Roadmarking News

The New Zealand Roadmarkers Federation Inc

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Sections

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NZRF Update

Hi members,

Thank you to everyone who attended the 2025 AGM and Roadmarking Conference in Christchurch from 12–14 August. At the AGM we welcomed back four members of the Executive – Dominic Elder (Downer), Bruce Goodall (Coastline), Gareth Noble (Geveko) and myself, Darcy Prendergast (Spray Marks). We also welcomed David Goddard (Damar) to the Executive team. As a small Executive team with day jobs, we are always keen for more people to get involved, so please reach out if you're interested in contributing – otherwise don't be surprised if we 'tap you on the shoulder' when help may be needed.

This year's conference drew over 75 attendees and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Presentations were very well received, with the calibre of content described as some of the best yet. The plant display was another highlight, we plan to repeat this feature at 2026 conference also.

The social programme was also well supported, including the 'Believe it or Not' quiz night, annual dinner, and off-site activities such as golf, racing simulators and golf simulators. We certainly saw the competitive nature of roadmarkers at play along with plenty of banter and laughter.

Building on this success, planning is already underway for the 2026 Conference, which will be held at the Waipuna Hotel and Event Centre in Auckland from 11-13 August 2026. As usual, we are alternating between North and South Island venues.

You are even able to book your accommodation now for reduced rates. Please go to www.waipunahotel.co.nz and use booking code **NZROAD26**. There is an Early Bird Special - 20% discount on the Public Flex rate (for bookings made 30 days or more prior to arrival, subject to availability).

On the industry front, the NZTA Integrated Delivery Contracts (IDCs) are set to begin in April 2026, following a transition process that included an RFI in 2024, an RFT in mid-2025, and the nomination of preferred suppliers in late 2025 for 10-year terms. These new contracts replace the former Network Outcomes Contracts (NOCs) for state highway maintenance. Importantly, pavement marking – initially excluded – has now been confirmed as part of the IDC framework. This decision, recently communicated to NZRF members from NZTA, will be managed through the upcoming negotiation phase.

While Executive team has been in correspondence with NZTA representatives on what roadmarking may look like within IDC contracts it does represent significant shift for our industry. NZTA intend to have a roadmarking document out within the near future. Obviously with the late inclusion roadmarking back into the IDC process the turnaround time between industry seeing documents and tender closing date will be short, be ready.

The new season is underway, although poor weather across the country has delayed start times in some areas. This may create challenges later in the season as contractors work to meet contractual obligations. With extreme weather events becoming increasingly common, it is essential for both clients and contractors to plan with this in mind.
As always, stay safe out there on the roads.

Darcy Prendergast- NZRF Exec
Recent hot laps adventure with Greg Murphy – Wow

NZRF Conference

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NZ Transport Agency Updates

1

SH2 Hawke's Bay update

Exciting news for Hawke's Bay! We're officially breaking ground on the Hawke's Bay Expressway project in November.

Funding has been approved to 4-lane the road between Taradale Road and Links Road/Pākōwhai Road – including the design and construction of a new overpass at the busy Links Road/Pākōwhai Road intersection.

This is the first Road of National Significance (RoNS) project to start construction – a major milestone for the country. These upgrades will improve safety, reduce congestion and make travel between Napier and Hastings quicker and more reliable.

2

The Multipatcher on Northland roads

This is a Multipatcher – a machine you'll see roadworkers using for small tasks such as fixing potholes and road edges.

The Multipatcher is an all-in-one solution that allows roadworkers to quickly complete repairs from the driver's seat, reducing disruption to your travel.

One of the advantages of the Multipatcher is its ability to perform multiple types of repairs at the same time, saving both time and costs.

As the Multipatcher moves along the road, the driver scans the road for defects such as potholes. The Multipatcher then sprays a hot mix-like solution to fill the pothole, and a final layer of dry surface is applied to protect the hot mix solution as it sets. As the Multipatcher moves over the patch, it presses the material in - leaving a road-ready surface you can travel over immediately. The entire process can take as little as a minute to complete, making it a fast and efficient repair solution.

The Multipatcher even comes equipped with built-in traffic management boards, further enhancing safety and efficiency.

We'll be using it on Northland's state highways all year round, helping keep the roads safe and smooth.

NZ Transport Agency Updates

3

Takitimu North Link Stage 2

Applications for statutory approvals have now been lodged for Takitimu North Link Stage 2. This is a long-awaited step forward for the new 4-lane state highway west of Tauranga, between Te Puna and Ōmokoroa.

The project extends Takitimu North Link Stage 1, currently in construction between Tauranga and Te Puna, onwards to Ōmokoroa.

It will improve reliability, resilience and safety for people travelling through the Western Bay, particularly at Ōmokoroa, Whakamārama, Te Puna and Tauranga.

We are looking forward to working on the design with local authorities including Western Bay of Plenty District Council, Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council, and local hapū Pirirākau and Ngāti Taka, recognising the important role this infrastructure will have in the future prosperity of the region.

4

Mt Messenger Bypass

The completed tunnel will be about 9m high and 13m wide – with capacity to accommodate large freight. Te Ara o Te Ata will be a smoother and safer route than the current steep, narrow, winding stretch of State Highway 3 in north Taranaki.

Workers have now passed 100 metres of excavations of the top section of the tunnel. While the 110-tonne roadheader gets most of the attention, our drone spotlights some of the other machines, equipment and people involved in creating this standout feature of the future bypass. We're cutting the tunnel in two stages – first, the upper portion (the 'top heading'), followed by the bottom section (the 'bench'). At regular intervals we pause excavations to apply shotcrete (sprayed-on concrete) and install rockbolts on the new cuts, to support the structure. You can see just how much progress has been made, and we're on track to complete excavation of the top heading later this year. The Mt Messenger Bypass will make this stretch of SH3 much more resilient and safer for everyone, providing a secure connection through north Taranaki. – especially for freight.

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New Zealand

Signage on road marking trucks

Recently one of our members was fined by the New Zealand Police for not displaying the correct signage on their road marking vehicles.

This was discussed at the recent T8 Testing Officer workshop during our annual conference in Christchurch. During this interactive session it was noted that there was a poor understanding and application of the Dangerous/Hazardous Goods Signs and Labels rules.

There were 16 non-conformances issued between 2015 to 2024 regarding Tank labels and DG labels. This made up 13 percent of the non-conformances during this period.

From the T8 Testing Officer's Guide the following specifies what is required.

8.1.13 Dangerous/Hazardous Goods Signs and Labels (Ref. T 8 10.3, T 12 10.3, T 18 10.3)

Paint tanks must bear the appropriate Hazardous Goods Label, UN Number, Proper Shipping Name and Class of the dangerous goods contained, e.g. Flammable Liquid, 1263 PAINT, III.

Labelling must match the requirements of the Group Standard for the material in the tanks.

Where the vehicle or vehicle combination is carrying more than 250 litres the vehicle (and trailer) must be appropriately placarded. The requirements for placarding relating to the carriage of dangerous goods is described by Section 7 of the NZTA Dangerous Goods Rule 45001/1 2005 and Amendment 45001/2 2010.

Use the capacity of the material supply tanks as an indication of the application of these requirements to the applicator. The transport of dangerous goods as "tools-of-trade" is described by NZTA Factsheet 68 June 2011. The requirements with regard to identification and placarding are described in NZTA Factsheet 67. Confirm that requirements are met and that the systems used include facilities for changing in line with product changes.

There is various documentation that can also help operators regarding the correct placement and what is required for tank wagons and bulk carriers. The New Zealand police have referenced the following reference guide.

For tank wagons in New Zealand carrying Class 3 Dangerous Goods, you must display the correct Class 3 placard on the front, sides (both), and rear of the tank wagon. The placard must be the specified square-on-point shape, at least 400 mm x 400 mm, showing the hazard class number "3" on the bottom corner. In addition, placards for the proper shipping name and environmentally hazardous substance mark should be displayed if applicable.

New Zealand

Six months of repairs needed for Transmission Gully, NZ Transport Agency says

The NZ Transport Agency / Waka Kotahi will rebuild parts of Transmission Gully over six months to resurface it and fix areas of the road damaged by water.

The $1.25 billion motorway north of Wellington opened to the public in March 2022 after years of delays.

While the road was made public for drivers, elements of the project are yet to be completed.

In December it was announced NZTA would take control of the project after a legal battle with the road's builders, which RNZ revealed cost the transport agency more than $600,000.

The roading agency's lower North Island/top of the South Island regional manager Mark Owen said substantial works were not completed by the builder before the project restructure.

"The cost of this work is still to be quantified."

Owen said around 20 kilometres of the road was scheduled to be resurfaced, which would also include drainage improvements after water damaged parts of the road.

"Water has affected the quality of the road surface and base course (the layer of ground beneath the road surface) in several areas and it is critical it is mitigated to prevent further pavement damage."

The work is expected to take place between October and March.

He said that the work would likely include resurfacing at the Kenepuru Interchange, the Waitangirua Interchange and two sites north of the State Highway 58 Interchange.

The road's southbound lanes would take up much of the roadworks, but some parts of the northbound lanes might be resurfarced too.

"Drivers can expect an increase in road maintenance on the motorway this summer."

Infrastructure New Zealand chief executive Nick Leggett said many motorists would be frustrated by the news.

"While it is sooner than many would have expected for maintenance of this scale to occur, it is vital that the work is undertaken to ensure the motorway continues to perform well for the region."

Leggett called for transparency around the cause of the maintenance and when it will be done.

"The public will want to understand why this work is required, what the impact will be on road users, and how costs are being managed. Clear communication is important to maintain confidence."

NZTA said worktimes would be finalised in the coming weeks which would be shared with the public.

New Zealand

Auckland business owner admits unroadworthy truck killed worker

For six years prior to the moment a runaway construction truck hit and killed a road worker in a posh Auckland suburb, authorities repeatedly warned that the heavy-duty vehicle was not roadworthy.

Dangerously defective brakes were among the numerous issues cited by vehicle safety officers.

But Ashik Transport company director Ashik Ali kept using the vehicle anyway, with tragic results.

Now he's pleaded guilty to manslaughter.

Ali, 55, had been set to go to trial in the High Court at Auckland next week for the May 2024 worksite death of roadworker Johnathon Walters.

Details of the case, including the company's shocking history of non-compliance, can now be reported for the first time following his arraignment yesterday.

'Reversing at speed'

The truck, with a full payload of chip seal roading metal, weighed over 20 tons when it began rolling down an incline along Remuera's Victoria Avenue, where another night of road resurfacing work was just starting.

Walters and two Downer Group construction company co-workers were about 40 metres downhill, focusing on their work, when "without warning, Mr Ali's truck had a brake failure and began reversing at speed".

"Mr Walters did not hear or see the vehicle heading towards him and was knocked to the ground by the left rear corner of the truck," court documents state.

"The truck's dual rear wheels ran over Mr Walters' legs and his pelvis area was run over by the truck's front left wheel as it continued reversing downhill.

"The truck continued reversing down Victoria Ave at speed, while Mr Ali struggled to regain control as it zig-zagged across both lanes, narrowly avoiding other road workers and their vehicles."

The vehicle finally stopped about 400 metres from where Walters had been hit, but only after it was slowed down by collisions with two lamp posts, a tree and a wall.

When another road worker asked Ali if he was okay, he replied that he was and said he'd "park up and come back", documents state.

He instead fled - driving the truck, with its windscreen now gone, over 13km away to his Papatoetoe business premises.

When the site foreman called him and said he needed to return, explaining that Walters had been run over, Ali instead drove himself to Middlemore Hospital for a non-life-threatening arm injury.

The victim, meanwhile, was rushed into surgery at Auckland Hospital, where doctors amputated one leg and tried to reconstruct his other leg and pelvis.

Despite their efforts, he died two days later as a result of the crushing injuries.

"I tried to press the brake, speed or clutches," Ali told police when they spoke with him at Middlemore. "Nothing would work."

Cont....

New Zealand

Flagrant non-compliance

But the truck's defects should have been a surprise to no one, authorities have suggested.

Ali had bought the previously owned Isuzu CXZ 72J in November 2017 and it was issued its first pink sticker - barring it from being used on the road - just two months later.

"The VSO [vehicle safety officer] recorded the truck was in poor condition and should not have been on the road," the summary of facts states of the January 2018 traffic stop.

A subsequent May 2019 inspection "established the brakes were dangerous and the vehicle should not have been operating".

The company director was contacted by the New Zealand Transport Agency the following year, with officials expressing concern his fleet was not being maintained to a safe standard and the company was not paying road user fees.

The suspicions were confirmed following a July 2020 inspection of the entire fleet. As a result, Ali was ordered to obtain certificates of fitness every three months.

The following month, Ali told authorities he was addressing the truck's brake issues. But when police again pulled over the truck in Otara in March 2021, it again failed a spot inspection.

"This truck was still subject to the pink sticker that was issued on 30 January 2018," court documents state. "The sticker had been unlawfully removed.

"The inspection identified serious safety defects, including a cracked right front wheel, loose wheel nuts, the second axle differential was leaking oil, an air leak behind the cab (the air reservoir supplies air to the brake and suspension systems), insecure batteries, a stop light not working, and worn brushes on the tipper arm. The overall safety appearance of the truck was described as very bad by the VSO."

More non-operation stickers were placed on the truck and the driver was issued a written notice warning that the vehicle should not be operated again unless on "a direct route to a place of repair".

As a result, Ali assured authorities that he no longer intended to use the vehicle - choosing to scrap it rather than get it repaired. But instead, it appears, he simply changed the plates and kept on using it.

By the time of the fatality, the truck had been unregistered for two years and the last warrant of fitness had been issued three-and-a-half years prior.

When Ali showed up at the Remuera site around 8pm on May 8, 2024, he had already worked a 12-hour day at another Downer road construction site in North Auckland, using a different truck from his fleet. His company was subcontracted to work on the projects.

The sticker identifying the truck as unusable had been partially removed along with the last certificate of fitness, from nearly five years earlier.

A post-crash inspection revealed many of the defects that had been identified in 2021 still plagued the vehicle.

Ali now faces a sentence of up to life imprisonment following his admission of guilt to manslaughter. Justice Rebecca Edwards set a sentencing date for November.

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New Zealand

NZTA rolls out mobile trailer cameras to catch speeding drivers, Auckland to see first unit

A new mobile speed camera is being rolled out this week, targeting high-risk areas in Auckland before being deployed across New Zealand.

The cameras are fitted onto a trailer, joining the fleet of SUVs that replaced the traditional vans earlier this year.

The first trailer will begin operating in Auckland from this Wednesday, with nine more joining the fleet in coming months.

There are currently 34 mobile cameras operating in SUVs.

NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) head of regulatory strategic programmes Tara Macmillan said the technology was the same as used in the SUVs. The trailers give police more flexibility to move cameras between “high risky locations”, she said.

“Using mobile trailers also allows us to have our cameras out for longer stretches of time, and to set up in places that might be difficult for SUVs to operate,” Macmillan said.

“Both our trailers and SUVs will be working day and night, detecting speeding wherever and whenever it occurs.”

Macmillan said that speeding drivers can cause serious and irreparable harm on the roads, including deaths and serious injuries.

“Evidence shows that we can reduce the chances of people being killed or seriously injured in crashes if drivers travel within speed limits, and that is why we have safety cameras.”

She said the cameras would be able to detect speeding vehicles travelling towards and away from it.

They are fitted with extensive security and tracking systems, boasting both CCTV cameras and alarm systems to protect the equipment and ensure the safety of operators.

The exact timing and location of mobile safety cameras would be informed by evidence, which might include crash data and feedback from local communities.

Mobile cameras were set to be used in places where there was a risk of people being killed or seriously injured in a crash.

Macmillan said they would be monitored 24/7.

NZTA rolled out the new SUVs in May, which replaced the fleet alongside the vans that police have traditionally used.

From July 1 this year, NZTA became fully responsible for the operation of all safety cameras.

The police continue to issue notices for the offences they detect.

At the time, NZTA said it will not receive any incentives or funds from tickets issued. Safety camera infringement fees go into the Government Consolidated Fund.

New Zealand

Moteo-Puketapu Bridge opens to the public

Another Cyclone Gabrielle rebuild milestone is about to be ticked off with less than 24 hours until the official opening of the Moteo-Puketapu Bridge. A chalkboard sign outside the Puketapu Store has been counting down the days in anticipation for local residents and those passing through.

The vital connection on Vicarage Rd across the Tūtaekuri River was washed away during Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023 and work began for the rebuild in June 2024. The bridge will be open to the public at 10am after an invitation-only dawn blessing.

Hastings District Council Mayor Sandra Hazlehurst said the opening this weekend is a huge milestone in the recovery from Cyclone Gabrielle.

"We are hugely grateful for the support and input of the local community and mana whenua, and for all the hard work of our contractors and their efforts to engage with the community and keep them involved throughout the project."

She said the bridge, which was fully funded by the Government's National Infrastructure Funding and Financing programme and cost around $28 million, was "a lifeline, a reconnection and a promise of resilience".

"Built three metres higher than the original, with piles reaching 41 metres deep, and designed with three columns instead of five to reduce debris build-up, the bridge is engineered to be more durable, carry heavier loads, and resist higher-intensity earthquakes."

Tukituki MP Catherine Wedd said the opening was hugely significant for the community. "It's going to reconnect the communities of South Puketapu and North Puketapu and after everything they have been through, this is a huge symbol of progress."

Wedd said she and Napier MP Katie Nimon had spent time during the aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle in the community, and the way everyone got back on their feet was to be admired. "From the families, to the homes, to the businesses to the school it has just been amazing and the bridge opening is a significant milestone in the progress to the rebuild." She said central and local government worked together with the community to make the work happen.

"It's taken just over two years to get a huge infrastructure project like this built and is a real tribute to everyone working collaboratively." A nod to the history of the original Puketapu Bridge is reflected in the bridge's new name – the Moteo-Puketapu Bridge. In 1906, when it was first opened as a swing bridge, it was called the Moteo Bridge as it was primarily built to enable children at Moteo to safely cross the Tūtaekurī River to get to school. In 1963, when a more permanent structure was built and opened, it became more commonly known as the Puketapu Bridge, or sometimes Vicarage Bridge, reflecting one of its approaches off Vicarage Rd.

The joining of the names reflects the rejoining of the communities cut off when the bridge washed away during Cyclone Gabrielle.

New Zealand

Road markings wrecked by burnouts cited as factor in tourist's death

A coroner has found that road damage caused by antisocial drivers contributed to the death of a Canadian tourist and has urged boy racers and their ilk to be aware of how their actions affect others.

Helen Poon, 34, also known as Man Shun Poon, died from injuries suffered in a crash that occurred on the afternoon of December 30, 2023.

Poon had been driving an Audi TT Coupe south on Roy's Hill Rd near Hastings. She approached the T intersection with Maraekakaho Rd and intended to turn right.

At the same time, a Toyota Landcruiser was travelling east on Maraekakaho Rd.

Roys Hill Rd and Maraekakaho Rd make up part of State Highway 50, which runs between Napier and SH2, south of Waipukurau.

As Poon entered the intersection to turn right, the Toyota collided with the driver's side of the Audi.

Poon suffered serious injuries and was transferred to Hawke's Bay Hospital by ambulance. She was later transported to Wellington Hospital via helicopter. Her injuries proved unsurvivable, and she died on January 4, 2024.

Coroner Mark Wilton's findings on Poon's death were released on Tuesday. He said that when Poon approached the intersection, she had not given way, and the driver of the Toyota had applied his brakes but it was too late. The driver of the Toyota and his passengers assisted Poon and her friend, who was in the Audi's passenger's seat.

After the crash, the Toyota driver inspected the road and commented that there were almost no visible road markings due to burnout marks.

Another witness reported that the Give Way sign had been vandalised and turned around, so it was not facing Poon when she approached the intersection.

Police investigated the scene and the crash and provided a report to the coroner. It said there were no faults in either vehicle, and neither alcohol, speed nor weather were factors.

The road condition, however, was a factor.

The intersection is a popular site for antisocial driving behaviour and the police report revealed that burnout activities had "completely erased the road markings", and the Give Way sign on the left side of the road had been turned about 90 degrees away from the view of southbound traffic.

Additionally, the Give Way sign that should have been on the right side of the road had been removed. So, too, had the yellow chevron signs that should have been on the opposite side of Maraekakaho Rd from Poon as she approached the intersection.

Cont....

New Zealand

Police said these things were a contributing factor in the crash that led to Poon's death. who was in the Audi's passenger's seat.

The coroner agreed, noting that the main cause of Poon's death had been her failure to give way.

"There is a stark difference between the view of the road Ms Poon had and what she should have had under normal circumstances, and had the road not been damaged." Coroner Wilton noted that the road markings had been repainted immediately after the crash, before the road was reopened.

In the month after the crash, NZTA installed "high-performance pavement markings" and corrected the signs. It also added "high-friction surface strips" in a bid to deter street-racing activity, particularly burnouts at the intersection.

Coroner Wilton contacted NZTA as part of his inquiry and was informed that the agency had approved funding for "low-cost/low-risk safety" improvements for the intersection in the 2024-27 National Land Transport Programme, and that work would start in the coming construction season, which runs from October until June next year.

The work will include geometric improvements, reprioritisation of traffic travelling on SH50 and rumble strips.

The coroner noted that remedial works were completed swiftly and that further work was planned by NZTA, but said he remained "concerned that antisocial driving behaviour continues to damage the road markings" and made several recommendations.

One of these was that NZTA gave further consideration to any methods that may deter antisocial driving behaviour, including burnout activity at the intersection.

He also recommended that NZTA arranged regular checks of this section of road to ensure the road markings are still clearly visible.

"Ms Poon's death highlights the consequences that such driving activities can have. The damage caused to the road and environment endangers the safety and lives of all New Zealand road users," the coroner said in his findings.

"This may not be readily apparent to those who engage in such behaviour. However, I make this comment to generate awareness among the driving public of New Zealand who participate in antisocial driving activities to be aware of how their actions impact others on the road.

"I encourage those drivers to disengage from such driving behaviour and follow the road rules," he said.

NZTA's regional manager of system design, Lisa Faulknor, said a raised island was being considered for the intersection, which would help separate traffic, as well as restrict the space available for undesirable behaviour, such as burnouts.

Upgraded lighting was also being considered to improve the readability and clarity of priorities at the intersection.

"This tragic fatality underscores the detrimental impact this kind of antisocial driver behaviour can have on our roading networking alongside police as the enforcers of driving behaviour is essential to the success of any roading infrastructure solution," Faulknor said.

New Zealand

Road cones digital hotline pilot update from WorkSafe NZ

In the first 12 weeks (2 June to 22 August) since the road cones digital hotline was launched, it has generated a high level of interest and engagement from the public and across the temporary traffic management system.

The road cone hotline page is the second most viewed on WorkSafe's website. Over 979 valid hotline reports regarding TTM had been received, at the time of this reporting.

Reports have come in most frequently from Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and NZTA's state highway network - likely reflective of high infrastructure activity in these areas.

WorkSafe's inspectors have been through training to enable them to have a better understanding of the TTM system and requirements. Our inspectors have been on 17 shared site visits so far, with NZTA, Christchurch City Council and Auckland Transport. These joint visits have improved visibility, promoted safer practices, and facilitated on-the-ground education. Our inspectors will be integrating TTM risk assessment and education into their general site visits across sectors as well.

Feedback from RCAs has been mostly positive, though there have been some challenges raised, such as resource limitations and mismatched site locations.

Setting up workable processes for us to share hotline reports with the RCAs enabling reports to be acted on locally, and for them to share the outcomes with us, is crucial for the success of the road cones hotline pilot.

RCAs are helping us identify improvements we can make to the hotline form to help the reports become more accurate.

As the reported sites are checked by the RCAs and as more of the outcomes are sent back to us, we are able to build a picture of what is being found.

As a new member of the TTM-ISG, WorkSafe is working closely with ISG members and with NZTA to offer education and guidance to councils to support the momentum toward the adoption of a risk-based approach to TTM, using NZTA's guide to temporary traffic management.

As the pilot evolves, WorkSafe remains committed to taking an iterative approach - listening, learning, and adapting to meet the goal of reducing excessive road cone use, while ensuring workers and the public are kept safe.

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Australia

Road safety trial to measure brain activity in older drivers

University of the Sunshine Coast researchers are seeking older drivers for a new trial measuring age-related changes in attention, as part of a broader program to develop a screening method for assessing cognitive fitness to drive.

Samantha Ellis, a PhD candidate at the MAIC/UniSC Road Safety Research Collaboration, explained the research will specifically examine brain activity and how it relates to driving.

"While a number of factors are important, we know that our ability to focus on the road is fundamental to safe driving," she said.

"As we age, it's natural to experience changes in our attentional abilities. While these changes are normal, it is important to understand how they may impact our driving performance."

To measure this, researchers will have eligible participants perform computerised attention tasks while measuring their brain activity using an EEG.

Participants will then complete measures of simulated driving to see how they respond and react behind the wheel, which will be compared to a control group of drivers aged below 30, with at least three years of driving experience.

"Unlike standard cognitive tests, the EEG will allow us to measure brain activity associated with attention in real-time," Ms Ellis said.

"This will allow us to better understand how the measured brain activity relates to driving performance."

Researchers expect the trial will provide greater insights on how attention impacts driving ability as we get older, including whether compensatory behaviours have a place in maintaining safety.

Senior Research Fellow Dr Kayla Stefanidis said this was crucial for informing the development of better tools to accurately assess cognitive fitness to drive.

"We want to keep older drivers who are safe, driving for as long as possible," she said.

Currently GPs and health professionals make assessments without the aid of any standardised measure or test for assessing cognitive fitness to drive.

"The development of a cognitive screening tool would help GPs and other health professionals accurately identify whether a patient requires further testing," Dr Stefanidis said.

"For older adults, it could also reduce costly and unnecessary assessments in older adults who do not require them."

To be eligible, participants must be aged 60-90 and able to attend one appointment at the University of the Sunshine Coast Sippy Downs campus.

People that wish to take part in the study can find out more here.

Australia

TAC reveals "Australia's Deadliest Predator" in a bold road safety initiative

In a striking collision of behavioural science and creativity, the Transport Accident Commission (TAC), in partnership with Thinkerbell, has launched a powerful new road safety initiative aimed at reframing the nation's perception of risk on our roads. Titled Australia's Deadliest Predator, the campaign takes the form of an integrated public experience combining a striking physical installation, immersive audio, social video, and radio.

The project comes to life as a large-scale public exhibit in Melbourne's CBD that mimics a zoo enclosure. But instead of a fearsome animal, visitors encounter the wreckage of a car destroyed in a speed-related crash. This draws attention to the fact that Australia's deadliest predator is in fact a speeding car, killing far more people in Australia than snakes, sharks, or crocodiles combined.

An accompanying immersive audio experience, accessible on-site or via personal devices, guides listeners through the chilling reality of how a small speed increase can spiral into tragedy. People will also experience the project across multiple other touchpoints asking people to consider Australia's greatest predator. Between 2001 and 2021, six Australians died each year on average due to deadly animals. By contrast, speeding has claimed more than 400 lives annually, totalling 4100 deaths in the past decade alone.

Despite the data, TAC-commissioned research found a dangerous perception gap: nearly 75 percent of Australians fear snakes, but only 11 percent believe driving 5 km/h over the limit is extremely dangerous. Says TAC Head of Community, Jacqui Sampson: "Australia's Deadliest Predator is a bold initiative that compares speeding fatalities to deaths caused by dangerous wildlife, encouraging Australians to rethink what they fear the most.

"We are showing up differently to connect Victorians to the real dangers of speeding and challenge the relaxed mentality that 'just a little bit over the limit' is OK. We are all in control of our behaviours on the road and have an absolute obligation to keep ourselves and others safe."

Tom Wenborn, Chief Creative at Thinkerbell says "We wanted to hold a mirror up to the public's irrational fears. People panic about snakes and sharks, yet shrug at doing 10km/ph over. From exhibit to earbud to screen, it's a multi-sensory intervention against complacency."

Says Adam Ferrier, psychologist and Chief Thinker at Thinkerbell: "Humans are hardwired to fear dramatic, visible threats—like sharks, snakes, or crocodiles—because our brains evolved to react to immediate and vivid dangers. But when it comes to everyday risks like speeding cars, we tend to underestimate the danger. This is a classic case of the availability heuristic: we worry about what's most memorable, not what's most likely. Behavioural science shows us that to shift behaviour, we need to make the invisible visible —so Australians can start seeing speeding not just as a statistic, but as the country's deadliest predator."

The Australia's Deadliest Predator enclosure is open to the public from 20–24 August outside the Melbourne Museum. Full campaign content and the audio experience are available online

Australia

Push for road safety reform: 'It's time for the penalties to match the severity'

Queensland's peak motoring body, RACQ, has launched a new road safety campaign, calling on the state government to take action, amid worrying crash and fatality statistics. Together with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS), Safer Australian Roads and Highways (SARAH Group) and Queensland Trucking Association (QTA), RACQ has launched the 'Get Serious on Road Safety' campaign. "Over the five years, there were 31,742 crashes where people were killed or seriously injured on Queensland roads. That represents an estimated social cost of $35.7 billion," said RACQ Managing Director and Group CEO David Carter.

"On average 79 people die each year in crashes involving a speeding driver, while 57 fatal crashes involved a drink driver and 59 a drug driver. "RACQ analysis also revealed that the 4000 drivers charged with dangerous driving over the past four years had already racked up more than 95,000 traffic offences – that's an average of 23 offences each. "It's clear we have a cultural crisis on our roads; it's time to get serious on road safety and crack down on dangerous drivers to save lives."

RACQ is calling for a series of key reforms to curb Queensland's road toll, which is sadly on track to exceed 300 again this year. "We must see a significant boost in roadside drug and alcohol testing, supported by investment in rehabilitation to curb this alarming culture," Carter said. "Expanded vehicle impoundment powers to remove extreme offenders from their vehicles are also needed to deal with those who repeatedly and recklessly put lives at risk."

RACQ is calling for the urgent rollout of more point-to-point speed cameras on high-risk roads and a greater on-road police presence to stop reckless driving and restore respect for road rules.

They also want a trusted vehicle security rating system introduced as part of broader efforts to tackle vehicle crime and stop stolen cars becoming deadly weapons. The worst-affected areas highlighted in RACQ's crash dashboard are in regional Queensland – a trend that comes as no surprise according to QTA CEO Gary Mahon, who has long pushed for road safety reform.

"What our members see on Queensland roads every day is confronting. For every serious or fatal crash, there are countless near misses – any one of them could be the next tragedy," Mahon said. "There's a serious problem with dangerous driver behaviour on our roads. It's time for the penalties to match the severity of the behaviour. Too many people still think speeding has no consequences – but our members can tell you, from being out there every day, there are." Fellow of RACS Dr David Lockwood added, "Queensland emergency departments see the aftermath of speeding and reckless driving every day – shattered lives, broken families, and life-changing consequences, such as ongoing pain, mental health struggles and even problems with usual activities. "These victims aren't in and out of hospital in a day; half of them undergo surgeries and endure months of complicated recovery, placing huge pressure on our healthcare system.

"We can't keep turning a blind eye. It is clear the current strategies are not working to curb the cultural crisis on Queensland's roads. It's time for both drivers and government to step up. This isn't just about enforcement – it's about saving lives."

For Peter Frazer OAM, road trauma is deeply personal. He lost his daughter in a crash that drove him to found the SARAH Group and Australia's National Road Safety Week. "As everyone has a right to get home safe, any life lost is one too many. While all Australian governments have committed to halving the road toll by 2030, the number of lives lost continues in the wrong direction. Tragically here in Queensland, it continues to rise," Frazer said.

"Enough is enough. It's time to implement stronger enforcement and consequences to stop this unnecessary and tragic loss of life."

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Australia

National road safety data shows pedestrian deaths have increased by almost 50 percent since 2021

The number of pedestrians killed in Australia has risen by almost 50 percent in four years as the country's road toll reaches a 15-year high, according to the nation's peak motoring body.

Australian Automobile Association (AAA) managing director Michael Bradley said it was a sign the federal government's national road safety strategy was "falling well short of its targets".

The national road safety data hub shows 1,340 people died on Australia's roads in the 12 months to July 31, 2025, which was a 2.9 percent increase from the previous year.

This toll includes 205 pedestrians, which is 44 more than the 12 months prior.

"Since 2021, when Australian government adopted a national road safety strategy target of halving road deaths by 2030, total road fatalities have increased by 22.2 percent," an AAA spokesperson said.

"Over the same period, fatalities among pedestrians have increased by 48.6 percent."

A spokesperson for Federal Transport Minister Catherine King said the government had introduced a number of new vehicle standards in recent years to improve safety outcomes for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

"This includes Australian Design Rules that cover devices for indirect vision to reduce blind spots around trucks and advanced emergency braking for passenger vehicles to reduce fatal collisions with pedestrians," they said.

State and territory breakdown

Tasmania records 41 percent rise in road deaths in 12-month period

New South Wales was the deadliest state for road fatalities, with 355 deaths recorded between August 2024 and July 2025 — 17 more lives than the year prior.

Both Queensland and Victoria recorded 299 deaths, an increase of 2.7 and 1.7 percent respectively.

Western Australia's fatalities spiked by 12.7 percent with 204 deaths over 12 months.

The road toll rose 14.3 percent in the ACT, and by 41.9 percent in Tasmania where 44 people were killed.

In South Australia, the road toll improved by 9.4 percent, and in the Northern Territory the lives lost decreased from 64 to 44 this past year.

The AAA is calling for more transparency around what could be causing these dangerous encounters, particularly those involving pedestrians.

"The rising rate of pedestrian deaths was driven by sharp increases in Western Australia — 31 deaths, up from 14 a year earlier — and Queensland — 37 deaths, up from 23 a year earlier," a spokesperson said.

Pedestrian Council of Australia chief executive Harold Scruby said there were numerous factors that put pedestrians at risk — such as speed limits.

"We could easily make all of our CBDs 30 kph," he said.

"Paris, London, Madrid have 30 kph zones in high pedestrian activity areas, and that also helps the cyclists. The traffic moves well together and safely."

Cont....

Australia

He also questioned the decision to allow e-mobility devices on footpaths.

"Footpaths were created for one purpose, to protect pedestrians from vehicles and to make us safe — and what do we do? We invite these high-powered motor bikes and e-scooters, and we expect things to not go awry," he said.

Earlier this year, the Queensland government launched an inquiry into e-scooter and e-bike safety to look at the current rules around the mobility devices, how they shape up to other jurisdictions, and how laws are enforced.

Australia's transport ministers met in Melbourne this month where they agreed the Western Australian government would draft a framework to regulate the use of e-scooters that would be supported by other jurisdictions.

A spokesperson for Ms King said while the regulation of e-bike and e-scooter use is the responsibility of states and territories, the "community concern and risk" they presented was clear.

"That's why the Australian government is continuing to work with the states and territories to identify the risks and opportunities they, as well as personal mobility devices more broadly, present — and identify appropriate risk management strategies," they said.

Supporting road safety in Queensland

Queensland MPs from across the political spectrum have come together to form the state's first Parliamentary Friends of Road Safety. Supported by Transurban, Government, industry, and the community, the group will share expertise and research, and champion positive road safety outcomes as a priority issue in Queensland. The group has been formed in response to alarming road fatality and trauma statistics in Queensland, with almost 200 lives already lost on Queensland roads this year. These aren't just numbers - they're families, friends, and futures cut short.

Transurban's Head of Road Safety, Liz Waller, strongly supports the initiative and is confident it will drive real change in road safety. "Data-driven collaboration is essential to improving road safety outcomes and it's great to see industry and government coming together to share knowledge and find solutions," Ms Waller says.

Transurban has recently partnered with the Department of Transport and Main Roads and MAIC-QUT Road Safety Research Collaboration (a three-year research program focused on advancing Road Transport Psychology and Road Transport Safe Systems) on a new research project, investigating tailgating behaviour on Queensland roads. The research is timely, with our data revealing that during peak periods, more than 50 percent of motorists are tailgating less than two seconds behind other vehicles on the Logan and Gateway Motorways and 20 percent less than one second, whilst travelling at over 90km/hr.

These are alarming statistics, given motorists are encouraged to drive at least two seconds behind the car in front in good conditions, and even more if the roads are wet.

Australia

$517 million road contract awarded in Melbourne

Alliance partners have been awarded a $517 million (A$800 million) contract in Melbourne, Australia, for a stretch of the Eastern Freeway. The package of works is to upgrade the Hoddle to Burke stretch of the Eastern Freeway.

The design and build alliance includes Seymour Whyte (a subsidiary of VINCI Construction), John Holland, Jacobs, Mott MacDonald and Major Road Projects Victoria. The value of the construction contract value will be shared between Seymour Whyte and John Holland.

The Eastern Freeway will benefit from new express lanes, new traffic management technology and Melbourne's first dedicated busway. These changes will reduce travel times by up to 11 minutes between Springvale Road and Hoddle Street and improve public transport in Melbourne's east.

The work is being managed by the Victorian Government and the project includes the addition of one lane in each direction, new and upgraded walking and cycling paths, bridges and underpasses, upgrade community open spaces, revitalise wetlands and waterways and plant new trees and plants.

Tougher noise standards and new and upgraded noise walls will also deliver better noise protection for residents.

Work will also connect the Eastern Freeway to the new North East Link tunnels in Bulleen – linking Melbourne's east to the M80 Ring Road in Greensborough, cutting travel times by 35 minutes, skipping 18 sets of traffic lights and taking 15,000 trucks/day off local roads.

The Eastern Freeway Upgrades will be delivered in three stages. Major works are underway now. The project is due for completion in mid-2028.

Victoria invests $210m on road safety

The Victorian government is advancing road safety across Victoria with a $210 million investment through the Safe Local Roads and Streets program, aimed at reducing road trauma on local roads. Announced by Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne, the program will fund more than 200 projects to support local councils with up to $2 million each for safety upgrades on local roads, intersections, and precincts. The funding enables local councils to implement safety enhancements, including pedestrian crossings, intersection upgrades, and speed-calming measures.Local governments manage 87 percent of Victoria's roads, making this program crucial in improving everyday travel for residents going to school, work, and community activities.

The Safe Local Roads and Streets Program supports councils to develop, plan, and deliver these vital safety infrastructure projects, aligning with the stategGovernment's 2030 Road Safety Strategy which aims to halve road deaths by 2030 and work towards eliminating road fatalities by 2050.Minister Horne said: "We've funded more than 200 projects to help local councils to deliver safer streets where local communities needs them most."This initiative forms part of a broader Victorian government commitment to road safety, including a record $976 million Better Roads Blitz in the current budget to repair potholes and upgrade road surfaces across the state. TAC Chief Executive Officer Tracey Slatter emphasised the importance of the funding for local road safety efforts, stating: "We know local governments are deeply committed to making their local roads safer, and this program is providing the much-needed investment needed to help councils prevent crashes and save lives in their local communities." Head of Road Safety Victoria Marcelo Vidales added: "We're working alongside every single Victorian council to deliver important road safety infrastructure on local roads." This comprehensive funding approach underscores the Victorian government's commitment to safer community roads and the goal of significantly reducing road trauma over the coming years.

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UK road safety push could see mandatory eye tests for older drivers

Older drivers could face mandatory eye tests and the drink-drive limit could be cut as the government tries to reduce the number of road deaths.

In a major overhaul of the UK's road safety laws, ministers are also reportedly considering tougher penalties for uninsured drivers and failing to wear a seatbelt.

The proposals, expected to be published as part of a road safety strategy in the autumn, come amid concern about the number of people being killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads.

Last year, 1,633 people were killed and almost 28,000 seriously injured in traffic incidents, and numbers have remained relatively constant after a large fall between 2000 and 2010.

A Labour source said: "At the end of the last Labour government, the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads was at a record low, but numbers have remained stubbornly high under successive Conservative governments.

"In no other circumstance would we accept 1,600 people dying, with thousands more seriously injured, costing the NHS more than £2bn a year."

Meanwhile, the number of people killed in drink-driving incidents has risen over the past decade, reaching a 13-year high in 2022 and prompting concern that existing road safety measures are no longer working.

Under the plans being considered by the transport secretary, Heidi Alexander, and first reported in the Times, the drink-drive limit in England and Wales could be cut from 35 micrograms of alcohol a 100ml of breath to 22 micrograms.

This figure would be in line with Scotland, which cut its drink-drive limit in 2014, and the rest of Europe, where no other country has a limit as high as that in England and Wales.

The UK is also one of only three European countries to rely on self-reporting of eyesight problems that affect driving, leading ministers to consider compulsory eye tests every three years for drivers aged over 70 and a driving ban for those who fail.

Other proposals are reported to include allowing the police to bring prosecutions for drug-driving on the basis of roadside saliva tests rather than blood tests as increasing numbers of drivers are being caught with drugs in their system.

The Labour source added: "This Labour government will deliver the first road safety strategy in a decade, imposing tougher penalties on those breaking the law, protecting road users and restoring order to our roads."

The strategy is due to be published in the autumn, and all proposals will be subject to consultation.

Global

Evaluating the friction of pavement markings and colored pavement – MnDOT

Pavement markings make travel safer for all road users. However, the material used for retroreflectivity can be slicker than the surrounding pavement. To maximize the safety of bicyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians, MnDOT and local agencies explored the friction values of different marking materials. Project results produced valuable information on relative friction between pavement and marking materials and, importantly, identified effective testing tools to evaluate and compare products.

Pavement markings are crucial for traffic flow and safety for all road users, especially at night or in other low visibility conditions. Retroreflective material reflects light back to its source, enhancing visibility at night. But the components of these materials can make the markings slicker than the surrounding pavement. This change in friction between the pavement and the markings may create a safety hazard for bicyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians, especially when the markings are wet.

The friction and durability of pavement markings and colored pavement materials are improving. While MnDOT and local agencies use a variety of pavement marking materials, the differences in friction between the markings and pavement have not been investigated. To enhance the safety of all road users, the agencies wanted to explore and compare the friction values of various materials and the best equipment to measure friction.

What Did We Do?

A comprehensive review of past research on skid resistance and durability of pavement marking and colored pavement products explored latex, thermoplastics, preformed tape, epoxy-based material, methyl methacrylate (MMA) marking materials and other products. Researchers also reviewed NordicCert, a Scandinavian certification process for road marking materials, to inform consideration of a similar framework in Minnesota.

To understand how pavement markings impact vulnerable road users, researchers evaluated data from 351 motorcycle crashes, including pavement marking details, road surface conditions and weather. Additionally, a survey of road users gathered perspectives from bicyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians regarding general experiences with pavement markings and any slipping incidents.

Preliminary testing determined the friction properties of pavement surfaces, pavement markings and colored pavement. The research team also tested and compared three types of friction-measuring equipment: a dynamic friction tester (DFT), which operates at variable speeds; a British Pendulum Tester (BPT), which is only used at very low speeds but is still representative of pedestrian and bicyclist experience; and a T2Go slow-moving wheeled friction-measuring device.

Pavement marking friction experiments at the MnROAD testing facility in November 2023 and June 2024 identified wear from traffic and winter conditions. Ten products installed on both concrete and asphalt pavements included latex with Type 1 beads, different epoxy formulations, Preform Thermo and MMA supplemented with beads, corundum, taconite, crushed glass and other materials. The research team used a DFT and a BPT for the friction measurements, and a Sideway-force Coefficient Routine Investigation Machine (SCRIM) to obtain continuous friction data.

What Did We Learn?

The analysis of motorcycle crash data showed

Cont....

Global

a strong correlation between pavement markings and surface conditions, especially under adverse weather conditions. Similarly, all three vulnerable road user groups surveyed reported that pavement markings were slick when wet. All groups recommended marking material improvements, such as adding texture or roughness for better safety.

Preliminary tests revealed higher friction of epoxy pavement markings on dry concrete, but higher friction varied between the pavement and markings in wet conditions. The DFT and BPT produced consistent measurements, but the T2Go device measurements were inconsistent with the other two devices. As in preliminary testing, the DFT and BPT produced comparable results in the MnROAD tests, as did the SCRIM. Average pavement marking friction decreased over time due to wear and environmental exposure. Materials such as corundum, crushed glass and locally available taconite increased the friction properties of epoxy- and MMA-based markings.

The NordicCert pavement marking certification system could provide a model for a similar certification system in Minnesota. While desirable pavement marking friction levels were not conclusively identified, researchers suggested a procedure used in the U.K. for providing options to correct any skid resistance problems.

What's Next?

MnDOT and local agencies can continue to monitor the pavement markings applied at MnROAD and evaluate various materials and friction enhancements across winter seasons and other varied conditions. The DFT could be the most cost-effective, consistent testing method. The SCRIM provides the most comprehensive friction measurements without the need for traffic control, but it may be cost-prohibitive.

$760 million Taiwan bridge project nearing completion

The final section of Taiwan's new Tamsui-Guandu Bridge is being slotted into place. The section has been transported to the site from Taipei Port. The bridge is costing an estimated $760 million to construct and stretches 920m across the Tamsui River.

According to Taiwan's Highway Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation, the bridge will be the largest span single-tower asymmetrical cable-stayed bridge in the world when complete. The bridge is expected to open to traffic in the second quarter of 2026 and will help reduce traffic congestion in Taipei, as the existing Guandu Bridge crossing over the Tamsui River is not able to cope with the volume of vehicles it has to carry at present. The new bridge will also cut travel time between Taoyuan International Airport and Tamsui.

Financing for the bridge project has been provided jointly by the Ministry of the Interior, the New Taipei City Government and the Ministry of Transportation. The bridge has been designed jointly by Zaha Hadid Architects, Sinotech Engineering Consultants and Leonhardt Andra und Partner Beratende Ingenieure.

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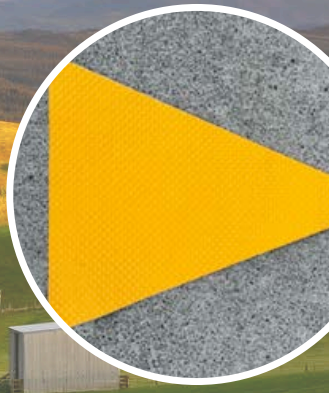

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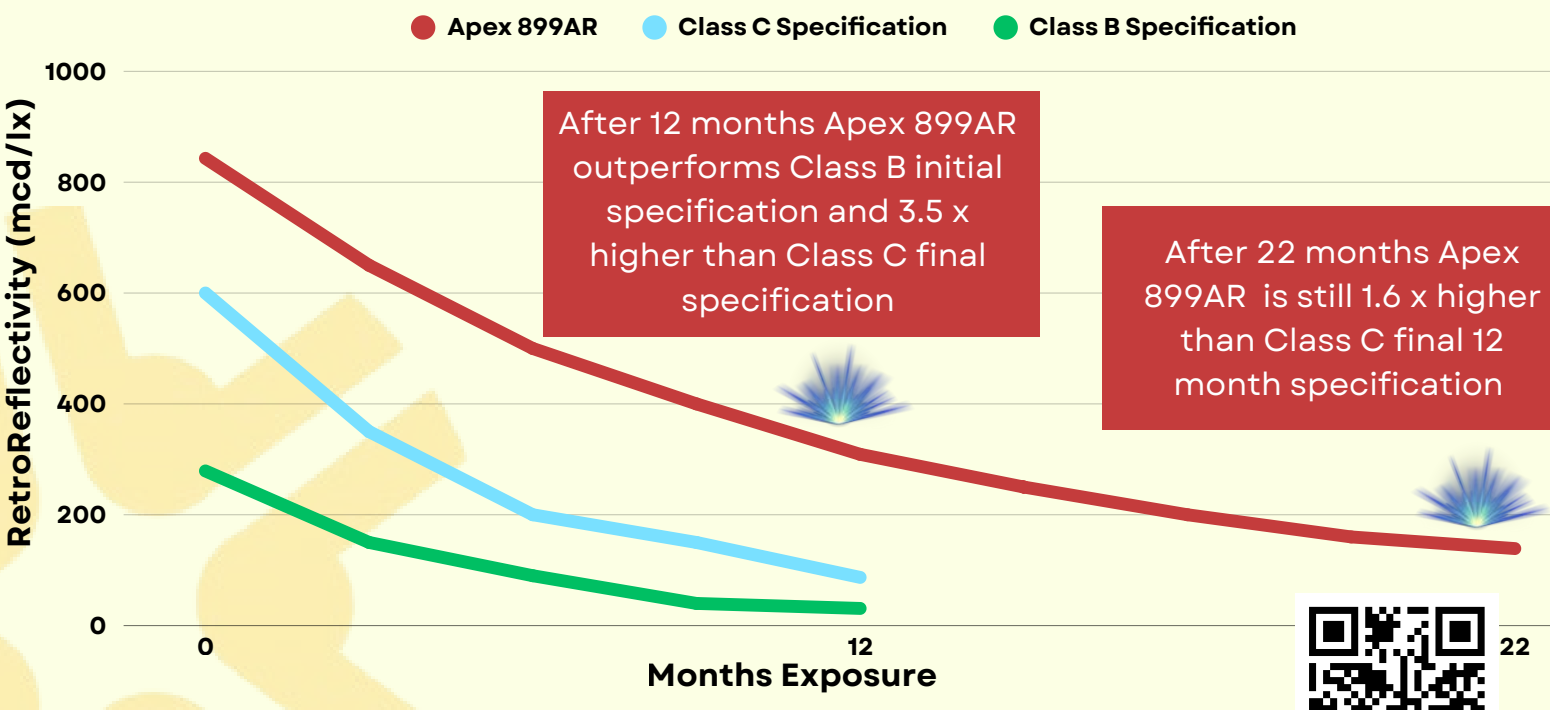

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A two-wheeled future: How cities can re-imagine shared e-bike and e-scooter solutions

Electric bikes and scooters have swept through city streets with a mix of enthusiasm and controversy. Heralded as green alternatives to cars, these nimble vehicles promise less traffic, cleaner air and more accessible mobility. But the story hasn't been all smooth riding, as highlighted in our recent article on the challenges that micromobility both faces and presents. From cluttered walkways to safety concerns, shared micromobility has faced criticism wherever it's been introduced.

Still, many cities are recognising that the question isn't whether shared e-bikes and scooters should exist – but how they can be managed in ways that make them an asset instead of an eyesore. Around the world, urban planners, tech companies and local governments are experimenting with creative solutions that could turn these services from a frustration into a celebrated part of the transport ecosystem. We've heard all about the challenges – what about the solutions?

Smarter parking: digital corrals and incentives

One of the loudest complaints about e-bikes and e-scooters is that they're often left haphazardly blocking pavements, forcing pedestrians to walk in the street and we've all seen e-scooters dumped in parks and rivers.

Cities are countering this with "digital corrals" – designated virtual parking spots linked through GPS.

Riders end their trip only when they park within these zones, and apps may reward good behaviour with discounts, loyalty points, or future ride credits. As a prime example, San Francisco is experimenting with painted zones and geo-fencing technology that won't let riders lock vehicles outside the approved areas.

Even more inventive is the idea of "dynamic pricing." Imagine paying a little bit less if you return your scooter to a busier hub, or a little more if you leave it outside the network. This system mimics bike-sharing docks without the physical infrastructure, using financial nudges to encourage responsible use.

Reimagining street design for micromobility

Shared micromobility often feels chaotic because it's squeezed into infrastructure built primarily for cars and pedestrians. Rather than banning e-scooters from pedestrian walkways or bike lanes, some cities are rethinking street layouts to give them their own, bespoke and legitimate place.

"Slow lanes," for instance, are popping up as dedicated zones for scooters and bikes, separate from both pedestrians and cars. In Barcelona, micromobility corridors have been designed to reduce conflicts and accidents, while in New York City, protected bike lanes are expanding rapidly to accommodate the growing demand.

Another idea being piloted is modular "mobility hubs." These hubs act as docking spaces, charging stations and transfer points between public transport nodes and shared micromobility. Think of them as the 21st-century bus stop where your ride doesn't just pick you up but charges, updates software and waits neatly out of the way.

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Global

Harnessing data for safer streets

Every shared ride produces a stream of data: routes taken, speeds reached, stops made. Cities can use this information not just to regulate companies, but to improve safety.

In Portland, Oregon, city officials analyse scooter GPS data to spot where crashes or sudden stops happen most often, revealing poorly designed intersections or potholes. Instead of blaming riders for accidents, the city can then invest in infrastructure fixes.

Some companies are going a step further, embedding AI into their scooters to detect dangerous riding. For example, scooters that sense pavement use can alert the rider – or autonomously slow down – before conflicts occur. In the near future, we may see scooters that adapt speed limits dynamically based on time of day, density of pedestrians, or even on proximity to schools.

Equity first: expanding access beyond the city centre

Critics often argue that shared micromobility mainly serves tourists or affluent young professionals.

To counteract this, cities are pushing for 'equity-centred' plans.

Los Angeles requires operators to serve low-income neighbourhoods, while Chicago has experimented with reduced pricing for residents who qualify for public benefits. Some cities are introducing 'unlock-free' zones, where riders don't have to pay the standard activation fee, lowering barriers for short and frequent trips.

Additionally, partnerships with employers, schools and community groups can ensure that e-bikes and e-scooters meet actual mobility needs, not just leisure rides. When paired with public transport, micromobility can fill gaps in "last-mile" travel, making commutes easier for people who might otherwise rely on cars.

Tackling safety with creative education campaigns

Helmet laws and safety campaigns are nothing new, but cities are realising that they need more imaginative approaches to resonate with riders. Some companies have partnered with influencers or gamified safety, offering rewards for watching instructional videos or participating in virtual road safety challenges.

In some cities scooter operators distributed free helmets that could be unlocked with the same app as the scooter, removing one excuse for not wearing one. Meanwhile, in Helsinki, an art-driven campaign painted colourful "safe ride zones" directly onto pedestrian walkways to guide scooter riders toward correct routes.

Integrating with public transport for seamless journeys

The most successful shared micromobility systems won't stand alone – they'll be part of a broader ecosystem. Forward-thinking cities are already exploring integrated fare systems where a single transport card or app covers your bus, subway and e-scooter trip.

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"In Vienna, residents can plan entire journeys through one platform, WienMobil, seamlessly transferring between tram, train and e-scooter. Singapore is testing similar integration, with real-time updates showing when a scooter ride will best connect with the arrival of a bus. This approach reframes micromobility not as a competitor to public transport but as its ally, making urban mobility more flexible and resilient.

Green power meets circular design

Environmental sustainability was one of the original USPs of shared micromobility, but early models rather backfired: scooters were often scrapped after just a few months of use. To address this, cities and companies are turning to circular design principles. Next-generation scooters feature swappable batteries, reducing downtime and waste. Charging depots run on renewable energy, while retired vehicles are recycled for parts. Some cities are even linking micromobility fleets with broader clean-energy policies, encouraging companies to power their operations with local solar or wind resources.

The road ahead

Shared e-bikes and scooters are here to stay, but whether they become beloved or begrudged depends on how cities shape the next phase of implementation. From smarter parking and data-driven safety to equity programmes and green innovation, the potential solutions are as diverse as the challenges. What's clear is that the future of micromobility can't be built by companies alone. It requires cities to take bold, creative steps and by embracing innovation instead of restrictions, municipalities can transform the narrative from "nuisance" to "necessity."

The pavement clutter, safety concerns and access issues that dominate headlines today may soon feel like growing pains on the path to a new urban reality: streets designed for people, not just for cars.

€300 million bypass for Montpellier

Planning is now underway in Southern France for the new €300 million western bypass for Montpellier.

The project will provide additional capacity between Juvignac and Saint-Jean-de-Védas.

This new 6.2km stretch will provide an improved connection for the A 709 and A 750 motorways. Once the work is complete, it will provide an urban ring road for Montpellier.

An environmental study has been carried out although more approvals will be needed, while much of the land required has now been acquired.

The project is being developed by Vinci Autoroutes, which will also operate the route.

Around 300,000 people live in the city itself, while more than 810,000 live in the Montpellier metropolitan area.

Montpellier has seen the fastest growth in population of any city in France over the last 25 years and construction of this new link road will help reduce congestion for this historic city.

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