



## Victoria's road safety aims ambitious, but achievable: inquiry finds

Victoria's yearly road toll could be cut to less than 200, according to the recommendations of a wide-ranging parliamentary inquiry.

The Legislative Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee has found that although Victoria failed to reach the ambitious targets set out in the State's previous road safety strategy, *Towards Zero*, they are still achievable.

The inquiry was established in June 2019 to examine the increase in Victoria's road toll after decades of steady decline.

"Victoria has done well over the past 40-50 years to reduce the road toll; however, it has plateaued in recent years," Committee Chair Enver Erdogan said.

"The Committee heard this has happened in many parts of the world. This suggests previous reforms have achieved all they can and it's time for a fresh push to reduce road trauma even further."

The Committee has made 36 recommendations relating to road standards, data collection, driver training and behaviour, and vehicle safety. It has also addressed concerns around a lack of openness among Victoria's road safety partners.

The Committee heard that the State's road safety partners should be proactive in allowing other road safety experts to objectively analyse data supporting policy decisions.

"Victoria's road safety partners must commit to a new culture of cooperation, transparency and an acceptance of the benefits of independent scrutiny of their work," Mr Erdogan said.

The Committee wants improvements to the type of data that is collected and believes one agency should have oversight of data integration. As well, it has recommended a review of the skills base of managers in the Department of Transport.

Road standards was an issue of great interest to the Committee, especially in rural and regional Victoria. It has recommended the Victorian Government review speed limits on all rural and regional roads as a matter of priority.

As part of this process the Government has been urged to report on its current road maintenance priorities, including the predicted star rating for all road projects.

“A star safety rating for roads exists, with one-star being the least safe and five-star being the safest. Research suggests fatalities and serious injuries are halved for each incremental improvement to a road’s condition,” Mr Erdogan said.

“The Government should undertake and publish research to determine the cost and timeframe of making all highways, arterial roads and other roads of significance in Victoria a minimum three-star rating. This will give the Victorian community a better understanding of the roads they are driving on.”

Other areas addressed by the Committee include improved community engagement and consultation when installing wire rope barriers, and how to ensure the public retains confidence in the speed camera system.

“Unsafe speeds are a major contributor to road trauma. Speeding fines do deter bad driver behaviour, while also funding improvements to our road network,” Mr Erdogan said.

“We also need to do more to tackle driver distraction in a way that is ‘technology neutral’. So instead of outlawing specific technology, such as mobile phones, laws should address unsafe actions or behaviour.”

The Committee heard from around 70 witnesses, including local and international road safety experts, and received more than 150 submissions.

To view all of the findings and recommendations read the final report in full [here](#).

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