

Transport
for NSW

2024 NSW Road Safety Forum

Summary Outcomes report

April 2024



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Introduction and purpose

In 2023, New South Wales (NSW) experienced a concerning rise in road fatalities, mirroring trends seen in some other parts of Australia and internationally. Recognising the urgency of addressing this issue, the NSW Government tasked Transport for NSW (Transport) to host the 2024 NSW Road Safety Forum (Forum) on Thursday 22 February 2024.

The Forum sought to provide an open and collaborative platform to discuss new ideas and initiatives to help NSW get back on track to meet its road safety targets of halving road fatalities and reducing serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2030.

The agenda and structure of the Forum aimed to provide an opportunity to:

1. Hear from road safety stakeholders who have contributed to reducing road trauma.
2. Gather feedback from Forum attendees on ways to improve road safety in NSW, and to consider actions from the [2026 Road Safety Action Plan \(2026 RSAP\)](#) that could be accelerated or scaled up.

Attendees and engagement

The Forum brought together approximately 155 attendees including international and Australian road safety experts, advocates for road trauma victims, transport, and health stakeholders, Federal and State Members of Parliament, private sector stakeholders and road safety supporters, media representatives and others. Designed to foster open dialogue and an exchange of innovative ideas, the event featured both in-person and online attendees, engaging in discussions and digital polling across various road safety topics.

Throughout the course of the day-long Forum, presentations and panel discussions were given by several speakers including Transport representatives, State and Federal Members of Parliament, road safety subject matter experts and representatives of state police departments.

In conjunction with the Forum, a Community Attitudes Survey (CAS) was developed and promoted via an open-link to the public, as well as a representative sample. The CAS

aimed to provide an opportunity for individuals outside of the Forum to have a say on road safety issues that were most important to them. The findings from this survey will be provided in an additional report to be released at a later date.



Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief, clear and accurate summary of the key comments, ideas and suggestions generated by Forum speakers, panellists, and attendees.

Figure 1 shows how information was gathered and summarised, ensuring balanced viewpoints and emphasising the consistent ideas that emerged from all Forum speakers, panellists, and attendees.

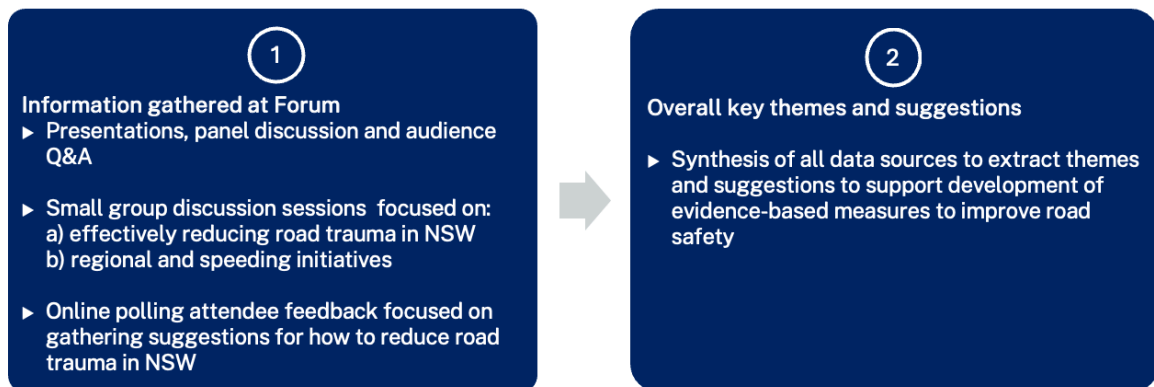


Figure 1: Gathered and summarised Forum information

Insights from presentations and panel discussions

Over the course of the day, two presentations and four panel discussions were held. For videos of these sessions visit [NSW Road Safety Forum 2024](#).

Overall summary of the key messages from presentations and panels

1. Road safety collaboration: Foster collaboration through local government engagement, underlining the importance of a unified approach across different levels of government and stakeholders.

2. Speed limit setting: Set speed limits that are contextually appropriate, considering the specific use, location, and surrounding environment of the road to enhance safety.

3. Speed enforcement: Increase compliance with speed limits through the strategic use of average speed cameras, emphasising their effectiveness as a fair and equitable enforcement tool that has been proven to reduce road trauma.

4. Safer road infrastructure: Prioritise safety in the construction and upgrading of roads, incorporating designs that protect all users, including vulnerable ones.

5. Driver education for younger drivers: Highlight the dangers of risk-taking behaviours with targeted education programs, aiming to change attitudes towards safer driving behaviours among young drivers through positively reinforced, youth-centric communication strategies and community support.

6. Cultural shift: Work towards embedding safe driving as a cultural norm in Australia, requiring a comprehensive approach that includes enforcement, education, and societal change to reject risk-taking behaviours on the road.

Presentation: International road safety perspectives – Trauma challenge internationally and the safe system approach

Sweden has achieved significant improvements in their road safety outcomes over the last 20 years, including an approximately 50 per cent decrease in road trauma and 70 per cent reduction in child fatalities. Sweden's adoption of the Vision Zero approach marked a shift in road safety thinking.

In Sweden, strategic enhancements to both infrastructure and speed management have been key to reducing traffic-related injuries and deaths. This has included redesigning urban and rural roads to safely accommodate a mix of users, with particular attention to vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. The advancement of vehicle safety technologies and collaborative efforts among various stakeholders, including government agencies, the private sector, safety organisations, and the community have been other cornerstones of Sweden's successful approach to reducing road trauma.

Presentation: Road trauma in NSW – the ongoing challenge and the 2026 Road Safety Action Plan

The 2026 RSAP prioritises a Safe System approach, focusing on speed management, enforcement, and infrastructure improvements such as the deployment of safety barriers and the transformation of road networks to prevent run-off-road and head-on collisions. The 2026 RSAP also emphasises the importance of vehicle safety enhancements and the cultivation of safer driving behaviours among young drivers. Community engagement, evidence-based policymaking, and the deployment of new technologies is advancing these solutions forward. The potential of these proposed solutions is grounded in a robust evidence base and the successful application of similar measures in jurisdictions around the world.

Panel: Post-COVID-19 – What will influence and change the behaviours of young drivers?

Incorporating young individuals' voices in developing communication strategies, employing modern and relevant media platforms, and leveraging influencer partnerships were suggested as ways to enhance the appeal and impact of road safety campaigns. Additionally, fostering a supportive community environment and providing mentorship opportunities and shifting attitudes about risk taking behaviours are crucial for addressing the underlying issues that lead to risky driving behaviours among vulnerable youth. The panellists discussed that the solutions might work because they address the specific challenges of reaching and influencing young drivers in a fragmented media environment by speaking directly to their interests and lifestyles.

Panel: Safe speeds and placemaking in regional NSW

Solutions canvassed included the introduction of lower speed limits in strategic areas, alongside the adoption of a movement and place framework aimed at better integrating land use with transport planning. The latter will encourage road designs that intuitively suggest safer speeds and interactions between vehicles and pedestrians. Additionally, the success of physical road safety measures, such as speed humps and road narrowing, was highlighted. The panellists underscored that lower speed limits could significantly decrease crash severity, making roads safer for all users.

Panel: Average speed camera enforcement

A key factor that needs to be addressed is the cultural acceptance of speeding, where drivers commonly exceed speed limits, essentially viewing them more as guidelines than strict rules. The expanded use of average speed cameras and the introduction of mobile average speed cameras could form the cornerstone of a more effective speed management strategy. By offering a fair and equitable enforcement mechanism over long distances, average speed cameras could significantly reduce deliberate speeding. The success of average speed camera in various jurisdictions worldwide, coupled with their proven impact on reducing road trauma, fatalities, and serious injuries, reinforces their potential as a viable solution.

Panel: Driving behaviour – an operational policing perspective

Enhanced enforcement strategies, including the use of new technologies like mobile phone detection cameras and data-driven policing, were discussed as critical tools in addressing specific high-risk behaviours. However, the conversation underscored a broader need for cultural change within the community. This involves shifting societal norms to reject risk-taking behaviours and embrace a more collective sense of responsibility for road safety. Education, particularly targeting young drivers to instil safe driving habits before they hit the road, was identified as pivotal in developing lifelong safe driving behaviours.

Insights from attendees on evidence-based measures to improve road safety in NSW

Below is a summary of attendee feedback given in the online polling and small group discussions which focused on two topics:

- International insights and 2026 Road Safety Action Plan initiatives
- Speed initiatives and the challenge in regional NSW.

Topic 1: International insights and 2026 Road Safety Action Plan initiatives

Attendees provided feedback in two ways - through small group discussions and online polling. In both cases, they focused on the following three questions.

1. What should we be doing MORE of to effectively reduce road trauma in NSW?

The five most common points raised in the small group discussions and online polling were:

- **Speed management:** Implement more effective speed management by introducing actions such as a broader implementation of average speed cameras and stricter enforcement of speed limits. Implementing lower speed limits in areas where the infrastructure does not support higher speeds was also recommended.
- **Enforcement:** Increase enforcement efforts to ensure road safety policies and measures are comprehensively supported.
- **Local engagement:** Enhance local, regional, and rural engagement to tailor safety messaging and programs to the needs of various communities.
- **Infrastructure improvements:** Focus on prioritising safety in road infrastructure design and improvements, with enhancements including safety barriers and road design changes to accommodate all users safely.
- **Communication with and education for young drivers:** Intensify efforts on youth-centric education and engagement, using initiatives that effectively connect with younger demographics, including exploring further integration of road safety education into schools and community programs.

2. What NEW initiatives should we consider to effectively reduce road trauma in NSW?

The five most common points raised in the small group discussions and online polling were:

- **Education and awareness:** Continue emphasising the importance of educating both young drivers and the public about road safety through the school curriculum and public awareness campaigns, underlining the foundational role of education in driving behavioural change.
- **Technology and compliance:** Leverage technology to enhance road safety and compliance, including the adoption of advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) and stricter mobile phone usage regulations, highlighting the critical role of technological advancements in improving road user behaviours.
- **Advancing safer infrastructure development for improved speed management:** Focus on embedding safety design principles into infrastructure improvements and speed management strategies. Such as the implementation of safer speed limits and extensive use of average speed cameras, to ensure safer road environments. Specific suggestions included:
 - Introduce appropriate speed limits on rural roads to better reflect the unique risk factors and conditions of each area, moving away from the default standard of 100 km/h.
 - Expand the deployment of average speed cameras to monitor and enforce speed limits for all vehicles across the state, ensuring consistent compliance over extended distances.

- Implement mobile average speed cameras to provide flexible and responsive speed enforcement that can adapt to varying road safety needs and conditions.
- **Governance and leadership:** Advocate for stronger governance and leadership in the road safety sector and embracing data-driven policymaking to guide strategic decisions.
- **Community and demographic-specific initiatives:** Adopt tailored approaches to meet the specific needs of diverse communities, including initiatives directed at regional and remote areas, young drivers, and vulnerable groups, recognising the importance of contextual and inclusive road safety measures.

3. Is there anything we should be do LESS of to reduce road trauma in NSW?

The five most common points raised in the small group discussions and online polling were:

- **Minimise political influence:** Focus on an evidence-based, bipartisan approach to road safety, reducing the impact of politics to ensure decisions prioritise effectiveness over popularity.
- **Promote positive communication:** Shift from negative, fear-based communication strategies to positive, reward-based messaging that encourages community engagement and behaviour change.
- **Reduce bureaucracy:** Streamline processes to facilitate quicker implementation of safety measures, emphasising tangible actions over prolonged discussions and reducing bureaucratic hurdles.
- **Recognise cultural and community diversity:** Lessen the focus on top-down and one-size-fits-all solutions, moving towards empathy-driven, community-focused initiatives. Embrace innovative communication methods, particularly that consider diverse and vulnerable communities in policy formulation, ensuring road safety measures are inclusive and comprehensive.
- **Broaden focus of communications:** Expand the narrative around road safety beyond the reduction of fatalities to also highlights its role in injury prevention.

Topic 2: Speed initiatives and the challenge in regional NSW

Feedback was solicited through small group discussion focused on the questions below:

1. What do you think the biggest challenge is in providing safer speeds across the NSW network, especially in regional NSW? How can that be overcome?

The five most common points raised across the discussions were:

- **Education:** Crucial for changing behaviours; includes maintaining road safety in the school curriculum and using public campaigns.
- **Political and community support:** Needed for stricter speed controls (both setting limits and enforcement), addressing political reluctance and community resistance.

- **Enforcement:** Key for ensuring speed limit adherence, with a focus on speed cameras and consistent law enforcement.
- **Infrastructure:** Road design improvements are necessary for safer speeds and integrating safety features.
- **Leveraging the media:** Vital in altering public perceptions and behaviours towards road safety. Harnessing the impact of the media on public opinion, ensuring the delivery of clear, consistent messages from authorities to shift public attitudes and garner support for road safety initiatives.

2. Are there any speed initiatives, or variations of current speed initiatives, that you think will help reduce trauma on NSW roads?

The three most common points raised across the discussions were:

- **Average speed enforcement:** Expand point-to-point speed enforcement, including fixed and mobile for all vehicles, to enhance safety.
- **Dissemination of road safety messages:** Continue to address road safety education as part of the school curriculums, while also considering widespread community awareness campaigns using both traditional and social medial platforms to disseminate messaging.
- **Technology and infrastructure:** Invest in safety technologies and road improvements that support safer speeds.

3. What would be the pros and cons of average speed initiatives?

The points raised across the discussions concerning the wider application of average speed monitoring were:

Benefits or Pros	Challenges or Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety improvements • Effect on driver behaviour • Effective in changing behaviour • Perception of fairness • Reduction in excessive speeding • Fairness across vehicle types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation challenges • Public reluctance • Concerns about revenue raising • Local government challenges • Infrastructural and investment needs • Potential avoidance behaviours • Political challenges

Conclusion

This report was compiled by an independent external organisation and delivered to NSW Government, consolidating the input from subject matter experts and Transport attendees at the Forum.

Transport would like to thank all contributors that made this Forum possible. To our attendees, speakers, and panellists – thank you for supporting such an important event that will help us get back on track to our road safety goals.