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New road safety office honours election commitment to reduce road toll

The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) congratulates the Morrison Government on honouring its election commitment to establish a new national office of road safety, which will begin operating tomorrow (1 July).

AAA Chief Executive, Michael Bradley, said the new office had been a key demand of the AAA and the eight million motorists it represents through Australia's state and territory motoring clubs.

Mr Bradley noted the Federal Government was yet to finalise the charter of the new office, which will be on the agenda at the next COAG Transport and Infrastructure Ministerial Council in August.

However, the government has already decided that the new Office of Road Safety will administer the Road Safety Awareness and Enablers Fund and the Road Safety Innovation Fund, which were announced in the 2019-2020 Federal Budget.

Mr Bradley said: "This is an important first step in delivering a more ambitious and a better-coordinated national road safety agenda, which is long overdue.

"As clearly highlighted by the findings of last year's Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy, Australia's performance has stalled in recent years. Road trauma continues to hospitalise 100 Australians every day and kills 100 more every month.

"The AAA supports the Inquiry co-author's view that governments around Australia are failing to act with the urgency and scale required to address this emergency, and we hope this new agency will provide the greater leadership and coordination that Australia needs."

The AAA hopes the Transport and Infrastructure Council's August meeting will help clarify and define the Office of Road Safety's role and responsibilities and guide development of the next phase of the National Road Safety Strategy.

"Given the findings of the recent Inquiry, it's crucial that the new office is specifically charged with ensuring consistency of road safety data collection across jurisdictions and promoting best-practice research," Mr Bradley said. "The AAA hopes it will also play a central role in driving road safety outcomes through transport infrastructure investment and will focus on policies that ensure a safer Australian vehicle fleet."

Media contact: Jake Smith jake.smith@aaa.asn.au 0403 466 153

The Australian Automobile Association is the nation's peak motoring body, representing Australia's state-based motoring clubs and their 8 million members. The AAA is an apolitical and technology-neutral advocate for federal transport policy that improves safety, affordability, and mobility.