

NT GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO SAVING LIVES ON TERRITORY ROADS



Clare Martin

Clare Martin
Chief Minister
of the Northern Territory

A comprehensive road safety package has been approved to cut the Territory's devastating road toll.

On average, one person is killed every week and nine seriously injured on our roads – we had to act decisively – and that's what we've done.

We've taken the tough decisions needed to reduce the number of people killed and also recognised our unique conditions.

We've accepted all the principles of the NT Road Safety Taskforce Report, *SAFER ROAD USE: A Territory Imperative*.

The open speed limit will go – the default speed limit on open roads – unless signposted otherwise – will be 110km/h.

However, the Stuart, Arnhem, Barkly and Victoria Highways will all have 130km/h speed limits.

After listening to Territorians, I feel confident that the higher limit on our main highways recognises our circumstances.

Demerit points will be introduced to deter people from driving dangerously – they'll be enforced by more police on our roads.

Penalties will be increased for drink-driving, speeding and not wearing seatbelts – cameras will catch people who speed and run red lights.

Greater emphasis will be placed on road safety education.

I'd like to thank the Road Safety Taskforce for its thorough examination of road safety in the Northern Territory – we expect the changes to be implemented by the end of 2007.

Our shocking statistics

Three times the risk of being killed

Your risk of being killed on Territory roads is currently up to three times greater than anywhere else in Australia.

Highest risk in the developed world

The risk of being killed in a car crash in the Territory is currently higher than in any other developed country.

Seatbelts not worn in half of all fatal crashes

Not wearing a seatbelt increases your risk of being killed or seriously injured. In more than 50% of fatal crashes in the NT since 2000, seatbelts were not worn when available.

Half of all fatal crashes involve drink-driving

Almost half (48%) of all fatal crashes in the NT involve a driver over the legal blood alcohol limit.

State or territory	Number	Number of people killed per 100 000 population each year
ACT	5	†††††
VIC, NSW	8	††††††††
WA, QLD	9	†††††††††
Tas, SA	10	††††††††††
NT	25	††††††††††††††††††††††††††††

The above table is compiled from Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) data. (Based on average of years 2000-2005 - rounded to the nearest whole number - NT Road Safety Taskforce Report, graph 2, page 5)



Northern
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REDUCING THE TERRITORY ROAD TOLL

November 2006

SAFER ROAD USE: A Territory Imperative



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www.saferroaduse.nt.gov.au

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REDUCING THE TERRITORY ROAD TOLL

The Northern Territory Government is committed to making our roads safer for all Territory road users.

In January 2006 the NT Government established the Road Safety Taskforce to work out how to reduce the Territory's shocking road toll.

The Taskforce reported back to Government with 21 recommendations aimed at changing our road use culture.

The following table shows the NT Government's decisions, based on the Taskforce's recommendations, in four key areas: penalties, enforcement, education and road safety coordination.

Changes to reduce the Territory road toll will be rolled out over the next 12 months.

Changes at a glance

Increased penalties and fines

Alcohol-related offences below 0.08 – fines doubled

- Fine increased from \$100 to **\$200** for drink-driving offences

Speeding – all fines doubled

- Up to 15km/h – increased from \$50 to **\$100**
- Over 15km/h up to 30km/h – increased from \$100 to **\$200**
- Over 30km/h up to 45km/h – increased from \$150 to **\$300**
- **Over 45km/h – additional 'fine only' penalty of \$500**

Not wearing seatbelts – all fines doubled

- Driver or adult fails to wear seatbelt – increased from \$100 to **\$200**
- Driver fails to ensure person under 16 years wears seatbelt – increased from \$120 to **\$240**

Running traffic lights – fines increased

- Fail to obey red light – increased from \$120 to **\$240**
- Fail to obey yellow light – increased from \$80 to **\$100**

Repeat drink-driving offences – suspension of driver's licence

Regardless of any later court penalty:

- **Immediate suspension for 3 months** for second offence within 3 years
- **Immediate suspension for 6 months** for any subsequent offence within 3 years

Tougher seatbelt regulations

- Carrying more passengers than seatbelts is prohibited
- Children under 12 months must be appropriately restrained

Demerit point system

- Introduction of a demerit point system based on the national model

Increased enforcement

Improved detection of drink-driving

- Time limit on breath testing or taking blood samples increased from 2 to **4 hours**
- Blood samples will be collected by a wider range of qualified persons in places other than just hospitals

Detection of drug-driving

- Blood testing for detection of suspected drug-driving
- New offence for driving having consumed a prohibited drug

Increased enforcement (continued)

Speed limits on NT open roads

- 130km/h speed limit – Stuart, Arnhem, Barkly and Victoria Highways
- 110km/h speed limit – rural roads unless otherwise sign posted

Introduction of a Graduated Driver Licensing scheme for new drivers

- Minimum 6 months on L-plates and 2 years on P-plates for drivers under 25 years
- Minimum 6 months on L-plates and 12 months on P-plates for drivers over 25 years
- Total ban on mobile phone use (including hands free) for all L and P-plate drivers
- Failure to display L or P-plates – fine increased from \$50 to **\$100**

Installation of integrated red light and speed cameras

Highway Patrol and Remote Area Traffic Patrol units

- New units to operate out of Katherine and Alice Springs

Establish a dedicated Traffic Section in NT Police

Improved road safety education

Improved road safety education curriculum for NT students

- Road safety included in school curriculum

Review of mandatory Drink Driver Education course

Remote community road safety officers

- Referred to new Road Safety Coordination Group for advice and recommendations on requirements for remote communities

Improved signage on routes with high tourist traffic

Improved road safety awareness campaigns

- Campaign on drink and drug-driving
- Campaign on speed limits
- Ongoing general road safety awareness programs

Improved coordination of road safety

- Municipal councils' role in road safety formally recognised
- Road Safety Coordination Group (including a recognised road safety expert) established to replace the Road Safety Council. The new group to formally report to Government.

A SAFER TERRITORY IS IN YOUR HANDS