

**John Graham**

Minister for Roads

**Yasmin Catley**

Minister for Police and Counter Terrorism

**Jenny Aitchison**

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

## Media Release

### Road experts gather in Sydney for safety's sake

**Thursday, 22 February 2024**

Road safety experts from Australia and overseas, along with advocates for motorists and road victims will today gather at the NSW Government's 2024 Road Safety Forum.

More than 90 experts are being brought under the same roof for the first time – and many more joining online – to focus on ways to improve safety on roads right across NSW.

Like all other Australian states, NSW has experienced a rise in fatalities on our roads since the COVID era and the forum will be an invaluable setting to consider solutions and innovations, drawing on the experience of Scandinavian countries that have had success in lowering their road tolls over the past decade or more.

The NSW Government is determined to co-operate with the Commonwealth on the national conversation on road safety, with a particular focus on data sharing among the states.

The Government has this week agreed to begin sharing crash information with motoring group NRMA to ensure continued transparency of road safety trends in NSW.

The forum's keynote address is to be delivered by Dr Johan Strandroth who was instrumental in the implementation of Sweden's "Vision Zero" approach which has been credited with lowering fatalities there since its introduction in the late 1990s.

According to the Australian Government, Sweden has the second lowest road fatality rate in the world behind only Norway. Australia was ranked 18 out of 31 OECD nations.

A key focus of today's forum will be regional road safety and the effect of speeding, drink and drug driving. A third of the NSW population resides in regional areas, but just over two-thirds of the state's road fatalities take place in our regions, including urban centres in regional areas.

The NSW Labor Government has been active in introducing new road safety measures, including the expanded use of mobile phone detection cameras that will this year begin enforcing the use of seatbelts.

The Government has also pioneered the carrot-and-stick approach through the demerit point scheme. More than 1.2 million NSW drivers will be rewarded with having a demerit point removed from their licence from April in return for maintaining a spotless record for 12 months from 17 January 2023.

In conjunction with the forum, Transport for NSW is running an online survey to allow the public to have a say on a range of road safety topics.

The survey is now open and will be live until 4pm Wednesday 6 March 2024 and is available at [https://www.ipsossurveys.com.au/mriweb/mriweb.dll?I.Project=O24\\_003760\\_01C](https://www.ipsossurveys.com.au/mriweb/mriweb.dll?I.Project=O24_003760_01C)

**Minister for Roads John Graham said:**

“NSW is pleased to host this most important forum and I look forward to hearing from the most pre-eminent experts from Australia but also from countries that have had success in reducing fatalities on their roads in recent decades.

“Road fatalities have increased across Australia and many parts of the world after Covid. This forum is an opportunity to tap into the best ideas to counter that trend and make sure everyone gets home to their loved ones every time.

“The enhanced sharing and use of data around road crashes is an important element in improving safety in NSW and other states which is why our Memorandum of Understanding to share more information with the NRMA is another advance that we can build on.

“I want to remind the wider community that your input into this important issue is welcome and urge you to take part in the online survey being run in conjunction with today’s forum.”

**Minister for Police and Counter Terrorism Yasmin Catley said:**

“Today’s forum is an important opportunity to collaborate and share ideas to help reduce fatalities and improve safety on our roads.

“I’m acutely aware that too many people are getting behind the wheel of a vehicle, or in the passenger seat, and never coming home.

“Every life lost on our roads is a tragedy and has a lasting impact on not only the friends, families and communities of those involved but on our first responders who attend far too many fatal incidents.

“The NSW Police Force are out there day and night working to protect the community but they can’t do it alone. Everyone has a role to play when it comes to keeping our roads safe.

“Everyone has a responsibility to themselves, their passengers and other roads users every time they get behind the wheel.”

**Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison said:**

“Today is an important day in NSW road safety history, as we gather together many different experts and stakeholders in the road safety space for the first time.

“Any death on our roads is a tragedy and as Regional Roads Minister I am particularly concerned that more than two thirds of these deaths take place on regional roads.

“We know country driving can be challenging – drivers in regional areas often drive longer distances on higher speed roads compared to those driving in the city. We know they’re often in older vehicles and environmental factors such as roadside hazards and bends in the road mean that a poor decision or mistake can be fatal.

“This is a conversation that I have been having across regional NSW since I came to office. I look forward to hearing the expert advice and to continue to work with rural, remote and regional communities to improve road safety in country NSW.

“Road safety is a shared responsibility and I urge every single road user to help us make sure everyone makes it home safely.”

**Senator Carol Brown, Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Transport said:**

“Today’s road safety forum is an invaluable gathering that I hope will provide ideas and outcomes can be carried through to the National Road Safety Conference coming up.

“Road safety is everyone’s responsibility- from local, state and territory governments as well as the Australian Government and individual road users.

“The National Road Safety Conference has been convened to bring together Road Safety Ministers and Police Ministers from across the country to engage on the worrying trends we are seeing on our roads.”

To download overlay footage including an interactive road toll graphic and videos of road trauma survivors please [click here](#)

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