



2013

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
SELECT COMMITTEE**

**REPORT ON THE GOVERNMENT'S
PROPOSED RURAL ROAD SPEED LIMIT
REDUCTION FROM 100KM/H ON SEALED
ROADS**

Members of the Committee:

Hon Greg Hall MLC (Chair)

Hon Tony Mulder MLC (Deputy Chair)

Hon Tania Rattray MLC

Hon Ivan Dean MLC

Hon Kerry Finch MLC

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INTRODUCTION

1. On Tuesday 20 November 2012, the Legislative Council resolved that a Select Committee be appointed, with power to send for persons and papers, with leave to sit during any adjournment of the Council, and with leave to adjourn from place to place to inquire into and report upon –
 - The issue of the Government’s proposed rural road speed limit reduction from 100 km/h on sealed roads and the potential impacts/benefits on the communities; and
 - Any other matters incidental thereto.
2. Support for the establishment of an inquiry followed widespread community feedback to Committee Members concerning the proposed reduction in speed limits.
3. Among the concerns raised was the belief that there had been a lack of community consultation prior to the decision being made, the potential impacts on regional communities, whether long term gains in road safety would be achieved by the changes and the belief there had been a lack of priority for road upgrades and other initiatives as an alternative to speed limit reductions.
4. At the first meeting of the Committee, the Hon Greg Hall MLC was elected Chair as the mover of the motion to establish the inquiry. The Hon Tony Mulder MLC was elected Deputy Chair.
5. As part of the inquiry process, the Committee called for public submissions. In total, 41 submissions were received – **Appendix A**.
6. The Committee also conducted public hearings in Hobart and Launceston during April and August 2013 – **Appendix B**.
7. The Committee would like to thank the interested parties who made written submissions and the witnesses who presented evidence at public hearings.
8. The decision of the Minister for Infrastructure, Hon David O’Byrne MP, to proceed with the reduction in speed limits, followed a recommendation made to him by the Road Safety Advisory Council (RSAC) in September 2011.

9. This in turn had followed the completion of two trials of the reduced speed limits (90 km/h on sealed roads and 80 km/h on unsealed roads) in the Kingborough and Tasman Municipalities by agreement with the participating Councils.
10. The trials resulted in the publication of two reports that were completed by the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC).
 - Kingborough Safer Speeds Demonstration (KiSS) – Evaluation Report after Twenty-four months – March 2012; and
 - Tasman Safer Speeds Trial (TaSS) – 24 month report - May 2012.
11. In September 2012, the Minister subsequently announced the release of the Safer Roads: Non-Urban Road Network Strategy (the Strategy). The Strategy incorporated the criteria that may be applied to non-urban roads (or sections of individual roads) in order to determine whether 100 km/h speed limits on sealed roads could be maintained. The criteria that were to be applied were specific to Tasmanian road conditions rather than using the 'optimal model' that had also been contemplated.
12. The Strategy sits under the Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2007-2016, which in turn sits under the Tasmanian Infrastructure Strategy and Tasmanian Economic Development Plan.
13. The Strategy also incorporated a number of other initiatives including the abolition of 'end speed limit' signs and was an alternative approach to applying a blanket reduction to all non-urban roads as originally contemplated.
14. In providing the Government's reasoning for the decision to proceed with the reduction in speed limits on sealed non-urban roads to 90 km/h, the Minister noted that more than 40 per cent of Tasmania's serious road casualties happen on non-urban roads with a 100 km/h speed limit.¹
15. On 19 August 2013, and following the commencement of this inquiry, the Minister, without notice, announced that the default speed limit on sealed

¹ Media Release, Hon David O'Byrne MP, 4 September 2012

- non-urban roads statewide, would not be reduced from 100 km/h to 90 km/h as previously announced.
16. The Committee noted as part of the announcement that the Government would continue with the proposed speed limit reductions on non-sealed roads, would continue to roll out a major education campaign and would be working with local communities and councils to keep Tasmanians safe on our roads (therefore continuing with the implementation of other elements of the Strategy).²
 17. In light of the announcement and the notable change in Government policy late in the implementation stage of the Strategy, the Committee resolved to finalise the inquiry at the conclusion of the hearings that had already been scheduled. The Committee further resolved to table a report of its findings in the Legislative Council as soon as practicable following the conclusion of the scheduled hearings.
 18. In preparing this report, it is important to note that the Committee has not considered the proposal to reduce the default speed limit on non-urban unsealed roads to 80 km/h, although it has been referred to in some submissions that were received. This was because there had not been any notable objections to the proposal and as such, it did not fall within the core terms of reference that were agreed upon by the Legislative Council.
 19. Given the inquiry has been concluded prematurely in light of the Minister's announcement, a variety of assumptions relied upon by the Government in reaching its original decision about reduced default speed limits have not been independently tested by the Committee through expert examination as originally contemplated. The Committee concluded this to be an unnecessary cost and time constraint on reporting its findings in the short term.

² Media Release, Hon David O'Byrne MP, 19 August 2013

FINDINGS

1. The Committee supports the decision of the Government not to proceed with the proposed reduction in speed limits to 90 km/h on non-urban sealed roads and believes that the decision reflects strong community opinion on the issue;
2. The Committee supports the decision of the Government to proceed with the reduction in speed limits to 80 km/h on non-sealed roads;
3. The Committee supports the implementation of the remaining elements of the Safer Roads: Non-Urban Road Network Strategy;
4. The majority of serious and fatal crashes on non-urban roads are attributable to a variety of causes in which speed is not a factor. This is supported by analysis completed by the RACT (as referred to in attachment 6 of its submission) and by statistical information provided by Tasmania Police;
5. There is currently a lack of reliable data collected by Tasmania Police and the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources to justify the assumption that lowering the speed limit will achieve the expected road safety benefits;
6. A single initiative (such as reducing default speed limits) will not resolve the issue of road fatalities and serious crashes on Tasmanian roads;
7. Assertions that 100 serious injuries/fatalities will be avoided over 6 years lacks objective data and where such data does exist, its rigor and comparability to Tasmanian non-urban roads is questionable;
8. The Government has failed to adequately engage and consult with regional communities about the proposed changes during the development of the Strategy;
9. The choice of the Kingborough and Tasman Municipalities for the speed zone trials was questionable in that they were not fully representative of the average topography and general driving conditions on non-urban roads in Tasmania;

10. The results of the trials conducted in Kingborough and Tasman Municipalities did not demonstrate quantifiable improvements in the crash statistics data nor in average travel speeds;
11. The Government has relied on its interpretation of the level of community support during the trials to partly justify the proposed speed limit reductions rather than other statistical data obtained from the trials;
12. Changes to speed limits can be made by the Government without the need for regulatory amendment by simply replacing the current 'End Speed Limit' signage with 90 kp/h signs.
 - a. The Committee also notes the assurances of the Minister that this will not occur except in those cases where local communities clearly support changes to speed signs;
13. Slower speed limits can result in increased risk taking by a proportion of other road users;
14. The reductions in the default speed limit had been recognised by the Government as being a more feasible road safety strategy than maintaining and upgrading the standard of non-urban roads in Tasmania;
15. RSAC stands by the recommendation to reduce default speed limits on some 100 km/h roads despite the Government's decision not to proceed with the recommendation;
16. A number of the witnesses believed that much greater focus should be given to driver education and training;
17. The Committee noted the assurance from the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources that the default rural speed limit would not be changed by administrative direction but would only occur on a case by case basis along with community agreement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations relate to the non-urban sealed road network in Tasmania.

1. The Government affirms its commitment not to proceed with a strategy that would reduce default speed limits on rural roads;
2. That road standards are set according to usage as an alternative to the policy of reducing speed limits to match sub-standard infrastructure;
3. That road funding be increased for continual rural road improvements and that priority be given to those sections of roads with the greater serious crash history;
4. The Government prioritise improved driver education and training programs as part of its road safety strategy. There should be a focus on the improved training and education for secondary school students, new drivers and their personal instructors;
5. Data collection standards for serious crashes be improved to capture expert opinion on causal factors to guide road safety policy;
6. Tasmania Police and the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources work more collaboratively on the collection and management of crash data into the future;
7. In the event the Government decides to pursue the reduction in speed limits on any non-urban sealed roads in the future, a consultative committee with community, transport, road safety and other regional stakeholders be established.

THE TRIALS OF REDUCED SPEED LIMITS

20. In reaching the decision to reduce speed limits on sealed non-urban roads, the Government and RSAC relied in part on the results of two trials that tested the reduced speed limits of 90 km/h on sealed roads and 80 km/h on unsealed roads.
21. The trials were conducted in the Kingborough and Tasman Municipalities for a period of 24 months with the agreement of the participating Councils.
22. The trials had (3) major criteria against which they were assessed and which resulted in the completion of assessment reports by the Monash University Accident Research Centre.
- Community knowledge of and attitude to speed limits;
 - Drivers' compliance with speed limits; and
 - Crash data analysis to identify possible safety benefits.
23. Both trials included a 'control municipality', which were used to assess the impacts of the trial in comparative terms against municipalities in which the existing speed limits remained in place.
24. The Committee had noted from the trial results and the associated comments by Government, that the success or otherwise of the trials appeared to focus on the measurement of community acceptance of the default speed limit reductions rather than quantifiable improvements in road safety (reportable accidents). Mr Bob Rutherford from Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) confirmed the Government's intentions in relation to the trials.

'The Kingborough and Tasman trials were primarily designed to show that we could get community acceptance of the changed speed limits. Our community surveys reveal that between 81 per cent and 84 per cent of respondents in Kingborough and Tasman believe the speed on sealed roads should be 90 kilometres an hour or lower and 91 per cent to 97 per cent - perhaps not surprising on the unsealed roads, the gravel roads - believe the speed limit should be 80 kilometres or lower. Obviously, due to the small number of crashes that you get in two

*municipalities like that, we were never going to get crash data that was robust enough to show the effect. What we do know, of course, and we know this obviously from what we did with the 50 kilometres an hour change, we confidently predict that there will be a significant reduction in the number of crashes, serious injuries and fatalities from bringing this in. There is a lot of empirical evidence, both in Australia and from around the world, that substantiates that.*³

Tasman Trial

25. The Committee noted the following key information from the Tasman trial report published by Monash University.

- There was a 0.2 percent decline in mean free travel speed in the municipality. By contrast, the control municipality showed an increase of 0.7;
- Compliance with the reduced speed limit reduced from 88 to 68 percent during the trial period and remained constant in the control municipality (approximately 85 percent);
- The reduced speed limits did not impact negatively on traffic flow;
- The compliance figures were more favourable in the first 12 months of the trial;
- Casualty and all crashes increased during the trial period; and
- The speed reductions met with substantial community acceptance based upon the completed survey results.⁴

26. Tasman Council was questioned about the trial during the inquiry hearings. Mayor Jan Barwick confirmed that the Council had supported an initial 12 month trial which was later extended to 24 months by the Government due to a lack of data having been obtained during the initial trial period. She indicated the Council was in favour of the speed limits being reverted to 100 km/h on the basis that accident rates had not decreased in the

³ Op.Cit. p.3-4

⁴ Monash University Accident Research Centre: Tasman Safer Speeds Trial (TaSS) 24-month Report

Council's opinion during the trial period and that community support for the reductions had also declined over the trial period.

'This is a Monash University Accident Research Centre report. Break O'Day Council was the council they compared Tasman with – they used baseline and 24-month crash numbers for both municipalities. Tasman municipality had six casualty crashes on a sealed road, and 15 crashes in total, with a 100 km/h limit, for 2006-08. Over a 24-month period, after we reduced the limit to 90 km/h, we had casualty crashes of nine and total crashes of 18. Our comparative council, Break O'Day stayed at the 100 km/h speed limit the whole time. For 2006-08, they had 17 casualty crashes and a total of 35 crashes. For the 24-month period when Tasman Council had the speed limit reduced to 90 km/h, they had 10 casualty crashes and a total of 24 crashes – a good reduction.

*The statistics came back showing that a 90-kph speed did not decrease accidents, but we have not heard anything much more from DIER. The Community Safety Committee still continues and we are still doing 90 kph and in the past two years they have not bothered to conduct any new surveys to find out what our crash statistics are now. As a council - and I am not just speaking for myself - we have tried it and we did not like it. I am speaking from a point of knowledge, in the fact that we have gone through the trial. It was not successful. The purpose was to reduce injuries, deaths and accidents and it did not do that. As a council we decided to oppose the proposal for the Arthur Highway. It would also be good to have the Nubeena secondary road back up to 100 kph but, having looked at some of the criteria, it probably will not meet them.'*⁵

Kingborough Trial

27. The Committee noted the following key information in the Kingborough trial report published by Monash University.

⁵ Op.Cit. Mayor Jan Barwick, p.66

- A decrease in the proportion of vehicles complying with the default speed limits during the trial relative to compliance with the original limits;
- A fall in mean free travel speeds on sealed roads (0.9 km/h). The control Municipality by contrast recorded a reduction of 1.6 km/h;
- Given that changes in travel speeds also occurred during the trial within the control municipality, the causal impact of Kingborough's speed reductions on travel speeds remains unknown;
- There was an increase in community support for the proposed reduction on sealed roads from 53 percent to 64.3 percent;
- Three of the five measured sites within the municipality showed increases in mean free travel speed;
- Compliance with the posted speed limits reduced from 91 percent to 8 per cent during the trial; and
- The number of casualty and all crashes reduced during the trial and was more significant within the trial municipality than the control municipality.⁶

28. Kingborough Council was questioned further about the trial during the inquiry hearings. Mayor Graham Bury confirmed the Council's support for the trial.

'The Council fully supported the trial and has been enthusiastic about the trial or demonstration and throughout the process we appreciated that getting useful statistics in an area where there are not a lot of crashes is quite tricky or difficult. It obviously has to be conducted over an extended period of time to get anything significant and I think we are a relatively low crash area anyway. On gravel roads, I think quite a lot of minor or moderate prangs don't get reported.

We have been very keen to participate in this. I suppose I have a bit of bias anyway – I have worked in quite a lot of emergency departments

⁶ Monash University Accident Research Centre: Kingborough Safer Speeds Demonstration (KiSS) – Evaluation Report after Twenty Four Months

*so I have a kind of personal bias in this regard, but the whole of council has been very supportive of the process.*⁷

29. Mr Ian Holloway from the Council went on to explain the community feedback received on the trial.

'The reduction from 100 to 90 on our sealed roads and a straight 80 for our unsealed roads - when that was first introduced there was some concern within the community regarding the reduction. However, a lot of that was based around two issues. One was the perceived impact on travel times and the other was a lack of overtaking opportunities on the Channel Highway south of Margate and therefore the lowering of the speed limit to 90 was perceived in some quarters to be a retrograde step.

*Monash University, who undertook the project on behalf of DIER, had telephone surveys conducted and the overall perception within the community from the first contact in 2007 through to 2009, when they conducted another survey, there was a marked change in attitudes. The percentage of residents who supported the reduction had dramatically increased and I have a copy of the report for committee members if they would like a copy. The report on page 18 details the statistics relating to percentage, but overall there was acceptance of it. It also increased the public's awareness of speed limits. At the start of the program there was some lack of knowledge within the community about what were posted speed limits and how they applied, but the survey after this program was introduced did increase percentages and people became much more accepting of the reduction in speed limits.*⁸

30. Although generally supportive of the proposed default speed limit reductions (with notable conditions), the RACT was critical of the Kingborough trial in its written submission and the interpretation of the trial results that had been applied by ARRB in developing the modelling to be applied by Government.

⁷ Op.Cit. Dr Graham Bury, p.58

⁸ Op.Cit. Mr Ian Holloway, p.58-59

*'The RACT remains concerned that the evaluation of the key report used as evidence for this proposal – the KiSS evaluation – is inconclusive at best; and does not support the theoretical modelling. This KiSS Evaluation report should be far more widely communicated to the communities affected by the proposals.'*⁹

31. Mr Bob Rutherford from DIER was questioned about the Government's reliance on the trial results and explained that the trials were about measuring community acceptance of speed reductions in the first instance, rather than empirical data of reduced accident results associated with the speed reductions.

*'Yes, I think we touched on this last time, We saw those trials as being about acceptability in the community rather than imaging that the level of data you get from two trials like that and for the time period involved would ever be adequate to justify the bringing in of the lower speed limit on an outcomes basis because clearly it would not.'*¹⁰

⁹ RACT written submission, 22 January 2013

¹⁰ Op.Cit. p.7

THE GOVERNMENT POSITION ON REDUCING SPEED LIMITS

32. The Government position on the proposed reduction in speed limits on sealed non-urban roads to 90 km/h has changed considerably over time.
33. In order to achieve the proposed speed limit reductions, the Government confirmed that the reforms would be delivered through the Safer Roads: Non-Urban Road Network Strategy (the Strategy). A copy of the Strategy was tabled at a hearing with DIER and is available online at the following website to view -
- <http://www.saferroads.tas.gov.au/>
34. Prior to the release of the Strategy, the Government had already introduced the Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2007-2016 and had been working with the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC), RSAC and other stakeholders on a series of reports and initiatives in relation to speed limits and other road safety initiatives for some time. The reports were tabled during the inquiry process.
35. The original Government proposal had been for a blanket reduction in speed limits to 90 km/h to be implemented on non-urban sealed roads in Tasmania.
36. Following community concerns being raised with Government in relation to the blanket proposal, the policy was changed by the Government to a framework whereby an assessment model would be applied to sealed roads nominated by communities and Local Government. This would enable a determination to be made as to whether the nominated roads (or a section of the road) could maintain the existing default speed limits of 100 km/h.
37. The modelling was developed by ARRB who prepared two reports in relation to the criteria. The reports were tabled in Committee as part of the inquiry process.
38. The modelling to be applied under the Strategy is referred to as the 'Tasmanian Criteria for 100 km/h Roads' and was developed specifically for

Tasmanian road conditions rather than applying the 'Optimal Model'. The Tasmanian criteria apply a lesser threshold than the 'Optimal Model'.

39. Mr Bob Rutherford from DIER explained the specific Tasmanian criteria that had been developed.

*'Together with ARRB, we have developed a less prescriptive second set of criteria - the Tasmanian criteria - for 100 kilometre roads and in applying the criteria we have relaxed the desirable lane width and shoulder sealing criteria, where the crash rate was below the average. It was very important that we looked at what the data said about crashes. By doing so - and I think that went the whole efficiency issue - the kilometres of state roads that will retain the 100 kilometre speed limit were increased by a factor of six. We are bringing forward a change that will leave the roads that carry most of Tasmania's journeys, in combination with the 110 kilometre roads, at 100 kilometres. To put that into perspective, where people are concerned about travelling times, more than 70 per cent of vehicle kilometres travelled on state roads on a daily basis will be on those roads. It is a crucial difference to what you might have been thinking, and where the pure criteria would have taken us.'*¹¹

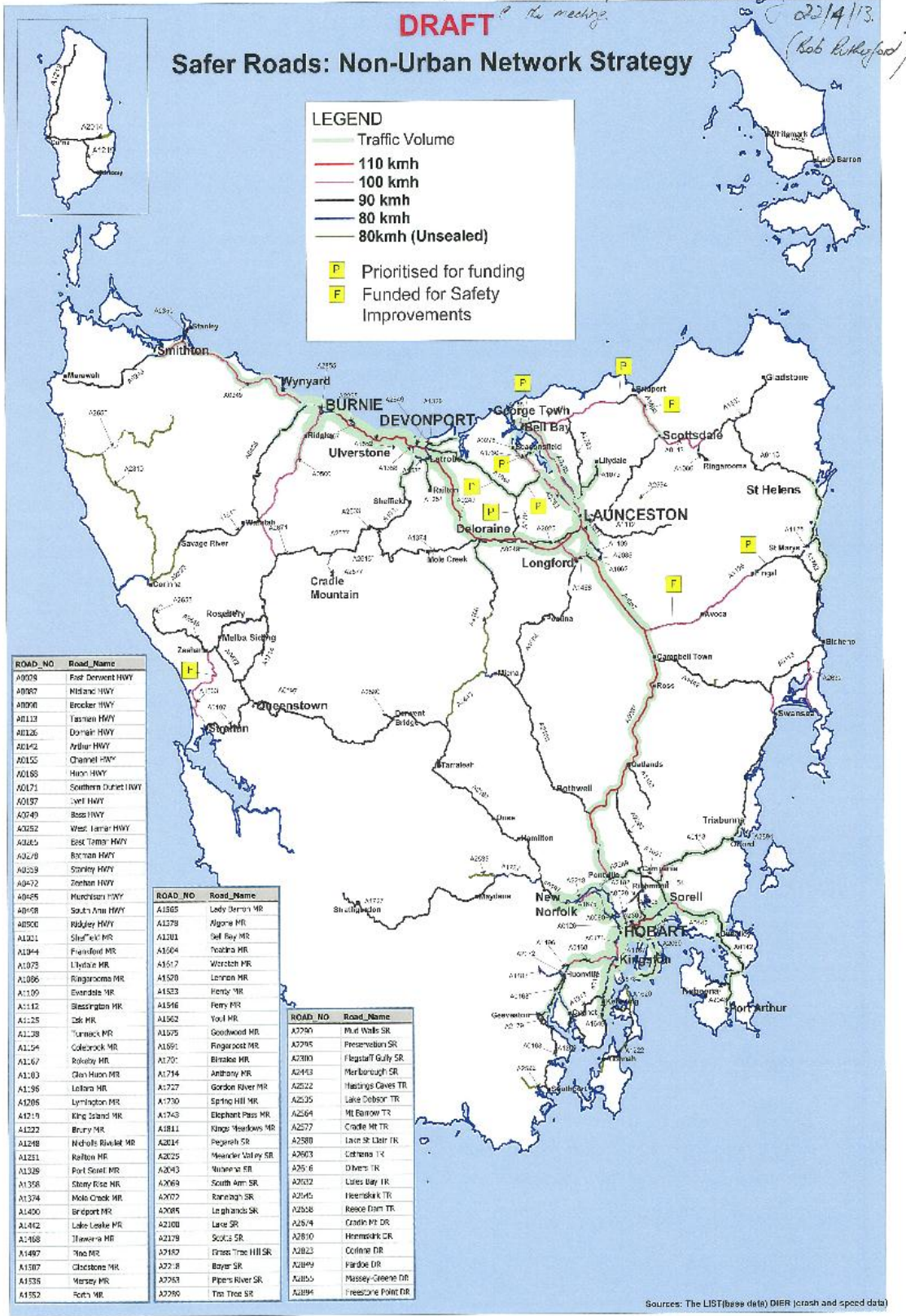
40. DIER confirmed through the tabling of the map on the following page, that some roads that had received a negative assessment under the modelling would be upgraded in order to maintain the 100 km/h speed limits.

¹¹ Op.Cit. p1-2

all members used copies of the meeting. Tabled by DIER 22/4/13. (Bob Riddiford)

DRAFT

Safer Roads: Non-Urban Network Strategy



LEGEND

- Traffic Volume
- 110 kmh
- 100 kmh
- 90 kmh
- 80 kmh
- 80kmh (Unsealed)
- P Prioritised for funding
- F Funded for Safety Improvements

ROAD_NO	Road_Name
A0008	East Devon HWY
A0087	Mildara HWY
A0090	Brooker HWY
A0113	Tasman HWY
A0126	Donner HWY
A0142	Arbler HWY
A0155	Channel HWY
A0188	Huron HWY
A0171	Southern Outlet HWY
A0197	Lyell HWY
A0749	Boss HWY
A0282	West Tamar HWY
A0485	East Tamar HWY
A0278	Borman HWY
A0228	Stanley HWY
A0472	Zeehan HWY
A0485	Murchison HWY
A0458	Saint Ann HWY
A0500	Ridgley HWY
A1001	Sheep MR
A1044	Flanderm MR
A1073	Livdale MR
A1086	Ringscome MR
A1109	Everdale MR
A1112	Glasgown MR
A1125	28k MR
A1138	Turlock MR
A1124	Colebrook MR
A1167	Rokeby MR
A1103	Old Huron MR
A1196	Lellara MR
A1206	Lymington MR
A1219	King Island MR
A1222	Brury MR
A1248	Nichols Rivulet MR
A1251	Railton MR
A1326	Port Sorel MR
A1358	Stony Rise MR
A1374	Mole Creek MR
A1400	Brigport MR
A1412	Lake Leslie MR
A1468	Tlaxera MR
A1487	Two MR
A1507	Cleatons MR
A1535	Morsey MR
A1552	Roth MR

ROAD_NO	Road_Name
A1565	Lady Derron MR
A1578	Algone MR
A1581	Self Bay MR
A1584	Toadna MR
A1517	Witchet MR
A1520	Lorran MR
A1523	Fenty MR
A1516	Ferry MR
A1562	Yard MR
A1575	Goodwood MR
A1691	Fingard MR
A1701	Brahae MR
A1714	Anthony MR
A1727	Gordon River MR
A1730	Spring Hill MR
A1748	Elephant Pass MR
A1811	Kings Heekows MR
A2014	Pegarah SR
A2025	Mearns Valley SR
A2043	Winnona SR
A2069	South Arm SR
A2072	Ranagh SR
A2085	Laghanda SR
A2100	Lace SR
A2178	SOUL SR
A2182	Green Tree Hill SR
A2218	Boyer SR
A2263	Pipers River SR
A2260	Tom Tree SR

ROAD_NO	Road_Name
A2790	Mud Walls SR
A2795	Preservation SR
A2800	Flagstaff Gully SR
A2413	Merborough SR
A2522	Heddings Gully TR
A2535	Lake Dobson TR
A2564	ML Barrow TR
A2577	Cradle Mt TR
A2580	Lace SR Distr TR
A2603	Lothians TR
A2516	Divers TR
A2022	Lutes Bay TR
A2045	Heemskirk TR
A2528	Rescoe Dam TR
A2514	Cradle Mt DR
A2810	Heemskirk DR
A2823	Collins DR
A2849	Farde DR
A2850	Massey-Greene DR
A2894	Freezone Point DR

Sources: The LIST (base data) DIER (crash and speed data)

41. Chair of RSAC Mr John Gledhill provided similar evidence about the criteria developed for Tasmania and that a sub-committee of the RSAC had undertaken an oversight role in the modelling.

'The subcommittee considered the impact on Tasmanian roads and the criteria were adjusted to reflect Tasmanian conditions. Initially, a very rigid safe-systems approach was applied by ARRB and they came up with a model which we called the 'optimal model'. I think we, as the subcommittee, realised that clearly there was virtually no road in Tasmania that would have met that. We also felt that we needed to be pragmatic because without community support this was never going to get off the ground. We looked at how that optimal model could be varied to still provide safety but perhaps at a slightly lower level. That has now become the Tasmanian criteria endorsed by ARRB and supported by the peer review of CASR. Whilst the optimal model was their first work, they did actually go back and rework it. In some places it varies little, if at all, but quite obviously Tasmania did not have a lot of divided roads and divided roads with a medium barrier in rural environments with no direct abutting access were one of the requirements of the optimal model.

The optimal model has been detuned a little but we still believe that the criteria we are now assessing Tasmanian roads against are robust and will provide appropriate safety levels to allow roads so designated to be driven at 100 kph.

The subcommittee recommended the road assessment criteria and the new signage to the full council which accepted and endorsed them. At its meeting of September 2011 the council unanimously agreed to recommend to the minister that existing 100-kph roads be assessed using the independent Tasmanian criteria to determine if they could safely retain 100 kph. Those that do not meet the criteria should have a reduced speed limit of 90 kph, and 80 kph on unsealed roads. The criteria should be used to help guide strategic investment on Tasmanian roads. In other words, where roads do not quite make it at the moment, in the future there may well be infrastructure works or funds directed to

*improving them, so we can lift the standard and lift the speed limit from 90 kph to 100 kph.*¹³

42. The Committee noted that RSAC includes the following membership that represents a broad range of stakeholders.

- Mr John Gledhill (Chair);
- Mr Peter Roche, CEO Motor Accident Insurance Board;
- Mr Norm McIlfattrick, Secretary DIER;
- Commissioner Darren Hine, Tasmania Police Commissioner;
- Mr Harvey Lennon, CEO RACT (road user representative);
- Mr Allan Garcia, CEO Local Government Association of Tasmania;
- Dr Bruce Corben, Road Safety Expert;
- Ms Suzi Watral, Marketing Expert;
- Mr Shaun Lennard, President, Tasmanian Motorcycle Council (road user representative); and
- Ms Emma Pharo, Bicycle Council (road user representative).¹⁴

43. In a letter to the Chair dated 4 April 2013, the Minister confirmed the Government's support for the Strategy and that it would be implemented by late 2013. He confirmed the following key issues in his correspondence in relation to the Strategy.

- The Strategy is one component of a broader strategy that takes into account the four cornerstones of a safe system approach, on which the Tasmanian and National Road Safety Strategies are based (the four cornerstones being safe roads and roadsides, safe road users, safe speeds and safe vehicles);
- The Strategy is a 'bold' first for Australia;

¹³ Op.Cit. p.28

¹⁴ <http://www.rsac.tas.gov.au/who-we-are/what-we-do/>

- With more than 40 percent of fatalities and serious injuries on Tasmania's non-urban road network, it is important that the Government act to save more than 100 people over the next six years from death or serious injury;
- The Strategy was developed over three years and was based upon recommendations made by the RSAC;
- The policy has evolved over time in response to the views of the Tasmanian community and key stakeholders (most notably the introduction of criteria to determine whether existing speed limits can be maintained rather than applying a blanket reduction);
- The replacement of end speed limit signs with improved signage.¹⁵

44. In its written submission to the inquiry, DIER also confirmed the following major points in favour of the Strategy and in support of the Government's position.

- That more than 100 lives might be saved over 6 years through the delivery of the Strategy;
- More than 40 percent of serious injury and fatal crashes occur on 100 km/h non-urban roads;
- Science supports that a small reduction in travel speed can result in significant crash reductions;
- Similar benefits have been demonstrated through the reduction in urban speed limits to 50 km/h since 2002;
- 100 km/h speeds can only be supported for roads with suitable safety infrastructure and many Tasmanian roads can never be upgraded to meet these standards;
- High volume and strategically important non-urban roads should be upgraded to maintain the 100 km/h speed limit; and
- The implementation of the Strategy will end confusion about 'end speed limit' signs.¹⁶

¹⁵ Letter from Hon David O'Byrne MP, Minister for Infrastructure, 4 April 2013

45. Mr Bob Rutherford from DIER later confirmed the Government's position that there was a link between reduced speed limits and saving lives.

*'The department is strongly behind these proposals because we believe this is a major initiative with the capacity to significantly reduce the effects of crashes on non-urban roads. We will be talking essentially about crashes and serious injuries because, as you know, the fatality numbers are difficult to work with - you get so much variation year to year with the numbers. But, we can save, we believe, more than 100 people from death or serious injury over a six-year period.'*¹⁷

46. Professor Ian Johnston appeared with Mr Rutherford at the April hearing and provided similar evidence in his capacity as the Government expert from the MUARC.

*'Around the world there have been an enormous number of changes, both up and down, in speed limits. People have tried to evaluate what happens when you put them up, and down. One examination has looked at all the scientific studies right around the world and came to the conclusion that every time speed limits come down, casualties come down and every time they go up, casualties go up. It is absolutely clear-cut - there can be no doubt at all. For example, Victoria did not have 110-kph speed limit zones for a long while and then they put a 110-kph limit on dual-carriage divided highways and the casualties went up over a two-year period by about 20 per cent. They brought the speed limit down to 100 kph and the number of incidents came back down again, so it is very striking.'*¹⁸

47. Professor Johnston also noted that the relatively poor standard of Tasmanian roads was a key factor in the decision to reduce non-urban speed limits.

'Prof. JOHNSTON - If we started with a clean sheet, you would build the roads to a totally different standard, but you don't have the money to

¹⁶ Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources written submission, 17 January 2013

¹⁷ Hansard Transcript 22 April 2013, Mr Bob Rutherford, p.1

¹⁸ Op.Cit. Mr Ian Johnston, p.17

do it. No state in Australia has the money to build them to the standard you want for 100 kph now, but you are stuck with 100 kph because you have it historically. What do you do? If you have the money, by all means turn all the current 100-kph roads into 100-kph standards roads and then you'll get the same safety benefit.

Mr MULDER - So we're going to allow people to travel on these roads at a faster speed than the road allows because we can't afford to build a road and we're going to save money? It seems to me a terrible position you've got yourself into by deciding you're going to vary the standard of the road applicable to the speeds you'll be travelling. You make a very significant point in the fact that the speed has a rock solid connection to the standard of the road. What we are watching here is a heap of relaxation of that thing and thereby creating, in your own words, danger.

Prof JOHNSTON - I obviously cannot answer the question for the Tasmanian government but the way I see it is really saying that if you have the money to fix them all, then fix them all now. If you do not have the money to fix them all -

Mr MULDER - Then reduce the speed limit.

Prof JOHNSTON - Yes, then reduce the speed limit. If you said, 'Let's reduce the speed limit on all of them', my experience from other states would be that you haven't got a snowball's chance in hell of getting that accepted. So you have to take the gains you can get where you can get them and then target your investment on the rest. That is not me speaking for the Tasmanian government.¹⁹

48. The Committee also received evidence from Tasmania Police. Although Tasmania Police would not express an opinion on Government policy decisions, Assistant Police Commissioner Donna Adams noted her observations in relation to Tasmanian road conditions in respect of 110 km/h highways comparative to currently signed 100 km/h roads.

Ms RATTRAY - Do you have any comment, Donna, on the 110-kph speed limit? I know it's policy, but from the policing perspective, if we

¹⁹ Op.Cit. p.18

reduce limits by 10 kph on the rural network for safety reasons, should we go to the next stage and put forward a 10-kph reduction in 110-kph zones?

Ms ADAMS - The big difference there comes back to the infrastructure and the road system itself. With the highways, there has been a concerted effort over the years to separate the lanes, to provide more shoulder width on the sides of the roads and a number of treatments to alert drivers to the potential dangers and risks associated with poor driving behaviour. The same effort probably hasn't been invested in the 100-kph road systems, or the non-urban roads that we're talking about.²⁰

49. Assistant Commissioner Adams was also questioned about whether Tasmania Police had raised concerns with DIER or RSAC in relation to rural speed limits.

Mr DEAN - Have the police, to your knowledge, ever put any position forward to DIER, or to the Road Safety Advisory Council, in relation to rural road speed limits?

Ms ADAMS - No, we haven't.

Mr DEAN - Have country police raised those issues, to your knowledge?

Ms ADAMS - In terms of country areas and speed limits, absolutely there have been concerns, because we do our own traffic enforcement, and planning for high-visibility operations. There have been several high-risk operations in rural areas, but they're normally as a result of a trend, or local government feedback. We respond with specific planning, but not more broadly.

Mr DEAN - I will put that question in a different way. To your knowledge, where the speed limit has been retained at 100 kph in rural areas, have any issues come to the attention of the police with regard to the speed limit and its impact on accidents and crashes?

²⁰ Hansard Transcript 29 April 2013, Deputy Commissioner Donna Adams, p.69

Ms ADAMS - Not to my knowledge. We have a governance arrangement in terms of the way that we deploy our resources for traffic, and we have what's called a senior traffic officer's forum, which is held every two months, and I'm part of that. That's where concerns, trends and even lower-level comments by some of our country officers are responded to, and that's where the planning strategy is set up for the following two months. Through that forum, which has been in place since I have been in the position, there has been nothing raised that would indicate a concern such as you have described.²¹

50. Chair of RSAC Mr John Gledhill also indicated that science was behind the decision and that it was the highest priority for RSAC.

'It is proven that where infrastructure can't be upgraded, speed management is the best option to mitigate risk. The science is strong. Reducing travel speed reduces crashes and crash severity regardless of the cause. I will emphasise that again because it is not just about speed as a causal factor; it is very much that when you have a crash, the body is not resilient to sudden impacts and regardless of whether speed caused it, speed certainly plays a major - if not the total - role in the injuries.

Reducing the travel speed on Tasmanian roads would deliver greater serious casualty reductions than any other measure. I had some work done by Newark for the council a couple of years ago and they estimated the injury savings in relation to a number of measures. I like the graph and we will see if we can table it shortly. That graph is very compelling visual evidence that reducing travel speeds will make the greatest difference - far more than any other measure.

The council unanimously agreed that this was the highest priority; it could result in the most significant gains and should be progressed. This is about travel speed, not speeding. We are looking at reducing speed limits. There will still be people speeding; it will remain an issue but it is not part of what we are about here. We have other projects

²¹ Op.Cit. p.66-67

*addressing issues such as driver behaviour and vehicle safety, learner-driver programs, and the like but we in this particular project are targeting speed limits and not speeding as such.*²²

51. Deputy Police Commissioner Donna Adams was also questioned about the causes of major accidents on the non-urban road network in Tasmania and noted there were a number of causal factors.

***'CHAIR** - A supplementary question, Donna - are you also aware that on a lot of rural and regional roads where those deaths occurred, inattention and other factors are by far the most predominant factor, outside speed?*

***Ms ADAMS** - Yes, absolutely. There are a number of common denominators in some of these crashes. Obviously speed, but inattention is another, as well as drinking and being under the influence of drugs. Sometimes it's very difficult to categorise a crash down to one of those particular factors. You might find there's been a combination of circumstances that have contributed to a particular crash. It's difficult to attribute all the time to one particular factor.*²³

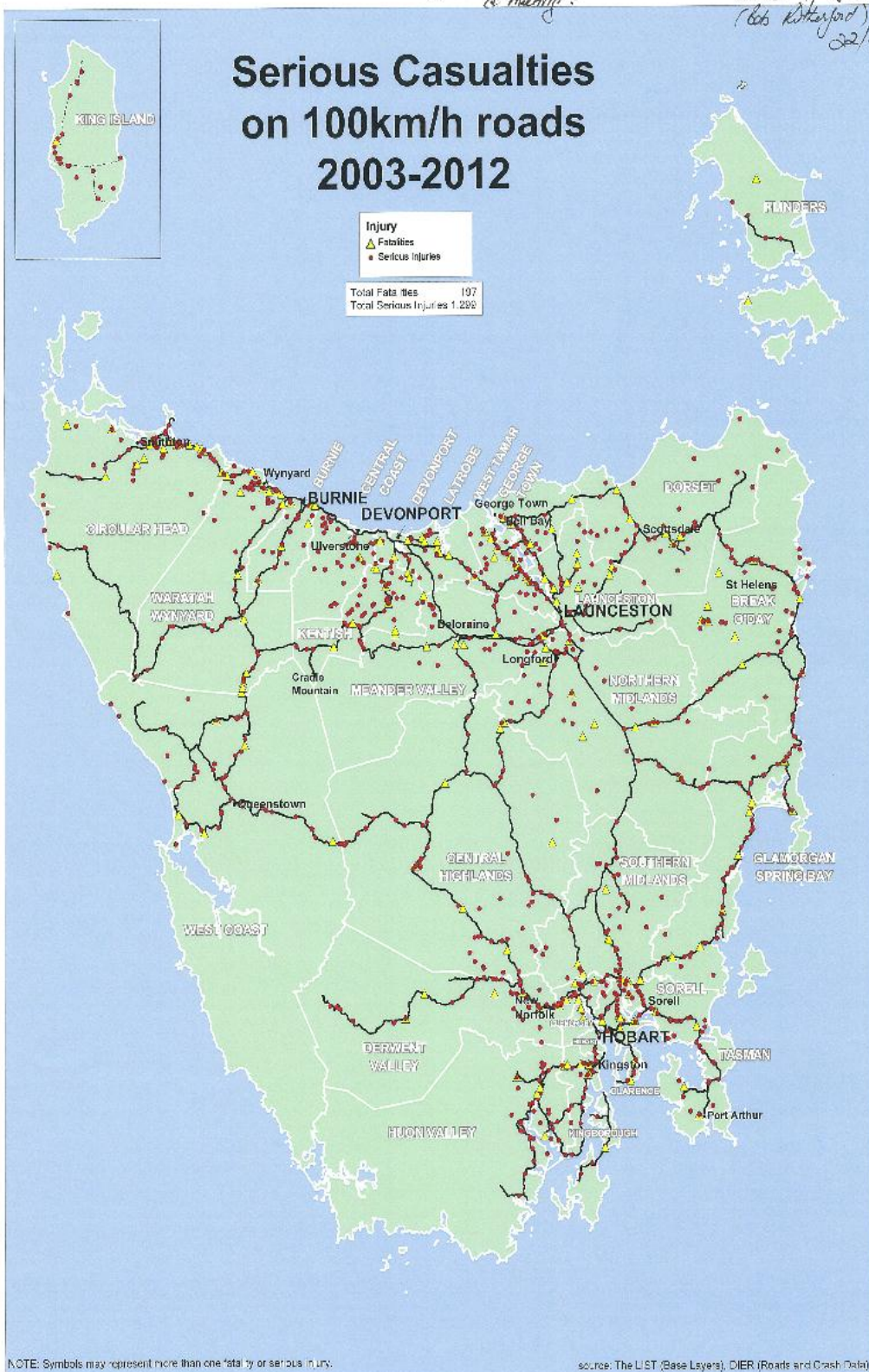
52. During the hearings process, DIER tabled the following map detailing serious casualties on 100 km/h roads from 2003-12.

²² Op.Cit. Mr John Gledhill, p26-27

²³ Op.Cit. p.69

11 members used copies
at meeting

Tabled by DIER
(6th October)
22/4/13.



53. On the date of a second scheduled hearing with DIER (Monday 19 August 2013), the Minister, without notice, made the following major announcement that confirmed a significant change in the Government's policy position on the proposed speed reductions.

*'Mr O'Byrne confirmed that the default speed limit on rural roads, state-wide, will not be reduced from 100kmh to 90kmh – instead the government will continue to roll out a major education campaign and will work with local communities and councils to keep Tasmanians safe on our roads.'*²⁵

54. As part the announcement, the Minister also confirmed *'that speed limits on gravel roads would still be reduced to 80km/h and 'end' speed limit signs would still be removed as planned later this year'*.²⁶

55. The Committee proceeded with the scheduled hearing with DIER and used it as an opportunity to clarify the Government's position in relation to the strategy in light of the announcement. Mr Bob Rutherford confirmed the Minister's position during his evidence and advised that it was based upon widespread community dissatisfaction with the decision.

'Obviously the minister has been listening to a wide range of opinions, and I am taking the deliberations of this committee seriously, and the issues we took back in respect of those conversations. I affirmed what I took to be the support of the committee for taking the limit down to 80 kph on gravel roads. I also can assure you the minister was well apprised of the committee's view that irrespective of where we were in the science this had not been articulated well enough to the community. Importantly, and my memory is Mr Dean may have raised the issue of the need to take the community with you over changes to limits because it is the respect of the 90-odd per cent who obey the rules that is gold in the saddlebags of how we manage our roading system for safety.

I took that to be the tenor of the remarks from the committee, and you may have put it more forthrightly, Mr Dean, that we had not taken the

²⁵ Op.Cit.
²⁶ Ibid

community on that journey and so at risk was respect for the whole system of the setting, and compliance with, speed limits. I hope that adequately captured what was said. I do not know the minister's mind and I don't know what weight he put on the different things before him, but I am certain the committee reflecting those community views, with the advantage of being able to think long and hard about these issues in your review function, would have been of considerable interest to him. We have to take the community with us in these major changes.

Because we have a greater body of knowledge now after all the work that was done, and the considerable discussions last time, we will be proceeding with getting rid of the 'end speed limit' signs and doing the new signing. That was that was discussed at length - Mr Mulder, you pressed that point hard - and it is about giving people some certainty over the rules. We have knowledge now of some of the areas we need to look harder at, what we are signing them at, and we will going out to engage with local government to prosecute that agenda in a detailed way.²⁷

56. Mr Rutherford was questioned about whether the Government would be proceeding with speed reductions to 90 km/h on any non-urban roads and he noted that work would remain ongoing and would require community support before any changes would occur.

'What I can tell you is there will be 100 kph because they will stay at 100 kph until it is otherwise determined and we have done the work, and where we - as the minister has said - have the community on side for the change.'²⁸

57. Ms Ange Collis from DIER further noted that in response to the Minister's decision, the focus of the Department moving forward would be based upon educating the community.

'I think the public education campaign will be targeting the rural roads because that is where we have 40 per cent of our crashes. The new

²⁷ Hansard Transcript 19 August 2013, Mr Bob Rutherford, p.1

²⁸ Op.Cit. p.3

*signage will have the speed limit and a message underneath saying 'Changing road conditions,' and with a call to action to reduce or adapt speed, or something like that. We will be focusing on the rural roads and the message will be, 'If you see a sign like this, that means that you can't drive consistently at one speed and you need to adapt your driving to suit the changing road conditions.'*²⁹

²⁹ Op.Cit. Ms Ange Collis, p.6

PUBLIC FEEDBACK ON THE PROPOSAL

58. As part of the inquiry process, the Committee called for public submissions. Of the submissions received, approximately 73 percent raised concerns with the Strategy and were generally not in favour of the proposed reduction in speed limits on sealed non-urban roads to 90 km/h.
59. The remaining submissions (approximately 27 percent) offered support for the proposal.
60. The Committee also held public hearings in Hobart and Launceston and spoke with a number of different stakeholders who had raised concerns with the proposal.

Concerns with the Strategy

61. The majority of written submissions that raised objections with the proposed reduction in speed limits on sealed non-urban roads to 90 km/h, focused on the following issues -
- a. The impacts on regional communities;
 - b. The belief that the Strategy would result in increased travel times;
 - c. A lack of evidence derived from the trials in the Tasman and Kingborough Municipalities;
 - d. The Strategy would have little impact on road safety statistics (due to other causal factors);
 - e. The focus should be on driver education and driving to the conditions and that reducing the default speed limit would not act as a deterrent; and
 - f. The perceived lack of community consultation.
62. The following excerpts from the evidence received provide a snapshot of some of the major concerns that were raised. The reader should refer to the submissions and hearings transcripts in full for further information.

<http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/ctee/Council/rrspeed.htm>

63. Collision Analyst and Reconstructionist Mr Barry McDonald raised concerns with the possible consequences of a large scale default speed reduction.

*'A blanket reduction in speed on all country roads would likely have the opposite effect to what would be intended and there would be an increase in accidents. This would likely result in an increase in injuries and fatalities.'*³⁰

64. Mr Bruce Lindsay noted the following concerns with the rationale for the proposed reduction in speed limits on sealed non-urban roads to 90 km/h.

*'The recommendations on which the Government's proposed reduction of rural road speed limits are irresponsible, for applying a simple arithmetic calculation to the likely reduction in the numbers of road deaths and serious injuries which may result from a lowering of rural speed limits. To predict an annual reduction of four deaths fails to take into account the increased travel times, fatigue, traffic bunching and driver frustration which would most certainly result from application of the proposed limits. There is a strong possibility that the number of deaths and trauma incidents would rise, due to longer travel times and driver fatigue.'*³¹

65. Mr Peter Nalder commented on the lack of compliance that may arise from the change in speed limits.

*'By introducing a 90 restriction you will once again, be causing the majority to conform to try and contain the minority. It is not necessary to introduce a 90 speed limit, just to try and slow down the idiot element, that won't obey the rules anyway, by this I mean excess speed/drugs/drink driving/ unregistered/uninsured etc; in other words the ones most likely to cause an accident.'*³²

66. Ms Katherine Crawford noted that the focus should be on driver education and driving to the conditions.

³⁰ Mr Barry McDonald written submission, 2 April 2013

³¹ Mr Bruce Lindsay written submission, 30 November 2012

³² Mr Peter Nalder written submission, 5 December 2012

*'Educating young people in early High School, to drive to the conditions, is the best way. Letting you people have access to driver education and defensive driving skills, maybe government subsidized, might be good for some people to experience. Just because the road limit is 100 kms per hour, does not mean the road is safe to drive at 100 kms per hour..All the time! Common sense should prevail.'*³³

67. Defensive driving instructor Mr Barry Oliver raised similar concerns during his evidence.

'It is my considered opinion that a reduction in the speed limit to 90 kph will have the potential to cause more problems than the proposal seeks to overcome. First, I believe there will be a tendency for drivers to adopt the attitude that they can maintain 90 kph irrespective of the conditions, and when a corner comes up they may be less inclined to slow down before and therefore increasing the risk of a crash.

Second, I believe that the imposition of the 90 kph speed limit on a number of roads nominated will lead to a loss of concentration by drivers, therefore increasing the risk. On that point, we are frequently reminded that inattention is one of the major causes of crashes but this proposal will only make the problem worse. As the RACT said in their submission, between 2006 and 2010, driving without due care and attention was the major factor in serious crashes with 732 instances, compared to only 61 for exceeding the nominated speed limit. First, I would suggest that the reduction in speed limit will have the effect of drivers more likely to take the risk of exceeding the nominated speed limit to make up for lost time, especially on roads that are out of the way. The premises that reducing the speed limits on certain roads, will result in the reduction of 100 fatalities and/or serious injuries over a six-year period seems fanciful at best and I would question the validity of such claims and the data that supposedly supports that view, had the people who produced this information and subsequent claims actually driven on these roads. As a tourist state, we are keen to see more

³³ Ms Katherine Crawford written submission, 5 December 2012

*people come into Tasmania but I have a concern that they may think twice if they are faced with the prospect of driving along the road at 90 kph, when it is fact in suitable for a higher speed.*³⁴

68. Mr Bruce Laffer provided similar comments about the need to drive to the conditions but believed that a blanket 100 km/h limit should be maintained.

*'There are many sections of many roads where speeds event greater than 100 kph will be quite safe if drivers are sensible, sober and drive to the conditions. Many bends on these same roads can only be safely entered at speeds MUCH lower than 100 kph. We don't label each and every one of these bends with a statutory limit, or reduce the limit on the entire road to a speed which is safe on its sharpest bend; we expect drivers to use their common sense. This is why we test them before giving them a licence!'*³⁵

69. Mr Geoff Page from Page Transport supported Mr Laffer's position and commented on the importance of truck drivers needing to drive to the conditions regardless of the default speed limits that were in place.

*'It's not a matter of the limits you set on those roads; 80 kph is far too fast for a four-deck load of livestock - of sheep - on some of those gravel roads. You just couldn't physically travel at that speed, so it is nonsense to think that making it 60 or 80 or 100 kph is going to make any difference to the driver. He is going to drive to the conditions, whether it is a gravel road, or a sealed road. It really needs to be taken on a day-to-day basis.'*³⁶

70. Mr Peter Leschen also noted the importance of inattention as a causal factor in crashes and that an appropriate enforcement policy must be in place.³⁷

71. Mr Nigel Beeke provided a detailed submission in which he was critical of the interpretation of information by the Government and RSAC that had been relied upon to make its policy decision. Amongst his concerns were -

³⁴ Hansard Transcript 20 August 2013, Mr Barry Oliver, p.2

³⁵ Mr Bruce Laffer written submissions, 25 November 2012

³⁶ Op. Cit. Mr Geoff Page, p.3

³⁷ Mr Peter Leschen written submission, 8 January 2013

- Misinterpretation of the Kingborough and Tasman trial results;
- That it is not always possible to upgrade roads;
- The Monash University economic analysis being based upon European road modelling;
- The lack of detailed consideration of the economic competitiveness question; and
- The question of transport industry fatigue.³⁸

72. Mr Richard Sherriff noted his concerns with the level of community consultation.

'A matter that concerns me is the manner in which the Road Safety Advisory Council consulted with the public. It seems that they have been over zealous in trying to implement this 90kph default speed limit proposal and I refer you to the following:

1. *Limited community access to their public consultative process*
2. *Ignoring invited written submission against their proposal which were 80% against*
3. *Continually using inflated data on potential crash savings to advance their argument.*³⁹

73. Mr Geoff Page raised similar concerns in relation to the level of consultation that was undertaken prior to the Government reaching a decision.

'Two years or more. That was the only consultation we have had. I can also report that, to my knowledge, there has been no correspondence through our local livestock carriers association. The Tasmanian transport association have had dialogue, and other bits and pieces of information have been fed back to us, but from an industry specific point

³⁸ Mr Nigel Beeke written submission, 10 January 2013

³⁹ Mr Richard Sherriff written submission, 7 December 2012

*of view - with livestock transport - there has been no consultation, to my knowledge.*⁴⁰

74. Traffic Engineer Mr Terry Eaton also raised concerns with the consultation process involving the Northern Midlands Council.

'You hear nothing back. In our particular case, we attended two information sessions, but clearly by that time the proposal was well and truly in place. I attended one session at the Northern Midlands council, and another one at the tram sheds.

Clearly the department was not prepared to take on board any issues or any concerns that were raised. This was the proposal, they were going ahead, and they believed it was right - and there is no argument that they are sincere in that belief. However, our concern was - and it was raised fairly early - that there is no specific evidence our road network is unsafe.

The original proposal was to put it on all council roads. Then, following the RACT's intervention, the proposal was to put it on selected roads. Then they have come up with some road design standards that are totally beyond the capacity, not only of the councils but also of the state, to put in place.

*I asked about the veracity of these particular design standards, and clearly they are design standards that relate to the ability to drive at 100 kph at all times, everywhere. With our topography, and with our financial situation, that is impossibility. The Northern Midlands area has long stretches of straight road, and tight curves. In my mind, it comes back to the philosophical issue: do we drive to the conditions or do we advise drivers you can drive at this maximum speed everywhere, in which case we have to reduce the speed.*⁴¹

75. Mr Eaton questioned the outcomes of the Kingborough and Tasman municipality trials due to the topography of the municipalities and the road lengths, in comparison with other municipalities that could have been

⁴⁰ Op.Cit. p.5

⁴¹ Op.Cit. Mr Terry Eaton, p.12-13

involved in a trial, as part of his written submission (made in a private capacity).⁴²

76. The General Manager of the Northern Midlands Council, Mr Adam Wilson questioned the reasonableness of the standard that his Council would be required to meet for its roads in order to maintain the 100 km/h limit in accordance with the Strategy.

*'In Terry's report to the council in December, he also came up with the estimate that, for a small municipality, we'd be looking at an extra \$30 million. Our turnover for the year is \$15 million. We have a very good road network; we have a very good asset management plan in place now. To put these extra requirements on, puts so much more pressure on the rate base. I guess that's one of the areas that councils are looking at. There are no additional funds from any of the tiers of government to provide that, other than from the ratepayers. For an extra \$30 million to undertake that, it's quite large. And that's not our whole road network; that's only connector roads and the linking roads.'*⁴³

77. Ms Jan Davis, CEO of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, raised concerns with the impact upon rural communities in comparison with urban areas in Tasmania.

*'It is very difficult to argue against the proposition that the government has put because they have racked it up in 'if a life is saved it is worth it'. Our view is that that is all very well, but it is another example of discrimination against rural communities, or urban communities being treated differently to rural communities. We want to be sure that this is not an excuse for government to abrogate its responsibilities in maintaining rural roads to appropriate standards.'*⁴⁴

⁴² Mr Terry Eaton written submission, February 2013

⁴³ Op.Cit. Mr Adam Wilson, p.14

⁴⁴ Op.Cit. Ms Jan Davis, p.25

Support for the Strategy

78. In addition to the noted support for the Strategy from the Government and RSAC, the Committee also received submissions and other evidence in support of the proposal.

79. Most notable amongst the conditional support was the RACT (who is also a member of the RSAC). In its written submission, the RACT noted that the overwhelming majority of its members surveyed did not support the Strategy. However, it noted the following tentative organisational support.

'The proposed rural road speed limit reduction from 100 km/h on sealed roads highlights the tension between mobility and risk. The RACT's Members expect it to champion safe mobility. RACT has given the proposal qualified support on the basis that it could appear irresponsible, or accepting of too higher level of risk, to not support a potential reduction in speed limit on some stretches of narrow, single-land, winding rural roads where there is little prospect of funding to upgrade the safety of those roads through engineering measures, warning signage, better delineation or other measures – if comparatively high risks have been identified on these roads or links.

A broad-based "mass treatment" or 'blanket' approach to cutting speed limits on rural roads needs substantial community acceptance, and needs to be seen as credible, to enable any chance of achieving projected crash cost savings claims. From RACT's member feedback, this requisite credibility is in doubt with respect to the Government's proposed rural road speed limit reduction from 100 km/h on sealed roads.⁴⁵

80. Chief Executive Officer Mr Harvey Lennon clarified the RACT's position in further detail at a later hearing.

'This is clearly a slightly divisive issue. It is fair to say that the representation of our members who believe that the current speed limits are appropriate is around about two-thirds, and one-third are open to alternatives. Notwithstanding that, our organisation believes in not just

⁴⁵ RACT written submission, 22 January 2013

effective mobility but safe mobility and we are concerned that there are still too many lives lost on our roads and we would like to the incidence of road trauma reduced.

I think in the longer term there needs to be a commitment to applying appropriate safety standards to our roads, and especially roads which are of strategic significance which carry high volumes or where there is a demonstrated higher risk to motorists.

We all know that it is probably fiscally impossible to get all the roads that we would like improved in a short space of time and I guess as an organisation, we are applying some support or offering some support, to a direction which provides some reduction in road trauma and the significant cost to the community as an interim measure ahead of being in a position where perhaps some of the work that needs to be done to remediate our extensive rural network can be undertaken.⁴⁶

81. Chief Executive Officer of the Local Government Association of Tasmania (LGAT) Mr Allan Garcia also confirmed his organisation's general support on behalf of local government and noted that limited objections had been raised by Councils with LGAT.

'I haven't had councils ringing me saying this is a terrible thing, although there are some councils that have raised concerns. I am aware of Northern Midlands, Meander Valley, and West Tamar to a lesser extent. Certainly Break O'Day has been quite outspoken in its lack of support for the speed reduction. The first two, Northern Midlands and Meander Valley, have cited the significant network they have of rural roads as being one of the key reasons they have concerns- I will not say they are not supportive, but they have concerns about the reduction. From the Break O'Day perspective, they deem themselves to be a council a long way from either centre - Hobart or Launceston - so there are travel distance times and issues about taking a risk anyway when you get into a car.

⁴⁶ Op.Cit. Mr Harvey Lennon, p.46

In terms of how councils have responded to the proposition to reduce the speed limit from 100 kph to 90 kph, on rural roads in particular, and the subsequent reduction on gravel roads, they were all offered the opportunity for briefings, particularly at the elected member level, because there had been a lot of officer discussions. There was not a lot of take-up by the elected members around the state, either through the fact they were satisfied or unavailable. I think they were trying to be dealt with when members were available. In large part, the issue coming out of councils is that their concerns are they would believe some roads are capable of being travelled at 100 kph and, if not all those roads, certainly parts of those roads. I don't know whether The Sideling [✓] is one of them, but I heard what you were talking about in the evidence before. They have a view that there are certain areas of that road network where you should be able to 100 kph. In many cases they have put up their hands for an assessment to say, 'Let's have a look at these roads and see what component of it needs to be done'. As we speak, they are working with the state government on determining whether sections of those roads could remain at 100 kph. Then there is the debate around the standard: Is the standard too high? Is that an appropriate standard? Isn't it being set to insure there is a blanket? That is probably for experts other than me to determine, not being an engineer.⁴⁷

82. Dr Bruce Corben from Monash University also expressed his support and highlighted the lives he believed would be saved as a result of the Strategy.

'The rural road speed limit reductions proposed for Tasmania have the potential to prevent around 17-20 deaths and seriously injured every year, depending upon how widely they are implemented. Furthermore, these reductions will be achieved at a fraction of the cost of environmental impact of a large-scale barrier installation program and with relatively minor impact on travel times.'⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Op.Cit. Mr Allan Garcia, p.38-39

⁴⁸ Dr Bruce Corben written submission, 17 January 2013

83. Mr Andrew Smith noted that Tasmanian roads were generally not constructed and maintained to the same standard as comparable roads in other States of Australia as a reason to support the Strategy.

*'There are very few kilometres of roadway in this state comparable in standard to roads on which the other states would allow 100 km/h speed limits. And, in the main, those states go to the trouble of annually safety-checking the vehicles.'*⁴⁹

84. The Tasmanian Conservation Trust Inc noted the benefits that would flow for the community and native wildlife. The TCT argued there would be a notable reduction in roadkill.⁵⁰

85. The late Mr Geoff King provided a similar perspective and spoke of the Arthur River region. He noted that -

*'It is my view that a reduced road speed will lead to a safer journey, particularly for visitors at night, and a reduced level of roadkill of threatened species, namely Tasmanian devils and Spotted Tail quolls.'*⁵¹

86. Road Safety Consultant Mr David Healy also supported the Strategy and noted amongst other comments that -

*'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 number of deaths and serious injuries occurring on those roads.'*⁵²

⁴⁹ Mr Andrew Smith written submission, 26 November 2012

⁵⁰ Tasmanian Conservation Trust Inc written submission, 18 January 2013

⁵¹ Mr Geoff King written submission, 18 January 2013

⁵² Mr David Healy written submission, 18 January 2013

Signed this 30 day of October two thousand and thirteen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Hall". The signature is stylized with a large, circular initial "G" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Hon. Greg Hall MLC
Committee Chair

APPENDIX A – LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

Description	Date Received
1. A.J. Abbott	28/11/12
2. Andrew Gardner	16/4/13
3. Andrew Smith	26/11/12
4. Mr Barry McDonald	3/4/13
5. Belinda Crisp	3/12/12
6. Bruce Corben	17/1/13
7. Bruce Laffer	25/11/12
8. Bruce Lindsay	30/11/12
9. Bruce Taylor	18/1/13
10. Burt and Campbell Trucks Pty Ltd	29/11/12
11. David Healy	18/1/13
12. DIER	17/1/13
13. Dorset Council	11/4/13
14. Dr Grahame Vaughan	25/11/12
15. Mr Geoff King	18/1/13
16. Graham Alexander	29/11/12
17. Howard Colvin	18/1/13
18. Ian Wallace	13/1/13
19. John Jones	1/5/13
20. Katherine Crawford	5/12/12
21. Malcolm Eastley	5/1/13
22. Martin Small Consulting	18/1/13
23. Mike Delaney	29/4/13
24. Milan Prodanovic	16/1/13
25. Nigel Beeke	18/1/13
26. Northern Midlands Council	24/1/13
27. Phillip Vickers	11/1/13
28. P D Leschen	8/1/13

29. Peter Nalder	3/12/12
30. Philip Muir	18/1/13
31. Road Safety Advisory Council	17/1/13
32. RACT	23/1/13
33. Robin Claxton	18/12/12
34. Sherriff Agencies Pty Ltd	7/12/12
35. Tasmanian Conservation Trust	18/1/13
36. Terrence Rattray	5/12/12
37. Terry Eaton	4/2/13
38. Tim Manning	25/11/12
39. Ian Hollingsworth	13/5/13
40. John Beattie	20/5/13
41. Freycinet Eco Retreat (Virginia Cowie)	6/6/13

APPENDIX B – PUBLIC HEARINGS

22 April 2013 – Parliament House, Hobart

1. Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources – Mr Robert Rutherford, Dr Ian Johnston and Ms Deborah Davis
2. Road Safety Advisory Council – Mr John Gledhill and DIER – Ms Deborah Davis
3. Local Government Association of Tasmania – Mr Allan Garcia
4. RACT – Mr Harvey Lennon and Mr Vince Taskunas
5. Kingborough Council – Mayor Graham Bury and Mr Ian Holloway
6. Tasman Council – Mayor Jan Barwick

29 April 2013 – Public Buildings, St Johns Street, Launceston

1. Page Transport – Mr Geoff Page
2. Northern Midlands Council – Mr Terry Eaton and Mr Adam Wilson
3. Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association – Ms Jan Davis and Ms Mel King
4. CR Jones Transport – Mr Calvin Jones
5. Mr Terry Eaton
6. Mr Malcolm Eastley
7. Tasmania Police – Assistant Commissioner Donna Adams

19 August 2013 – Parliament House, Hobart

1. Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources – Mr Bob Rutherford and Ms Angela Collis
2. Mr Barry McDonald

20 August 2013 – Parliament House, Hobart

1. Mr Barry Oliver (via teleconference)