

Saving Lives on Country Roads

Fact Sheet

Roads and Maritime Services | September 2018

Reducing fatalities on country roads is one of the NSW Government's biggest challenges and a key focus of the Road Safety Plan 2021.

High-risk curves and fatigue were key factors in the rising road toll in 2015/16 and their contribution to the road toll is not a short-term issue. By addressing these issues, the **Saving Lives on Country Roads Program (SLCRP)** is designed to have a significant effect on long-term trauma and not just correct an emerging issue.

More than two thirds of fatalities occur on country roads. To address the challenge, SLCRP will implement proven mass action engineering countermeasures, including:

- Audio tactile line marking – alert drivers whose vehicle is leaving their travel lane.
- Wide centre lines – increase space between oncoming traffic.
- Flexible barriers – separate oncoming traffic and protect vehicles from roadside hazards.
- Curve improvements such as improved signage, widened shoulders, and electronic vehicle activated signage.

The objective of SLCRP is to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes caused by run-off road, head-on, and curve crashes on country roads.

SLCRP will be achieved with a route-based approach, rather than individual sites, to reduce costs and improve infrastructure consistency on country roads for the travelling public.



Audio Tactile Line Marking

Road line markings, including wide centre line treatments, may be supplemented with **audio tactile line markings (ATLM)** which further assist motorists in avoiding crashes.

ATLM alerts drivers that their vehicles are drifting from the road by acting as a visual and audible reference, particularly during night and adverse weather conditions. When a vehicle's tyre drives over the line, a distinct audio-tactile effect, consisting of noise and vibration, is generated letting the driver know they are drifting from their lane.

ATLM are sometimes referred to as "rumble strips".

ATLM is estimated to reduce crashes from vehicles leaving their carriageway by up to 30%.

Wide Centre Lines

Wide Centre Lines (WCL) are an effective road safety measure to reduce the risk of head-on crashes from drivers failing to stay in their designated carriageway and right-hand run-off road crashes. This treatment provides spatial separation between vehicles travelling in opposite directions. This is particularly valuable on rural undivided two lane carriageways.

WCL treatments replace the existing centre line on a road with two new lines approximately 1.0 metre apart. Standard centre lines are only separated by 0.1 metres. The increased space between traffic provides additional reaction time if a driver unintentionally drifts across the centre line towards oncoming traffic. Wide centrelines are estimated to reduce head-on crashes by 50%.

WCL treatments also improve road safety by providing additional space and visibility of oncoming

traffic. This is helpful for motorists passing cyclists or stopped vehicles, and overtaking of slower vehicles.

WCL treatments have become internationally recognised as an effective and low-cost measure for reducing head-on collisions. They have been used on key corridors including the Newell and Pacific Highways with positive results.

Standard road rules apply when driving on a section of the road treated with a wide centre line. A solid line does not allow overtaking, but a broken line does.

Flexible Barriers

Flexible barriers effectively protect vehicles from oncoming traffic and roadside hazards. Upon impact, the safety barrier deflects to re-direct the vehicle away from the hazard. This also minimises the forces acting on the vehicle's occupants.

These barriers can reduce the severity of crashes on country roads by up to 85%.

Curve Improvements

Traditional road safety treatments, including widening shoulders and installing additional alignment and advisory signage, are cost effective methods of treating hazardous curves.

Widening shoulders provides drivers with more space to react and redirect their vehicle.

Signage is a cost effective means of notifying a driver of an approaching curve, or assist the driver with a clear delineation of the curve's alignment.

Where static signage is not sufficient in collecting driver's attention, electronic vehicle activated signage could be a cheap solution to warning drivers and providing them with enough time to slow to a safe speed.

