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

Organisation: Bega Valley Shire Council

Date Received: 28 July 2025

Bega Valley Shire Council Submission to reduce road trauma in the Bega Valley

bega valley
shire council

Bega Valley Shire Council acknowledges and pays our respects to the traditional custodians of the lands, waterways and airspace of the shire.

Contents

Vision for our Road Safety Plan

Our Bega Valley Road Safety Plan 2026-2030 aims to drive road related trauma down for our community, our families and the 1.02 million visitors who come here annually. The annual economic cost of road trauma in Australia is estimated to be over $27 billion, with a significant portion attributed to medical expenses, lost productivity, and property damage. Collectively we must do better.

Council recognises and accepts the key role we play in road safety through the implementation of a safe systems approach (safe roads, people, vehicles and speeds) within our area of responsibility.

We recognise that we must continue to partner with the NSW and Australian Governments, and work with our community, to reduce the loss of life and road related trauma in our local community and our advocacy in this space is constant.

This plan outlines the specific measures Council needs to undertake to help keep our community and visitors to Bega Valley safe as they drive our local and regional roads or bus, scooter, cycle and walk around our community. The plan includes specific actions to build a safer road network, educate people to behave in a safer manner, transition to safer vehicles across the Council fleet and work with the NSW Government to ensure appropriate speeds.

We acknowledge the significantly increased funding programs developed by the NSW Government for local roads, such as Fixing Local Roads with a total funding of $691 million, supports councils in accelerating upgrades and maintenance on local roads and Fixing Country Roads which is a $543 million NSW Government Program providing targeted infrastructure funding from Restart NSW for regional freight projects.

Access to funding programs such as Safer Roads, Black Spot, and the Road Emergency Rebuilding and Resilience Fund (RERRF) is critically important for Bega Valley Shire Council to address road safety challenges across the region. These programs enable Council to deliver targeted improvements on high-risk roads, reduce the likelihood of serious crashes, and respond more effectively to damage caused by natural disasters. With a large rural road network and a growing need for safer infrastructure, securing this funding ensures that priority projects—such as curve realignments, shoulder widening, hazard removal, and safety signage—can be delivered efficiently and sustainably. Continued support through these programs not only enhances safety for local residents and visitors but also builds greater resilience and connectivity across the shire.

Bega Valley's plan adopts the Safe System approach of safe roads, safe speeds, safe vehicles and safe people, a proven and holistic approach adopted internationally and nationally as best practice in preventing road trauma. It acknowledges that our bodies can only withstand limited forces before injury or death occurs.

We all share responsibilities for road safety. Every decision we make, from the construction of our roads and automobiles to financial decisions, legal requirements, and educational initiatives, must be made with safety in mind. Every day, every road user must act safely. We are doing a lot to make the environment safer but the death toll continues to grow and all levels of government must act now to arrest the incease in death and trauma our residents are facing on a daily basis.
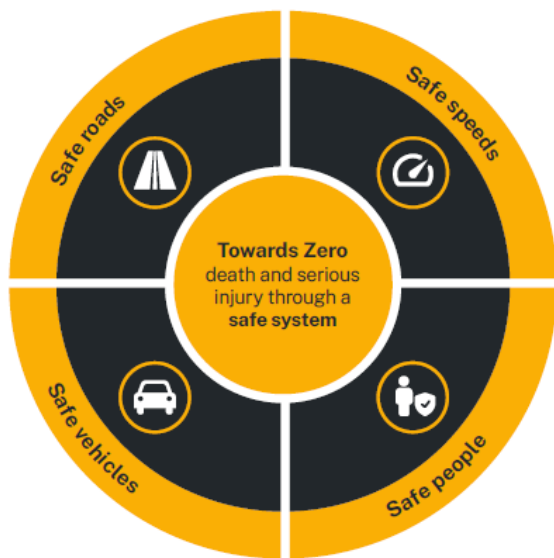
Road safety is a shared responsibility

Achieving our goal of zero trauma on NSW roads will require ongoing whole of government collaboration and support from stakeholders and every member of the NSW community.

We will also work closely with key partners and stakeholders including road safety advocates, local councils, indigenous organisations, emergency services, insurance groups, public transport providers as well as subject matter experts in education, health (drugs and alcohol), transport and logistics, and technology ensuring road safety targets are achieved. Everyone has a role to play as we work together to save lives on NSW roads.

Our strategy is in line with the Road Safety Action Plan 2026 NSW, paying particular attention to the scenario in the Bega Valley and the function of the Bega Valley Shire Council (instead of the NSW Government). We recognise that a large amount of the duty for road safety still rests with the NSW Government (e.g., Police, Ambulance and Health, car registration, setting suitable speed limits).

In addition to the Council's function as an advocate for the Bega Valley community on the state highway network, this plan defines the actions on the local and regional road network for which it bears direct responsibility as the road authority.

The important role that the Local Government Road Safety Officer Program plays through collaboration and teaching is described in this plan. This strategy recognises that the Council has little control over the financing and support received from other governmental levels in order to carry out the suggested initiatives. Council will persist in advocating for funds on behalf of our community in order to carry out the main strategies outlined in this plan.

The objective of this strategy is to enhance safety outcomes for all users of the road, including motor vehicle drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, and our employees who construct and maintain our transportation infrastructure.

Welcome to the Bega Valley

The Bega Valley Shire is a local government area located adjacent to the south-eastern coastline of New South Wales, Australia. The Shire was formed in 1981 with the amalgamation of the Municipality of Bega, Imlay Shire and Mumbulla Shire, with its name deriving from the town of Bega. The shire is also known as the Sapphire Coast for tourism and marketing purposes.

Location and background

The Traditional owners of the Shire are the communities of the Yuin-Monaro Nations. From ancient times they have been the inhabitants and custodians of the land, sea and waterways.

Land is used primarily for conservation and timber production. The next biggest land use is agriculture, particularly dairy farming. Fishing, oyster harvesting, tourism and retail are also important industries.

The main sectors of employment within the Bega Valley Shire is Health Care and Social Assistance (16%), Retail Trade (10.5%), Construction (10.2%) followed by Accommodation and Food Services (9.9%)

The Bega Valley Shire is located at the south-eastern corner of New South Wales, half-way between Australia's two largest cities, Sydney and Melbourne and three hours' drive from the nation's capital, Canberra. Our coastal fringe extends from Wallaga Lake in the north to Cape Howe and the Victorian border in the south. At over 6,200 km2, the shire is the largest local government area in coastal NSW and collectively this 225-kilometre section forms the beautiful Sapphire Coast, the heart of Australia's Coastal Wilderness.

Population

The Bega Valley Shire has a population of approx. 37,000 people (Australian Bureau of Statistics forecast 2025) which is growing at 1.57% per year.

The population consists of 18,307 males (50.9%) and 17,628 females (49.1%), with 30,559 (84.9%) members of the population aged over 15.

Bega Valley is a growing regional, residential and tourist area, it is very popular with visitors, especially during holiday times (1.02 million per year) .

The Bega Valley has a higher population of older persons compared to Regional NSW. The Bega Valley has a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (0 to 19 years = 20.1%) and a higher proportion of people in the older age groups, with the 60-69 years cohort the most common with 6,819 people.

With a median age of 52, our population is older than the rest of NSW (median age 39), but we have high levels of independence, with 47% of us fully owning our own homes, and 22% of us actively volunteering.

Our roads

The main link from Melbourne to Bega is 614.4kms via the Princes Highway (State Road) and 508.2kms from Bega to Sydney also via the Princes Highway (State Road) Bega to Canberra is 227.5km these all carry heavy vehicle traffic and freight and are favourite routes with motorcycle riders.

The local government road network is as follows, not all maintained by Council:

o   33.21% (1605km) Forestry Corporation NSW

o   28.65% (1348km) Bega Valley Shire Council

o   23.4% (1131km) National Parks & Wildlife Services

o   5.39% (260km) Crown

o   5.02% (242km) Private

o   4.33% (209km) Transport for NSW
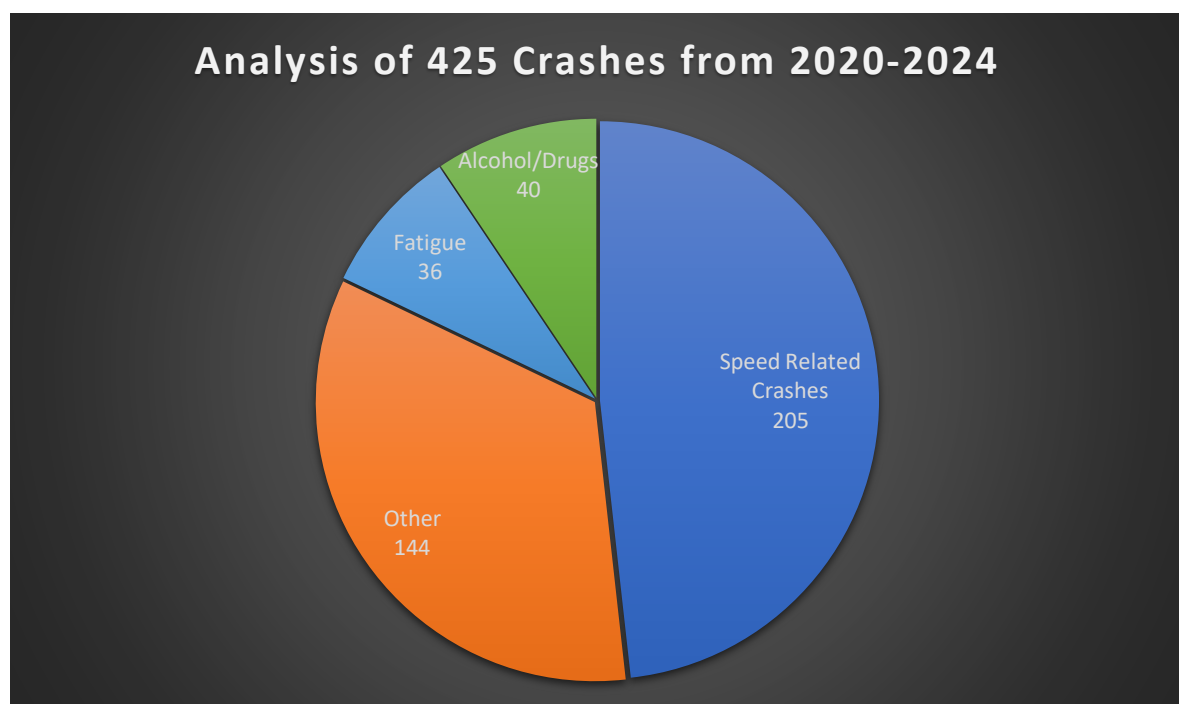
Crash data

In the Bega Valley LGA from 2020-2024 there were 425 crashes resulting in 400 casualties.

The 400 casualties were:

- 4 fatal crashes (.9%).
- 133 (31.3%) serious injuries.
- 132 (31.1%) moderate injuries.
- 40 (9.4%) minor/other injuries
The rest were tow away

Analysis of 425 Crashes from 2020-2024

Alcohol/Drugs 40
Fatigue 36
Other 144
Speed Related Crashes 205

From the above Pie Chart

- 205 (48%) crashes were related to speed
- 40 (9%) crashes were related to drug and alcohol
- 36 (9%) crashes were related to fatigue
- 144 (34%) crashes could be attributed to other known factors such as:
  - Animals on road
  - Failure to give way
  - Following too close
  - Driver distraction (mobile phone, inattention)
  - Inexperience driver
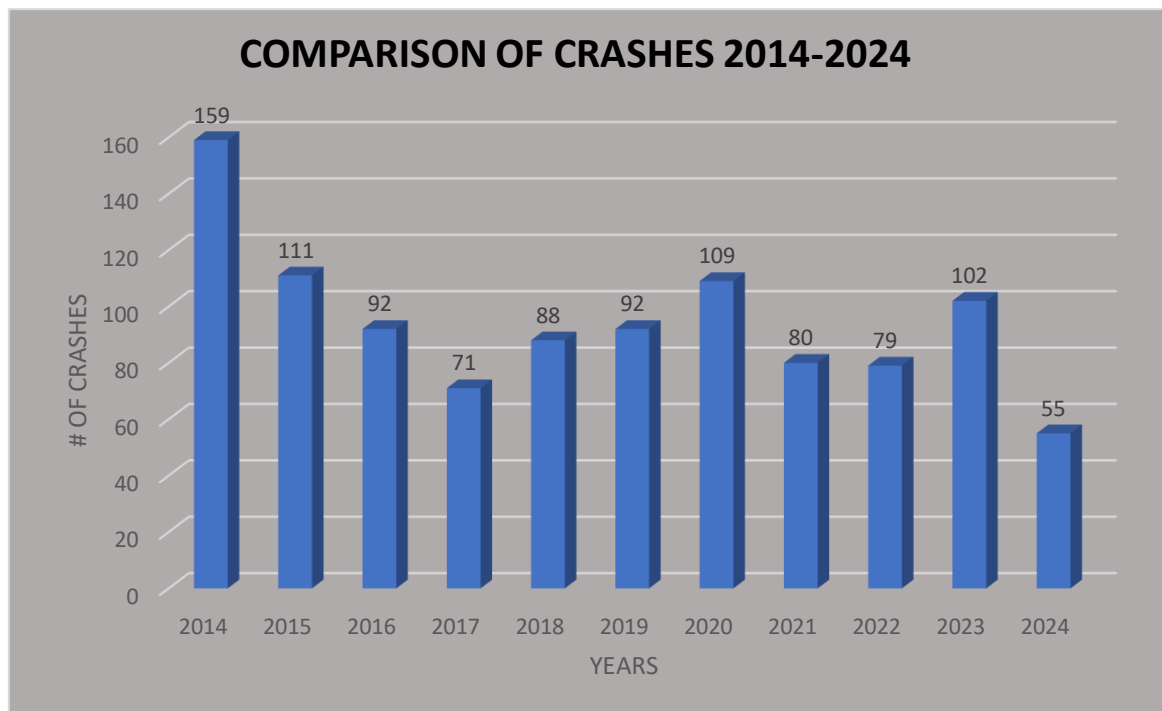
An analysis of crash data covering the 4-year period from 2020-2024, revealed the following key factors:

- Speed was a contributing factor in 205 (48%) of crashes in the 100km/h zones
- Fatigue was a contributing factor in 36 (9%) of crashes
- Single vehicle crashes account for 69.6% of all crashes
- Road surface of the majority of crashes was sealed 88.5%
- Non-Intersection locations account for 76.7% of crashes
- Car crashes account for 68.7% of all crashes
- Light truck crashes account for 24.9% of all crashes
- Motorcycle crashes account for 14.1% of all crashes
- Heavy Vehicle crashes account for 6.1% of all crashes
- Pedestrian crashes account for 0.2 % of all crashes
- Pedal cycle crashes account for 1.9% of all crashes

Crashes occurring in the 100km/h speed zone account for 205 (48%) of all crashes, 80km/h zone 77 (18.1%), 60km/h zone 34 (8.0%) and 50km/h zone 89 (21%).

Crashes on unclassified (local) roads account for 46.6% of all crashes.

From 2020-2024 Alcohol and Drug was a contributing factor in 40 crashes of 425 (9%) crashes. Trending highly with illicit drugs on the South Coast with average 7.3% across the NSW region.

The following graph indicates that the crashes are decreasing over a 10-year period in the Bega Valley.

Since the recent appointment of a dedicated Road Safety Officer (RSO), Bega Valley Shire has seen significant improvements in both road safety awareness and crash prevention efforts. The focused approach has led to the development and delivery of targeted education campaigns, community workshops, and safety initiatives addressing key risk factors such as speeding, fatigue, and impaired driving. This proactive engagement has contributed to a noticeable shift in driver behaviour and community attitudes toward road safety. While challenges remain, the coordinated efforts have strengthened partnerships with schools, local organisations, and enforcement agencies—creating a more informed and safety-conscious community across the Shire.

Current Strategies

What has Council done so far

Safe People

Since council employed a Road Safety officer in November 2023, we have targeted various road safety issues. See complete description below and **Appendix A** for a slide summary of activations.

Safety Around School

Project Description

Every day in NSW, there are more than one million students who travel to and from schools. The Safety around school's project aims to identify road safety issues around schools and provide schools with information on school road safety and possible engineering solutions. Road safety issues will be addressed in school zones as raised by schools, Rangers, Police, bus operators, key stakeholders and the community. The RSO will work with the Roads Engineer, Police, School Principals, Rangers and school communities to address speeding, parking, crossings and general road safety around schools.

In the Bega Valley LGA there are 18 primary schools and 4 high schools which include a mixture of private and public. There is also 1 TAFE in the Bega Valley LGA. With so many schools in the LGA, there are large numbers of school students travelling to and from school each day. With all this travel road safety issues can arise. The Centre for Road Safety develop ideas and practical solutions to help keep vulnerable pedestrians safe around schools, as they travel to school and home again. The RSO will make use of the TfNSW resources available and share them with the school community at relevant school term times and when an issue arises. This will include sharing of safety around schools' banners with schools during the school terms.

Rationale

In the Bega Valley in 2023, there was a fatality of a 14-year-old boy, that occurred in the school travel time periods on school days in 40km/h speed zones. Bega Valley would like to get this down to zero and keep it at zero. Council Ranger has brought attention to the issue of children who are darting across the road on foot and on bikes, without looking and barely avoiding oncoming vehicles. Our approach is to get in touch with relevant parties and spread the word to parents and kids about safety around our schools and on the streets in general.

Action taken 24/25

- RSO together with BVSC Ranger pinpointed problem schools
- Erection of large banners at various schools promoting No Parking, No Stopping and Bus Zone areas
- Leaflets were created by BVSC and supplied to schools explaining what the 'Kiss n Drop' zones, No Parking, No Stopping, Bus Zone areas mean
- Working with Little Blue Dinosaur, banners were erected in Eden, Merimbula, Tathra and Bermagui making everyone aware of children around during holiday period and the hold my hand message
- Email sent to all schools requesting they put into newsletters the message about keeping our children safe around schools
- Many social media, Facebook and Instagram posts on watching out for our kids around school zones and bus awareness flashing lights.

Road Safety Community Awareness – Road Safety Week / Month

Project description

The BVSC Road Safety Action Plan focuses on enhancing road safety education and local engagement. The Community Awareness Road Safety project provides a road safety, community awareness and educational program, highlighting and promoting National Road Safety Week and Bus Safety Week to all members of the community. The project will also involve the distribution and sharing of any quizzes, games, surveys and information from TfNSW to the relevant section/s of the community, whether this be drink/drug driving, 65+ driving age or the speed and vehicle or Active Transport quizzes within the general community. Social media posts will promote these awareness weeks using TfNSW approved campaign marketing materials for this project. The plan is to setup a table in the local shopping centre and encourage the community to join in, in games and quizzes and general knowledge questions on road rules and drink driving.

Project rationale

Promoting road safety is shared responsibility by sharing key road safety messages to the local road users and community across all demographics of the community is important for the Bega Valley as we are such a diverse community. By participating in community awareness campaigns, it helps educate and inform those of the Bega Valley. Events and community awareness campaigns in which will be targeted are: - National Road Safety Week (May 25) - Rural Road Safety Month (September 24) - Handing out the following messages: Top ten misunderstood road rules, On the Road 65+, Mobile Phones and driving, Drug and Drink Driving, Speeding and Fatigue. By participating in these the Bega Valley is enhancing road safety in the local community and working towards getting the message of Towards Zero out within the community.

Action taken 24/25.

- Constant social media, Facebook, BVSC website and Instagram posts on all aspects of Road Safety – includes, speeding, double demerits, seat belt safety, bus awareness animals on road etc
- Various Coffee with a Cop Campaign in Bega and Eden
- Numerous road safety activations in the Bega Village Centre cover all topics of road safety for both Road Safety month in September and Road Safety week in May.
- With use of chocolate wheel, we encourage the public to answer road safety questions for a spin of the wheel, to win TfNSW merchandise.

The Road Ahead 65 +

Project description

The BVSC Road Safety Action Plan recognises older road users as vulnerable road users, who due to their frailty have a greater severity rate of injury when involved in crashes. In Australia there has been growth in the older population, with people aged 65 and over in NSW estimated be 1.4 million. People are living longer and being more active, which is evident in the Bega Valley. This trend can be seen in older age groups in cycling, motorcyclists and pedestrians, not only drivers. The Road Ahead 65+ Older road-users workshops are a requirement by the Centre for Road Safety to address road safety for older road users. The Centre for Road Safety have developed a presentation to target active older drivers in the over (or near to) 65-year age group. In the Southern Region, the approach is to present to existing groups such as Retirement Villages, Probus, Rotary and Lions Clubs, Men's sheds and seniors' precincts. Our plan is to present this in a local Library, to ensure convenience to participants, as well as eliminating costs of venue hire, refreshments and promotions. As there are a large variety of groups in the Bega Valley, there is an extensive database of organisations that can be contacted. This project will align with the Bega Valley Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program Operational Plan.

Project rationale

The Bega Valley has a higher population of older persons compared to Regional NSW. The 60–69 year cohort is the most common with 6,819 people. The percentage of the community 60 years or older is 38.6% (Australian Bureau of Statistics). From 2018 to 2023 in the Bega Valley LGA, there were 501 crashes resulting in 494 casualties. From the 494 casualties, people aged 60+ were involved in crashes resulting in the following casualties: 60-69 years = 50 (12%) casualties 70+ = 50 (12%) casualties. As a motor vehicle controller, 60 -69 years olds were controlling the vehicle in 35 (8%) casualty crashes and drivers 70 years and over were controlling the vehicle in 36 (8%) casualty crashes, 5 unknown. Of these, males were the motor vehicle controller in 43 (9%) and females 33 (7%) of crashes.

Action taken 24/25:

- Presentation to 65+ Sanananda retirement village Tura Beach
- Presentation to 65+ Meals on Wheel Bega
- Presentation to 65+ Bimbimbie retirement village Merimbula
- Presentation to 65+ Uniting Church Merimbula
- Presentation to 6f5+ Mens Shed Bega
- Participated in Seniors Week – Silver Summit
- With our activation of questions and chocolate wheel we interacted with over 300 65+ participants.

Helping Learner Drivers Become Safer Drivers

Project description

One of the key priority areas of the BVSC Road Safety Action Plan is 'ensuring the safety of vulnerable and at-risk road users'. Within Australia, despite a reduction in fatalities, young drivers continue to be overrepresented in casualty crashes. The highest risk period for young drivers is when they move onto solo driving, especially the first twelve months. They are eight times more likely to be to be involved in a crash than that of a learner driver. Despite making up only 15% of all license holders, crashes involving drivers aged under 26 years of age account for nearly one quarter of annual road fatalities.

The NSW Centre for Road Safety offers free 'Helping learner drivers become safer drivers' (HLDBSD) workshops for parents and supervisors of learner drivers which are conducted throughout NSW. The workshops offer practical advice on how to help learner drivers become safer drivers and covers topics including: How to use the learner driver logbook; Planning driving sessions; How to deal with difficulties that may arise during practice; The importance of giving your learner driver constructive feedback. The workshops are organized and delivered by the RSO. This workshop will be on-line so parents and children can join in together. This is more convenient for all to attend.

Project rationale

In the Bega Valley from 2018-2022:

- 92 (22%) of motor vehicle controllers involved in casualty crashes were aged 17-25 years.
- 10 (2%) crashes involved a learner as the motor vehicle controller
- 39 (10%) of crashes involved a Provisional P1 driver as the motor vehicle controller
- 26 (6%) of crashes involved a Provisional P2 driver as the motor vehicle controller
- 55 (28%) of motor vehicle controllers aged 17-25 years were speeding
- 7 (1.5%) of motor vehicle controllers aged 17-25 years were potentially fatigued noting 5 of these MVC's were male and 2 were female.
- 30 MVC's were male and 10 were female

Actions taken 24/25

- RSO assisted in presenting "The I in Drive" presentation at RYDA – Rotary Youth Driver Awareness. It's a three-day program designed to educate young drivers and their passengers on road safety, aiming to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on the roads by improving awareness of factors that can cause crashes. Total of 18 session over 3 days attended by high schools all over south coast including Eden and Pambula.
- June 2024 – On-line HLDBSD
- April 2025 – On-line HLDBSD

Survive The Ride – Motorcycle Awareness

Project description

This project proposes to address motorcycle safety through a FREE 3 hour 'Survive the Ride' workshop.
The workshops are designed for both new and potential riders along with those just wanting a refresher course which focus on.
The key decisions for managing the common challenges for motorcyclists on the road such as:
- Cornering, riding in groups/traffic and staying alert.

- The various elements of riding posture for each type of bike – cruisers, sports, scooters, etc.
- Reducing personal risks, acknowledging the little mistakes and making a plan to avoid them in the future.

Project rationale

Between 2018 and 2022, on South Coast roads stretching from Helensburgh in the north and Bega in the South, there were 707 (35 less than the previous period 2017-2021) motorcyclist crashes resulting in 534 casualties. Of these casualties, 254 (47%) were seriously injured and 13 (2.5%) were sadly killed. Of all crashes (5,894) on South Coast roads, motorcycle crashes represent 12.5%.

Action taken 24/25

- November 2023 – Workshop at the Merimbula RSL
- June 2024 – Workshop at the Merimbula RSL
- The above workshops are presented by ex RSO Officers and members of [The Survive The Ride Association NSW](#).

Plan B – Drink Driving campaign

Project description

Educating the community to understand the increased risk of drinking and arriving home safely. That can be related to at least 40 crashes in Bega Valley Shire over a 4-year period. The Win a Swag Competition will be held during December 2023/January 2024 for 8-10 venues on the South Coast. Our venues are very supportive of this program and request to participate each year.

Project rationale

Alcohol affects the brain, reducing the ability to think clearly, make good decisions, and coordinate movements. This impairment starts at even low levels of Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) and worsens as BAC increases. This program will remind the community to understand the increased risk of drinking under the influence and arriving home safely.

Action taken 24/25

- RSO approached 12 clubs and pubs around the shire
- 10 of the clubs/pubs participated in the Plan B – Win a Swag competition
- Each venue received T-Shirts, bar runners, beer coasters, entry forms, entry boxes etc and request that the patrons write their Plan B option rather than driving home.
- Promotion goes for 2 months, and winner is randomly picked by a manager and they win a swag.

Summary of all activations
Safer Roads

Council actively partners with State and Federal Government in securing external grant funds to improve its existing road infrastructure. Many of the grant outcomes include additional road safety features aimed at improving road safety over and above what pre-existed. A list of some relevant road safety and infrastructure renewal initiatives are listed following.

Successful Grants:
2020

Regional Road Repair	Cobargo Bermagui Road
Regional Road Repair	Mount Darragh Road
Fixing Local Roads R2	Kameruka Lane

2022

Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program	Arthur Kaine Drive
Regional Housing	Boundary Road
Fixing Country Bridges R1	14 bridges, various locations
Fixing County Bridges R2A and R2B	6 bridges, various locations

2023

Roads to Recovery 22/23	Back Creek Road
Roads to Recovery 22/23	Hosies Road
Roads to Recovery 22/23	Illawong Heights
Roads to Recovery 22/23	Lookout Lane

Roads to Recovery 22/23	Meringo Street
Roads to Recovery 22/23	Widgeram Road
Roads to Recovery 22/23	Yowrie Road

2023

Fixing Local Roads R4	Nethercote Road
Fixing Local Road Pothole Repair	Various Roads
Black Spot / Safer Roads	Sapphire Coast Drive
LLS Marine Estate Management Strategy	Hunters Road
Infrastructure Betterment Fund	Nethercote Road
Flood Recovery & Resilience 22/23	Merimbula/Fishpen Road
Flood Recovery & Resilience 22/23	Boundary and Newtown Road
Regional Road Repair	Wallaga Lake Road

2024

| Black Spot / Safer Roads 24/25 | Candelo-Bega Road, Candelo |
| Get Active NSW 24/25 | Beach Street Missing Link - Design |

Council as a road manager also facilitates local network access for heavy vehicles in partnership with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and actively assesses individual permits to manage impacts to community safety, amenity and infrastructure damage and applies conditions (or refuses access) accordingly.

Council is also actively undertaking renewals of key road and bridge infrastructure that also improves road safety for all road users.

Council has adopted and is implementing recommendations from its Active Transport Strategy and Merimbula Transport Study that incorporates Movement and Place framework considerations and road user safety improvements that include slow speed zones, addressing missing shared path links and improved urban design for accessibility and active transport modes.

Council also facilitates a Local Traffic Committee under delegation from TfNSW and works in partnership with TfNSW, NSW Police and the local MP representative in discussing and recommendation actions to resolve relevant road safety issues for formal consideration by Council.

Council also regularly allocates budget for road safety audit and safe system assessments of its road network and the information is used to informed network planning.

What our Partners have done so far?

Safe Speeds

The regulation of speed zones lies with TfNSW. Speed reductions in the Bega Valley during the period of 2020-2024 were implemented to improve safety and address community concerns following TfNSW speed zone reviews and Council commissioned road safety audits and safe systems assessments. These changes included reductions on various roads, such as Tathra-Bermagui Road, the Princes Highway and others, with some speed limits lowered from 100km/h to 80km/h or even 60km/h.

Below is a more detailed summary of some of the changes:
- **Newtown Road, Bega:** Speed limits were reduced from 60km/h-50km/h
- **Towamba Road, Towamba:** Speed limits were reduced from 100km/h-80km/h
- **Tathra Road, Kalaru:** Speed limits were reduced in 3 sections from 60km/h-50km/h and 2 sections 80km/h-60km/h.
- **Tathra-Bermagui Road:** Speed limits were reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h on a 6km stretch at Cuttagee and a 2.9km stretch at Tanja. At Nelson, the limit was reduced from 80km/h to 60km/h.
- **Princes Highway:** A 2km section near South Bega was reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h due to crash history and intersection safety concerns.
- **Landing Road, Broadwater:** Speed limits were reduced to 50km/h from the Princes Highway intersection and 20km/h in the carpark. Broadwater Road also had its speed limit reduced to 50km/h.
- **West Kameruka Road:** A 12.2km section was reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h due to heavy vehicle usage and poor alignment.
- **Mogilla Road:** A 17.4km stretch from the Snowy Mountains Highway to Kemps Lane was reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h. A further section from Kemps Lane to Quinn Lane was reduced from 80km/h to 60km/h.
- **Tathra Road, Bega:** The existing 60 km/h zone was extended eastbound for 440 meters to just south of the Boundary Road intersection.
- **Princes Highway, Brogo:** A 5.9km section was reduced from 90 km/h to 80 km/h.
- **Lake Street, Merimbula:** Speed limit reduced on Wyeebo Street from 50km/h to 40km/h Safe Vehicles
- **Arthur Kaine Drive, Merimbula:** Speed limit reduced from 90km/h to 70km/h
- **Sapphire Coast Drive, Wallagoot:** Speed limit reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h
- **Tilba Road, Wallaga Lake:** Speed default limit of 100km/h was reduced to 50km/h
- **Wallaga Lake Road:** Speed limit was reduced from 100km/h to 80km/h
- **Pambula Beach Road:** Speed limit was reduced from 80km/h to 60km/h
- **Monaro Street, Pambula:** Speed limit reduced from 80km/h to 50km/h

TfNSW and NHVR implement the relevant regulatory licensing and vehicle approval programs to ensure safe vehicles are using all types of road networks.

Future Strategies

What are Council doing for the next financial year

Safe People

Bega Valleys Road Safety Officer together with TFNSW have a number of activations through the 2025/2026 year, they are as follows:

Community and Workplace Road Safety

By participating in community awareness campaigns, it is helping to educate and inform those of the Bega Valley. Events and community awareness campaigns in which will be targeted are: -

- National Road Safety Week (May 26)
- Rural Road Safety Month (September 25)
- Encouraging the following messages: Top ten misunderstood road rules, Senior drivers 65+, Mobile Phones, speeding, fatigue, Drug and Drink Driving By participating in these the Bega Valley is enhancing road safety in the local community and working towards getting the message of Towards Zero out within the community.
- We have over 180 fleet cars just within Council, to target these drivers for Safer Driver Behaviour will be a quite a majority of drivers on our roads. Working with fleet Managers to get messages in all Depots via leaflets, posters and online surveys.
- Collaborate with Clean Away trucks promoting and supplying the SARAH Road Safety Stickers to display on all vehicles, this will include media release.
- Purchase a VMS board and working with NSW Police to monitor speeding problem areas around the shire.

Safety Around Schools and Playgrounds

- Encourage better practice implementing ideas and practices in and around schools, school zones and playgrounds. Includes No Stopping and No Parking and hold my hand children safety.
- Provide up to date information on RSO activations to Principals, teachers and all staff via newsletters etc.
- Promote in school zones and playground areas encourage the SLOW DOWN and hold my hand in and around children and the meaning of No Stopping and No Parking.
- Promote and encourage the use of Safety around schools and playgrounds including parking information via large banners and signage. All playgrounds will be signed with Hold My Hand signage, so kids aren't running out or into playgrounds alone.
- Emailing schools information for newsletters
- Toblerone signage at all schools reminding them were 'Kiss n Drop', watch out for kids and No Stopping/ No Parking.

- Social media posts each term reminding parents to watch for kids, be bus aware and slow down when kids around.

Pop-Up Pedal Park Pilot Program

- Working with Eden community and parents teaching children road safety when riding bikes, balance and avoiding obstacles riding to school, playgrounds and shared paths.

- Work with local community groups and Community Centres, parents and grandparents to address drivers to look out for kids on bikes and teaching children the basic rules around speed, parking, crossings and general road safety around schools, playgrounds and car parks. By teaching the importance of balance, road rules, helmets, bright colours and awareness while riding a bike, will help us reach our goal.

- Work with Community groups to create awareness of speed around areas where children ride and play.

- This Pop-Up Pedal Park Pilot Program will be held on 11/12 April at Eden Skate Park. This will be a fantastic family fun event and determine on whether this is something the community would want permanently or not. Working with staff in Get Active NSW and connectivity with schools and riding to school, this will be a great program for reporting in future grants.

On The Road 65+

- This program is targeting the older generation on when it's time to retire from driving and making them aware of changes in their health and possible living circumstances.

- We encourage older drivers to think about using alternatives to driving and Increase awareness of other transportation. Increase awareness of trip planning, driving, walking, riding, public transport etc

- We also encourage local On-Demand bus representative to attend these presentations.

- We have already delivered 2 of these this financial year and have had requests for more already this year.

Caravan Weigh Day

There have been 4 caravan related crashes in the Bega LGA between 2019-2023 and another 5 that were trailers.

- Educate caravan users towing a caravan that they should understand their allowable limits and how to load and weigh their caravan.

- Reiterate the need to understand safe towing speeds, stopping distances and how towing can affect the safety of themselves and others while driving.

- The event includes an informal education session before each loaded vehicle and caravan was placed on portable scales to confirm weight and a detailed report was provided to participant.

- Encourage caravan weighing prior to heading home.

- Have conversations about fatigue, possible free camps along the way and distractions

Helping learner drivers become safer drivers

- On-line workshop for supervisors of learner drivers and carers and anyone involved with teaching children to drive

- Conduct GLS workshops - research best strategies for education PPT presentation, TfNSW (if applicable). Creative asset collateral

- Point out the difference in speeding even a few km's over. Show videos of TfNSW campaigns ie: speeding ads

- Advise that there are speed limits and default speed limits, but to always drive to conditions.

- Make sure they acknowledge when they are fatigued or don't feel right and listen to your mind.

- Show the ANCAP website and how to use.

- All the tips and tricks on becoming a safe driver.

Plan B – Drink Driving campaign

- Promotion of this Plan B will educate people to think about what their Plan B is. Not only for themselves but for their friends they are drinking with.

- By implementing the Plan B campaign, we are educating not only the public but the publicans to make drinkers aware of the possible consequence when drink driving, and how a small decision," **Plan B**", can make.

- Educating that this can make a huge difference in not only possibly their family but anyone else's family. Let's all work together on getting them home safe.

- Together working on keeping our roads Safe.

Survive The Ride

- The key decisions for managing the common challenges for motorcyclists on the road such as cornering, riding in groups/traffic and staying alert.

- The various elements of riding posture for each type of bike – cruisers, sports, scooters, etc.

- Reducing personal risks, acknowledging the little mistakes and making a plan to avoid them in the future.

- Plan a workshop at the Merimbula RSL

- The above workshops are presented by ex RSO Officers and members of [The Survive The Ride Association NSW](#).

Safe Roads

Council has applied to the following grant programs during 2024/25 for the identified infrastructure projects to improve road safety for a range of road users:

Australian Blackspot Program 2025/26

- Tathra Road, Jellat Jellat – Safety upgrade

Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program (SLRIP)

Tranche 3

- Boundary Road/Tathra Road, Bega intersection upgrade
- Lake Street connectivity, Merimbula

During 2025/26 Council is proposing grant applications for the following projects

SLRIP Tranche 4

- Cusack's Creek Armco culvert replacement

Recommendations Interventions to reduce road trauma in regional NSW caused by speeding, fatigue, drink and drug driving.

In the Bega Valley Shire Between 2020-2024 there were 425 crashes / 400 casualties – roughly 4.5% of all regional crashes, with a total of 4 fatalities. Unfortunately, this has increased dramatically in recent months with 9 deaths on State and Local roads with in the LGA during 24/25, one of which occurred during the drafting of this document. Of these recent deaths driver behaviour was the main contributing factor (primarily speeding and fatigue) with nothing specifically attributable to road condition or an unsafe road environment noting that all roads could be engineered into a safer environment. It is

In summary, an analysis of crash data covering the 4-year period from 2020-2024, revealed the following key factors in the Bega Valley Shire.

1. Speeding is a primary causal factor
2. Car crashes account for 292(68.7%) of all crashes
3. Road surface of the majority of crashes was sealed 88%
4. Crashes occurring in the 100km/h speed zone account for 204 (48%) of all crashes, followed by the 50km/h zone 89(21%), 80km/h zone 77 (18.1%) and 60km/h zone 34(8%).
5. Pedestrian crashes 1 (.25) and Pedal Cycle crashes 8(1.9%)
6. Alcohol and Drug was a contributing factor in 6.6% of crashes. Trending highly with illicit drugs on the South Coast with average 7.3% across the NSW region.

It is vital to continue education and driver behaviour awareness and road safety programs that target high risk age groups and continue to promote what really can happen if you speed, drink drive and microsleep.

In addition to the above, a continued lack of affordable and accessible public transport options in the Bega Valley Shire remains a key challenge, particularly on weekends. Consideration should be given to.
- Support entertainment and dining venues to run courtesy buses and extend collection points
- Advocacy and funding to regional bus operators to increase services

- Subsidised support for public transport operators
- Implement funding for Night Rider Bus Eden-Merimbula – Bega x 2 or 3 buses

Although on demand services contribute positively to the community particularly for the 65+ age range during midweek. This service alone does not alleviate the lack of public transport options.

Improving road safety on rural roads is vital to reducing serious crashes and saving lives. One key area of focus is enhancing visibility and driver awareness through targeted infrastructure upgrades. Installing street lighting at critical points such as intersections, bends, and known high-risk areas can greatly improve night-time driving conditions. Solar-powered warning lights for sharp curves or narrow bridges offer a sustainable and cost-effective way to alert drivers of upcoming hazards. The addition of illuminated audio tactile line marking (ATLM) can further support safer travel by providing visual and audible cues when vehicles drift from the lane, particularly in low-light or foggy conditions. These installations, combined with other low-cost, high-impact treatments, create a safer driving environment for all road users across rural areas.

Response to the Inquiry and Audit Report findings

Council provides commentary to the inquiry and audit report findings below:

Page 3 Executive Summary Conclusion

- If the bulk of deaths are in the regional areas, then that is where proportionally more funds should be directed. This seems disproportionate and disadvantageous to regional communities where the impacts and trauma of road related deaths can often be more greatly felt due to the smaller population sizes of communities.
- Agree that a review of the Local Government Road Safety Program outcomes is required in determining effectiveness in reducing road trauma and deaths.
- Disagree with the Transport for NSW one-size-fits-all approach at State level. Since the large proportion of deaths are in regional areas, regional based strategies are required to address the over-representation of road trauma and road related death impacts on regional communities. A proposal would be to integrate regional Road Safety Action Plans into the regional Integrated Transport Plans for holistic overview of transport and road safety improvements.
- Where mobile speed cameras are purported to have a safety focus, then revenue should be directed back to road safety programs noting the disproportionate amount of funding allocated to metropolitan areas where actual numbers of road fatalities are less. A greater proportion should be directed to regional communities where fatalities are overrepresented.
- Streamline and re-allocate the flow of funds from the Community Road Safety Fund to regional areas where the trauma and fatalities are over-represented and have systems in place to report on the allocation of funds between regional and metropolitan areas.

Page 5 Key Findings

- Have regional road safety plans and targets that are lower than State level so that funds can be directed appropriately to the areas of greatest representation of fatalities. Integrating a regional level road safety plan in the suite of Regional Strategic Integrated Transport Plans is an opportunity. The current State level targets in line with other jurisdictions skew results and do not address the imbalance of deaths and trauma in regional areas.

- Review and adjust the funding terms in the Local Government Road Safety program such that the 50/50 contribution is real and not exclusive of on-costs, vehicle and hardware costs which places a greater burden on Local Government and therefore is a disincentive to Local Government to participate.
- The Local Government Road Safety Program plays an important part in developing Safe People principles through education programs in the Safe Systems Approach however is just one of 4 elements in a Safe System. Safe Roads, Safe Vehicles and Safe Speeds are the other key elements that require input/funding/addressing in a holistic fashion to reduce road trauma and fatalities. Greater funding is required by local government to address Safe Roads issues since many local governments are constrained in being able to raise own source revenue to address infrastructure backlog regardless of safety improvements. Therefore, the advent or reliance upon grant programs is important in achieving local goals.
- Speed zoning standards have changed the way speed zone reductions are assessed and applied. There is also some imbalance as to how these are implemented through key grant programs and then the media surrounding the speed zone reduction managed. Council can report on more than one occasion deflective media towards Council has occurred when TfNSW are the speed zone regulator in NSW to then manage any community backlash over speed zone reduction. Further on occasion, when Council has applied to grant programs including Safer Roads or Blackspot and recommended a speed zone reduction as part of a suite of measures only for the grant to be deemed unsuccessful, TfNSW later then undertook a speed zone reduction on the relevant section of road without providing relevant grant funding and then left Council to manage any negative community sentiment. This creates again disadvantage to local regional communities that may have benefited from the additional grant funding to address the other safe system pillar of Safe Roads where the funds could be applied. Consequently, in this situation, only the Safe Speeds element of the Safe System was addressed.

Page 6 Key findings

- Council agrees that TfNSW should undertake a systematic review of its road safety strategies and plans such that road trauma and fatalities in regional NSW can be better addressed and regional areas less disadvantaged.

Page 7 Key findings

- Council agrees that a considered plan to address the Community Road Safety Fund underspend is required to address the over-representation of road fatalities in regional NSW.

Page 10 Road classification and ownership

- Funding underspends from the Community Road Safety Fund should be targeted to local government particularly those in regional areas since they have the biggest road networks, often small populations and therefore small rate base to provide funds for road and safety improvements which are often considered expansionary costs over a relatively large asset base to small revenue base.

Page 11 Road classification and ownership

- Whilst the deferral of the Regional Road Transfer and re-classification program provided some initial injection to repair local roads in regional areas, the re-instatement of the program in the long term is beneficial to local government to imbalance in managing large road networks with limited source income to address the revenue or existing infrastructure backlog

imbalance. Applying existing own source revenue to a smaller network may provide an avenue to better initiate or complete safety outcomes where the infrastructure is often considered expansionary cost.

Page 12 Road Safety Plans and Strategies

- There is the opportunity to cascade the NSW Road Safety Action Plan 2022-2026 and subsequent plans down to regional levels to address the over-representation of road fatalities in regional areas. This could be achieved by creating a regional Road Safety Action plan as part of the regional Integrated Transport Plans to incorporate road safety elements in a Safe System approach.

Page 13 Definitions of regional NSW

- A per capita FSI (Fatal and Serious Injury) measure divided between metropolitan and regional areas may be a useful measure to adequately address the dis-proportionate funds not flowing to regional communities where fatalities are over-represented.

Page 17 Fatalities and Serious Injuries on roads in Regional NSW

- Council is concerned with the audit findings that the proportion of fatalities in regional NSW has largely remain unchanged since 2012 despite the value of the Community Road Safety Fund. Steps are required to address the reported backlog of underspend in the fund for regional communities to reduce the disadvantage to regional communities despite recent State level plans and strategies. It appears the current State level framework has not proved effective or beneficial to regional NSW.

Page 18 Fatalities and Serious Injuries on roads in Regional NSW

- Council raises concern regarding the imbalance of fatalities in regional NSW as shown by TfNSW own data, but funding and programs are not proportionly targeted to regional NSW to address the imbalance of road fatalities compared to metropolitan areas.

Page 19 Fatalities and Serious Injuries on roads in Regional NSW

- Balance is needed to integrate safety outcomes from lower Safer Speeds versus the high economic productivity related with an efficient freight task on key road corridors. Whilst lower speeds can reduce road fatalities, they could also induce greater fatigue when travelling long distances as is common in regional areas. Hence the need to integrate safety, productivity and strategic transport outcomes at a regional level in any Integrated Transport Plans.

Page 22 Fatalities and Serious Injuries on roads in Regional NSW

- Council agrees with the funding of reduced road safety outcomes related to increased distance from hospitals and reduced mobile coverage. Council advocates for improved mobile coverage in regional areas so that contact with first responders is more secure and may reduce response time to road trauma locations potentially improving outcomes and reducing fatalities to regional communities. This is another measure to reduce regional social disadvantage.

Page 23, 2.1 Road Safety targets

- Council advocates for regional targets below State level since the report findings indicate that the majority of fatalities occur in regional areas. The State level targets skew the performance reporting, funding allocation and strategy aims. The current framework is disadvantageous to regional communities as indicated by the report findings since the majority of fatalities are in regional areas. Greater road safety effectiveness could be achieved by monitoring and targeting funding to the relevant regional areas consequently.

Page 25, 2 .1 Road Safety targets

- There may be benefit somehow through regulation changes to enhance the increase of matched data relative to unmatched data providing greater data certainty upon which to better inform decisions and strategic planning.

Page 26, 2.2 Tailoring road safety initiatives for regional NSW

- Council agrees with the report finding that implementation of regional road safety plans would benefit regional communities and reduce the over-representation of regional road fatalities, and that good strategy effectively targets risk. The report findings and data indicate that the highest risk is in regional areas as evidenced by the over-representation of regional fatalities.

Page 39, 3.1 Data sources to manage road safety

- Council welcomes the use of non-government data sources to promote pro-active decision making such as AusRAP. The inclusion of AusRAP data in recent Safer Roads and Black Spot grant assessment programs has proved beneficial to Council. During 2019-2020, Council partnered with Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) and undertook an AusRAP rating some 400km of its sealed road network. The data has been useful for not only targeting road safety activities and effort but useful in securing grant funding to address identified road safety issues strategically due to limited resources and funding.

Page 40 Validation of data from other NSW Government agencies

- Council welcomes the effective TfNSW data validation and security processes

Page 42 Accountability for road safety

- Council advocates for additional tier of road safety strategy and programs at a regional level to address the imbalance of regional fatalities so that strategy and resources are targeted at the area of greatest need. Local Governments are constrained and impacted by cost shifting from higher levels of government to maintain its existing asset base regardless of road safety improvements which often increase the asset base. As previously indicated in Council's submission, the additional tier could be integrated into the regional TfNSW Integrated Transport Plans. From the audit report data, it appears apparent the existing 3-tiered system has been unable to address the over-representation of regional fatalities. Addressing the delivery of the Community Road Safety Fund underspend may be a funding avenue to address the imbalance of fatalities between regional and metropolitan areas.

Page 48, 4.2 Governance

- Council advocates for consolidated public reporting on total road safety funding allocated to regional NSW to increase accountability and effective action monitoring to address the over-

representation of regional fatalities. This may assist addressing underspend in the Community Road Safety Fund.