



15 October 2021

Andrew McIntyre  
Inquiry Secretary  
Joint Select Committee on Road Safety  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr McIntyre

**RE: INQUIRY INTO ROAD SAFETY RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON NOTICE RSQN004**

Thank you for your letter of 17 September seeking further information to a question from Committee member, Matt Thistlethwaite MP.

**Mr THISTLETHWAITE:** Gentlemen, could you provide this on notice. You've mentioned the importance of data and the challenges around getting that data. Every single submission goes to this issue, but, when we raise it with the department or the Office of Road Safety, they assure us that everything is going well and that the information is available on the department's dashboard and the hub is developing well. Can you tell us where the deficiencies are, and, in particular, what data is and isn't being supplied, so that we can know the specifics of what we need to chase up with them?

**Mr Allan:** We can take that on notice, but I can elaborate a bit on the issue that Michael touched on around getting data from Western Australia. That's specifically a data linkage project in relation to serious injury—so, not fatalities—and there are issues around privacy in that regard that make it difficult to get data. It's linking a particular hospitalisation case with a road accident, so it canvasses individual information. I know there is difficulty in getting data, but the comments from the department are also accurate: that data collection and what they're are trying to do—with BITRE and with the Road Safety Data Hub—is impressive, and it's better data collection now. It's not perfect, but it's certainly far better and continuing to get better. But we'll take that on notice and give you more details around what's collected and what's not.

In response to the question, Austroads, on behalf of the Commonwealth and states and territories of Australia, was tasked with funding and managing a project that would address a major gap in road safety data: the lack of a valid national measure of the level of serious injury due to road crashes. This project involved the collection of crash and hospitalisation data from across the country. Austroads was best placed to coordinate the collection and dissemination of data, in partnership with Flinders University, the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare and the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics.

Austroads successfully established agreements with transport and health departments from all states and territories with the exception of the Department of Health in Western Australia. The project is now in its final stages of analysis and reporting. We continue to work with WA Health to find a solution that will secure the release of WA hospital data for incorporation in future updates of the national dataset.

Notwithstanding the incomplete picture of road trauma in WA, the project has been a success and has provided a robust, reliable serious injury dataset that supported the development of the draft national road safety strategy. Austroads will continue to support the efforts of the Office of Road Safety and all states and territories to maintain and develop this dataset into the future.

The ORS is responsible for the identification of data that supports the collection and reporting of performance indicators for the national road safety strategy. Austroads will support these data collection efforts where it makes sense. To date Austroads has not audited or investigated data gaps across the nation, so cannot comment on the suitability of state and territory data collections to support the monitoring requirements of the national road safety strategy or Commonwealth road safety programs.

Yours sincerely

**Geoff Allan**  
**Chief Executive**