

## AusLink

The Federal Government last week launched its long awaited Land Transport Plan, *AusLink*. The program includes \$11.8 billion for projects over the next 5 years, which is a \$400 million increase on the 2004/05 Budget figure.

*Auslink* is a long overdue development for Australian transport. The integration of road, rail and research funding into one rolling 5-year plan is a welcome shift to a more strategic long term approach to transport infrastructure. It is pleasing to see new funding included and the projects identified are a start of a process for the long term strategy of *Auslink*.

However more funding will be necessary to achieve the vision we all seek and *SaferRoads* would like to see a greater proportion of the \$67 billion in petrol excise and \$16 billion in GST collected on fuel by the Government over the next 5 years spent on improving roads. Expenditure on road infrastructure is an investment, not a cost, and the benefits accrue across the economy. Unfortunately, no mention of an extension of the highly successful Federal Blackspot program, which is set to end in 2005/06, was made. It is to be hoped that a positive announcement will come shortly. *Improving the safety of roads would account for almost half the target reduction in the fatality rates.* (Auslink white paper P 109).

## SaferRoads Activities

The state motoring clubs have been very active in recent months, promoting *SaferRoads*.

In NSW for example Ross Turnbull (President of the NRMA) has been traveling the highways and byways talking to locals, mayors, ambulance and police officers and meeting with politicians. Ross also spoke at the recent RTA Rural Roads Safety Summit about rural road safety issues.

A reply paid postcard was also sent to each of the NRMA's 1.7 million members inside the latest edition of *Open Road* with the lead in inviting members to nominate the worst stretch of road in their area. 6300 replies have been received to date. The NRMA Safer Roads website has been established—

[www.mynrma.com.au/motoring](http://www.mynrma.com.au/motoring) and is to be linked shortly to the AAA *SaferRoads* website. In addition a 1300 phone number has been established to take callers comments.

During Easter, the RAASA circulated their “Life or Death Bingo” news release (see the Resources section of the SaferRoads website) to educate RAASA members about the types of poor road conditions to look out for, and encouraging them to report their concerns to *SaferRoads*. This information will be passed on to road authorities. RAASA's *SaferRoads* website is at [www.raa.net/page.asp?TerID=429](http://www.raa.net/page.asp?TerID=429)

## Coming events

### Monday 28 June

The Australasian College of Road Safety (ACRS) and the George Institute for International Health are hosting a Seminar Monday 28 June (5.30 pm for 6pm start) on [\*Young Driver Safety: a Local and International Perspective\*](#), at the George Institute Conference Room, Level 10, King George V Building, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Missenden Road, Camperdown Sydney.

Chaired by Professor Mark Stevenson, Director Injury Prevention and Trauma Care Division at The George, speakers will include Dr Allan Williams (Chief Scientist at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Virginia USA) and Dr Rebecca Ivers and Dr Stephanie Blows (Research Fellows at the George Institute). For further details contact Cheri Donaldson by June 23 ([cdonaldson@thegeorgeinstitute.org](mailto:cdonaldson@thegeorgeinstitute.org)) or (02) 9993 4591 fax (02) 9993 4501.

*Please let us know of any similar events that could be of interest to SaferRoads supporters and we will mention it in coming Newsletters or if time is short distribute it by email.*

## Other Events

**14 July**—ALGA National Local Roads Conference and associated *SaferRoads* Launch South Australia.

**August**—AAA board meeting and *SaferRoads* launch Darwin.

**August**—National Road Safety Strategy meeting Sydney.