Local Government Association Tasmania

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Road Safety Strategy Development Team
Building Tasmania

Lodged online: https://engage.building.tas.gov.au/tasmanias-next-road-safety-strategy/written-submissions

Dear Road Safety Strategy Development Team,

LGAT Submission on Tasmania's Road Safety Strategy Discussion Paper

The Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed direction for Tasmania's next Road Safety Strategy. This submission has been prepared by the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) on behalf of Tasmanian local government in collaboration with our members; all 29 councils.

LGAT is incorporated under the *Local Government Act 1993* and is the representative body and advocate for local government in Tasmania. Where a council has made a direct submission to this process, any omission of specific comments made by that council in this submission should not be viewed as a lack of support by the LGAT for that specific issue.

We support adopting a Vision Zero approach, continuing to apply Safe System principles, and recognising that achieving meaningful reductions in road trauma requires coordinated action and clear identification of responsibilities across all levels of government and the broader community. The discussion paper reflects consultation feedback that called for a stronger focus on governance, partnerships, evidence and data, and the movement and place framework, which we generally support.

Local government owns and manages the majority of Tasmania's road network and plays a critical role in road safety through infrastructure planning, road management, speed management, active transport delivery, land use planning, community engagement, and education. The Strategy should more clearly recognise this role and provide practical support to enable councils to contribute effectively to statewide road safety outcomes.

Strategic Framework

We support the proposed emphasis on road safety management, partnerships, and evidence-based decision-making. We broadly support the Safe System approach and the principle of shared responsibility, but note that responsibility is not shared equally across the transport system. The Strategy should clearly recognise the differing responsibilities of each level of government, as well as other identified partners. State and federal governments have greater resources, powers, and capabilities to influence road safety outcomes, and the Strategy should recognise this with proportionate actions.

To strengthen implementation, the Strategy should:

- Explicitly recognise local government as a key delivery partner, rather than another general partner or stakeholder, through formal, ongoing involvement in governance, implementation, and review processes.
- Ensure road safety governance arrangements provide genuine opportunities for independent advice, local input and transparent monitoring of outcomes across the entire road network.
- Recognise the significant variation in council size, resources and technical capacity and ensure implementation expectations are proportionate.
- Require progress reporting that identifies outcomes on both State-managed and local government roads to ensure road safety performance is assessed across the whole network.
- Improve both access and support in application of crash, traffic, speed, near-miss and road safety data at a council level to support evidence-based local decision-making. This should also include identifying emerging data sources to detect crash risks before serious incidents occur.
- Support and facilitate a consistent statewide approach to road safety analysis, risk assessment and prioritisation across the local road network.
- Align funding programs with Strategy priorities and provide long-term investment certainty for local road safety improvements.
- Resolve uncertainty around heavy vehicle motor tax and line marking funding.

Local government delivery of road safety objectives will be constrained where there are additional delivery responsibilities without accompanying technical, financial or administrative support.

Movement and Place Framework

We generally support the proposed use of the Movement and Place framework to understand the differing functions of roads and tailor safety interventions accordingly.

This framework should complement, rather than replace, local knowledge and community engagement.

The Strategy should:

- Recognise the diversity of Tasmanian communities and road environments within the two broad categories of use.
- Ensure local government is actively involved in developing guidance, methodologies and implementation plans.
- Allow for flexibility in local decision-making that responds to community circumstances and avoids a one-size-fits-all application of speed or infrastructure treatments.
- Implement clear, consistent processes, assessment methodologies, decision-making and communication so local government and communities know how decisions are made and why.

Action Area 1: Safer Behaviour and Choices

Local government supports the continued emphasis on education, awareness, enforcement, and behaviour-change initiatives.

Priority actions should include:

- Ensuring road safety revenue, including the automated traffic enforcement program, is reinvested into road safety initiatives.
- Expanding programs targeting high-risk behaviours, including speeding, distraction, alcohol and drug impairment.
- Supporting councils to deliver locally tailored road safety initiatives.
- Improving awareness of emerging mobility forms, including e-bikes and e-scooters.
- Promoting safe interaction between motorists, pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users.

Behaviour change programs are most effective when supported by appropriate road design, enforcement and infrastructure investment.

Action Area 2: Safer Cities, Neighbourhoods and Places

We strongly support greater attention to safer urban environments and vulnerable road users.

The Strategy should prioritise:

- Investment in pedestrian safety infrastructure, including crossings and improved accessibility.
- Innovative infrastructure and design treatments, including line marking and visual road environment cues that encourage appropriate driver behaviour.
- Place-based safety improvements around schools, activity centres and community facilities, linked with safer active transport networks that support walking and cycling.
- Speed management approaches that are evidence-based, context-sensitive and developed in partnership with local government.

Councils are often best placed to understand local activity patterns, community expectations and emerging safety issues and have an active role in identifying and delivering improvements.

Action Area 3: Safer Travel on Roads Designed for Movement

We support a continued focus on reducing trauma on higher-speed regional and rural roads, where a significant proportion of serious crashes occur.

Priority actions should include:

- Increased investment in infrastructure treatments proven to reduce severe crashes.
- Recognition that resourcing ongoing road maintenance and renewal is fundamental to road safety outcomes.
- Expansion of low-cost, high-benefit treatments across local and state roads.
- Greater use of risk-based network assessment tools to inform investment decisions.
- Improved coordination between state and local government road programs.
- Recognition that many local government roads perform important movement functions and should be considered in statewide safety investment priorities.

The local road network should not be overlooked when identifying opportunities to reduce serious injuries and fatalities with infrastructure investment.

Conclusion

We support the overall direction of the discussion paper and its focus on Vision Zero, Safe System principles, partnerships and evidence-based action. To maximise success, the final Strategy should focus on responsibilities of those with the greatest capacity to influence road safety, including design, provision, maintenance, and operation of safe infrastructure. It must also recognise local government's road safety duties, embed them in governance and implementation, along with sustainable funding and technical support.

Achieving Tasmania's road safety ambitions will require a genuine partnership between the Tasmanian Government and local government, as well as communities and other partners. This must be supported by a clear implementation plan, appropriate resources, and defined accountabilities.

We look forward to further collaboration in the development of Tasmania's new Road Safety Strategy on behalf of local governments.
Please contact Jon Stanger, Senior Policy Adviser, if you have any queries regarding our submission at jon.stanger@lgat.tas.gov.au, 0437 374 125.

Yours sincerely,



Dion Lester
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER