



# ▶ road safety 2020 report on community forums

september 2010

## ▶ background to the forums

To inform development of the South Australian Road Safety Strategy 2020, the Road Safety Advisory Council (RSAC) conducted a series of community engagement forums across metropolitan and regional South Australia throughout September 2010.

In Road Safety 2020: A Safer Tomorrow Starts Today the RSAC recognised that all South Australians share the responsibility for improving road safety, individuals, families, community, businesses and government. The public were invited to 'join in on the conversation'.

The intention of the community engagement forums was to engage a wide range of community views and visions for the creation of the Road Safety Strategy for the next decade. The forums were also used to 'test' the vision statement developed by the RSAC as the basis of the Strategy.

A variety of communications were used to promote the forums. Initially Sir Eric Neal, Chair of RSAC, issued a media release in August 2010 announcing the series of public forums. RSAC also issued invitations to local Members of Parliament, Mayors, local SA Police (SAPOL) representatives, Community Road Safety Groups (CRSG) and other influential members of the community. Advertisements were placed in metropolitan and local newspapers to raise awareness prior to each public forum. This was followed up with local regional radio announcements.

The advertising message alerted readers to the upcoming community road safety forums being held in their area and directed them where to access more information or register to attend by telephone or online. Posters promoting the forums were distributed to venues by local Councils and CRSG. Information pamphlets also provided more information about the forums, the development of the road safety strategy, and road safety in general.

Promotions also appeared on RSAC members' websites, Office for Youth and SA Strategic Plan facebook sites and [www.myllicence.sa.gov.au](http://www.myllicence.sa.gov.au).

## ▶ the forums

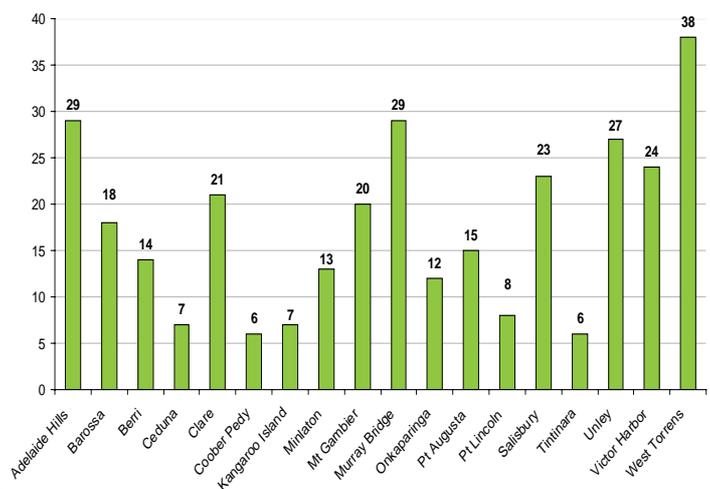
Forums were held in 4 metropolitan areas and 14 rural locations (see below), in which responses were recorded to five stimulus questions from participants from local communities.

Angaston	Berri	Ceduna
Clare	Cooper Pedy	Hahndorf
Kangaroo Island	Minlaton	Mt Gambier
Murray Bridge	Noarlunga	Port Augusta
Port Lincoln	Salisbury	Tintinara
Unley	Victor Harbor	West Torrens

The forums were conducted in a variety of venues such as Council chambers, community halls and sporting clubs. Numbers attending ranged from 5 at Cooper Pedy to 33 in West Torrens. Venue coordination was undertaken by the Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure (DTEI) and was supported by Local Councils and CRSG.

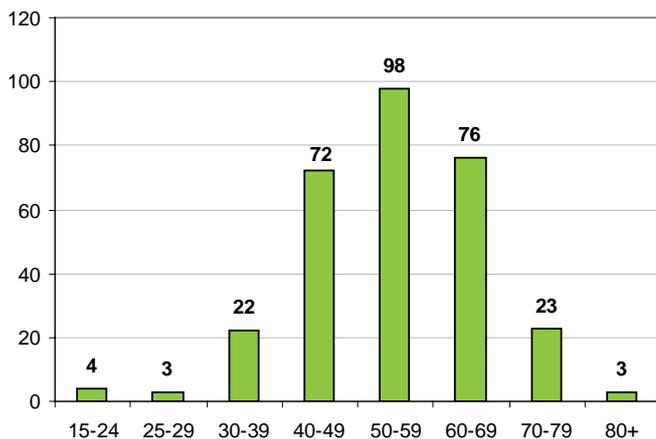
A total of approximately 320 participants attended the forums. Six attendees were Members of Parliament, nine were local Mayors and a further 23 were local Councillors.

### numbers of registered attendees at each forum



## ▶ the community was asked where are we now? where do we want to be? how will we get there?

age range of participants



The low participation rate of people younger than 25 in the forums was noted by some forum participants and, given the Government's commitment to involving youth more in decision making on policies that may affect them, another process is being pursued to engage youth views with the Office for Youth. The opinions and comments expressed in the forums are predominantly reflective of 40-69 year olds.

### ▶ the process

Participants were welcomed by the facilitator and a representative of the RSAC, who provided brief contextual information about road safety. Members of the community were asked by the facilitator to consider 5 questions in small groups. They were designed around the planning framework of 'Where are we now?' 'Where do we want to be?' and 'How will we get there?'

Around the notion of 'Where are we now?', participants were asked the following question:

**question 1: When you think about road safety in South Australia on a scale of 1 – 10 (where 10 is high), where do you think we are now?**

The participants were asked to write their chosen rating on a post-it-note and then stand in a 'line-up' using a scale of 1-10 in the room. They were invited to discuss their rating with others in the larger group, explaining the factors that influenced their rating. A

wide range of factors were given, but were different for each person.

Around the notion of 'Where do we want to be?' participants were asked the next two questions:

**question 2: Imagine road safety in South Australia was rated a '10' on your scale, how would things be different?**

Participants were provided with individual A3 sheets of blank paper to record their response to the question in words, pictures or both. They were invited to share their vision with others in small groups. The group then discussed and recorded the things they had in common and shared these with the larger audience.

**question 3: Whether we are aware of them or not, values and principles guide our behaviour and priorities in everyday life. What values and principles should guide road safety in the future?**

Participants were invited to answer this question by writing one value or principle per post-it-note, but were encouraged to write as many as they wished. The post-it notes were placed collectively on large sheets of paper. Each group then discussed their views, noting any similarities and sorting the post-it notes into similar ideas. The small groups reported their findings to the larger group.

Around the notion of 'How will we get there?' participants were asked two questions:

**question 4: If this is our picture of the future, what needs to change in our actions at the:**

- Individual/family level
- Community level
- Organisation/workplace level
- Government level?

The participants were rotated into new groups at this time and were asked to brainstorm responses to the question, recording their responses on a large template. The small groups reported some of their ideas to the larger group.

**question 5: If this is our picture of the future, what actions are you personally prepared to take?**

Participants were asked to individually record their

- ▶ participants acknowledged that much had been achieved in road safety over the years and that there is significant opportunity for more to be done at all levels of the community and government.

responses to this question on post-it notes. They were invited to share their responses either within the small group or in the larger group if they wished.

### ▶ data analysis approaches

MJL People Dynamics Pty (MJL), facilitated the majority of the forums, in addition a DTEI facilitator conducted a small number of forums. MJL has tabulated every response made at each forum for each of the five stimulus questions. (Note, there was no limit to how many responses anyone could give for each question). MJL concluded that the forum responses touched on a very wide range of road safety issues, including those specific to the metropolitan or regional location, and noted the following broad emergent themes:

- achieving zero fatalities and injury
- road design and maintenance
- vehicle safety design and technologies
- road user education, behaviours and attitudes
- community education and attitudes
- driver licensing
- alternative safer, greener, active modes of transport.

MJL added that participants acknowledged that much had been achieved in road safety over the years and that there is significant opportunity for more to be done at all levels of the community and government.

To prepare more detailed analyses, clusters of specific concepts and values relevant to MJL's broader themes were identified by DTEI staff. While many responses to questions 2 to 5 were limited in content, and/or could cover a range of meanings or contexts, equally, many comments were purposefully expressed to indicate specific desired road safety actions. This also applied to the suggestion-box comments received at a number of forums, as well as feedback received through the community engagement website.

Additionally, some responses seemed to be more relevant to later stimulus questions (because, for example, some people might have wanted to be sure their thoughts on road safety got recorded at the earliest opportunity). Remaining responses were often

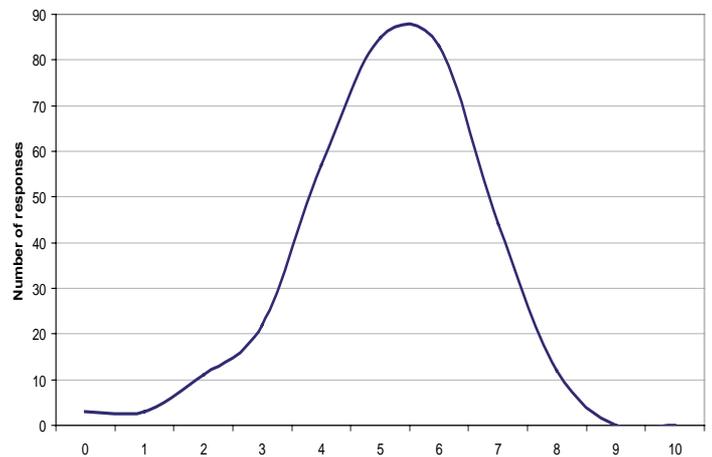
too diverse in nature to allow them to be meaningfully clustered together.

Two main data analysis approaches were used. One was a descriptive account of the full range of comments received, based on the tabulation conducted by MJL. The other approach used DTEI's content clusters as the basis for quantitative analysis of the comments. The following summary of the outcomes from across the forums incorporates these two approaches. It should be noted that the responses to the questions came from just over 300 participants.

### ▶ forum question outcomes

**question 1: Each forum participant was asked to rate on a scale of 1-10 where they believed road safety is currently.**

**on a scale of 1-10 where are we now in terms of road safety?**



The average rating was 5.14. The maximum number of responses (85) believed South Australia to be currently sitting at rating 5 in terms of road safety. 3 people rated South Australia at 0. No participant rated road safety at a 9 or 10.

- ▶ common responses included a lower road toll and reduced trauma, but also people having a stronger personal commitment to road safety

## question 2: Imagine road safety in South Australia is rated '10' on the scale, how different would things be?

(3071 responses)

### visionary big picture

Many responses (12%) were expressed in terms of how the State's vision for road safety, or its broader picture, might be different. Common responses included a lower road toll and reduced trauma (86), but also people having a stronger personal commitment to road safety (141). Many responses in this vein expressed a desire for strong political leadership and commitment to 'proactive' road safety (41), coupled with heightened community involvement (42). Others considered that driver's licences would be seen as privileges rather than rights (17).

Very few responses (6) commented on new ways of thinking in road safety, such as the Safe System approach (as outlined in the forum brochures and presentations). Similar less common but still perceptive big picture responses included basing road safety decisions on proven research evidence rather than purely political motivations, the need to consider the ageing of the population, and the need to involve young people in road safety decisions that affect them. There were also some calls for more support to community road safety groups (4) and the need to promote positive rather than negative road safety views (8).

### funding

Some comments (2%) related to road safety funding. Depending on how the stimulus question was interpreted, most responses (43) thought a '10' rating could only be achieved through having more road safety funding, while a few others believed that once level '10' had been achieved there would be no need for extra funding or funding would be reduced. Some funding responses (16) projected views that revenue from registration fees, fuel taxes and traffic fines should be directed back into road safety. Others wanted greater funding attention given to rural areas (8).

### safer vehicles

Many responses (14%) related to safer vehicles. Some of these (71) pointed to manufacturers' responsibilities to design and produce safe cars as indicative of high

road safety, although a few (13) simply wanted safety features to be more widely available in vehicles. Others (34) called for greater responsibility for safety to be shown by owners and drivers, to be enforced through roadside roadworthiness checking programs by Police (39). Others (20) wanted to see cash rebates to help remove the oldest/least safe cars off the road.

The remaining safer vehicle comments called for increased adoption of specific vehicle technologies such as Electronic Stability Control (ESC) (15), alcohol ignition interlocks (24), compulsory daytime running lights (10) and collision avoidance systems (23). There were also a few calls for wider availability of airbags, seatbelt interlocks, seatbelts on buses and speed limiters for young drivers.

### safer roads & infrastructure

A wide range of responses were received (18%). Many indicated that generally improved roads (137) and infrastructure (83) would raise our level of road safety, while others (67) wanted wider roads or more dual carriageways, more overtaking lanes (22), more sealed roads and road shoulders (26), better signage and road markings (47) and removal of roadside hazards such as poles and trees (54). Others simply asked for quicker responses when road faults were reported (12).

The remaining comments in this area called for increases or improvements in specific types of infrastructure such as roundabouts (15), crash barriers (23), and pedestrian crossings (13). There were a few calls for toll roads (6), provision of better parking areas for roads that are clearways (6) and more rest stops that facilitate Driver Reviver programs (18).

### various driver behaviours

There were 12% of responses in this area. Many nominated no drink or drug driving (95), supported by more responsible serving of alcohol in clubs and pubs (21), as indicative of the highest level of road safety. Other common responses included drivers who are well-behaved and compliant with the road rules (98), as well as drivers who are courteous, who respect each other and who share the road (136). A few responses concerned no hoon driving or road rage (38), and no use of mobile phones while driving (10).

## alternative transport

There were 6% of responses in this area. Some comments indicated that more, better or cheaper public transport would lead to a high level of road safety (81), while others considered that our rail system should be improved not only to attract passengers, but also to make freight transport by rail a more viable, economical, safer and ecologically-friendlier option (25). There were also comments that our urban planning doesn't allow more efficient vehicle use (18). Other responses related to more car pooling (15) and encouraging more walking and cycling (27).

## vulnerable road users

Four per cent of responses concerned vulnerable road users. Some considered a high level of road safety would be achieved through better and/or separated cycling and pedestrian facilities including designated pathways (57), but also more shared zones with motorised traffic (29). Others wanted to see greater responsibility shown by vulnerable road users, such as by wearing protective and/or high visibility clothing (24). A few comments concerned mobility scooters, specifically that the riders should be screened and trained (12).

## safer speeds

Five per cent of responses concerned speeds and speed limits. Many in this area called for lower speed limits (49) while others called for fewer different speed zones on the one stretch of road (17) and consistent speed limits around Australia (33). Other responses (16) called for greater use of technologies such as Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA).

## road rules

Several (63) comments in this area concerned a desire for uniformity and simplicity in the road rules. Some wanted road rule update information to be made more widely available (39).

## education / training / licensing

This was a popular topic, representing 19% of the responses to this question. Most responses demonstrated beliefs that more and/or better road safety education would enable attainment of a high

level of road safety. These included calls for more intensive driver education, either at school (103), or for existing drivers throughout their driving lives (171). There were calls for tougher or more frequent testing of drivers (41), including older drivers. There were also calls for purpose built driver training facilities or circuits (20).

There were calls for tougher licensing arrangements for younger drivers (68), with some wanting the driving age raised and passenger restrictions brought in. There was also comment that parents who teach their children to drive need more support (65), though some (7) said this teaching role should be exclusive to professional driving instructors.

Opinion (21) was split about the use of shock tactics in road safety advertisements. Other comments included the need for driver training opportunities to be more accessible to country people (8) and tighter management of the supervised driving hours required of learner drivers (9).

## enforcement / penalties

To achieve a ten in road safety, some participants (70) wanted zero tolerance to be applied to illegal road behaviours, while others called for more police (56) and/or tougher penalties (47) especially for repeat offenders. Others considered that with a high level of road safety, some leniency could be shown to low-level (particularly speeding) offences (9). Others wanted rewards and incentives made available to drivers with good records (13).

## question 3: What values and principles should guide road safety in the future?

The most common response, and one that was mentioned by at least one group in every forum, was 'respect'. It was stated 87 times across all the forums. Taken in the wider context of other emergent themes from the data, 'respect' could be interpreted in terms such as respect for one's own abilities and limitations, respect for the law, respect for human life, or respect generally for other road users. 'Courtesy' or 'consideration' was another common value, with one or the other stated by a total 59 participants.

Many of the remaining responses covered a wide

▶ the most common response, and one that was mentioned by at least one group in every forum, was 'respect'.

range of road safety issues rather than values or principles, for example, 'car maintenance' and 'good eyesight'.

**question 4: If this is our picture of the future, what needs to change in our actions at the:**

- **individual/family level**
- **community level**
- **organisational/workplace level**
- **government level?**

(938 responses in total)

#### **individual/family level**

(255 responses)

A variety of changes in our individual/family values and general attitudes towards road safety were commonly nominated (59% of responses), including: respect, tolerance and patience (33), taking responsibility (31), and setting an example to others (47). Other responses concerned obeying road rules (10), knowing one's abilities and limitations (8) and that driving is a privilege not a right (4).

There were also calls for safer vehicles, typically buying and using the safest cars (11), ensuring roadworthiness (7) and banning fast/powerful cars (12).

A few responses each were received for various driver behaviour changes, which included no drink/drug driving, responsible alcohol serving and designated driver use, and minimising driver distractions, including peer pressure.

Education and training changes (24% of responses) included general improvement in road safety education provision (30), retesting of drivers (6), advanced driver training (17) and calls to only allow learner drivers to be trained by professional instructors (5).

A few responses said that individuals should plan their journeys better, to avoid rushing and improve safety, while others wanted individuals to walk or cycle more.

Remaining comments included rewarding rather than penalising drivers and having higher penalties for drivers who commit offences when there are minors in the vehicle.

#### **community level**

(213 responses)

One third (33%) of responses indicated that people generally considered the community needs to demonstrate more commitment to road safety through greater involvement and consultation on the topic (38). Also included in this is a desire for the Government to listen more to what the community is saying (21).

The remainder of community level responses were spread across various actions that the community should take up. These ranged from the non-specific 'promote safe driving' to specific actions such as 'funding for groups to conduct child restraint or vehicle checks', and 'more community facilities to stop bored youths from hooning'. The majority of these action-type re-iterated comments given to earlier questions, for example, 'no drink driving', rather than as responses to Question 4 asking for what changes are needed. Nonetheless, analyses of these responses revealed a few theme clusters such as tougher penalties (17) and more education and training at both school (17) and driver levels (27).

16 responses suggested promotional mechanisms additional to CRSG, such as involvement of sporting clubs and local mentors.

#### **organisation / workplace level**

(138 responses)

Two-thirds (66%) of comments at this level reflected a visionary / broad picture perspective; for example, that workplaces should allow employees sufficient time to make work-related journeys (18).

There was also general concern (29) that workplaces should show greater commitment to the OHSW needs of employees who drive, and that employers should develop their own policy on road safety (15). There were also calls for more driver training and assessment in the workplace (23).

A few other workplace actions ranged from alcohol and drug testing at work, and organisations to be rewarded or fined for appropriate and inappropriate outcomes for driver employees. There were a few comments around schools as workplaces, particularly in relation to Safe Routes to Schools programs, child

restraint training and encouragement of car pooling, cycling and walking. There were also a few comments that workplaces should encourage employees to take public transport or to car-pool.

### government level

(332 responses)

A quarter (25%) of the responses fell under the visionary / broad picture cluster. Such responses called for strong leadership and bold decision making by all levels of government (at all levels) (19) and particularly for more funding (33). There were calls to ensure fuel tax, registration and fine revenue is channelled into road safety projects (10). There were also calls for more research based decision making (9) as well as governments listening to community views (11).

Another large range of comments (21%) clustered around education, training and licensing although previous comments again were iterated, such as raising the driving age (13), more driver training facilities and courses (14), using only professional instructors (7), driver retesting (6) and medical testing of drivers (5).

Safer roads actions (11%) included improved infrastructure (19), road upgrading (7) and signage (7).

Safer vehicles actions (9%) included improvements in vehicle safety standards (11), introducing compulsory roadworthiness checks (7) and promoting technological innovations more (7). Comments on alternative forms of transport (6%) included improvements in public transport (10), better investment in rail (6), and better urban planning to reduce reliance on cars (5).

Safe speeds actions (3%) included speed reduction, appropriate speed limits and use of speed limiters in vehicles.

Media and communication actions (3%) included banning distracting roadside advertising, but increasing road safety promotions generally.

There were also a few calls for the road rules to be more uniform, zero levels of alcohol and drugs in all drivers, more RBT, more traffic police activity generally, rewards for good drivers and tougher penalties.

### question 5: If this is our picture of the future, what actions are you personally prepared to take?

(553 responses)

Half of the responses (51%) were as requested, nominating an action participants would personally take. These included, driving more carefully or tolerantly (84), sharing the road (55), admitting limitations in abilities (20), commitment to learning all road rules (24), taking a driver education course (19) and volunteering for community road safety projects (73). A further fifth (20%) responded with actions involving influencing others, such as being a good example or role model (54), spending more time teaching children to drive or cycle (40), or reporting bad driving behaviour (16).

Remaining personal action comments were expressed in terms of lobbying the government for changes. These included lobbying for more funding (20), increasing the driving age (7), lowered speed limits (5), a driver education centre (7), more road infrastructure (8) and more police (9). There were also a few comments involving promoting alternative forms of transport and buying safer vehicles.

## ► further suggestions and online feedback

DTEI received 123 further suggestions from forum attendees as well as 43 comments made on its on-line feedback facility. Many of the comments re-iterated previously made comments, although there were some that offered further unique perspectives:

### visionary / big picture

- the Road Safety Advisory Council should have a community person in its membership there should be a greater liability onus on motorists who hit vulnerable road users

### safer vehicles

- there was divided opinion on whether car windscreen tinting laws should be relaxed or strengthened
- vehicle manufacturers should not be allowed to make cars capable of high speeds, or at least with speedometers showing speeds in excess of 130 km/h

### enforcement / penalties

- the Traffic Watch reporting system should be improved
- special traffic courts should be created (like family courts) to try difficult cases

### education / training / licensing

- that novice drivers can become disqualified too easily and that the disqualification periods should be reduced in line with those interstate
- that training should be available to Qualified Supervising Drivers of learner drivers
- that drivers who do education courses should be rewarded
- the authenticity of learner driver 75 hours logbook entries should be tightened
- learner driver mentoring programs should be established
- foreign drivers should receive training
- drivers need more education about 40 km/h past roadworks

## road rules

- a complete re-write of the Australian Road Rules with each Rule statement accompanied by a plain English explanation of what the Rule actually means in practice and illustrations.

## vulnerable road users

- marking of all pedestrian and bicycle passageways that cross arterial roads so that drivers know not to block them.

## metropolitan / rural response comparison

Responses at the metropolitan forms were proportionally compared with rural forum responses. While the vast majority of response categories had similar proportions, some specific differences were observed:

- 'Setting an example to others', (a change at the individual/family level Q.4), was nominated more often in rural areas (20%) than in the metropolitan area (15%).
- 'Safer levels or no alcohol/drugs in drivers' (community level) was nominated more often in rural areas (6%) than in the metropolitan area (0%).
- 'Responsible serving of alcohol' (community level) was nominated often in rural areas (8%) compared with hardly at all in the metropolitan area.
- 'Employers developing own road safety policy' (organisational / workplace level) was nominated more often in the metropolitan area (15%) than in rural areas (11%).
- 'Employers to provide safer vehicles for employees to drive' (organisational/workplace level) was nominated more often in the metropolitan area (22%) than in rural areas (7%).
- 'More funding for road improvements' (government level) was nominated more often in rural areas (12%) than in the metropolitan area (5%).
- 'Working with/on a local community road safety initiative' (personal action, Q.5) was nominated more often in rural areas (15%) than in the metropolitan area (8%).