

Queensland Road Safety Strategy

2022–2031



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- Queensland Corrective Services
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Foreword

For most Queenslanders, using the road is part of our everyday lives. Whether we are driving, riding or walking, commuting to work, or visiting friends and family, Queensland's road network facilitates access and mobility. The activity of our lives does not pause when we are on the move. Instead, the road itself is a place where our lives are lived and impacted.

While the majority of Queenslanders do the right thing on our roads, people sometimes make mistakes. When crashes occur, they cause harm and devastation to individuals, families and communities across our state. There are also enormous economic consequences to road trauma, costing Queenslanders an estimated \$6 billion in 2020, in addition to the significant impacts on our health system, where road trauma accounts for almost 15 per cent of annual hospital admissions.¹

Under the previous *Safer Roads, Safer Queensland: Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015–21*, the Queensland Government delivered over 130 initiatives in a seven year period. This included a significant investment in road safety infrastructure, with over \$1.22 billion invested through the Targeted Road Safety Program (TRSP) over the life of the strategy for activities such as intersection upgrades, shoulder widening, safer roadsides, barrier installation, township entry treatments, flashing school zone signs and wide centre line treatments, delivered through route actions as well as targeted treatments. Looking ahead, \$1.69 billion has been committed for the delivery of road safety infrastructure through the TRSP over the next four years.

Queensland has also delivered several key behavioural interventions, including the roll out of a

world-leading camera enforcement program using cameras that detect drivers who choose to use their mobile phones illegally, and in an Australian first, detect front seat occupants who wear a seatbelt incorrectly or not at all. Penalties for drivers caught using mobile phones illegally are now amongst the highest in the country.

We delivered a suite of nation-leading online resources that better equip our young drivers to safely start driving, introduced the one metre rule for bike riders and undertook a major overhaul of the state's approach to combatting drink driving by establishing a comprehensive, holistic approach that supports the separation of alcohol consumption from driving.

The successful reduction and then plateauing of fatal crashes over time has been offset by a corresponding increase in crashes resulting in serious injuries. We then witnessed a notable rise in fatalities for the first time in a decade following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, despite reductions in vehicles on our roads during the COVID-19 period, 278 people lost their lives in 2020, which is 58 greater than in 2019 and 37 greater than the previous five year average.

Crash data shows that an increase in risky road use behaviours, such as speeding and not wearing seatbelts, occurred during the lock down period and may have contributed to the increased number of lives lost. Drink and drug driving, driving while fatigued and driver distraction also remain prevalent, while an increase in the number of pedestrians and bike riders on our roads may also have been a factor.

We are also seeing a very concerning increase in the number of motorcyclists losing their lives on

our roads, in both urban and regional areas, and they continue to be significantly overrepresented in our annual number of lives lost. As vehicles get safer, motorcyclists remain relatively unprotected and will almost always be much worse off in a crash, no matter who is at fault.

Younger drivers are similarly, tragically, overrepresented in deaths on our roads. Experience is a significant factor in reducing a driver's road safety risk, and all road users need to consider how their driving, and riding, can influence the safety of those they share the road with.

Unfortunately, recent forecast modelling suggests that fatalities and serious injuries on Queensland roads will increase over the coming years, irrespective of the pandemic's effects. This means that despite our on-going efforts and extensive range of road safety interventions already in place, system-wide factors contributing to road trauma persist.

We must urgently change how we think about road trauma if we are to achieve our vision of zero deaths and serious injuries by 2050. That's why we have developed the *Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022–2031*, which pushes our thinking beyond the traditional transport sector to consider the broader health, social and cultural factors that contribute to road trauma. Our new approach builds upon the Safe System foundations set by our previous *Safer Roads, Safer Queensland: Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2015–21*, but goes further by positioning road trauma as a preventable public health issue.

In alignment with the *National Road Safety Strategy 2021–30*, our new strategy commits us to reducing the number of lives lost on the road by 50 per cent and reducing serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2031.

To achieve these targets, this strategy outlines four key pathways through which we will prioritise our efforts over the coming decade and will be supported by a series of three action plans and the *Queensland Road Safety Research and Evaluation Framework*. We will also track our progress through a 'Queensland State of Road Safety Report' to be published at the end of each action plan period to outline our performance and progress towards meeting this strategy's objectives and targets. This approach will allow us to monitor trends and crash data, and ensure we remain both proactive and responsive to a broader than ever range of road safety issues.

We are at the beginning of a new approach towards zero, one that will involve working more broadly and collaboratively across government, industry and the community to break down silos, improve coordination and support grassroots community initiatives that take on the complex social problems that are playing out on our roads. Our ultimate goal is to drive system wide change towards safer, healthier and thriving Queensland communities.



**The Honourable
Mark Bailey MP**

Minister for Transport
and Main Roads



**The Honourable
Mark Ryan MP**

Minister for Police and
Corrective Services and
Minister for Fire and
Emergency Services

Leveraging new technology

Mobile phone and seatbelt cameras for enhanced enforcement

Over the coming decade, the development and integration of new technologies will play a fundamental role in our approach to reducing road trauma, particularly through our enforcement and deterrence activities.

Queensland has been at the forefront in using technology to improve road safety, from point-to-point speed cameras to our award winning Hold-the-Red innovation. In July 2021 we rolled out cameras to detect drivers who use their mobile phones illegally, and in an Australian-first, detect front seat occupants wearing a seatbelt incorrectly or not at all.

This followed the 2020 introduction of tougher penalties, \$1000 and 4 demerit points, for using a mobile phone illegally while driving, some of the highest in the country. The penalty was increased to help put a stop to this dangerous behaviour and to save lives.

Fixed and portable cameras have now been introduced in urban and regional areas across Queensland, and are in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Drivers and passengers who undertake these illegal behaviours should assume they can be caught anywhere, anytime.

Early infringement data suggests that this technology has the potential to improve road user behaviour significantly over time. In the first two months of enforcement from 1 November to 31 December 2021, over 20,500 infringements were issued for these dangerous behaviours. Of these more than 14,800 were for using a mobile phone illegally while driving, and more than 5,700 were for front seat occupants wearing their seatbelts incorrectly, or not at all. We will continue to monitor the progress of the program and undertake a full evaluation in the coming years.



Strategy at a glance

Vision

The Queensland Government's vision is for zero road deaths and serious injuries by 2050.

Targets



reduction in fatalities
by 2031



reduction in serious
injuries by 2031

Objectives

Safety takes priority in all decision making.

People who use roads and roadsides are safe.

People who work on the road and use vehicles as a workplace are safe.

New modes of transport and safer vehicles are integrated so that all road users safely share the network.

Queenslanders understand the role of physical and mental health and wellbeing on road safety and that road trauma is a preventable public health issue.

The diverse needs of communities, including those in regional and remote areas, are improved through partnerships and empowerment of local networks.

Robust relationships beyond the transport sector deliver targeted initiatives suited to specific at-risk and vulnerable populations.

Research and data are integrated and shared to support the implementation of fit-for-purpose initiatives and to guide progress towards vision zero.

Pathways and enablers

Four pathways have been identified to organise our priorities under this strategy to help guide us towards our objectives. Four enablers will assist with implementation.



Introduction

Historically, Queensland has been a world leader in implementing road safety interventions. The introduction of mandatory seatbelts, random breath testing, speed cameras and a graduated licensing system have all had clear impacts on reducing the number of lives lost on our roads from 31 per 100,000 in 1969, to five per 100,000 in 2020 (see Figure 1). Initiatives such as targeted engineering treatments and behaviour change programs continue to underpin these essential measures. However, despite decades of steady improvements, fatalities have started to plateau, and serious injuries are rising.

Our strategic approach to road safety in Queensland has evolved over time, changing and adapting as new evidence and ways of thinking about the problem

have emerged. Under our previous strategy, *Safer Roads, Safer Queensland – Queensland’s Road Safety Strategy 2015–21* and its supporting Action Plans (2015–17, 2017–19 and 2020–21), Queensland adopted the internationally recognised Safe System model (see Figure 2). The Safe System approach considers a broad set of transport system components alongside an ambitious vision of zero road deaths and serious injuries for Queensland by 2050.²

As the Safe System is being embedded across Australia, contemporary research indicates there are some limitations to the model in practice. In particular, the attempt to reduce the system into ever smaller components can lead practitioners to operate in ‘safe silos’ by failing to account for the broader

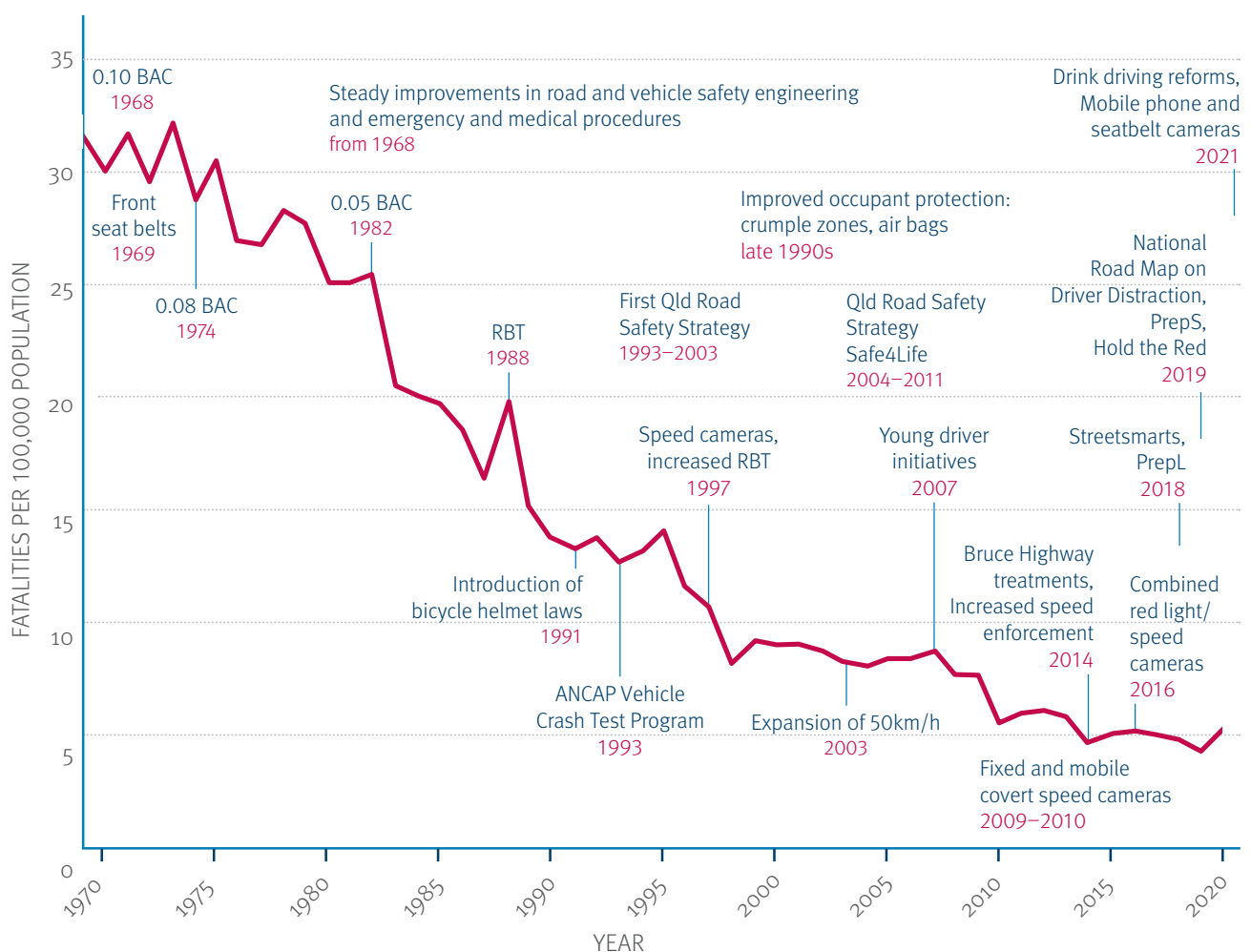


Figure 1. Road fatalities per 100,000 population in Queensland between 1969–2020

system factors that lay outside the transport system (that is, in broader society), and the inter-relationships of the Safe System's component parts.³ However, recent studies suggest that applying systems thinking to the Safe System approach can provide a better understanding of these interconnected factors and bring together diverse disciplines using a common language to identify potential solutions to road trauma.

This strategy builds upon the foundation of the Safe System to enhance its reach by elevating and expanding our thinking to consider the broader system factors and trends that contribute to road trauma.⁴

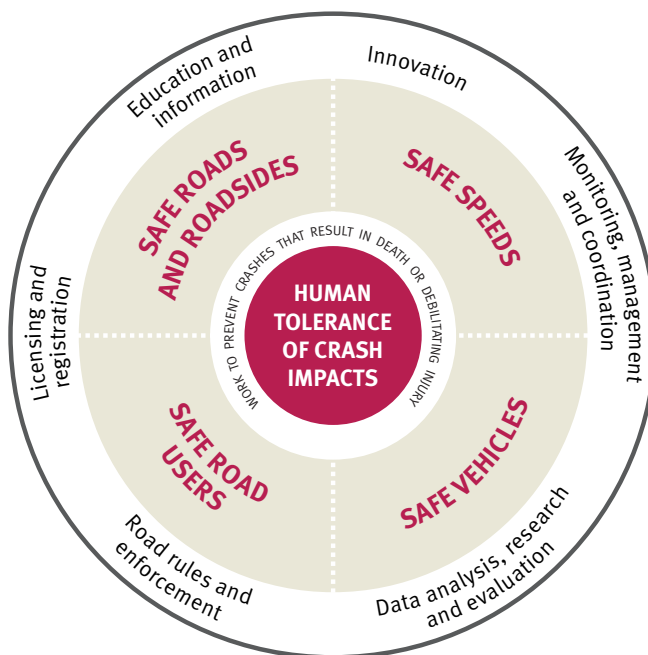


Figure 2: Safe System model

Queensland snapshot

QLD POPULATION

 **5,230,026**

QLD CRASH LOCATION

 **Two thirds of road fatalities** within Queensland

occur within regional/remote areas.¹

WHERE PEOPLE LIVE

 **51%** of Queenslanders live outside the capital city⁴

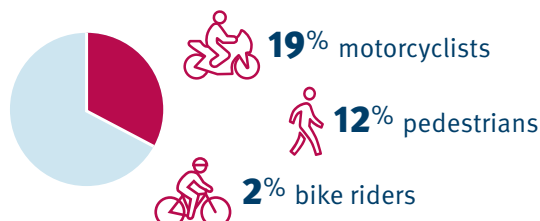
YOUNG DRIVERS



Each year **drivers aged 17–24** are involved in **a quarter of fatal crashes** on Queensland's roads, and **more than 2000** are hospitalised.⁵

VULNERABLE ROAD USERS REPRESENT

33% of lives lost are vulnerable road users, comprised of:²



QLD NETWORK

 **33,369** kilometres of state-controlled roads

145,000 kilometres of Local Council Controlled Road Network

AVERAGE AGE OF FLEET

 Queensland: **10.4** years³

¹ Using ABS Remoteness Index data for 2016 to 2020 fatal crashes

² Department of Transport and Main Roads. 2018–2020 Baseline fatality rate.

³ Motor Vehicle Census, Australia, 31 Jan 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)

⁴ Regional Population 2019–20 Financial Year | Australian Bureau of Statistics

⁵ Department of Transport and Main Roads. 2020.



Our challenge

With over 33,000 kilometres of state-controlled roads, and a local government-controlled road network comprising approximately 145,000 kilometres of road, Queensland has the longest and most diverse network of any Australian state. It is also the most decentralised of the mainland states, with the majority of the population living outside the capital city, which means Queenslanders rely heavily on a safe, efficient and resilient transport system to ensure social and economic prosperity.

Over the coming decade, Queensland's growing and ageing population will apply considerable pressure to our transport system in ways that will have far-reaching implications for road safety. Combined with rapid technological innovation and changes to how people choose to get around, we are facing increases in urban congestion, heavy vehicle volumes, and freight movement on our network, with subsequent increases in interactions between light and heavy vehicles, and vehicles and vulnerable road users.⁵

In some cases these pressures were accelerated following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, where spikes in demand for online purchasing resulted in a rapid increase in the number of delivery bicycles, motorcycles, vans, trucks and the 'grey fleet' (private vehicles used for the purpose of work) on our roads. Similarly, the inability to travel overseas has resulted in increased levels of domestic travel in vehicles, while income insecurity, along with limitations in

vehicle supply, may further contribute to our ageing fleet as people may be put off purchasing newer, safer vehicles.

While most population growth is expected to occur in urban areas, the long term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic—which saw a spike in remote work and population growth in regional areas—remains unclear.^{7,8} This could place greater demands on minor roads and the infrastructure needed in these areas to support a potential increase in vulnerable road users as communities grow and change.

How we choose to manage the challenges to road safety presented by these trends and pressures will need to be balanced with other priorities. This includes the promotion of active transport through the *Queensland Cycling Strategy 2017–27* and the *Queensland Walking Strategy 2019–29*, new mobility choices through the Mobility as a Service initiative, as well as the work of other government agencies to promote healthy living, net-zero carbon emissions and safer work environments.

Due to the increasing complexity of these disruptions, we must be prepared to adjust and adapt as the road safety risk profile shifts over the coming decade by ensuring the appropriate mechanisms are in place. We know that partnerships and coordination of effort within and across layers of government needs to be stronger, and that capacity at the local level needs attention and support.



Our opportunity

With our existing expertise and our world leading programs, we are in a strong position to take a bold new approach to road safety in Queensland. While continuing to invest in what is proven to work, we will increase efforts to respond to community needs at a local level to initiate and enable targeted solutions. We know that successful interventions are designed with supportive communities, and genuine engagement is key to owning and embracing solutions.

We must build partnerships with new stakeholders to influence a broader range of the system-wide factors we know play a role in road trauma. We continue to believe that road safety is everyone's responsibility, and now we need to find new ways to reach people across Queensland.

One such emerging area of focus is that for many Queenslanders, a vehicle or road is their workplace. This includes road workers, delivery drivers and riders,

heavy vehicle drivers, along with the thousands of people that use their vehicle for work or as part of their daily commute. Our work influences our state of mind, and being on the road for work increases exposure to road related risks. Increasingly, the time spent in our vehicles is recognised as a workplace health and safety issue, and better understanding both system factors and individual pressures will help us develop comprehensive solutions to address this issue and consider the role that employers can play in improving safety on the road.

This area is under-explored in terms of road safety measures, and the Queensland Government is committed to working across government and industry to identify new opportunities to improve the safety of those who work on the road or in a vehicle. Through this approach, we can also influence and impact the community more broadly by improving workplace road safety culture.

We must build partnerships with new stakeholders to influence a broader range of the system-wide factors we know play a role in road trauma.

Objectives for 2031

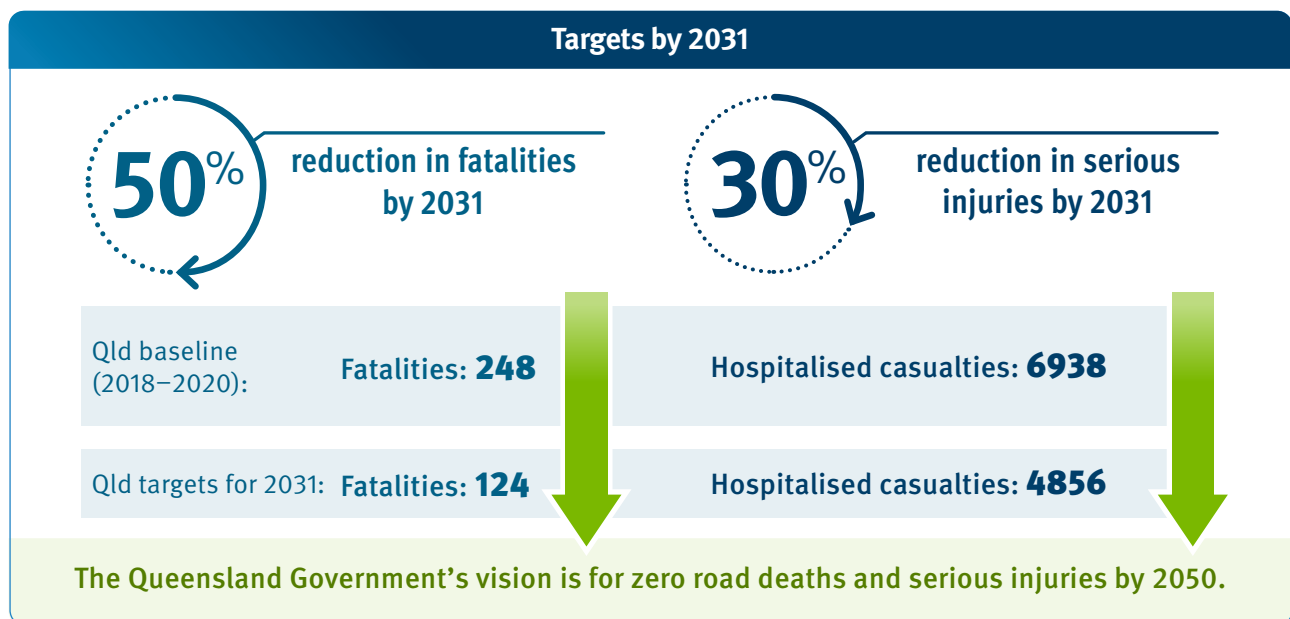
Under the term of this strategy, our objectives for road safety over the next ten years are:

- 1 Safety takes priority in all decision making.
- 2 People who use roads and roadsides are safe.
- 3 People who work on the road and use vehicles as a workplace are safe.
- 4 New modes of transport and safer vehicles are integrated so that all road users safely share the network.
- 5 Queenslanders understand the role of physical and mental health and wellbeing on road safety and that road trauma is a preventable public health issue.
- 6 The diverse needs of communities, including those in regional and remote areas, are improved through partnerships and empowerment of local networks.
- 7 Robust relationships beyond the transport sector deliver targeted initiatives suited to specific at-risk and vulnerable populations.
- 8 Research and data are integrated and shared to support the implementation of fit-for-purpose initiatives and to guide progress towards vision zero.



Vision and targets

The Queensland Government is committed to eliminating death and serious injuries from our roads. That's why our vision continues to be zero road deaths and serious injuries on Queensland roads by 2050. This will not occur instantly, therefore we have set interim targets for this strategy, which align with the *National Road Safety Strategy 2021–30* targets of a 50 percent reduction in fatalities and 30 percent reduction in serious injuries by 2031.



Guiding principles

The following principles will guide how we go about achieving our vision:

- 1 Build upon the Safe System to take a more holistic approach to keeping Queenslanders safe.
- 2 Road trauma is a preventable public health problem that reflects broader social and cultural trends and issues.
- 3 Improving road safety is a shared responsibility that stretches beyond the traditional transport sector and requires collaborative action and leadership across government and the broader community.
- 4 The diversity of Queensland communities requires localised, fit-for-purpose solutions that address unique issues and concerns.



Pathways and enablers

While the Safe System remains the foundation of our approach to road safety in Queensland, this strategy adopts a model that will allow us to engage with a broader set of stakeholders, including those outside the traditional transport sector, through the use of four key pathways to organise our priorities: roads and roadsides, places and spaces, individuals and communities (see Figure 3).

Since road safety is a shared responsibility between those who design and operate the system and those who use it, the pathways have been organised into two halves: Movement and Place, representing the system side, and Health and Behaviour, representing the human side. The sides are not discrete, but instead exert influence on each other: infrastructure choices can influence road user behaviour, and road user behaviours can influence decisions about design and infrastructure treatments.



Figure 3: Queensland model for road safety

*Road safety is a shared responsibility
between those who design and operate the
system, and those who use it.*



MOVEMENT AND PLACE

Movement and Place is a concept that highlights the dual function of our roads and streets: the movement of people and goods, and the creation of places and destinations adjacent to them. Applied as a decision making framework and network planning tool, Movement and Place can assist planners and engineers with an integrated approach to the planning, design, delivery and operation of transport networks.⁹

Using Movement and Place to frame our understanding of the system side of the road safety challenge allows us to consider broader system factors, rather than focusing on the transport system in isolation. Through the categorisation of each road and street, we consider the network of places and public spaces created and the usage patterns that evolve and change around them. It allows for a better understanding of how to prioritise competing modes such as driving and bike riding or walking, how to ensure accessibility, and ultimately how to keep all users safe, now and into the future.





Roads and roadsides pathway

How we design, build, operate and maintain our transport network influences safety outcomes for all road users. Infrastructure planning, design and operations are essential to the safe and efficient movement of people and goods across the network.

As the Safe System approach acknowledges, the human body is fragile, and people make mistakes. That is why we must continue to focus on making the system as forgiving as possible, particularly as we plan for an increase in vulnerable road users as our population grows and ages.

Priorities:

1. Set consistent and benchmarked safe standards and include innovation to build and improve the state-wide network making the best possible use of public investment in infrastructure.
2. Continue to prioritise investment in safe infrastructure and innovative treatments across the road network and retrofit safety countermeasures wherever possible.
3. Manage the operation of the network to ensure the safety of all road users.



Places and spaces pathway

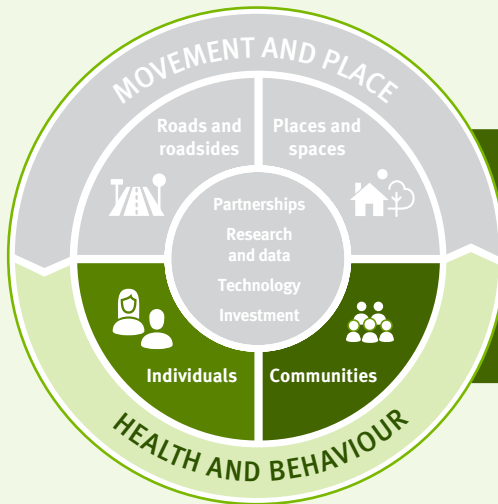
The places and spaces adjacent to our road network as well as the demands of our daily lives influence how and why we use the road. Places are central to our lives for recreation and for work—so safe movement to them, through them and within them should be a priority in their planning, design and maintenance. Consideration of place can also help shift our thinking about the transport network so that it becomes one part of the broader liveability picture, and many local governments across Queensland have been proactive in this approach.

Through the delivery of appropriate place-based infrastructure and creation of people-friendly streets, we can improve health and safety, and in turn, encourage new behaviours that improve road safety outcomes. Locations with high place value tend to be where interactions between a variety of different road user types occur most frequently, and using a

Movement and Place framework allows us to consider the best outcomes for all road user types, from drivers and motorcyclists, to bike riders, pedestrians and other vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children or those with accessibility requirements.

Priorities:

1. Ensure planning prioritises considerations of place and purpose, including mobility options and supportive infrastructure.
2. Engage with the community and stakeholders on speed management approaches that establish a better match between speed limits, road conditions, the surrounding environment and street activities to improve road safety.
3. Minimise risk for people using the road for work and vehicles as a workplace.



HEALTH AND BEHAVIOUR

Using the road is an essential part of our lives, so it is not surprising that everyday pressures influence our behaviour and decision making on the road. Risk awareness, hazard perception and other cognitive activities that are key to safe road use can be impacted by external influences, distractions and our overall state of mind.

By using Health and Behaviour to frame our understanding of the human side of the road safety challenge, we can take a more holistic approach to understanding the road user that includes individual and community level factors of influence.





Individuals pathway

One of the core components of the Safe System approach is ensuring 'safe road use'. As road users we share the road and roadsides, and the way we interact with each other is one of the most important areas to target for influencing road behaviour. Individual behaviours are often driven by a variety of complex and interrelating socio-economic, health and lifestyle factors.

Our physical and mental health, as well as our understanding of how to stay safe, have a direct influence on the way we behave and the decisions we make. By expanding our understanding of how upstream factors influence behaviour, we may find other opportunities that will have positive impacts for road safety.

Priorities:

1. Broaden awareness and understanding of the impacts of physical health, mental health and state of mind on our ability to use the road safely and incorporate this knowledge into targeted initiatives.
2. Design whole of life education to ensure adequate skills and knowledge are available to support positive decision making and responsible behaviour.
3. Lead a shift in attitudes, empathy and tolerance towards a sharing culture that includes all types of road users.



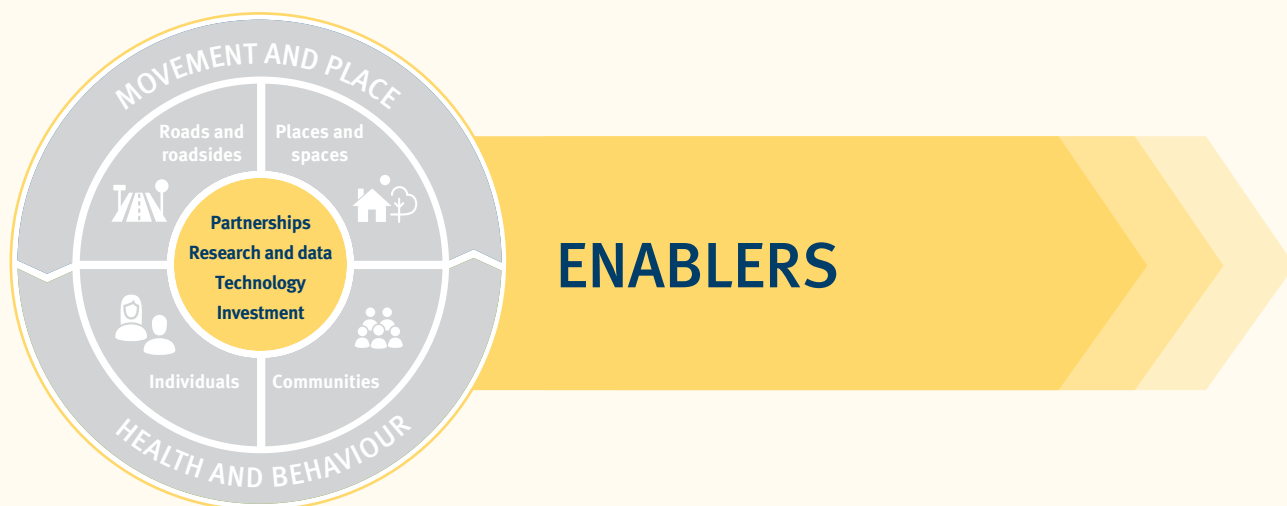
Communities pathway

Part of the challenge of influencing positive road safety outcomes stems from the distance between policy and practice, and attempts at one size fits all approaches. While population-based interventions such as drink driving laws are essential and often quite effective, it is also important to acknowledge the unique issues faced by some communities and consider how we might develop localised, fit-for-purpose solutions.

Existing community networks are well placed to identify local issues and needs and to positively influence behaviour on our roads. One of the keys to the success of this strategy will be working in partnership with local governments, frontline practitioners and community members to develop place-based approaches to grow capability over time, using co-design and other collaborative methods.

Priorities:

1. Empower local networks to lead targeted initiatives that support the health and wellbeing of members of their community.
2. Drive cross-agency collaboration to improve service delivery to communities.
3. Identify the needs of at-risk cohorts and support access to appropriate services and opportunities.



In order to implement the strategy, four key enablers have been identified, including partnerships, research and data, technology and investment. These enablers work across all four pathways and will assist with the development and delivery of initiatives in the strategy’s accompanying action plans.

Building **partnerships** across government, industry and communities is essential to the success of the strategy. Public health issues require a holistic approach and a coordinated effort. Over the next decade we will work more closely with a wide range of new and existing stakeholders to coordinate, align and share policy initiatives and strategic programs. We will also support local government to build capacity and consistency in the delivery of road safety initiatives. Partnerships also enable a flexible approach to solving road safety problems, including through supporting and assessing innovative pilot programs, and targeted initiatives.

Two key elements to ensuring successful partnerships are the sharing of **research and data**. In this respect, the strategy will be guided by the *Queensland Road Safety Research and Evaluation Framework*, which will lead the Queensland Government in a

coordinated road safety research agenda that ensures appropriate and useful research is conducted in areas of emerging concern, while minimising duplication of efforts. The framework allows for a future-focused approach to be combined with responsive, evidence-based implementation of road safety programs and initiatives.

Innovation, driven by **technology**, will continue to provide opportunities to enhance safety and enable new approaches to behaviour change, compliance and enforcement. However, we must also ensure the safe integration of increasing levels of connectivity and automation, and take advantage of modal shifts to newer, cleaner and more efficient modes of transport. In a period of rapid change, we must support road users to adopt and adapt to new safety enhancing technologies as they become available.

Resourcing and **investment** are fundamental to this broad scope of road safety work. We will support improvements to existing funding models to make them more responsive to contemporary road safety priorities, and explore new opportunities to improve safety outcomes by working in partnerships outside the traditional road safety space.

Queensland Road Safety Data Bureau (RSDB): Connecting Government for road safety

In 2019, the Motor Accident Insurance Commission (MAIC) funded the establishment of the RSDB, a cross agency, co-located team comprised of Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health and MAIC. The RSDB aims to consolidate, integrate and analyse road crash related data from member agencies to inform whole-of-government decision making and approaches to road safety policy and practice. This includes a recent modelling project that contributed to the development of this strategy. The work of the RSDB will allow us to enhance cross-agency relationships, develop a deeper understanding of road crashes and their impacts, and inform collaborative road trauma prevention strategies and actions.

Implementation and accountability

We will work with our stakeholders to implement the strategy over three phases, each supported by an action plan (see Figure 4). Taking this phased approach provides flexibility in the development and delivery of road safety programs, particularly during times of increasing uncertainty and complexity. The first phase will focus on exploring and initiating

change to set the foundations for our new approach. Once the groundwork has been set, subsequent action plans will work to trial and develop new practices, adjust course if required, and then by phase three work to enable and empower local governments and communities to formalise the new approach.



Figure 4. Phased approach to structural and cultural change

Queensland Road Safety Action Plans

The action plans will focus on the practical actions we need to take to reduce road trauma in Queensland. TMR will be the lead agency responsible for coordinating the action plans and reporting on progress to Government over the term of the strategy. Responsibility and accountability for the implementation of actions will occur across state government agencies, local governments and the Queensland community as represented in each action plan.

Reporting on progress will occur through the 'Queensland State of Road Safety Report' at the conclusion of each action plan to track key data on road safety trends and report on progress towards the strategy's objectives and the 2031 targets.

Governance

A strategic leadership group will be established to oversee the implementation of the strategy. This will include providing advice on delivery of actions, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Composition of this group will consist of lead delivery agencies across the Queensland Government, local government and key community stakeholder representatives. These governance arrangements will support implementation of this strategy and will facilitate improved coordination within and across government departments and non-government organisations to reduce road trauma.

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