

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Roads and Road Safety



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LOWER ROAD TOLL NO COMFORT TO 213 FAMILIES

Victoria recorded its equal lowest road toll since records began in 2020 - but that is of no solace to more than 200 Victorian families who will start the New Year without a loved one.

Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll today joined representatives from Victoria Police, Road Safety Victoria and the Transport Accident Commission to reflect on the past year on our roads and reiterate the Andrews Labor Government's commitment to tackling road trauma.

Despite reduced traffic throughout the year due to coronavirus restrictions 213 people still died on Victorian roads – and the statistics show poor, high-risk driver behaviour is continuing to have fatal consequences.

Disappointingly, enforcement agencies reported a spike in high-range speeding during coronavirus restrictions, with drink and drug driving, illegal phone use, fatigue and lack of seatbelts also significant contributors to road trauma last year.

While fatal crashes reduced across the board, regional roads were again overrepresented with 126 lives lost, accounting for more than half of the state's road deaths – with excessive speed and fatigue major factors in country crashes.

Fatalities were down across every road user group except cyclists, with an increase from 11 deaths in 2019 to 13 cyclists in 2020. Around 68 per cent of drivers and passengers killed on Victorian roads last year were in vehicles that were more than 10 years old.

The Labor Government recently launched its new *Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030*, with a focus on delivering solutions to the major contributing factors to road trauma as well as proactively making our roads safer for those where their workplace is the road, and our more vulnerable road users.

The Strategy will develop programs to stop drink drivers in their tracks and prevent reoffending, getting young and older drivers into safer cars and deploying innovative high-tech cameras across Victoria to hold distracted drivers to account.

Stronger enforcement may not be popular, but it is effective. Enforcement is one of the strongest tools to influence driver behaviour – and while too many Victorians are still dying on the roads, enforcement of risky behaviours remains vital.

The Government's mission is to halve road deaths by 2030, building on initiatives like road infrastructure upgrades that have proven effective at reducing road trauma on some of our highest-risk regional roads.

Every Victorian has a role to play in driving down road trauma. Without the support of everyone making safe choices – whether on two wheels or four, on a bike or walking across the road – we will continue to see hundreds of families shattered by road deaths each year.

Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

"Any reduction in the road trauma is welcome – but even one life lost on Victorian roads is too many, let alone more than 200 families starting 2021 in grief. We all have to do more – and we've released an ambitious new Road Safety Strategy to make sure all Victorians are safe on our roads and reduce the risky behaviour that we know causes trauma."

Quote attributable to Minister for Police Lisa Neville

"We want to build a strong culture of road safety across our state, but we cannot do that alone. Each and every Victorian has a responsibility to drive safely, and it's a responsibility we all need to take seriously."

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