

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Roads and Road Safety



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TACKLING TRAUMA AS VICTORIANS RETURN TO THE ROADS

As Victorians begin to move around the state for the festive season and COVIDSafe Summer, the Andrews Labor Government has unveiled a new strategy to eliminate deaths on our roads in the years to come.

Victoria's Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 aims to halve deaths and significantly reduce injuries by 2030 and sets Victoria on the path towards zero road deaths by 2050.

Despite the reduced traffic due to the pandemic, more than 200 people have lost their lives on Victorian roads this year – heartbreaking for families, friends and communities. The new Strategy will focus on embedding a strong culture of road safety across our state, supporting road users to make safe choices as we progressively reduce fatalities on our roads.

This includes a dedicated focus on the issues we know are driving our state's road toll: driver behaviour including speed and distraction, greater support for vulnerable road users and those who use the road as part of their work, addressing unsafe vehicles, high-risk roads and intersections, and greater emphasis on post-crash care.

The Labor Government is already investing more than \$720 million over coming years to keep Victorians safe on the roads, including more than \$100 million to deliver the infrastructure that will protect vulnerable road users like cyclists and pedestrians.

Over the life of the Strategy, the Government will roll out new initiatives to deter risky behaviour on our roads through a series of action plans the first of which will be released in 2021. A further investment of \$45.9 million is being made to deliver a number of priority initiatives and reforms that will make our roads safer.

Distracted drivers are a growing danger, with mobile phone use the main driver behind the increase in crashes. The number of Victorians not wearing a seatbelt – one of the simplest ways to stay safe – is also a concern.

It's why, under the Strategy, the Labor Government is investing \$35 million to deliver a fleet of new generation AI-enabled camera systems, utilising high-resolution cameras with image processing and machine learning software that can detect illegal mobile phone use, the absence of seatbelts and other offences. A trial of these state-of-the-art cameras was conducted in July this year and work on the full rollout will now commence to ensure the cameras are operational on our roads by 2023.

In an extra boost for driver safety, the Labor Government is already delivering a 75 per cent increase in mobile speed camera enforcement to catch dangerous drivers on our roads.

We know that 38 per cent of crashes occur on high-speed rural roads – so the Strategy will continue to roll out life-saving infrastructure like rumble strips and wire rope barriers throughout regional Victoria.

Young and older drivers are also over-represented in crash data, and alongside new education campaigns to target risky behaviour among those groups, we'll pilot programs to support them to access safer vehicles – particularly for those living in regional Victoria. This includes a pilot program to help at-risk cohorts that will replace up to 1,000 older, unsafe vehicles with safer replacements.

This year has laid bare the inequalities for those working in the gig economy, and delivery drivers and riders are increasingly overrepresented in road incidents. The Strategy will work alongside these workers, delivery services, and other road users to trial education and safety initiatives for this sector.

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The focus on those who use the roads for work will also see work commence on reforming the heavy vehicle licensing system to improve safety and meet the needs of our growing freight industry.

The Strategy will also bring partners together from across government to develop new interventions to prevent repeat offending on our roads – tackling drink and drug drivers, as well as those at high risk of repeat high-level speeding.

Supporting the new Strategy, the TAC's new hard-hitting road safety campaign is also rolling out across the state from today, entitled 'The Lucky Ones Get Caught'.

The campaign, which includes a graphic and emotive M+ execution, reaches across television, radio, social and digital, and highlights the dangers of speed and driver distraction – and the need for all of us to stay safe this festive season.

The development of the Road Safety Strategy has been led by Road Safety Victoria in close collaboration with Victoria's Road Safety Partners – the Transport Accident Commission, Victoria Police, the Department of Justice and Community Safety and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Victoria's Road Safety Strategy can be found here: <https://transport.vic.gov.au/about/governance/reporting>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

"I won't accept that someone not making it home to their family is an inevitable part of using our roads – it's why we're making the investments to reduce the heartbreak that too many Victorian families still experience."

"This Strategy sets out our next 10 years of work to make our roads, vehicles and journeys as safe as possible – but we cannot do this alone. We need all Victorians to make the right choices to keep them and other road users safe."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police Lisa Neville

"Our road safety camera program plays a critical role in changing driver behaviour and saving lives and this investment will help prevent road trauma and reduce the number of motorists doing the wrong thing."

"We want every trip to be a safe one this holiday season. If you make poor choices, you risk being caught – but that makes you, your family and your fellow road users the lucky ones."