

# Vulnerable Road User Program Guidelines



## Contents

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Vulnerable Road User Program ..... | 1 |
| Safe System Principles .....       | 1 |
| Infrastructure Treatments .....    | 1 |
| Mandatory Criteria .....           | 2 |
| Assessment Criteria .....          | 3 |
| Requirements .....                 | 3 |
| Funding .....                      | 3 |
| Reporting .....                    | 4 |
| Legislative Compliance .....       | 4 |
| Publicity .....                    | 4 |
| Acknowledgment.....                | 4 |
| Variations.....                    | 4 |
| Reference Documents .....          | 1 |



# IMPROVING SAFETY IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES

## Vulnerable Road User Program

The Vulnerable Road User Program (VRUP) forms a key component of the Improving Safety in Our Towns and Cities theme of the *Towards Zero - Tasmania Road Safety Action Plan 2020-2024*. The VRUP provides an opportunity for local government to apply for funding for small-scale infrastructure treatments to improve road safety for vulnerable road users (pedestrians, motorcyclists and cyclists).

Vulnerable road users have a high risk of being severely injured in a crash with a motor vehicle as they are completely unprotected and have no physical protection to absorb crash energy.

The VRUP program aims to:

- minimise the opportunity for conflict between vulnerable road users and motor vehicles in urban and non-urban areas; and
- provide an opportunity for local councils to develop and implement small-scale, low cost, effective infrastructure treatments targeting vulnerable road user safety issues.

The program is funded jointly by the Australian Government's Road Safety program and the Road Safety Levy collected by the Tasmanian Government and administered by the Department of State Growth (State Growth).

## Safe System Principles

The Safe System approach underpins the Government's *Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026* and represents a shift away from traditional reactive approaches to road safety infrastructure. The core Safe System principles are:

**Fatal and Serious Injuries are not acceptable on our roads.** Every road user has the right to travel safely on the road network and this right cannot be traded for other gains (such as traffic efficiency).

**Humans are fallible.** Traditional approaches that assume 100 per cent compliance at 100 per cent of the time by road users will make the roads safe is not realistic or acceptable. Human error is inevitable meaning that crashes are inevitable.

**Humans are vulnerable.** By accepting that crashes are inevitable, we must acknowledge that all road users have limited tolerance for energy in a crash before it becomes a fatal or causes serious injury. Core to the Safe System approach is that the energy in collisions that do occur is minimised so that resultant harm is minimised.

There is a **shared responsibility** for road safety between system managers and road users. System managers must acknowledge that fatal and serious injuries are not acceptable, humans make mistakes and humans are vulnerable in decision-making. Road users also have an obligation to attempt to use the road safely.

## Infrastructure Treatments

Applications are sought that include appropriate infrastructure treatments to improve overall safety and reduce the risk of crashes.



# IMPROVING SAFETY IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES

Types of infrastructure treatments which have been undertaken through the VRUP include:

- Wombat crossings
- Footpaths
- Pedestrian crossings
- Refuge islands
- On-road bicycle lanes
- Kerb ramps
- Motorcyclist protection rails



Applicants should refer to the Austroads report *Towards Safe System Infrastructure: Compendium of Current Knowledge* to assist in the selection of appropriate infrastructure treatments (reference 3).

## Mandatory Criteria

All applications need to meet all the following criteria to be considered:

- The applicant must be a Tasmanian local council.
- All mandatory sections of the application form must be completed, and the application must include the design and schedule of works for the proposed infrastructure treatment.
- The application must address an area of current, or potential, risk of conflict between motor vehicles and vulnerable road users.
- The application must deliver cost-effective infrastructure improvement.
- Applications not supported by a co-contribution from local council need to provide an explanation on this matter.
- The area targeted must be in an urban or non-urban location and on either a State or council-owned road.
- A minimum of \$10 000 can be requested.



## IMPROVING SAFETY IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES

- The application must be for a new project. Applications that will not be considered for funding include:
  - additions to existing projects;
  - maintenance infrastructure activity or administration costs incurred; and/or
  - anything below the minimum funding amount of \$10 000.

### Assessment Criteria

A risk management approach is used to assess applications. Applications that meet the mandatory criteria will be assessed against the following criteria:

- The likelihood of a crash occurring based on exposure rates (i.e traffic volume data) and the likely consequence of a crash.
- The potential crash reduction benefit(s) of the proposed infrastructure treatment.
- Co-contribution or explanation for applications not supported by local council funding.
- The use of the Safe System design tool (reference 4).
- Alignment with key directions under the *Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026* and the *Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Action Plan 2020-2024*.

The VRUP Assessment Committee conducts the assessment of applications. Membership is made up of representatives from the Road Safety and State Roads branches of State Growth.

### Requirements

All grant recipients must sign an agreement with State Growth. This confirms State Growth's and the local council's responsibilities according to the application. The main provisions of this agreement cover the following:

#### Funding

- State Growth will commit to an agreed payment timetable based on the terms of the agreement and the amount funded for the approved project. For example, a project grant could be funded at key milestones (negotiated for each project), and/or at the project completion.
- State Growth may select a project at random for financial and/or compliance auditing.
- The local council is responsible for the project and the management of all associated activities and risks. State Growth's role is to provide funding.
- Funding for the project, including the component received from State Growth, must be included in the local council's annual reporting.



# IMPROVING SAFETY IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES

## Reporting

- The local council is required to notify State Growth when the project is complete.
- A completion audit is to be undertaken by State Growth once the project is complete. Final payment will only be made by State Growth once this has occurred.

## Legislative Compliance

The local council will need to consider if the approved project is subject to any legislation. This includes, but is not limited to, the *Roads and Jetties Act 1935*.

## Publicity

State Growth may use the information from the approved project for business purposes. For example, State Growth may use the data, project outputs and/or financial information as a showcase to other local councils, or use photos as examples to put on Tasmanian Government websites or in support materials.

## Acknowledgment

State Growth may require the installation of signage at the entry to the defined corridor to inform road users of the existence/role of the SRRP and the source of the project funding.

## Variations

Approved projects must not be varied unless the variation is approved by the VRUP Assessment Committee. A variation includes the use of different infrastructure treatments to those detailed in the application, and/or a variation in the funding amount. Requests to vary the approved project must be accompanied by supporting information, including details and revised design and schedule of works.



# IMPROVING SAFETY IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES

## Reference Documents

The following documents can be utilised to inform applications.

1. [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy 2017-2026](#)
2. [Towards Zero – Tasmanian Road Safety Action Plan 2020-2024](#)
3. [Austroads, Towards Safe System Infrastructure. A compendium of current Knowledge, AP-R560-18](#)
4. [Austroads, Safe System Assessment Framework, AP-R509-16](#)
5. [Austroads, Embedding Safe System in the Guide to Traffic Management, AP-R595-19](#)





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