to travel longer distances.

Our Indigenous population is young, with one third under 15. This means there will a significant increase in demand for driver education and licensing services in the future.

Current and ongoing activities

- The DriveSafe NT Remote driver and licensing education program includes free driver education, training and licensing services to eligible participants.
- Digital online driver education resources in English and language.
- The Michael Long Leadership and Learning Centre road safety education sessions.
- The Road Safety Community Grants Program.
- The regional and remote school road safety education program.
- Targeted initiatives involving the arts – including the Road Safety Film Competition and the Allstars Road Safety Band.
- Ongoing government support for regional and remote passenger transport services.
- Industry Engagement and Employment Pathways program to enable access to driver education and licensing program for selected remote students.

What could be done?

Targeted messaging

Mainstream awareness and education programs that have otherwise been successful, such as wearing of seatbelts and drink driving, are still not reaching our remote Indigenous audience. There is also a lack of targeted road safety literature that is informed by Indigenous knowledge or systematic research with Indigenous groups.

Options for consideration

- 5.1.1. Consult with Indigenous stakeholders and specialists to develop targeted strategies to address Indigenous road safety issues.
- 5.1.2. Deliver targeted and culturally appropriate, regional/ place-based campaigns and resources addressing drink driving, seatbelts, speeding, vehicle overcrowding, flooded road crossings and pedestrian safety.
- 5.1.3. Create a 'Road Safety Champions' program in remote communities to promote education and encourage the development and implementation of road safety initiatives.
- 5.1.4. Develop tailored programs targeting Indigenous people and focusing on promoting awareness about the link between alcohol use and road safety.
- 5.1.5. Provide targeted road safety grants to attract participants to develop Indigenous road safety initiatives.

Education and awareness programs

The majority of road trauma occurs on our regional and remote roads. Programs need to deliver expanded services to these remote areas to reach the target audience.

Options for consideration

- 5.1.6. Deliver NT Government programs through partnerships including: The DriveSafe NT Program through the Department of Education's Indigenous Pathways to Employment Program; DriveSafe NT and the Back on Track Drink Drug Driver program in all Department of Correctional Services adult correctional facilities.
- 5.1.7. Expand DriveSafe NT Remote to include road safety education and Motor Vehicle Registry services in remote areas.

Minimise loss of licenses from fines and offences

Having a driver's license provides greater mobility and helps with access to employment and education opportunities. Losing a license because of traffic offences or fine defaults can lead to a cycle of unauthorised driving, further fine defaults and potential imprisonment.

Options for consideration

- 5.1.8. Investigate options with the Fines Recovery Unit to minimise the loss of licence.



5.2 Young Drivers

What we know

Young and novice drivers (16-25 years old) are new to the road and evidence tells us that the most hazardous period for these drivers is in the first six months of driving solo. Measures to limit young drivers' exposure to high risk situations during the early stages of driving might reduce trauma for younger and novice drivers and make them safer drivers for the future.

Licensing age, consumption of alcohol, distractions and driving at night are all factors that significantly increase the crash risk for inexperienced drivers.

Facts

- Male drivers comprise about 65% of road trauma in the 16-25 age group.
- Approximately 40% of speed related trauma involved people aged 16-25.
- 16-25 year olds comprise only 22% of licensed drivers but are involved in at least 29% of all crashes.
- NT drivers are allowed to drive solo from 16 years and 6 months, which is the youngest age of all jurisdictions. They also spend the least amount of time on a Probationary (P) license.

Inexperience largely contributes to why young drivers are over represented in road trauma. Driving experience reduces crash risk over time. Young drivers underestimate risk partly due to their cognitive and perceptual skills not being fully developed to enable them to appropriately manage and respond to varied driving situations.

Current and ongoing activities

- The DriveSafe NT program, which includes subsidised driver education, training and licensing services for eligible participants.
- Online Learner driver testing and new Learner driving handbooks.
- Targeted road safety education programs and information sessions for young people including the Choices Program for Senior and Middle school students and partnerships with sporting organisations.

Table 2 - Road safety education summary

EARLY CHILDHOOD (T - Year 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Roads Early Childhood Resource - Focus areas: Passenger Safety, Pedestrian Safety, Playing Safely, Sensing Traffic • Hector the Road Safety Cat and Resources • Bike Safety (Alice Springs)
PRIMARY YEARS (Year 3 - 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Roads Primary Years Resource - Focus areas: Passenger Safety, Pedestrian Safety, Safety on Wheels, Road Rules And Signs • Safer Roads Class Booster Lessons • Bike Safety (Darwin & Alice Springs)
MIDDLE YEARS (Year 7 - 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Roads Middle Years Resource - Focus areas: Drug/Alcohol Use Issues, Predicting and Responding to Drug Use Risks and Consequences, Road User Issues, Road User Risks and Harm Reduction Strategies, Taking Action • Safer Roads Class Presentations
SENIOR SCHOOL URBAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choices Road Safety Senior Student Workshop (Pre-Driver/Driver) - Focus areas: The influencing Factors of Crashes, Safe Driving Behaviours, Attitudes and Practices, Reducing the Risk Strategies • Ignition Driver Behaviour DVD
SENIOR SCHOOL REMOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Driver Education Program (13-18 years) - Department of Education
NOVICE DRIVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DriveSafe NT and DriveSafe NT Remote Driver Education Programs - Focus areas: NT Road Crash Facts, Safe Driving Practices and Attitudes, Professional Driver Training • Ignition Driver Behaviour DVD
GENERAL COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road Safety Forum/Workshops - Focus areas: NT Road Crash Facts, Safe Systems (Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles, Safer Speeds, & Safer People) • Community Events And Presentations • Road Safety Community Grants

(DIPL, 2017)

Approaches of other jurisdictions

Increasing the safety of young drivers is a high priority in all Australian jurisdictions. Young drivers are one of the highest crash risk groups of all road users. Other jurisdictions have already implemented graduated licensing for Probationary drivers, which goes beyond the current Northern Territory licensing process. Creating specific restrictions around Probationary 1 (P1 or red P's) and Probationary 2 (P2 or green P's) allows for drivers to gradually gain experience.

Table 3 - Graduated driver licence comparison as at 2016

Learner Period	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	ACT	NT
Minimum age	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years	16 years	15 and 9 months	16 years
Minimum Length	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	12 months	6 months	6 months
Maximum Speed	90km/h	Signposted	Signposted	100km/h	100km/h	L1 -80km/h	Signposted	80km/h
Probationary stage 1								
Minimum Length / Age	1 year / 17 years	1 year / 18 years	1 year / 17 years	1 year / 17 years	6 months / 17 years	1 year / 17 years	3 years / 17 years	2 years / 16 years and 6 months
Passenger Restrictions	One peer passenger between 11pm-5am	One peer passenger only (16-22yrs)	One peer passenger between 11pm-5am	One peer passenger only (16-20yrs)	No	No	No	No
Late night restrictions	Only if multiple passengers	No	Only with multiple passengers	From 12am 5am	Between 12am-5am first 6 mths P1	No	No	No
Mobile phone	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Maximum Speed	90km/h	Signposted	Signposted	100km/h	100km/h	90 km/h in a 90 or 100 km/h zone. 100 in a 110 km/h zone.	Signposted	100km/h
Probationary stage 2								
Minimum Length / Age	2 years / 18 years	3 years / 19 years	2 years / 18 years	2 years / 18 years	18 months	1-2 years/ 18 years	None	None
Mobile phone	Hands free	None	Hands free	Hands free	Hands free	Hands free	n/a	n/a
Maximum Speed	Signposted	Signposted	Signposted	100km/h	100km/h	Signposted	n/a	n/a

(DIPL, 2016)

What could be done

Strengthen the licensing process

Reviewing and strengthening of the Graduated Licensing System to instill safe road behaviour from the start of the licensing process.

Options for consideration

5.2.1. Review the Graduated Licensing System.

Targeted driver learning and education

Road safety education plays a significant role in developing awareness and promoting safe road use for young drivers before they begin to drive. We need to increase access to and improve educational support and look at innovative ways for safe road use to be communicated.

Options for consideration

5.2.2. Review current training programs for young drivers.

5.2.3. Implement and Evaluate a pre driver program (remote and urban) to provide best practice information to senior school students.

5.2.4. Incorporate driver licensing, car maintenance and road safety concepts into the Vocational Education Training program in schools.

5.2.5. Incorporate and develop online tools that help young drivers improve their knowledge and skills, eg. hazard perception tests.

5.2.6. Encourage partnerships with insurance and motor associations to offer incentives for safer driving, i.e. insurance premium reductions.

Promote awareness

There are many types of activities that can distract a driver. The risk and outcomes of using mobile technology is well documented in Australia, however, many drivers and riders still fail to understand the dangers associated with distraction. We need to raise awareness to ensure road users fully understand the risks and penalties.

Options for consideration

5.2.7. Develop initiatives and community campaigns to tackle novice driver distractions including use of emerging technologies.



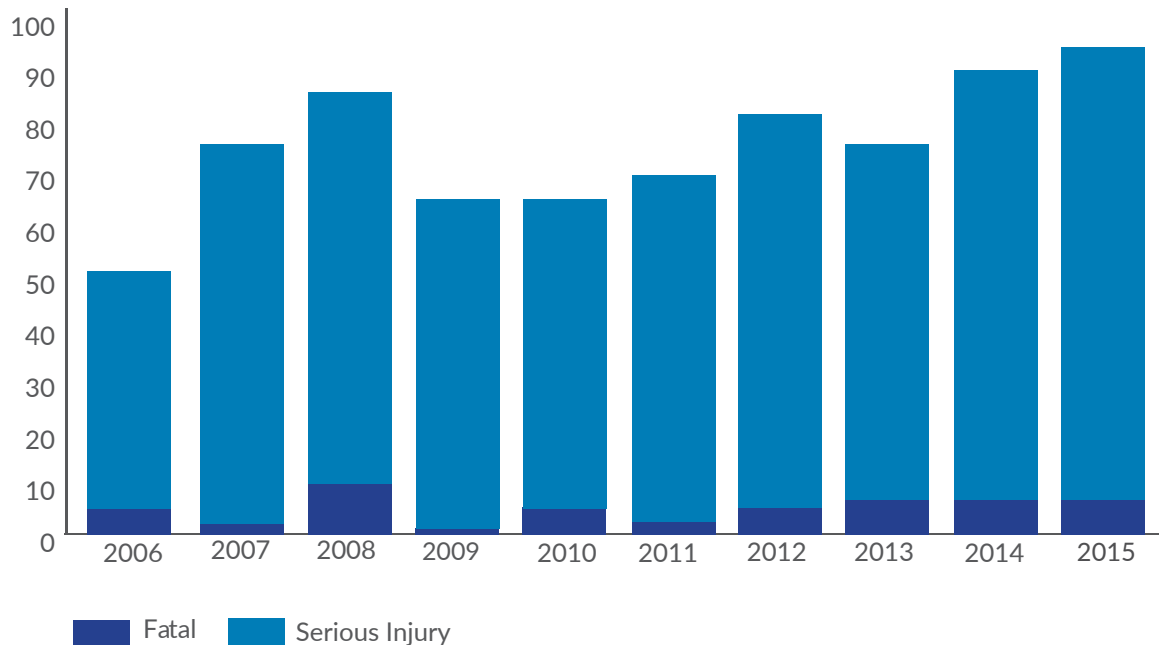
5.3 Motorcyclists

What we know

Research shows that the risk of a motorcyclist being killed or seriously injured in a crash is at least 18 times higher than for a car driver.

Motorcycle riding requires a high level of vehicle control and cognitive skill compared to driving. However, this mode of travel does not offer similar safety advantages to cars. This makes motorcycle riders vulnerable road users and crashes tend to result in more severe outcomes.

Chart 6 - Serious injury and fatality of motorcycle riders in the Northern Territory 2006 - 2015



Motorcycle registrations have been steadily increasing and scooters and mopeds are a popular choice for young people due to their lower entry price. Unless steps to make riding safer are addressed now, more motorcyclists will be injured or killed on our roads.

Facts

- On average motorcyclists represent 10% of all fatalities and 13% of road trauma.
- Approximately 60% of motorcycle riders are responsible for their own injury.
- 95% of trauma involving motorcyclists involves non-Indigenous people. There is an over-representation of males aged 15-24 and 50-64.
- Most motorcycle road trauma occurs around Darwin and Alice Springs.

Current and ongoing activities

- Supporting Rider Awareness NT in community rider safety initiatives.
- Delivery of safe rider training courses, including the Motorcycle Education Training and Licensing program.
- Contributing to the development of a national computerised car and motorcycle hazard perception testing models.
- Targeted enforcement campaigns.

What could be done?

Approaches of other jurisdictions

The Northern Territory has similar requirements as other jurisdictions for motorcyclists including a zero Blood Alcohol Concentration for learner riders, a ban on mobile phone use and a maximum speed restriction. A review of the Graduated Licensing System is necessary to better equip new riders with enhanced skills. Strengthening rider education while riders are learning is essential for developing safer riders.

Table 4 - Motorcycle graduated licensing systems

	Pre learner phase							
	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Minimum age for a learners permit	16 years and 9 months (15 years and 9 months car learner's permit)	16 years 9 months (16 years car learner's permit)	16 years (16 years car learner's permit)	18 years (16 years car learner's permit)	16 years (16 years car learner's permit)	16 years and 6 months (16 years car learner's permit)	18 years (16 years car learner's permit)	16 years
Requirement for car licence tenure	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x
Mandatory pre-learner training or course	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x
Mandatory pre-learner assessment (practical)	x	x	✓	x	x	x	✓	✓
Mandatory motorcycle specific theory/ knowledge test	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓

(DIPL, 2017)

Strengthen the licensing process

More motorcycles and scooters on our roads has resulted in higher numbers of riders involved in road trauma. It is essential to provide a licensing process which can help riders gain experience and acquire skills in a safe environment to reduce their risk on our roads. In Queensland, about 95% of applicants upgrading to their rider license, obtain this license from a rider training course.

Options for consideration

- 5.3.1. Investigate the option to introduce a Class R (Rider) licensing requirement for all Power Two Wheelers (PTW) Motorcycles. Where a vehicle is registered as a motorcycle, riders will require a Class R license and not a Class C (Car) license. This will include removal of the provision to ride with a Class C learner permit.
- 5.3.2. Introduce standalone motorcycle graduated licensing where riders will progress through a Learner and Provisional license stage before obtaining a full unrestricted Class R licence. This will possibly include that Class C licenses must be held for a minimum time before a Class R license is obtained.
- 5.3.3. Mandate rider training for all riders including mopeds prior to the issue of a licence.
- 5.3.4. Review and amend the Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme to keep the power to weight ratio but remove upper engine capacity.

Encourage safer road use

Motorcycle riders are at greater risk of serious injury in a crash. The risk is higher when older riders return to motorcycle riding. Opportunities must be explored and promoted for improving safety for motorcycle riders. Choosing more visible and safer riding clothing and helmets and technologies such as anti-lock brakes for bikes will assist to protect riders from more serious injury. The safety benefits of antilock braking (ABS) are also becoming more widely known with efforts to mandate ABS at a Federal level being considered.

Options for consideration

- 5.3.5. Promote motorcycle safety participation course for returning riders.
- 5.3.6. Promote the use of safety equipment, new technologies and safe road use.
- 5.3.7. Implement a rider safety education and awareness campaign.

Increasing safety in traffic

We can help keep motorcyclists safer by evaluating the practice of lane filtering. This is when a motorcycle moves between slow moving or stationary traffic. Lane filtering offers greater protection to a motorcyclist as it assists the rider to move safely through congested traffic and provides the opportunity to get in position in front of traffic.

Currently, in several jurisdictions, including the Northern Territory, the practice is not specifically banned, however the rider will contravene several road rules if they do lane filter.

Other jurisdictions have moved towards specifically allowing for the practice of lane filtering by amending legislation and creating awareness around safe and legal filtering. This will be a move towards creating consistency in national laws.

Table 5 - Australian jurisdictions who have adopted lane filtering

NSW	ACT	QLD	VIC	WA	SA	TAS	NT
✓	✓ Trial underway	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗

Options for consideration

- 5.3.8. Evaluate the introduction of lane filtering.



6. Other Key Actions

The following key actions relate to a number of the previously identified priority areas.

Enhanced information sharing

We need to better utilise social media to connect with our widely spread population and harder to reach road users. Working more closely with road safety stakeholders will increase our understanding of the issues and assist with finding targeted solutions.

Options for consideration

- 6.1. Implement a social media and online strategy for road safety in the Northern Territory, to draw attention and inspire the community to own our road safety problem and encourage participation in finding solutions.
- 6.2. Improve the accessibility of road safety information, including statistics and evidence based information, through an engaging and contemporary website.
- 6.3. Continue to align enforcement and education campaigns.
- 6.4. Review and report on road safety outcomes annually.
- 6.5. Develop and adapt an educational program for workplaces to promote safer driving practices, particularly when people drive as part of their job.

Invest in research

Develop a more detailed understanding of community attitudes toward road safety to shape interventions.

Options for consideration

- 6.6. Develop a research survey that examines the attitudes and behaviours of Northern Territory road users.

Community action

Community grants for road safety projects are currently available, however, a review to increase the impact of grants should be undertaken.

Options for consideration

- 6.7. Enhance the Road Safety Community Grant Program.

Heavy vehicle safety

Heavy vehicles pose particular challenges to road safety as the consequences of crashes involving trucks can be very severe.

Options for consideration

- 6.8. Review the assessment process and investigate continual training improvements for heavy vehicle licensing in the Northern Territory, including implementation of in-vehicle recording of assessments.
- 6.9. Update the heavy vehicle inspection manual to align with National Heavy Vehicle Regulator inspection requirements.

Safe vehicles

All vehicles need to comply with nationally consistent vehicle safety standards and Northern Territory roadworthy standards and legislation.

Options for consideration

- 6.10. Review the current Authorised Inspector Scheme.
- 6.11. Improve levels of compliance by industry and members of the public relating to safe vehicles.
- 6.12. Promote the use of 4 and 5 star ANCAP rated vehicles.

Cycling safety

More people cycle in the Northern Territory (per capita) than in any other Australian State or Territory, however, concerns about road safety remain a key barrier to more people taking up cycling. Bicycles are classed as vehicles and cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as all other road users. However, cyclists are vulnerable road users and every year, a number of cyclists are seriously injured on Territory roads. Considering lower speed limits in urban areas with high pedestrian and cyclist use, analysing cycling crash data and provision of separated infrastructure are key actions to improve cyclist safety (refer to sections on infrastructure and speed).

To improve safety for cyclists, several states and Territories have adopted local road rules which require vehicles to allow at least 1 m when overtaking cyclists. In the Northern Territory, a minimum passing distance has not been implemented. However information about sharing the road with cyclists, including recommended minimum passing distances, is included in driver education materials. A national approach regulating passing distance is being reviewed and there is an opportunity for the Northern Territory to introduce a mandatory minimum passing distance.

Options for consideration

- 6.13. Investigate options for the introduction of a mandatory minimum passing distance for vehicles overtaking cyclists.
- 6.14. Implement a vulnerable road user awareness campaign.
- 6.15. Undertake bus/heavy vehicle and cyclist workshops to raise awareness of the interaction between road users.

We want your input

This discussion paper has been prepared to help guide the development of a five year Road Safety Action Plan for the Northern Territory.

Road safety is everyone's responsibility. Now that you have seen some of the options for consideration we want to know your thoughts.

You can go online to www.haveyoursay.nt.gov.au to complete a short survey or to find more information. You can also attend a forum near you.





www.nt.gov.au