



Quarterly Report

Australian College Of Road Safety

May 2003

From the President

This is my last report as President, after an intense and rewarding two years in the role. The first of my last jobs is to congratulate the two new Fellows of the College, awarded during my tenure. Colin Grigg was honoured with a fellowship, which was presented at the conference in Brisbane last year. Colin is a founding member of the College, and a long-serving member of the Executive, who continues to work as an effective advocate for road safety and especially rural road safety. Colin is also the Editor of Australia's first road safety journal (Roadwise), which he started. Ray Taylor is the latest Fellow of the College. Ray has not only worked effectively for many years in road safety (in Victoria, in NSW, and for Australia generally), but also performed critical roles for the College as a member of the Executive and as President of the College. Ray and Colin join a distinguished group of Fellows.

My job as President has been made a great deal easier by the Executive Committee of the College, and my limitations have been covered extraordinarily effectively on more than one occasion (including critical contributions to our efforts to reduce the promotion of unsafe driving through car advertising described below). The College generally is, and I personally am, deeply indebted to the rest of the Executive and to the team at the National Office who achieve a great deal, especially within the limited time available.

CAR ADVERTISING.

Despite regulations, which have been in place for some years, car advertising has been disappointingly unresponsive to concerns that the industry depicts and indeed promotes unsafe and

illegal driving practices. Unsafe driving is depicted as being fun or even thrilling, as involving skills to be admired, as resulting in successful competition with other drivers, and as being a feature of attractive, desirable, macho males in particular.

Last year the College added weight to the push for better regulation of this industry by making a submission to Senator Ron Boswell (Federal Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Roads and Transport) identifying substantive concerns with the self-regulation of this industry. The consequence of this push has been a new set of regulations, which addressed our main concerns with the earlier regulations themselves, although our concerns with the processes by which the regulations are enforced remained un-addressed. Our submissions have been improved by the suggestions of a number of members of the Executive, including details of ads, details of rulings by the relevant board, and additional points to address concerns with the use of fantasy.

In our first submission we recommended that the system be revised to produce a number of changes including the following:

“Changes to the guidelines by which these ads are assessed for suitability. In particular, at present ads are able to show extremely dangerous behaviour so long as they have some trivial disclaimer to show that they are not being filmed on public roads. We suggest that the requirement for safe, legal, responsible driving should apply regardless of the circumstances under which the ad is filmed or the apparent circumstances presented. When on public roads, private roads, race tracks, open fields, salt pans, or desert dunes, the same requirement (that the

behaviour depicted should be safe and legal) should apply.”

The revised regulations addressed this point, in particular, with detailed descriptions of the behaviours which were unacceptable in ads, and an important addition regarding the conditions under which the ad is depicted. The code includes the following:

“Advertisers should ensure that advertisements for motor vehicles do not portray any of the following:

(a) Obviously unsafe driving, including reckless and menacing driving to the extent that such practices would breach any Commonwealth law or the law of any State or Territory in the relevant jurisdiction in which the advertisement is published or broadcast dealing with road safety or traffic regulation, were they to occur on a road or road-related area.”

The latter phrasing is critical. It identifies that the advertiser can no longer get away with promoting dangerous driving by depicting it as being on a race track or private road. Rather, the behaviour will be judged as if it were to occur on a public road.

In these changes to the code, we have made progress. However, ads that contravene the code are still screened regularly, and the body that ‘enforces’ the code has dismissed complaints on the basis that the ad was based on fantasy. It is noteworthy that fantasy is not mentioned in the code and is thus not identified as an exemption from the code. The failure of effective enforcement of the new code highlights the need for further change.

Our second submission made the following recommendations (including some which were also in our first submission):

1. A system of prior assessment of ads before they go to air. This could even be a system of advice during the process of an advertising campaign being developed.
2. A mechanism for fast action to stop campaigns when they appear, if they breach the standards. Currently, advertisers are able to effectively run their ad. campaign while action is delayed.

3. A system of highly deterring penalties for advertising which breaches the standards, to ensure there are incentives to avoid such campaigns from the start.
4. An independent arbitrator to head the assessment of advertising. It is apparent from the above cases that the present system does not work in this regard.

Hopefully, we will continue to make gains in the arena (especially in relation to ensuring that the regulations are enforced, possibly by virtue of the adoption of the latter four recommendations). Certainly the publicity we have received suggests we are doing well. The Australian Transport Safety Bureau wrote to us describing our submission as cogent and seeking permission to circulate it to others, which was naturally granted. Our second submission was covered by the Daily Telegraph in April, and I was interviewed on national radio (Triple M, Phil O’Neil Show) on this issue. Phil O’Neil and the only caller who had time to express an opinion in any detail both agreed that car advertising promotes unsafe driving. This kind of support from the media and from the public can be influential. The signs are good for further successes, and the continuing advocacy role of the College.

Soames Job, President.

Annual Directory

Mid-year we will be preparing the 2003 Directory of ACRS Members, a copy of which is sent to every member. We normally include in the Directory the address and contact details that you sent us when you renewed your membership. If there is any of that information that you do not wish to be included in the Directory for privacy reasons, or if you wish to update your details, please let us know by 30 May.

College AGM by teleconference

Once again we are planning to hold our annual general meeting by teleconference – since with a membership scattered throughout Australia and New Zealand there is really no other way to enable all those who are interested to participate. You should by now have received full details if you are a member of corporate delegate. Please attend if you possibly can – we need your participation.

News from the College Chapters

ACT and Region Chapter

Eleven members attended the Chapter's AGM on Monday 14 April. The Chapter plans to hold quarterly seminars/workshops during 2003 and hopes to be more active with media opportunities.

NSW (New England) Chapter

The Chapter held its AGM on 8 April. The annual Arrive Alive Expo for high school students is once more being planned. The Chapter is also looking at safety issues associated with minibuses.

NSW (Sydney) Chapter

The Chapter joined with other groups in running a Child Safety seminar on 10 March. A seminar on the Emergency Services was held on 29 April, and another on Speed Management is planned for 4 June.

Queensland Chapter

The Chapter hosted a seminar on 'Roadside Safety Barriers' in Brisbane on 25 March, at which there were 40 delegates. This was the first in the series of seminars that the College is planning to hold in most of the State/Territory capitals in 2003 – 2004. The speakers were Mr Dan Fardon, who is a senior road safety auditor and also Honorary Research Fellow in the Transport Systems Centre of the University of South Australia; Professor Raphael Grzebieta, a member of the College Executive and Associate Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering at Monash University; and Professor Rod Troutbeck, Head of the School of Civil Engineering at the Queensland University of Technology.

South Australia Chapter

The Chapter held its AGM on 7 May. The chapter is currently planning to convene a half day meeting to discuss road safety issues confronting the youth. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for early September 2003.

Victorian Chapter

The Chapter held a 'Young Driver Issues' seminar on 7 May followed by the Chapter AGM. A seminar on 'Roadside Safety Barriers' organised in conjunction with the College's National Office, is planned for Melbourne on Tuesday 15 July 2003, at Monash University. Five regional area meetings are planned for older drivers as follow-up to the 2002 Older Drivers Conference in Melbourne.

Western Australian Chapter

The AGM has been held and the committee elected. The Chapter is looking at following up on the appropriateness of the current punitive measures related to driving licences, fines and demerit points when viewed from a road safety perspective. There is particular concern about the implied messages being sent by the current measures. The feedback from other States currently received and the ongoing debate on this matter in other States will be closely monitored.

Proceedings of the 'Developing Safer Drivers and Riders' Conference

The National Office has excess stock of the July 2002 conference proceedings on CD-ROM so we are offering these to College members at the **very special price of \$10 each** (including GST, post and packing). To order, contact the National Office (contact details on back page).

Queensland takes biggest bite of the big apple

Queensland's "every k over is a killer" anti-speeding campaign recently won the highest award at the New York Festivals' Awards for Advertising and Marketing Effectiveness.

Transport Minister Steve Bredhauer said the campaign - which has won also extensive acclaim at both State and national levels - was the first time an Australian campaign had received the Grand Trophy.

The campaign was developed for Queensland Transport by Queensland company BCM Partnership. It consisted of a series of television commercials and outdoor billboards, aimed at making speeding socially unacceptable to ultimately reduce the road toll.

The awards attracted more than 16,000 print, radio, television and other campaign entries from 64 different countries. "To take out the Grand Trophy acknowledges our work is as good as it gets anywhere in the world," Mr Bredhauer said. "What's even more satisfying is that we are starting to get through to motorists - but we still have a way to go to make speeding as socially unacceptable as drink driving. Public education

has a valuable role to play in reducing the road toll and is most effective when combined with targeted enforcement, as is the case in Queensland."

New WA driver training centre

Driver skills and behaviour will be put to the test at the new Grogan Road Driver Training and Education Centre (DTEC) being developed on 30 ha of land at the Perth International Airport.

Road Safety Minister Michelle Roberts recently visited the site of the DTEC and turned the first sod to begin construction of the new purpose-built facility. She said businesses with fleet vehicles and people who drove for a living would be able to improve their skills and competence behind the wheel. "One quarter of all company vehicles in Australia are involved in a crash each year and company car drivers can be expected to have more crashes than drivers of private cars," she said.

The new centre will include a two-kilometre road circuit; a skid prevention area; manoeuvring areas for motorcycles, cars and heavy vehicles; a dedicated area for four-wheel-drive and all-terrain vehicle training; lecture rooms and admin area.

NSW researchers commence new study of young driver risk factors

Researchers at Sydney University, in collaboration with a number of other organisations, are about to enroll young drivers in a study looking at the risk factors for car crash related injury and death. The purpose of the study, which may prove to be the largest ever conducted on this issue, is to improve the safety of young drivers by gaining a more detailed understanding of the reasons why young people are over-represented in car crashes. All drivers under 25 who hold a NSW provisional driver's licence (red P plates) are eligible to participate in the study. The study may be completed on line at the website: www.drivestudy.com or by ringing for a questionnaire. If you have contact with young people or their parents and would like to assist in recruiting drivers for the study, please contact Stephanie Blows on (02) 9351 0126 or drive@iih.usyd.edu.au. (*Youthsafe Newsletter*).

More 50 kph areas in Victoria

New 50km/h speed limits are being introduced in approximately 60 Victorian rural and outer metropolitan town centres. The new speed limit will improve pedestrian and vehicle occupant safety and is part of the Bracks Government's Arrive Alive! road safety strategy to reduce the road toll by 20 per cent by 2007. The new 50km/h speed limits will become effective when signs are installed between March and June 2003.

Innovative Rural and Remote Study

Researchers from the University of Queensland Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety and James Cook University School of Medicine will be taking a new approach to rural and remote road safety research from April. Their aim is to examine crash experiences, behavioural and attitudinal risk factors, at-risk populations, high risk modes of transport and trip characteristics, to better understand the rural and remote road safety problem. More than 400 hospitalised crash patients will be interviewed to gain insight into the factors contributing to their crashes. Coronial information will provide details of fatal crashes. With the assistance of the police and ambulance services, passing motorists will be flagged down for interview at the same time of day as the crash case, to provide comparable information. Over 250 of the crash sites will also be visited one week after the crash. It is hoped that analysis of all the information gained will lead to insights into the kinds of intervention that will reduce the road toll in rural and remote areas. (*Safety Visions – CARRS-Q Newsletter*)

NZ-LTSA researches drink driving

A recent LTSA study has confirmed that the rate of drink-driving is nearly eight times higher at night than at other times. The study covered 14,000 people from 7,000 households that monitored their drinking and driving patterns over two days and were later interviewed about them.

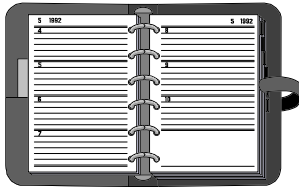
The study found that during the hours of high alcohol consumption (10pm to 6am on Fridays and Saturdays), 90 out of every 10,000 trips were made by alcohol-impaired drivers over the period of the study. At other times only 12 trips were made by alcohol-impaired drivers. Other studies have shown that males are the major offenders with regard to drink-driving, with 24 male drivers being alcohol-impaired for every 1 female driver.

However, campaigns to reduce the rate of drink-driving have had a noticeable effect. In 1991 269 people died in New Zealand in alcohol-related crashes, compared with 118 in 2001. (*Road Safety NZ – March 2003*)

Fatal accidents and vehicle fires

One of our members, Bruce Mitchell, Road Safety Officer with the City of Casey, Victoria, is seeking information on any research being done into fatal accidents where at least one vehicle involved caught fire. Please contact Bruce direct at bmitchell@casey.vic.gov.au if you can help.

For your Diary



18 - 23 May 2003: 21st ARRB Transport Research and 11th REAAA Conference, Cairns. Contact Irene Taylor Tel: 03 9881 1607 email: irenet@arrb.com.au

26-29 May 2003: SimTecT 2003 Simulation Conference and Exhibition - Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide. For further details see www.simtect.com.

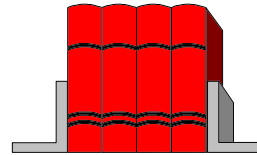
1-3 June 2003: IPWEA NSW Division Annual Conference – Sydney. Contact: Janice Parker tel/fax: 02-9943 6564; email: conference2003@ipwea.org.au

15 July 2003: ‘Roadside Safety Barriers’ Seminar – Australian College of Road Safety, Victorian Chapter, at Monash University. For details contact the National Office (see last page)

24-26 September 2003: Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference – Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, Sydney. Conference website: www.iceaustralia.com/rta. Contacts: tel: 02-9544 9134; fax: 02-9522 4447.

24-26 September 2003: AITPM National Conference on ‘Transport Land Use Integration – Keeping pace with growth’ – Sydney Convention Centre, Darling Harbour. For information contact tel: 02 9320 9431; email: aitpm@bigpond.com

New to the ACRS Library



The following publications have been received recently in the National Office Library. If members would like more information about them, please contact the National Office.

1. **‘Update and Overview of Research on the Effectiveness of the Victorian Transport Accident Commission’s Road Safety Television Advertising Campaigns’** – Transport SA, December 2002.
2. **‘Vehicle Crashworthiness and Aggressivity Ratings and Crashworthiness by Year of Vehicle Manufacture’** - Monash University Accident Research Centre, Report No. 196, January 2003.
3. **‘Motor Cycle Safety’** - the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, Monograph No. 12, October 2002.
4. **‘Older Pedestrians’** - the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, Monograph No. 13, December 2002.
5. **‘Safety of Small Work Groups on Roadways’** - Monash University Accident Research Centre, Report No. 195, September 2002.
6. **‘The Feasibility of Identifying Speeding-related and Fatigue-related Crashes in Police-reported Mass Crash Data -** Monash University Accident Research Centre, Report No. 197, March 2003.

First five star result for ANCAP

The Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) has recorded its first ever five star crash test result with the Subaru Forester XS -LP. Up to

now, the only cars to achieve five stars have been the Renault Laguna, Mercedes C and E class and the Saab 9-3, all of which were proved in EuroNCAP tests. The ANCAP and EuroNCAP tests follow identical procedures. In previous tests last year the Subaru had scored four stars out of the maximum five (along with six other compact 4WD models).

The Forester AX-LP, equipped by Subaru with side and head protection airbags, improved its rating to the maximum five stars after an additional pole test recently. The pole impact test, available only to vehicles fitted with head-protecting side airbags, shunts the vehicle side-on at 29 kph into a steel pole lined up with the driver's head, simulating a crash into a tree or a pole. (Road Safety NZ – April 03)

New Zealand and the ACRS

The National Executive Committee of the College has been encouraged by the steadily growing membership of New Zealanders in the College. This has led to considering if the time is ripe to assist those members to commence local College activities and perhaps form the first New Zealand Chapter. A recent postal survey to members and non-member professional road safety people in New Zealand is seeking to find out what the next step should be, including possibly changing the College's name. If there were to be College activities in New Zealand, the time would probably be right for the College to include 'New Zealand' in its title or alternatively to use the term 'Australasian', as adopted by many other Australia-New Zealand associations.

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