
Excessive clearing may not reduce crashes

Safe and Scenic Toodyay Road
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BETTER driver behaviour leads to fewer crashes, so congratulations go to all Toodyay road users.

Improved driver behaviour has seen road crash statistics significantly reduce in the five years 2016 to 2019 since the Wheatbelt road safety review was conducted in 2015.

This means that the crash and killed or seriously injured reports have reduced significantly from a crash density of 0.722 to around 0.200.

We are still waiting for the crash data to come out for 2020 but these figures are based on the assumption that 2020 will be similar to 2019.

Driving change – the road safety strategy for WA 2020-2030, is the framework to guide WA's road safety journey over the next decade including reducing the number of people fatally, severely or seriously injured by 50 to 70 per cent by 2030, and to zero by 2050.

The document also highlights that approximately 75 per cent of all serious crashes involve a mistake, a momentary lapse in attention or being tired.

So a reminder to all drivers – plan ahead to avoid distractions, give yourself a little extra time, make sure you are well hydrated and stop frequently if you are on a long journey.

Crash insights reveal that 55 per cent

of rural crashes are on roads designated 110km/h and 37 per cent involve the vehicle crashing into a solid object such as a tree.

The sealing of road shoulders and installation of audible edge and centre lines on a number of WA's rural roads has reduced severe and casualty crash rates by 58 per cent and 80 per cent respectively.

After accounting for treatment costs, the net cost savings to the community were estimated at \$50.6 million.

Equally significantly, these statistics show that excessive land clearing to achieve road widening is not always necessary to reduce crash rates.

Not only money and lives are saved but also our precious environment.

The new road strategy for the next decade of achieving a 50 per cent reduction in major crashes will see WA keep pace with the rest of Australia.

Achieving a 70 per cent reduction will see WA catch up with the best performing Australian jurisdictions.

WA could save up to 723 lives and prevent approximately 8000 fewer people suffering from serious and life-changing injuries over the next decade.

This is achievable by doing more of what works, embracing new technology and engaging with the community and stakeholders to develop a cultural shift in road-safety attitudes and behaviours.



Old-growth Wandoo trees will be removed to widen Toodyay Road.