

INQUIRY INTO PEDESTRIAN SAFETY (MINISTERIAL REFERENCE)

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Mr Geoff Corrigan MP
Chair
Staysafe Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Mr Corrigan,

City of Sydney Submission - Inquiry into Pedestrian Safety

Please find attached the City of Sydney's submission to the Staysafe Inquiry into Pedestrian Safety.

As requested the submission outlines the issues that relate to pedestrian safety in the unique City of Sydney road environment. In particular the City is concerned about traffic speeds in areas of high pedestrian activity and in the narrow inner-city streets with high concentrations of pedestrians, which is outlined in the submission.

The City has embarked on a major long term vision, *Sustainable Sydney 2030* which will improve pedestrian safety and amenity in Sydney making it a truly world-class city. Addressing the issues outlined in the City's submission to the Inquiry will contribute to the City achieving the 2030 vision.

The City welcomes the Staysafe Inquiry into Pedestrian Safety and is pleased to have been given the opportunity to make a submission.

If you would like to speak with a Council officer about the City's submission, you can contact Len Woodman, Road Safety Strategy Project Coordinator on 9265 9333 or at lwoodman@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

MONICA BARONE
Chief Executive Officer

city of villages

Submission by the City of Sydney

Staysafe Committee

Inquiry into Pedestrian Safety

June 2009

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Introduction

The City of Sydney welcomes the opportunity to have input into this Inquiry into Pedestrian Safety and supports all initiatives which bring about a reduction in road trauma involving pedestrians and bicycle riders.

The City's submission draws on the local expertise and knowledge of City officers in Traffic Management, Transport Planning and Road Safety as well as areas including City Planning and Project Management.

In less than a decade the residential population of the City of Sydney has increased by 49,000 (38%). It is estimated that employment for the current City of Sydney LGA totalled approximately 385,000, including 300,000 within the CBD and Pyrmont-Ultimo alone. An estimated 483,000 people travel to the City on any day to shop, be educated, conduct business with firms in the City or simply to be entertained.

With a population of 177,000 and over 850,000 people in Sydney on a typical weekday, pedestrians and motor vehicles compete for space. As a result of a disproportionate bias to maintaining high vehicle capacity and speed, pedestrian safety is compromised. Pedestrians represent a high proportion of road injuries in the City of Sydney, accounting for 28.3% of road casualties in 2007 compared to 8.3% for the State.

As the number of residents and commuters walking and cycling to work increase there is a potential for more conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles.

The solution to the competition for road space is to follow the example of many cities around the world and restrict motor vehicle movement where people walk or ride bicycles. This is not only important in terms of road safety but for long term solutions to environmental issues including climate change. It is the City's intention to create a pedestrian friendly environment which encourages walking and cycling.

The key solutions to pedestrian road trauma within the City of Sydney and particularly central Sydney are clearly seen as reducing vehicle accessibility, reducing vehicle speeds and improving pedestrian movement through improved crossing opportunities at traffic lights, including the length of the green walk time.

There are many different speed limits around the City of Sydney from 10km/h in Shared Zones, to 40km/hr in residential areas, a 50km/h Urban Speed Limit with a number of State Roads zoned at 60km/h. Clearly this can be confusing, particularly where there are some streets with 50 km/h signs and others without signs that are zoned 50 km/h.

Many European states have adopted 30 km/h (or 20 mph in the U.K.) as the standard for residential and CBD areas. This is considered best practice.

A speed limit of 50km/h is considered too high for central Sydney where the speed limit should be reduced at least to 40km/h. Elsewhere in the City of Sydney Local Government Area lower speed limits should apply to the inner city residential areas to improve safety and amenity for pedestrians.

Sustainable Sydney 2030

The City of Sydney has consulted widely to identify how Sydney can be a world class city in terms of pedestrian safety and amenity. In 2007 the City engaged Jahn Gehl Architects, the internationally renowned specialists in city planning, to undertake research and studies that would provide the basis for the City of Sydney to plan the future of the City.

The resulting *Public Life and Public Spaces Study* is a key component of the City's vision for the future, *Sustainable Sydney 2030*.

The *Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision* proposes key directions for the City and a series of progressive actions for the next 20 years. It sets a strategic framework and agenda for the City's annual Corporate Plans and will drive capital works priorities and work programs for the years to come.

Increasing public transport use and reducing the use of private vehicles together with encouraging walking and cycling as preferred transport will be the major objective that impacts on pedestrian road safety.

The key objectives in *Sustainable Sydney 2030* that relate to pedestrian road safety issues include giving greater priority to pedestrian and cycle movements and amenity in the City of Sydney by,

- Integrating pedestrian movement and cycling into transport planning,
- Managing the road space to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport,
- Giving pedestrians priority at traffic signals,
- Reducing speed limits in central Sydney to improve safety and amenity, and
- Developing a liveable green network between activity hubs which will be a safe and attractive walking and cycling network across the City's streets, parks and open spaces.

Submission addressing the Terms of Reference

The City of Sydney has reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry. The following are the City's comments on the specific items identified in the Terms of Reference.

Each area is presented in the order of priority that the City believes must be addressed.

The current emphasis placed on pedestrian road users as part of land use policies and the planning and management of the road system

Central Sydney has the highest pedestrian and vehicle traffic mix of any city in Australia. It is essential that all involved in transport planning and traffic management should include and prioritise walking and bicycle riding as legitimate forms of transport.

The City of Sydney supports and promotes walking and cycling as the preferred choices for transport as they have positive economic, social and environmental benefits. The City's main road safety concern is for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Speed environment

The City of Sydney considers that the current variations in speed limits throughout the Local Government Area do not clearly indicate to drivers the risk level prevalent in the area. Roads in central Sydney and other high pedestrian and cycling activity areas be subject to the 40 km/h speed limit and that the 50 km/h Urban Speed Limit be applied on all other roads (with the exception of the Eastern and Western Distributors, the Cross City Tunnel and other main through routes outside the City centre).

The RTA has approved 40 km/h Local Area speed limits in a number of sporadic locations such as The Rocks, some parts of Surry Hills, Rosebery and some roads adjacent to the Eastern Distributor. However there is no consistency in where 40 km/h is set as a limit.

Currently the RTA will not approve lower speed limits on local roads where the average speed is recorded as higher than 40 km/h and there is no proposal to provide engineering treatment that self-regulates drivers to driving at 40 km/h.

In 2005 the City requested 40 km/h for central Sydney under the RTA's *40 km/h in High Pedestrian Activity Area* (HPAA) program, but was rejected by the then Minister for Roads and the then Chief Executive of the RTA. This rejection occurred despite community consultation that demonstrated that two-thirds of respondents supported lower speed limits where pedestrian activity is high. The reason provided by the RTA was that it was necessary to provide engineering treatment on all roads subject to a 40 km/h limit and that this was not practical on wider streets.

The RTA has approved a small number of 40 km/h areas under the HPAA program. This included Redfern Street and more recently Glebe Point Road. A unique 30 km/h speed limit, designated as a HPAA, has been implemented by the RTA on Druitt Street, following a fatality and a number of crashes involving State Transit Authority buses and pedestrians. No self-enforcing engineering treatment has been

implemented along Druitt Street, but relies on narrow lane widths to encourage lower speeds.

The Botanic Gardens Trust also uses 30 km/h along Hospital Road and Mrs Macquarie's Road. These are unique uses of this particular limit with New South Wales. This is interesting considering that many jurisdictions in Europe set their urban speed limit at 30 km/h (or 20 mph in the U.K.). 30 km/h is generally considered the standard, best practice limit for areas where there is potential for conflict between vulnerable road users and vehicles.

The NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines point out that speed limits should be set to promote safety and reduce speed differential between vehicles. With increasing cycling activity in the City a 40 km/h limit is important to reduce the speed differential between motor vehicles and non-motorised vehicles.

Outside of central Sydney there are many inner City residential areas that have narrow streets and laneways away from the main streets.

Many laneways have narrow or no footpaths. Some laneways provide access for delivery vehicles, garbage trucks and car parking areas. They can also provide a shortcut for vehicles, often being used by drivers to avoid traffic lights and traffic queues. Where this occurs pedestrians using the laneways are at risk or feel threatened by motor vehicles.

Reducing the speed limit on narrow roads and laneways and giving pedestrians priority is a potential solution to improving pedestrian safety and amenity. This is considered in more detail under the City's *Laneways Program*.

Pedestrian, Cyclist and Traffic Calming Plans (PCTC Plans)

Pedestrian, Cyclist and Traffic Calming Plans (also referred to as Local Area Traffic Management Schemes) are considered an effective tool to improve local areas in terms of pedestrian and cyclist safety and amenity. A key component is that of reducing traffic speeds.

Speed limits, together with pedestrian crossings must meet certain criteria, referred to as 'warrants' for the RTA to approve.

These plans are community driven to manage and calm traffic on local roads, increase pedestrian, bicycle and public transport access and provide better safety and amenity for local residents.

The City has completed a number of studies as part of its Pedestrian, Cyclist and Traffic Calming Plan (PCTC) program. This includes Redfern, Glebe and Forest Lodge, City East, Chippendale and Surry Hills.

Recommendations

The City recommends that pedestrians and cyclists are given greater priority when planning and managing the road system within all areas of high pedestrian activity and residential areas.

Approval of lower speed limits, on Local Roads, including 10 km/h Shared Zones, should be delegated to local councils, approved by the relevant Traffic Committee.

The RTA should review its criteria for speed limits to reflect the special conditions in the City of Sydney.

A consistent regime of speed zoning is introduced that in urban areas prioritises pedestrian and bicycle movement.

It is recommended the Inquiry investigate a means to establish a consistent regime of 40 km/hr speed limits for inner city areas and central Sydney.

Additional strategies to increase pedestrian safety

The City of Sydney has a number of strategies that will improve pedestrian safety and amenity, linked to *Sustainable Sydney 2030*. However there is a legal requirement that local councils must get speed limit changes approved and implemented by the RTA.

Internationally many other cities have the authority to set speed limits within their local areas.

Laneways Program – Shared Zones

The City has a program to revitalise and improve pedestrian access and safety on the City's laneways and narrow streets. Many of these laneways and streets already accommodate high levels of pedestrian activity, such as Wilmot Street, with almost non-existent footpaths, where several thousand people walk each day.

It is particularly important that these laneways have restrictions on traffic movement and the speed of traffic. A very low speed limit and priority of pedestrians over vehicles is necessary for safety due to the lack of footpaths. This should be accommodated by introducing *10 Km/h Shared Zones*. As the RTA approves and sets all speed limits in New South Wales it is necessary to apply to them for every planned Shared Zone.

The City has been given specific criteria for Shared Zones required by the RTA and has recently obtained the RTA's latest *Speed Zoning Guideline*. The Guidelines refer to *10 Km/h Shared Zones* as a 'special speed limit'.

The criteria makes it necessary to apply to the RTA on a road by road basis. Also the criteria does not include reference to current pedestrian activity on the laneways and roads under consideration. There is a requirement for a laneway or street to be 250 metres or less in length with traffic movement less than 300 vehicles per day.

This seems to contradict the *NSW Speed Zoning Guidelines* (3.2.3 (a)) that states a Shared Zone is "a network of roads".

The current criteria for establishing Shared Zones are arbitrary, and explicitly exclude any consideration of pedestrian volumes. Instead, an arbitrary ceiling of 300 daily vehicle movements in an area of no more than 250m length is used to determine shared zone applications. This is not consistent with interstate practice, nor with the practice used to determine applications for pedestrian crossings. Victorian guidelines, for example, allow up to 500 daily vehicle movements in a shared zone.

Whilst the criteria and Guidelines may be appropriate in other situations, the City of Sydney should be considered separately, as it is unique in having a high number of laneways and narrow streets, high concentrations of pedestrians and vehicles.

The terminology "Shared Zone" is no longer appropriate taking into consideration that Shared Zones give pedestrians priority over other vehicles. This distinction has been brought about by the adoption of the Australian Road Rules in 1999. Prior to this Shared Zones in New South Wales gave equal priority to all road users. The City considers that changing this terminology will make road users more aware of their

responsibilities in Shared Zones. In the United Kingdom and other countries the term *Pedestrian Zone* is used where pedestrians have priority.

Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2017

The City of Sydney's Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2017 is Council's commitment to making cycling an attractive a choice of transport.

The strategy outlines the infrastructure needed to ensure a safer and more comfortable cycling environment and the social initiatives that will encourage more people to cycle.

It is based on comprehensive analysis of cycling issues prepared by consultants for the City with significant input sought from the community during its preparation.

The implementation of dedicated bicycle lanes and the increased number of cyclists on all roads will contribute to identifying the City as a low speed environment. Lowering speed limits to 40 km/h in central Sydney will contribute to cyclist safety where separated bicycle lanes cannot be provided, as well as enhance pedestrian safety.

Recommendations

The RTA should support changes to the Australian Road Rules to rename *Shared Zones* as *Pedestrian Zones* which clearly demonstrates that pedestrians have priority.

The existing criteria for Shared Zones should be reviewed and allowance made for special, and often unique, situations found in central Sydney and urban environments.

The City recommends that new evidence-based criteria be adopted that consider a range of street, pedestrian and traffic conditions when determining shared zones.

Speed limit reductions will improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

Effectiveness of recent measures to address pedestrian safety

Over the past ten years the City of Sydney has implemented programs aimed at improving pedestrian safety and amenity.

Footpath widening

Footpaths have been widened on many streets to accommodate increases in pedestrian movement and prevent pedestrians overflowing on to the roadway. Where footpaths have been widened at pedestrian crossings this does reduce the distance that pedestrians have to cross when the green light is showing.

Footpath widening together with streetscaping improves the amenity and environment for pedestrians. It is considered an important tool in achieving the objectives of *Sustainable Sydney 2030* that include the development of a network of safe, linked pedestrian and cycle paths that gives greater priority to pedestrians in the City.

Kerb extensions

At some locations where footpaths cannot be widened along a length of road kerb extensions have been constructed if space is available. Kerb extensions provide a

greater area for pedestrians to wait for traffic light changes reducing the need to stand on the roadway when large numbers of people are waiting.

Education through promotion and advertising programs

The City introduced the LOOK RIGHT and LOOK LEFT pedestrian safety markings in 2000 prior to the Olympics and continues to maintain them. In all locations the markings are stencilled on the roadway as the number of people waiting to cross is often high and would cover the stencils if they were placed on the footpath as is the practice in many other councils.

The City of Sydney has worked with the RTA on the Local Government Road Safety Program since 1994 and has employed Road Safety Officers continually since 1994. As part of the Program road safety education and promotional activities have been implemented on a regular basis. With RTA cooperation and funding contributions specific programs aimed at improving pedestrian behaviour and at drivers to slow down have been implemented annually since 1996. The City also supports the RTA *“Been Drinking – Walk Safe”* program aimed at reducing the incidence of alcohol related crashes involving intoxicated pedestrians.

Other recent programs include pedestrian awareness campaigns aimed at reducing the potential for collisions between cyclists and pedestrians as the interest in cycling increases and the City introduces more bicycle lanes and shared paths. The campaign also promotes responsible cycling and reminds motorists to be aware of cyclists.

Recommendations

The City will continue to implement programs that enhance pedestrian safety and amenity by improving public space and reducing the impact of vehicles.

The City continues to support the Local Government Road Safety Program and recommends that the program is maintained by the RTA.

The underlying causes of pedestrian injuries and fatalities

In 2007, 84% of crashes involving a pedestrian and a vehicle were as a direct result of the pedestrian stepping off a footpath into the path of the vehicle. Many crashes involving pedestrians occur at signalised intersections.

Pedestrian behaviour

When analysing crashes we tend to look to identify who was at fault and not how crashes can be avoided by addressing both the prime cause and other contributory factors. For example many pedestrians are injured as a result of their ‘incorrect’ actions. As a result they are seen as ‘being at fault’. This often leads to the assumption that the driver did not contribute to the crash irrespective of the fact that had they been moving at a speed from which they could stop in time then the crash would not have occurred.

Pedestrian behaviour is often cited as a major cause of crashes resulting in pedestrian trauma. Through observation it can be determined that many pedestrians are frustrated at the time it takes for traffic lights to change to green. In addition the time allowed to cross a street safely is often considered to be short. The combination of the green light (green man) and the flashing red is generally considered by the RTA as sufficient to cross. However many pedestrians especially under the crowded city conditions cannot cross safely in the time allowed.

Apart from on weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. it is necessary for pedestrians to press a button at traffic lights in order to ensure that a pedestrian

green light shows when traffic is stopped. Streets in central Sydney and other major routes such as William Street, Broadway and King Street, Newtown are active 24 hours a day and it should not be necessary for a pedestrian to have to 'request' a green traffic light.

It has been observed that some overseas jurisdictions, including Singapore, Thailand and some cities in the United States have introduced countdown timer systems to improve pedestrian compliance to the traffic lights and reduce the level of frustration at waiting for traffic lights to change. It is understood that there are a number of different systems used but this should not prevent testing systems that may be suitable for Sydney.

Another often quoted reason for crashes involving pedestrians is that they are intoxicated or drugged. The City of Sydney has several hundred licensed premises including pubs, hotels and restaurants.

Whilst an intoxicated pedestrian may be considered 'at-fault' in some crashes there should still be some responsibility on behalf of drivers. This responsibility is primarily to drive at a speed appropriate for the prevailing conditions. If the conditions include centres where there are high numbers of licensed premises then low-speeds are required to accommodate potential conflict with pedestrians and therefore avert pedestrian trauma. This is much the same as we would expect around School Zones.

The NRMA completed research into the incidence of intoxicated pedestrian fatalities in 2002 and have provided the Fact Sheet, *Intoxicated (Drunk) Pedestrians*. The NRMA research stated that crashes involving intoxicated pedestrians generally occurred in the hours of darkness (89%) and over half occurred on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. The research also identified that intoxicated pedestrian fatalities were more prevalent outside the Sydney Metropolitan Area.

The City supports the RTA program "*Been Drinking – Walk Safe*" and provides resources to local licensed premises regularly, with emphasis on times around major events such as the Sydney Mardi Gras every March.

Driver behaviour

There is concern that some drivers may show inadequate respect for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. The current RTA Learner Driver Log Book places city driving in the "*City and motorway driving*" category and pedestrians and cyclists are not specifically mentioned at all.

A greater emphasis could be placed on drivers recognising and dealing with pedestrians and cyclists during the learner driver phase to address these concerns. By doing so, new drivers would learn to respect pedestrian and cyclists safety when driving.

In many European states drivers in urban areas are expected to be ready to deal with unexpected and even illegal behaviour by vulnerable road users.

The *Australian Road Rules (February 2009 version)* allows pedestrians to cross a road at any point if they are more than 20 metres from a controlled crossing, provided they cross by the shortest and safest route and do not stay on the road longer than is necessary. There are no "Jaywalking" laws such as in the United States and Singapore.

However, many drivers have the incorrect perception that pedestrians doing so are 'jaywalking' and committing an offence. Greater emphasis should be to correct this misconception.

The major underlying risk in the City of Sydney is that drivers do not adequately adjust their speed for the narrow city streets and congested inner city conditions.

While excessive speed is considered responsible for just 1% of the crashes many more crashes can be avoided if lower speeds are adopted.

It is a simple law of physics that the lower the speed of a vehicle then the shorter distance it takes that vehicle to stop. The RTA demonstrates this on their website under "*Why a lower speed limit*".

Observation of traffic in central Sydney reveals that there is a high incidence of driver running through red lights. It is understood that currently the red-light camera program is maintained by the NSW Police. It would be appropriate for the management of red-light cameras to be the responsibility of the RTA and linked with the speed camera programs. There is scope to adopt new technology that combines red-light cameras and speed cameras and locate them on roads in central Sydney.

In November 2003 a default Urban Speed Limit of 50 km/h was adopted in all built up areas. This followed trials in the late 1990's and the gradual introduction of 50 km/h at the request of local councils. Since becoming the default limit it is no longer a requirement to signpost streets in built up areas. However some streets still have 50 km/h signage which leads to confusion by drivers. In addition some state roads are signed 60 km/h.

The RTA has specific programs that promote increased safety for pedestrians through lowering the speed limit. This includes the *40 km/h In High Pedestrian Activity Areas* (HPAA) and *School Zones* for children.

The *40 km/h In High Pedestrian Activity Areas* program has been implemented in many places including the CBD areas North Sydney, Chatswood, Parramatta and many rural towns. The RTA has not approved a *40 km/h In High Pedestrian Activity Areas* for central Sydney.

The RTA is currently reviewing many State Roads with a 60 km/h speed limit and is reducing the limit to the Urban Speed Limit where appropriate. Recent examples of this within the City of Sydney include King Street, Newtown and Botany Road through Alexandria and Beaconsfield.

The City, and most other councils promote the RTA's *Helping learner drivers become safe drivers* program for parents and carers of new drivers. This is an opportunity to promote better awareness of pedestrian and cycling safety issues to new drivers and their supervisors.

Safe system approach to crashes involving pedestrians

The RTA has adopted the *Safe System* approach to road safety. The *Safe System* philosophy recognises that, even with the best preventative programs in place, people will continue to make mistakes and crashes will continue to occur. *Safe System* seeks to not penalise road users with death or serious injury when they make mistakes.

Appropriate speed limits are an integral part of *Safe System*. Even a marginal reduction in speed can result in a drop in casualty crashes.

The Australian Transport Council (ATC) reported in 2006 that small reductions in average speeds (even one or two per cent) result in substantially greater percentage reduction in deaths and injuries. It was also reported that the chance of surviving a crash decreases dramatically above certain impact speeds. For pedestrians the risk increases above 20-30 km/h.

Recommendations:

Traffic speeds in areas of high pedestrian activity are reduced through lower speed limits. A consistent regime of 40 km/h speed limits will identify central Sydney and residential areas as low speed environments.

Remaining state roads with a speed limit of 60 km/h be reduced to the Urban Speed Limit of 50 km/h.

That pedestrian green times are increased at all signalised crossings, particularly in central Sydney and the main arterial roads in the LGA.

There should be a permanent automatic 'call-up' so that there is no requirement for pedestrians to push a button to get a pedestrian green light.

That trials involving appropriate countdown timers are introduced as soon as possible.

New technology in regard to speed and red light cameras should be adopted in central Sydney and other high risk locations.

Driver education programs, including the *Helping learner drivers become safe drivers* program include more emphasis on drivers' responsibility towards pedestrians and cyclists.

Investigate legislative changes that put more responsibility on drivers to be aware of vulnerable road users in urban areas.

Short and long term trends in pedestrian injuries and fatalities in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas

The City of Sydney relies on the official crash data provided by the RTA. This data is provided twice annually and provides details of crashes reported by the police. The data includes information relating to each crash. Crashes generally come under one of three headings. Fatal crashes are those in which at least one fatality has occurred. This is followed by recorded injury crashes where at least one injury has occurred. The third designation is called towaway when no injuries have been sustained but a vehicle has had to be towed.

Injury crashes do not clarify the extent of injuries caused by a crash. It would be helpful if information relating to the severity of injuries was made available, so that serious 'life-changing' injuries can be determined as these types of crashes should be given the same level of concern as fatalities when used in road safety planning.

The latest data available is for crashes up to 31 December 2007. Chart 1 below shows the 10 year trend for all crashes. The RTA is developing its CrashLink system to provide more up-to-date information to road safety professionals.

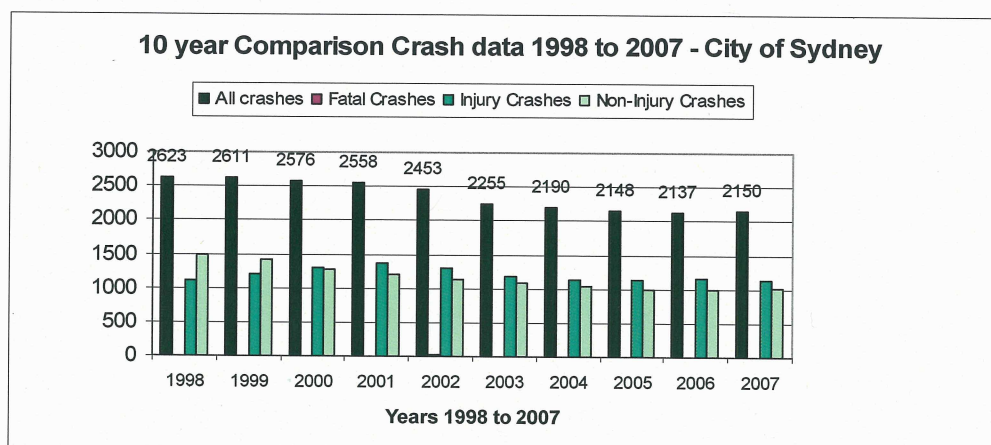


Chart 1 Motor Vehicle Crashes 1998 to 2007

Crashes involving pedestrians

Pedestrians represent a high proportion of road injuries in the City of Sydney Local Government Area, accounting for 28.3% of road casualties in 2007 compared to 11% for the Sydney Region and 8.3% for the State. In central Sydney half the injury crashes involved pedestrians.

Chart 2 below shows the data for crashes involving pedestrians in the City of Sydney for ten years between 1998 and 2007.

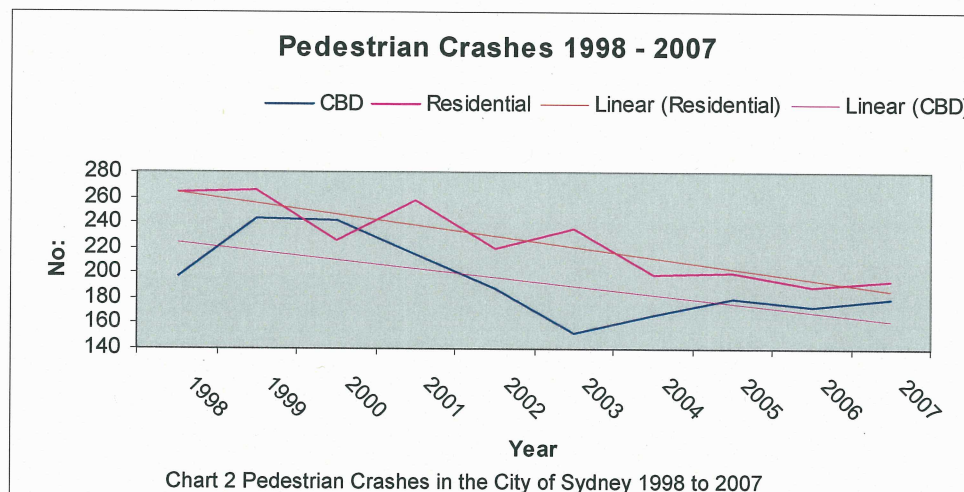


Chart 2 Pedestrian Crashes in the City of Sydney 1998 to 2007

The number of injury crashes involving pedestrians has shown a downtrend over the past 10 years. However since 2003 there has started to be an increase in these types of crashes, particularly in central Sydney. In 2007 (374 pedestrian injury crashes) were almost 10% lower than in 1998 (462).

Fatal crashes

Fatal crashes involving pedestrians are generally random events. Even in central Sydney where average speeds can be low pedestrians are vulnerable and as a result account for a high proportion of the fatal crashes that occur. Chart 3 shows the fatal crashes for the City of Sydney between 1998 and 2007. The RTA has advised that there were three pedestrian fatalities in 2008 and that up to June 2009 no pedestrian fatalities have been recorded in the City of Sydney.

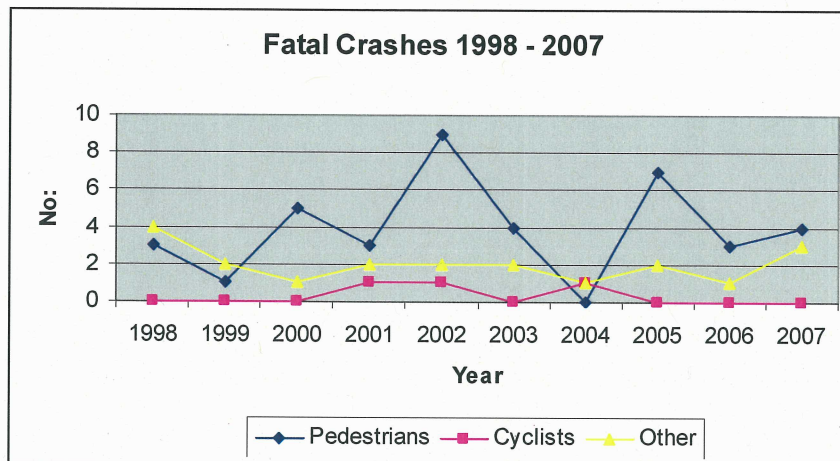


Chart 3 Crashes involving fatalities 1998 to 2007

The crash data also showed that crashes involving pedestrians had the following characteristics:

- When viewed by day of week accidents are generally evenly spread, with small peaks on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Crashes involving pedestrians were fewer at weekends.
- The highest number of accidents occurred during the daytime peak period which is consistent with activity in a major city/inner city area.
- The 30-49 and 21-29 age groups represents the majority of pedestrian injuries (Males are highly represented in both these age groups).
- Only one per cent of all injury crashes involving a pedestrian was due to excessive speed (based on data for 1998 to 2007).

Recommendations

That crash data is supplied by the RTA to local councils on a more regular basis and without considerable delay (currently eighteen months).

Crash data should identify crashes where severe 'life-changing' injuries have occurred as these crashes should hold the same importance as fatalities.

The incidence of drivers leaving the scene of the accident after hitting pedestrians

The City of Sydney does not have data that identifies issues relating to drivers leaving the scene. Generally this is an issue for the NSW Police to address.

There is some anecdotal evidence that minor collisions involving pedestrians and drivers do occur and are not reported. This includes pedestrians hit by slow moving vehicles being parked, vehicles moving slowly on footpaths and vehicles exiting or entering the driveways to premises that have access across footpaths.

The City of Sydney includes conditions to Development Applications (DAs) that require building operators to have signage on the exit driveways from buildings reminding drivers to stop before crossing the footpath to allow people to cross. Many

building operators in central Sydney have installed warning lights or other systems to warn people that vehicles are exiting the building. This does not remove the pedestrians' right of way to continue along the footpath.

The City encourages footpath treatment across driveways to show drivers that they are crossing a footpath.

Recommendations

The City of Sydney will continue to review Development Applications to reduce the potential of collisions involving pedestrians on footpaths.

Pedestrian safety issues and strategies in other jurisdictions

There are pedestrian road safety issues in almost all cities throughout Australia and cities and towns overseas.

Most notable of strategies to reduce pedestrian road trauma are those that reduce the incidence of conflict between people and vehicles. Engineering solutions can be put in place to reduce crashes involving pedestrians. Often this can be restrictive and detract from improving pedestrian amenity and safety.

The pedestrianisation of roads in city centres is quite common throughout many European cities. Often this is supported by an effective public transport system and by restricting access to central city areas by non-essential vehicles.

The second strategy that is notable is that of reducing the speed of vehicles that travel in and around city areas. It is common for cities to have control over setting appropriate speed limits on their roads.

Austrorads Guide to Road Safety – Part 3: Speed Limits and Speed Management states:

Speed limits on much of Australia and New Zealand's road network are higher than limits many OECD countries set on comparable roads.

In Australia, most local and collector roads in urban areas (including residential streets) are zoned to 50 km/h – in many OECD countries 30 km/h or 40 km/h limits are used extensively.

Internationally there have been a number of different schemes involving the lowering of speed limits in areas where there is benefit to pedestrians in terms of safety and amenity.

In the United Kingdom recent changes in Department of Transport guidelines have relaxed the recommendations and in many residential areas 20 mph (32 km/h) limits may be set by councils without any physical measures at all.

In March 2009 the London Borough of Islington in the United Kingdom announced that it would be implementing a 20 mph (32 km/h) speed limit on all of its council controlled roads. About half of Islington's 1,420 residential roads, covering 278 kilometres, are already 20 mph (32 km/h).

Other major cities and towns in the U.K. that have introduced 20 mph speed limits include Oxford (population 151,000), Leicester (292,600), Portsmouth (197,700) and Newcastle upon Tyne (189,000).

In some towns and cities in the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom have introduced a 'Naked Streets' concept, also known as "shared space", which is a very promising approach to both pedestrian safety and improving the vitality of an area. Naked street schemes place importance on how drivers make decisions about their behaviour, recognising the importance of how they perceive their surroundings. It is a significant departure from attempts to control behaviour through interventions like road humps, or engineering pedestrians out of our streetscape through subways or guardrail.

The shared space concept was masterminded by the innovative Dutch Traffic Engineer Hans Monderman and is based on a principle that removing all priorities will make all road users work together bring traffic speeds down and improving pedestrian access and safety.

The Netherlands has since 1999 made great use of the Woonerf system where a street or group of streets in a town or city where pedestrians and cyclists have legal priority over motorists. As of 1999, the Netherlands had over 6000 Woonerf schemes in place.

In Germany, similar zones are termed *Verkehrsberuhigter Bereich*. Under German traffic law motorists in a *Verkehrsberuhigter Bereich* are restricted to a maximum speed of 7 km/h, pedestrians, including children, may use the entire street and children are permitted to play in the street.

Recommendations

Speed zoning guidelines and criteria should be revised to allow councils to approve local road speed limits as is common practice in Europe.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The City of Sydney is working towards a city that is pedestrian and bicycle friendly and will continue to encourage walking and cycling as the key methods of transport. However it is important to recognise that motor vehicle use in the City will continue and there is an ongoing need to improve driver skills and behaviour for the benefit of all road users, especially vulnerable at-risk groups such as pedestrians and cyclists.

The City of Sydney has identified many of the positive strategies that have been implemented in European and other cities around the world. Through *Sustainable Sydney 2030* the City will be transformed into a world class city with a network of safe, linked pedestrian and bicycle paths integrated with green spaces throughout the City.

The City will continue to work with the RTA and other agencies to promote road safety for all road users in the City of Sydney.

This submission has provided recommendations to address each of the Terms of Reference.

The City of Sydney suggests that the following recommendations are the most important if we are to reduce the number of crashes involving pedestrians and over the longer term improve drivers' attitudes and behaviour towards pedestrians and cyclists:

1. Approval of lower speed limits, on Local Roads, including 10 km/h Shared Zones, should be delegated to the local Council, approved by the relevant Traffic Committee.
2. That pedestrian green times are increased at all signalised crossings, particularly in central Sydney and the main arterial roads in the LGA.
3. That trials involving appropriate countdown timers are introduced as soon as possible.
4. The introduction of a consistent regime of 40km/h speed limit for High Pedestrian Activity Areas, such as central Sydney. In the longer term 30 km/h should be considered as the preferred speed limit in such areas, adopting international best practice.
5. The introduction of a consistent regime of 40km/h speed limits, or lower, for Local Traffic Areas, particularly those where Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Plans indicate that lower speeds are desirable.
6. Criteria for 10 km/h Shared Zones should be revised to include consideration the specific needs of any particular Local Government Area. Pedestrian volumes should be included and considered more important than vehicle movements.
7. Suitable educational programs to be introduced for all road users on appropriate driver interaction with pedestrians and cyclists.