

## 27. SAFEROADS LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROAD SAFETY CONFERENCE

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Corporate Plan Output: Road Safety	

The purpose of this report is to highlight for Committee members items on the Saferoads Local Government Road Safety Conference agenda that are of interest to the Council. A large portion of the conference involved parallel sessions. My attendance along with Lee Kelly Schools Advocate, Councillors Thompson and Stonhill provided wide coverage of the issues relating to the Council's needs. Attendance at the conference allowed us to tap into quality ready developed programmes that could be suitable for use in our city. Networking was a significant aspect of the conference and valuable contacts were achieved. Numerous items in the conference agenda will be utilised in the next 2–3 years particularly in relation to the review of our Road Safety Strategy and our evolving relationship with central government especially the Police.

Specific outcomes from the conference are:

- **Road Safety Strategy**

The main purpose of the conference was to assist local authorities in developing their Road Safety Strategy. It was clear that in Christchurch we are well ahead of the majority of local authorities within Australia. A limited number of local government Road Safety Strategies have been developed in Australia and New Zealand. A presentation on the Christchurch Road Safety Strategy was made by Councillor Thompson at the conference. This was very well received. Subsequent feedback has also been very positive. Our Road Safety Strategy stands up very well in comparison with those that were presented at the conference. Improvements to our strategy, when it is reviewed in July next year, will incorporate the latest information gained from the conference.

- **Traffic Safety Committees**

Australian local authorities are encouraged by their State Governments to establish road safety committees. Some committees have been established with limited community involvement. Committees with a wider stakeholder involvement similar to the Council's Co-ordinating Committee for Traffic Safety were the most successful. This format is now being promoted as the model that provides quality programs with full community support.

- **Red Light and Speed Camera Operation**

There is considerable developments occurring in the operation of red light cameras and speed cameras in Australia. The level of enforcement is such that most people travel at the speed limit. I visited two red light camera manufacturers and had extensive discussions with the Police both in Canberra and Melbourne. I obtained a valuable insight into the latest technology used overseas.

The red light and speed camera operation and prosecution is contracted out in New South Wales, Capital Territory and Victoria. Queensland is also investigating options in this area. I meet with company representatives providing this service. This networking will assist in the presentation of a report on our red light camera trial to this Committee in October.

- **Drugged Driving**

The Co-ordinating Committee for Traffic Safety has regularly raised this issue. As a result a team has been set up by that Committee to investigate what can be done to address this issue. Victoria will be prosecuting people found driving under the influence of drugs from 1 December. The Victorian initiative was implemented as they have more crashes involving drugged driving than drunk driving. The team investigating this issue will access information obtained from the conference.

- **50 km/h Local Road Speed Limits**

Throughout Australia the normal urban speed limit is 60 km/h. Legislation has recently been passed which allows local neighbourhood speed limits of 50 km/h. As a result of this change large areas within both New South Wales and Victoria now have neighbourhood areas covered by 50 km/h speed restriction. The change is expected to result in 200 casualties per year reduction in Victoria.

The Government is currently reviewing the method of establishing speed restrictions in New Zealand. As part of this review speed restrictions other than 50 km/h may well be able to be installed within local residential areas in New Zealand. The use of local area speed restrictions will be monitored and reported to the Co-ordinating Committee for Traffic Safety and this Committee in the future.

- **Town Planning**

The lack of consideration of the road safety impact of town planning decisions was the subject of a paper at the conference. This issue is also identified within our Christchurch Road Safety Strategy and will be subject to an increased commitment in the near future.

- **Legal Issues**

A very interesting paper at the conference was the legal liability for road safety of local authorities. Councils can and are increasingly being successfully sued for liability. This occurs when steps they have taken aren't safe rather than failure to take steps that would change the safety situation. To avoid problems all steps taken by the Council need to be well documented. The Council is addressing this issue by the development of our Safety Management System.

- **Crash Reduction Studies**

The Victorian State Government has recently substantially increased the funding for local authorities to undertake and implement crash reduction studies. Funding of \$60 million per year is available for local authorities to address both identified crash reduction projects and perceived road safety problems.

Transfund has made similar changes in New Zealand. Starting this financial year the Council is able to undertake a considerably increased number of crash reduction projects with an increased subsidy and for projects up to a value of \$70,000. Clearly there is an international commitment towards targeting engineering projects that will or are likely to reduce the number of crashes occurring.

- **Cycle Education Programmes**

The police in Victoria and Queensland undertake cycle use training (Cycle Ed) in schools. Their programme is significantly different to the Council's program (Cycle Safe) in that it does not include on road cycle use. Cycle Safe provides training on streets surrounding the school and within the adjacent neighbourhood. The effectiveness of Cycle Safe training especially in relation to this difference is currently being independently evaluated. A feature of the Cycle Ed program is the installation of a sign outside participating schools denoting their involvement. This approach will be investigated for Cycle Safe.

- **Florescent Yellow/green School signs**

A road safety expert from Canada identified that schools in her country have changed to the yellow/green florescent school signs currently being tested in Christchurch. The Safety for Schools Committee is currently seeking approval to erect these signs outside all schools in Christchurch. The Committee, schools and the community all agree that they make the location of the school more obvious. A copy of the Canadian evaluation of the signs is being obtained to support the Committee's request for approval to use them.

- **Other Items of Interest**

**Accident site signs.**

- Warning signs are erected at high crash number sites

**Child restraint harnesses sales**

- Local Councils sell Child Restraint with a subsidy.

**Harness installation Stations**

- Signs are erected at business that fit and check Child car restraints at no charge.

**Enforcement signs**

- Signs erected highlighting the current police enforcement campaign.

**Older Road Users**

- There is a strong commitment by all road safety providers in Australia to assist this rapidly expanding group within the community.

Attendance at the Conference provided information on and valuable contacts regarding road safety interventions in Australia. This will be used in the future to ensure the Council remains a Road Safety leader. Thank you for the opportunity.

**Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the information be received.