



Submission to Infrastructure and Transport Ministers Meeting - 28 May 2021

By Roads Australia

National Road Worker Safety Strategy:

Roads Australia (RA) welcomes the significant additional investments the 11 May 2021 made in road safety, notably the additional \$1 billion for the Federal Government's **Road Safety Program**, the provision of a further \$1 billion for the **Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program** and \$5.1 million over the next four years to support the work of the **Office of Road Safety**.

Although these investments will undoubtedly enhance the safety of physical road infrastructure, RA again wishes to reiterate the need for a comprehensive, nationally coordinated **national road worker safety program**.

Given the size and scale of the forward pipeline of transport infrastructure projects around the nation, more must be done to make certain on-site workers. Over recent months, we have witnessed several tragic incidents resulting in fatalities and serious injuries because of traffic-related accidents around roadworks.

Our industry's workforce is dedicated to keeping the community safe through the provision of quality transport infrastructure. It is only fair that this commitment is repaid by ensuring their exposure to danger is minimised through a nationally consistent strategy.

RA encourages Ministers to support the development of such a strategy through the Office of Road Safety, ensuring the participation of all jurisdictions and peak industry bodies in its design and implementation.

Procurement Reform:

The Roads Australia [Procurement Reform Report](#) was released in September 2020. Copies have been provided to members of ITMM and meetings have been held with a number of ITMM members to discuss matters in relation to their specific.

Some members of ITMM have already commenced work to implement selected recommendations, but there are six recommendations in the report that RA would like to suggest ITMM approach as a committee to achieve a nationally consistent approach.

These are:

Recommendation 8:

That ITMM and other stakeholders



- (i) *identify best practice approaches to procurement and contract standardisation for major government funded infrastructure projects; and*
- (ii) *(ii) develop a framework to identify the optimal approach to adopt for each type of project.*

Recommendation 10:

That ITMM develop a set of best practice principles for project tendering for endorsement by peak industry bodies and state and territory governments.

Recommendation 11:

That ITMM develop a Risk Charter that can promote a collaborative approach to project risk identification and management.

Recommendation 16:

That ITMM work with state and territory government agencies, and other industry stakeholders, to participate in reviews of collaborative project implementation for a number of recently completed projects to help identify skills gaps.

Recommendation 17:

That ITMM reassess the role of Independent Reviewers, and if appropriate, work with industry and government stakeholders to develop alternative, more effective project quality control and assurance processes.

Recommendation 18:

That ITMM engage with senior State Government representatives to discuss alternate governance models (including the SPV concept), and if receptive, work with an independent corporate governance specialist to develop proposals that would help drive major improvements in governance for mega-projects.

Alignment of skills training with industry needs:

RA notes the Federal Budget's investment in skills and training opportunities, as well as the Federal Parliament's ongoing [Inquiry Into Australia's Skilled Migration Program](#).

Industry participants are already reporting difficulties finding workers to undertake specialist roles on transport infrastructure projects. This situation is likely to be exacerbated by the continuation of Australia's international border being closed until well into 2022. Yet simultaneously, governments are making significant investments in transport infrastructure projects to boost economic activity and employment growth. The result is a further squeeze on industry capacity which - unless addressed quickly – risks delays in project delivery and thus delays in their economic and social dividends.

RA strongly encourages Ministers to establish a taskforce that will work with industry to ensure it can access specialist skills in a timely manner, despite ongoing border and migration restrictions.