

IPWEA NSW Media Release

2018 Local Roads Congress

Councils urge action on road safety

Councils need to take immediate action to address the horrific road safety toll. That's the key message coming out of the NSW Local Roads Congress held in Sydney on 4 June 2018. And they are going to need the help of the NSW and Australian Governments to make a real difference.

Councils and experts from across NSW were joined by the President of Local Government NSW Linda Scott and Members of Parliament from both sides to develop a way to lower the road toll across NSW. With 392 deaths and more than 12,000 serious injury crashes in 2017 in NSW alone, and the trend going in the wrong direction, the Congress is calling for extra measures to turn the road toll trend around.

Presenting at the Congress, Minister for Roads, Maritime, and Freight Melinda Pavey, MP highlighted the new \$125M Saving Lives on Country Roads Program as a significant step forward and called for collaboration between all levels of government. The Minister also confirmed the LG Road Safety Program through to 2021.

IPWEA NSW President Warren Sharpe OAM called on the NSW Government to build on the excellent work being done in partnership IPWEA (NSW), LGNSW and councils.

"Almost 90 per cent of NSW roads are under the control of councils. We're urging all councils to identify the most effective actions in their own community by developing road safety plans. To do this, they need skilled engineers and technical officers so IPWEA (NSW) has developed new guidelines. Nearly two-thirds of councils now have trained road safety auditors provided through a partnership between IPWEA (NSW) and the NSW Government. We're calling on the remaining councils to take advantage of this opportunity", Mr Sharpe said.

"The NSW Government's transport funding programs provide a once in a generation opportunity for councils to make a real difference to road safety and freight efficiency on local road networks", Mr Sharpe added.

"Despite this, our research clearly shows that communities in the bush need additional ongoing financial support. We've put the case that Federal Assistance Grants should be re-distributed to regional NSW with city councils able to sustain their income by rating high density development vertically. Any re-distributed funding must be tied to roads", Mr Sharpe said.

The Opposition agrees. Shadow Minister for Transport and Roads, Maritime, and Freight, Jodi MacKay, MP and Shadow Minister for Local Government Peter Primrose MLC, were united in their support of the redistribution of FAG funding at the Congress.

IPWEA (NSW) Roads & Transport Directorate Manager, Mick Savage, outlined the importance of additional funding in the bush.

"Rural areas produce the food and resources we all rely on in the city. A million dollars a year extra at Moree or Griffith spent on their local road network just means so much more, and when two-thirds of all fatalities are occurring in regional NSW, it just makes sense to provide greater support in our regional areas to lower the road toll", Mr Savage said.

The Congress also heard from Dr John Crozier, Trauma Chair, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, who left no doubt as to the impacts of road crashes. In a confronting presentation, he outlined an 'average day' in a hospital emergency ward, including that for every serious injury recorded, there were an additional seven presentations to hospitals from road crashes.

NSW Police, Australian Trucking Association, Centre for Road Safety, State Emergency Services, National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and the Newell Highway Taskforce all backed further measures to address improved road safety and transport and road worker safety. Mayor of Parkes, Ken Keith OAM, further called on Councils to develop new cadet Engineers to grow skilled professionals of the future from their own towns.

NSW Staysafe Committee Chair Greg Aplin, MP wrapped up the Congress outlining recent successes including compulsory minimum driver training for young drivers but highlighted speeding, drink and drug driving, fatigue and driver distraction as remaining road safety challenges.

Delegates adopted a communique calling for the development of a sustainable and more equitable funding model to look after roads, target road safety and open up local road network to more efficient transport to better service our community and drive the NSW economy forward.

Ends:

The communique is available here <https://www.ipwea.org/roadtransportdirectorates/aboutrd/new-item/congress>

Media Contacts:

Warren Sharpe, OAM 0409 398 358

John Roydhouse 0406 959 344

Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (NSW) Division

Level 12 447 Kent Street

Sydney

NSW 2000

Tel 02 8267 3001

Fax 02 8267 3071

Email: nsw@ipwea.org

Website: www.ipwea.org/nsw

About IPWEA (NSW)

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia NSW Division (IPWEA NSW) is a professional organisation and registered charity providing services and advocacy for those involved in and delivering public works and engineering services to the community.

About the Roads and Transport Directorate

The NSW Roads and Transport Directorate is a partnership between IPWEA (NSW) and Local Government NSW (LG NSW) and seeks to advocate and assist policy makers and road managers on the technical aspects of roads and transport issues in NSW.

NSW State and Local Government Elected Officials at the 2018 Local Roads Congress

