



FACTSHEET 16

PROMOTION OF SAFER VEHICLE CHOICES

Safer vehicle choices can be promoted through ANCAP and the Used Car Safety Ratings website. ANCAP rates the safety performance of new vehicles through crash tests assessments and through active safety technologies designed to minimise the risk of a crash occurring. A 0 to 5 stars rating is published indicating the level of safety provided by the vehicle tested. The higher the star rating the safer the vehicle. Used Car Safety Ratings (UCRS) have also been developed for consumers to make informed choices regarding safety when purchasing used vehicles¹. The UCRS (<https://howsafeisyourcar.com.au/>) may be applicable in some jurisdictions and situations.

Implementation considerations

There appears to be minimal promotion of ANCAP and UCRS in regional and remote areas to encourage the purchasing of safer vehicles. Promoting safer vehicles in these areas is important given vehicle technology that can reduce the likelihood of crashes². ANCAP star rating needs to be continuously promoted.

Vehicle purchasers may be more concerned with purchasing a vehicle that is 'fit for purpose'. 'Quasi-commercial' vehicles such as utilities and tray tops may be chosen which are, traditionally, less crashworthy than passenger vehicles. Additionally, they may not have the latest advanced driver assist technology, such as autonomous emergency braking, which can reduce the likelihood of a crash from occurring in the first place. Vehicle purchasers may be less willing to pay for optional/additional safety features³.

Effectiveness

89% of vehicles tested and rated by ANCAP in 2019/20 achieved a 5-star rating⁴. However, the average vehicle age of motor vehicles in Australia is 10.6 years so not all vehicles on the road have a 5-star rating.

Older vehicles, those built in 2000 or earlier, account for just 20% of the registered vehicle fleet but are involved in 33% of fatality crashes. Newer vehicles, those built 2011-2016, make up 31% of the fleet yet are involved in just 13% of fatality crashes⁵.

The most effective means of accelerating the uptake of vehicle safety technologies into a vehicle fleet is by reducing the average age of the vehicle fleet⁶.

If all new vehicles purchased were equivalent in safety to the safest available at the time within the type chosen, reductions in fatal and serious injuries of 33% could be achieved⁷.

Target road user groups

Vehicle Purchasers and Owners, Vehicle Drivers and Vehicle Passengers.

Target behaviour

Vehicle purchasing

¹ MUARC, 2021, Used Car Safety Ratings 2021, Victoria: Monash University Accident Research Centre <https://assets.howsafeisyourcar.com.au/content/used-car-safety-ratings-2021.pdf>

² Austroads 2019a, National view on regional and remote road safety (AP-R603-19), Sydney NSW: Austroads.

³ McIntosh, L. (2012). Changing attitudes to vehicle safety in Australia. Paper presented to the Australasian College of Road Safety Conference, Sydney, NSW, Australia

⁴ ANCAP, 2020, Beyond the stars. The facts behind ANCAP 2019-20, Manuka, ACT: ANCAP, Accessed on 26 July 2021 <https://s3.amazonaws.com/cdn.ancap.com.au/app/public/assets/22188555637b12cd6c507075b4af3e4f5bc5d855/original.pdf?1606194925>

⁵ ANCAP, 2017, New analysis: fatality rates four times higher in an older vehicle. Retrieved from <https://www.ancap.com.au/media-and-gallery/releases/new-analysis-fatality-rate-four-times-higher-in-an-older-vehicle-0e2f9e>

⁶ Peiris, S., Berecki-Gisolf, J., Chen, B. and Fildes, B. 2020, Road trauma in regional and remote Australia and New Zealand in preparedness for ADAS technologies and autonomous vehicles. Sustainability (Basel, Switzerland), 12(11), 4347, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12114347>.

⁷ Budd, L. and Newstead, S., 2019, Potential road safety benefits of making safe vehicle choices in Australia, Clayton, Vic: Monash University Accident Research Centre.



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