

MEDIA RELEASE

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Federal Budget transport spend can save lives, as well as jobs

- Federal Budget road spend should save lives as well as jobs.
- Motorists one of few groups to pay their own way in budget through fuel excise.
- More black spot funding needed with road toll at 1105.

Australia's peak motoring body wants next week's Budget investment in roads and transport projects to prioritise the protection of lives, as well as jobs.

The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) Budget submission highlighted the nation's annual road toll is stuck at well over 1000 deaths and that a further 100 Australians are hospitalised every day from car crashes.

AAA Managing Director Michael Bradley said: "The Government has the opportunity to start attaching strings to funding provided to state and territory governments, which can start to ensure their respective safety commitments are met.

"In addition to the tragic and unnecessary loss of life, our failure to reduce road trauma continues to cost the Australian economy nearly \$30 billion every year and represents a \$4 billion annual drag on government budgets."

The federal Budget is expected to confirm motorists continue to pay their own way on the nation's roads through the 42.3 cent per litre fuel excise, which is again expected to generate significantly more revenue for the federal government than it spends on roads and public transport expenditure.

"Sizeable transport investment has been flagged and this will mirror the priorities of Australian commuters," Mr Bradley said.

"But the Government must also seize the opportunity to ensure the money is properly invested with stringent criteria to ensure we also keep Australians alive on our roads."

In addition to increased funding for road safety initiatives such as the Black Spot Program and the Road Safety Innovation Fund, tougher funding criteria were urgently needed to ensure state and territory governments honoured their undertakings as a part of the National Road Safety Strategy.

In the 12 months to June 2020, 1,105 people died on Australian roads.

Mr Bradley said the driving public would also be looking for the federal Budget to provide more details on the expected costs of the federal government's recently announced plan to secure additional fuel supplies; as well as increased investment in programs aimed at improving vehicle technology to deliver safer, more affordable and greener transport options.

The AAA represents more than 8.5 million Australians through its clubs, the NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAA, RAC, RACT and AANT.

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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.

