

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

## RURAL ROAD SPEED LIMITS

### SUBMISSION

The relationship between average travel speeds and road trauma is well established in the scientific literature. Small reductions in the average travel speeds of traffic lead to significantly larger reductions in numbers of deaths and serious injuries occurring on those roads.

The recommended approach within Tasmania to reduce the speed limits on non-urban roads where the infrastructure support is less than appropriate is an extremely positive initiative that will save lives and avert serious injuries. It places Tasmania at the vanguard within Australia in terms of progressing the development of the Safe System – an approach that is enshrined within the National Road Safety Strategy with all State transport ministers being co-signatories to this approach.

The initiative also reflects “best practice” adopted by the best-performing northern European countries where top speed limits rarely exceed 90 km/h for all traffic, with the exception of motorways.

Importantly, the evidence that is available points to only small increases in travel time being linked to moderate reductions in average traffic travel speeds. For example, travelling on average at 90 km/h rather than a 100 km/h over a 100 km journey leads only to an extra 6 minutes and 40 seconds in travel time! Distances actually travelled on these roads may typically be much shorter than 100 km.

I strongly endorse the recommendation to reduce speed limits to 80 km/h and 90 km/h on select roads where the infrastructure support is at a less than appropriate standard. Mobility with safety should be the over-arching aim.

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