
Surgeons call for dramatic change in Australian road safety management

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The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) is calling for a dramatic overhaul of road safety measures following the findings of the Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy launched today in Canberra by the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development.

Dr John Crozier, Co-Chair of the Inquiry into the Effectiveness of Australia's National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 and RACS Trauma Committee Chair says failing to improve the current situation will result in 12,000 people killed and 360,000 injured at a cost of over \$300 billion over the next decade.

"Australia's road safety performance has stalled. There is a lack of focus on a harm elimination agenda. Our complacency is reflected in the death of 1226 people and an estimated 36,000 people seriously injured in crashes on Australian roads last year alone," Dr Crozier says.

Inquiry Co-Chair and Director of the Centre for Automotive Safety Research Associate Professor Jeremy Woolley says the Inquiry's recommendations, if implemented, will radically transform road safety performance across Australia.

"Road safety is a national problem, which is why a National Road Safety entity, Australian government cabinet oversight of the issue through a Minister for Road Safety, and an annual \$3 billion Road Safety Fund are needed," Associate Professor Woolley says.

"Despite good intentions, the current strategy can be described as an implementation failure. Better strategic management is required and we must move from a coping mechanism to one that fixes the problem once and for all."

Ongoing funding for the Australian Trauma Registry, which is currently the only way to measure the burden of serious injury across Australia's major trauma centres, and benchmarking of trauma care are among the 12 recommendations of the Inquiry.

"In addition to the tragic impact that road trauma has on families, the economic cost is upwards of \$30 billion per year, which is largely borne by health services and is entirely preventable.

"We must halt this carnage, acting at a scale that matters, with a disaster response approach that reflects the true scale of the epidemic. Lives depend on it," Dr Crozier says.

Ends.

Download the [full report](#) and [factsheet](#).

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.

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