

What's important in the Barossa, Light, Mallala and Gawler region?

Community Cabinet October 2015



September 2015

For more than 110 years, RAA has proudly served its members and the South Australian community by offering a range of services and advocating on behalf of our members to make South Australia a state where people of all ages are safe, secure and mobile.

In this Submission, we comment on matters important to our members, with a focus on roads, road safety, transport options, fuel, tourism and cycling in the Barossa, Light, Mallala and Gawler regions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Historically mobility access for the wider community has not been a big focus of transport policy, other than to assume that those who do not have access to a private vehicle would use public transport.

We believe community transport policy has been the responsibility of the health portfolio. It is increasingly being understood, however, that this approach does not meet the different mobility needs of an entire community.

RAA will highlight a number of key areas important to our member's:

- Road safety
- Road maintenance and investment
- Cycling
- Tourism
- Fuel
- Mobility and transport options

Transport and mobility options for regional South Australians can be limiting, with smaller towns and no viable critical mass for public transport options.

Crash statistics showed in the Barossa, Light and Mallala areas driving under the influence (DUI) is a key crash factor at 8.4%, significantly higher than the Gawler region. While DUI is not acceptable in any circumstance, understanding the reason for this behaviour will help develop solutions.

Tourism is a major industry for areas within this Community Cabinet scope. In analysing crash data, it was identified non-local residents accounted for a high proportion of crashes at specific sites. Making the region safer is important when growing tourism travel and encouraging longer stays RAA encourages the government to prioritise ongoing road maintenance funding for regional areas.

RAA has taken this opportunity to highlight some of the key areas of concern, while not an exhaustive list, this paper highlights a series of major concerns.

DISCUSSION

Road Safety

RAA's Road Safety team have analysed crashes in the four council areas of City of Gawler, Barossa District Council, Mallala District Council and Light Regional Council over the last 5 years (2010-14). In looking at the distinct differences analysis is in two sections, one for the City of Gawler and then the remaining three regional Councils together.

Barossa District Council, Mallala District Council and Light Regional Council

Within the time frame of 2010-14, there were a total of 730 casualty crashes:

LGA	Casualty Crashes	Total Casualties	Serious Injuries	Fatalities
Barossa DC	287	389	96	15
Light Regional	259	367	82	14
Mallala DC	184	268	54	5
TOTAL	730	1024	232	34

NB: This is casualty crashes. As an 'all crash' figure, it would be unreliable.

For each of the three LGA regions above, the most prominent crash type was 'Hit Fixed Object'; accounting for 38% of all casualty crashes across the three council areas. Other prominent crash types include 'Roll' Over' (17%), 'Right Angle' (16%). Rear End crashes were also prevalent in Barossa and Light, but less so in Mallala.

As you might expect for these crash categories, inattention plays a big part, accounting for 53% of all casualty crashes. Perhaps more alarmingly, DUI accounts for the second highest number of crashes; 61 out of 730 casualty crashes (8.4%) were caused by road users that were DUI.

Across the three council areas, 32% of casualty crashes occurred at intersections. Intersections with the highest number of casualty crashes include:

- Kapunda to Gawler Road & Roseworthy Road (Light Reg.) – 7 Casualty Crashes (4 Minor Injury (MI) & 3 Serious Injury ((SI))
- Port Wakefield Road & Brooks Road (Mallala DC) – 7 Casualty Crashes (4 MI & 3 SI)
- Mallala to Two Wells Road & Port Wakefield Road (Mallala DC) – 6 Casualty Crashes (6 MI)
- Stelzer Road & Seppeltsfield Road (Light Reg.) – 5 Casualty Crashes (2 MI & 3 SI)
- Sturt Highway & Nurse Road (Light Reg.) – 5 Casualty Crashes (3 MI, 1 SI & 1 Fatal)
- Williamstown to Birdwood Road & Springton Road (Barossa DC) – 5 Casualty Crashes (3 MI & 2 SI)

More than half of all casualty crashes in these council areas occurred on high speed roads; 58% of casualty crashes occurred on roads with a designated speed limit of 100km/h or 110km/h. Roads where casualty crashes most commonly occurred (within these council boundary areas) include:

- Barossa Valley Way – 75 Casualty Crashes
- Port Wakefield Road – 72 Casualty Crashes
- Sturt Highway – 53 Casualty Crashes
- Kapunda to Gawler Road – 34 Casualty Crashes
- Main North Road – 33 Casualty Crashes

Gawler

Between 2010 and 2014 there were a total of 306 casualty crashes in the City of Gawler council area.

LGA	Casualty Crashes	Total Casualties	Serious Injuries	Fatalities
City of Gawler	306	406	27	2

Unlike Barossa, Light and Mallala, the most prominent crash type in the City of Gawler was Right Angle crashes, making up 31% of all casualty crashes in that council area. This is followed by rear enders, accounting for 28%. Hit Fixed Object crashes, which were highest in the other three council areas was third on the list in Gawler, accounting for 14% of casualty crashes there.

Similar to the other areas, inattention was the leading cause of casualty crashes in the City of Gawler, accounting for 43% of the total. This is followed by failing to give way at 18%, failing to stand (8%) and disobeying a stop sign (also 8%). Note that DUI, which was a leading cause of crashes in Barossa, Light and Mallala accounted for 3% of casualty crashes in Gawler.

Crashes at intersections accounted for 57% of all casualty crashes in Gawler which is much higher than the other three council areas. The intersections where most casualty crashes occurred is as follows:

- Main North Road & Dalkeith Road – 39 Casualty Crashes
- Adelaide Road & Nineteenth Street – 33 Casualty Crashes
- Adelaide Road & Twelfth Street – 20 Casualty Crashes
- Barossa Valley Way & High Street – 19 Casualty Crashes
- Bridge Street & Murray Street – 18 Casualty Crashes

Note how these intersection totals are much higher than the totals in the other three council areas. There are another 21 intersections that have higher crash totals in Gawler before we get to the highest intersections in Barossa, Light & Mallala.

61% of casualty crashes in Gawler occurred on roads with a designated 50km/h speed limit. 8% occurred on high speed roads with a speed limit of 100km/h or 110km/h. Roads where casualty crashes occurred most within the Gawler Council area include:

- Main North Road – 84 Casualty Crashes
- Adelaide Road – 46 Casualty Crashes
- Murray Street – 30 Casualty Crashes
- Dalkeith Road – 27 Casualty Crashes
- Barossa Valley Way – 15 Casualty Crashes

Roads

Road surface issues are a recurring theme reported on RAA's Report a Road system, and a review of key tourist routes within the region may be considered with a view to improving ride quality for road users.

The 80km/h speed restrictions posted throughout the region have been a positive step forward in road safety. While arterial roads should be maintained at 100km/h or 110km/h as far as practicable, it would be beneficial to hold further reviews of speed limits on the higher speed roads in the region which have a significant number of property accesses to key tourist attractions.

The Northern Connector will play a key role in reducing the travel time between Adelaide and the Mid North, Gawler and Barossa Valley regions. The Northern Connector will not only benefit the tourism industry but also the transport and logistics industry that are likely to experience cost savings from the potential reductions in travel time and fuel consumption.

Roads within the identified Community Cabinet region have diverse use heavy vehicle transport is extensive, with the region having two significant freight routes, the Sturt Highway and Port Wakefield Road.

In the Barossa region, the highest freight movement is found on the Sturt Highway where heavy vehicles contribute to between 18 and 20% of the total traffic flow. On the minor and collector roads within the region, heavy vehicles represent between 5 and 10% of the total traffic.

Samuel Road and Seppeltsfield Road are just two of the roads in the region that form part of the Barossa Valley Freight Route. RAA's recent road safety audit also suggested that other intersections along the freight route should be examined to determine if improvements can be made to assist the freight movement.

The Barrier Highway has the highest heavy vehicle volumes in the Mid North with 15% of the traffic comprising of heavy vehicles. Around the Mallala area, Port Wakefield's traffic volumes consist of between 15 and 20% of heavy traffic while on the other minor and collector roads, heavy vehicles represent 10 to 15% of the total traffic flow.

Cycling

Barossa Valley is fortunate to have had significant investment in a number of on-road and off-road cycle lanes. These provide safer route options for local and tourist cyclists while enhancing the tourism industry through the development of planned wine and cuisine trails.

RAA would welcome expansion of the network within the Barossa Valley as well as development of similar infrastructure in neighbouring areas including the Mid North and the Light and Mallala regions.

As cycling tourism increases greater emphasis will be required for supporting infrastructure, with separated cycling options the safest.

Tourism

The Barossa region attracts around 214,000 visitors at a three night average stay, annually, it is estimated a further 680,000 day trips occur. These figures coupled with the limited alternative transport options, demonstrate that there are large numbers of drivers in the Barossa driving unfamiliar roads.

In 2014, RAA conducted a Road Safety Audit at an intersection on Seppeltsfield Road with a notorious crash history. Following a further crash later that year, RAA developed a concept for a low cost treatment at the intersection, targeted at addressing the primary crash risk which was failure to Give Way at crossroads. The concept was constructed in 2015 as an interim measure until a larger roundabout could be constructed.

Analysis of the crashes at the intersection showed that the road users responsible for the crashes were not local to the region. The majority of road users were from interstate with others residing in the inner Adelaide suburbs. Our members have also made us aware of intersections within the region that have similar issues and the demographics of the road users involved suggest that a region wide road review is required. The review should assess the level of safety built into intersections and mid blocks and explore options for other low cost treatments that will protect road users.

From this road audit RAA has identified the need for key tourist regions requiring additional road infrastructure consideration. During 2016 RAA will be conducting specific tourism

assessments with particular focus on driving in non-familiar environments and the specific needs of these drivers.

Initially RAA will focus on Kangaroo Island, Barossa Valley and the Clare Valley. There are a number of safety groups in these regions, and RAA will aim to work with these groups, the community and responsible road authorities to refine their concerns to some specific locations, allowing us to undertake formal road safety audits and more detailed investigations than we've undertaken in the past. RAA will target areas with high crash rates as well as taking a proactive approach in identifying safety risks. We'll aim to suggest solutions and where possible, assist authorities and the community in lodging blackspot funding applications for treatments.

Fuel

Fuel is the most popular section on the RAA website; members can search by location and fuel type for pricing in their region. Currently RAA is unable to supply this real time service to residents in the Barossa, Light, and Gawler or Mallala regions, due to data not being publicly listed.

Additionally RAA provides monthly regional fuel ratings for 18 regional locations, these monthly ratings are an indication of how retailers have passed on fluctuations in wholesale prices. Due to retail price data not being available this service is also unavailable.

Petrol prices can vary up to 30cpl between Adelaide/Gawler/Evanston and neighbouring regions. Publicly listed fuel prices would allow RAA to advocate against excessive prices and motorists could knowingly source the best priced fuel on their journey.

Public and Community Transport

Mobility options other than personal vehicle are limited within the identified Community Cabinet region. Public transport to the region is not very accessible, with Gawler being the end of the train line and minimal transport options past this point.

Bus transport is offered to all regions through private providers on a daily basis, these services provide transport to the major centres from Adelaide Central Bus Station, not to smaller outlying regions. Gawler and the Barossa offer a limited Dial-a-Ride services, this comprises of, pre-booking a collection time and the paying for a point to point service. Currently the hours are limited to predominantly office hours and a limited Gawler evening service.

Community transport options are offered to community members that have limited mobility options for shopping and medical appointments and are coordinated through the individual District Councils. All regions offer a centralised community bus service that services major towns transporting clients to as far as Muno Para Shopping Centre, community bus services are offered bi-weekly excluding public holidays.

Community car services are more flexible, however are offered as the last available transport option for mainly medical appointments. Pre booked, volunteer services are door to door with a nominated donation payment.

RAA supports community transport options, in many cases this is the only option for residents to access shops or medical appointments. Ideally funding for these services should be considered core/ongoing, eliminating the recent plight of many waiting to find out if they were able to continue operating after funding changes. The hybrid of federal, state and local funding can also be confusing and limiting in both service provision and access of these services.

Private taxi providers operate across the region, the numbers and availability of these services is unknown, however appear to offer the most flexible paid transport option. Hire cars and specific small tour buses complete the private booked transport options.

We believe there are still many people in these regions with limited suitable and affordable transport options. Dynamic ridesharing may provide additional options for transport in regional areas ultimately increasing mobility choices and reducing crashes related to DUI.

RAA Comment/Position

RAA has long advocated for a long term planned and consistent approach to road maintenance and forward works. Australian road users contribute billions of dollars annually to Federal and State revenue through fuel taxes, GST payments on fuel and registration and licensing fees.

Governments should maintain a forward works programme, of at least five years, for funding roadwork's allowing road authorities and road-related industries to plan with confidence.

A strategic approach to this issue is necessary, one that acknowledges the purpose and significance of the road hierarchy, the interrelationship between transport and adjacent land use, and the importance of the appropriate speed environment in which to manage travel demand.

While efforts to improve driver behaviour should be maintained, road authorities should be held accountable to ensure that, as far as practicable, roads are designed and maintained to reduce the risk of death and injury to road users.

RAA believes individuals should be provided with real choices of mobility, involving well planned and implanted urban planning and development, this includes options that provide access to safer, more sustainable travel, including affordable alternative transport modes.

Summary

Community Cabinet provides an ideal opportunity to discuss with local residents issues important to them; RAA supports this initiative by the Government. It is important to find solutions to these important issues; we hope that the detail provided in this paper assists this process.

"Report a Road" is a web form where members can provide us with information on roads they feel are not safe. This coupled with RAA road assessments and crash data provide some compelling evidence for improved road maintenance funding support in regional South Australia.

Mobility options are important for everyone, allowing them to choose appropriate ways to do their day to day business. Private motor vehicles continue to be the most common form of transport for South Australians, the car is even more important for regional people who have limited transport and mobility options.