International Visitors and Road Safety in Australia: A Status Report

Edited by
Jeffrey Wilks, Barry Watson & Robert Hansen
International Visitors and Road Safety in Australia: 
A Status Report

edited by

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**Disclaimer**

The views expressed in the various chapters are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Editors, CARRS-Q, ATSB or the Travelsafe Committee.
This report is one of the tangible outcomes from a symposium held in Brisbane on 14 May 1999. The Symposium on International Visitors and Road Safety in Australia was co-hosted by the Queensland University of Technology’s Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety (CARRS-Q) and the Queensland Parliament’s Travelsafe Committee. As Chairman of the Travelsafe Committee, I was very pleased to be involved in bringing the symposium to fruition. It was the first national forum in Australia to examine the road safety problems faced by international visitors and, I understand, the first such forum held anywhere in the world.

Its timing was no accident. Australia receives approximately 4 million international visitors each year. It has a vibrant and growing international tourism sector generating earnings in excess of $16 billion annually. Tourism researchers suggest visitor numbers will swell to 4.6 million in the year 2000 due largely to the Olympic Games in Sydney, and should remain at this level for some time. All international visitors use roads and many drive. In fact, Australia is a favourite self-drive tourist destination among visitors from many parts of the world.

From surveys we know that 20% of the country’s international visitors rent a motor vehicle during their stay, and 43% drive a private or company car. This combined with the predicted visitor numbers suggests that up to 2.8 million international drivers could be driving on Australian roads next year. Few countries experience such an influx of visitors to their roads, and Australia’s 12.8 million licensed drivers will see a lot of new faces in the traffic.

It is still easy, however, to overlook the road safety problems faced by tourists and to move on to bigger issues on the road safety agenda. And that is not being critical of our transport departments. After all, their job is to manage the social costs of road trauma efficiently and effectively, and international visitors comprise barely more than a few percent of the national road toll. But this issue straddles other agendas. In tourism circles, a single fatality involving international tourists can have catastrophic consequences, far beyond the tragedy of a single fatality and any economic value we may assign to it. Past incidents involving the deaths of international tourists in Australia have demonstrated this only too well. These cases attract frenzied attention from foreign media. Australia’s image in the eyes of millions of prospective visitors can be tarnished in a matter of days. In a country with a growing economic dependence on tourism, the stigma from these single incidents can have far-reaching consequences.

The Brisbane symposium was a vital first step towards a coordinated road safety strategy for international visitors. Perhaps most importantly, it brought parliamentarians, public officials and industry representatives together to discuss the issues and options to address them. This report presents papers by keynote speakers at the forum, and status reports on tourism and road safety activities provided by governments from around Australia and New Zealand. It also captures some of the main discussions from the day and offers a framework for moving forward. It is a valuable resource for any groups and individuals working in the transport and tourism sectors. I congratulate the Australian Transport Safety Bureau for having the foresight to publish this important publication.

Nita Cunningham MLA
Member for Bundaberg and
Chairman of the Travelsafe Committee
Australia has a well-deserved reputation as a safe international travel destination. The intention of this status report is to further enhance that reputation by contributing to a 'best practice' strategy for promoting road safety among international visitors. Currently, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of injury death for tourists world-wide.¹ We believe that the number of injuries and fatalities on our roads can be further reduced through coordinated efforts in the areas of education, enforcement and encouragement. To this end, the Travelsafe Committee of the Queensland Parliament and the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) invited industry and government delegates to a special symposium (see Appendix A) on international visitors and road safety in Brisbane on 14 May, 1999.

By drawing together interested parties from transport, tourism, politics, law, insurance, health, police, car rental companies, academia and other relevant areas of government, it was possible to raise awareness of the need to assist visitors on our roads. This was the first time many of these groups had worked together addressing common road safety issues. The results were very positive. This book is one of the concrete outcomes of the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q initiative. It presents national overviews of the issues in transport, insurance, law and tourism, as well as 'status reports' from State and Territory jurisdictions across Australia, and a national report from New Zealand. By sharing the information and ideas available at this point in time, we hope that new programs and initiatives will have a head start and can build on previous successes rather than reinvent the wheel.

The forthcoming Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was a major catalyst for our interest in international visitors and road safety. In addition, we recognise that the 'Olympic Effect' or the enhanced visitor numbers resulting from the Games, will continue at least until the year 2004. During this period Australia will be in the international spotlight and as a host nation we have an ideal opportunity to develop quality road safety interventions that will assist our visitors and also provide a model for visitor care in other countries.

The central focus of our work at CARRS-Q has been a recognition that driving in an unfamiliar environment can be both difficult and confusing. This applies equally for Australians driving overseas, especially in 'right side of the road' driving countries, as well as for international visitors driving on Australian roads. One of the joys of international travel is experiencing different cultures, sights, sounds, people and environments. However, the unfamiliar can also pose hidden dangers. In the area of road safety, we hope this book will contribute to reducing problems international visitors might otherwise experience in Australia.

Jeffrey Wilks, PhD
Managing Editor

Acknowledgments

The editors would like to thank the four Keynote Presenters, session chairs, members of the Expert Panel, and all the delegates who attended the symposium on International Visitors and Road Safety held in Brisbane on 14 May, 1999. Special thanks are extended to Jane Olsen for assistance in organising the symposium, and to Trina McLellan for media liaison.

As part of the broad symposium project, letters were sent to all Australian state and territory Transport Ministers requesting a 'status report' on international visitors and road safety for their jurisdiction. We would like to thank the Ministers and their departmental staff for the reports that form the main body of this book. In some chapters the people who had direct responsibility for producing the report are mentioned by name; in others the protocol dictated that only the organisation be acknowledged. To all of those involved in producing the reports, thank you.

From its inception, this project has been strongly supported by the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland. We particularly thank Professor Mary Sheehan for her support and encouragement. Thanks also to Lesley Anderson, Commissioner, Motor Accident Insurance Commission (Queensland) for funding the research. The work of Kim Johnston in preparing the text and graphics for publication is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks also to Vivienne Wilson for her assistance with desktop publishing; Graham Fraine, Mark King, and Dr. Donna Pendergast for their comments on the manuscript; and Ian Faulks for advice and encouragement throughout the project.

Finally, we thank the Federal Office of Road Safety (now a division of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau) for publishing this work. By sharing information in this way, all jurisdictions are in a stronger position to promote road safety among international visitors to Australia.

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Robert Hansen, B App Sci, Grad Dip Tech Man is Research Director with the Travelsafe Committee of the Queensland Parliament. The Committee is required to examine and report to the parliament on all aspects of road safety and public transport, with particular emphasis on the causes of road crashes and measures aimed at reducing deaths, injuries and economic costs to the community.
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Australian Capital Territory
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Victoria
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South Australia
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Northern Territory
Department of Transport and Works ........................................ www.nt.gov.au/dtw/links/roadreport.shtml
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New Zealand
Land Transport Safety Authority ................................................ www.ltsa.govt.nz
New Zealand Tourism Board ..................................................... www.nzta.govt.nz
Office of Tourism and Sport ....................................................... www.ot.govt.nz
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New Zealand Police ........................................................................ www.police.govt.nz
Statistics New Zealand ...................................................................... www.stats.govt.nz
ABC Pacific .............................................................................. www.abcpacific.co.nz

Other Relevant Sites
Australian Tourist Commission .................................................. www.australia.com
CARRS-Q .............................................................................. www.carrs.qut.edu.au/carrs

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## SECTION 1

International Visitors and Road Safety in Australia

- Keynote Overviews

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CHAPTER 1

A NATIONAL TOURISM OVERVIEW

Robert Crick*

Introduction

This chapter provides a tourism perspective on the many issues that impact on road safety for international visitors travelling in Australia. The safety of international tourists and Australia's positive image as a safe holiday destination are important issues. The current size of the international tourism market and the trends expected in visitor arrivals during the next few years are outlined. In addition, some of the current road safety initiatives for international travellers that we are aware of, and in some cases involved in, are discussed.

The next two to three years will serve to highlight tourism's importance to Australia as the Sydney Olympics and, following that in 2001, the Centenary of Federation, emphasise in the eyes of Australia and the world the enormous attraction of Australia as a tourism destination.

Industry Overview

Tourism in Australia is a $60 billion per year industry, providing direct employment for around 700,000 Australians and indirect employment for 340,000. The international component of the tourism sector contributes more than $16 billion in foreign exchange - over 14% of our total export earnings.

International tourists contribute significantly to our economy and it is important to ensure that their visits to Australia are interesting, enjoyable and, of course, safe.

* Head of Division, Sport & Tourism, Commonwealth Department of Industry, Science & Resources. The contribution of Karen Jacobsen in developing this chapter is gratefully acknowledged.
The International Visitor Market in Australia - Trends

Despite the impact that the global economic crisis has had on a number of our key visitor markets, 1998 figures show only a 3.5% decline in visitor arrivals, to just under 4.2 million, compared to a record level in 1997 of 4.3 million. Table 1.1 provides a breakdown of the major markets for inbound visitors to Australia, and is graphically depicted in Figure 1.1.

Table 1.1: Inbound Visitors to Australia for the Top Ten Tourism Markets -1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>751 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>NZ</td>
<td>709 390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>467 530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>373 910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>247 070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>149 960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>143 420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>127 380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>112 080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>93 030</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Figure 1.1: Major Markets for Inbound Tourism -1998.

As indicated above, Japanese continued to top the list of visitors to Australia, recording over 750,000 visits in 1998 or 18% of arrivals. They were followed closely by New Zealand at 17%, the United Kingdom (UK) at 11% and the United States of America (USA) at 9%. With the exception of Japan, all of these markets showed a growth in arrivals during 1998.

Certainly some of our key and emerging markets have been hit hard by the economic crisis, with visitor numbers from countries such as Korea, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia falling dramatically during 1998.

At the same time, there has been a resurgence in the key North American and European markets. This has been due, among other things, to the decline in the value of the Australian dollar against the USA and European currencies as well as a refocussing in overseas marketing by the Australian Tourist Commission towards these sectors.
The Tourism Forecasting Council (TFC) predicts that international arrivals will return to record levels during 1999-2000, growing at an average annual rate of 7.2% in the decade to 2008. If realised, this would see around 8.4 million international visitors coming to Australia in the year 2008, spending more than 190 million nights here.

A key factor in the outlook for international tourism will be the expected growth in visitors from China under the new Approved Destination Status which was recently confirmed. The TFC expects visitor numbers from China to grow almost ten-fold over the next decade from their 1998 level of 77,000. Over the next three years this will generate more than $1 billion in export earnings and create thousands of new jobs.

By 2008, China is expected to become the sixth largest source of visitors to Australia after Japan, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the United States and South Korea. The forecasts of strong growth from China and, to a lesser extent, India mean that Australia is establishing itself as a tourism destination for the two most populous countries in the world, both of which have rapidly growing middle classes with an increasing propensity to travel.

There is also renewed growth in the European markets, meaning greater growth from countries whose visitors tend to stay longer in Australia and make greater use of a variety of means of transportation to travel widely. In terms of road safety, these figures are important.

Stronger growth also appears to be occurring in many of the markets which have long-standing reputations for independent and adventurous travel in regional Australia. These include the UK, Germany, Scandinavia and North America, tourists who feature strongly in the statistics for cars, motor homes and other self drive vehicles. This will be addressed in more detail in a later section.

**International Marketing**

Of course, an important factor in determining who comes to Australia is marketing. The Australian Tourist Commission’s (ATC) international marketing campaigns are based around demonstrating the diversity of the Australian experience to the rest of the world.

The Minister for Sport and Tourism, the Hon Jackie Kelly MP, recently launched the ATC’s new international TV, cinema and Internet marketing campaign that dangles Australia’s tourism hook before 300 million people in 11 countries. The campaign combines traditional images of Australia’s natural attractions with the friendly and free spirited people of Australia. It also features the essence of Australia - its diversity of cultures, magnificent food and wines and relaxed lifestyle. For example, the North American campaign titled *Australia: Meet the Locals* uses real Australian characters and promises adventure, escape and off the beaten track holidays. One of the two key markets is the single adventure seeker aged 25-49 looking for a holiday experience which will give them great stories to tell. The European campaign *Discover the Other Side of Yourself* targets the key UK and German markets with messages that Australia offers freedom, escape and an enriching and unforgettable experience.

A strong message in these campaigns is that we are asking young and/or adventurous travellers to holiday in diverse areas of Australia, far from the standard tourism destinations for overseas visitors such as Sydney, the Gold Coast and Melbourne. This is the sort of market who are interested in self drive holidays, often in remote destinations.

The ATC is aware that tourists will need some safety information if they come to Australia.
Safety Information – ISR Portfolio

The ATC’s internet site provides safety tips for international tourists on Australia’s driving laws and advice for travelling in outback Australia. The ATC’s site is located at: http://www.australia.com.

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources (Sport and Tourism Division) also provide similar safety advice on its web site which is located at: http://www.isr.gov.au/tourism/TravelTips/travelsafety.html.

Several of the State and Territory Tourism Commissions include health and safety information among the general information that they provide on their web sites, including information on road safety.

Safety advice is also available through ATC written publications and a Department sponsored section in the current Australian Book of Maps series of publications which are distributed in a range of languages to inbound tourists. In these locations, we offer a wide range of health and safety information which is reasonably general in nature.

The Department will again be funding the publication of information this year. We are also in the process of refocussing our messages to emphasize current issues for international tourists, for example, water safety and road/outback safety messages. Given that Federal, State and Territory tourism bodies are providing similar messages to international tourists, the option must also exist to co-ordinate messages so that travellers are receiving one strong message on these issues.

The Olympic Effect

A major focus for us all over the next 18 months will be the Sydney 2000 Olympics. The Tourism Forecasting Council commissioned a study on the impact of the Olympics and its report released late last year makes interesting reading.¹

Table 1.2: Projected State/Territory Shares of International Visitor Arrivals due to the Sydney Olympic Games ('000), 1999-2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>Aust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1101</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1621</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State Shares 67% 6% 22% 44% 6% 11% 1% 8%

(Source: Tourism Forecasting Council)¹

It is expected that between 1997 and 2004 the Olympic Games will attract an extra 1.6 million international visitors to Australia and generate $6.1 billion in tourism export earnings.

Table 1.2 shows that the Olympic Games are set to provide a significant boost to tourism in Australia. While NSW will benefit more than other States and Territories from the boom in international visitor arrivals, the spin off throughout Australia will be substantial. It is important that Olympic tourists leave Australia with a positive impression of our country, and a safe travel experience will go a long way to ensuring this.

Of course, we can expect that a large majority of Olympic visitors will be using our roads. If we consider that 11% of all international tourists in 1997 used a rental car at some time during their trip, then it can be expected that over the next five years an extra 180,000 tourists will use a rental car.

International Travellers - Getting Around (Modes of Transport)

While obvious, it is nevertheless true that driving in Australia can often be a totally unique experience for international visitors. Factors such as driving on the left hand side of the road for the first time; in an unfamiliar vehicle; in conditions that could include dirt roads, high temperatures, encounters with kangaroos, other wildlife and stock; as well as a raft of different traffic laws, often from state to state, can serve to unsettle even the most experienced and competent international driver.

Road safety obviously affects all international tourists in one form or another, whether they are driving a vehicle themselves or are pedestrians taking a package holiday and travelling on coaches or travelling in taxis and shuttles. They will be on our roads and affected by a myriad of safety issues - the condition of roads/highways and signage systems, the enforcement of road rules, the regulation of the coach, taxi and hire car industries, the list goes on.
### Table 1.3: International Visitors and Type of Road Transport Used - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Road Transport</th>
<th>Number of International Visitors Using Road Transport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car (Private, Company)</td>
<td>1,418,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Car</td>
<td>437,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Drive Van/ Motor home</td>
<td>44,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Wheel Drive</td>
<td>40,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi or Chauffer Driven Hire Car</td>
<td>1,042,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel Shuttle Bus</td>
<td>458,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Distance Coach or Bus</td>
<td>357,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour Bus</td>
<td>1,145,445</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)

### Figure 1.3: Percentage of International Visitors Using Types of Road Transport - 1997.

As shown in Table 1.3, private car is the most popular form of transport for international tourists. However, if we consider the three forms of bus or coach (hotel shuttle bus, long distance coach, tour bus) we can see that the bus and coach market forms a substantial part of road transport for international tourists. Generally speaking tourists will use a combination of these forms of transport during their stay.

### Table 1.4: Use of Private/Company Car by Visitor Origin - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Visitors using private car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>245,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>242,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>105,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>84,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>63,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>63,216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>59,492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>58,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>44,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>40,684</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)

Tables 1.3 to 1.8 and Figures 1.3 to 1.7 were produced for this chapter by the Bureau of Tourism Research from their database.
The largest number of overseas road users in private cars are New Zealanders and travellers from the UK. This could be seen as a positive in terms of road safety, given that these nationalities are familiar with left hand side of the road driving. It is also interesting to note the significant number of travellers from Asian countries driving motor vehicles in Australia.

Table 1.5: Use of Rental Cars by Visitor Origin - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Visitors using rental cars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>102,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>69,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>42,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>37,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>30,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>17,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>12,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>10,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>9,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>9,171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)

Figure 1.5: Use of Rental Cars by Visitor Origin -- Proportion of All Visitors from Origin Country (%) - 1997.
International visitors use 4WDs, self drive vans, motor homes and campervans in far smaller numbers than cars. It is significant, however, that European visitors are far more likely to choose these types of transportation. German, Swiss, Dutch and Scandinavian travellers favour self drive and adventure tourism in regional areas.

Table 1.6: Use of 4WDs by Visitor Origin - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Visitors using 4WDs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>10,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>8,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>2,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>2,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>2,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>2,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1,464</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)

Figure 1.6: Use of 4WDs by Visitor Origin – Proportion of All Visitors from Origin Country (%) - 1997.

Table 1.7: Use of Self Drive Van, Motor Home or Campervan by Visitor Origin - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Visitors using transport type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>14,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>9,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>4,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands/Holland</td>
<td>2,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>2,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1,759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1,041</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)
Backpackers

A short case study for an important and unique category of tourist - the backpacker - illustrates the information outlined at this point.

Case Study

- Backpackers as a group have many unique features - they stay for long periods; try to do and see as much as possible; and, though travelling with limited budgets, they will ultimately spend more than the average tourist, especially on transport (as a percentage of their budget).
- Aside from the general road safety problems experienced by international tourists, backpackers are generally also younger, without huge amounts of driving experience, and they are extremely budget conscious so that any vehicle they rent or, quite often, purchase will be bottom of the range complete with all the related problems.
- The Bureau of Tourism Research study in 1997, With my Swag upon my Shoulder - A comprehensive study of international backpackers to Australia\(^2\) gives an insight into the market.
- In the year the study\(^2\) was conducted 1995-96, 230,000 backpackers visited Australia. This represented 6% of international visitors for that year. In 1997/98, the figure grew to 9%.
- On average, they stayed 83 nights compared to 23 nights for all visitors. The largest source countries for backpackers are the United Kingdom (20%), North America (14%), Germany (11%), and Other Europe (18%).
- As you can see, most of the countries with large numbers of backpackers visiting Australia are also the countries which top the figures for travellers most likely to self-drive during their stay in Australia. This is no surprise.
- While long distance coach/bus is the main form of inter-regional transport, nearly 30% of backpackers use cars, campervans or motorcycles as their main form of transport.
- Whereas the average tourist is likely to rent/hire a vehicle if they are planning a self drive segment to their holiday, backpackers will often purchase vehicles.
- This is obviously a segment of the international tourism market whose behaviour should be considered closely when discussing strategies for road safety.

A Focus on Safety

The exploration of the international visitor market thus far provides a basis for decisions about where to focus our attention to improve road safety for this sector. The figures provide an insight into who will be on our roads and highways at any given time and what forms of transportation they will be using. This information can assist in developing awareness campaigns and other means of improving tourist safety. The other piece of the puzzle, of course, concerns patterns in the location of accidents for different tourist groups. While we have some information in this area, it would be useful for safety planners to have access to the accident profiles for different nationalities.

On the Road with International Travellers - Travel Patterns

According to Federal Office of Road Safety figures, it is much more likely that accidents and fatalities for international tourists occur as a group in regional areas - 64% of fatal crashes involving international drivers happen on country roads.

International drivers are also twice as likely as Australian drivers to overturn their vehicle in a fatal crash. This is probably related to lack of familiarity with their vehicle and with rural roads. International tourists are also more likely than Australians to be involved in fatigue related accidents and to not be wearing seatbelts.

Though major cities such as Sydney remain popular destinations for Australia's international tourists, increasing numbers are attracted to Australia's natural environment, from the vast inland areas to the coastline. The remoteness and harshness of the landscapes in many areas of Australia, while being precisely what attracts adventurous travellers to these destinations, may also be what causes them most problems.

Regional Visitation

As indicated in Table 1.8, of Australia's major inbound tourism markets, the most popular destinations for Japanese tourists are New South Wales and Queensland. New Zealanders also focus most of their travel on NSW and QLD although a substantial number also visit Victoria. Travellers from other Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore tend to mainly visit the three eastern Australian States, although due to its proximity to Asia, Asian travellers quite often arrive and/or depart through Western Australia.

It is in the travel patterns of Europeans and North Americans that we see a greater dispersion of travellers around Australia. Nearly all States and Territories record significant visitation from these groups. There is an obvious need to focus our attention on these groups and on the types of travel used. Other statistics on road usage by tourists also provide useful pointers on safety issues.

Tourist Road Usage

In 1996 the Tourism Task Force produced a study titled Tourism Transport Needs Across Australia. According to this study, the roads most heavily used by tourists are (in descending order of use):

- Pacific Highway (Sydney – Brisbane);
- Hume Highway (Sydney – Melbourne);
- Great Western & Sturt Highways (Sydney – Adelaide);
- Bruce Highway (Brisbane – Cairns); and
- Princes Highway (Sydney – Wollongong).

This pattern of tourist road usage reflects the concentration of Australia's population along the eastern seaboard. With the exception of the Pacific Highway and the Princes Highway between Sydney and Wollongong, all of these roads form part of the National Highway network.
Table 1.8: Percentage Of Inbound Tourists Visiting Australian States and Territories - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>ACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asia</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europe</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)

Commonwealth Funding for Roads

Keeping the roads safe and well maintained is a shared responsibility of the three levels of Government. In 1999-2000, $644.9m is being spent by the Commonwealth on the National Highway network, with a further $124.5m for Roads of National Importance. More than 90% of these funds will be spent in regional areas. The Commonwealth Government also provided $388.3m in untied funds to local governments, and $408.8m to State governments in 1999-2000. For most people, the Pacific Highway stands out as most in need of attention. The Commonwealth Government provided a further $77m in the 1999-2000 Budget towards its upgrading.

For roads that are not part of the National Highway network, the Federal Road Safety Black Spot program targets those road locations where crashes are occurring. Since 1996-97, the Federal Road Safety Black Spot program has provided $109m for 1122 projects across Australia, about half of which was spent in regional Australia. In 1999-2000, $37.8m will be spent on this program. Due to the success of the program in providing low cost treatments to reduce accidents, the Commonwealth Government recently announced that the Black Spot program will continue for another two years until 2002.

The National Highway network links all States and Territories.

Photo courtesy of Department of Transport & Works, Northern Territory
Particular Issues and Initiatives

Hire vehicles

As the numbers indicate, for many international tourists, hire vehicles including 4WDs, are an important mode of transport used to experience regional Australia. Particular concerns have been voiced about the quality of rental vehicles and the levels of service, including safety advice, provided by rental companies.

Both governments and industry have responsibilities to ensure that people renting vehicles are treated fairly and professionally. Each State and Territory government has regulations in place to check the roadworthiness of vehicles.

Along with ensuring that tourists hire a reliable and safe car, there is a need to provide information to tourists about safe driving in Australia. While the Commonwealth Government provides some information on driving safety through its web page and printed material distributed to tourists, there may be a useful role for hire vehicle companies. For example, because rental companies require tourists to state where they intend to go, they could pass on safety advice relevant to the intended trip.

Advice on remote area safety is particularly pertinent given recent tragic events. While tourists are ultimately responsible for their actions, information provided to tourists renting 4WDs covering remote area travel may mean the difference between life and death. Many 4WD clubs are developing safety material for their members as well as providing driver training. It would be useful if international tourists could be made aware of these kinds of services.

In addition, tourist safety would be enhanced if hire vehicle companies ensure that the vehicle they rent is adequate for the proposed journey. The demands on a vehicle that is needed for a trip around Australia are much different from one that is only required to be driven around the city.

These issues are not easy to solve, however the rental car industry should be encouraged to explore these issues further.

Intelligent Transport Systems

Tourists are often unfamiliar with the places they visit. Unfamiliarity with a driver’s surroundings may increase their chances of being involved in a crash. The incorporation of technology in rental vehicles such as Intelligent Transport Systems or ITS can provide ways to increase the safety of tourists.

For example, Route Guidance Systems can provide information to tourists on the most appropriate travel route to their destination. This removes the driver’s need to navigate from a map while driving and decreases their chances of becoming lost or even being faced with traffic conditions for which they were unprepared.

Another type of ITS are the Automated Vehicle Location Systems, which can provide the exact location of the tourist’s car. This would allow vehicles to be located if the tourist was stranded or broken down and others were unaware of their whereabouts. This would be particularly beneficial in Australia’s outback.

ITS have many potential applications for safety, and with the development of a national strategy for the use of ITS currently underway, it is to be hoped that these applications will soon be realised and applied on a large scale. The policies of vehicle rental companies who currently make safety equipment such as emergency beacons (EPIRBs) available to tourists hiring vehicles for outback/distance travel should also be endorsed.
Coach Travel

As mentioned previously, the bus and coach market is a popular means of transportation for international tourists and it is therefore reassuring that coach travel is the safest form of land transport, some 20 times safer than travel by private car. Only scheduled domestic air travel which utilises large aircraft has a better safety record. Still, in 1997 there were 24 crashes involving buses and 31 crashes in 1996.

Since 1 July 1994 all new coaches have been required to be fitted with strengthened seats and inertia reel seat belts. This should contribute significantly to tourist safety, as well as assisting the industry's reputation and profile in the long run. The Commonwealth Government is committed to a high standard of bus safety. As well as the requirement for seat belts it has introduced Design Rules covering tyre standards, emergency exits and improved rollover strength.

The last five years has also brought improvements in fatigue management for bus drivers. Bus driving hours are now regulated and they are soon to be amalgamated with a more recently developed set of hours for truck drivers. This process is currently being implemented by the National Road Transport Commission.

We cannot forget how important educating and informing tourists of vehicle safety features are in ensuring the safety of our tourists.

Other Government Initiatives

Several other Government initiatives which will contribute to the safety of all road users are worth noting, for example, the implementation of standard road rules across Australia which should be nearing completion by 2000. Abolishing the differences at State borders should make road travel safer and easier for many international tourists.

The tourism industry is also directly contributing to the improvement of national road safety through the Tourism Council Australia Regional Tourism Committee which is involved in the development of a seamless national approach to tourism signage. All States and Territories have agreed to this concept which should cut down on the confusion and distraction experienced by international tourists driving in unfamiliar surroundings.

This also aligns well with an agreement by all State and Territory Transport Ministers to implement a standard system of route numbering for major roads and highways around Australia, bringing us into line with international norms. Tasmania and Victoria already have this system in place.
Conclusion

In conclusion I would like to highlight an innovative project which should enhance the safety of drivers in outback South Australia and the Northern Territory while providing a highly focused tourism experience. It provides a good example of a cooperative approach by tourism, road safety and transport authorities in integrating safety messages into tourism product.

Case Study – Explorer Highway Tourism Drive

- The Explorer Highway Tourism Drive is a joint initiative of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission and the South Australian Tourism Commission.

- The objective of the three year $2 million project is to promote a seamless drive crossing Australia from South to North in the footsteps of John McDouall Stuart, thereby increasing the tourist numbers travelling along the Stuart Highway between Adelaide and Darwin.

- In 1997-98, the Northern Territory Tourist Commission received a grant of $300 000 through the Regional Tourism Program administered by the then Department of Industry, Science and Tourism to assist with the establishment of this tourist highway.

- Travellers will be guided along the Explorer Highway by quality interpretive and motivational information on sites of interest which capture the natural, cultural and pioneering history of the land through which the highway passes.

- A series of information shelters is being installed between Port Augusta and Darwin. These shelters range from major orientation stations displaying regional maps and information, to information bays at the gateway to each town, roadside rest stops and highway directional signage at each major intersection.

- They all serve the purpose of encouraging travellers to take frequent rest stops along the length of their journey. The use of these rest areas provides a fatigue management strategy as well as enhancing the visitors' overall experience.

- Other forms of signage in interpretation Shelters are specific road safety messages - avoiding fatigue (Stop, Revive, Survive), the wearing of seat belts and specific regional cautionary advice on road trains and wandering stock.

- This project involves the work of officers from a range of tourism, road safety and transport bodies in the Northern Territory and South Australia and is a great example of a cooperative approach to the combining of tourism experiences with appropriate safety practices.

- It has already been noted that this concept could be expanded in the future to include the Victoria and Barkly Highways which would involve Western Australia and Queensland.

1 For further information on this initiative refer to the South Australian (Chapter 10) and Northern Territory (Chapter 12) Status Reports.
About the Author

Robert Crick is currently Head of Division, Sport and Tourism, in the Department of Industry Science and Resources. He was appointed to this position in November 1997. His primary responsibility in the Sport and Tourism Division is to provide advice to the Government on how policies and programs can assist in helping the tourism, sport and recreation industries enhance their contribution to Australia's economic welfare.

From 1990 to 1997, he was a senior executive in the then Department of Primary Industries and Energy in charge of the energy and various resource sectors. Prior to 1990, Robert spent several years as a member of Australia's diplomatic service, during which time he served at Australian diplomatic posts in Moscow, Nairobi and Ottawa. While serving in Canberra in between postings, he specialised in international legal and multilateral policy issues.

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CHAPTER 2

A NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY OVERVIEW

Bill Ellis*

Introduction

This paper is an overview of international tourist involvement in fatal crashes in Australia. It includes an assessment of the relative risk of involvement of international tourists, the size of the problem in road safety terms and the projected issue in the year 2000, the factors associated with tourist involvement in road trauma and possible countermeasures. In the way of disclaimer, it should be noted that these statistics rely heavily on coronial investigations. The identification of an individual as an international tourist in such reports is, I believe, highly probable. There may be a few cases, however, where such identification fails to take place.

International Tourists and the Risk of Road Death

Driving or walking in unfamiliar surroundings can doubtless be more dangerous than driving or walking in one's own town or suburb. Risk is associated with the degree of familiarity that road users have with their environment.

Figure 2.1: People Killed per 100 million km Travelled - 1988, 1990 & 1992.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1992</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local driver</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate driver</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: FORS, 1996)*

Research reported in FORS Monograph 4 has shown that within Australia interstate drivers have a higher risk of being involved in a fatal crash than local drivers (see Figure 2.1). This report classified drivers on the basis of coronial reports of road deaths and estimated distance travelled using Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) surveys of distance travelled. It is estimated that, for every 100 million kilometres travelled, the number of people killed in fatal crashes involving interstate drivers is twice that for local drivers.

* First Assistant Secretary, Federal Office of Road Safety (now Australian Transport Safety Bureau). The contributions of Dennis O'Leary and Michael McFadden in developing this chapter are gratefully acknowledged.

If the risk for Australian drivers driving outside their home State is significantly higher, it can be assumed that the risk for international visitors is even greater. Unfortunately, a direct comparison of risk with local drivers on the basis of distance travelled is not possible (data on distance travelled is not collected for tourists).

Figures are available, however, from the Bureau of Tourism Research for the number of international tourists visiting Australia and the average duration of stay. These figures can be converted into resident population equivalents and a comparison made on the basis of road deaths per 100,000 population. These road deaths include all road users, that is, drivers/riders, passengers/pillions, pedestrians and cyclists. Figure 2.2 shows that, in 1994, the rate for international tourists was double that for all Australians. There were 22.0 international tourist road deaths per 100,000 population compared with 10.8 Australians.

**Figure 2.2: International Tourist Deaths per 100,000 Population - 1994.**

![Graph showing international tourist deaths per 100,000 population compared to Australians.](source)

It is probable tourists are at even greater risk of death on the road when compared with Australians. Bureau of Tourism Research figures show that the tourist group is drawn from a relatively low risk middle age population. There are proportionately less of the high risk age groups than in the resident population. If the observed rates could be adjusted for the effects of age and sex, the difference between the international and local rates of death would probably increase further.
The Size of the Problem

Although international tourists are at greater risk of death on Australian roads, the absolute size of the problem has been relatively minor. In 1994, there were 45 fatalities identified as international tourists. According to the Bureau of Tourism Research estimates, the number of tourists visiting Australia has been relatively stable at around 3 million visitors. As such, it seems reasonable to assume that the number killed each year on our roads has remained relatively stable at approximately 45 deaths each year. This cannot be described as a major road safety problem.

![Figure 2.3: Size of the Road Safety Problem - 1994.](image)

![Figure 2.4: Projected Size of the Road Safety Problem - 2000.](image)

However, this is set to change. Forty-five road deaths each year is a result of approximately three million visitors staying an average of 24 days each. In the year 2000, with the Sydney Olympics, it is estimated that 4.6 million tourists will visit Australia. Assuming that they remain a similar period to past tourists, the number of deaths involving international tourists on Australian roads is set to increase to approximately 70 during that year. A further 1,000 serious injuries to overseas visitors could also be expected.

It would not be accurate to describe this as a massive road safety problem. It does not bear comparison with alcohol or speeding as a cause of road trauma. Yet no death on the road is acceptable and the tourist issue is attended by particular consequences. Taking into account the economic benefits associated with tourism and the impact on future tourism of Australia's reputation as a safe place to travel, the road safety of international tourists is an issue worthy of special consideration by the relevant authorities.
International Tourist Involvement in Fatal Crashes

The following analysis of international tourist involvement in fatal crashes was based upon 132 deaths reported by coroners in 1990, 1992 and 1994. This included 44 drivers, 56 passengers, 16 pedestrians and 16 from other road user groups. The analysis is concerned with the factors associated with international tourist involvement in fatal road crashes. Due to the relatively small numbers involved, care should be taken when interpreting the findings particularly when specific road user groups are considered. The results should be treated as representative rather than indicative.

Figure 2.5: Road Deaths by Road User Group - 1990, 1992 & 1994.

The profile of tourists killed in road crashes is somewhat different from the total population. Tourists are more likely to be occupants of vehicles. Vehicle occupants comprise 3 in 4 of international tourists killed compared with 2 in 3 Australians. International tourists also tend to be passengers rather than drivers, in contrast to Australian occupants who tend to be drivers.

International tourists killed are less likely to be pedestrians. All of these trends are consistent with the assumption that tourists tend to be wealthier and more towards middle age than the resident population.

International Tourists as Drivers

In general, international drivers do not exhibit the same high risk behaviours that local drivers display. Factors such as alcohol and speeding are lower for international drivers, although they are still of significance. The fact that international drivers do not exhibit the same pattern of high risk behaviours associated with local drivers is suggestive that the causes of crashes may be due to their unfamiliarity with Australian conditions. However, such a proposition is very difficult to prove with existing data sources. It must remain an educated guess as to the causes of crashes involving international drivers.

The most prominent risk factor that differentiates between international and local drivers is seat belt usage. Fifty-two percent of international drivers killed were not restrained at the time of the crash. This compares with 38% for local drivers (see Figure 2.6).

In addition, unbelted international drivers differ from unbelted local drivers. For local drivers, not wearing a seat belt is associated with other high risk behaviours. This is not true of international drivers. Nearly 60% of unbelted local drivers were drunk compared with less than 10% of international drivers.
It could well be the case that failure to wear a seat belt by an international tourist tends to reflect the usage in their own country rather than a tendency to high risk behaviour. As such, it is potentially more amenable to active intervention.

**International Tourists as Passengers**

Historically, vehicle passengers comprise the largest single road user group accounting for 46% of international tourist deaths on the road. In approximately 50% of these cases, the driver of the vehicle was also an international tourist.

Vehicle passengers are a somewhat difficult road user group to address as they are not in control of the vehicle in which they travel. Consequently, there are few countermeasures that can be directed specifically at occupants.

As with drivers, seat belt usage is a prominent factor and this is within the control of the individual passenger. Figure 2.7 demonstrates that international tourists are less likely than local passengers to be wearing a seat belt. The difference between local and tourist passengers is almost exactly the difference between local and tourist drivers with 55% of tourist passengers unbelted compared with 38% of local passengers.

Once again, this behaviour probably reflects practice in their own country rather than a tendency to high risk behaviours.
International Tourists as Pedestrians

The number of international tourists killed as pedestrians each year is less than ten. Nevertheless, increased pedestrian activity can be expected in Sydney during the Olympic Games and the potential for increased levels of road trauma exists.

In adult pedestrian deaths overall, the presence of alcohol plays a major role, being involved in 34% of deaths. However, for International tourists, alcohol involvement does not appear to be a major factor.

Three in four pedestrian deaths involving International tourists occur on the near side of the road, that is, when the pedestrian steps from kerb. This proportion is greater than that for resident pedestrians where slightly less than half are hit on the near side. In the case of the resident pedestrians, many of these are intoxicated.

The high proportion of International tourists who are sober and killed when stepping from the kerb is consistent with the proposition that these may involve a failure to look in the appropriate direction when walking across the road. However, as noted before, these results should be treated with caution due to the small numbers involved.
Conclusion

Currently, about 45 international tourists are killed on Australian roads each year. It is predicted that this number could rise to 70 in the year 2000 with an increased influx of tourists associated with the Olympic Games. The majority of tourists killed are vehicle occupants but there is some reason to anticipate an increase in pedestrian casualties from the current five or six each year with the Olympic Games.

The most obvious countermeasure to reduce tourist casualties would be a program to increase use of seat belts. It is here where the gains are potentially largest. There may also be some benefit in educating tourists as to the strict observance of speed and alcohol limits in Australia. These remain significant factors in crashes involving international drivers although the relative size of the problem is less than that for local drivers.

Finally, international tourists may have some difficulty adapting to conditions as pedestrians on Australian roads. Again education and perhaps signage at frequently travelled locations may assist in reducing the toll.

Summary

- 45 international tourists are killed on Australian roads each year;
- it is predicted that this number could rise to 70 with the Olympic Games;
- a majority of tourists killed are vehicle occupants; and
- there is some reason to anticipate an increase in pedestrian casualties with the Olympic Games.

Potential Countermeasures

- Increase the use of seat belts - it is here that the gains are potentially largest;
- educate tourists as to the strict observance of speed and alcohol limits in Australia; and
- increase education (and perhaps signage) directed at pedestrian at frequently travelled locations, as this may assist in reducing the toll.
About the Author

Bill Ellis is First Assistant Secretary, Federal Office of Road Safety (now the Australian Transport Safety Bureau). He has worked on radio communications, broadcasting and transport policy issues for the Commonwealth Government for several years. Prior to joining the Federal Office of Road Safety in August 1998, Bill headed the Corporate Division of the Department of Transport and Regional Services.

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CHAPTER 3

AN INSURANCE PERSPECTIVE

David Matcham*

Introduction

Rental Motor Insurance

In every rental of a car, van or 4WD there is a charge for insurance to cover the vehicle, which mostly
the renter selects. This pool of premium collected goes to paying for any subsequent crashes. For
every registration of a rental vehicle there is a premium collected for Comprehensive Third Party (CTP)
insurance to cover any injury caused by that vehicle to another person. Rental car CTP premiums are
four times more than that of ordinary vehicles and the obvious conclusion from this is that their claims
are four times higher! In many cases the driver pays for a personal accident cover to cover injury or
incapacity to him or herself. Or, there is a travel policy in force from the visitor's home country, often
both.

However, there are no figures available to indicate if the premiums collected from overseas visitors are
adequate for the damage and injury they cause or whether they are being subsidised from the overall
insurance pool or from Insurance Companies' reserves. For CTP, there are strong reasons to believe
that a lot of the funding is coming from reserves — at least until premiums are adjusted to meet claims.
In New South Wales that is every 90 days.

Lumley Market Share

It should be realised that as far as Lumley General is concerned our interest lies in the damage to the
actual vehicle, as we insure 10,500 rental vehicles of which 5 - 10% are campervan units. The rental
car market is about 45,000 units, so Lumley's share of the market is 25%.

Our estimation is that 8% of rentals are to overseas visitors. Lumley is also the insurer for the Campervan
and Motorhome Club of Australia, insuring 5,500 vans of which, at any one time, 500 belong to over-
seas visitors who, instead of renting, buy a van for a short term.

It is logical that if we can reduce the number and severity of losses involving these vehicles, then we
will be contributing to a reduction in injuries, or in other words, assisting the international user group to
be safer on our roads.

Lumley, in conjunction with Robert Kelly, Insurance Broker to the rental industry, undertake a lot of work
in the area of risk management and loss control. This paper outlines some of the analysis we carry out
and the types of claims experienced. The paper then describes what we are doing to reduce the
incidence and severity of these losses.

* B. Bus, Managing Director, Lumley Insurance Limited. The contributions of Colin Tizzard and Peter Gialantzis in developing this chapter are gratefully
acknowledged.
The Overseas Motor Vehicle Rental Market

In 1996, roughly 20% of overseas visitors rented a car, campervan or 4WD. Table 3.1 shows the type of vehicle being rented by visitors, by country of origin.

Table 3.1: Overseas Visitors' Motor Vehicle Rentals (%) - 1996.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>No. of rentals</th>
<th>Europe*</th>
<th>NZ</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rental Cars</td>
<td>570,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vans</td>
<td>58,000</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4WD's</td>
<td>99,000</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>727,000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Of the visitors from Europe, about a third were from Germany.

(Source: Bureau of Tourism Research)

The utilisation of a rental vehicle is 274 days on average per year, which is a rate of about 75%. Based on an average rental cost of $75 per day we can obtain a 'ball park' figure of the economic value of overseas renters:

45,000 rental vehicles, 8% to overseas visitors = 3,600
Utility 274 days per year = 986,400
Average $75 per day = $74,000,000
An Insurance Perspective

These figures are obtained from clients and therefore cannot be verified. In addition, fuel costs and other expenditure are not accounted for, which could increase the figures substantially. In our estimation, the average rental period among international visitors is approximately 15 days for campervans and 7 days for cars.

Claims

Motor Claims

The 10,500 rental vehicles insured by Lumley's produce some 20 claims (above excess) per week. Excesses vary, but are usually around $1,000, with some as high as $3,000. We do not always get information on these claims below the excess, therefore our best estimate is that the average claim is in the vicinity of $5,000.

In addition, our records indicate that overseas renters' claims are 50% higher than that of local renters. Simply put, they have bigger and more costly claims.

The focus of Lumley General is to reduce these losses:

- for our own profitability;
- for our clients' continuity of business, profitability and reputation; and
- for the overseas visitors' uninterrupted holiday and safety.

Reducing the incidence and severity of losses can be achieved through:

- analysis;
- determining causes; and
- implementing countermeasures.

Analysis

The data collected for analysis is based on the claim form for each incident. Additional questions are added to the claim form on occasions where we identify further data is required. Data focuses on the who, when, where and how of accidents.

Cause of Accident (How)

Did the accident involve the vehicle being hit in the rear, a loss of control or hitting animal?

Figure 3.1 is for the year 1997/98 for claims where the driver is at fault (DAF), for both single vehicle and two vehicle accidents. On the left is the number of claims and on the right the cost of those claims. As can be seen, accidents involving 'Right of Way' and 'Lost Control' dominate, making up 63% of the claims and 70% of the cost.
Figure 3.1: DAF Claims Analysis for the Loss Period 1997/98.

**COUNT BY LIABILITY**
- Reverse
- Hit stationary vehicle
- Hit rear
- Lost control
- Right of way

**COSTS BY LIABILITY**
- Hit stationary vehicle
- Hit rear
- Lost control
- Right of way

*TPAF* = Third Party at fault
*CVO* = Client vehicle only
*DAF* = Driver at fault

(Source: Lumley Rental Claims Database)

Figure 3.2 also illustrates claims where the driver is at fault, however this figure refers to single vehicle accidents only where no other vehicle was involved. 'Lost Control' and 'Hit Animal' make up 50% of claims.

Figure 3.2: CVO Claims Analysis for the Loss Period 1997/98.

**COUNT BY LIABILITY**
- Mechanical fault
- Flood
- Hit object
- Lost control
- Hit animal

**COSTS BY LIABILITY**
- Hit object
- Animal
- Lost control
- Flood

*TPAF* = Third Party at fault
*CVO* = Client vehicle only
*DAF* = Driver at fault

(Source: Lumley Rental Claims Database)
Figure 3.3 is for the year 1998/99 (up until April) for claims where the driver is at fault, for both single vehicle and two vehicle accidents. Note that 'Lost Control' make up only 3% of claims, yet represent 38% of the cost. It is with these costly claims when the damage is severe, that the severity of injuries increases.

**Figure 3.3: DAF Claims Analysis for the Loss Period 1998/99.**

**Time of Accidents (When)**

Figures 3.4 and 3.5 summarise data collected from one of Lumley's leisure rental clients with a fleet of over 600 units.

**Figure 3.4: Time of Accidents Involving Overseas Renters - 1998/99.**

(Source: Lumley Rental Claims Database)
Even though this is a small sample (108 claims costing $530,000) it does show an increase in accidents involving overseas renters around noon and between 5:00 and 6:00 pm, suggesting a fatigue factor. In addition, the increase in claims around 9:00 am is interesting. Specifically, it poses the question of whether more drivers are getting on the road, or whether drivers need reminders every morning, because about one third of these claims had a cause code of 'Right of Way'.

Figure 3.5: Hit Animal Losses Involving Overseas Renters - 1998/99.

Figure 3.5 indicates that there is a definite problem in this area at dusk and an hour or two later. Among the Campervan and Motorhome Club drivers it is almost exclusively the overseas people who lodge 'Hit Kangaroo' claims. The local renters tend not to be travelling after 3:00 pm, whereas overseas visitors want to cover more territory more quickly and are still on the road at dusk. (The club actually have a policy 'In at 5, out at 8').

Age (who)

In general, under 25 year olds have a disproportionately higher number of claims than other age groups. Our rental experience indicates that this continues to rise until 28 years of age.

On the whole, overseas visitors tend to be more experienced drivers. Our claims peak in the 40-45 age bracket, but that is more a reflection of the age of renters rather than that they are poor drivers. We also look at who was at fault, for example, was it the rental driver or a third party that caused the incident?

Location (where)

The most costly crashes are those which occur in the country or the outback.

Type of Vehicle

The power and size of rental vehicle also needs to be considered. Does it make sense to put someone, who is used to driving a 1.2 litre manual, into an enormous campervan or into a V6 Commodore with power steering that will do 200km/h? As someone observed, "We have the fastest cars in the world and the worst roads for speed". One place to start would be to change the unlimited speed in the Northern Territory to 110km/h.
To identify high risk overseas rentals, it is necessary to compare accidents with the general rental fleet. In other words, are under 28 year old tourists having a disproportionate number of losses compared with local drivers of this age group? Is the proportion of 4WD losses the same as their proportion of rentals? For example, in one fleet it was found that drivers from one European country were responsible for over 60% of the losses. On further checking, it was found that they made up over 60% of the renters so there was no over-representation. If there had been we could have examined the marketing in that country or even produced loss control material in their language.

**Results**

**What are the main causes of rental vehicle crashes?**

The three most costly ones are:

- collisions with kangaroos – particularly at dusk;
- right of way collisions -- possibly due to drivers, used to a left hand drive vehicle, looking the wrong way, seeing it is clear, and driving into the traffic. Alternatively, they may not understand the road signs; and
- lost control collisions - these are the major crashes and are mostly single vehicle accidents. That is, that there is no other vehicle involved. This supports the evidence that fatigue is a factor. The vast distances to travel in Australia are often made worse by jet lag from different time zones and an exhausting 24 hour flight to get to this country.

There are other types of crashes of concern, such as rear-end collisions, reversing and problems on roundabouts. But these are not as costly and tend not to result in significant injury. There is even the occasional flood. For example, we paid out handsomely for one vehicle trapped in Katherine after a recent major flood.

**Measures**

**What is Lumley's doing, or would like to do, to reduce the incidence and severity of these losses and improve safety for the overseas visitor driving on our roads?**

Below is a sample of some claims involving vehicles hitting kangaroos.

**Sample 1: 'Hit Kangaroo' claim**

- At Coral Bay near Carnarvon, Western Australia
- Driver: 38 year old Swiss in a 6 berth campervan
- Hit a kangaroo at 5:30 pm at 65km/h
- Damage to the front of the vehicle was $5,000
- He drove another 30kms to the nearest roadhouse without a fan or water in the radiator.

**Sample 2: 'Hit Kangaroo' claim**

- 10km outside Camooweal, Queensland in light rain
- Driver: 39 year old German in a Toyota 4WD
- Hit animal at 7:50 pm when blinded by the high beam of a road train coming the other way
- Damage $8,000 to front, nearside and windscreen.
Driving on Country Roads

One measure we have taken is to prepare one of our Superior Driving Technique Brochures on Driving on Country Roads. It covers Farm hazards, Fatigue, Avoiding a head-on collision, Unsealed Roads, High speeds and Animals. The Animal section reads:

“In addition to farm animals, native animals are a particular hazard on country roads. Even small animals can cause extensive damage and leave you stranded with an undriveable vehicle. A natural instinct is to swerve to avoid an animal which can cause you to collide with a roadside hazard or an oncoming vehicle. When faced with an animal on the road, slow down and stop if possible, but maintain your vehicle’s line. It is always preferable to damage your vehicle colliding with an animal than with another vehicle or an immovable object.”

Another measure is the ‘Shu-Roo’ device that is fitted to the front of a vehicle. It emits a high pierced noise that drives kangaroos away. Queensland Post have reportedly had a lot of success with these.
We plan to alter our claim form to gather data on the office from which particular vehicles are rented. This will assist us to determine if kangaroo claims are more likely to emanate from particular offices. If so, the installation of these devices can be targeted, thereby reducing related costs.

As a matter of interest, other brochures in our ‘Superior Driving’ series that are valuable for overseas renters are:

- Towing Caravans and Trailers, and
- Going Four Wheel Driving?

Left Hand Drive

Lumley’s claims data suggests that overseas drivers used to left hand drive vehicles experience problems in Australian conditions which contribute to ‘Right Of Way’ and ‘Lost Control’ crashes.

Figure 3.6: Lost Control Claim.
Here is a sample of several right of way and lost control claims.

Sample 1: 'Lost Control' claim

- At Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia
- Driver: 31 year old Swiss in a Toyota Landcruiser
- Rolled the vehicle at noon doing 60km/h
- Swerved to miss a piece of wood on the road
- Damage $22,000.

Sample 2: 'Lost Control' claim:

- Figure 3.6 shows a $50,000 loss to a Landcruiser
- The driver was a 44 year old German who had a head on with an Avis car at 9:30 am
- In wet conditions the Avis car lost control on a bend
- The other driver, a Japanese lady, was killed - our driver suffered broken ribs
- According to the claim form the Landcruiser was going 60km/h and the Avis car was travelling “very, very fast”

Sample 3: 'Right of Way' claim

- Mackay, Queensland
- Driver: 23 year old Austrian driving an Econovan
- At 5:00 pm, turning right, and collected by a car coming the other way doing 70km/h
- Damage $12,000.

One of the initiatives we are working on in this area are rear view mirror hangers to provide information to drivers.

Educational Initiatives

Robert Kelly of Rentsure is convinced that 'emotional' posters of real crashes situated in rental booking lounges would be effective. We have discussed with Staysafe (the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety, New South Wales Parliament) the option of a 3 – 4 minute inflight video called 'Safe Driving in Australia' and we have offered to finance it provided we can include some of our clients' vehicles in it. Our research shows that the gimmick drivers use to remind themselves to keep left is to always be on the side where the middle of the road is. We would highlight this in the video. This video could also run in rental booking offices or lounges.

One of our clients suggested the use of large 'keep left posters' in the offices of van parks so that as the overseas driver books out they are reminded, at the outset of the day, to keep left. The increase in accidents involving overseas visitors around 9:00 am prompted this suggestion. Another possibility is an audio cassette for the driver to play, as they drive off, instructing them of safe driving in Australia. This could even be produced in various languages if necessary.

Fatigue

There is a lot of work being done on fatigue by the trucking industry through the Road Transport Forum and some of their findings could be used to supplement the already very good work being done as part of the Drive, Revive, Survive program.
One of our clients is overcoming the particular problem with overseas visitors, of an exhausting 24 hour flight and jet lag, by making it a condition of hire at the point of sale in the northern hemisphere that they cannot pick up the vehicle until 24 hours after they have landed. Robert Kelly has advised me that some renters are now including, and insisting on, a nights accommodation and rest for northern hemisphere visitors before they can pick up the vehicle.

Incentives for Insureds to Reduce Accidents

Like any other insured party, if a rental company can improve the performance of its fleet, losses will be reduced, their bottom line improves, and safety is enhanced. Motor vehicle claims drive the insurance premium more so than other classes of insurance because it is claims intensive. You could take a broad rule of thumb and calculate that your claims figure would represent about 80% of your premium.

The other 20% is the amount the insurer needs for claims administration, recoveries, loss control services, reinsurance (most Insurers provide cover up to $20,000,000 for Third Party Damage), and a small profit margin. Fleet owners pay this to Insurers because it is considerably cheaper than doing it themselves. So, if claims represent some 80% of premium, there is a strong monetary incentive for rental companies to reduce their claims.

Another strong incentive is the reputation of the rental company. No renter wants a customer whose holiday has been wrecked by a crash or injury to be complaining to everyone about their miserable time in Australia at the hands of such and such company. Thirdly, time off the road for a rental company is lost income, so again there is a monetary incentive not to have crashes. And lastly, the safety aspect. No one wants their company and their assets to be the means of someone being injured or killed.

So, all in all, there are strong monetary, reputation and safety incentives for rental companies to reduce motor vehicle losses which, in the main, makes them open to loss control activities. For example, the renter can exercise loss control through the terms and conditions of the rental agreement. Most require that no person under 21 years of age, or 25, can drive the vehicle and limit the use of the vehicle (unless it is a 4WD) to sealed roads only.

One rental operator gives each traveller a letter headed ‘Welcome to Australia’. The following are some excerpts:

- slow down and drive carefully and always drive on the left-hand side of the road;
- for overland trips tell a reliable person where you are traveling; and
- beware of fatigue – take regular breaks at least every two hours. It’s best to drive no more than 4-5 hours on any one day. Avoid driving in the hottest time of the day – start early.

The letter finishes with the following advice:

“Australia is a beautiful country. Take time to enjoy what we have to offer. Drive to survive your journey, enjoy your holiday and return home safely”.
Conclusion

In conclusion, from an insurance perspective, I would make the following recommendations.

1. Establish guidelines, or even possibly legislate, to discourage overseas visitors from driving on Australian roads after a long flight from a different time zone. That is, make it a requirement that an international visitor can’t pick up the vehicle until they have rested. An extremely tired visitor getting into a vehicle, bigger or more powerful than they have ever driven before, to drive on a different side of the road, is a recipe for disaster.

2. With the year 2000 in mind, implement a program for educating visitors on our left side driving. An in-flight video would be a start. This should also target pedestrians who could face serious injury by looking the wrong way when crossing a road, and walking straight into the traffic. In England there are signs on the kerb reminding pedestrians to look right before crossing.

3. Encourage the Northern Territory to set a 110km speed limit.

4. Again, establish guidelines or legislate, to make it compulsory that every traveler to the outback have a communication device for their safety in the event of a crash, breakdown, getting lost, or illness. Alternatively, drivers must file a trip plan each day.

5. Another helpful innovation for overseas people, with little concept of Australia’s vast distances, is to include travel times on road kilometre signs. For example, ‘PERTH ... 420kms ... 7 hours.’

6. Lastly, the Campervan and Motorhome Club have asked me to raise the very real problem of parking in rest areas or wayside areas for up to 24 hours. Caravan parks are now full of ‘permanents’ with no room for tourists (eg. in 1997 of the 3,660 sites in 40 Queensland parks, only 1,060 were for tourists). Where they are welcome, the cost is too high as many Club members are pensioners on restricted incomes. As well, they don’t need most of the facilities they are being charged for as modern vans and motorhomes are self contained. At present, after a couple of hours in a rest area, their members are reportedly harassed by Rangers to move on. Overseas visitors reportedly receive the same treatment. For fatigue and safety reasons we suggest that legislation be amended to allow longer stays in suitable areas that are not designated caravan parks.

About the Author

David Matcham joined the Lumley Group over 22 years ago as a junior employee and became Managing Director on 1 July 1999. During his career at Lumley, David has been involved in most aspects of the business and has participated in the transformation of the company into the success it is today.

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CHAPTER 4
A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

Robert Davis*

Introduction

Estimates predict that the number of international visitors to Australia in 2000 will be about 770,000 higher than the 1996 tourism intake.¹ The publicity surrounding the Olympics will likely result in a further net boost to Australia's already increasing annual tourist intake until 2004.¹

International tourism has the same effect on the Australian economy as does the export of primary products and manufactured goods. In 1997 alone, 4.3 million tourists expended $14,952 million on trips to Australia.² About $5,317 million was expended on pre-paid package tours (some of which was wholly expended outside the Australian domestic economy) and $9,635 million was expended by other tourists. In the 1970’s Australia had the resources boom, but in the 1990’s tourism is our star growth export industry.²

In 1997 international visitors expended $34.4 million on self-drive cars and camper vans. As has been pointed out by others, Australian driving conditions challenge many international visitors due to differences in their knowledge and experience relating to road rules, travelling distances, road conditions, seat-belt usage, alcohol limits etc.

As a result of these differences, the consumers of some tourist services (in particular the self-drive rental market) face an increased risk of death and injury. Increased, that is, over what the international visitor may experience at home and, for the rental operator and their insurers at least, increased over what they would expect from resident Australian consumers. Further, because international tourists share our roads with Australians they also pose an increased risk of death and injury to Australian road users.

No comprehensive and reliable body of data exists to enable the magnitude of these risks to be assessed. This difficulty poses a problem for insurers who crave stability. The entire insurance industry is based on the ‘punt’ that the income from premiums and the investment of reserves will continue to meet claims and operating expenses and also provide a sufficient return on the investment of their shareholders.

When the share-market is buoyant insurers make good profits on their investments and often use these profits to expand their market share in more risky areas of coverage. When share-markets plunge insurance profits decline resulting in an urge to increase premiums to cover future liabilities on cover already written.

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¹ B. Soc. Sci (Psychology), LLM, LLM (Corporate & Commercial), Managing Partner, Attwood Marshall - Lawyers.
Whenever another 'change' is thrown into this equation the insurance 'punt' becomes more difficult. Insurers are then faced with the dilemma of either increasing premiums (something that is difficult to do in the Comprehensive Third Party (CTP) market where premiums are set by government), or lobbying for subsidies in the form of liability protection (that is, limiting the rights of injury victims to claim damages), or both. Whenever the latter occurs insurers commonly dust off the old 'litigation explosion' media releases and portray lawyers and the public as the culprits for a funding 'crisis'. Sometimes this is valid, but often the claims of crisis are overstated or, if a crisis does exist, the causes are much more complex.1

Governments both accentuate and pander to the problem by controlling CTP premiums for political, as opposed to economic, purposes. This anti-competitive control of premiums forces insurers to make ambit claims for premium increases (which the insurers must try to justify) and encourages governments to suppress needed increases until it is too late. When the inevitable 'crisis' occurs (which is an inevitable result of this process) politicians are then quick to blame others for causing the problem.

This paper is not intended as a criticism of insurers, politicians or lawyers. But it is important not to shrink from reality when it relates to the issue at hand. The Year 2000 Olympics, particularly when coupled with the pending Goods and Services Tax (GST) does have CTP insurers nervous. This nervousness has the potential to stampede them into a push for premium increases and that, in turn, may spook politicians into further restricting the rights of the injured in certain Australian States. That would be a pity as, in my analysis of the known facts, there is very little evidence that the Year 2000 Olympic Effect will result in any significant increase in claims in Australia.

This paper focuses on the peculiar nature and magnitude of the legal risks posed by the Year 2000 Olympics. It will not, as some have feared, be a 'how to' pamphlet on how to promote personal injury litigation for international tourists. It is, instead, an attempt to medicate some of the fears that I feel are beginning to surface, with a dose of reality.

There are several issues that will be considered separately. First, do international visitors pose or face an increased risk of injury? Second, is it likely that any increase in the level of injury will produce a corresponding increase in the number of claims for legal compensation (that is, will any increase in the 'injury risk' result in a flow-on increase in the 'legal risk' to insurers etc)? Third, who gains and who loses whenever an injured international visitor claims (or fails to claim) the legal compensation that he or she may be entitled to? Finally, what action can be taken to manage both the risks of injury and the resultant legal risks of damages?

Evidence that International Visitors Create Increased Injury Risks

Logic dictates that the influx of new tourists during and following the Year 2000 Olympics will produce an increase in injury rate. That said, the evidence does not support fears that Olympics will result in any claims crisis or funding 'blow-out' for insurers.

In 1997 Australia serviced 4.3 million international visitors4 and we did so without producing any claims crisis or any funding crisis in the insurance market. It is therefore unlikely that an increase in international tourists during the Olympics will result in any sudden impact on insurers or premiums. If international visitors (as a group) cause any significant impact then it would have been noticed already.

Some may argue that international visitors may be a significant risk factor in many accidents, but that

1 Such as poor returns on invested reserves, too aggressive expansion into risky areas of coverage, or poor forward planning, or any combination of these.
the true picture is obscured because the data has not been collected or examined before, or because the true picture is being obscured by other factors. This observation is valid in a general sense, but the historical results produce no argument for increased premiums leading into the Year 2000 Olympics. This is because the existence of the claims arising from the international visitor cohort has, to an overwhelming degree, already produced claims that have formed the basis of setting premiums over the last decade of Australia’s tourism boom. Further, and notwithstanding the increase in cost of living and increases in average claim size, the underlying casualty rate continues to drop.

What is the cost of the ‘increased claims’ from the Olympics and the Olympic Effect likely to be? In 1995 the Federal Office of Road Safety examined all Coroners’ inquests of international visitors for the years 1988, 1990 and 1992 and estimated that this represented only 1.5% of all fatal crashes in Australia. As mentioned previously, this mortality rate applied to the total cohort of international visitors in Australia during each of the referenced years. This is a much larger number of visitors than will flow directly from the Year 2000 Olympics or the subsequent Olympic Effect.

Figure 4.1 sets out the incidence of all Australian road fatalities per 10,000 vehicle registrations between 1993 and 1996 and compares that trend with the trend for increase in international tourists during the same period. This data at least provides no support for the claim that international visitors produce increased risks.

Figure 4.1: Comparison between Total Road Fatality Rate and Influx of International Tourists, 1993 - 96.

(Sources: International Visitor Survey, 1997; FORS Monograph 28)
The Federal Office of Road Safety (FORS) recently compared the number of road fatalities with the number of registered vehicles in Australia. Figure 4.2 is reproduced directly from that monograph. It reveals that by 1997 the level of traffic fatalities had fallen to the levels they were in 1950, namely about half what they were in 1970. This is notwithstanding a greater than 5 times increase in the number of registered vehicles on the road between 1950 and 1997. This is a wonderful testament to the fact that Australian roads and vehicles are becoming safer (largely due to the introduction of mandatory seat belts in the 1970s and improvements in vehicle handling and crashworthiness). The majority of international visitors attending Australia for the Olympics will enjoy the benefits of these impressive gains in safety.

Figure 4.2: Level of Road Death Versus Number of Registered Vehicles, 1925 - 1995.

That is not to say that there is no value in searching for evidence as to whether or not international tourists are a risk factor in accidental injury. On the contrary, there is great value in performing this exercise if all stakeholders are willing to respond with carefully targeted initiatives to either:

1. reduce the special risks of accidental death and injury peculiar to international visitors; or

2. recoup from the international visitors the costs to the Australian community resulting from these increased risks.

(Source: FORS Monograph 23)

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Do International Visitors Claim Compensation at the Same Rate as Australians?

There is no hard data on this but it is my personal experience that the answer is ‘no’. There are several factors that operate to suppress litigation by international visitors. I shall deal with each in turn.

Cultural Perceptions and Experiences

In a paper such as this it is impossible to compare and contrast the perceptions and experiences of all cultural groups likely to visit Australia for the Olympics. I shall therefore confine this discussion to an analysis of relevant legal and cultural differences between Australia and the culture that is claimed to be the most ‘litigation mad’ society on the planet, the United States of America (USA).

This choice is also appropriate, as some have suggested that the Asian economic downturn and the geographic isolation of Australia from Europe will each produce a large influx of USA visitors to the 2000 Olympics. This fact has made some insurers nervous, given the entrenched urban mythology that Americans are culturally predisposed to litigation.

There are many differences between the USA and Australia in relation to claims for damages arising from motor accidents. These are examined below.

CTP Cover

USA compulsory third party (CTP) motor vehicle insurance does not resemble CTP cover as we generally know it in Australia. In most States, compulsory CTP cover is set at ridiculously low levels. As a result, CTP cover is regularly inadequate to compensate those who are injured as a result of the negligence of the vehicle driver.

In practice this means that sensible USA car owners take out non-compulsory top up general liability-insurance to protect them in the event they are sued following a motor vehicle accident. This type of cover may not apply outside the USA. Further, the same people take out personal accident insurance to protect themselves if they are injured in a motor accident and have no effective recourse to recover against another.

Because high-end cover is non-compulsory it is often not taken out by those on lower incomes, presumably on the theory that they have nothing to lose if they are sued. Similarly, most in the lower socioeconomic groups cannot afford to take out personal accident insurance and, when injured, become destitute.

The differences in insurance coverage means that those seriously injured in motor accidents often go uncompensated, by insurance at least, unless a deeper pocket can be found for recovery. This is why there is substantially greater product liability litigation in the USA than Australia. Here it is almost never necessary to sue a vehicle manufacturer, as it is far easier to sue the other driver.

I have practiced in personal injury litigation for over 20 years for the largest plaintiff law firm on the Gold Coast. In my experience, which included the period of the Brisbane Expo, it is very rare for an international visitor to claim legal compensation for local injury.° That is, if we eschew the small research on the issue (which refutes the claims that the USA is particularly litigious) and adopt the hysterical claims made by USA product manufacturers and liability insurers about the USA in the mass media. These claims are regularly parroted by lazy Australian journalists who are unwilling to check their facts.

° That is, if we are indifferent to the small research on the issue (which refutes the claims that the USA is particularly litigious) and adopt the hysterical claims made by USA product manufacturers and liability insurers about the USA in the mass media. These claims are regularly parroted by lazy Australian journalists who are unwilling to check their facts.

1 The opposite of the ‘deep pockets’ lament of many insurers is that ‘you cannot get blood out of a stone’.
While the differences in CTP culture in the USA have proved disastrous for many USA injury victims, it has benefited Australia because USA product litigation has driven vehicle safety developments worldwide. This is because the USA comprises the single largest developed market for vehicles (both local and imported) in the world and manufacturers worldwide have had to comply with their laws if they hope to sell into that market.

Paradoxically, the absence of unlimited CTP cover in the USA has motivated evolution of safer vehicles in the USA and thereby greatly contributed to the safety of vehicles imported into Australia.

**Contributory Negligence**

Australia is a civilised country when it comes to the protection we have and expect under the law. One example of this protection is in the area of contributory negligence. In Australia when two parties have each contributed to an accident the court will apportion liability between them. For example, if person 'A' is suing and the court concludes that he or she was guilty of 20% contributory negligence then that person's damages will be reduced by 20%. In other words, a person that is guilty of 20% (or other percentage) of contributory negligence will recover only part of their total damages.

Prior to the 1970's most USA jurisdictions applied the old common law doctrine of contributory negligence. That doctrine operated as a complete bar to recovery in negligence if the plaintiff had, to any degree, contributed to his or her own injury.

Indeed, even after a rash of statutory law reform since the 1970's many USA jurisdictions still apply harsh (by Australian standards), comparative negligence rules which operate to totally deprive victims of compensation if their own fault exceeds arbitrary limits of culpability. This model of damages apportionment operates to subsidise USA insurers as those injured but who are >50% negligent recover nothing, and those that are <50% negligent have their damages reduced.

The old common law contributory negligence defence was not available in cases based on the USA model of strict liability. This fact accentuated the tendency for those injured in motor accidents in the USA to sue vehicle manufacturers instead of the other party to the accident.

Many USA visitors will be unaware of the differences between USA and Australian law relating to contributory negligence. This will result in some not making a claim, as they will believe that they have no right to compensation if their negligence was a significant contributor to the accident.

**Visitors Employ Lawyers Back Home**

When international visitors are injured in Australia their first priority (in cases of moderate to severe injury at least) is usually to get home. Thoughts of compensation are secondary for most people. Most international visitors have lawyers of their own and will be reluctant to engage a stranger in a strange land to act on their behalf. That is not to say that this reluctance cannot be overcome, but the tendency to leave seeking legal advice until you are back in familiar surroundings is a strong one.

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2. Unlike Australia, where comparative negligence merely reduces damages according to the percentage of assessed culpability, if the laws in many USA states actually deprive a victim of compensation if they exceed minimum culpability thresholds. For example, most USA jurisdictions that have adopted comparative negligence still deny recovery to a plaintiff who is assessed to be more than 50% to blame. For example, Schwartz, V. in Comparative Negligence, (1985) 3rd edn., Michie Publishing, Charlottesville VA, USA, §3.5, reports that of the 46 states that had adopted comparative negligence as of 1994, 30 had selected a 50% threshold!
USA lawyers will advise clients to seek local Australian advice, but they will often do so only as a second course, and then only if it is clear that no recourse exists to an USA defendant. Their first priority will be to exhaust examination of USA options for recovery. In some cases they will succeed in identifying a USA defendant and where that occurs they may never pursue remedies against alternative Australian defendants.

The reasons for this bias are complex. First, most USA lawyers have a strong view about the advantages of the USA civil justice system. In some respects this bias has a solid basis in fact. For example, most USA citizens deeply value their right to trial by jury and most USA lawyers are aware that the right to jury trial has been abrogated in Motor Accident claims in Australia. Further, USA lawyers would prefer to risk a more certain result for a lesser sum in Australian courts for a less certain result of a greater sum in an USA court. Second, legal principles regulating forum shopping often operate against joining both an USA defendant and an Australian defendant in the same proceedings. In such cases the USA defendant would have greater ammunition (and motivation) to apply to have the USA action struck out on the basis that Australia was the most appropriate forum for the proceedings. Third, everyone is apprehensive about becoming involved in legal proceedings in a foreign land. As they say, better the devil you know than the one you don't!

The 'English Rule' on Costs

In low-end claims, many USA lawyers will advise clients against commencing proceedings in Australia in view of what they call the 'English Rule'. This rule is what we know of as the 'cost indemnity rule, or the 'loser pays rule'.

In the USA the standard rule is that each party to litigation pays their own costs, irrespective of the outcome. In the USA clients pay their lawyers a contingent fee which usually equates with a third of the recovery in personal injury actions. If the client wins then the lawyer gets paid, but if the client loses then the lawyer recovers nothing and the client does not incur any liability for the opponent's costs.

The loser pays rule has an interesting effect on the threshold at which litigation becomes a feasible and desirable option for many clients. Where the rule exists those with a good claim are encouraged to pursue it in the expectation that when they win their costs will be paid (in part at least) by the opponent. But where the claim is less certain then the risk of an adverse costs order will often deter an unsophisticated litigant against going to court.

At least that is how USA lawyers often perceive the rule works in the UK and Australia. The reality is quite different, as for every client that is deterred by the cost indemnity rule there is a client that is emboldened by it. Like many swords, it cuts both ways. Further, the only clients in Australia deterred by the rule are clients who have cases that most plaintiff lawyers would not be willing to accept anyway.

Even among Australian Plaintiff lawyers there are differences of opinion on the practical effect of the cost indemnity rule. Some Plaintiff lawyers love the rule as they see it as a means of making low end claims more economic for their client. Paradoxically, most Australian Insurers also love the rule as they consider it to be valuable in deterring spurious or risky claims. Both propositions are equally valid.

Personally, and from the perspective of one who has examined the USA and Australian rules in more detail than most, I do not care whether we have a cost indemnity rule or not. If the rule goes then some low end claims will be lost, but more litigants will be willing to take a chance. Overall the success rate in court will probably drop (as is the case in the USA) but the end result for insurers and plaintiff lawyers will probably be the same. What insurers will save in paying plaintiff's costs under the present system they will spend in paying more for their own costs under a system such as that in the USA.
USA Perceptions about Contingent Fees and Access to Justice

USA contingent fees have a bad name for no good reason. Insurers, on the assumption that they make it easier for plaintiffs to sue, oppose them. Well, they do, but let's face it, insurers profit out of every insured person who can be deterred from claiming. Further, every civilised society has an obligation to the citizen to permit the poor to have the same access to justice as the wealthy.

While USA insurers and manufacturers hate contingent fees there is no doubt that injured clients do not. All USA plaintiff lawyers would prefer to be paid by the hour if they were paid irrespective of the result (eg: as defendant lawyers are paid). The reality is that their clients can rarely afford to pay fees on an hourly basis and even when they can they will nearly always opt for a contingent fee if given the choice.

A society that confers rights on citizens but then makes it too costly or difficult for the citizen to exercise those rights is not a society that any of us would like to live in. There is no difference to having rights but not being able to exercise them and having no rights at all.

How is all this relevant to the current issue? Well, put simply, I believe most USA lawyers are aware that 'contingent fees' as they understand them are not available in Australia. Because of that some would view Australian Justice as being less accessible because citizens are denied the ability to engage lawyers on a contingent basis. As such, they would be less inclined to recommend their clients take action in Australia than the USA, where a USA option existed.

Naturally, some (perhaps many) USA lawyers will be aware (or find out) that there is little difference between 'contingent fees' and 'speculative' or 'conditional' fees as utilised in Australia. So the comments above will not have universal application.

Expense and Inconvenience of Suing in Australia

Many Australian lawyers would be unwilling to represent USA clients unless the clients were prepared to pay some or all of the additional expenses associated with litigating their case in Australia. These

When international visitors are injured in Australia, their first priority (in cases of moderate to severe injury at least) is usually to get home. Thoughts of compensation are secondary for most people.
expenses can be extensive, particularly if the client received ongoing medical treatment in the USA and it becomes necessary to rely on USA experts for proof of disability, pain and suffering etc. Further, some courts are unwilling to assist with special fixtures and this creates difficulties for clients that have to travel to and accommodate themselves in Australia.

While the court rules and evidence Acts of each Australian State offer some assistance in mitigating these costs for extra-territorial witnesses (by allowing evidence to be given by phone, statement, etc), the absence of the personal presence of experts can sometimes have negative consequences.

In short, the cost and inconvenience of litigating in Australia will be a deterrent for many lawyers and their clients.

**The Effect of Being Injured on Risk Aversion**

Contrary to portrayal of some in the media, plaintiffs do not view their injury as a 'lottery ticket'. Being injured has serious consequences for the injured person. The disability, loss of income, ill health, pain, all increase the financial and emotional toll on the entire family of the injured. This, coupled with apprehension about the legal system and an absence of control over the legal process all conspire to make plaintiff's much more risk averse than the opposing liability insurers. This is why over 95% of plaintiff's settle their claims out of court.

Given that the injured already operate from a position of disadvantage when dealing with insurers, it would come as no surprise that the disadvantage is greatly accentuated by the prospect of litigation on the other side of the world!

**The Accident Risk and Legal Threat Posed by International Drivers**

Recent reports citing Dr. Mather from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare indicate that the three major causes of death and injury each year in Australia are accidental falls, adverse medical outcomes (medical malpractice) and traffic accidents. In monetary sums allocated to this hierarchy (which only counted the health care cost of 'treating' the injuries):

- $806 million was spent on treating the effects of accidental falls;
- $400 million was spent treating the effects of 'adverse medical outcomes' (an expression used in the medical profession which equates to what lawyers call 'medical malpractice'); and
- $370 million was spent on treating people injured in road accidents.

There is no doubt that, notwithstanding the impressive gains made in traffic safety over the last 25 years, road safety remains a risky activity. Further, if there is any area in which an international visitor may be at increased risk (compared to an Australian resident) it is in using our roads. That said, it must be kept in perspective. For example, Dr. Mather's study suggests that medical misadventure to already injured tourists may add as much to their treatment cost as the original accident itself!

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14 The psychological effects of injury on negotiating and settlement behaviour are well documented. See, for example, Davis, R. Negotiating personal injury cases: a survey of the attitudes and beliefs of personal injury lawyers, 1994, Australian Law Journal, 734. This article examines a selection of the published research on this subject.

15 See article in the Sydney Morning Herald by Judith Whelan entitled 'Bad Medicine Dearer Than Road Accidents', 30 April 1999, p. 5.

16 This is not a paper about medical malpractice. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that CTP insurers invariably bear much of the superimposed costs caused by medical malpractice. This is because the medical provider largely hides malpractice from the injury victim. As a result the additional treatment costs of the medical misadventure are claimed against the opposing party in the litigation and ultimately paid by the CTP insurer. It follows that prudent insurer's should consider targeting those responsible for malpractice as a means of recouping some of the costs of providing benefits to victims of traffic accidents.
Another way to view the issue is to compare the 'cost' of accidents involving tourists with the 'income' they generate for our economy. It has been calculated that in 1997 the cost of Queensland accidents involving international drivers was approximately $18.91 million.\(^{17}\) Certainly, this is a lot of money, but in that same year 2 million tourists visited Queensland and injected hundreds of millions of dollars into the state economy.\(^2\) When the total 'accident cost' is divided by the number of international visitors that year the mean 'cost' of visitor accidents only comes to $9.46 each! Putting it another way, a levy of $10.00 per visitor would cover the total cost!

What are the main areas of legal exposure likely to arise for traffic injuries caused by or to international tourists? There are several possibilities so, for the sake of clarity, I shall deal with them separately.

**Negligence**

The overwhelming majority of persons who sue for traffic injury in Australia will win or lose depending on whether he or she can prove negligence against another party in the same incident. This is not to say that other legal theories of recovery may not be 'technically' or theoretically viable against other defendants, such as hire companies, road authorities, etc. But the reality is that these defendants are much more speculative targets, under our legal system at least, than is a driver at fault.

The instances where those injured in traffic accidents sue local authorities, vehicle manufacturers or traffic authorities are very rare, and are generally confined to cases involving catastrophic injury received by a driver in single vehicle accidents. Putting it another way, other more speculative defendants only get sued when there is no easier target, and where the seriousness of the injury justifies the extra cost and risk of failure in the proceedings.

Negligence requires proof of a number of elements, such as duty of care, breach of duty, causation and loss. The duty to exercise reasonable care begs the question what is 'reasonable'? The answer depends on what a reasonable person's response would be to the risk, given its magnitude, the probability of the risk occurring and the practicality of steps that could be taken to mitigate the risk.\(^{18}\)

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*Driver's licence checking.*

\(^{17}\) Wyong Shire Council *v* Shirt (1980) 146 CLR 40.
It is worth considering how these concepts will apply to the ‘risk factors’ which are likely to expose international visitors to ‘increased’ risk of injury upon our roads.

Factors such as:

- resistance to compulsory wearing of seatbelts;
- driving on incorrect side of the road;
- exceeding the speed limit;
- unfamiliarity with distances producing fatigue;
- unfamiliarity with driving on dirt roads, or driving ‘off road’; and
- mistaken belief as to minimum levels of permissible blood alcohol.

In every case (where negligence is relied upon at least) the outcome will depend on whether any person owed a duty to the injured tourist to exercise care to minimise the risk of harm from these causes. That implies that one or more of these risks were the effective cause of the injury. Naturally, contributory negligence by the visitor will reduce his or her entitlement to compensation.

A driver injured or killed because of his or her own speeding, travelling on the incorrect side of the road, falling asleep at the wheel etc will not likely sue another road user involved in the same accident (unless that person was also negligent to some degree). If they did they would fail. So in this context, CTP insurers have nothing (or very little) to fear from actions by international tourists arising from these ‘increased risks’. But that is not to say that these risks do not expose Australians and CTP insurers to no increased legal risk. For example, considering the position of the tourist is only half the story, we must also consider the risk to Australian road users posed by the risky actions of international drivers. That said, I doubt that any insurers could credibly claim that the risk is significant.

Given that international tourists are unlikely to sue road users for injury caused by the tourist’s own fault, do they have any reasonable prospect of suing anyone else, under the negligence theory, for their injury? The answer to this question is ‘sometimes perhaps’.

The major area of legal risk arises from the action known as ‘failure to warn’. An obligation to ‘warn’ will usually arise wherever a duty of care exists and where, given the existence of the duty of care, a warning is a reasonable response to the foreseeable risks. The failure to warn action is still evolving in Australia, but the following general observations can be made as to the scope of this head of negligence:

- It is unlikely that any obligation to warn will arise with respect to risks that are so obvious as to render the warning superfluous.\(^\text{19}\)

- Notwithstanding the principle referred to above, an obligation to warn may arise with respect to an apparent risk if the risk of injury is high and the cost of the warning is low and the warning is likely to be effective in reducing the risk.\(^\text{20}\)

- That said, the obviousness of the risk and the cost and the utility of the warning are always relevant issues that will determine whether ultimate liability will be imposed in any given case.\(^\text{21}\)

- There is no obligation to warn of things that pose such a slight or implausible risk of danger that a reasonable person would take no steps to obviate the risk.\(^\text{22}\)

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\(^{19}\) See, for example, Head -v- Pick (CA (Qld) 27 February 1968, unreported, BC664756).

\(^{20}\) See, for example, Sousaari -v- Steinhardt [1989] 2 Qd R 477.

\(^{21}\) Romeo -v- Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory (1998) 72 ALJR 206.

\(^{22}\) See, for example, Hinton -v- Jaenke (CA (Qld) 3 November 1995, unreported, No 37/95). This issue was discussed at length in Wyong Shire Council -v- Stock (1980) 146 CLR 41.
• A plaintiff will not succeed if he or she fails to establish that a satisfactory warning would have been heeded.\(^{23}\)

• A defendant who gives a warning may still be liable if he or she knows that a warning that is given will not be heeded.\(^{24}\)

• The test of whether or not a Plaintiff would have abided a warning is subjective to the plaintiff, and is not based on what a reasonable person would have done in response to the same warning.\(^{25}\)

All of this means that car rental companies have little risk exposure for failure to warn international visitors against drinking alcohol and driving or against not wearing seatbelts as these are matters comprising obvious risks. While it could be said that driving on the wrong side of the road also poses obvious risks, it presumes that the international visitor is first aware of what is and is not the wrong side of the road in Australia. So it may be possible to argue, in a highly speculative way, that a failure to instruct which is the correct side of the roadway may result in liability following a head on collision. But this would only be arguable if the driver was involved in an accident early in the first road journey.

Further, rental car companies may have a duty to warn of other unusual risks that are not likely to be known to international visitors, such as:

• the need to take spare water, petrol and tyres on long inland trips;
• the importance of staying near a vehicle if stranded;
• to avoid camping beside rivers in crocodile country;
• how to extract a bogged vehicle from sand;
• how to advise others of the travel plans so delay in arrival can be used to initiate a search, etc.

**Contract**

As a rule, contract will not impose any higher duty of care than negligence unless there are express terms increasing that duty. The more usual scenario here is not terms increasing the common law liability in negligence, but terms that purport to exclude that liability.

At common law exclusion clauses can be effective in limiting general liability in negligence, but a lot depends upon the clarity with which they are drafted.

Sections 71(1) and 71(2) of the Trade Practices Act 1974 (Commonwealth) imply statutory warranties of merchantability and fitness for purpose into contracts for the supply of goods. Liability for breach of one of these implied conditions extends to the consumer or any person who acquires the goods from or derives title to the goods through the consumer.\(^{26}\) While this extends the common law doctrine of privity of contract to protect certain non-contractual parties, innocent bystanders are not protected.

Sections 74 and 75 of the Act further imply a duty to exercise care and skill in the supply of services. In many respects this obligation can be discharged (in part at least) by supply of adequate warnings and instructions so as to arm the consumer with the means to protect him or herself. The provisions of the Trade Practices Act will apply to nearly every contract for supply of goods or services to international visitors.\(^{27}\)
There are clear limits to the circumstances in which liability may be excluded or modified under these sections. The net effect of section 68 of the Trade Practices Act is that it is very difficult for a supplier of goods or services to contractually ‘exclude’ liability for unsuitable goods or negligent services.

Contributory negligence does not generally apply to reduce liability under a contract.

**Strict Product Liability**

Suppliers of defective goods are strictly liable for product defects under Part VA of the Trade Practices Act 1974. This type of liability arises whenever defective goods are supplied and a person is injured by the defect. The test is whether the goods conform to the ‘safety’ expectations of the reasonable consumer. In deciding whether the goods meet these expectations the court will consider, among other things, the:

- purposes for which the goods have been marketed;
- any instructions or warnings with respect to the goods; and
- what might reasonably be expected to be done with the goods, etc.

Clearly the Act is wide enough to create a right of action by someone injured by defective goods. As the test for defectiveness is based, in part, upon the knowledge of the supplier, then it is possible for a supplier to become liable if the goods are not safe for the purpose for which they are supplied, or are rendered unsafe because of the absence of suitable warnings or instructions. While this may appear to impose an additional legal risk on suppliers, it is unlikely that Part VA (in this instance at least) imposes any additional liability to that which would already be imposed through failure to warn or instruct under ordinary negligence principles.

The real significance of Part VA liability is that it cannot be excluded or modified by contract. Further, like negligence, the action extends to protect innocent bystanders (such as, in the case of a traffic accident, the passengers in the car or any other person injured in the same incident).

Contributory negligence by the injured visitor will reduce the compensation that would otherwise be recovered under Part VA of the Act. As is obvious from the above, suitable warnings and instructions will go a long way towards reducing the liability exposure of the supplier of goods and services. This occurs for several reasons:

1. adequate warnings and instructions will reduce the risk of injury (the most desirable outcome for all concerned);
2. warnings and instructions will, if appropriate, also reduce the legal exposure of the supplier in that:
   a) they will often meet the threshold requirements of ‘reasonable care’ or ‘product safety’ so as to exclude any legal liability for failing to abide by the warnings or instructions; and

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28 Section 68 of the Trade Practices Act 1974 (Commonwealth).
30 Section 75AC(1) of the Act.
31 Section 75AC(2) of the Act.
32 Section 75AP(1) of the Act.
33 Section 75AN of the Act.
b) even in those cases where a threshold of legal liability remains, the consumer’s failure to follow the instructions or abide by the warnings will often constitute contributory negligence that will reduce the residual value of his or her right to compensation.

It is often said that you should first avoid the activity that causes the risk, but if it cannot be avoided then you should guard against the risk so that it cannot cause injury. If you cannot do that then at the very least you should always ‘instruct’ and ‘warn’ about the risk so consumers can take action to protect themselves.

Who Gains and Who Loses When Injured Consumers Recover Compensation?

The only inflexible rule in this process is that in a closed economy somewhere, somehow, someone has to pay the cost of death and injury.

Injury results in unavoidable loss of:

- productivity and lost taxes; and in
- direct costs to the taxpayer either through health-care payments, social security, etc.

These are just the financial costs, yet they are multiplied many times over by the resulting social cost to the injured, that person’s family and network of support. All these ‘costs’ are the unavoidable consequence of the injury. Someone has to pay these costs.34

There are a number of stakeholders in the injury compensation loop. They are the:

- federal government (which provides federally funded health and social security benefits);
- state governments (which provide health services under subsidy from the Federal Government);
- insurers (who provide insurance benefits for profit);
- motorists and employers (who pay the CTP and compulsory Workers Compensation premiums);
- taxpayer (who ultimately picks up the tab for all the financial costs that the insurers don’t pay for); and
- injured person and his or her family (who pay the social costs).

Over recent years there has been a trend for State Governments to limit compulsory premium increases for political purposes. The usual strategy has been to cap the benefits the injured can recover from the compulsory scheme, thereby forcing the burden for the cost out of the state ‘political’ arena and onto both the taxpayer, private health and disability insurers (if any) and the injured person’s family.

Queensland Transport calculates the average ‘cost’ of different categories of injury according to a severity rank. For example death is $712,000, a hospitalisation injury is $148,000, a treatment injury is $20,000, a minor injury is $20,000 and a property claim is $10,000. See Wilks, J. and Watson, B. Road safety and international visitors in Australia: looking beyond the tip of the iceberg. Travel Medicine International, 1998, 16(5), 194-198. This methodology is based on work by Andreassen, D. Cost for Accident Types and Casualty Classes. Research Report ARR 227. Vermont South, Victoria: Australian Road Research Board, 1992.
There are a lot of myths spread by politicians and insurers about this process in which they each pretend that the financial 'cost' of injury can be contained by legislation. This is nonsense of course, as legislation does not cure the sick or bring the injured back to life. All legislation does is shift the point where the burden for the cost will fall. This generally results in the injured and the Australian taxpayer being asked to subsidise the profits of insurers and underwrite the re-election prospects of government politicians.

When an injured driver recovers compensation from a CTP insurer they also recover and repay to the Federal and State Governments, free of charge, hospital expenses, Department of Health payments, private health insurance and Social Security refunds, etc. In short, they recover from the wrongdoers and their primary liability insurers and in the process repay to others (primarily the Australian taxpayer) of treatment and support. These payments represent a significant part of all 'damages' or 'compensation' paid by public liability insurers, Workers Compensation insurers and CTP insurers in Australia. It follows that the Australian taxpayer and the Federal Government are major beneficiaries of the majority of compensation benefits paid by insurers.

The significance of this point is that not everyone involved in the compensation loop incurs a cost when the injured recover compensation from insurers. In those cases the Australian taxpayer is the net beneficiary, while the net losers are the group that forms the base for the premiums. If there is an increase in compensation claims from international tourists then it is in the interests of the Australian taxpayer that the injured receive compensation from these who profit most from the activity that produces the risk. This occurs best where premiums are risk rated in a free market and where the suppliers of the goods and services who are exposed to the increased legal risk are encouraged to pass the additional premium costs onto those that produce the risk, that is the international tourist. Further, the additional risk exposure provides powerful motivation to all concerned to take advance steps to reduce the risks of injury.

As mentioned above, compensation claims by international tourists are a mixed blessing. If no claims are brought then the taxpayer suffers by having to fund the irrecoverable hospital and medical costs incurred by the international visitor. When a claim is made the taxpayer is relieved of this burden, but the burden then passes to the insurer, and if we are not careful, the wider premium base.

It will be interesting to see if State Governments and CTP insurers try to use the Year 2000 Olympics as another excuse to seek further subsidies from the community in the form of reduced common law entitlements.

**Managing the Risks: Reducing the Cost of Injury During the 2000 Olympics**

There are two ways of avoiding the cost of injury. The first is avoiding the injury itself by action to reduce the injury risk. The second, (and this is only an option for some stakeholders in the compensation loop), is to attempt to shift the cost burden onto others. But as has already been pointed out, shifting the point where the burden of the cost of the injury falls does not reduce the cost of injury!

Suitable education (eg: warnings and instructions) will reduce both the risk of injury and also the legal exposure of those providing goods and services to the international visitor. This education should be pitched at both a general and a specific level.
General Inbound Education for International Visitors

A range of initiatives is required to educate visitors of the precautions required to overcome the risks that the visitors may not be aware of from their existing experience.

These risks include things such as:

- road travel differences in Australia;
- precautions required to minimise the dangers of travelling in the outback; and
- precautions to avoid injury from dangerous wildlife, etc.

This general education may be provided by a range of measures such as:

- Internet information on each of the risk areas;
- informative in-flight videos on inbound flights;
- distribution of these videos for free use in hotel video services; and
- supply of brochures on these topics to incoming tourists as they arrive in Australia, supply by tourist information providers, hotel concierges, etc.

The State and Federal governments each have a financial stake in funding the cost of benefits to international tourists injured in Australia. It follows that, if they are concerned about the cost of injury, they should bear the main burden for providing this generic information.

Specific Instructions and Warnings at the Point of Supply

Specific information should be supplied by these service providers engaged in the supply of goods or services that are likely to result in an increased risk to the international visitor. Industry groups should take up the challenge to both develop and provide this material and ensure it is supplied to consumers at the point when the goods or services are ordered. This will both defray the cost to individual operators and also ensure a reasonable degree of quality and thoroughness to the material that might otherwise be lacking from amateurish in-house fliers and brochures.

In specific cases, where the activity requires high risk of injury (such as driving on the wrong side of the road) care must be taken to ensure the consumer acknowledges the ‘instructions’ before the activity is engaged in. This naturally involves difficulty, particularly where the visitor may not be fluent in the English language. For that reason it is also necessary to develop these basic warnings and instructions in each of the major languages.

Hire and contractual documents should contain acknowledgments by the consumer that he or she has received and will abide by the instructions in order to minimise risk of injury to him or her and others.

It is impossible to be more specific in relation to the precautions required. Not every item or warning or instruction will relate to matters where an injured visitor would have reasonable prospect of suing, but the existence of this information, if delivered properly, should enhance our reputation as a safe yet exciting tourist destination.
About the Author

Robert Davis is the Managing Partner of the Queensland law firm Attwood Marshall, and a founding member of the Australian Plaintiff Lawyer's Association. A lawyer for the past 20 years, Robert is admitted to practice in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. His specialty areas are those which involve complex litigation, including Product Liability, Trade Practices, Class Actions, Malpractice and Professional Negligence. Robert has a particular interest and legal experience in the area of tourist health and safety, having represented clients in several complex tourist injury matters. He is also a prominent advocate for road safety.

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SECTION 2

International Visitors and Road Safety in Australia
- Status Reports

As an extension of the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q symposium program, letters were sent to Transport Ministers in all Australian states and territories, and New Zealand, requesting a status report on international visitors and road safety in their jurisdiction. A broad framework was suggested to guide development of these reports, including background information on the jurisdiction (e.g., population, industries), the size and scope of international tourism for each area, motor vehicle crash data, any programs targeting international visitors, and road safety contacts. Even with these guidelines it was anticipated that there would be considerable variation in the submissions.

The following nine chapters are the reports received. The editors again thank the responsible Ministers and their staff for the time and effort that went into preparing the reports. Much of the material presented, especially the crash data, has not been publicly available before now. This material is critical to the planning of policy initiatives and intervention strategies. This sharing of road safety information demonstrates a high level of collaboration across the jurisdictions.

Before proceeding, some key issues concerning road crash statistics should be clarified for readers unfamiliar with this type of data. Throughout Australia, the police generally attend road crashes where a person is injured, an estimated level of damage occurs (for example, $2,500 in Queensland\(^1\)) or where one or more vehicles is towed away. The Police record details of these crashes on report forms that are collated and entered into databases maintained at the state and territory level. The information from the crash report forms is supplemented by other relevant data such as the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of road users tested. The Federal Office of Road Safety (FORS) also maintains a national database that records the findings of Coronial investigations into road deaths.

A number of conventions are used when reporting crash statistics. For example, the outcomes of crashes are typically presented in two ways. The first concerns the class and number of casualties that occur in crashes. Casualty classes and the definitions commonly used in Australia are:

- fatality - where a person dies within 30 days as a result of injuries sustained in a crash;
- serious injury (sometimes referred to as a hospitalisation) - where a person is formally admitted to hospital;
- medical treatment - where a person is treated at hospital outpatients or other medical centre; and
- minor injury - where someone receives first aid treatment only.


The second method used in reporting crash outcomes concerns the type and number of crashes that occur. Commonly used crash types and their definitions are:

- fatal crash - where at least one person dies within 30 days as a result of injuries sustained in that crash;
- serious injury (or hospitalisation) crash - where the most serious injury sustained in the crash involved at least one person being formally admitted to hospital;
- medical treatment crash - where the most serious injury sustained involved a person being treated at a hospital outpatients or other medical centre;
- minor injury crash - where the most serious injury involved someone receiving first aid treatment only; and
- property damage only (PDO) crash - where at least one vehicle is towed away or the damage cost was estimated to be greater than a threshold level, but no one was injured.

In keeping with these reporting conventions, it is possible for more than one casualty to arise from a single crash. For example, a collision between two cars resulting in the death of both drivers will be classed as only one fatal crash. However, two fatalities will be recorded for the crash.

Furthermore, the term 'driver' is often used in crash reporting to cover all operators of motor vehicles. Therefore, in the following status reports unless otherwise specified the term 'driver' refers to drivers of cars, trucks, buses and motorcycles.

Finally, some differences exist between the jurisdictions in the way they identify overseas visitors in their databases. For example, some jurisdictions base their identification of international visitors on the driver's licence details collected by the Police at the time of the crash. As a result these jurisdictions can only identify overseas visitors who are involved in crashes as motor vehicle drivers (including motorcycle riders). Other jurisdictions base their identification on the residency details obtained from the visitors. This permits the identification of a wider range of international road users involved in crashes. The implications of these differences are discussed in more detail in Chapter 14.
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CHAPTER 5
QUEENSLAND

Land Transport and Safety Division
Queensland Transport *

Introduction

Queensland (QLD) is Australia's second largest State, covering 1,727,000 square kilometres. It is located on the north-east of the Australian continent, bordered by the Coral Sea, the South Pacific Ocean, New South Wales and South Australia to the south and Northern Territory to the west.

To put Queensland's size in perspective, it is more than seven times the size of the United Kingdom, more than four and a half times the size of Japan, and around six and a half times the size of New Zealand.

Population

Queensland's estimated resident population at 30 June 1996 was 3,339,109. Queensland's population has shown steady growth over the past decade, progressively increasing its share of the Australian total, to 18.3% at 30 June 1996. Population growth in the five-year period to June 1996 averaged 2.5% annually, well above the Australian average of 1.1%.

Net migration has been the major component of population growth in Queensland. In common with most Western societies, the population is gradually ageing as birth rates decline and life expectancy increases.

Compared with other mainland States, Queensland's population is relatively less centralised with more than half of the State’s population living in coastal, regional centres outside the Brisbane metropolitan area. This reflects Brisbane's remoteness from the agricultural, pastoral and mining activities in the central, northern and western regions of the State. Urban centres have always performed important functional roles in regional Queensland.

Industries

Queensland possesses a large proportion of Australia's natural resources and has traditionally relied on the fortunes of mining, pastoral and agricultural industries. The State's manufacturing industry, initially dependent on primary industry, now includes basic metals, chemicals, petroleum and coal product industries. More recently, the State's economy has further diversified with a significant increase in the size of service industries and strong growth in tourism.

* This report was prepared under the supervision of Dr. Mark Leggett. The contributions of Wayne Dale and Rachel Gorny are acknowledged.


The relative importance of agriculture and mining to Queensland compared with the rest of Australia is evident in comparisons of gross state product (GSP) and employment.

In 1995-96 Queensland's agricultural sector contributed 4.1% of the State GSP, and employed 5.4% of the labour force. For the rest of Australia, this industry contributed 3.7% to gross domestic product (GDP), and employed 4.2% of the labour force. Mining in Queensland accounted for 5.1% of GSP and 1.6% of employment in this year, while for the rest of Australia mining accounted for only 4.5% of GDP and 1.1% of employment.

In contrast, manufacturing accounted for only 11.9% of GSP and 10.9% of employment in Queensland compared with 15% and 13.6% respectively for the rest of Australia.

Attractions for Visitors

Queensland has a vast area and range of geographic and climatic regions and is known for its outback, lush green rainforests, golden beaches and fresh blue waters. Queensland's coasts and islands offer snorkeling, diving and sailing. The Great Dividing Range separates the sub-tropical rainforest coastal area from the lush hinterland with its many national parks. Further west, Queensland's outback is arid and stark.

Queensland is rich in World Heritage listed areas. One of its major attractions is the Great Barrier Reef, part of the world's largest Marine Park. The Reef, covering an area of 345,000 square kilometres, is the largest of its kind. The many islands of the Whitsundays offer superb boating and coral viewing.

Fraser Island is another World Heritage area, and is the world's largest sand island, covering 163,000 hectares and 124 kilometres. The island combines natural sand blow, coastal heath, mangrove swamps, pristine freshwater lakes, tropical rainforest and sand dunes.

The Wet Tropics area, stretching from Townsville to Cooktown draws many visitors. It comprises some of the world's older rainforests and includes the Greater Daintree, the largest expanse of virgin rainforest in Australia. Other Queensland World Heritage areas include the Scenic Rim National Parks, the largest area of subtropical rainforest in South-East Queensland.

Outback Queensland covers a huge area, allowing visitors to explore national parks, limestone caves, dinosaur footprints and Aboriginal rock art. The Riversleigh Fossil Fields within Lawn Hill National Park in the remote north-west, offers one of the four most significant fossil sites in the world. The mining town of Mount Isa covers 41,255 square kilometres and geographically is the largest city in the world.

Another area of interest to visitors is Queensland's capital city, Brisbane, located on the Brisbane river and close to the waters of Moreton Bay. South Bank, the site of Expo 88, is a major attraction. The Gold Coast, south of Brisbane, offers a 42 kilometre stretch of beaches, resorts, wildlife parks and theme parks, and night time entertainment.

Tourism Overview

Tourism involves a number of sectors, providing benefits to both residents and visitors. This includes:

- transport (airlines, train services, car rentals etc);
- accommodation (hotels, motels, caravan parks, hostels, holiday units etc);
- food services (restaurants, taverns, cafes etc);
- retail activities (travel agents, boutiques, souvenir stores etc); and
- attractions (theme parks, national parks, events etc).

Queensland, its major towns and main highways, are shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Road System in Queensland.

Importance as an Industry

Queensland’s economy relies significantly on the strength of tourism and related services. Tourism in Queensland has expanded rapidly since the 1970s largely due to higher disposable income, better transport, more facilities and attractions for tourists, and promotional campaigns.

Tourism is Queensland’s second largest industry. Queensland Treasury estimates show that tourism expenditure accounted for approximately 7.1% of Gross State Product (GSP) in 1997-98. Exports of tourism, both overseas and interstate, contributed $4.3 billion to the Queensland economy in 1997-98. Exports of tourism overseas were worth $2.24 billion in 1997-98, representing around 10% of all exports in that year. The value of tourism exports can be compared to coal (worth $5.54 billion), sugar (worth $1.75 billion) and meat (worth $1.62 billion).

In 1995, tourism operations directly employed 122,000 Queenslanders, representing approximately 8.5% of the Queensland workforce.

International Visitors to Queensland

In 1997, Queensland received 1.98 million international visitors. This represents an increase of 85% from 1991 (1.07 million visitors). In the year to June 1998, 1.89 million international visitors came to Queensland.

International visitors spent a total of 21.1 million visitor nights in Queensland during 1997. The average length of stay was 10.6 nights.
**Age of Visitors**

The greatest proportion of international visitors to Queensland in 1997, accounting for 28% of the total, were aged 25-34 years. Sixteen per cent of international visitors were aged 35-44, 16% were aged 45-54 and 17% were aged 15-24. Forty-eight per cent of visitors were male (961,408) and 1,022,401 were female.

**Description of Travel Party**

Most of the 1.9 million international visitors to Queensland travelled in the company of others. Sixty-seven per cent travelled accompanied, 35% travelled as an adult couple, 11% travelled as a family group (parents and children) and 18% as friends or relatives travelling together.

**Purpose of Travel**

In 1997, 76% of international visitors travelled to Queensland for the purpose of a holiday. Eleven per cent visited friends and relatives. Only 5% visited the state for a business trip, while the remaining 8% visited for various other reasons.

**Mode of Travel**

In 1996 (latest available data) 40% of international visitors drove a private or company car on Queensland's roads. Fourteen per cent drove a rental car at some stage during their visit. Taxis were used by 56% of all visitors.

**Expenditure**

International visitors staying in Queensland spent an estimated $1.8 billion dollars in 1997. Excluding international airfares, visitors had an estimated average expenditure of $1,468 per trip.

Those staying in commercial accommodation spent, on average, around $181 per day. For these visitors, an average of 26% of expenditure was spent on shopping, 26% on accommodation, 21% on food and beverages, 9% on transport fares, and a further 3% on other incidental expenses.

**Visitor Activities in Queensland**

The major activities of international visitors to Queensland in 1997 were going to the beach (including diving) (49%), going on guided tours or excursions (43%), visiting national parks, bush walking, rainforest walks (41%), and visiting wildlife parks/zooes (36%). Other activities included visiting friends or relatives, visiting botanical and other public gardens, visiting history/heritage sites, and visiting amusement parks.

**Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Tourists**

In this section, information on road use and population trends in Queensland are first provided, followed by crash information on casualties involving overseas drivers. Trends in casualties involving overseas drivers are then considered in the light of trends in overall reported crashes in Queensland and in terms of general population growth, vehicle growth and growth in the number of international visitors.

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*Data was sourced from the Queensland Transport Road Crash Database.*

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<td>2.039</td>
<td>2.172</td>
<td>2.224</td>
<td>2.308</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International visitors (million)</td>
<td>1.425</td>
<td>1.599</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>1.961</td>
<td>1.981</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Comparing the period 1993 to 1997 (the last year for which international visitor data is available), it can be seen that Queensland’s population grew 11%, the number of vehicles on register grew by 20% and the number of international visitors grew by 39%.


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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>2299</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitalised</td>
<td>4052</td>
<td>4600</td>
<td>4636</td>
<td>4480</td>
<td>4146</td>
<td>4349</td>
<td>26263</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medically treated</td>
<td>5876</td>
<td>6205</td>
<td>6692</td>
<td>6834</td>
<td>6478</td>
<td>6214</td>
<td>38299</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor injuries</td>
<td>3131</td>
<td>3587</td>
<td>3932</td>
<td>4131</td>
<td>3928</td>
<td>3937</td>
<td>22646</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Casualties</td>
<td>13455</td>
<td>14814</td>
<td>15716</td>
<td>15830</td>
<td>14913</td>
<td>14779</td>
<td>89507</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Queensland Transport Road Crash Database)

In the period 1993 to 1997, total reported casualties in Queensland grew 11%. This is the same rate of growth as population (see Table 5.1) and less than the rate of growth for vehicles on register. Growth rates for the more severe casualties (fatalities and hospitalised) are lower. It should be noted that in 1998 fatalities dropped further on the figure for 1997.


<table>
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<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitalised</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medically treated</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor injuries</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total casualties</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Queensland Transport Road Crash Database)
The table shows that total overseas driver casualties grew by 34% in the 1993 to 1997 period, slightly less than the 39% growth in international visitors (Table 5.1). Just as for total Queensland casualties, the more severe casualties (fatalities and hospitalised) for overseas drivers grew by less. Casualties requiring hospitalisation grew by 12% and fatalities showed a decrease. Because of the small numbers for fatalities, year-on-year comparisons may be misleading. However when the three-year period 1996 to 1998, which totalled 15 fatalities, is compared with the period 1993 to 1995, where 28 fatalities occurred, it is seen that there is still a 46% reduction in the latter period compared to the former.

Table 5.4 combines the data from Table 5.2 and Table 5.3 such that casualties involving overseas drivers are expressed as a percentage of total reported casualties in Queensland.

Table 5.4: Overseas Driver Casualties as a Percentage of Total Reported Casualties: Queensland, 1993-1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitalised</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medically treated</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor injuries</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total casualties</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Queensland Transport Road Crash Database)

It can be seen that casualties involving overseas drivers represent, on average, some 2.2% of total casualties. The table also shows that comparing 1997 to 1993 the relative contribution of overseas drivers to total casualties has grown by 21%. The equivalent figure for the growth of international visitors relative to total Queensland population can be shown to be 25%, suggesting that there has been either little or no change or a slight improvement in the relative involvement of overseas drivers in casualties as the Queensland road crash situation as a whole has evolved. It should be noted further, that the relative representation of the most severe casualty category, fatalities, has shown a decrease in 1997 compared with 1993 of some 45%.

In conclusion, the foregoing analysis has shown a marked growth in Queensland’s own population and total vehicles on register, and even more marked growth in international visitors over the period 1993 to 1997. There has been some growth in casualties involving overseas drivers over this period but somewhat less than that for growth in international visitors themselves. In particular, there has been a marked decrease in road fatalities involving overseas drivers, more marked than experienced for the Queensland road toll as a whole.

In the next section, a disaggregated view of the overseas driver road crash problem is considered.

Characteristics of Crashes Involving Overseas Drivers

Information used in this analysis is drawn from an assessment of over 30 characteristics of hospitalisation crashes involving overseas drivers for 1997 and 1998. First, major crash characteristics are presented. The results of comparison with all Queensland crashes in 1997 and 1998 are then used to determine
over- and under-represented features. Two years of data in each case are considered to increase the statistical reliability of comparisons.

As for crashes in general, major factors in crashes for overseas drivers in 1997 and 1998 involve cars (83% crashes), and occur at intersections (66%) and in built-up areas (47%). Collision with other vehicles is also a major crash category (59% of crashes).

Over-represented Factors in Crashes

Of the 30 factors reviewed, a geographical characteristic was most over-involved (for geographical analysis, the state is broken down into its eight Police Regions). The Northern and Far Northern Regions are substantially over-represented in crashes involving international drivers, accounting for 38% of such hospitalised crashes compared with only 14% for Queensland crashes in general. This leads to an over-involvement of 170%.

The second most over-involved characteristic concerns seat belts. Only a small proportion of casualties involving overseas drivers (10.4%) fail to wear seat belts. However, this compares with an even smaller figure, of 4.4%, for casualty crashes in general. Hence overseas drivers are over-involved by 130%.

Another vehicle-related factor is also over-involved: motorcyclists represent 6.8% of overseas casualties which compares with 3.4% for casualties in general, an over-involvement of 100%.

Two aspects of Queensland's road environment were also over-involved - a wet road surface is cited as a characteristic in 16.7% of overseas driver crashes. This compares with 7.8% of casualty crashes in general, an over-involvement of 114%.

Similarly, road curves are currently involved in 32% of crashes involving overseas drivers. This compares with 23% for vehicles in general, an over-involvement of 39%.

Under-represented Characteristics

Perhaps surprisingly, in contrast with the higher than average failure to wear a seat belt rate for overseas drivers outlined above, alcohol involvement is under-represented. Only 1.7% of overseas drivers involved in hospitalisation crashes have a reported BAC above .05. This compares with 3.7% for hospitalisation crashes in general, an under-representation of 54%.

The second most major under-representation involves a regional factor. Southern Queensland except South East Queensland - that is, Metropolitan North, Metropolitan South, Southern and North Coast Police Regions - represents 36.2% of overseas driver hospitalisations. This compares with 61% of all hospitalisations in Queensland and is a 40% under-representation. The next most under-represented categories involve age groups. The 60 years and over age group is 32% under-represented and the 0-16 years age group is 27% under-represented.

Crash Characteristics which are Increasing over Time

To assess change in the overseas driver crash problem, the data for hospitalised crashes for 1997 and 1998 involving these drivers was compared with equivalent data for 1992 and 1993.

Results of the comparison show that, for the categories assessed, the greatest proportional increase over the period involved pedestrians. In 1992 and 1993 pedestrians were a small proportion (1.4%) of total reported casualties arising from crashes involving overseas drivers. However, the equivalent figure for the years 1997 and 1998 was 3.4%, still small, but an increase of 143%.
The second most over-represented characteristic was regional. Metropolitan North, one of the regions which shows a smaller proportion of overseas driver crashes per year in 1997 and 1998 (9.4% of the total), displayed the largest increase. Compared with Metropolitan North’s 5.6% figure in 1992 and 1993, the 1997 and 1998 figure of 9.4% represents an increase of 67%.

The third most over-represented feature in this assessment was wet roads. A figure of 16.7% of crashes in 1997 and 1998 compared with that of 12% in 1992 and 1993, indicates a 40% increase.

**Relatively Decreasing Crash Characteristics**

A number of crash characteristics showed relative decreases over the two periods studied. Motorcycles showed the most marked change, from a 14.7% involvement in 1993 to a 6.8% involvement in 1997 and 1998, a 54% decrease. The 100km/hr zone also showed a decrease of some 9%, and the 17-24 years age group showed a decrease of 33%. Decreases in these three factors together may indicate the influence of the speed camera program.

BAC levels greater than .05 also showed a decrease over the periods reviewed. In each period the involvement has been low. The figure in 1992 and 1993 was 2.3%; however this had decreased further to 1.7% in 1997 and 1998, representing a 26% decrease over the period.

Turning to regions, the category showing the greatest decrease was the South East Region. A significant region for the involvement of tourism, the South East Region displayed 24% of the state’s crashes involving overseas vehicles in 1992 and 1993. In 1997 and 1998 this figure had decreased to 17.4%, a 27% decrease.

**Conclusions from Crash Evaluation**

As expected, the foregoing analysis shows that cars, in both open road and 60km/hr environments and involved in two vehicle collisions, are the major factors involved in crashes involving overseas drivers. These major characteristics differ little from that of the general population. Where factors start to differ, however, is in regional distribution. The Northern and Far Northern regions have over twice the overseas driver involvement than they have for hospitalisation crashes in general. Clearly, programs to specifically address overseas driver crashes would need to particularly focus on these regions.

Considering further over-represented factors, a focus on seat belt wearing would seem appropriate, given the 130% over-representation of failure to wear seat belts compared to road users in general. Similarly, while comparison with 1992 and 1993 shows that motorcycle crashes for overseas drivers were down 54%, they still occur at a rate 100% greater than for road users in general. Pedestrians,
although a small (3.4%) component of the total overseas road crash problem, are nonetheless over-represented.

The wet road surface problem is also over-represented, both compared to road users in general and also grown over the period. This may represent increased rainfall in Queensland in recent years compared to the earlier part of this decade. Similarly, road curves are over-involved in overseas driver crashes compared to crashes in general. Further analysis of these road environment issues could lead to improved public information for overseas drivers.

Under-represented features can also provide information of relevance to safety program planning. The under-involvement of the extremes in age groups, the over 60 year olds and the under 16 year olds, may well represent demographics of the travelling public. The decreased involvement of the 17-24 years age group, alcohol involvement and the 100km/hr zones in 1997 and 1998 compared to 1992 and 1993 may indicate the effects of programs operated for the benefit of all Queenslanders, such as Random Breath Testing (RBT) and Speed Cameras.

Finally, the South East Police Region has shown a 27% decrease in 1997 and 1998 compared with 1992 and 1993. This region contains major tourist destinations such as the Gold Coast and Hinterland, and so the crash reduction represents the opportunity for further research as there may be specific programs or approaches conducted in the South East Region which could be adopted more widely.

Road Safety Initiatives

The foregoing sections have shown that, while road crash frequencies for overseas drivers have increased overall, they have done so at a rate lower than total growth in international visitors. The previous section showed that some changes in crash patterns in 1997 and 1998 were consistent with international drivers receiving benefits from existing programs contained in the Queensland Road Safety Action Plan targeted at all road users, such as RBT, Random Road Watch, Speed Cameras and mass-media public information.

It should be noted that these programs have most of their significant effects on fatal crashes. It is notable that the fatal crash rate for international drivers is now some 50% lower than in the early 90s. For this reason it is considered that further development planned for key road safety campaigns in 1999, such as for the Speed Management Program and general public information programs, will continue to benefit international visitors.
Having noted the major effect of these general programs, what are some of the initiatives specifically aimed at visitors to the state, including international visitors? For Queensland Transport these initiatives include:

- a multi-lingual brochure distributed widely to visitor outlets;
- the QT Website (http://www.transport.qld.gov.au) accessible from around the world and containing considerable safety information; and
- the Driver Reviver program consisting of some 30 sites providing rest stops on major Queensland highways during holiday periods.

The Department of Main Roads:

- has provided significantly improved road infrastructure over the last 10 years, improving safety and mobility for both Queenslanders and visitors;
- explicitly considers tourism along with other economic issues in its model for allocating resources for roadworks;
- is currently engaged in a joint study with Tourism Queensland of the implications of current tourism trends for Main Roads;
- carries out a major program providing rest areas on Queensland highways and is providing extensive audible edgelining at high risk fatigue sites. These measures assist both local road users and interstate and international visitors; and
- provides signage on the Queensland highway system harmonised with international standards.

Concerning the Queensland Police Service, as mentioned there are major benefits from ongoing, state-wide enforcement programs, such as Speed Cameras and Random Road Watch. Further major programs are conducted at holiday periods, such as Christmas, Easter and long weekends. These programs significantly influence international visitors. Other motorist and tourist agencies also provide services, particularly information sources for international visitors.

Finally, and most significantly, a bid is currently being made to Queensland Treasury by Queensland Transport for extra funding for a major strategy to assess and address specific road safety risks arising from the 2000 Olympics to be held in Sydney.

Issues to be addressed in the proposed strategy include:

- recognising that strategy is whole-of-government, involving Queensland Transport, Queensland Police Service, Main Roads, local governments and the Department of Tourism, Sport and Racing;
- recognising that risk is pre- and post-Olympics, as well as during, and also includes Interstate 'escapees';
- estimating extra traffic by type and route, recognising differences between urban and rural areas, and noting that the road freight task will also increase;
- communication with/involvement of tourism bodies/operators;
- determining the role of public transport; and
- improving information to visitors from car and bus hire firms.
Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

The following organisations provide road safety information to international visitors in Queensland:

- Tourism Queensland and regional tourist associations;
- Royal Automobile Club of Queensland;
- Queensland Transport;
- Department of Main Roads;
- Rental cars, such as Avis, Hertz and Budget;
- International hotels such as the Sheraton, Hilton, etc;
- Local government information centres such as the Gympie Information Centre; and
- Website (Queensland Transport “Road Safety” visitor link to Tourism Queensland)

Initial further contacts for readers are as follows:

Queensland Transport
Wendy Bullock
Director (Community Programs & Information)
PO Box 673
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006
Phone: (07) 3253 4243
Email: wendy.a.bullock@transport.qld.gov.au
Web site: www.roadsafety.net

Royal Automobile Club of Queensland
Gary Fites
General Manager External Relations
GPO Box 1403
Brisbane Qld 4001
Phone: (07) 3361 2444
Email: gfites@racq.com.au
Web site: www.racq.com.au

Queensland Transport produces road safety information in several languages.
CHAPTER 6

NEW SOUTH WALES

Road Safety Branch
Roads and Traffic Authority*

Introduction

Population and Area

New South Wales (NSW) has an area of 801,428 square kilometres, and a population of approximately 6.3 million. It is a highly urbanised State: 3.8 million, or 60%, of NSW people live in Sydney, which has an area of 12,400 sq km. A further 13% live in regional cities or towns of more than 20,000 people. The NSW population has grown to 6.3 million from 6 million in 1993. There have been only marginal increases in births, and the median age has risen from 32.1 years in 1988 to 35 years in 1998.

In the period 1993-1997, the under-15 population of NSW remained fairly stable. There were declines in the 20-24 and 30-34 age groups but rises in most other demographics (including 25-29), with significant increases in the 35-44 age group. There was a slight fall in the 60-65 age group, but in the same period there have also been gains in all groups over 70.

Major Highways

The main transport routes in NSW are:

- the Pacific Highway, which runs north up the coast from Sydney to the Queensland border;
- the Princes Highway, which runs south from Sydney down the coast to the Victorian border;
- the Newell Highway, which runs north/south through the mid-part of the State, from Tocumwal to Boggabilla;
- the Great Western, Mitchell and Barrier Highways, which combine to take the traveller from Sydney west to Broken Hill, or north west to the Queensland border north of Bourke;
- the Hume Highway, which runs from Sydney south to Albury (then on through Victoria to Melbourne);
- the New England Highway, which runs from Newcastle north to the Queensland border at Tenterfield; and
- the Sturt Highway, which runs from Wagga Wagga west to the Victorian border at Mildura.

* The assistance of Tourism New South Wales in developing this chapter is acknowledged.

International Visitors & Road Safety in Australia

Industries

NSW attracts half Australia's imports and produces around 25% of its exports. Its principal exports are led by coal and related products. These account for 72% of the total value of NSW minerals. Other key exports are sheep and wool and aluminium, while major imports are value-added products such as computers, vehicles and electrical equipment.

About 33% of total Australian manufacturing activity takes place in NSW. The largest manufacturing industries in the State are food/beverages/tobacco, basic metal products, machinery and equipment, chemicals, coal and petroleum products, and paper products (from the raw materials through to printing and publishing).

The service sector represents over 80% of the NSW economy, which is a slightly higher proportion than the Australian average.

Attractions for Visitors

NSW contains the distinctive scenery and leisure activities of several diverse climate zones, from the Snowy Mountains in the south to the wine country of the Hunter Valley, from the tropical rainforests of the north to the dry heat of the western plains. Both within and outside Sydney, beaches up and down the coast are a primary tourist attraction, from Bateman's Bay to Byron Bay and Tweed Heads.

Sydney is overwhelmingly the most popular region in NSW, for its spectacular harbour, the iconic Harbour Bridge and Opera House, and a cosmopolitan culture offering a wide choice of restaurants and entertainment alternatives. In 1997, 97% of overseas tourists to NSW visited Sydney. Its next nearest rival, the Upper North Coast, was visited by 5%. Surveys have shown that two-thirds of Sydney's attractions are in the cultural/educational category; 24% are nature related and only 10% are amusement parks, etc. In 1997, Sydney boasted all 10 of Australia's top 10 tourist attractions [by survey]: Sydney shopping; the Opera House; Darling Harbour; the Rocks; Sydney Harbour Cruises; Sydney Tower; Sydney beaches; Kings Cross; Sydney's Chinatown; and Sydney/NSW zoos, aquariums and sanctuaries.

NSW holds a number of festivals each year, from the Sydney Festival and the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras at the height of summer, through to a number of regional festivals including chamber music at Mittagong at Easter, the Tamworth Country Music Festival, and numerous festivals celebrating high season for the gardens or natural flora of the region.

Sydney and NSW offer a number of opportunities to see and study Aboriginal heritage, in situ in most of the National Parks around Sydney, or preserved in a wide variety of museums and galleries, led by the Art Gallery of NSW and the Australian Museum in Sydney.

Tourism Overview of NSW

In 1995-96, tourism provided around $20 billion for the NSW economy. It is one of the State's fastest growing industries in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

In 1996, the latest year for which employment figures are available, the tourism industry in NSW provided around 240,000 jobs directly and 115,000 indirectly, which is 8.6% of total employment in the State.

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2 Compiled in collaboration with Tourism New South Wales.
The Domestic Tourism Market

This paper concentrates on overseas visitors to NSW. However, it should be noted that while NSW attracts more overseas visitors than any other State, and for longer stays, its domestic tourism market is far larger (26 million visits or 82 million nights in 1997, as opposed to 2.6 million visits or 35 million nights from overseas visitors). It is also worth far more to the economy — in 1995-6 overseas visitors spent $5 billion in NSW but domestic tourists spent $15 billion.

The main form of accommodation used by both types of tourist is staying with friends and relatives. Over 80% of non-business domestic tourists use private (or company) cars as their usual mode of transport.

The International Visitors Market

Numbers

NSW currently attracts around 2.6 million international visitors each year. Figure 6.1 shows annual growth in NSW international visitor numbers, 1993-97.

Figure 6.1: Annual Growth of International Tourists to NSW, 1993-1997 (million).

As the figure shows, growth slowed sharply to 0.6% in 1997, after growth of 8-10% in the preceding years. At the same time, NSW's market share of overseas visitors declined from 64% in 1994 to 60% in 1997, though it was still by far the largest market. Its nearest rival was Queensland with 50% market share.

Forecasts suggest the number of international visitors could climb to 2.8 million by 2000, taking into account the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. It is forecast that the Games will attract an additional 1.5 million visitors between 1998 and 2004, and on average 60% of these tourists will come to NSW, peaking at 87% (or 300,000 additional overseas visitors) in 2000.4

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Length of Stay and Accommodation Type

NSW also attracts the largest number of visitor nights. In 1997, NSW hosted 35% of all international visitor nights in Australia, with Queensland hosting 23% and Victoria 20%. The average length of stay in Australia is 23 days, about 14 of which will be spent in NSW.

Thirty-seven percent of the visitor nights spent in NSW are spent in the homes of friends and relatives (by far the largest accommodation sector used), followed by rented houses/farm accommodation at 26%, with hotels/motels/resorts at 19%.

Country of Origin

In 1997 the highest concentration of overseas visitors to NSW came from non-Japan Asia (29%), with Japan next (21%). In terms of the number of visitor nights spent in NSW, non-Japanese Asian visitors again led (37% of all visitor nights stayed), followed by those from the UK and Europe (30% of nights stayed).

This pattern was disrupted in early 1998 by the Asian economic crisis, which caused spectacular falls in tourism from Thailand, Indonesia and Korea. However, by the end of 1998 the overall decrease in visitors from Asia levelled out at 9%, with Singapore and Thailand each recording positive growth. Visitors from the more mature markets of USA, Canada, UK and Europe increased during 1998.

Age and Sex of Visitors

In 1997, of the 2.6 million overseas visitors to NSW, 51% were male and 49% female. Figure 6.2 shows the dominant age groups. From this it can be seen that, although 25-34 year-olds are the largest single category, people of middle age and older make up the bulk of NSW's international visitors.

Purpose of Travel

In 1997, 62% of international visitors had come to NSW on holiday, and 16% to visit relatives and friends. Only 11% had come on business. Holiday also made up 39% of visitor nights, while business
accounted for only 6%. Forty two percent of overseas visitors to NSW in 1997 were making a return visit.

**Modes of Travel**

Relatively little information is available about the modes of travel most commonly used by overseas visitors within NSW. Between stopovers in Australia, international tourists overwhelmingly travel by plane (32% of visitors), followed by tourist bus, with private or company vehicles used by only 7%. From arrival port to first stopover, the vast majority travel by private or company car (28%), charter bus (24%) or taxi/chauffeur car (18%). In 1997, overseas visitor travel in Australia was about 45% plane, 36% private or company car, 29% tour bus and 26% taxi/chauffeured.

The amount spent on organised tours grew from $168 million in 1993 to $336 million in 1997. In the same period, the amount spent on rental and leased self-drive cars, campervans, etc grew from $189 million to $270 million, showing that while this market is growing healthily, rental cars remain a smaller percentage of the market than the organised tours which were about 28% of international tourist travel in NSW in 1997.

**Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Visitors**

**Characteristics of Crashes Involving Overseas Visitors**

The most obvious point to be made about the involvement of overseas visitors, particularly in fatal and other serious casualty crashes in NSW, is that the numbers are exceptionally small. Trends can only be seen by comparing the data of a number of years, and even over a long period it is hard to be confident of any definitive movement in individual crash characteristics.
Statistics for Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Visitors

Between 1993 and 1997 the growth in overseas visitor numbers was far in excess of the underlying growth in the resident population and the motor vehicle fleet.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Overseas Visitors (m)</th>
<th>Population ('000)</th>
<th>Motor Vehicles Registered ('000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>6,005</td>
<td>3,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>6,060</td>
<td>3,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>6,127</td>
<td>3,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>6,205</td>
<td>3,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>6,273</td>
<td>3,417</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Change from 1993 to 1997:
- Overseas Visitors: 39%
- Population: 4%
- Motor Vehicles Registered: 6%


However, between 1993 and 1997 there were significant decreases in crashes and casualties involving overseas resident controllers. For example, total crashes fell by 32% and related casualties by 25%.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Crashes</th>
<th>Fatal</th>
<th>Serious Injury</th>
<th>Serious Casualty</th>
<th>Other Injury</th>
<th>Non Injury</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>223</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>201</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>209</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% Change from 1993 to 1997:
- Fatal: -31%
- Serious Injury: -30%
- Serious Casualty: -43%
- Other Injury: -27%
- Non Injury: -32%
- Total: -27%

(Source: RTA Traffic Accident Database System)

* Only crashes which involve at least one overseas motor vehicle controller (driver, motorcycle rider) or overseas resident pedestrian or pedal cyclist.

The residence of non controllers is not recorded on the accident database. Hence crashes and casualties involving overseas non controllers are not included in the above. Non controllers include motor vehicle passengers, motorcycle pillion passengers and pedal cycle pillion passengers.

Serious Casualties are the sum of Killed and Admitted to Hospital.
Serious Casualty Crashes are the Sum of Fatal and Serious Injury Crashes.
During the same period there were (more modest) decreases in all recorded crashes and casualties in NSW. Fatal and serious injury crashes reduced by about 4%, with reductions of up to 8% in less serious crashes. The result is that overseas visitors in 1998 made up a slightly smaller proportion of a smaller overall number of NSW crashes and injuries than in 1993 (see Table 6.3).

Overseas visitors do tend to have a greater proportional involvement in more serious crashes, but this involvement is generally no more than 1%, either of total serious casualties or of serious casualty crashes.

Table 6.3: Percentage of all Road Crashes Involving International Residents*, NSW, 1993-1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crashes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Injury</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Casualty</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Injury</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Injury</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casualties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killed</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted to Hospital</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Casualty</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: RTA Traffic Accident Database System)

New South Wales produces road safety information in several languages.
Table 6.4 looks at all controllers (including drivers, motorcyclists, pedal cyclists and pedestrians) involved in crashes in NSW in the years 1993 and 1997, showing how overseas visitors measure up against local controllers and those from interstate.

### Table 6.4: Number of Controllers (Drivers, Riders, Pedestrians) Involved in Crashes; Severity, Residence - 1993 & 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of Crash</th>
<th>Overseas</th>
<th>Interstate</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Injury</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>8,108</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>8,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Casualty</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>8,925</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>9,718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Injury</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>24,721</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>26,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Injury</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1,937</td>
<td>52,010</td>
<td>1,410</td>
<td>55,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>3,439</td>
<td>85,656</td>
<td>2,381</td>
<td>91,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1997</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fatal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Injury</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>6,019</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>6,579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Casualty</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>8,841</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>9,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Injury</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>23,202</td>
<td>1,005</td>
<td>24,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Injury</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1,478</td>
<td>53,044</td>
<td>2,409</td>
<td>57,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>2,468</td>
<td>85,087</td>
<td>3,670</td>
<td>91,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: RTA Traffic Accident Database System)

Between 1993 and 1997, there was a 33% reduction in the number of overseas resident controllers involved in crashes on NSW roads. Table 6.4 shows that in 1997 only 1 in 600 controllers involved in a crash was an overseas resident. For serious casualty crashes, only 1 in 300 controllers involved was an overseas resident.

There is always some room for error in road injury statistics because of the stressful circumstances in which data are collected, but there may be a wider margin of error in the case of international visitors because they have to be identified as such before they will appear in the appropriate data set. It is therefore possible they represent more of the 1.4% increase in the "Unknown" category than other groups. Even if the numbers are not exact, however, they are very small; the trends over time should be reliable; and similar data collection difficulties may be faced in all jurisdictions.
Recent NSW Fatality Statistics Comparable With FORS Monograph 3 - Driving in Unfamiliar Surroundings, International Drivers

This FORS research differs from the RTA Traffic Accident Database information (Tables 6.2 and 6.3) in that it refers only to fatal crashes involving international drivers. It is not clear whether this is identified by their licence status or postcode of residence, but the latter is used in NSW to identify international drivers. The FORS research was undertaken on Australian data from the fatality files for 1988, 1990 and 1992.

NSW fatal crash data from the RTA Traffic Accident Database System was collated for the last six available years, 1993 to 1997. ‘Drivers’ included motorcyle riders but, to match the FORS research, the analysis did not include overseas pedal cyclists or pedestrians.

Some Comments about NSW Data Relevant to the FORS Research

During the six year period, there were 24 fatal crashes in NSW involving at least one overseas driver (0.8% of all fatal crashes). These crashes involved 28 overseas drivers, and resulted in 36 persons killed (1.0% of all fatalities). So fatal crashes involving overseas drivers continue to be rare. Bearing in mind the small numbers, the following observations are made:

- overseas drivers tend to be more elderly: 7 of the 28 drivers were in the over-60 age group, that is 25% compared to 11% for Australian drivers involved in fatal crashes;

- overseas drivers have a similar gender distribution: 20 out of 28, or 71%, were males, cf 78% for Australian drivers;

- overseas drivers tend to have more than one occupant: 22 out of 28, or 79%, had more than one occupant cf 41% for Australian drivers;

- overseas drivers tended to be more likely to be driving four wheel drives: 4 out of 28, 14% were driving a four wheel drive cf 4% for Australian drivers;

- there was a more even mix of fatalities - of the 36 persons killed, 9 (25%) were the overseas driver, 8 (22%) were passengers in the overseas driver’s vehicle, 10 (28%) were passengers in another vehicle and 4 (11%) were drivers of another vehicle;

- crashes involving overseas drivers were more likely to occur in country areas: 21 out of 24, or 88%, occurred in the country, cf 56% for crashes not involving overseas drivers;

- there was a similar incidence of weekend crashes for overseas drivers (33%) as crashes not involving overseas drivers (33%);

- overseas drivers are less likely to be speeding (14% cf 25% of Australian drivers) and under the influence of alcohol (4% cf 14% of Australian drivers);

- the incidence of fatigue for overseas drivers (11%) was similar to Australian drivers (12%);

- because of the relatively small numbers, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that seatbelt usage is lower amongst overseas drivers. Around 11% of overseas drivers were not wearing a restraint cf 19% for Australian drivers; and

International Visitors & Road Safety in Australia

- more than half of fatal crashes involving overseas drivers were head-ons: 13 out of 24, or 54%, compared with 19% of crashes not involving overseas drivers. Rollover crashes were slightly overrepresented: 17% of crashes involving overseas drivers compared with 9% of crashes not involving overseas drivers.

The most recent NSW fatality statistics for 1993-1998 therefore tend to support the findings from the FORS research based on 1988, 1990 and 1992 data. However, the results are based on relatively small numbers and should be treated with due caution.

Characteristics of Overseas Resident Pedestrian Casualties

Table 6.5 details the statistics for pedestrian casualties suffered by overseas residents in NSW over the ten year period 1988 to 1997. Table 6.6 compares these with all pedestrian casualties in NSW over the same period and gives the numbers behind the analysis of crash characteristics which follows Table 6.5.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Killed</th>
<th>Seriously Injured</th>
<th>Other Injured</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>1995</td>
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<td>28</td>
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<td>1996</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-1997</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: RTA Traffic Accident Database System)

Figure 6.3: Pedestrian Casualties - Overseas Residents, NSW, 1988 - 1998

(Source: RTA Traffic Accident Database System)
Table 6.5: Overseas Resident Pedestrian Casualties Versus Total Pedestrian Casualties, 1988-1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Percentages*</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-16</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-25</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-39</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6,485</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>20,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>14,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped Nearside</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>15,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped Emerging</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<td>4,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped far Side</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>8,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ped Playing</td>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3,381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5,413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2,204</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3,227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>3,283</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2,855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawn</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daylight</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>23,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dusk</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darkness</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified road</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>16,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>19,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>35,735</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Figures rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

(Source: RTA Traffic Accident Database System)
There were 200 overseas resident pedestrian casualties over the ten year period 1988 to 1997. Of these, 14 were killed and 45 seriously injured.

The incidence of overseas resident pedestrian casualties is relatively rare, on average only 20 casualties per year. Overseas residents represent only 1 in 180 (0.56%) of total pedestrian casualties. Compared with pedestrian casualty incidence, overseas residents have a slightly higher representation amongst pedestrian fatalities; around 1 in 100 (0.99%) of all pedestrian fatalities are overseas residents. Compared with all pedestrian casualties, an overseas resident pedestrian casualty is more likely to be a young or middle aged adult. Seventy five percent of overseas resident pedestrian casualties are aged 17 to 59 years compared with 50% of all pedestrian casualties.

An overseas resident pedestrian casualty is more likely to be female - 51% of overseas resident pedestrian casualties are female compared with 41% of all pedestrian casualties. An overseas resident pedestrian casualty is more likely to occur in the metropolitan areas (88% of overseas resident pedestrian casualties compared with 81% of all pedestrian casualties) and is more likely to occur on local roads (71% of overseas resident pedestrian casualties compared with 54% of all pedestrian casualties). An overseas resident pedestrian casualty is also more likely to occur during darkness (34% of overseas resident pedestrian casualties compared with 28% of all pedestrian casualties).

An overseas resident pedestrian casualty is more likely to be struck whilst crossing from the far side of the carriageway (30% of overseas resident pedestrian casualties compared with 24% of all pedestrian casualties).

Compared with all pedestrian casualties, overseas resident pedestrian casualties have a similar distribution of casualties by day of week and calendar month.

Please note that these comments do not take into account any differences in risk exposure levels between overseas resident pedestrians and other pedestrians. For example, the relatively high levels of overseas resident pedestrian casualties aged 17 to 59 years may simply reflect the actual levels of pedestrian activity amongst overseas visitors to NSW rather than an increased likelihood of pedestrian trauma. Certainly, overseas visitor numbers tend to be concentrated within this age range (refer Figure 6.3).
Road Safety Initiatives

Because of the relatively low incidence of overseas visitors among fatalities and serious injuries on NSW roads, this has not been a priority area. As the Sydney Olympic Games is occurring in 2000 and is expected to attract many more than the usual number of visitors, however, the RTA is working with the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority (ORTA) to address and distribute key road safety messages for incoming intending road users.

RTA did substantial preliminary work on the issue in 1997. Eight basic messages were developed, covering road users of all classes, and significant work was done on potential outlets, their reach and their pros and cons. This is being used as the starting point for current work.

Broadly, opportunities identified for disseminating road safety information were:

- overseas;
- in transit by air and sea;
- at the airport;
- In transit from air and sea ports and on highways;
- hotels; and
- at tourist and Olympic sites and city information areas.

A large number of individual outlets were assessed. Some of these provide information on road rules and safety tips already, but this is not part of a co-ordinated program. Broadly, the types of outlets considered potentially very useful were:

- certain travel guidebooks which visitors would buy overseas;
- Guide to Sydney/NSW handbooks;
- tourist maps;
- in-flight magazines, videos etc;
- Tourism NSW's "Meet and Greet" and "City Host" services;
- information put out by Australian tourist authorities for the use of overseas travel wholesalers;
- the World Wide Web (WWW);
- key agencies around Sydney (e.g. City Council, ORTA, Darling Harbour Authority) which could form separate points of distribution or work together;
- car rental companies;
- telephone information lines;
- compulsory papers travellers must use to pass through airports;
- billboards/posters/brochures in a range of targeted positions;
- other transport authorities; and
- in the case of the Games, some Olympic sponsors may be useful partners or outlets.

In 1998 Tourism New South Wales developed a video for overseas visitors and RTA assisted with road safety messages.
Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

An interagency project is currently underway to ensure that road safety information for overseas road users is promulgated through a variety of outlets in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic games. However this project has not been finalised and specific outlets have not yet been announced. In the meantime, some general sources of information are:

- Roads and Traffic Authority offices throughout the State provide information on road rules and driving conditions in a range of languages;
- RTA Home Page on the Word Wide Web (www.rta.nsw.gov.au);
- Australian Tourist Commission's Traveller's Tips;
- car rental agencies; and
- Olympic Roads and Transport Authority (messages in development).
Introduction

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is essentially a 'city state', based on Canberra, the federal capital. The ACT has a population of around 310,000 and an area of 235,600 hectares.

The ACT has a transport system which relies primarily on road based vehicles. In December 1998 it had around 227,000 licensed drivers and 216,000 registered vehicles. There are four main highways connecting Canberra to the surrounding region, as shown in Figure 7.1.

Canberra has a good hierarchical road system, low traffic congestion, a generally high level of road design safety, and few high-risk rural roads. However, these advantages often give ACT drivers a false sense of security which can lead to undesirable levels of risk-taking and unsafe driver attitudes and behaviour.1

ACT industry is based mainly in the tertiary sector, particularly government administration, service industries and tourism. National capital attractions are a major part of Canberra's tourist appeal, although recreational and 'ecotourism' opportunities in the local region are an increasingly important market.

Carillon Bell Tower on Lake Burley Griffin.

* This report was prepared by Robin Anderson, Manager, Road Safety.

Tourism Overview

The 1997 Canberra Visitors Survey\(^2\) showed that the city has around 280,000 international visitors each year, which represents about 20% of total visitors. International visits are growing by over 5% a year.

Of the international visitors, 33% came from the United Kingdom (UK) and Ireland; 23% from elsewhere in Europe; 23% from the United States of America (USA) and Canada; 9% from Asia and 8% from New Zealand. These origin shares can however, fluctuate significantly from year to year.

The main reasons international visitors came to Canberra were to visit friends and relatives (29%), holidays (24%) and business (27%). Mode of travel to the ACT was car (45%), coach (28%), air (23%) or train (4%). Less than 5% were on group tours.

International visitors’ gender was close to equal and age distribution was fairly uniform. They stayed an average of 4.4 nights, double the stay of domestic visitors.

Road Trauma Involving International Visitors

International visitors to the ACT can drive on an international licence, or where a reciprocal arrangement exists, on their foreign national licence. If they become a permanent resident, they are required to take out an ACT drivers licence.

There are about 1,000 diplomatic corps licences in the ACT at any one time. Given the small and specialised nature of this group, they have not been considered as international visitors for the purpose of this paper.

Road crash data collected in the ACT provides only limited information on international visitors - namely whether the driver and/or others involved in a fatal or serious crash hold an international drivers licence.

An analysis of such data for the five years 1993 to 1997, showed there were 26 international visitors involved in fatal and serious injury crashes in the ACT - an average of 5.1 persons a year. The international visitor casualties consisted of 12 drivers, 10 passengers and 4 motorcyclists. The majority of these people (50%) were aged between 20 and 30 years. However, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the representativeness of these trends, given the small numbers involved.

Nonetheless, the following general figures are useful in gauging the level of road crash involvement by international visitors to the ACT:

- only 0.02% of international visitors to the ACT were involved in serious crashes (versus 0.09% of domestic visitors);
- they comprised 0.36% of all serious crash casualties in the ACT; and
- the crashes involving international visitors represented 3.9% of serious crashes involving all visitors to the ACT (versus 18% of total visitor numbers - indicating considerable under-representation).

The data confirms that ACT roads are a relatively safe place for international visitors. While there is no data or analysis to specifically explain this low level of crash involvement by international visitors, some possible reasons are:

- many international visitors use low risk air or coach travel;
- they are driven around by locally-based family, friends or business colleagues; and
- the largest origin group (UK and Ireland) would be relatively familiar with the Australian driving environment, if hiring a car.

Road Safety Initiatives

Given the very low level of crash involvement by international visitors, as outlined above, there have not been any ACT programs directed at this group to address specific road safety problems.

However, work is currently taking place in the context of introducing the new uniform Australian Road Rules, to ensure that traffic and tourist road signage is clear, up-to-date and has international standardisation to the greatest degree practicable.
Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

National Roads and Motoring Association (NRMA) offices throughout the ACT and NSW are able to assist international visitors on a wide range of driving matters, especially in regard to motoring holidays. They are also the main agency for the (re)issuing of international drivers licences.

Information on many aspects of car use, driver licencing and road safety needed by international visitors is available from the ACT Motor Vehicle Registry in Dickson and, to a lesser extent, ACT Government Shopfronts and the Canberra Visitors Centre.

Relevant contact information is as follows:

**ACT Government contact on road safety matters:**

Mr Robin Anderson  
Road Safety Manager  
Department of Urban Services  
GPO Box 158  
CANBERRA ACT 2601  
Email: robin_anderson@dpa.act.gov.au  
Phone: (02) 6207 6931  
Fax: (02) 6207 7160

**Driver licencing and road rules:**

ACT Motor Vehicle Registry  
Challis Street  
Dickson ACT 2602  
Phone: (02) 6207 7000

The ACT Government Homepage, which gives access to the ACT Traffic, Learner Driver and Older Driver Handbooks, is at www.act.gov.au.

NRMA Limited, has ACT offices in Canberra City (92 Northbourne Avenue, Braddon) and the Belconnen, Tuggeranong and Woden town centre shopping plazas. Their common phone number is 132 132, from anywhere in the ACT or NSW. The NRMA website is at www.nrma.com.au.
Introduction

Victoria has a population of around four million. Victoria boasts some of the best tourist attractions in Australia with attractions such as the Great Ocean Road, with its magnificent ocean rock formations, the '12 Apostles'. Victoria also features vast mountain ranges, lush green countryside, big rivers and lake systems, long white beaches and arid desert country.

Melbourne itself is a cosmopolitan metropolis with over 4000 restaurants, theatres boasting international productions and a hectic sporting life. There are international sporting events including a tennis grand slam and the Formula One Grand Prix, plus our very own brand of football, Australian Rules.

The calendar also includes numerous festivals of world-repute which attract Australia's best performers plus artists from all over the world. These include the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, the Melbourne Arts Festival and the Melbourne International Jazz Festival. With extensive parks and gardens we are also known as Australia's garden city, showcased each year by the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show.
Tourism Overview

In 1996, 1,041,000 international visitors visited Victoria from the following areas/countries:

Table 8.1: Number of International Visitors to Victoria - 1996.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>International Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia (excluding Japan)</td>
<td>294,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>156,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>124,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>111,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK &amp; Ireland</td>
<td>106,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Tourism Victoria)

The forms of transport utilised by international visitors is detailed in Table 8.2. Note that the percentage adds up to more than 100% as some tourists used more than one form of transport.

Table 8.2: Forms of Transport Used by International Visitors - 1996.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private or company car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long distance coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Tourism Victoria)

Trams and cars on St. Kilda Road, Melbourne.

Photo courtesy of Tourism Victoria
International Visitors

In the Federal Office of Road Safety Report (FORS)\(^1\) of fatal crashes involving international visitors it is reported that 13\% of these crashes occurred in Victoria. This is half the crashes that occur in Queensland (26\%) and New South Wales (25\%).

An analysis of crashes involving car drivers and motorcyclists involved in casually crashes (ie. fatal and injury crashes) in Victoria for the period 1994 to 1998 is shown in Figure 8.1.

**Figure 8.1: Casualty Crashes Involving Drivers and Motorcycle Riders with International Licences in Victoria, 1994 - 1998.**

![Casualty Crashes Involving Drivers and Motorcycle Riders with International Licences in Victoria, 1994 - 1998.](source: VicRoads Road Information Services)

**Table 8.3: Casualty Crashes Involving Drivers and Motorcycle Riders with International Licences in Victoria 1994 - 1998 – Major Types of Crashes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Crash</th>
<th>Number of Crashes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross Traffic at Intersection</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turning Right/Through Traffic</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear End</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Carriageway</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head On</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right Near</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>438</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: VicRoads Road Information Services)

---

### Table 8.4: Serious Casualty Crashes Involving Drivers with International Licences in Victoria 1998 – Age of Drivers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fatal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-29</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Known</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: VicRoads Road Information Services)

### Summary of Crashes

In 1998, there were 130 casualty crashes reported to Victoria Police involving drivers and motorcyclists with international licences, out of a total of over 17,000 casualty crashes reported each year. This represents less than one percent of reported casualty crashes in Victoria.

It should be noted that there could be significant under-reporting of drivers with international licences in the crash data eg. the driver is taken to hospital before the police arrive at the crash scene and his or her licence status is not recorded.

It is also unclear the amount of driving (distance travelled) and the type of driving (rural or urban) undertaken by tourists to gauge whether they are over-involved in crashes (and certain types of crashes such as head on crashes).

Fatigue and unfamiliar road conditions can contribute to overseas driver crashes.  

*Photo courtesy of VicRoads*
Road Safety Initiatives

A number of initiatives are available to international visitors including:

- the VicRoads Internet site contains a large amount of information about safety issues and licensing matters. A new site to be developed in 1999/2000 will specifically target international travellers with a range of road safety information;

- the Victorian Traffic Handbook is available in 11 languages to fully explain road laws and other relevant information;

- the Computer Licence Test to obtain a Victorian Licence is available in 16 languages (for long term visitors);

- motoring organisations such as the RACV distribute a wide range of road safety information to international traveller (RACV also issue international Licences);

- Victoria's existing road safety programs such as publicity, enforcement, on road activities (eg rest stops) would enhance the safety of many international visitors; and

- an investigation will be undertaken to enhance the road safety information available through tourism bodies such as Tourism Victoria.

The Victorian Traffic Handbook contains information on current road laws, and is available from most newsagents. Photo courtesy of VicRoads
Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

Sources of road safety information for international tourists in Victoria are:

The VicRoads Internet Site at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

VicRoads Bookshop

   60 Denmark Street
   Kew, Victoria, 3101
   Telephone: (03) 9854 2782

RACV Public Policy Group

   550 Princes Highway
   Noble Park, Victoria, 3175
   Telephone: (03) 9790 2915
Introduction

Tasmania is an island state with a population of 475,000 people. Its major industries are vegetable and fruit production, seafood production, tourism, and forestry and forestry based products. Tasmania has a range of significant attractions for visitors. The most visited natural areas or other attractions are:

- heritage areas (around the State);
- Hobart Botanical Gardens;
- Cataract Gorge;
- Cradle Mountain;
- Port Arthur Historic Site;
- Sullivans Cove/Salamanca Place;
- West Coast (including Gordon River);
- Stanley; and
- National Parks (including Freycinet).

Tourism Overview

Tourism is a growth industry in Tasmania. Total tourism revenues from interstate, international and intrastate visitors contributed $735 million to the State's economy, representing approximately 10% of Gross State Product (GSP). Tourism employs close to 19,000 people or just over 10% of the State's workforce, compared to the national average of 7%.

Visitor Numbers

Visitor numbers to Tasmania topped the half million visitor mark for the first time in 1997-98. An estimated 501,500 visitors came to Tasmania in 1997-98, a 4% increase on 1996-97. Just over 85% of all visitors were from interstate sources (427,600), the remaining 15% were international visitors (73,900). Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland continue to be Tasmania's primary source of visitors (37%, 23% and 10% of all visitors respectively). The British Isles, Continental Europe and the United States of America (USA) are the main sources of visitors from overseas (each accounting for 3% of all visitors).

Tasmania receives approximately 2% of international visitors to Australia.

---

* This report was prepared by Chris Smyth, Manager Road Safety, with assistance from Mr Frank Hussey, Tourism Tasmania.
* Information supplied by Tourism Tasmania.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Visitor Nights</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Average Stay (Nights)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>18,700</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>158,300</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Isles</td>
<td>16,100</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>241,100</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continental Europe</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>284,500</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia (including Japan)</td>
<td>11,900</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>117,800</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>8,200</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>127,800</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Overseas</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>64,800</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Overseas</strong></td>
<td><strong>73,900</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>994,200</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Tourism Tasmania)

Tourism is a growth industry in Tasmania. Total tourism revenues from interstate, international and intrastate visitors contributed $735 million to the State’s economy, representing approximately 10% of Gross State Product (GSP).
Table 9.2: Main Forms of Transport within Tasmania (All Visitors), 1997-1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport type</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rental vehicle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental car</td>
<td>215,700</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental camper van/motorhome</td>
<td>5,100</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend's/relatives vehicle</td>
<td>99,900</td>
<td>19.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own vehicle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own car</td>
<td>77,900</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own camper van/motorhome</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own motorcycle</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transport</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxis</td>
<td>30,100</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public buses</td>
<td>14,800</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour coach</td>
<td>28,100</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking/hitch-hiking</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Transport</td>
<td>7,700</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>501,500</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Tourism Tasmania)

Coach tours are especially popular among international visitors in Tasmania.

Photo courtesy of Tourism Tasmania
Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Drivers

Road accident statistics for 1993 to 1998 in relation to international drivers are provided in Table 9.3.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>International Drivers Killed</th>
<th>Total Road Users Killed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* year to date figure as at May 1999.

(Source: Road Safety Branch – Traffic Accident Database)

During the period 1993 to 1998 there were 44,375 drivers/riders involved in road accidents in Tasmania. An estimated number of international licence holders in all accidents (1993 to 1998) is 325, or 0.73% of road users. This figure is based on a detailed analysis of licence origins of 1998 drivers involved in accidents.

Road Safety Initiatives

A number of initiatives relating to international visitors have been developed by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources and the Special Road Safety Task Force.

An overview of some of the initiatives include:

- specific road signage on all major highways relating to the use of speed cameras in Tasmania and public education signs regarding the dangers of excessive speed;

- distribution of information to tourists regarding responsible driving on our roads, in particular information relating to:
  - nature of the highways and overall road infrastructure;
  - location of rest stops;
  - involvement of car hire companies in a ‘Your Life is in Your Hands’ campaign.

The information campaign has been utilised in a number of mediums including:

- published in tourist booklets;
- stickers on the driving wheel of ‘hire cars’ and additional information within the hire car;

- the Special Road Safety Task Force has also conducted a number of ‘Driver Reviver’ campaigns (Special Road Safety Task Force) which have been heavily patronised by visitors to the state. The task force has also produced an education card for visitors to the state.
The education card highlights the following areas:

- local road conditions and the need to plan for your journey;
- drink drive advice;
- fatigue.

The education cards are to be distributed by the Department of Primary Industry, Water and Environment staff (Quarantine Officers) to visitors (using cars) disembarking from the Trans Tasman Line.

The Special Road Safety Task Force is investigating other innovative road safety strategies (particularly in conjunction with hire car companies) to maximise the safety of international and interstate visitors.

In addition, a detailed consultant’s report in relation to The Tasmanian Visitor Information System – A Proposal for an Integrated Approach to Visitor Information for Tasmania - has been prepared. Two of the aims for the system are to improve the quality of the visitor experience and for the system to be easily understood by users.

**Road Safety Information Services for International Visitors**

A number of organisations provide road safety information to interstate visitors. The key bodies are:

**Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources**

Division of Transport  
Road Safety Branch – Manager Chris Smyth  
10 Murray Street  
Hobart Tasmania 7000  
Phone: 03 6233 6622  
Fax: 03 6233 6006  
Email: c-smyth@dot.tas.gov.au  
Internet: www.tourism.tas.gov.au

**Tourism Tasmania**

Market and Business Development  
Rowan Sproule, Director  
110 Collin Street Level 14 Trafalgar Centre  
Hobart Tasmania 7000  
Phone: 03 6230 8360  
Fax: 03 6230 8353  
Email: Rowan.Sproule@tourism.tas.gov.au  
Internet: www.tourism.tas.gov.au

**Royal Automobile Club of Tasmania (RACT)**

Corner Murray & Patrick Streets  
Hobart Tasmania 7000  
Phone: 03 6232 6300  
Email: d.ling@RACT.com.au  
Internet: www.RACT.com.au

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Introduction

Geography

South Australia (SA) has a total area of 984,377 square kilometres, representing one-eighth of the Australian continent. More than 50% is pastoral land, with 6.5% of the State designated as national parks and wildlife reserves. Most of the population lives in the southern coastal zone.

South Australia is a land of generally low relief, with the inland area largely covered by plains, sand and gibber deserts. The most important mountains are the Mt Lofty-Flinders Ranges system, which extends north about 800 km from Cape Jervis to the northern end of Lake Torrens. The 2,590 km River Murray, which drains about one-seventh of Australia, enters the sea in South Australia and is the State’s major river.

Climate

South Australia enjoys hot dry summers with relatively mild nights and cool winters, with most rainfall occurring during May to August. Adelaide’s average daily maximum temperature in January is 29°C, and in July is 15°C. South Australia is the driest of the Australian States and Territories. While Adelaide has an average annual rainfall of 585 mm, just over 80% of the State receives an average of less than 250 mm of rain a year.

Population

South Australia’s population of 1.5 million lives mostly along the coast and in the capital city, Adelaide, which has 1,083,000 people, or 73% of the State’s total population. Whyalla (23,380) and Mount Gambier (22,030) are the two largest centres outside Adelaide, followed by Port Augusta (13,910), Port Pirie (13,630) and Gawler (15,480).

Agriculture

Most of South Australia is arid or semi-arid. Despite the climate, the State contributes more than 10% of the gross value of Australian agriculture. Cereal crops of wheat, barley and oats grown for grain comprise 90% of the area sown to crops. Wheat is the main cereal crop, with average yields of 1.4 tonnes a hectare. South Australia grows about 13% of Australia’s wheat and about one-third of its

* This report was prepared under the supervision of John Spencer, Manager, Safety Strategy. The contributions of Fred Tong and Rob Martschink are acknowledged.
barley, including high-quality malting barley. About 42% of Australia’s vineyards are in South Australia and most of the grapes are used for wine making, with a small proportion used for dried fruit.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing forms an important part of South Australia’s economy with the motor vehicle industry the largest single sector. Other major manufacturing industries include electrical appliances and equipment and base and fabricated metal products. The State leads the country in wine and brandy production and is a significant supplier of meat, wood, printing, cement and concrete products, iron and steel, and appliances and electrical equipment.

Road Transport

South Australia has more than 95,000 km of roads, of which about 26,000 km are sealed. More than 2700 km are classified as national highways.

South Australia is a land of generally low relief, with the inland area largely covered by plains, sand and gibber deserts.
Tourism Overview

With its Mediterranean climate, fine food and wines, numerous festivals and events, kilometres of clean sandy beaches and national parks, South Australia is an important holiday destination, particularly for those who enjoy the outdoor life. South Australia is a state of contrasts - rugged outback wilderness, scenic mountain ranges, an extensive coastline, offshore islands and a large, meandering river. Adelaide is a convenient base for touring regions such as the Barossa Valley and Southern Vales wine areas, the southern beaches and the tranquil Adelaide Hills. The Adelaide casino is also a popular tourist destination.

The Adelaide Festival Centre is South Australia’s major performing arts venue and is the focal point for the biennial Adelaide Festival of Arts. The Festival and the accompanying Adelaide Fringe Festival present a three-week program of artists from many countries, drawing attendances of more than 700,000. There are more than 400 other festivals, carnivals, sporting and special events held within the State each year. These include the:

- Adelaide International Three Day Horse Trial;
- Tour Down Under International cycle race;
- Sensational Adelaide 500 car race;
- Bay to Birdwood Car Rally;
- Womadelaide;
- Barossa Vintage Festival;
- Tasting Australia; and
- Australian Festival for Young People.

The State has a unique and well-preserved heritage. Major historical themes include the German settlements of the Barossa Valley and the Adelaide Hills; the Cornish and Welsh settlement of the mining towns of Moonta, Burra and Willunga; and the maritime history of Port Adelaide and Robe. Each year heritage and wine vintage festivals are celebrated throughout the State.

The River Murray is Australia’s longest river that, together with its lakes, is a major asset offering luxury cruise vessels, self-skippered houseboats and recreational pursuits. The Flinders Ranges and northern outback areas are only five hours from Adelaide. The Flinders has some of Australia’s most rugged scenery and traditional outback flavour. The opal mining centre of Coober Pedy is a popular destination for Australian and international tourists. The rugged coastal scenery of the far West Coast, southern Yorke Peninsula and Kangaroo Island provide excellent fishing opportunities and uncrowded beaches.

Australia’s unique wildlife is a feature of Cleland Wildlife Park and Warrawong Sanctuary in the Adelaide Hills, only 30 minutes from Adelaide, and the Flinders Chase National Park on Kangaroo Island. The Coorong National Park in the Upper South East is a unique waterway providing a haven for water birds.

Expenditure

Tourism in South Australia generates $1.9 billion of expenditure annually. Growth in the industry has been conservatively estimated to generate annual increases in income of $40 million per year. Tourism contributed up to 10% of the growth in state employment and Gross State Product (GSP) over the last 10 years. South Australia is ideally positioned with international standard facilities able to cater for the burgeoning convention industry. In 1996, South Australia achieved 17% market share of Australia’s convention industry with over 97,000 delegates to conventions in the State.

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1 Based on data prepared by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade - International Public Affairs Branch. Population figures updated from the Australian Bureau of Statistics - South Australian Year Book 1999. Original material may be viewed at the 'About Australia' web site at http://www.about-australia.com/sa.htm
Employment

Tourism in South Australia directly supports up to 26,500 jobs. This makes it as significant as the automotive sector in direct job creation terms.

Visitors and Visitor Overnight Stays

In South Australia, tourism generates around 4.7 million trips and 22 million visitor nights annually. South Australians travelling in their own State account for around 48% of the nights, visitors from interstate 33% and international visitors 19% of the nights.²

International Tourism

In 1997/98 financial year, South Australia attracted 286,200 international visitors who spent 4.3 million visitor nights here. This was an increase of 10% in visitor numbers and 24% in visitor nights on the previous financial year.

In 1997/98, 7.4% of Australia’s international tourist arrivals visited South Australia, accounting for 4.6% of the total nights spent by international visitors in Australia. Europe, including the United Kingdom (UK), is SA’s main overseas market area, providing over half the State’s International visitors. The United States of America (USA), New Zealand and the regional areas of Asia are also major sources for visitors. Table 10.1 shows details of international visitors in 1997.

Table 10.1: International Visitors to South Australia - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Residence</th>
<th>No. to Australia</th>
<th>No. to SA</th>
<th>% Visited SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1,172,200</td>
<td>33,100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>609,700</td>
<td>24,600</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>386,600</td>
<td>54,600</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>307,400</td>
<td>34,200</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>123,400</td>
<td>31,500</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>60,800</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europe</td>
<td>316,500</td>
<td>62,000</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Countries</td>
<td>202,800</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: South Australian Tourism Commission)³

International visitors to South Australia by places visited in 1997 are shown in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2: Locations Visited by International Visitors - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide Hills</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barossa Valley</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Murray</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kangaroo Island</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coober Pedy</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This column sums to more than 100% because some visitors visited more than one place.

(Source: South Australian Tourism Commission)³

Interstate

During the year ended March 1998, interstate markets generated 1,091,000 visitor trips to South Australia, up 0.4% compared with the year ending March 1997. They spent 7,169,000 nights in South Australia, down 2.2%.

South Australia's share of interstate trips was 6.7% and visitor nights was 7.1%. Victoria and New South Wales are the State's most important interstate markets, providing 38% and 26% of the State's visitor nights respectively.

Intrastate

During the year ended March 1998, South Australians took 3,357,000 trips within their own state, down 5.1% compared with the year ending March 1997. They spent 10,487,000 visitor nights in South Australia, down 0.9%. South Australia's share of national intrastate trips was 6.7% and nights was 6.5%. About 90% of intrastate trips are for less than seven nights duration and the most visited regional destinations are Yorke Peninsula, Fleurieu Peninsula and the River Murray.

Hotels, Motels and Serviced Apartments

In the December quarter 1998, overall demand (room nights occupied) rose 5.4% compared with the national average increase of 4.9%. South Australian occupancy rates were up from 59.9% in the December quarter 1997 to 60.8% in the September quarter 1998. The increase in demand was mainly concentrated in Adelaide (demand up 9.2%). While traditionally the December quarter has been a strong conference quarter, operators cited major events as the 'top of mind' reason for increased business. In the 12 months to December 1998, room nights spent in hotels, motels and serviced apartments in South Australia increased by 4.3% compared to the national average increase of 3.2%.

Overseas Arrivals and Departures

Among international visitors departing between January and December 1998, those who stated that South Australia was the State in which they spent most of their time increased by 3% compared to the same period in 1997. The only other States to record an increase were Victoria up by 2% and Western Australia up by 1%. This compares with a 3% fall nationally.

Tourism in South Australia directly supports up to 26,500 jobs. This makes it as significant as the automotive sector in direct job creation terms.

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Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Visitors

Total Number of Crashes

During the five-year period from 1994 to 1998, there were 202 crashes involving overseas drivers (those with licences issued overseas). Of these crashes, 77% (156) were property damage crashes, 15% (30) involved minor injuries, 6% (12) involved serious injuries and 2% (4) involved fatalities. They represent an average annual total of 40 crashes - 31 property damage, 6 minor, 2 serious and 1 fatal. Table 10.3 shows the actual number of crashes involving overseas drivers since 1994. It shows that crashes involving overseas drivers account for 0.1% of SA total road crashes in the last five years.

Table 10.3: Number of SA Road Crashes Involving Overseas and Local Drivers, 1994 - 1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Crashes</th>
<th>Overseas</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>38,829</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>39,300</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>39,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>38,941</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>38,882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>38,876</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>39,649</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>195,595</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>195,393</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Crash Location)

Each year, on average, there were six (15%) crashes involving overseas drivers in the City of Adelaide, 20 (50%) in the metropolitan area (Rest of Adelaide Statistical Division) and 14 (35%) in the Country. Table 10.4 shows the distribution of these crashes by crash severity. It is noteworthy that all the fatal crashes and the majority, 7 (58%), of the serious crashes were in the Country.

Over the five-year period, 9 of the crashes were in the outback (crashes on unsealed roads in unincorporated areas of northern SA) - 8 in the Far North and 1 in the Whyalla region. Four were property damage, 3 were minor and 2 were serious injury crashes.

Table 10.4: Total Number and Percentage Distributions of SA Road Crashes Involving Overseas Drivers by Crash Location, 1994 - 1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crash Location</th>
<th>Fatal</th>
<th>Serious Injury</th>
<th>Minor Injury</th>
<th>Property Damage</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide City</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of ASD</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Transport SA Road Crash Data Base)
Crash Type\(^5\)

Figure 10.1 shows that in the Country, roll over and hit fixed roadside objects are the most common types of crashes involving overseas drivers.

![Figure 10.1: SA Road Crashes Involving Overseas Drivers by Crash Type, 1994 - 1998](image)

When Do They Occur?

Figure 10.2 shows that a larger number of the crashes occurred in the summer months of February and March.

![Figure 10.2: SA Road Crashes Involving Overseas Drivers by Month, 1994 - 1998](image)

\(^5\) Figures 10.1 - 10.3 were produced for this chapter by Safety Strategy from the Transport SA Road Crash Data Base.
Age-Sex of Overseas Drivers Involved

Figure 10.3 shows that a large number of overseas drivers involved in SA road crashes were young drivers less than 35 years of age. The majority of the overseas drivers were males.

Figure 10.3: Number of Overseas Drivers Involved in SA Road Crashes by Age and Sex, 1994 - 1998.

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Level of Drivers

Of a total of 23 overseas drivers who were injured in crashes during the 1994-1998 period, 10 were tested for BAC level and none were found to be positive.

Road Safety Initiatives

Tourist Safety Initiatives

Road safety initiatives directed at tourists in South Australia predominantly target areas and features of the State, and touring activities, that may expose visitors to increased risk. Given the attraction of South Australia’s outback and desert regions and parks to tourists, and the vast distances to be travelled often in extreme conditions, considerable focus is directed towards road safety and correct travel procedures in these regions. Initiatives considered important in promoting tourist safety include:

- A three-year tourist signposting program in conjunction with local councils, to direct travellers to facilities and emergency services within the locality. The signs use easily recognisable symbols to enable tourists to locate police, ambulance, hospitals and other community facilities.

  Status - The program is currently in its final year.

- The provision of a system of State road network markers on strategic routes linking major regional and tourist centres within the State. The system is designed to complement the existing national highway route marker system.
Status – The metropolitan area has been completed. Rural areas are expected to be completed by the end of the 1999/2000 financial year.

- The establishment of an Outback Safety Working Group to address tourist safety in the outback under the direction of South Australian Tourist Commission (SATC) in conjunction with representatives of Transport SA, SA Police, other Government agencies and community, emergency and commercial organisations.

Following the death of an Austrian tourist in a remote region of the State in 1998, the group was established to identify approaches and strategies to encourage safe and informed travel in the outback and remote areas of South Australia.

Status – Recommendations of the group are currently being developed.

- The installation of large multilingual road signs Warning – Animals on Road at the beginning of 10 unfenced areas of the Stuart Highway in remote northern areas. The signs are in English, German and Japanese, and include a silhouette of a cow and a sheep, indicating unrestrained stock may be encountered on the road.

Status – Complete.

- The Explorer Highway is a joint initiative between South Australia and the Northern Territory to promote the Stuart Highway between Port Augusta and Darwin as a travel experience. It includes the provision of tourist information, innovative facilities and shelter at the border on the Stuart Highway. The site is a guide to the correct travel routes and acts as a tourist navigation tool with the provision of signage, literature and activity packs for children.

Status – Design of the facilities at the Northern Territory/South Australia border has been completed and agreed. Construction under the control of the NT Department of Transport and Works has commenced with expected completion in 1999/2000. This component is jointly funded by the NT Department of Transport and Works, Transport SA and the National Tourism Development Program.

- As part of the Explorer Highway initiative, works will commence this year to upgrade 24 car and truck parking bays between Port Augusta and the Northern Territory border.

Status – Planning and design in progress.

- The provision of information on road use and licensing requirements for tourists. Currently this includes:


  - The South Australian Road Traffic Code, covering the road rules, standard road signs, dealing with hazardous situations, approaching livestock, road accidents, basic first aid and resuscitation, plus other necessary information for road users. This is available on the Transport SA Registration and Licensing internet site provided above.

  - Information on outback roads through the Far Northern Roads Condition Report – describing road conditions, road works, road closures and hazards in rural and remote areas of the state. Additional information includes travel tips and other sources for outback and metropolitan areas information. The service is available through an interactive Transport SA Internet
The provision of driver information literature including smart cards on driver fatigue, *Drowsy Drivers Die*, and a pamphlet on *Country Driving Hints*. These are available through tourist agencies, hire car outlets and various accommodation providers.

Status – Complete.

• As part of South Australia’s commitment to the promotion of cycling, incorporated within the Cycling Strategy for South Australia are the following specific strategies targeting tourists:

  - To enhance the well being of road users through access to enjoyable cycling in safe conditions, and also to encourage the South Australian tourism industry to recognise and act on the potential for development through recreational cycling.

  - Ensure that the way in which future cycling information is marketed will ensure that safety information is included on a range of subjects including road rules, and touring tips.

  - Equip arterial roads which have adequate available space with cycle lanes.

  - Provide a metropolitan and statewide cycle route, including rural towns as part of an integrated system that enables direct, efficient and safe travel – and links with local and long distance passenger transport nodes.

  - Consider cycling in all national highway projects.

  - Provide dedicated cycling trails catering for tourists.

Status – The Cycling Strategy for South Australia was released in 1996. Since then, strategies have been implemented, including the establishment of an extensive network of cycling routes throughout the metropolitan area and in major country towns. The establishment of dedicated cycling trails through rural tourist areas (the Riesling and Mawson Trails), as well as the metropolitan region (the Linear Park Trail) and the distribution of cycling maps and information through airports, and travel and bike hire centres have been implemented.

Other Safety Initiatives

These include general improvements to the State road network that also provide tangible safety benefits to tourists. Initiatives include:

• Installation of an emergency Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) airstrip on the Stuart Highway with a further four planned in total on the Stuart and Eyre Highways – these potentially save valuable hours in terms of retrieval times for crash victims.

• Completion of the construction and sealing of all unsealed rural arterial roads by 2004.

• Funding of annual programs for the following:
  - overtaking lanes;
  - shoulder sealing;
  - audible edgeline treatment;
  - raised pavement markers;
  - crash barriers.
- Development of a statewide strategy for upgrading and rationalising roadside rest areas and truck stops to assist in combating driver fatigue. Commencement of a program to upgrade the existing network.

- The provision of education programs targeting drink driving, speeding, seat belt wearing and driver fatigue.

Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

Bicycle SA
Address: State Association House, 1 Sturt Street, Adelaide, SA 5000
Postal: 1 Sturt Street, Adelaide, SA 5000
Phone: (08) 8410 1406
Fax: (08) 8410 1455
Internet: http://www.bikesa.asn.au/
E-mail: office@bikesa.asn.au

Royal Automobile Association of SA Inc
Address: 41 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide, SA 5000
Postal: 41 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide, SA 5000
Phone: (08) 8202 4600
Fax: (08) 8202 4520
Internet: http://www.raa.net/index-fat.html

South Australia Police
Address: 30 Flinders Street, Adelaide, SA 5000
Postal: GPO Box 1539, Adelaide, SA 5001
Phone: (08) 8207 5000
Fax: (08) 8207 4525

South Australian Tourism Commission
Address: 50 Grenfell Street, Adelaide, SA 5000
Phone: 1300 366 770
Fax: (08) 8303 2231
Internet: http://www.visit-southaustralia.com.au
E-mail: contact-us.visit-southaustralia@saugov.sa.gov.au

Transport SA
Address: 33–37 Warwick Street, Walkerville, SA 5081
Postal: PO Box 1, Walkerville, SA 5081
Phone: 1300 360 067
Fax: (08) 8343 2585
E-mail: enquiries@transport.sa.gov.au
CHAPTER 11

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Introduction

Environment

Western Australia (WA) occupies the entire western third of the country (2.5 million square kilometres) bordered by the Indian Ocean to the west, South Australia and the Northern Territory to the east, the Timor Sea to the north, and the Southern Ocean to the south. The state extends 1621 km east-west and 2391 km north-south.

It has a small fertile coastal strip in the south-west corner, but it gets drier and more barren the farther north and east you go. Much of the state is composed of the Great Sandy, Gibson and Great Victoria deserts and the Nullarbor Plain - a very inhospitable region running from the Great Australian Bight to the Timor Sea. The wild and rugged Kimberley is in the extreme north of the state.

Western Australia has a variety of climates. The tropical north has hot, sticky, wet summers and warm dry winters. From May to November, the nights are mostly cool and crisp and the days are sunny with blue skies. Desert areas have hot, dry summers and mild, dry winters. The Mediterranean climate of the south has hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters.

Western Australia's population is approximately 1.8 million. Despite being a very multicultural state, over 68% of Western Australia's population were born in Australia. Western Australia's major exports are iron ore, gold bullion, petroleum and petroleum products, wheat and wool. Over 10% of Australia's workforce is employed in Western Australia - most in the wholesale and retail trade, finance, insurance, property, business industries and tourism. Western Australia is made up of eleven regions - each one offering a distinct range of travel experiences and attractions.

Kimberley - The tropical north of WA renowned for its spectacular outback wilderness. Red earth contrasting with pristine white, sandy beaches, vast gorges and majestic waterfalls.

Pilbara - A region in the north of the State that evokes the spirit of adventure. The gorge country is two billion years in the making.

* This report was prepared by Nina Lyhne, Acting Executive Director, Office of Road Safety. Contributions by colleagues are acknowledged.
Gascoyne - Some of Australia's premier soft adventure and eco-tourism experiences can be found here. The Shark Bay World Heritage area and Ningaloo Marine Park are world-famous natural attractions.

Mid West - A region providing visitors the contrast of outback and ocean experiences - Western Australia’s premier wildflower region.

Goldfields - To the east of Perth, a region steeped in the history of WA gold mining with grand Australian architecture and a rich heritage of early settlement.

Perth - Western Australia’s capital, renowned for its warm, sunny climate, pristine coastline and relaxed lifestyle. Only minutes away are beaches, vineyards, hills, an historic port city and an island.

Peel - Just a short drive south from Perth, a region abundant with first-class golfing facilities, white-water rafting, majestic forests, fishing and surfing.

Heartlands - Offering a relaxed country lifestyle experience mixed with the unique and the unusual such as the famous Pinnacles and Wave Rock - all a comfortable drive from Perth.

South West - Rich in natural and man-made attractions where good living is a way of life. The famous Margaret River wine region nestles amongst some of WA’s most spectacular natural scenic attractions with vast forests and a rugged coastline to explore.

Great Southern - The State’s most southerly region where spectacular natural scenery abounds.

Esperance - Where some of Australia’s most spectacular coastal scenery, beaches, islands and magnificent national parks can be found - one of Western Australia’s fastest growing tourist destinations.

Figure 11.1: Map of Western Australia
Tourism Overview

Tourism is Western Australia's fastest growing industry. Most tourists visiting Western Australia by air come from the United Kingdom and Ireland, Singapore, Indonesia, Japan and New Zealand.³

Expenditure

Total expenditure by all visitors in the 12 months to March 1998 amounted to $2.1 billion, up by 3.7% on the 12 months to March 1997.

Table 11.1: Visitor Trends (Number of Visitors) - Western Australia, 1994/95 - 1997/98

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrastate</td>
<td>4,114,000</td>
<td>5,279,000</td>
<td>5,274,000</td>
<td>5,748,000*</td>
<td>11.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>568,000</td>
<td>594,000</td>
<td>508,000</td>
<td>546,000*</td>
<td>3.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>495,000</td>
<td>515,000</td>
<td>555,000</td>
<td>579,000*</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,177,000</td>
<td>6,388,000</td>
<td>6,337,000</td>
<td>6,873,000*</td>
<td>9.7*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sources: International visitors; WATC estimate based on Australian Bureau of Statistics; Tourism Information data used from Websites: Lonely Planet -- Destination Western Australia & Discover Western Australia at www.westernaustralia.net/fast_facts/stats/ index.shtml)

International data: Includes US Navy personnel
Domestic data: Intrastate and interstate visitor trips only include those aged 14 years and over

*No actual data is available for 1997/98 as the Domestic Tourism Monitor was terminated at the end of March 1998. Estimates provided in 1997/98 are for the 12 months to March 1998.
**Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Visitors**

In Western Australia 1% of drivers involved in police reported crashes resulting in a fatality, serious injury or minor injury have an international drivers licence. In absolute terms this represents 595 drivers over the four year period – 1995 to 1998.

**Table 11.2: State of Issue of Driver's Licence Involved in Traffic Crashes by Severity of a Crash, 1995-1998.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>State of Issue</th>
<th>Fatal</th>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Medical</th>
<th>Non-Medical</th>
<th>PDO*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>2573</td>
<td>7790</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>29014</td>
<td>41467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>2663</td>
<td>7983</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>29868</td>
<td>42668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>2742</td>
<td>11149</td>
<td>2729</td>
<td>38857</td>
<td>55754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>776</td>
<td>1090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>31</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>530</td>
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<td>2844</td>
<td>11445</td>
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<td>40060</td>
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<td>1997</td>
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<td>212</td>
<td>3086</td>
<td>10790</td>
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<td>Interstate</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>1115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>International</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>3207</td>
<td>11090</td>
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<td>38961</td>
<td>56371</td>
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<td>247</td>
<td>3114</td>
<td>10737</td>
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<td>39330</td>
<td>56304</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>1104</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td></td>
<td>International</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>601</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>3219</td>
<td>11032</td>
<td>2970</td>
<td>40616</td>
<td>58091</td>
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<td>1995-98</td>
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<td>928</td>
<td>11515</td>
<td>40486</td>
<td>10318</td>
<td>144951</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interstate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>2943</td>
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<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1440</td>
<td>2054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>11933</td>
<td>41550</td>
<td>10621</td>
<td>149505</td>
<td>214563</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Property Damage only*  
(Source: Main Roads Western Australia)

It should be noted that the statistics presented in Table 11.2 represent the number of drivers involved in crashes, rather than the number of crashes, i.e. one or more drivers may be involved in a single crash. In addition, prior to 1995 the state of issue of drivers license was not recorded in Western Australia.

International visitors represent those identified above as holding a New Zealand or international drivers licence. Serious injury and minor injury crashes are identified as "Hospital" and "Medical" crashes in Table 11.2.
Road Safety Initiatives

Road Safety initiatives targeting international visitors currently in place in Western Australia involve the provision of road safety information to visitors. A map with road safety advice is distributed widely throughout the state. Information is provided in 8 languages. Car hire companies distribute brochures relating to road rules and general road safety to visitors. Some car hire companies have videos that they make available to visitors.

A number of new initiatives are currently being developed. It is generally recognised that in a state as diverse as Western Australia road safety messages will need to be regionally based. RoadWise committees are developing regionally based education and communication strategies to target international visitors to their region. Work is underway to develop a video which will provide a regionally appropriate road safety messages for visitors to the Kimberley region.

Discussions are currently under way with the Western Australia Tourism Commission to include road safety messages on their website. This is likely to be one of the most effective way of communicating road safety messages to this target group.

Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

Office of Road Safety

Address: Ground Floor, 441 Murray Street, Perth, WA, 6000
Postal: PO Box 7272, Cloisters Square, Perth, WA, 6850
Phone: 08 9320 9508
Fax: 08 9320 9507
Email: pbeard@transport.wa.gov.au
Internet: www.transport.wa.gov.au/roadsafety

Royal Automobile Club of WA

Address: 228 Adelaide Terrace, Perth, WA, 6000
Postal: GPO Box C140, Perth, WA, 6839
Phone: 08 9421 444
Fax: 08 9221 2708
Internet: www.rac.com.au

Police Road Safety Section

Address: 57 Lincoln Street, Highgate, WA, 6003
Phone: 08 9227 6727
Fax: 08 9227 7109
Email: pd802410@wapol.gov.au
International Visitors & Road Safety in Australia

Western Australian Tourism Commission

Address: WA Tourist Centre, Albert Facey House, Forrest Place, WA, 6000
Postal: GP Box W2081, Perth, WA, 6001
Phone: 1300 361 351
Fax: 08 9481 0190
Email: travel@tourism.wa.gov.au
Internet: www.westernaustralia.net

Bikewest

Address: Ground Floor, 441 Murray Street, Perth, WA, 6000
Postal: PO Box 7272, Cloisters Square, Perth, WA, 6850
Phone: 08 9320 9320
Fax: 08 9320 9315
Email: bikewest@transport

Transport Licensing Call Centre

Phone: 131 156
Introduction

Overview

The Northern Territory (commonly referred to in this chapter as the Territory or NT) has a land area of 1.35 million square kilometres, with a population of 190,000 people. Over 27% of the population are Aboriginal people.

The road network is 20,000 km long, of which 6,000 km is sealed.

Figure 12.1: Road Network in the Northern Territory

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*This report was prepared by Andris Bergs (Manager) and Pam Palmer (Research Officer), Road Safety Section.*
Population Centres

Most of the major population and administrative centres are on the Stuart Highway which bisects the Territory from north to south. Darwin is situated on the north coast and has a resident population of 86,000; Katherine, 310 km south along the Stuart Highway has a resident population of 10,000; Tennant Creek, a further 670 km south, has a population of 5,500; and Alice Springs, yet another 500 km south, has 25,500 people. The South Australian border is 280 km south of Alice Springs. The town of Jabiru, which is located in Kakadu National Park and is situated 250 km east of Darwin along the Arnhem Highway has 1,500 residents. Yulara, the service centre for the Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park is 440 km south west of Alice Springs along the Lasseter Highway.

Transport Routes

The two other major highways are the Victoria Highway from Katherine into Western Australia and the Barkly Highway from just north of Tennant Creek into Queensland. The railroad from the south terminates in Alice Springs. Proposals are presently being considered for the extension of this line to Darwin.

Airlines service the major centres and many of the smaller and more remote communities. Darwin has an international airport and the major airlines also provide direct interstate links with Alice Springs, Yulara and Nhulunbuy.

Visitors Overview

In 1997/98 the Northern Territory had a total of 1,161 million visitors, of whom 372,000 were international visitors and 495,000 were from interstate. The remaining 293,000 were intra-Territory travellers. The total number of visitor nights in 1997/98 was 6.43 million. This was comprised of 0.946 million from intra-Territory travellers, 3.784 million from interstate visitors, and 1.682 million from international visitors.

The 372,000 international visitors mostly came from: United Kingdom (UK)/Ireland, Germany, other European countries, North America, Japan, and New Zealand.

The domestic travellers were from:

- Intra-Territory 38%;
- New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory 17%;
- Victoria / Tasmania 16%;
- Queensland 11%;
- South Australia 11%; and
- Western Australia 7%.

Tourism Details

Importance of the Tourism Industry In the Northern Territory

Tourism is a major industry in the Northern Territory economy. The industry contributes more to the Territory economy than in any other State or Territory (see Table 12.1), in 1995/96 contributing 6.6% of the Gross State Product (GSP).

Using the production based method of calculating GSP, the Territory tourism industry employed 8.7% of employed persons compared to 7.2% nationally (1995/96).

---

Table 12.1: Contribution to Gross State Product (GSP) of Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants, and Cultural and Recreational Services - 1995/96.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>% of GSP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 12.2: Gross State Product by Industry Type for the Northern Territory - 1995/96

Visitor Numbers

In 1997/98 the Northern Territory had a total of 1,161,000 visitors – a decline of 11% overall. This decline in visitor numbers was largely offset by an increase in the average length of stay. The number of international visitors increased slightly (+1%) to 372,000. However, the increased length of stay meant international visitor nights increased by 14%.
Of the total number of visitors 293,000 were intra-Territory visitors, 495,000 were from interstate and 372,000 from overseas (see Figure 12.3).

**Figure 12.3: Total Visitor Numbers by Usual Place of Residence - 1997/98.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/Region</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asia</td>
<td>13,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA/Canada</td>
<td>52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK/Ireland</td>
<td>94,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Europe</td>
<td>72,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total International Visitors</strong></td>
<td><strong>372,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12.4: International Visitors by Usual Place of Residence (%)

- New Zealand 4%
- Japan 12%
- Other 5%
- Other Europe 19%
- Other Asia 3%
- USA/Canada 14%
- Germany 17%
- UK/Ireland 26%


The regions of Europe, UK/Ireland and North America accounted for 76% of all international visitors to the NT.

In 1997/98 the proportion of visitors from Japan dropped dramatically to a low of 12% from 21%, whilst there was an increase in the number of visitors from UK/Ireland from 23% to 26%.

Tourist Expenditure

During 1997/98, visitors spent some $701.8 million in the Northern Territory on accommodation, tours, food, souvenirs and other goods and services. International tourists spent $243.0 million – an increase of 10% on the previous financial year.

Territory Tourism Market

The Territory tourism industry continues to have distinct peak and off peak seasons. The peak season coincides with the ‘dry season’ in the Top End, particularly July to September, this extends to October in the Centre.

An obstacle to tourism in the Territory is the significant distance between tourist attractions and population centres within the Territory. In order to alleviate this problem, three Tourism Drives are currently being developed through the NT as part of the Tourism Drive Market Strategy:

- Explorer Highway Tourism Drive from the Southern Ocean to the Arafura Sea;
- Nature’s Way through the Mary River Wetlands and Kakadu; and
- Pioneers’ Path linking Uluru, Kings Canyon and the Mereenie Loop Road.

Information stands are being installed along these Drives providing visitors with information about the regions, as well as maps showing Heritage and 4X4 trails and visitors facilities.
Tourist Destinations

National parks continue as key attractions for tourists in the Territory, particularly Uluru-Kata Tjuta (Ayers Rock - The Olgas), Watarrka (Kings Canyon), Kakadu, Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge), and Litchfield National Park. The Desert Park near Alice Springs and Territory Wildlife Park near Darwin also attract many visitors. The most popular destination for international tourists in 1997/98 was Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

Two-thirds of international visitors visited the Centre region, whilst a much lower proportion of international visitors visited the Katherine and Tennant Creek regions.

Figure 12.5: International Visitor Numbers by Region - 1997/98

Length of Stay

The average length of stay for international visitors in the Territory in 1997/98 was 5.5 days. This varied from region to region, with the longest average stay being in the Top End region (6.3 days).

Age and Sex

The largest proportion of international visitors is in the 25-34 year age group, although a significant proportion of international visitors are also in the 18-24 and 55+ age groups (see Figure 12.6). There is an even ratio of males and females in the NT international tourism market.

Figure 12.6: Age of International Visitors - 1997/98.
Accommodation

In 1997/98, over half (55%) of all international visitors stayed in hotels or motels.

The backpacker market is significant in the NT Tourism industry, with 30% of international visitors travelling as 'backpackers', compared to only 2% of domestic travellers. Just under half of the tourists travelling as backpackers were from UK/Ireland.

Over half of the interstate and international visitors who drove to the NT stayed in caravan parks (51%), and a significant proportion of self-drive tourists (23%) stayed in hotels and motels.

Transport

Most international visitors entered the Territory by air (70%), with 14% arriving by coach/express.

Once within the Territory the most common means of travel for international visitors was tour coach (43%), followed by self-drive vehicles (32%). The use of air travel as a means of transport once within the Territory declined in 1997/98 to 9% (down from 13%). Air travel within the NT is more common with international visitors, compared to domestic visitors (see Figure 12.7).

The majority of tourists entering the Territory by air arrived at Darwin airport, although a higher proportion of international visitors arrives at the Yulara Airport than at any other. For tourists entering the Territory by road, the most popular road of entry was the Stuart Highway from South Australia (54%), followed by the Barkly Highway from Queensland (28%), and the Victoria Highway (11%).

Figure 12.7: Main Transport Used by International Tourists Within the Northern Territory - 1997/98.

Road Accidents and Trauma Involving International Visitors

General Overview

Between 1993 and 1997 the rate of road crash fatalities in NT per 100,000 population ranged from 24 to 40. During this same period the rate of road crash injuries (excluding fatalities) per 100,000 population ranged from 606 to 667. In both areas these were the highest of any jurisdiction in Australia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fatal Crashes</th>
<th>Injury Crashes</th>
<th>Non-injury Crashes</th>
<th>Total Crashes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>1462</td>
<td>2301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>1669</td>
<td>2517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>2723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>2671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>1543</td>
<td>2390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Northern Territory Vehicle Accident Database, Department of Transport and Works)

In 1997 the two major categories of crashes in the NT were angle and rear end collisions. These 1,085 crashes together accounted for over 45% of all crashes. However, the majority of these did not result in any injury.

While only 293 (12.3% of all crashes) were overturns, the majority of these (199) resulted in an injury or a fatality as shown in Table 12.4. These crashes are particularly severe because they usually occurred at higher speeds, in more remote areas, and where vehicle occupants frequently did not use available seat belts.

Table 12.4: Northern Territory Types of Crashes Which Resulted in Injury - 1997.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crash type</th>
<th>Fatal No.</th>
<th>Injury No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overturn (Single Vehicle Rollover)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck object</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck animal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without colliding</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angle collision</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear end</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head on</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side swipe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hit parked vehicle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>791</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Northern Territory Vehicle Accident Database, Department of Transport and Works)

In 1997 Aboriginal people represented 27.3% of the NT population and were significantly over-represented in road fatalities - 45% of all those killed (53% of NT residents killed) and 23% of those injured (25% of NT residents injured). Of the 27 Aboriginal people killed in that year, 13 were pedestrians while the remaining 14 were either drivers or passengers. Pedestrian behaviour in and around urban areas (as well as in remote locations) continues to be a major problem in the NT.

Visitor Involvement in Road Crashes

All road crashes which are reported to NT police are recorded in the NT's Vehicle Accident Data Base. Information on place of residency is included amongst the range of data on the where, when, what, why and consequences of the crash event. Table 12.5 details the severity of injury suffered by people involved in crashes in the NT from 1993 to 1998 against their usual place of residency.
Table 12.5: Severity of Crashes - Persons Injured by Residency 1993 - 1998.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Severity</th>
<th>Overseas</th>
<th>Interstate</th>
<th>N.T.</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Admitted</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Not Admitted</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injured Not Treated</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>1027</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Admitted</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Not Admitted</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injured Not Treated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>953</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Admitted</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Not Admitted</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injured Not Treated</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1021</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Admitted</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Not Admitted</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injured Not Treated</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Admitted</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Not Admitted</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injured Not Treated</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Admitted</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Treated Not Admitted</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Injured Not Treated</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Northern Territory Vehicle Accident Database, Department of Transport and Works)

Over the past six years (1993 to end 1998) there were 445 international visitors reported as being injured on NT roads, representing 5.9% of all casualties. There were 33 international visitor deaths, representing 9.5% of total fatalities.

The countries/areas which recorded the largest number of people suffering serious injuries in road crashes were the USA/Canada, Germany, UK/Ireland/Scotland, and Japan. This is broadly consistent with their contribution to visitor numbers in the NT.

Northern Territory Road Safety Initiatives

NT Road Safety Strategy and Co-ordination

The Northern Territory's Road Safety Strategy provides a framework for the development and delivery of integrated programs to reduce the level and severity of road trauma. This strategy covers all aspects
of road safety including road users, vehicles, road environment, trauma management and co-ordination of efforts by government, community and industry agencies.

Key government agencies involved in road safety include – the Department of Transport and Works; Police; NT Tourist Commission (NTTC); NT Health Services; and the Territory Insurance Office. Community and industry agencies implement their own road safety programs or link in with these bodies. The principal advisory body to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Development (who has overall carriage of road safety policy development) is the Road Safety Council of the Northern Territory. Visitor road safety has been identified as a priority problem — this includes both interstate and international visitors.

Road Safety Challenges for Visitors to the Northern Territory

The major road safety issues for visitors to the Northern Territory, often in common with local road users, are fatigue, excessive speed, non-compliance with seat belt regulations and alcohol. The distinctive characteristics of remote roads present additional hazards to tourists, and particularly international tourists, in the Northern Territory — problems which may also be experienced in the remote areas of other Australian jurisdictions.

Some of the particular road safety 'hazards' which tourists can face on Territory roads include:

- little appreciation of the long distances between major centres and tourist attractions and the time required to travel there safely - resulting in inadequate planning of journeys with infrequent rest breaks leading to driver fatigue;

- need to keep on the left hand side of the road (and always remaining aware of the direction of oncoming vehicles);

- driving in an unfamiliar environment - heat, glare, very heavy rain, variable road surfaces (unsealed, corrugated, flooded or dusty roads);

- no posted speed limit with low level police enforcement on remote roads;

- ignorance of, or non compliance with, seat belt laws;

- livestock and other animals on the road;

- driving unfamiliar (and sometimes inappropriate) types of vehicles such as four wheel drives, and at speeds which are excessive for the road conditions or beyond the competence of the driver; and

- lack of familiarity with the types of vehicles which share the highways such as road trains (which can be up to 53.5 metres in length and travelling at speeds of up to 100 km/h) or other vehicles travelling at considerably slower speeds.

The rental vehicle industry and other sectors of the tourist industry report that an unacceptable number of international travellers arrive in Darwin or Alice Springs and, after flying for a number of hours, plan to pick up their rental car (or 4x4) and travel directly to a distant attraction such as Kakadu or Uluru (3 to 4 hour drives).

This can be a recipe for disaster. They may already be fatigued and dehydrated, they may not know...
how to handle their chosen vehicle, they may not take notice of seat belt laws, nor the hazards which might be encountered on the road, and they may not plan rest stops. Their focus is on getting to the attraction, not on how they will travel. Too often the outcome is a single vehicle roll over – either because the vehicle drifted off the road onto the gravel shoulder (driver fatigue) and the driver over-reacted or because the driver swerved to avoid a minor obstacle or small animal, in both cases putting the vehicle into an uncontrollable slide resulting in a roll.

Visitor Programs

Many of the Territory’s road safety programs - which aim to reduce hazards experienced by travellers or which specifically encourage safer behaviours by visitors - have been developed by various agencies under the umbrella of the NTTC’s ‘Tourism Drive Market Strategy’, or they complement it.

The Road Safety Council of the NT (RSC) also plays a major role in initiating programs particularly targeted for interstate and overseas visitors. Specific projects which have been developed to improve the safety of visitors and other long-distance travellers include the following.

Tourism Drive Strategy

As outlined above, this NTTC strategy is presently promoting three regions of the Territory, around major transport routes. This is one of the major collaborative projects developed by the NTTC, the Department of Transport and Works, the RSC and industry groups.

This is an integrated program that informs travellers about the unique attractions, history, economy and environment of the regions and provides advice on safer travel. Information is distributed by the Regional Tourist Associations, at Wayside Inns (Roadhouses), at selected Roadside Rest Areas (10 sites along the Stuart Highway from Darwin to South of Alice Springs) and at visitor centres. One major road safety benefit is that visitors become more aware of distances and times involved in a journey and see the travelling as an important part of the experience, not solely the destination. The more frequent stops serve to reduce fatigue. Information of local conditions and laws also encourages safer behaviour.

4WD travel in the Northern Territory.

Photo courtesy of Jon Hedges
Roadside Rest Areas

Roadside Rest Areas are an integral element of the Tourism Drive strategy – as places where people can rest and as sites for the provision of information to travellers. The Department of Transport and Works is presently consulting with various groups as it develops a rest areas policy which considers where they should be located and the facilities which could be provided at these sites (shade, dust suppression, landscaping, water etc). Tourist information stands will also be provided at selected locations.

One special site will be developed at the NT/SA border where numerous travellers stop for ‘photo opportunities’. Signage will cover the broad range of NT road rules (and traffic enforcement strategies – Random Breath Testing; Red Light and Speed Cameras, etc) as well as provide some road safety hints.

Visitor Quiz

The NTTC, RSC and their South Australian counterparts have developed a quiz which also encourages tourists to stop regularly at the major centres, Wayside Inns and tourist information stops to complete the quiz questions. The quiz covers the Explorer Highway (Stuart Highway) which runs from Port Augusta (South Australia) through to Darwin. Anecdotal reports indicate that this quiz has been very well received by visitors which enhances their enjoyment of the journey and is an effective tool to combat driver fatigue. The NTTC is presently redesigning and enhancing the booklet before it is reprinted.

"The Territory By Road" Multilingual Map

This map, which shows major roads and tourist destinations in the Territory, contains road safety messages in seven languages on the reverse side. The map was developed following extensive consultation with industry and is distributed free of charge throughout the NT to car rental companies, accommodation providers and tourist information centres. Limited numbers are also provided to select interstate vehicle rental companies. The map has been well received and a reprint is planned.

Messages include:

- keep left;
- seat belts;
- long distance and fatigue;
- single vehicle rollovers;
- 4x4 Vehicles;
- wandering stock and animals;
- alcohol;
- speed;
- pedestrians;
- road Trains;
- caravans; and
- floods and Dust.

Road surface categories are identified, explained and illustrated; estimated driving times between major centres and attractions are provided; and the map links with the three Tourism Drives.
Keep Left / Seat Belt Stickers

Symbolic stickers have been distributed to rental car companies to be placed on dashboards of vehicles. This serves as a reminder for drivers to use their seat belts and to always keep left.

Rental Vehicle Industry Initiatives

Rental car companies advise their clients about choosing appropriate vehicles for the intended journey; provide instruction about vehicle operations; propose travel itineraries that include planned stops; and generally advise about environments through which their clients will be travelling.

"Belt Up" Signs

These road signs were introduced some years ago at roadside rest areas, truck stops and Wayside Inns. They are placed at the traffic exit points onto highways to remind vehicle occupants to always wear seat belts.

Caravan Brochure and Poster

This poster and pamphlet were initiated by the NT Road Transport Association and were developed by the RSC in consultation with the NTTC and the transport and tourism industries.

The brochure and poster have been distributed by the NTTC at Caravan, Camping and 4X4 promotions across Australia, at its inter-state/territory branches, and through a network of caravan park, Wayside Inn, automobile associations and tourism information centres across the Territory and throughout Australia. This pilot project will be evaluated at the end of the 1999 tourist season.

Road Safety Audio Tape

This pilot project was initiated by the Yulara Road Safety Sub-Committee of the RSC. Road safety messages have been translated into German, Italian and Japanese. The cassette tapes will be copied, and then distributed through hire car outlets at Yulara for placing into vehicles that will be hired by international visitors or Australians who may not be familiar with NT remote area driving conditions. The project will be evaluated later in 1999 and its potential for wider use assessed.
Rollover Vehicle Display

This was also a Yulara Road Safety Sub-Committee initiative adapted from a Western Australian police project. The display consists of a Landcruiser station wagon that was involved in a single vehicle rollover crash. The occupants of the vehicle were all wearing seat belts which helped prevent any serious injury. The wreck incorporates signage that alerts motorists to the dangers of fatigue, long distance driving, non-wearing of seat belts, etc.

The display is moved from location to location, mainly in the southern region of the NT, to prominent tourist destinations and stop-overs. NT Police often assist in the re-location of the trailer. The display has attracted a lot of positive feedback, and will be a part of the 1999 RSC NT Show display.

Driver Reviver Stations

This project, which involved NT Police, Road Safety and Motor Vehicle registry personnel, has not operated for some time in the NT because such stations are labour-intensive and costly in terms of time (including co-ordination) relative to the numbers of travellers who receive messages. Driver reviver events are therefore only suitable (in the NT) for specific events/times when many travellers are on a particular road. The involvement of the local community, industry and government agencies is essential.

Press Messages

Road safety messages have been included in a select number of tourist-focused publications such as backpacker magazines, the NTTC's Motoring Guide and Holidaying in the Top End and the private publication Exploring the Stuart Highway – Further than the eye can see....

Road Developments

While not specifically for visitors to the NT, highway developments undertaken by the Department of Transport and Works, such as extending the network of sealed roads (replacing gravel roads), widening the sealed carriageway (from one to two lanes), sealing shoulders, and providing overtaking lanes all contribute to road safety.
Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

NT Road Reports

NT Department of Transport and Works
Recorded telephone message
Phone: 1800 246 199

General Road Safety Advice

Road Safety Council of the NT
Senior Field Officer
GPO Box 1176
DARWIN NT 0801
Phone: 08 8924 7533
Fax: 08 8924 7077
Email: roadsafety@nt.gov.au

Road Safety Council of the NT
Senior Field Officer
PO Box 1260
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
Phone: 08 8951 5354
Fax: 08 8951 5791

NT Tourist Associations & Tourist Commission

NT Tourist Commission
GPO Box 11155
DARWIN NT 0801
Phone: 08 8999 3850
Fax: 08 8999 3909
Email: maria.purvis@nt.gov.au
Internet: www.nttc.com.au

Central Australian Tourism Industry Association
PO Box 2227
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
Phone: 08 8952 5800
Fax: 08 8953 0295
Email: visinfo@catia.asn.au

Tennant Creek Regional Tourist Association
PO Box 601
TENNANT CREEK NT 0861
Phone: 08 8962 3388
Fax: 08 8962 2509
Email: tcrta@topend.com.au
CHAPTER 13

NEW ZEALAND

Safety Strategy Section
Land Transport Safety Authority*

Introduction

International visitors and road safety are highly inter-connected. For the year ending May 1999, 1,532,702 people visited New Zealand (NZ) for an average stay of twenty days.¹ This amount translates on a per day basis to 83,928 visitors or the equivalent of 2.2% of the total resident population of 3,807,500.² The majority of international visitors use some form of transport to see the country, including land transport.

This chapter highlights the connection between international visitors and road crashes in New Zealand. However, rather than provide a detailed analysis of road crash trends involving international visitors, the aim of the chapter is to provide a brief overview of New Zealand tourism, road crashes involving international visitors and major road safety initiatives.

Population and Geography

New Zealand, a country comprising two main islands and a number of smaller islands situated in the south-west Pacific Ocean, has a population of 3.8 million people. Figure 13.1 shows the two main islands and the national highway system.

With a combined land area of 270,500 square kilometres and a coastline of 5,650 km in length, New Zealand is a similar geographic size to Japan or the United Kingdom. New Zealand however, is relatively sparsely populated³ and geographically remote in comparison to the majority of its trading partners and the dominant tourism markets of the Northern Hemisphere.

Industry and Trade

Major New Zealand industries produce predominantly primary sector based goods. These include dairy products, meat and meat products, wool, seafood, forestry, food and beverages, fruit and wine, wood and wood products, crude material (such as methanol), machinery, transport equipment and manufactured goods.

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¹ This report was compiled by Sean Coley, Senior Policy Analyst.
² New Zealand Tourism Board (NZTB), Office of Tourism and Sport (OTSP) and Statistics New Zealand.
³ The resident New Zealand population (which excludes overseas visitors) was estimated to have been 3,807,500 at 31 March 1999, compared with 3,788,300 at 31 March 1998. Despite this increase, permanent and long-term departures exceeded arrivals by 10,200 during the year to March 1999, compared with a net gain of 2,700 for the March 1998 year (Source: Statistics New Zealand Internet web site www.stats.govt.nz - National Population Estimates, March Quarter 1999 provisional data).
⁴ New Zealand population density is estimated at 14 people per square km (Source: Wellington City Council, New Zealand Population Profile, 1999).
Tourism is also a major industry and is the country's largest single foreign exchange earner. For the year ending March 1997 the nation's total exports of goods and services totalled NZ$27,528 million, which comprised NZ$20,725 million in the export of goods and NZ$6,803 million in the export of services. In comparison, imports of goods and services for the same period totalled NZ$26,678 million.

New Zealand's major trading partners are Australia, Japan, the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK). In the year to June 1997, 87.5% of New Zealand's exports were to Asia, Australia, Europe, the former USSR and North America. Imports from the above country groups accounted for 94% of New Zealand's total imports in the year to June 1997.
Attractions for Visitors

New Zealand’s tourism promotion strategy is based on the image of a clean, green, unpopulated and unpolluted environment. In particular, the vast areas of national parks, numerous walking tracks, rugged landscape, a focus on outdoor activities, Maori culture and heritage, museums, arts and crafts and indigenous flora and fauna, have made New Zealand an attractive destination for international visitors escaping more populous home countries. The comparatively low value of the New Zealand dollar with major currencies also makes New Zealand an attractive destination, despite being a long haul journey.

This focus has meant New Zealand has had to develop a sustainable tourism strategy to carefully manage the impact of tourism development on the natural environment. The main cities visited by international visitors are Auckland, Rotorua and Queenstown, which act as gateways to the many provincial centres scattered throughout the north and south islands.

Tourism Overview

For the year ended April 1999 1,532,272 people visited New Zealand, up 5.1 percent compared with the year to April 1998. A 55,128 increase in arrivals in the year ended April 1999 resulted in an estimated NZ$132 million in additional foreign exchange earnings.

There have been fluctuations in the number of international visitors coming to New Zealand. Since 1996 there has been a decrease in the numbers of travellers from Germany and, due to the Asian Economic Crisis in 1997, South Korea. Yet, for the year ended April 1999, the traditional markets of Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom provided 55% of the total arrivals as well as being the key growth markets with respective increases in the year to April 1998 of 11.6%, 8.1% and 7.6%.
For the year ended April 1999 visitor numbers from key markets have mostly increased. The main markets from which visitor numbers have increased are: Australia (up 11.6% on the year ended April 1998); the United States (up 8.1%); the United Kingdom (up 7.6%); and Europe (including the UK, up 4.9%). The main markets from which visitor numbers have decreased are Asia (most Asian markets declined in the year to April although arrivals increased in the month of April) and Japan (down 6.5%).

Based on statistics from the recently produced 'Tourism Satellite Account', for the year ended March 1995 tourism accounted for 15.8% of New Zealand's exports. As a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), direct tourism expenditure for the year ended March 1995 was 3.4% of total GDP. In dollar terms, total tourism expenditure on domestically produced goods and services totalled NZ$9.109 million (10.5% of GDP), while international visitors spent NZ$4.305 million on tourism-related goods and services. In addition, the Tourism Satellite Account reports that of total New Zealand travel undertaken to the year ended March 1995, domestic personal travel accounted for 39%, international travel (to and from New Zealand) 47% and domestic business travel constituted the remaining 14%.

Road Crashes Involving International Visitors

Between 1989 and 1998 there was a 33% decrease in the number of road deaths in New Zealand, despite a traffic growth rate which averaged 4% between 1991 and 1998. New Zealand is still ranked 18th of the 27 countries listed in the OECD accident database in 1996 for the number of road deaths per head of population, and 14th in the number of road deaths per 10,000 vehicles.

In New Zealand, the number of road fatalities involving drivers with an overseas licence are small (14 deaths in 1998) in comparison with the total number of fatalities on New Zealand roads each year (503 deaths for the year to 31 December 1998).

Although the number of international visitors to New Zealand has increased substantially, the number of road crashes involving holders of an overseas licence has remained relatively constant (see figures below).

From New Zealand's computerised Traffic Crash Reports, it is possible to determine if drivers involved in road crashes hold an overseas licence. However, it is not possible to accurately identify what proportion of these drivers are tourists at the time of the crash.

In a 1996 study of tourist accidents in New Zealand, Page and Meyer noted that, based on data provided by the Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance Corporation (ACC), road and recreation/sporting accidents were the most common type of injury claim for overseas visitors.
and Meyer suggest, based on an analysis of ACC data on claim rates, that accident claims are infrequent when proportionately compared with the domestic population, although accident claims are more frequent in the case of some nationalities, namely North American and Japanese visitors.\(^{18}\)

Tables 13.1 through 13.3 illustrate the numbers and percentage of overseas licence holders, including international visitors, immigrants and temporary visitors, killed and injured on New Zealand roads (first and second categories). The tables also show the number and percentage of road crashes in which overseas drivers were considered by Police at the accident scene to have been a contributing factor to the crash (third and fourth categories).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of drivers with overseas licence</th>
<th>% of crashes involving drivers with overseas licence</th>
<th>Number of crashes where &quot;foreign driver&quot; was included as a causation factor</th>
<th>% of crashes with &quot;foreign driver&quot; as a causation factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Research and Statistics Section, LTSA)

### Table 13.2: Serious Injury Crashes in New Zealand, 1993-1998.\(^{19}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of drivers with overseas licence</th>
<th>% of crashes involving drivers with overseas licence</th>
<th>Number of crashes where &quot;foreign driver&quot; was included as a causation factor</th>
<th>% of crashes with &quot;foreign driver&quot; as a causation factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Research and Statistics Section, LTSA)

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\(^{19}\) For the purposes of the data sets, serious injuries are categorised as those that require urgent medical treatment or an acute admission to hospital. The crash statistics are sourced from Police Crash Reports and are collated by the Research and Statistics Section, LTSA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of drivers with overseas licence</th>
<th>% of crashes involving drivers with overseas licence</th>
<th>Number of crashes where “foreign driver” was included as a causation factor</th>
<th>% of crashes with “foreign driver” as a causation factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Research and Statistics Section, LTSA)

In a detailed study of crashes from 1995 involving a manual search of traffic reports forms, only 39% of the 'crash involved drivers' who held overseas licences could be identified as short term visitors to New Zealand: 58% gave local (New Zealand) addresses and 9% were classed as overseas students.20

In the study by Page and Meyer,21 during the years 1988 to 1991 the New Zealand Police recorded that foreign drivers were involved in 1,386 serious or minor injury crashes. Of this amount, the Police considered foreign drivers to have been a contributing cause in 232 serious or minor injury crashes. In terms of fatal crashes, between the years 1988 and 1993, 52 foreign drivers were involved in fatal road accidents, with 20% of these fatalities due to drivers not keeping to the left hand side of the road.22

By 1995 the number of fatalities involving drivers with an overseas licence stood at nineteen. Despite this amount being more than double the nine deaths recorded the previous year, it is difficult to identify a common cause for the increase in road crash fatalities involving holders of overseas licences.23

However, research by the Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) over the 1995 to 1997 period,24 has shown that key contributing factors in fatal road crashes are alcohol (29%), speed (34%), drivers and passengers not wearing seat belts (32.4%) followed by driver fatigue (9%).25 Fifty two percent of all fatal crashes that occurred between 1995 and 1997 involved neither speed nor alcohol.

Police Crash Reports indicate that an estimated 50 lives could be saved annually if vehicle occupants involved in a crash wore seat belts. Between 1995 and 1997 driver fatigue was identified as a contributing factor in 132 fatal crashes and 1,411 serious and minor injury crashes.21

The above discussion has highlighted the importance of ensuring both international visitors and local residents receive and comprehend key road safety messages. Between 1995 and 1997 forty-eight

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24 National Road Safety Committee (NZ). Ministerial Advisor Paper, Meeting of Australasian Parliamentary Road Safety Committees and Ministerial Advisors, Parliament House, Brisbane, 13 May 1999, pp. 2-3. It's difficult to accurately quantify the exact percentage of people who have died as a result of not wearing a seat belt at the time of a crash. The 32.4% percentage is therefore provisional.
25 National Road Safety Committee (NZ). Ministerial Advisor Paper, p. 3.
percent of total road crashes in New Zealand involved one or more of the following three factors: excess speed, alcohol and failure to wear seat-belts. Combined with 20% of road fatalities being directly attributable to drivers failing to keep to the left-hand side of the road,²⁷ the Government has developed a number of road safety proposals and these are discussed below.

Road Safety Initiatives

While there is no LTSA policy work underway to examine the link between road crashes and international visitors, there are a number of current initiatives being undertaken by the Government and private sector that aim to reduce the incidence of crashes, including those involving international visitors.

To directly target international visitors to New Zealand, the LTSA has produced a brochure titled Driving Safely in New Zealand. The pamphlet is available in English, German and Japanese and has an annual print run of approximately 150,000. The LTSA website (see www.ltsa.govt.nz) also has up-to-date safety information for international visitors intending to drive on New Zealand roads.

²⁷ Despite a perception that road crashes, resulting from the driver failing to keep left, are caused by overseas licence holders, proportionately New Zealand licence holders constitute the majority of drivers who have crashed because they failed to keep to the left hand side of the road.
The brochure and video resources are available from rental vehicle companies and travel agents.

The two mediums explain distinct aspects of:

- NZ road rules (including 'keeping left');
- maintaining speed limits;
- giving way and crossing one way bridges;
- stopping;
- use of motorways;
- comprehending traffic signals;
- intersections;
- hazard signs;
- pedestrian crossings;
- parking;
- travelling times around NZ;
- overtaking rules;
- alcohol limits;
- seatbelt wearing requirements; and
- road crash reporting.

The Government established the LTSA in 1993 as a regulatory-based crown entity with the principal aim "to undertake activities that promote safety in land transport at reasonable cost". The LTSA has produced a number of documents on road safety targets and programmes, including the Safety Directions Development Programme; the National Road Safety Plan, and the Community Road Safety Strategy.

The National Road Safety Plan sets national goals, targets and priorities (including a vision) to the year 2001. The plan's focus is on national and local/regional level co-ordination arrangements for road safety.

Road Safety Information Sources for International Visitors

The following public and private sector organisations are useful sources for information on tourism and road safety. When calling from outside New Zealand, the country code is +64.

Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA)

The LTSA's mission is to promote safety in land transport at a reasonable cost and to manage the registration and compliance of motor vehicles on New Zealand roads.

PO Box 2840
WELLINGTON
Phone: +64 - 494 8600
Fax: +64 - 494 8601
Email: info@ltsa.govt.nz
Internet: www.ltsa.govt.nz

"Reasonable Cost", as defined in section 16(1) of the Land Transport Act 1993, is when the “value of the cost to the nation is exceeded by the value of the resulting benefit to the nation”. In practice, this means that decision should be based on:

- benefit/cost analysis (where possible); and
- evaluation of non-tangible benefits and costs (where appropriate).

LTSA Strategic Plan 1997-2001, 12.
New Zealand Tourism Board (NZTB)

The NZTB is responsible for the marketing and promoting of New Zealand as a visitor destination overseas. It has 14 offices worldwide.

PO Box 95
WELLINGTON, NZ
Phone: 04 472 8860
Fax: 04 478 1736
Email: enquiries@nztb.govt.nz
Internet: www.nztb.govt.nz

New Zealand Tourism Industry Association (NZTIA)

The NZTIA serves as the NZ tourism industry's representative organisation, with strong regional and local connections.

PO Box 1697
WELLINGTON, NZ
Phone: 04 499 0104
Fax: 04 499 0827

Office of Tourism and Sport (OTSP)

Situated in the Department of Internal Affairs, the OTSP was established in July 1998 and replaced the Tourism Policy Group, which operated out of the Ministry of Commerce. The Office is responsible for providing tourism policy advice to Government and monitoring the outcomes and work programme of the NZTB.

PO Box 5640
WELLINGTON, NZ
Phone: 04 498 7440
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NZ Automobile Association Inc. (AA)

PO Box 1
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Internet: www.aa.org.nz

NZ Police

PO Box 3017
WELLINGTON, NZ
Phone: 04 474 9499
Fax: 04 474 9446
Email: Information@police.govt.nz
Internet: www.police.govt.nz
Tourism sites on New Zealand

The Lonely Planet Guide to New Zealand:
Internet: www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/aust/nz.htm

Abcpacific.com/nz:
Internet: www.abcpacific.co.nz

This site offers a comprehensive listing of web-site connections to travel and tourism related sites, including accommodation, airlines, rail, rental car, and travel advice on getting around NZ.
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CHAPTER 14

CRITICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Barry Watson*, Jeffrey Wilks* and Robert Hansen**

Introduction

Motor vehicle crashes consistently emerge from the travel medicine literature as the most common cause of injury death for tourists. Yet worldwide there has been very little empirical research into the factors contributing to such crashes, and even less attention to developing appropriate risk management strategies for improving the safety of international visitors.\(^1,2\) In some respects this is not surprising; crashes involving overseas visitors usually represent only a small proportion of any jurisdiction’s annual road toll. Nonetheless, there is a growing awareness of this issue in Australia, particularly in response to the increase in visitors that will accompany the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

The preceding chapters represent the most comprehensive analysis of this issue undertaken in Australasia to date. As such, it is timely to critique the available information and identify strategies for the future. In keeping with this objective, this chapter will address four key issues:

- current knowledge about the involvement of international visitors in road crashes;
- countermeasures that have been implemented to date;
- new countermeasures that appear worthy of trial or implementation; and
- research and data requirements necessary to improve our understanding of the issue and to assist with the evaluation of relevant countermeasures.

The Involvement of International Visitors in Road Crashes

The Identification of International Visitors

Major differences exist in the way that international visitors are identified in road crash databases across Australia and New Zealand. In most jurisdictions, the only overseas visitors who are specifically identified are those involved in crashes as drivers or motorcycle riders. In these cases the determining criterion is that the visiting driver holds an international driver’s licence. This is the main criterion used in the status reports from Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, and New Zealand.

\(^1\) Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q), Queensland University of Technology.
\(^2\) Secretariat, Travelsafe Committee.
This method of identifying international visitors has two major limitations. Firstly, as noted in the New Zealand status report, it is impossible to distinguish between drivers who are genuine tourists and those who may be longer-term visitors or new residents who have failed to obtain a local licence. While this may lead to some uncertainty, it is likely that the large bulk of these drivers will be short-term visitors.

A second and more serious concern is that this method only identifies overseas visitors involved in crashes as drivers or motorcycle riders. As such, it does not identify those overseas visitors involved in crashes as pedestrians, pedal cyclists or passengers. This obviously restricts the scope of the analysis and the conclusions that can be reached.

In contrast, the New South Wales (NSW) and Northern Territory road crash databases define international visitors in terms of residency, rather than licence status. This permits the identification of overseas visitors who are involved in crashes as drivers, motorcycle riders, pedal cyclists and pedestrians. However, the residence of non-controllers (passengers in motor vehicles and pillion passengers on motorcycles and pedal cycles) is not identified in the NSW database. Hence, in that state it remains impossible to identify international visitors who are involved in crashes as non-controllers.

Furthermore, in some instances it is possible that the residency status of an overseas visitor may not be appropriately identified. "There is always some room for error in road injury statistics because of the stressful circumstances in which data are collected, but there may be a wider margin of error in the case of international visitors because they have to be identified as such before they will appear in the appropriate data set." In this regard, CARRS-Q recently analysed six years of Queensland crash data as part of an investigation into the role of international drivers in road crashes. The study found that an overseas address was recorded for only 873 (34.3%) of the international drivers involved in crashes during the period. In many other cases, a local address (or just a suburb or town) was recorded — presumably the location where the visitor was staying in Australia.

The Federal Office of Road Safety (FORS) fatal file utilises the results of Coronial investigations rather than data collected by the police at the time of the crash. As such, this database identifies all overseas residents involved in fatal road crashes in Australia, including passengers. Moreover, the FORS database confirms that historically "vehicle passengers comprise the largest single road user group accounting for 46% of international tourist deaths on the road." The limitation of the FORS data is that it only provides information relating to fatal crashes.

Hence, there is currently no official database in Australasia that provides a comprehensive picture of the involvement of international visitors in road crashes. While quite detailed data is available about the involvement of international drivers in crashes, only limited information is available about other types of international road users such as pedestrians and passengers. Unfortunately, this restricts the scope of the investigations that can be conducted.

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2. NSW Roads and Traffic Authority, Chapter 6: New South Wales, p.80.
4. Similar problems with identifying overseas visitors have been reported in hospital studies. For example, Walker S., Wilks J., Ring I., et al. Use of Queensland hospital services by interstate and overseas visitors. Health Information Management, 1995, 26, 12-19.
5. ibid., Chapter 2: A National Road Safety Overview, p.23.
The Magnitude of the Problem

The constraints involved in identifying international visitors make it difficult to accurately assess the magnitude of the problem. The FORS database, which provides the most complete picture for fatal crashes, suggests that there are approximately 45 tourist deaths on Australian roads each year. In absolute terms this is not a large problem, representing only 2.5% of Australia's annual road toll. However, as already noted, no comparable figure is available for the total number of overseas visitors injured on Australian roads.

The status reports confirm that the relative involvement of international visitors in road crashes varies substantially across jurisdictions. Among the two states that use residency to identify overseas visitors, New South Wales (NSW) and the Northern Territory (NT), these differences are particularly pronounced. For example, in 1997 there were 4 overseas visitors killed on NSW roads (representing 0.4% of total fatalities among drivers, motorcyclists and pedestrians) and a further 61 injured (together representing 0.2% of casualties). In contrast, in the Northern Territory in 1997 there were 2 international road users killed and a further 66 injured. This represented 3.3% of total fatalities and 5.6% of total casualties. Indeed, 1997 was a relatively good year in the Northern Territory for international visitor deaths. Between 1993 and 1998 there were an average of 5.5 international visitor deaths per year in the Northern Territory, representing 9.5% of total deaths.

Therefore, while the number of casualties is relatively similar in these two jurisdictions, international visitors represent much more of a road crash problem in the Northern Territory. While a range of factors undoubtedly contribute to this difference, the key would appear to be the higher relative exposure of international visitors on the Northern Territory's roads compared with NSW. For example, in 1997 NSW received 2.6 million overseas visitors, equivalent to 41.4% of the state's 6.3 million population. In contrast, the Northern Territory hosted 372,000 international visitors in 1997/98, which was almost double their population of 190,000 people.

Similar differences appear to exist among other jurisdictions. Exact comparisons are difficult due to the differences in the data provided. Nonetheless, in Queensland (where there is a high level of international visitors) international drivers represented 2.2% of the total casualties experienced between 1993 and 1997. In contrast, overseas drivers represented only:

- 0.1% of total crashes in South Australia between 1994 and 1998;
- 0.8% of total casualty crashes in Victoria in 1998;
- 0.73% of total crashes in Tasmania between 1993 and 1998; and
- 1.1% of total crashes in Western Australia between 1995 and 1998.

The number of international visitors to New Zealand has increased substantially over recent years, with a 5.1% increase experienced in the year ending April 1999. While this has not led to a major increase in the number of overseas drivers involved in crashes, their contribution to the New Zealand road toll has increased markedly. (This is largely due to an overall decline in road crashes in New Zealand over the last decade.) In 1998, overseas drivers were involved in 3.1% of fatal crashes (compared with 1.1% in 1993) and 3.3% of serious injury crashes (compared with 1.8% in 1993) in New Zealand.

Conclusions about the scale of the problem among other road user categories are more difficult to draw due the lack of data available. For example, comprehensive data relating to overseas pedestrians was only provided by NSW. This data indicated that overseas pedestrians accounted for only 0.99% of total pedestrian fatalities and 0.56% of total pedestrian casualties between 1988 and 1997.
In summary, the full extent of the road trauma experienced by overseas visitors in Australasia remains unknown. However, based on the involvement of overseas visitors in fatal crashes, the problem appears relatively small. This conclusion appears to hold for all Australian jurisdictions with the exception of the Northern Territory, where overseas visitors have accounted for almost 10% of deaths and 6% of casualties over recent years.

**Are Overseas Visitors at Higher Risk?**

Another rationale for targeting overseas visitors is the argument that they are at a higher risk of crashing (and possibly of being injured in a crash) than local drivers, due to their lack of familiarity with Australian driving conditions and road rules.\(^8\)\(^9\) This hypothesis is difficult to test, without accurate exposure data relating to the amount of road travel undertaken by overseas visitors.

FORS has attempted an alternative test of this hypothesis by utilising population-based data rather than distance travelled to determine the relative risk of being involved in a crash.\(^10\) They used data relating to the annual number of international tourists visiting Australia and their average duration of stay to derive a death rate per 100,000 persons for this group.\(^11\) Based on 1994 data, international visitors experienced a death rate of 22.0 deaths per 100,000 persons compared with a rate of only 10.8 per 100,000 population for Australians.

Furthermore, FORS suggests that this comparison may actually underestimate the risk faced by overseas visitors, since they are largely drawn from a middle-aged group (who traditionally are at lower risk of being involved in a crash compared with younger and older road users). While this may be true, other evidence suggests that people tend to engage in more risky activities (e.g., alcohol and drug use, sexual practices) while travelling than they do at home.\(^12\)

**Is the Problem Increasing?**

The status reports indicate that the absolute numbers of international visitors involved in crashes is relatively stable or increasing slowly in most jurisdictions. Interestingly, between 1993 and 1997 in Queensland there was a 25% increase in the number of international visitors relative to the total Queensland population. At the same time, the involvement of overseas drivers in total casualties increased by 21% - suggesting there has been little change in their overall crash risk.

Nonetheless, there is growing concern about the likely effect of the Sydney Olympic Games on visitor numbers and the resulting impact on tourist crashes. FORS has estimated that the 4.6 million visitors expected in Australia during the year 2000, including visitors to the Olympic Games, could increase the number of tourist deaths in that year from 45 to approximately 70 (with an additional 1000 seriously injured).\(^13\) While this potential increase is of concern, the projected deaths are still relatively small. The situation is well summarised by FORS:


\(^{16}\) Ellis B. Chapter 2: A national road safety overview.

\(^{17}\) In other words, this represents 100,000 years of exposure experienced by visitors in any given year.


\(^{19}\) Ellis B. Chapter 2: A national road safety overview.
Critical Issues and Future Directions

It would not be accurate to describe this as a massive road safety problem. It does not bear comparison with alcohol or speeding as a cause of road trauma. Yet no death on the road is acceptable and the tourist issue is attended by particular consequences. Taking into account the economic benefits associated with tourism and the impact on future tourism of Australia's reputation as a safe place to travel, the road safety of international tourists is an issue worthy of special consideration by the relevant authorities.14

Contributing Factors

Overseas driver crashes

Previous research undertaken by FORS15 has suggested a link between international driver crashes and the difficulties associated with driving in unfamiliar surroundings. Based on data for 1988, 1990 and 1992, they found that the fatal crashes involving overseas drivers were more likely to involve the non use of seat belts, driver fatigue and the overturning of vehicles than those involving local drivers. In contrast, while alcohol and speeding were still contributing factors in many cases, these factors were implicated less often in international driver crashes than those involving local drivers.

More recent research by FORS, reported in Chapter 2, has confirmed most of these findings. "The most prominent risk factor that differentiates between international and local drivers is seat belt usage. Fifty-two percent of international drivers killed were not restrained at the time of the crash. This compares with 38% for local drivers".16 (Similar results were obtained for international vehicle passengers involved in fatal crashes.) While alcohol (16%) and speeding (16%) were found to be factors, they were again under-represented relative to local drivers.

It has been suggested that the low seat belt wearing rates among overseas vehicle occupants may be indicative of their normal driving behaviour, shaped by poorly enforced (or non-existent) seat belt laws in their home country.17 Alternatively, in some cases it may be indicative of the higher risk-taking associated with international travel mentioned earlier.

An important caveat which should be placed on the FORS research is that it only addresses fatal crashes and that the sample size is relatively small (a total of 15 deaths in 1990, 1992 and 1994). Consequently, it is useful to consider the available evidence from other jurisdictions.

The Queensland status report confirms the FORS findings relating to seat belts and alcohol use. For example, based on data for 1997/98, 10.4% of overseas drivers hospitalised as a result of a road crash had not been wearing a seat belt compared with 4.4% of hospitalised drivers in general. Only 1.5% of the hospitalised overseas drivers had a BAC exceeding .05, compared with 3.7% for total hospitalised drivers. The Queensland status report also reports that hospitalised overseas drivers are over-represented in motorcycle crashes and crashes involving wet roads and curves.

A separate analysis of Queensland crash data undertaken by the authors16 found other evidence supporting the hypothesis that overseas drivers experience difficulties coping with an unfamiliar driving environment. This study examined six years of crash data (1993-1998) to ensure an adequate

16 Ellis, B. Chapter 2: A national road safety overview. p.22.
sample size for the various comparisons between overseas and Australian drivers.\textsuperscript{19} It found that international drivers were over-represented in a group of crashes where disorientation may have been a factor, including 'angle', 'head-on' and 'sidewipe' crashes. (These crash types accounted for 55.2% of all crashes involving overseas drivers, but only 42.7% for those involving Australian drivers.) In contrast, they were under-represented in crashes suggesting a lack of attention, such as 'hit fixed obstruction', 'hit parked car', 'hit pedestrian' and 'hit animal' (17.6% for internationals cf. 28.6% for Australian drivers). Further work is required to confirm this hypothesis concerning driver disorientation.

Furthermore, in approximately one third of the crashes involving overseas drivers (N=874) it was possible to identify the country of origin for the driver. Not surprisingly, the drivers from right-side driving countries were over-represented in head-on crashes (16.3%) compared with drivers from left-side driving nations (5.3%). These findings support anecdotal evidence that international drivers from right-side driving countries can experience difficulties, particularly in emergency situations, adjusting to left-side of the road driving.\textsuperscript{20}

While the NSW status report examines the factors contributing to crashes involving overseas drivers, it only considers fatal crashes occurring between 1993 and 1997. As noted by the authors, the sample size is relatively small (N=24 crashes involving 28 overseas drivers) limiting the conclusions that could be reached.\textsuperscript{21} Nonetheless, the results suggested that overseas drivers are over-represented in head-on and rollover crashes compared with Australian drivers, and are under-represented in crashes involving speeding and alcohol. However, no differences were found in relation to driver fatigue. Furthermore, the authors were unable to draw conclusions about seat belt wearing due to the small number of crashes involved.

In summary, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that overseas driver crashes are less likely to involve high risk driving behaviours such as alcohol or speeding. Rather, they appear to be the product of unfamiliarity with the Australian driving environment, often exacerbated by the failure to wear a seat belt. However, these conclusions are largely based on studies with small sample sizes, so further work is required to confirm the results.

**Overseas pedestrian crashes**

Only two status reports directly examined the behaviour of overseas pedestrians. The FORS study reported in Chapter 2 examined the behaviour of overseas pedestrians in relation to alcohol and the location of the crash (relative to the roadway). However, the number of crashes was very small (N=5) preventing any firm conclusions from being reached. The NSW study reported in Chapter 5 featured a larger sample (N=200 crashes), including all crashes resulting in death or injury to overseas pedestrians during the period 1988 to 1997. Compared with total pedestrian casualties, overseas pedestrians killed or injured in crashes were more likely to:

- be young or middle-aged adults, and females; and
- be struck in a metropolitan area, on a local road, in darkness and while crossing from the far side of the carriageway.

It is unclear whether these findings reflect any underlying causal factors, other than differences in exposure. It has been suggested that overseas pedestrians from right-side driving countries can experience difficulties adjusting to Australian traffic (eg. needing to look right rather than left for oncoming traffic). However, it is unclear whether the NSW results support this hypothesis.

\textsuperscript{19} Australian drivers include local and interstate drivers.
\textsuperscript{20} Anecdotal evidence of this nature was raised at the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q Symposium: International visitors and road safety in Australia (see Appendix A), the major catalyst for this book.
\textsuperscript{21} NSW Roads and Traffic Authority. Chapter 6: New South Wales.
Critical Issues and Future Directions

Location of Crashes

Few of the status reports directly examined the location of the crashes involving overseas visitors. As noted above, NSW data indicates that overseas pedestrian casualties are more likely to occur in metropolitan areas. In contrast, NSW fatal crash data indicates that overseas driver crashes are more likely to occur in country areas.22

Other evidence tends to confirm the conclusion that overseas driver crashes, particularly severe crashes, are more likely to occur in country areas. For example, the Queensland status report indicates that there is a higher representation of hospitalised overseas drivers in the state's Northern and Far Northern Regions. In South Australia during the period 1994 to 1998, only 35% of the total crashes involving overseas drivers occurred in country areas. However, while the numbers were small, all the fatal crashes and the majority of the serious injury crashes occurred in country areas. Once again these results may merely be indicative of differences in exposure among international drivers and the tendency for rural crashes to be more severe due to higher vehicle speeds.

Current Countermeasures Targeting Overseas Visitors

The status reports indicate that a wide variety of countermeasures targeting overseas road users have already been implemented in Australasia. Not surprisingly, the jurisdictions that have been most active in the area are those where there is a higher involvement of overseas visitors in road crashes (such as the Northern Territory), those particularly concerned about the Olympics (NSW and Queensland); and those where there have been high profile instances of visitor deaths (eg. South Australia).

A range of stakeholders have been involved in the development and implementation of initiatives in this area including: government road safety authorities; motoring organisations; tourism authorities; and industry groups such rental vehicle operators. The countermeasures implemented to date largely fall into four categories:

- information campaigns featuring media such as multi-lingual brochures, maps and handbooks, world wide web (www) sites, videos, audio tapes, dashboard stickers in hire vehicles;
- improvements to the road environment through the internationalisation of road signs, the development of Tourist Drives with relevant signing, the erection of specific warning signs for tourists eg. 'Belt Up' signs, the enhancement of rest areas;
- vehicle rental practices such as providing safety information to overseas clients, conducting vehicle familiarisation sessions with clients, and recommending (or requiring) new arrivals to rest before picking up their vehicle; and
- mainstream programs which are assumed to influence international drivers without any special tailoring, such as traffic law enforcement initiatives.

While a variety of road safety campaigns targeting international drivers have been implemented over recent years, none appear to have been systematically evaluated.23

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22 As noted earlier, this study examined the factors contributing to fatal crashes involving overseas drivers between 1993 and 1997. The sample size was relatively small (N=24 crashes involving 28 overseas drivers), so the results should be treated with caution.

Additional Countermeasure Options

Overview

As part of this project, a range of new countermeasures have been suggested for implementation in Australia to improve the safety of international visitors. Table 14.1 summarises the suggestions that have arisen from a variety of sources including:

- discussions at the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q Symposium: International visitors and road safety;24
- potential countermeasures identified in the previous chapters; and
- research previously undertaken by the authors into national and international practices.25

The format adopted in Table 14.1 is based on the Haddon Matrix,26 a common model used in road safety to conceptualise countermeasures. It categorises different measures according to two dimensions: whether the countermeasure operates by modifying the road user, the road environment or the vehicle; and at what stage in the crash causal chain it is designed to intervene.

As can be seen, the majority of the suggested countermeasures fall into the pre-crash stage. This reflects the strong prevention orientation adopted by stakeholders. It also reflects the view that overseas road users are vulnerable due to their lack of familiarity with Australian road conditions and that they need to be better prepared.

One of the major areas of discussion at the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q Symposium concerned the type of educational strategies that should be employed to communicate with overseas visitors. In particular, there was considerable discussion about the preferred content, style and timing of educational messages. It was generally acknowledged that this is an area requiring further research. Nonetheless, a wide range of strategies were suggested including:

- the provision of better information to people planning a trip to Australia, utilising the internet and tourist agencies;
- the development of videos to be shown on aircraft or in vehicle rental offices;
- the inclusion of more educational material on road maps;
- the wide availability of audio cassettes for international visitors to listen to while driving;
- the wider use of billboards displaying messages relevant to overseas drivers; and
- the wider availability of safety information at petrol stations.

Priority Actions

There is wide variation in the likely feasibility, costs and benefits of the countermeasure options identified in Table 14.1. Indeed, little scoping work appears to have been undertaken within Australia to determine those countermeasures that are likely to provide the best returns. This is a critical issue, given that international visitors represent a minor road trauma problem and will never attract large amounts of government road safety funding.

Therefore, it is essential to identify priority actions that are feasible, likely to be cost-effective and target a large part of the identified problem. While further research is required in this area, one key priority

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24 See Appendix A for details of this Symposium.
25 See Wiles J., Watson B. and Faulks I. International tourists and road safety in Australia: developing a national research management programme.
26 Haddon W. Advances in the epidemiology of injuries as a basis for public policy. Public Health Reports, 1980, 95(3), 411-421.
was endorsed at the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q Symposium: the need to increase seat belt wearing rates among international visitors. The current situation was summarised by Dr Michael Henderson when he said:

\[
... \text{what stands out in the fatal file at least is that they [overseas visitors] are not wearing seat belts. ... [This] is the single most important factor. ... and we should not lose the focus by being too diffuse.}^{27}
\]

Australia has historically been a world leader in the area of seat belt wearing promotion and enforcement.\(^{26}\) The opportunity exists to apply the strategies that have worked so well with the general driving population to international visitors.

Table 14.1: International Visitor Road Safety Countermeasure Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-crash stage</th>
<th>Crash stage</th>
<th>Post-crash stage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Road user</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Educational strategies targeting factors such as:</td>
<td>- Introduce seat belt interlocks for rental vehicles</td>
<td>- Better collection of data relating to factors contributing to overseas driver crashes and subsequent medical treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Seat belt wearing</td>
<td>- Improve the level of traffic fine recovery from international drivers involved in traffic offences and crashes (to enhance the likely deterrent impact of penalties)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fatigue</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Targeted seat belt enforcement in areas frequented by international drivers</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Remove seat belt exemptions for taxi drivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Wider application of vehicle rental practices such as vehicle familiarisation sessions and requirements for new arrivals to rest before being able to pick up vehicles</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Require travelers in remote areas to file travel plans</td>
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</table>

**Vehicle**

- Warning messages on the dashboards of vehicles eg. “Keep left”, “Wear a seat belt”
- Wider provision of vehicles equipped for disabled drivers
- Restrictions on the type of vehicles that can be hired without sufficient experience eg. 4WDs

**Road Environment**

- Placement of seat belt advisory signs at strategic locations eg. exits of airports, rest areas
- More use of international road signs
- Better signage of tourist routes
- Include estimated travel times on road distance signs
- Remove restrictions on the length of stay at rest areas

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The Need for Collaborative Efforts

Given that international visitor safety is never likely to attract large amounts of government road safety funding, it is essential that stakeholders work co-operatively to ensure that scarce resources are used in the most effective manner. For example, it is important that initiatives undertaken by the vehicle rental industry are based on sound research and are reinforced by government policies or initiatives.

As documented in the status reports, significant co-operation has already occurred between road safety and tourist stakeholders in many jurisdictions, particularly in South Australia and the Northern Territory. A good example is the activities of the South Australian Travelling Safety in the Outback Working Group. This group includes: SA Tourism Commission; Flinders Outback Regional Tourism Association; SA Police; Transport SA; the Royal Automobile Association (RAA); SA Government Insurance Corporation; the Crown Solicitor’s Office; and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs - all working together to promote visitor safety. The countermeasure options documented in Table 14.1 represent a wide range of opportunities for further co-operation, many of which are currently under consideration in the various jurisdictions.

In addition, international road users will benefit from the continued development of multi-cultural road safety initiatives in Australia. For example, many road safety organisations have worked with other agencies to produce educational material relating to driver licensing and road safety in a variety of languages. Rather than develop new materials for international visitors, it will often be more cost-effective to adapt or extend existing multi-cultural initiatives, such as multi-lingual brochures and videos.

Data Needs and Research Priorities

A range of data needs and research priorities have been highlighted in this project and previous research by the authors.29 The key priorities are summarised below:

**Data needs**

- ensure rigorous collection of address details (particularly home country) for international visitors involved in crashes;
- identify all international road users involved in crashes (i.e. not just drivers) in relevant databases;
- collect specific exposure data regarding the types and amount of road travel that overseas visitors undertake in Australia; and
- establish the full economic and social costs of crashes involving international visitors, including the costs borne by Australasian jurisdictions and those borne by the visitor’s home country.30

**Strategic research**

- establish the full extent of road trauma experienced by overseas visitors in Australasia (including drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and passengers);

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30 For a discussion of the difficulties involved in costing international visitor crashes see Wiles J. and Watson B., Road safety and international visitors in Australia: looking beyond the tip of the iceberg. Travel Medicine International, 1998, 16(6), 194-198.
Critical Issues and Future Directions

• scope the likely cost-effectiveness of different countermeasure proposals to identify priority actions;

• evaluate existing international visitor safety countermeasures to establish cost-effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement; and

• investigate regional patterns in international visitor crashes in order to geographically tailor countermeasure approaches.

Road user research

• utilise road crash and industry databases to obtain a better insight into the factors which contribute to crashes involving international visitors;

• survey international visitors to assess levels of knowledge, beliefs and perceptions about road use in Australia and to identify barriers to compliance with laws and safety advice; and

• trial and evaluate best practice educational strategies with different groups of international visitors.

Conclusion

The key aim of this publication has been to draw together the available data relating to the safety of international visitors on Australasian roads and to document current and proposed countermeasures. The data confirm that international visitors do not represent a major road safety problem. However, their safety is an important issue from a tourist perspective. At stake are Australia's and New Zealand's reputation as safe destinations and the economic benefits associated with tourism.

While a range of countermeasure directions have been identified, it is important that priority is given to those that target the largest parts of the problem in a cost-effective manner. At this point in time, the highest priority should be given to countermeasures that increase seat belt wearing rates among international visitors. In addition, educational initiatives should continue to focus on the dangers associated with driving in an unfamiliar environment, particularly in relation to driver fatigue. Improvements are also required in the collection of data relating to overseas visitor involvement in crashes.

The following message was endorsed by delegates to the Travelsafe/CARRS-Q Symposium and provides a guide for future activity:

Australia welcomes international visitors. We recognise that driving conditions here may be very different to those in visitors' home countries, and that driving in an unfamiliar environment can sometimes be difficult and confusing. Taking early action to address this issue, and in particular promoting the wearing of seat belts and increased awareness of fatigue, is an appropriate response for a host nation that values international travellers and wishes them to have a safe and enjoyable visit.
Appendix A – Travelsafe/CARRS-Q Symposium held in Brisbane, 14 May, 1999

Background Presented to Delegates

Australia receives approximately 4 million international visitors annually. The Australian Tourism Forecasting Council predicts that this figure will rise to 4.6 million in the year 2000 largely due to the Olympic Games in Sydney.

Many international visitors to the games will travel interstate while in Australia. Increased visitor number to all states and territories are expected until at least the year 2004. Fifty percent of the extra visitors attracted by the games are expected to visit Queensland, 25% Victoria, 13% Western Australia, 9% the Northern Territory, 7% South Australia, 7% the Australian Capital Territory and 2% Tasmania.

Tourism is a major export earner for Australia ($16.1 billion in 1997-1998) and exceeds the earnings of more traditional export commodities such as coal, meat and wool.

All international visitors are road users and many are drivers. Figures from the International Visitor Survey indicate that 43% drive a private or company car, 15% rent a car, 2% drive a motorhome or camper van and 3% use a four wheel drive vehicle while in Australia.

On average, 30 fatal crashes involving visitor drivers occur annually on Australian roads. These result in 32 deaths. A further three international visitor pedestrians die annually in other crashes.

In Queensland, overseas drivers were involved in 2482 crashes reported to police between 1992-1997. In terms of injury severity, 39 of the crashes were fatal crashes, 397 were hospitalisation crashes, 503 were medical treatment crashes and 261 were minor injury crashes. This represents a small proportion (1.5%) of crashes recorded for the state over the period. However, the involvement of international visitors in crashes imposes significant costs on Australia. These include costs to the tourism industry and the effects of bad publicity. CARRS-Q researchers estimate that the social cost of crashes involving international visitors in Queensland that occurred during 1997 was $18.9 million.

For many international visitors, driving in Australia is different to driving in their home country. Many will encounter dirt roads, kangaroos and road trains for the first time. Many others will drive on the left side of the road for the first time. Most will be largely ignorant of Australia’s traffic laws and the subtle differences that exist in each state and territory. Unfamiliar surroundings, vehicles and traffic conditions are major factors contributing to crashes involving foreign drivers.

International visitors have not been targeted for major road safety campaigns. In addition, many of the proven safety campaigns would not effectively target a group who are only in the country for a short period of time.

There is, however, great potential to better prepare overseas visitors for driving in Australia and this will be the primary focus of the symposium.
The Symposium

This Symposium brings together leaders in government and industry from the areas of transport, tourism, law, insurance and medicine to discuss the issue of international visitors and road safety in Australia. The symposium will provide a unique opportunity for tourism, insurance and road safety leaders to share ideas and develop solutions to the road safety problems faced by our overseas visitors.

Improving the road safety of international visitors will yield positive social and economic benefits to Australia and enhance our image as a safe tourist destination.
### Program

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Speaker Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>8.45 am</td>
<td><strong>REGISTRATION</strong></td>
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| 9.00 am    | **WELCOME & OVERVIEW OF THE DAY**            | Mrs Nita Cunningham MLA  
Chairman, Travelsafe Committee  
*(Hon Jim Elder, MLA, Deputy Premier of Queensland opened the symposium)* |
| 9.30 am    | **SESSION 1**                                 | *Session Chair* – Mr Bruce Wilson  
Director-General,  
Queensland Transport |
| 9.30 to 10.10 am | **KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1** | *A National Road Safety Overview*  
Mr Bill Ellis  
First Assistant Secretary,  
Federal Office of Road Safety (FORS) |
| 10.10 am   | **KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2**                        | Mr David Matcham  
Director,  
Lumley General Insurance Limited |
| 10.50 am   | **MORNING TEA**                               |                                                                                |
| 11.00 am   | **SESSION 2**                                 | *Session Chair* – Mr Mark Peters  
Deputy Director-General,  
Queensland Department of Tourism, Sport and Racing |
| 11.00 to 12.00 noon | **KEYNOTE ADDRESS 3** | *A Legal Perspective*  
Mr Robert Davis  
Australian Plaintiff Lawyers Association |
| 12.00 noon | **KEYNOTE ADDRESS 4**                        | Mr Robert Crick  
Head of Division – Sport & Tourism,  
Department of Industry, Science & Resources (Commonwealth) |
| 12.40 pm   | **LUNCH**                                    |                                                                                |
| 2.00 pm    | **SESSION 3**                                 | *Session Chair* – Professor Mary Sheehan  
Director, CARRS-Q  
Panel discussion and open forum  
with questions from the floor |
| 3.30 pm to 3.50 pm | **Summary of the main points, actions to follow and critical time-frames** | |
| 3.50 pm to 4.00 pm | **CLOSING REMARKS** | Mr Graham Healy MLA  
Travelsafe Committee |
Members of the Expert Panel

Mr Paul Blake  
Mr Gary Fites  
Mr Stephen Gregg  
Mr Peter Hagan  
Mr Allan Honor  
Mr Robert Kelly  
Mr Graham Jones  
Mr Stewart Moore  
Ms Lori Mooren  

Executive Director, Land Transport & Safety, Queensland Transport  
General Manager (External Relations), Royal Automobile Club of Qld  
Assistant Secretary, Road Safety & Legislation, Dept Transport & Works, NT  
Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan North Region, Qld Police Service  
Managing Director, Rentsure Pty Ltd, Motor Vehicle Rental Insurance  
Chair, Rental Vehicles Committee, Motor Trades Association of Qld  
Managing Director, National Centre for Tourism Pty Ltd.  
General Manager -- Road Safety, NSW Roads and Traffic Authority

Travelsafe Committee

The Travelsafe Committee is a select committee established by a resolution of the 49th Parliament of Queensland. The committee is required to examine and report to the parliament on all aspects of road safety and public transport with particular emphasis on:

• issues affecting road safety including the causes of road crashes and measures aimed at reducing deaths, injuries and economic costs to the community;

• the safety of passenger transport services, and measures aimed at reducing the incidence of related deaths and injuries; and

• measures for the enhancement of public transport in Queensland and reducing dependence on private motor vehicles as the predominant mode of transport.

Successive Travelsafe Committees have made substantial, tangible contributions to the improvement of road safety since the first committee was established in May 1990 by the 46th Queensland Parliament.

Membership

Mrs Nita Cunningham MLA (Chairman)  
Mr Howard Hobbs MLA (Deputy Chairman)
Member for Bundaberg  
Member for Warrego

Mr Graham Healy MLA  
Ms Lindy Nelson-Carr MLA
Member for Toowoomba North  
Member for Mundingburra

Mr Len Stephan MLA  
Mr Terry Sullivan MLA
Member for Gympie  
Member for Chermside

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CARRS-Q

The Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety (CARRS-Q) is funded by the Queensland Government’s Motor Accident Insurance Commission (MAIC) for the purpose of collaborative, interdisciplinary teaching, research and consulting activities. The centre is located in the School of Psychology and Counselling at the Queensland University of Technology’s Carseldine campus in Brisbane. Head of the School of Psychology and Counselling at QUT, Professor Mary Sheehan, is the centre’s director.

CARRS-Q provides a stimulus for road safety and accident prevention research in Queensland, conducting applied research in road safety, work safety and accident prevention. In its research activities, the centre gives particular attention to factors influencing injury and fatality patterns in Queensland such as climate, regionalisation and lifestyle.

In addition to its core research program, CARRS-Q administers the Road Accident Prevention and Road Safety Research Grant Scheme. This scheme, funded by MAIC, provides competitive research funding in areas such as: intervention and deterrence programs; offender rehabilitation; vehicle design; engineering and road safety; and road safety in rural Queensland. CARRS-Q mentors researchers funded through the scheme.

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Delegates at the Symposium
International Visitors and Road Safety in Australia, 14 May 1999

Mr Barry Aitken, Executive Officer, Road Safety Committee, Victorian Parliament
Professor Richard Allsop, Professor of Transport Studies, University College London, UK
Ms Lesley Anderson, Commissioner, Motor Accident Insurance Commission - Queensland
Mr Robin Anderson, Road Safety Manager, Department of Urban Services, Australian Capital Territory
Professor Koll Arnold, School of International Business, Queensland University of Technology
Dr Paul Barnes, Manager, State Public Safety Unit, Queensland Fire and Rescue Authority, Queensland
Mr Reg Barrett, Director, Land Transport Safety Authority, New Zealand
Professor Nick Bellamy, Director, Centre of National Research on Disability and Rehabilitation Medicine (CONROD), University of Queensland
Mr Paul Blake, Executive Director, Land Transport & Safety, Queensland Transport
Ms Jan Bimrose, Head, Queensland Tourism Development Team, Department of State Development, Queensland
Ms Gillian Brown, Manager - Road Safety, Motor Accidents Authority, New South Wales
Ms Wendy Bullock, Director (Community Programs and Information), Queensland Transport
Dr John Carlyle, Barrister-at-Law and Government Medical Officer (Gold Coast)
Senior Sergeant Graham Chamberlin, Officer in Charge, State Traffic Taskforce, Queensland Police Service
Mr Robert Crick, Head of Division - Sport & Tourism, Department of Industry, Science & Resources, Canberra
Ms Amanda Croker, Principal Policy Advisor, Health Outcomes Unit, Queensland Health
Mr David Cunningham MP, Deputy Chairman, Road Safety Committee, Victorian Parliament
Mrs Nita Cunningham MLA, Chairman Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament
Mr Jeremy Davey, Deputy Director, CARRS-Q, Queensland University of Technology
Mr Robert Davis, President (Qld), Australian Plaintiff Lawyers Association
Mr Harry Duynhoven MP, Permanent Member, Transport and Environment Committee, New Zealand Parliament
Mr Mark Ellord, Regional Manager, Northern & Western Region, Transport SA
Mr Bill Ellis, First Assistant Secretary, Federal Office of Road Safety
Mr Ian Faure, Director, Staysafe Committee, New South Wales Parliament
Mr Gary Fites, General Manager (External Relations), Royal Automobile Club of Queensland
Dr Nadia Fletcher, Senior Strategic Projects Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority, New South Wales
Mr Daniel Gschwind, Queensland Manager, Tourism Council of Australia
Mr Tilak Goonasekera, Manager, Road Reserve Management, Main Roads, Queensland
Mr Stephen Gregg, Chief Executive Officer, Tourism Queensland
Dr Robert Grenfell, Travel Medicine Physician, Victoria
Mr Peter Hagan, Assistant Secretary, Road Safety and Legislation, Dept of Transport and Works, Northern Territory
Mr John Hand, Deputy Commissioner, Motor Accident Insurance Commission - Queensland
Supt Mike Hannigan, State Traffic Support Branch, Queensland Police Service
Mr Rob Hansen, Research Director Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament
Mr Lloyd Hastings, Managing Director, Red Beach Rentals Pty Ltd, Surfers Paradise
Mr Graham Healy MLA, Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament
Appendix A

Dr Michael Henderson, Chairman, Australian Advisory Committee on Road Trauma

Mr Paul Highams, Director, Sales and Marketing, Hughes Limousines, Brisbane

Mr Allan Honor, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan North Region, Queensland Police

Mr Bob Howie, Assistant Commissioner, Southern Operations, South Australian Police

Adjunct Professor Graham Hughes, Chair, CONROD, University of Queensland; Chair, CARRS-Q, Queensland University of Technology

Ms Karen Jacobson, Sport and Tourism Division, Department of Industry, Science and Resources, Canberra

Mr Graham Jones, Manager (QLD), Insurance Council of Australia

Mr Graham Jones, Chair, Rental Vehicles Committee, Motor Trades Association of Queensland

Dr Bob Kass, Chief Executive Officer, Travellers Medical & Vaccination Centre, Adelaide

Mr Robert Kelly, Managing Director, Rentsure Pty Ltd, Sydney

Mr Gordon Lee, Principal Engineer (Road Environment Safety) Transport Technology Division, Main Roads, Queensland

Dr Mark Leggett, Director (Strategy), Land Transport & Safety Division, Queensland Transport

Mr Hilary Loos, Manager (Production Services), Corporate Communication, Main Roads, Queensland

Mr Russell Luhra, Principal Program Officer - Urban Amenity, Brisbane City Council

Ms Nina Lyhne, Acting Executive Director, Office of Road Safety, Dept of Transport, Western Australia

Ms Emem Macken, General Manager - Strategic Marketing, Worldcare Pty Ltd Assistance Services, Brisbane

Mr David Matcham, Managing Director, Luntley General Insurance Limited

Mr Daniel Mayhew, Senior Vice-President, Traffic Injury Research, Canada

Mr Rob McBride, Senior Research Officer Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament

Mr Brian Measey, Board Commissioner, Northern Territory Tourist Commission

Dr Deborah Mills, Medical Director, Travellers’ Medical & Vaccination Centre, Brisbane

Mr Brian Milnes, Sales Manager, Britz: Australia Rentals & Tours Pty Ltd

Mr Stewart Moore, Managing Director, National Centre for Tourism Pty Ltd, Brisbane

Ms Lori Mooren, General Manager Road Safety, Roads and Traffic Authority, New South Wales

Mr Andre Moten, Director, Queensland Olympic 2000 Task Force, Department of Tourism, Sport and Racing, Queensland

Ms Lindy Nelson-Carr MLA, Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament

Ms Danni Newmann, Contract Manager, Ansett Australia

Mr Dennis O’Leary, Director, Public Education and Liaison, Federal Office of Road Safety

Ms Jane Olsen, Executive Assistant Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament

Ms Samantha Organ-Moore, Manager (Communication Strategy), Queensland Transport

Ms Pam Palmer, Research Officer, Road Safety and Legislation, Department of Transport and Works, Northern Territory

Mr Mark Peters, Deputy Director-General, Department of Tourism, Sport and Racing, Queensland

Hon Carolyn Pickles MLC, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, South Australian Parliament

Ms Grace Portolesi, Research Officer to the Hon Carolyn Pickles MLC, South Australian Parliament

Mr Bruce Prideaux, Lecturer in Transport & Tourism, Gatton Campus, University of Queensland

Ms Kate Redford, Administrative Officer, CARRS-Q, Queensland University of Technology

Mr Byron Roberts, Director, Australian Federation of Travel Agents
Ms Kimberley Rogers, Senior Tourism Advisor, Tourism Queensland
Mr Joe Scalzi MP, Member, Joint Standing Committee on Transport Safety, South Australia Parliament
Mrs Tricia Schmidt, Murphy Schmidt Solicitors, Brisbane
Professor Roger Scott, Dean, Faculty of Arts, Queensland University of Technology
Professor Mary Sheehan, Director, Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland, Queensland University of Technology
Mr David South, Manager - Road User Behaviour, VicRoads
Mr Eugene Stankevicius, Planning Manager, Western Australian Tourism Commission
Mr Terry Sullivan MLA, Travelsafe Committee, Queensland Parliament
Professor Claes Tingvall, Director, Monash University Accident Research Centre, Victoria
Mr Colin Tizzard, National Risk Control Manager, Lumley General Insurance Ltd
Professor Rod Troutbeck, Head, School of Civil Engineering, Queensland University of Technology
Professor Peter Vulcan, Chair, National Injury Prevention Advisory Council Member, Australian Advisory Committee on Road Trauma
Ms Elizabeth Warhurst, General Manager - Industry Development, South Australian Tourism Commission
Mr Barry Watson, Lecturer in Road Safety, CARRS-Q, Queensland University of Technology
Mr John Wikman, Traffic and Safety Manager, Royal Automobile Club of Queensland
Dr Jeffrey Wilks, Principal Research Fellow, CARRS-Q, Queensland University of Technology
Mr Bruce Wilson, Director-General, Queensland Transport
Supt Bob Wylie, Officer in Charge, Traffic Support Division, Victoria Police