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31 January 2020

Committee Secretariat
Joint Select Committee on Road Safety
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Joint Select Committee on Road Safety - Inquiry

Transurban is pleased to provide a submission in response to the Inquiry established by the Joint Select Committee on Road Safety.

Transurban's road safety strategic framework is based on the Safe System Approach and includes targets and action plans with an ambition to operate a transport network that is free from fatalities and life-changing injuries. We measure and report on our road safety performance and engage experts to analyse our data, assess our network and evaluate our activities to support our continued road safety efforts.

Transurban responded to the Inquiry into the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020, co-chaired by Assoc Professor Jeremy Woolley and Dr John Crozier. We provided an overview of our road safety strategic framework, examples of our work to support the national strategy and those of our state partners, and priorities for consideration in the next strategy and action plans. Our submission can be found [here](#).

Travel on Transurban's network has increased by 40 per cent over the past five years as a result of our expanded network and increased rates of traffic. Our serious injury crash rate has plateaued over this time, averaging 4.9 serious injury crashes per 100 million VKT. In the first half of the current financial year (FY20), Transurban's serious injury crash rate is 3.90. Although we are still analysing this significant reduction, our investment in new and upgraded roads including technology, maintenance systems and excellence in incident response, along with a focus on safety through the Safe System Approach are certainly relevant factors.

Transurban has a role in contributing to the safety and performance of the overall network in the jurisdictions and cities in which we operate. In responding to the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the current Inquiry, we draw on our experience and activities to provide relevant and real-world examples.

a. *The effectiveness of existing road safety support services and programs, including opportunities to integrate Safe System principles into health, education, industry and transport policy*

There is an opportunity to strengthen the Safe System principles across functional areas and their associated policies and programs to ensure a synergistic approach to creating a safe transport system. Although some programs and services offered throughout Australia align with the approach, others continue to promote and respond to long-held beliefs that driver behaviour is the key to achieving improved road safety outcomes.

Programs and services must be evidence based and allow for innovation that can be measured and communicated to ensure further investment, particularly in education and health programs, and to have the best chance of making a difference.

It is critical that government agencies, providers and industry have an understanding of the Safe System Approach and how it informs and applies to their work, whether program or service based.

As an example of this, each Transurban geographical region has developed and implemented a road safety action plan that aligns with the Safe System Pillars. Actions are identified through our own crash and performance data, along with independent data from sources such as AusRAP. Actions target key crash types, support our government partners' activities and focus on road safety capability across our business.

Another example is in how we are supporting our people to understand their role in achieving a safe transport network. We are currently finalising a bespoke professional development program for leaders across our business, whether in operations, projects, technology, safety or corporate services. We will know the success of the program when our people are able to articulate safety considerations and implement measures to achieve Safe System 'alignment'.

b. *The impact of road trauma on the nation, including the importance of achieving zero deaths and serious injuries in remote and regional areas*

The report on the National Inquiry in Road Safety (National Inquiry) articulated the impact of trauma on the nation in terms of cost, social impact and missed opportunity. Achieving zero is possible and this has been demonstrated across the nation in particular regions and contexts such as local government areas, towns and school zones. Transurban has also been able to demonstrate zero fatalities on segments of our network. We aim to have our whole network fatality free.

c. *The possible establishment of a future Parliamentary Standing Committee on Road Safety and its functions*

Transurban does not have a view on this ToR.

d. *Measures to ensure state, territory and local government road infrastructure investment incorporates the Safe System principles*

Recommendations from the National Inquiry identified an opportunity to align infrastructure investment with Safe System principles. Tools are now available to support this recommendation, including the Safe System Assessment Guidelines, revised road safety audit guidelines and AusRAP, all of which are utilised by Transurban in the management of our network.

Measures could relate to Safe System-compliant road design, proportion of speed limits appropriate for the road network, proportion of travel on 3 star and better roads, proportion of network length at 3 star or better, rating and assessment of safe intersection design and implementation, establishment of measures to rate smart motorways and associated infrastructure and technologies, and proportion of separated networks for vulnerable road users including cyclists and pedestrians.

e. *Road trauma and incident data collection and coordination across Australia*

As an operator in Australia and North America, Transurban would recommend an internationally recognised approach for data to ensure a consistent coding protocol for injury and crash attributes. Ideally, data would be updated on a timely basis and be made available, within privacy requirements, to the research sector, industry and stakeholders to inform road safety actions and focus efforts on key issues.

The collation, coordination and reporting of road trauma data could be a function of the new Office for Road Safety.

f. *Recommending strategies, performance measures and targets for the next National Road Safety Strategy*

The next strategy has an opportunity to build on the positive outcomes from across the nation and internationally in terms of speed management, regional and rural road protection, improved intersections and an increased effort in implementation of intelligent transport systems to create smart motorways and support the emerging connected and automated vehicle fleet.

A focus on automated enforcement for speed through the deployment of average-speed cameras, mobile-phone detection cameras and closed lane enforcement will support safe driving behaviours. These technologies already have support from the community given they are considered 'fair' and target specific behaviours that concern motorists. Technology that captures data such as near misses can be used to develop interventions before crash issues emerge.

Establishing targets for increased fleet safety in all modes of motorised transport from motorcycles to passenger vehicles, trucks and heavy vehicles will be critical to ensuring that zero can be achieved within the next decades as modelled by road safety and transport academics and our road authorities.

The recommendations of the National Inquiry are key to developing performance measures and targets.

g. *Recommendations for the role of the newly established Office of Road Safety*

The Office of Road Safety (Office) has a critical role in ensuring that a robust, evidence-based strategy and associated action plans are established that build on the recommendations of the National Inquiry.

The Office has an excellent opportunity to lead the capability development in the Safe System Approach across all sectors of government and other stakeholders particularly industry and the community sector that derives approvals for infrastructure, delivers on legislation and obtains funding from government grants.

To achieve zero, the Office needs to be resourced adequately, with officers engaging with the best-performing jurisdictions across the world and given every opportunity to gain the confidence of the community.

h. *Other measures to support the Australian Parliament's ongoing resolve to reduce incidents on our roads, with a focus on the recommendations from the Inquiry into the effectiveness of the National Road Safety Strategy 2011–2020*

There is specific vulnerability in our transport network: pedestrians, cyclists, the aged, young drivers, regional communities and those with a range of social, mental and health conditions. The transport system should be designed and operated to protect the most vulnerable.

The National Inquiry has proposed a series of recommendations to address road trauma in Australia. Transurban fully supports the adoption and implementation of all recommendations.

Yours faithfully

Elizabeth Waller
Road Safety Manager