



VICTORIA STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

• STATE HEADQUARTERS •
168 STURT STREET, SOUTHBANK VIC 3006
TELEPHONE (03) 9684 6666 FACSIMILE (03) 9684 6659
EMAIL: vicses@ses.vic.gov.au



File Ref: SES/07/316
Letter Code: CD/07/146209
Date: 5 October 2007

RECEIVED
11 OCT 2007

Submission No. LC/307
Received
Road Safety Committee

BY:.....

Ms Alexandra Douglas
Executive Officer
Road Safety Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Email: rsc@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Douglas

In response to the invitation to make a submission to the Inquiry into Improving Safety at Level Crossings, Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) is pleased to assist by providing a short summary of related issues for the Committee's consideration.

Context.

VICSES provides a range of services at the scene of emergencies involving level crossings; this includes both as the primary rescue responder at a level crossing incident, or as a support agency providing additional resources and support during multi-agency responses.

Impact

VICSES volunteers regularly experience the trauma associated with incidents at level crossings, because of the horrific injuries that typically occur in these situations. Level crossing incidents have a high potential cost to VICSES in terms of the impact on our volunteers psychological well being, and the need to provide ongoing professional support programs to those volunteers.

Submission.

VICSES does not have access to subject matter experts monitoring developments in level crossing safety. This submission is provided in context of suggesting simple measures that might help to reduce the impact of level crossing incidents on emergency service providers.

VICSES respectfully suggests that the Committee considers the following matters:

1. The full cost imposed by trauma upon emergency service workers and others in the community when considering strategies to improve safety at level crossings.
2. A range of control measures to reduce the risk of incidents at level crossing including:
 - Introduction of a high profile public education campaign such as the highly successful TAC “Wipe of Five” and “Bloody Idiot” drink driving campaigns.
 - Short-term strategies such as placing additional traffic lights prior to arriving at flashing lights already operating at crossings, and installing high visibility line markers that cause vehicles to vibrate and alert drivers when approaching level crossings.
 - Long term strategies such as installing boom gates at uncontrolled crossings and where appropriate, engineering solutions that eliminate crossings by providing separated overpass or underpass systems.
3. Continuing targeted enforcement strategies such as those currently being undertaken at high-risk crossings by Victoria Police.
4. Introducing a code of conduct and other education programs in consultation with transport industry stakeholders to improve driver education and behavior within the various industry groups.
5. Installation of traffic cameras at high risk level crossings to deter, detect and prosecute drivers crossing against flashing lights or going around boom gates.

On behalf of VICSES I thank your Committee for the commendable work being undertaken to improve safety at level crossings.

Yours sincerely



Mary Barry
Chief Executive Officer