

Submission
No 7

INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE MAA AND THE MAC - EIGHTH REVIEW

Organisation: Safety and Policy Analysis International
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Date received: 23/08/2007

SPAI
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Hon. Christine Robertson MLC
Chairperson
Standing Committee on Law and Justice
Legislative Council of New South Wales
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
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Attention: Mr John Young, Principal Council Officer

Dear Christine,

I refer to the current review by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice on the exercise of the functions of the Motor Accidents Authority and the Motor Accidents Council, and particularly to the findings and recommendations made by the Committee in a previous review (the seventh review) in 2006 that relate to road safety matters.

I have for several years served in a voluntary capacity as the Vice-President and Secretary for the New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety. All members of the Chapter executive serve in a voluntary capacity.

I have only just become aware of the current review by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice, and it is appropriate therefore that my comments should be considered as a personal view, and not necessarily the view of the full executive of the New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety. I believe, however, that my colleagues on the chapter executive would support my comments had they had the opportunity to do so.

The New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety regards the Motor Accidents Authority as a very important partner.

The Motor Accidents Authority provides a grant to the New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety, on annual application, to assist the chapter to support individuals and organizations working in the road safety and road injury prevention areas in New South Wales. The chapter conducts a program of seminars and conferences to provide professional development and education to road safety workers in New South Wales. Typically, four seminars and conferences are scheduled each year.

The New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety develops its annual program of activities to align with the published road safety strategic priorities of Motor Accidents Authority (target groups of children 0-16 years, youth 17-25 years, pedestrians, and motorcyclists). The chapter also schedules seminars, when the opportunity arises, to take advantage of visiting scholars and road safety professionals who have indicated that they are willing to discuss road safety research, policies and programs.

The grant from the Motor Accidents Authority to the New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety has been \$5,000/year in 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007. The grant allows the organisation of seminars and conferences on road safety topics that attract a wide range of road safety professionals.

The grant allows facilitates the seminars and conferences to be offered free or at low cost. The seminars and conferences are held in Sydney, typically at an accessible CBD location.

Grant funds are only expended on expenses associated with the conduct of seminars and conferences (including venue costs, catering, and printing expenses).

A feature of the seminar and conference program is the involvement of keynote speakers from jurisdictions outside of New South Wales, including, where possible, international speakers. Over 2004-2007, speakers have been from the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States of America, China, India, and Vietnam, as well as interstate speakers. It is important to note that the grant from the Motor Accidents Authority is not used to fund overseas travel costs, but the chapter will on occasion reimburse part of the accommodation cost associated with a speaker staying over in Sydney during a visit to Australia.

The New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety provides a biannual report to the Motor Accidents Authority, reporting on each seminar or conference, the speakers and topics, number of attendees, and overall cost of the seminar or conference.

The New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety also submits its proposed program of seminar and conference activities to the Motor Accidents Authority for comment and concurrence. There is also regular discussion between members of the chapter executive and staff of the Motor Accidents Authority about opportunities that arise to augment the seminar and conference program.

The New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety works closely with the Professional Association of Road Safety Officers, the peak body representing local council road safety officers in New South Wales, but also forms specific partnerships for seminars and conferences activities on road safety issues, as the opportunity arises. These partnerships facilitate information sharing and

professional development among road safety workers. Partnering organisations over 2005-2007 have also included the STAYSAFE Committee, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Australia France Association for Science and Technology, the Biomedical Panel of the Society of Engineers Australia, the NSW Office of Ageing, the Australian Automobile Association, NRMA Motoring & Services, Monash University Accident Research Centre, and the George Institute for International Health.

The seminars and conferences over 2004-2007 (to date) have covered a diversity of road safety topics, including:

- World Health Day forum— New South Wales launch of the World Health Organisation global report on road trauma prevention (Wednesday 7 April 2004)
- Graduated driver licensing
- Motorcycle safety
- Developments in vehicle technology
- Street furniture and road safety
- Older driver licensing and ageing
- International conference on driver distraction
- Young drivers at risk
- Repeat drink driving offenders and unlicensed drivers
- International conference on global issues in road trauma
- Parental involvement in young driver safety
- Children and road safety
- Road safety and planning in transport and urban design
- Current Australian initiatives in international road safety
- Intelligent speed adaptation in Australia
- International conference on road safety for infants, children and young people (included special sessions on the UN Global Road Safety Week 2007, the NRMA-Westmead Youth Road Trauma Forum, and the safety of infants and children in passenger cars)

These seminars and conferences have provided the opportunity for the public release and discussion of the outcomes of many projects funded and supported by the Motor Accidents Authority.

Registrants for the seminars typically number 20-60 people, while registrants for the international conferences number 90-150 people. Seminar papers may be published on occasion (singly or as a proceedings). The proceedings of the international conferences organised by the New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety are published after full academic review. For example:

- I am editing the proceedings of the recent international conference on road safety for infants, children and young people, held 2-3 August 2007 at Parliament House, Sydney.
- STAYSAFE 70 (2006). Local to global perspectives on road safety. Proceedings of the 4th meeting of Australasian Parliamentary road safety committees and Ministerial nominees, Parliament House, Sydney, Monday 3 April 2006 and

Tuesday 4 April 2006. (I.J. Faulks, Ed.)

- STAYSAFE 67 (2006). Driver distraction: Proceedings of an international conference on distracted driving, Sydney, Australia, 2-3 June 2005. (I.J. Faulks, M. Regan, M. Stevenson, J. Brown, A. Porter, J.D. Irwin, Eds.)

I believe that the Motor Accidents Authority is a very effective and well-run organisation, and it functions efficiently in meeting its statutory road safety legislative responsibilities and conducting actions under its injury prevention strategy. The provision of a grant to assist the New South Wales chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety to conduct professional development and education activities for road safety workers (and others interested in road safety and road injury prevention) is a valuable and effective means of enhancing road safety activities in New South Wales.

I generally endorse the findings and recommendations made by the Committee in a previous review (the seventh review) in 2006 that relate to road safety matters, and agree with the government response on those road safety matters which was recently forwarded to you by the Hon. John Della Bosca MLC.

By way of background, I am a behavioural scientist with over 20 years professional experience in transportation safety and workplace safety. I am a partner with Safety and Policy Analysis International, a trans-Pacific company operating transportation safety, alcohol and drug, and youth consultancies. From 1991-2006, I was affiliated with the New South Wales Parliament, as the Director of the STAYSAFE Committee (the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety), where I was responsible for the direction of the investigative and research activities of the Committee as well as management and procedural aspects of the Committee. I was also privileged to be invited to present the keynote opening speech at the Motor Accidents Authority's pedestrian seminar, Sydney, 24 May 2002.

Thank you for the opportunity of making comment to the review by the Standing Committee on Law and Justice of the exercise of the functions of the Motor Accidents Authority and the Motor Accidents Council.

Yours sincerely,

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23 August 2007