



March 2019

Results from a 2018 AA survey and workshop on
Road Safety Actions




What are AA Members' views on road safety?

Media stories and public conversations about improving road safety often throw up a wide range of ideas and suggestions for actions.

Each of these potential actions have different levels of benefits, practicality and cost that need to be carefully analysed prior to being implemented.

In addition to this 'technical' analysis, the AA sees strong public buy-in as vital to making progress in road safety.

With work underway to develop a new road safety strategy for the next decade, we wanted to better understand what our Members and AA Councillors thought were the actions most worth pursuing.

A photograph showing a man driving a car and a woman sitting in the passenger seat. Both are smiling and looking towards the camera. The man is wearing a light blue shirt and a watch, and the woman is wearing a light green shirt. The car's interior and steering wheel are visible.

The AA sees strong public buy-in as vital to making progress in road safety

Methods

Workshop of AA Councillors & staff

At the AA Annual Conference in March 2018, 78 AA Councillors and staff took part in a workshop on what actions they believed had the most potential to improve road safety in New Zealand.

The workshop began with four short presentations from experts on each pillar of the safe system:

Road user behaviour

Hamish Mackie, Mackie Research



Speed

Dr Sam Charlton, Waikato University



Roads and roadsides

Colin Brodie, NZTA



Vehicles

Iain McGlinchy, MoT



AA Councillors are people who volunteer to be part of the AA's District Councils, of which there are 17 around the country. They help the AA represent our Members by working to improve transport and road safety issues in their local regions.

AA Member survey

In September 2018, an email survey of a random nationwide sample of AA Members asked what actions they saw as having the most potential to improve road safety. We received 797 usable responses and of those respondents:

53.7% were female

83% had use of 1 or 2 vehicles

17.7% were under 35

21.1% lived in a rural area

13% described themselves as 'fast drivers'

6.1% said they had been in a crash where someone was seriously hurt or killed

The nature of a workshop versus an online survey means we could not ask completely identical questions but we tried to structure things so some comparisons could be made between the views of AA Councillors and staff, who have more knowledge and familiarity of road safety issues, and the views of our general AA Members.



Results

On the following pages are results from the two methods



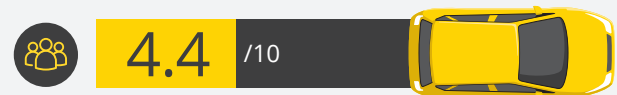
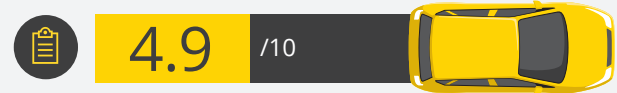
AA Member survey



AA Councillors and staff workshop

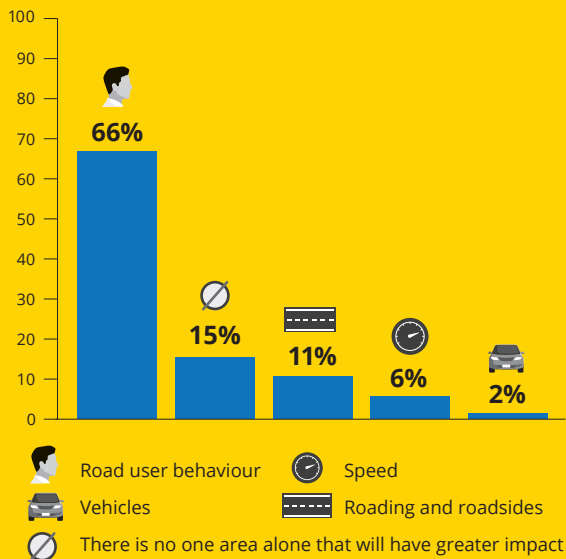
1. How would you rate New Zealand's current road safety performance?

Both groups were asked to score New Zealand's current road safety performance out of 10 and the results were similar, although slightly more negative among our delegates. The bulk of ratings from our Members were either 4 or 5, indicating that they definitely thought things could be better but also that don't view the current situation as disastrous either.



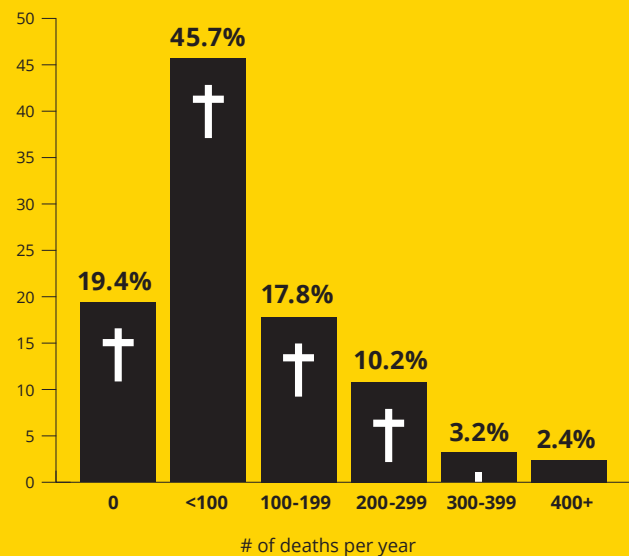
MEMBER SURVEY ONLY

2. Which of these areas do you believe will have the greatest impact on road safety over the next decade?



This question was not asked in our workshop as the AA as an organisation supports the safe system approach and sees all four pillars inter-linked in terms of safety impact. The results from our Member survey show quite a different public viewpoint, with 66% identifying road user behaviour as the key area for safety gains. It was interesting to see that roading and roadsides (11%) was selected by more of our Members than speed (6%) or vehicles (2%) in terms of stand-alone areas of impact.

3. If you were in charge of the next road safety strategy for this country, how many road deaths would you regard as acceptable by 2030?



With Vision Zero being considered as part of the new strategy, we wanted to try and gauge what the general public thought should be aimed for in terms of road deaths. We showed a graph of road deaths over the previous 30 years to our Members in the survey to provide some context around where we are currently at. The most popular choice was less than 100 deaths and, if you combine the three top options, 83% of respondents favoured a figure of less than 199 deaths.

4. Potential seen in road safety actions

We gave both our delegates in the workshop and Members in the online survey a range of potential actions that they could rate as having either high, moderate or low potential to improve road safety.

The table of results (on page 6) shows the order of preference for options that both groups got to rate. There were some notable similarities and differences between the two groups.

One action that we asked about in the workshop but not in the online survey was accelerating implementation of the Speed Management Guide. This was because our Councillors and staff are familiar with the guide, but we did not feel we could provide enough context and understanding about the guide to our Members in the online survey.

In terms of how much potential our delegates saw in accelerating the Speed Management Guide work, it was ranked seventh equal in terms of preference alongside increasing the use of roadside signs that display the speeds drivers are travelling at.

Actions seen as having the greatest potential by both groups



Learning to drive
becoming part of
secondary school
education.



Large-scale investment
in centreline and
roadside barriers.



**More roundabouts
and safety measures**
at high-risk
intersections.



4. contd. **Potential actions to increase road safety ratings**

 AA Member survey	Rank	 AA delegate workshop
 Stronger enforcement and deterrents for drivers using cellphones	1	 Making learning to drive a part of secondary school education
 Large-scale investment in barriers down the centreline and along the sides of high-risk highways and regional roads	2	 Using more physical features, design and road markings to differentiate different speed zones
 Increased use of roundabouts and other safety measures at high-risk intersections	3	 Increased use of roundabouts and other safety measures at high-risk intersections
 Making learning to drive a part of secondary school education	4	 Trialling educational programmes as alternatives to fines for speeding and other traffic offences
 Making Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) a required feature for new cars entering NZ	5	 Large-scale investment in barriers down the centreline and along the sides of high-risk highways and regional roads
 Increased use of Intersection Speed Zones to alert drivers and lower the speed limit on the through road if a vehicle is approaching from a side street	6	 Making Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) a required feature for new cars entering NZ
 Requiring new motorcycles to have ABS brakes	7	 Increased use of roadside signs that display the speeds drivers are travelling at
 Using more physical features, design and road markings to differentiate different speed zones	8	 Requiring side-under-run protection on trucks
 Increased use of roadside signs that display the speeds drivers are travelling at	9	 Requiring new motorcycles to have ABS brakes
 Requiring side-under-run protection on trucks	10	 Increased use of Intersection Speed Zones to alert drivers and lower the speed limit on the through road if a vehicle is approaching from a side street
 Trialling educational programmes as alternatives to fines for speeding and other traffic offences	11	 Stronger enforcement and deterrents for drivers using cellphones

There were several actions where the views of the two groups were quite different:

- Stronger enforcement around cellphones was seen as having the greatest potential impact among AA Members but it was rated the lowest by AA Councillors and staff in the workshop. *A possible reason for the difference in views is AA Councillors being aware that despite several other countries increasing the severity of penalties, they continue to have a substantial number of drivers using cellphones behind the wheel.*
- Trialling alternative penalties for traffic offences was seen as having a reasonably high potential impact by AA Councillors and staff in the workshop but was rated the lowest among AA Members.
- Using more physical features, design and road markings to help drivers tell different speed zones was rated very highly by AA Councillors and staff in the workshop but wasn't as strongly supported by AA Members.

5. Other actions seen as likely to make a difference



MEMBER SURVEY ONLY

What percentage of AA Members thought an action would make a big difference to road safety over the next decade?		
HIGH	More rest stops and slow vehicle bays around the country, particularly on tourist routes	79%
	Increased use of red light cameras at high-risk intersections	65%
	Restrictions on the types of vehicles young people can drive	62%
AVERAGE	Require new trucks to have blind-spot monitoring	56%
	Increase the number and presence of Police on the roads	54%
	Education campaigns that focus on safe speeds in different conditions	52%
	Provide more separated cycleways	52%
	A trade-in/scrappage scheme for unsafe older cars	52%
	Introduce higher safety standards (eg side airbags) and age limits on used imports entering NZ	49%
	Incentivise/reward safe driving rather than solely focus on punishing bad driving	47%
	Reduce speed limits around schools	44%
	Make reversing cameras a requirement for new vehicles entering NZ	40%
	Include demerit points on speed camera offences	36%
LOW	Require drivers to be regularly re-tested for their licence	35%
	Widespread speed limit reductions in urban areas	28%
	Widespread speed limit reductions on rural roads and highways	26%
	Reduce the usual 10km/h tolerance before a ticket is issued for speeding	24%



What the AA says


The AA advocates for progressive road safety as well as working to represent the views of our Members.

We think that balance is important because ultimately, whatever actions to improve road safety are adopted, they will be most effective if the changes make sense to people and have widespread public support.

The AA wants New Zealand's next road safety strategy to deliver improvements that will make a meaningful difference and are realistic, supported by good evidence and work with people's modern lives.

To help deliver this, we want the new strategy to establish benchmark measures of public attitudes on a range of road safety issues that can then be regularly monitored to show changes over time.

Experience in other countries shows that improvements in road safety do not happen overnight but take time and steady, consistent steps forward to deliver results.



The AA believes road safety actions will be most successful **where authorities take the public with them.**



The information in this report is based on research conducted by the AA through surveys of AA Councillors, staff and Members in 2018.

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