



# ANNUAL REPORT

Australian Automobile Association





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## AAA Vision

To promote responsible, safe, affordable motoring and assistance services nationally for its collective membership.

## AAA Mission

- To provide a strong, effective and collective voice for the Australian motoring community.
- To facilitate and support continuing success and development of the motoring and related activities of its constituent members.

## Role of AAA

AAA will pursue its Vision and Mission by:

- Research, development and advocating policy and technical improvements in motoring.
- Facilitating and supporting the continuing success and development of motoring and related activities of its constituent members, providing opportunities for discussion and collaboration to realise effective synergies.
- Maintaining and facilitating contacts between constituents and like organisations nationally and internationally.

## **The Australian Automobile Association and constituent motoring organisations have had a busy year in 2006-07.**

It was a year that saw changes in leadership at both AAA and among the Clubs, new corporate arrangements for AAA products and services and a heightened profile on members' issues and road safety activities.

AAA and the Clubs are a unique brand in that we represent consumers – we are not an industry or sectoral interest organisation trying to secure a better return on the dollar or a bigger slice of an industry pie.

We are cleanskins in our role as consumer advocates – and this role is increasingly being recognised by political parties, the media and stakeholders.

This role and our activities are recognised by results:

- the increasing funds going into road infrastructure;
- the strong advocacy on issues such as petrol prices; and

- the development and promotion of policy such as driver education and vehicle safety which have been embraced by government and opposition parties alike.

AAA advocacy activities have included the further development of the Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP), with the release of the first star ratings of the AusLink network in October 2006 showing 51% of the national highway was rated 3 stars or less – not good enough.

We also saw petrol prices take a high profile in 2006-07, with AAA and the Clubs actively commenting on the prices in comparison with international prices. This advocacy was a factor in the Government announcing an inquiry into petrol pricing by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

The Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) was incorporated in 2006-07, and is now acting on a more independent basis. AAA remains an active member of ANCAP and supports its role in crash testing vehicles, star rating them for safety and commenting on vehicle safety issues.

AAA President Ron Gray and Executive Director Lauchlan McIntosh both stepped down at the end of 2006. On behalf of AAA and Constituents, I would like to thank them for their contribution to AAA and road safety.

Lauchlan leaves after 14 years in the AAA driver's seat and has certainly overseen some significant changes in road safety and advocacy activities in his time. Thank you Lauchlan.

AAA's new Executive Director, Mike Harris, started in February 2007 and brings to the position a wealth of public sector experience in both the transport and Treasury areas, providing a strong base for AAA's activities nationally and internationally.

The Board and management of AAA also continue to take a leadership role on road safety issues at a regional and a global level.

This leadership is demonstrated by Australia's active role in FIA and FIA Foundation activities, liaison with motoring organisations in Europe, the US, Japan and China.

At a regional level, AAA assisted the Automobile Association of Malaysia in developing a road assessment program along the lines of the Australian Road Assessment Program.

Personally, I have been honoured to take up the appointment as AAA President and I look forward to representing the needs and aspirations of our 6.5 million members and indeed all Australian motorists.

Alan Evans  
President  
Australian Automobile Association

# Executive Director's Overview

**It would be an understatement to say my learning curve as Executive Director of the Australian Automobile Association has been sharp.**

I had expected a number of changes in moving to a national organisation after a long-term career in transport, treasury and other public service bureaucracies around Australia – but those changes have been quantum.

What I have learned is that AAA and the motoring clubs are major players in researching, formulating, developing and implementing policy and programs in the interests of our members – and we do it well. I have also learned that, internationally, AAA and the clubs are recognised as progressive and innovative leaders in the world of motoring organisations.

AAA - through its advocacy and representation activities at the regional, state, national and international level - is well established in the minds of governments, transport agencies and departments, stakeholders, the media and in global forums.

AAA's profile is built upon the successful activities of the motoring clubs, a highly competent national secretariat staff and a clear vision for progressing road safety issues and programs on behalf of members.

While my first few months have been about learning, it is clear that the activities of AAA and the Constituent clubs have continued successfully through 2006-07. Highlights include:

- Record road funding announcements in the 2007 Budget;
- Increased funding for the national Black Spots program;
- Ongoing success of the Parliamentary Visits Program;
- Increasing public profile of programs such as AusRAP and ANCAP;
- High public profile on issues such as petrol prices and road safety; and
- Leadership on issues such as climate change and vehicle emissions.

One of my first activities in taking up my position in February was to oversee the development of AAA's Strategic Plan from 2007 to 2010. This is effectively AAA's blueprint for the future – I believe the Plan demonstrates the clarity of our objectives and the

strategic outcomes we are seeking to achieve. It continues a number of well-developed and mature programs and activities as well as introducing some imaginative and exciting new ones.

It sets out a clear plan and structure for progressing motorists' issues to a range of stakeholders and decision-makers. And it is initiating new policy in areas such as climate change, emissions trading, sustainability and fuel price reform.

These sit alongside programs such as the Australian Road Assessment Program, the Australasian New Car Assessment Program and innovative proposals such as the *keys2drive* driver education program.

These AAA activities are reflected among the Constituent motoring organisations as they service the increasingly diverse needs of some 6.5 million members and their families.

AAA's ongoing ANOP research series was released early in 2007 – the eighth suite of results in the past 10 years. This research shows Australians' love affair

with their car is still dominant. Nine in 10 motorists use their cars every or most days of the week, compared to an increase between 1999 and 2007 from 11% to 13% in those using public transport once a week.

The AAA survey also shows that motorists strongly support and expect the clubs to represent their interests on a wide range of issues – from petrol prices to toll roads, to fuels, to the environment, to road funding and to safer vehicles among others.

AAA's advocacy activities and successful programs such as the Parliamentary Visits Program allow the motorists' concerns to be heard by Federal Government ministers and opposition, Commonwealth agencies such as the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, and other national and international organisations.

Our activities are recognised through Commonwealth support for activities such as AusRAP, where ATSB has provided funding of more than \$1 million over the past three years, and also a Child Restraint

educational program developed between AAA, ATSB and Kidsafe.

Another element of this position I had not realised is the role Australia plays in world road safety forums and activities.

This includes key involvement on major international programs such as the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP) and New Car Assessment Programs (NCAPs), helping shape debate at the FIA Conference and FIA Foundation, and at the UN Global Road Safety Forum in April 2007.

AAA, the motoring clubs and the Australian Government supported the attendance of a delegation of 8 Australian youth ambassadors to this important international meeting. The delegation presented to the Global Forum and reported back to a range of Australian stakeholders and audiences.

The clear direction and planning activities has made my transition into the AAA Executive Director's position a smooth one. I have found a real desire

among AAA and the clubs to improve road safety outcomes and to ensure members' interests are well represented throughout my first months in the job.

For that I would like to thank the AAA Board, the various AAA groups and committees comprising club nominees and the AAA secretariat staff, who do a terrific and very professional job.

I acknowledge the activities of AAA and the Constituents, appreciate the sharp learning curve and all those who have contributed, and look forward to reporting on a full year's activity in the 2007-08 AAA Annual Report.

Mike Harris  
Executive Director  
Australian Automobile Association

**The AAA Board oversees the activities and strategic functions of the AAA. The constituent motoring organisations are NRMA Motoring & Services, RACV, RACQ, RAASA, RACWA, RACT, AANT and RACA.**

The Board met in August 2006, November 2006 and April 2007.

Board meetings set and review the strategic direction of AAA, review AAA activities against the Business Plan, decide on key policy issues, oversee AAA forward planning, exchange views among constituents and ensure the statutory requirements for the organisation are achieved.

The Annual Conference was hosted by the RACT and conducted in Hobart on 10 to 13 November 2006.

Board committees include:

- Presidents;
- CEOs;
- Audit and Investment; and
- Remuneration.

All Board committees have their own Charter to ensure their relevance and have met regularly throughout 2006-07.

As part of the CEOs' strategic planning and representation activities, a Study Tour was conducted to Japan, Canada and the United States.

Some members of the Board also attended the FIA General Assembly in October 2006.

At the end of 2006, AAA President Ron Gray stepped down and NRMA President Alan Evans was appointed with RACWA President Freda Crucitti appointed as Vice-President. Executive Director Lauchlan McIntosh also stepped down after 14 years in the position.

The AAA Board thanks both for their contribution and wishes them well.

## President



Alan Evans  
NRMA Motoring & Services

## Vice-President



Freda Crucitti  
RACWA



Michael Tynan  
NRMA Motoring & Services



Tony Stuart  
NRMA Motoring & Services



Clive Hall  
RACV



Colin Jordan  
RACV



Julie-Anne Schafer  
RACQ



Ian Gillespie  
RACQ



Juliet Brown  
RAASA



John Fotheringham  
RAASA



Alden Halse  
RACWA



Terry Agnew  
RACWA



Ted Best  
RACT



Greg Goodman  
RACT



David Booth  
AANT



Gavin Thomas  
RACA



Mike Harris  
AAA

The AAA continued to research key issues and develop advocacy programs. For 2006-07, the key programs were:

## SaferRoads

The SaferRoads project – established in 2003 – is the major road safety vehicle for AAA and Constituents. The project is a partnership with the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), the Australian Trucking Association (ATA) and the Australasian College of Road Safety (ACRS).

SaferRoads is underpinned by the “safe systems” approach to road safety – **safer drivers in safer cars on safer roads.**

SaferRoads acts as an umbrella for other AAA activities such as the Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP) and the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP).

## AAA/ANOP Research - Motorists' Attitudes

AAA commissioned and promoted its latest round of polling into motorists' attitudes and concerns, undertaken by ANOP in early 2007 – the eighth suite of research results in 10 years.

Focus groups were tested in a number of Australian cities, by electorate, with a follow up quantitative survey of 1500 drivers conducted as well.

The research showed motorists were using their car more than ever – equal to the highest recorded levels since AAA surveys began in 1995. Some 9 in 10 motorists use their car every or most days of the week, compared to a minor rise in public transport usage from 11% to 13% since 1999.

Motorists' major concern was high petrol prices, doubling from 20% to 42% of respondents. Their second concern was the behaviour of other drivers, which has been a major long-term issue.

## Australian Road Assessment Program

The Australian Road Assessment Program (AusRAP) is an initiative of AAA and Constituents, utilising data from State Government road and traffic agencies around Australia. It assesses and rates Australian roads using two protocols – risk mapping of casualty crashes and a star rating system using an internationally recognised Road Protection Score (RPS).

AusRAP released its star ratings report in October 2006 – *Star Rating Australia's National Network of Roads*. The report provided star ratings for the AusLink network for all Australian States and Territories except NSW (as the data was not available).

The results showed 51% of the national network was rated 3 stars – a figure described by AAA and the clubs as unacceptable for a national highway network.

The report attracted significant media and stakeholder attention nationally and regionally.

In order to obtain data for the AusLink network in NSW, the Director Research & Policy negotiated an MOU with the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA).

The results of these AusRAP reports are being increasingly recognised among government, industry, the media and stakeholders. State and Territory road authorities have provided valuable technical advice and data for use and analysis under the program.

Direct assistance and briefing on AusRAP was given by AAA representatives to the Tasmanian Department of Energy, Infrastructure and Resources, in conjunction with RACT.

AusRAP was also strongly supported by the Commonwealth Government, with the Australian Transport Safety Bureau providing a grant of \$298,000 for AusRAP activities in 2006-07.

The Director, Research & Policy, attended the EuroRAP meeting in Prague in November 2006, reporting on the latest developments relating to Australia's star rating methodology.

The Director, Research & Policy, also attended the NZAA Annual Conference where he gave a presentation on AusRAP and encouraged the Club to implement its own Road Assessment Program.

AAA's Research Manager attended meetings of the International Road Assessment Program (IRAP) and the European Road Assessment Program (EuroRAP) to discuss activities, ensure consistency of processes between programs and to exchange information.

The Director, Research & Policy, and Research Manager also spent separate times in Malaysia, assisting the Automobile Association of Malaysia to develop their own road rating program. A pilot program was implemented in conjunction with ARRB and iRAP.

Publicity was given to AusRAP at a booth during the ARRB Conference in Canberra in November 2006 which was attended by hundreds of delegates. A booth was also established at the APEC auto-dialogue in Adelaide in April 2007, showcasing AusRAP, the ARRB technology to star rate roads, and iRAP.

## Australasian New Car Assessment Program

AAA is an active member of the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP), which has continued to build on its role as the leading independent advocate for consumers on vehicle safety through regular reporting on crash test results for a wide range of vehicles.

In 2006-07, ANCAP conducted tests on family cars, small cars, 4 wheel drives and people movers, providing safety information and a star rating for occupant protection and pedestrian safety.

Star ratings varied across vehicles and attracted significant publicity within the automotive industry and among the broader public.

ANCAP was incorporated as a company in July 2006, with AAA represented on the Board.

This new corporate structure has seen the appointment of an Executive Officer, a Technical Manager and a Communications Co-ordinator.

ANCAP conducted a successful Media Open Day in May which provided journalists with the opportunity to test drive cars with and without ESC, to view an ANCAP crash test and to be briefed on ANCAP's activities.

ANCAP Reviewed its strategic direction during early 2007 – resulting in a focus on the “Stars on Cars” safety labelling program.

## Public Communications

AAA has been an effective advocate in highlighting a range of motorists' issues in the national media and to stakeholders.

The AAA Executive Director and AAA staff have appeared in a wide variety of national broadcast and print media on a range of topics relevant to Australian motorists. This included road safety, petrol prices, road funding, vehicle tariffs and AusRAP. A list of AAA media releases is shown over the page.

Communications programs have also been developed, in consultation with Constituents, to support public releases and events for AAA, ANCAP and AusRAP activities, with Clubs taking a complementary role in dealing with the media.

The Executive Director also hosted a dinner at the National Press Club for Press Gallery media shortly after his appointment.

## Media Releases

AAA issued the following media releases in 2006-07:

12.6.2007	Family Cars Getting Safer
7.6.2007	Motorists Should Expect Lower Petrol Prices
8.5.2007	AAA Welcomes Boost To Road Funding
4.4.2007	AAA Welcomes Black Spot Funding Increase
30.3.2007	AAA Welcomes Government Call for Petrol Price Monitoring
6.3.2007	Albury-Wodonga Bypass Will Save Lives
16.2.2007	AAA Welcomes New AusLink Funds
17.1.2007	Australia Lags on Road Safety Strategy - 194 Deaths Behind Target
16.1.2007	AAA Welcomes ACCC Warning - Petrol Prices Should Be 7 Cents Lower
11.1.2007	New AAA Chief Executive Appointed
9.1.2007	1600 Road Deaths in 2006 - Roadside Hazards Our Biggest Killer
23.12.2006	Don't Drive to Distraction - Text Before You Drive
22.12.2006	Tariffs on Imported Cars are a Tax on Motorists
8.12.2006	Mutual Obligation in Young Driver Training
16.11.2006	New AAA President in the Driver's Seat
12.10.2006	AAA Supports Government Safety Call on REVA
3.10.2006	Australia's First Star Ratings of our National Highways
8.9.2006	Peter Brock Will Be Sadly Missed
28.8.2006	AAA Executive Director to Stand Down
15.8.2006	AAA Welcomes Government Announcement on LPG/Ethanol

## Parliamentary Visits Program

In 2006-07, the Parliamentary Visits Program (PVP) was facilitated by AAA for the third successive year with all motoring clubs participating.

It is evident now that AAA and the Clubs have developed many effective relationships with Members of Parliament and advisers, due in part to the successful operation of the PVP.

More than 100 direct face to face meetings with parliamentarians were facilitated during the period.

The availability and participation in the PVP of many senior Club representatives – including Presidents, Board Members, Chief Executives and Public Policy Managers – was a key factor that assisted in facilitating access to senior Cabinet Ministers and advisers.

The opportunity to meet with Ministers and Shadow Ministers was also an effective method of illustrating a united position of strength and

commitment on significant issues affecting Australian motorists. These meetings also allowed an opportunity for politicians and advisers to canvass a broader cross section of opinions.

It is evident that, as the PVP has evolved, the Clubs' professional presentation of material and information to parliamentarians has improved significantly – as has the level of engagement and follow-up from meetings.

Most Clubs now organise follow-up meetings where necessary with parliamentarians in their home state.

In the final months of 2006-07, leading in to the 2007 Federal election, AAA and the Clubs focused on developing presentations based upon an election strategy – *Motoring Matters...For Every Australian* – which detailed national priority projects and initiatives to improve road safety and economic outcomes for the nation and Australian motorists.

Motoring Clubs utilised and adapted the election strategy to add to their own initiatives and state-specific priority road projects for presentation to parliamentarians.

The range of subjects discussed in meetings was broad but included ANCAP, AusRAP, AusLink, driver education for learners and the aged, road tolls, fuel prices and taxes, alternative fuels, black spot funding, regional roads and national highways, environment, de-speccing, fuel tax reform and road pricing.

## Federal Budget/ AusLink

The Treasurer announced new investment in infrastructure, including roads, in the May 2007 Budget. There was a significant boost to road investment funds nationally of \$22.3 billion for AusLink 2 (2009-2014).

The Government also announced increased funding for the Black Spots program, from \$45 million to \$60 million a year. AAA has argued for some time that this should be increased to \$100 million a year.

AAA issued a media release welcoming the additional funding, published a detailed commentary on the Budget outcomes – all Clubs made media comment on funding for local projects in their State.

## Petrol Prices

The AAA was at the forefront of public comment through 2006-07 in highlighting petrol prices and the margins between world oil prices and domestic petrol prices. AAA was also active in raising the disparity between metropolitan and regional petrol price margins and the ACCC's lack of action in its price monitoring role.

The AAA advocacy was a factor in the Government's announcement in March 2007 that it had ordered the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to undertake an inquiry into petrol pricing.

Graphs showing the increased margins can be viewed at the end of this Annual Report.

## Skills Shortage

AAA built on the work conducted with Automotive Training Australia (ATA) in 2006 and again sponsored ATA's participation in a series of high school careers advisors seminars held throughout the country.

ATA were able to provide information on automotive careers to almost 700 high school careers advisors across the country.

**The AAA facilitated a broad range of activities on behalf of its Constituents. Some examples were:**

## Public Policy Forum Meetings

The Public Policy Forum (PPF), comprising representatives from all Constituents, is responsible for researching and developing policy proposals and implementing Board decisions. PPF meetings were conducted via teleconference in October 2006, in Canberra in February 2007 and via teleconference in May 2007.

Topics addressed in the PPF meetings included AusRAP, the Motoring Matters election strategy, vehicle emissions, petrol prices, the Productivity Commission (PC) Inquiry into Road and Rail Freight Infrastructure Pricing, fuel tax reform, alternative fuels, UN Road safety week, driver education, climate change.

In conjunction with the PPF meetings, a meeting of the AusRAP Steering Committee is held which reviews recommendations from a Technical Working Group and sets policy direction for AusRAP.

## Road Service Managers

The 2006 Road Service Managers conference was hosted by the RACV and held on 23-24 October in Melbourne. The conference identified a number of areas for additional action and cooperation and the most significant issues identified were:

- Development of consistent OH&S procedures for road patrols; and
- Development of a long-term strategy for sustainable road service networks in metropolitan, regional and rural Australia.

A national road patrol OH&S manual will be presented to the 2007 Road Service Managers conference.

The Road Service Managers also held a Technology Forum on 25 October 2006.

## National Driver Training Trial Reference Group

The National Driver Training Trial is one of the largest and most rigorous studies into young driver training and education ever undertaken. It involves 28,000 young drivers from NSW and Victoria.

The AAA Research Manager represents the AAA on the Federal Transport Minister's Reference Group, which comprises representatives from the driver training industry and several young drivers. The Group provides the Minister with practical advice on all aspects of the National Driver Training Trial.

## UN Road Safety Delegates

AAA and some Constituents – NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAASA and RACT – joined with the Federal Government to sponsor a delegation of eight young Australians to attend the UN Assembly on Youth Road Safety in Geneva in April 2007.

The group gave a presentation to the Assembly.

In Australia, the delegates also met with Federal MPs, attended a PPF meeting and presented to a range of meetings and conferences on the Assembly.

# Representation

**The AAA represents Constituents and their members – motorists and their families – in activities at a range of different forums nationally and internationally. These include:**

## FIA Conference Week

Nineteen Australian delegates attended the FIA Conference Week and FIA Working Group sessions in Cape Town, South Africa, in May 2007. Delegates from more than 50 countries attended.

AAA used the Week to conduct a number of formal and informal meetings, including:

- Region 2 Club representatives;
- FIA Director-General for Mobility;
- FIA Three Year Public Policy Working Group; and
- The “Right to Repair” Working Group.

Commissions included Legal and Consumer Affairs, Tourism, Road Assistance, and Marketing. The FIA Foundation also focussed on the new “Make Roads Safe” campaign, which is aimed at the UN and World Bank, and on-road pricing and technical matters, including On-Board Diagnostic related issues.

## APEC Road Safety Summit

AAA and the Clubs attended the APEC Road Safety Summit conducted in Adelaide in March 2007. AAA provided a presentation on AusRAP and met with various Australian and international delegates.

## International Motoring Documents

AAA - through its affiliation with the AIT/FIA and as the only authorised association in Australia - provides through the Constituent motoring clubs a variety of international motoring products which allow individuals the freedom to travel independently overseas with a minimum of formalities.

## International Driving Permit

An International Driving Permit (IDP) allows motorists to drive overseas and also provides additional identification. There were 166,553 IDPs sold in 2006-07.

## Carnet de Passages en Douane

A Carnet de Passages en Douane (CPD), or a Carnet, is simply a vehicle “passport” which includes all vehicle details and allows entry into many countries around the world without lengthy delays and the need to pay duties at each border.

Around 400 vehicles are temporarily imported into Australia annually and the AAA guarantees to the Australian Customs Service to pay duties for these vehicles if they are not re-exported within the 12 month expiry date. AAA issued 79 Carnets for vehicles leaving and entering Australia in 2006-07.

## Camping Card International

A Camping Card International (CCI) is a useful and widely recognised document throughout Europe and Africa at camping and caravan sites. The CCI provides insurance cover for financial members for bodily injury to third parties. Clubs issued 203 CCIs in 2006-07.

## Productivity Commission

AAA made a detailed submission to the Productivity Commission in November 2006 as a response to its draft report on Road and Rail Freight Infrastructure Pricing.

The submission advocated the replacement of fuel excise with a road user charge, and identified the actual charges that might apply in practice to cover pavement wear, crash costs and the costs of air and noise pollution.

The submission also highlighted the fact that cars are overcharged compared to trucks for using the road network.

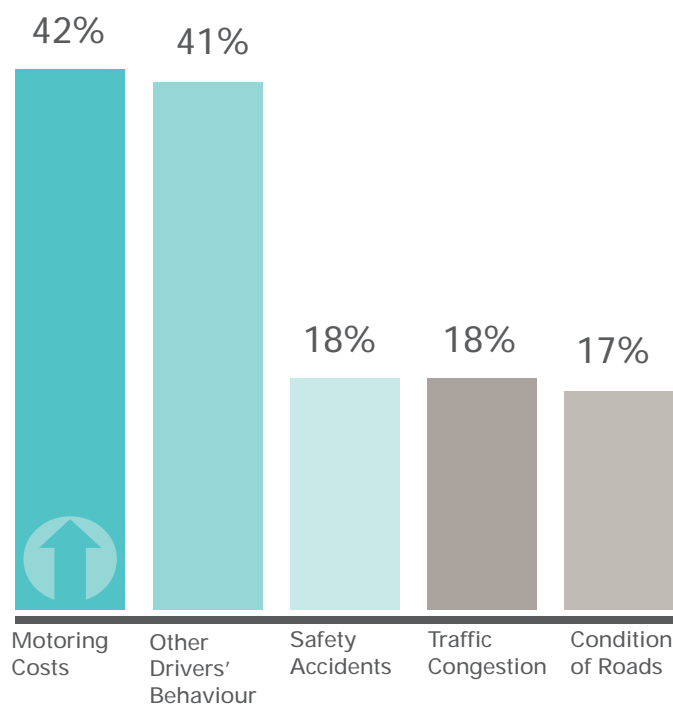
Information was also provided on how ITS might be implemented for road pricing.



l to r: James Hurnall (Director Technical Services); Margaret Blacklock (Accounts Officer); John Metcalfe (Director Research & Policy); Peppina Sorbara (International Documents Officer); Paul Scott (Parliamentary Liaison Officer); Greg Smith (Research Manager); Kirsti Donovan (Office Assistant); Julie Anderson (Liaison Manager).

Inset l to r: Mike Harris (Executive Director); Allan Yates (Communications Manager).

## Motorist's Main Issues in 2007 Main responses to open-ended question



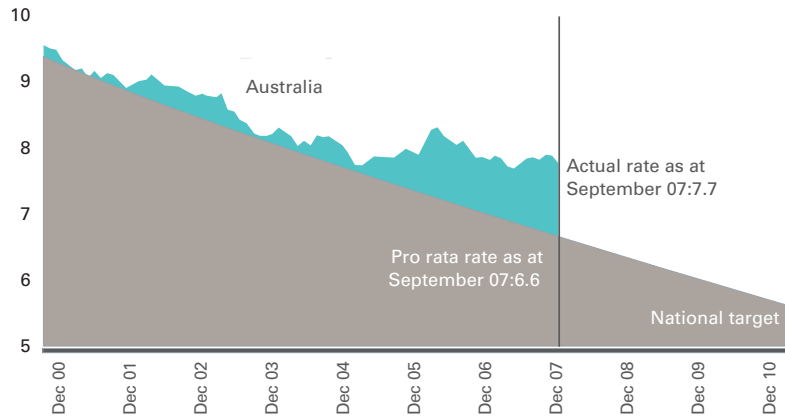
2005:	20%	48%	24%	17%	24%
2003:	26%	37%	18%	14%	16%

2007 AAA National Survey of Motorists' Attitudes

### Key Findings:

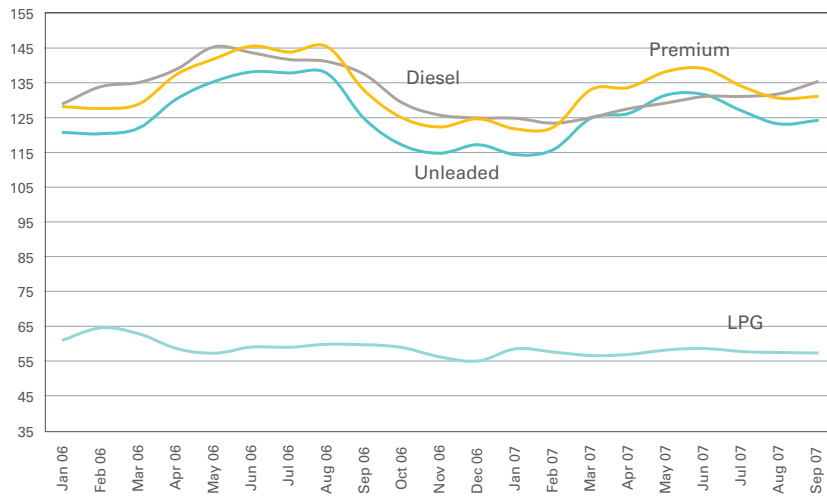
- Concern about motoring costs has increased significantly as petrol prices have become a big issue for motorists.
- Other drivers' behaviour is the second big issue.
- While lower on the agenda, roads continue to be more of an issue in regional areas, and congestion in urban areas.
- Concern about congestion is now at the highest level yet seen.

### Road death rate against National Road Safety Strategy target (deaths per 100,000 population)



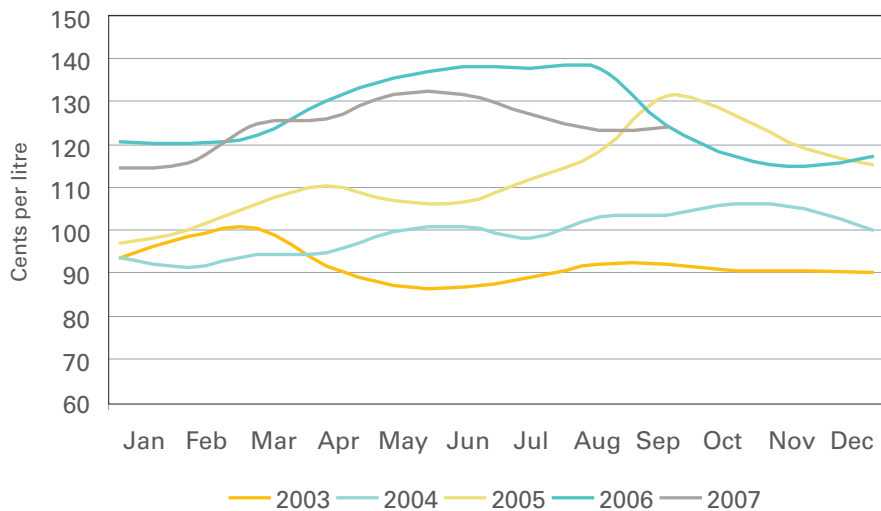
Source: AAA analysis of Australian Transport Safety Bureau and Australia Bureau of Statistics data

### Average capital city fuel prices (cpl)



Source: AAA analysis of FUELTrac data

### Average capital city petrol prices, 2003-07



Source: AAA analysis of FUELtrac data



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