

**INTERVENTIONS TO REDUCE ROAD TRAUMA IN REGIONAL NSW CAUSED
BY SPEEDING, FATIGUE, DRINK AND DRUG DRIVING**

Organisation: Maitland City Council

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Parliamentary Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety

Subject: Inquiry into Interventions to Reduce Road Trauma in Regional New South Wales

Submitted by: Maitland City Council (MCC)

Date: July 2025

1. Introduction

Maitland City Council (MCC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into effective interventions to reduce road trauma in regional NSW, with a specific focus on speeding, fatigue, and drink and drug driving. As a participating council in the Local Government Road Safety Program (LGRSP), MCC recognises the importance of a community-focused, data-driven approach to road safety and supports the objectives of the 2026 Road Safety Action Plan.

2. Local Government Road Safety Program (LGRSP)

The LGRSP is a joint initiative between Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and local councils, aimed at delivering behavioural road safety programs at the local level. Co-funding of Road Safety Officer (RSO) roles enables councils like Maitland to:

- Raise the profile of road safety locally
- Create a road safety culture within the community
- Engage key stakeholders including internal council teams, Police, schools, and businesses
- Deliver evidence-based local projects
- Integrate the Safe System approach into strategic planning and infrastructure

MCC has successfully aligned its programs with these objectives, with a strong emphasis on community engagement and education.

3. Local Crash Data (2019–2023)

- Total Reportable Crashes: 711
- Previous 5-Year Period: 693 (indicating a slight upward trend)
- Fatal Crashes: 14 fatalities
- Serious Injuries: 143
- Moderate Injuries: 254
- Minor/Other Injuries: 74
- Towaway (Non-Casualty): 226

Contributing Factors:

- Speeding: 21.1%
- Fatigue: 12.1%
- Drink/Drug Driving: 10.3%

Crash Locations:

- 54.6% on local roads
 - 44.3% in 50 km/h zones; 30% in 60 km/h zones
 - Traffic congestion during school hours and commuter peaks
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4. Current Strategies

Speeding Interventions

Maitland Local Roads Speed Project (MLRSP)

- Targets casual speeding in high-risk areas
- Uses Vehicle Activated Signage (VAS) and courtesy speed-checks
- Shares speed data with local Police for targeted enforcement
- Utilises TfNSW campaigns ("Every K Counts", "Stop It or Cop It")

School Zone Blitz

- Conducted at the start of each school term
- Joint operation with Police and compliance teams to reinforce safe speeds near schools

Fatigue Reduction Strategies

Safer Shift Workers Project

- Targets commuters to Upper Hunter mining and industrial sites
- Delivers fatigue messages via VMS and fatigue education kits at 24/7 worksites

Depot Education

- Toolbox talks on fatigue management for council workers

Holiday Campaigns

- High-visibility VMS signage during long weekends and school holidays

Drink and Drug Driving Prevention

Plan B Campaigns

- Partnered with Maitland Liquor Accord (MLA)
- Messaging promoted on buses, coasters, bottle bags
- Alcolizer units used at festivals and public events for education

Local Events Engagement

- Participation in Maitland Taste, Aroma Festival, and Bitter & Twisted
- Safety promotion integrated with community activities

Youth Road Safety

- Helping Learner Drivers Become Safe Drivers workshops for parents and supervisors
- ROADwhyz program for 17-25-year-olds, led by Police, Ambulance, and local partners
- RYDA (Rotary Youth Driver Awareness) events supported in local schools

Motorcycle Safety

- Ongoing collaboration with neighbouring councils and TfNSW
- Distribution of "Motorcycling the Hunter" booklets
- Site audits of crash clusters and popular riding routes
- Hosting of Back on Your Bike workshops for returning riders
- Support of campaigns such as Spot Joe Rider

Saving Lives on Country Roads

- Installation of ATLM, CAMs, and advisory signage
- Social media campaigns and signage to promote rural road safety
- Engineering audits of sharp curve locations

Vulnerable Road Users

- Safety decal campaigns: "Look Out Before You Step Out", "Ring Before Passing"
- Pedestrian and cycling safety messaging at events like Active Fest
- Site audits and funding applications for shared path and pedestrian safety improvements

Safety Around Schools

- "Safety Around Schools" project to improve visibility and compliance
- Signage upgrades, chalk curbing, and on-site audits
- Presentations during school orientations and P&C meetings

Caravan Safety

- Partnering with Get About Training for towing and reversing workshops
- Response to growth in local and regional caravanning

Community Engagement and Issue Resolution

- The RSO works directly with residents, businesses, and schools
- Issues reported (speeding, parking, pedestrian safety) are documented, mapped, and actioned
- Regular participation in Local Traffic Committee and grant-supported infrastructure projects

5. Effectiveness of Current Strategies

Speeding Interventions

The MLRSP has demonstrated measurable impact in high-risk local road areas. Community feedback and Police data indicate improved driver awareness, particularly where VAS signage is used. TfNSW campaign alignment enhances consistency and recognition, supporting reductions in casual speeding. School zone blitzes have led to greater compliance at critical times.

Fatigue Reduction

Programs targeting fatigue are successfully reaching vulnerable groups. The Safer Shift Workers Project has received positive feedback from employers and workers alike. Toolbox talks and 24/7 education kits contribute to a proactive fatigue culture. VMS signage during peak travel periods reinforces critical messages at point of need.

Drink and Drug Driving

MCC's localised campaigns in partnership with MLA effectively embed Plan B messaging into the community. Engagement at high-attendance events extends reach and relevance. Use of interactive tools like alcolizers increases understanding of legal limits and personal responsibility, with strong anecdotal and observed engagement.

Youth Safety

Youth-targeted programs are highly valued by schools, parents, and emergency services. Regular participation in ROADwhyz and RYDA ensures consistent, coordinated messaging. Workshops equip supervisors with the tools to improve young driver safety, while the ROADwhyz program is credited with influencing participant attitudes.

Motorcycle Safety

MCC's leadership in motorcycle safety has seen improved collaboration and stronger messaging consistency across councils. The success of Back on Your Bike and Spot Joe Rider demonstrates community enthusiasm and positive cultural shift. Education, infrastructure auditing, and regional resources all support safer riding behaviours.

Rural and Regional Road Initiatives

Grant-funded improvements like ATLM and CAMs are being delivered based on crash data and site assessments. Rural curve crashes remain a focus, with MCC demonstrating strong project planning and infrastructure delivery in partnership with engineers and TfNSW.

School and Community Programs

The Safety Around Schools initiative has produced tangible compliance improvements. Clear signage, stakeholder education, and consistent messaging have increased parent and carer accountability. Positive engagement from schools and feedback from enforcement partners affirm its effectiveness.

Broader Community Engagement

RSO-led engagement and responsiveness to local concerns fosters trust and visibility of road safety work. Partnerships with Police and community groups enhance response effectiveness. Projects are supported by rigorous mapping, site inspections, and integrated planning.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Maitland City Council supports ongoing funding and expansion of LGRSP initiatives, particularly in regional NSW. We recommend:

1. Sustained co-funding of Road Safety Officers through LGRSP
2. Increased support for fatigue, speed, and drug/alcohol-specific regional campaigns
3. Broader delivery of Safe System infrastructure treatments
4. Enhanced data sharing and impact evaluation frameworks for councils
5. More freedom with community road safety projects

The current strategies employed by MCC are delivering strong behavioural, cultural, and safety outcomes. With continued support, regional councils can further reduce trauma, support vulnerable road users, and implement effective, community-based solutions.

We remain committed to collaborative, evidence-based road safety strategies that improve outcomes across all road user groups in our region.

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