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# AusRAP Information Kit



## Welcome to the AusRAP Information Kit

The AusRAP Information Kit has been developed to help you effectively communicate and engage on matters related to AusRAP, including the release of state- or territory-based road star ratings reports.

This kit includes key messages and frequently asked questions, designed to support consistent and insightful communication when sharing information about AusRAP and its findings, both proactively and in response to inquiries.

The purpose of the kit is to facilitate positive engagement and foster informative discussions with the public, media and other stakeholders, including within your organisation, to raise awareness about AusRAP and its benefits.

For any questions or additional information, please contact Keith Simmons, AusRAP Program Lead, at [ksimmons@austrroads.gov.au](mailto:ksimmons@austrroads.gov.au) or 0439 404 901.

Thanks,

The AusRAP Team

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# Key Messages

## AusRAP objectives are achievable

- AusRAP's mission is an Australia free of high-risk roads for all road users.
- Our goal is at least 80% of all travel on Australian roads to be on 3-star or better roads by 2030, a goal in line with the National Road Safety Strategy (2021-30).
- Fatal and serious injuries (FSI) are not inevitable and can be prevented.
- These goals are achievable, and success has been demonstrated elsewhere, such as in: Siero (Spain), which has achieved at least 12 years fatality free since 2009; in Kerpen (Germany) and Lake Forest (California, USA), which have not had a road death for 10 years; and, Gothenburg (Sweden), a city of 500,000 people, that has achieved zero road deaths.

## AusRAP road safety ratings proactively identify risk

- AusRAP is recognised as a proactive tool that helps prevent fatal and serious injuries by highlighting road safety hazards and prioritised treatments to remove or reduce risks before serious crashes occur.
- The AusRAP road safety star rating system is a tool that allows us to work proactively towards our vision of an Australia free of high-risk roads for all road users.
- Road safety star ratings are recognised as a 'lead' indicator for road trauma, highlighting the current level of safety and, more importantly, providing a path towards safer outcomes.
- Road safety star ratings reflect the safety performance of our roads and can be used to inform and prioritise treatment decisions to maximise the impact of investment in safety.
- AusRAP safety ratings focus on reducing and mitigating the 'worst' crashes – fatal and serious injuries – not all crashes. Our current focus is on the

highest traffic volume roads, being national highways and major arterial routes, which means vehicle occupants are also the focus. In coming years we will expand AusRAP's focus to more roads, including key local roads, and all road users.

## Return on investment

- Road safety infrastructure is one of many priorities governments can invest in, so optimising the return on investment from available funding is critical.
- Each road considered for treatment will require a different delivery time and funding investment to achieve 3 star or higher status. Priority-based planning, focused on safety, will help maximise return on investment.
- Significant strategic investment will be required to achieve the goal of at least 80% of travel on 3 stars or better roads for all road users.

## Education improves outcomes

- Understanding and knowing safety ratings allows the Australian public to better appreciate the role of safer roads in reducing road trauma.
- AusRAP's methodology provides a tool to communicate the risk of road trauma to all stakeholders.
- AusRAP's methodology, tools and systems are effective, trusted and reliable.
- As the safety of a road improves, the risk of serious injury or death for road users decreases. For each star that a road's safety performance is improved, the risk of harm is halved. So road users are half as likely to suffer a fatal or serious injury on a 3-star road compared to a 2-star road.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Key points

- Nobody should be killed or seriously injured on Australia's road network.
- AusRAP's objectives are to reduce lives lost and serious injuries on Australia's roads and to ensure that at least 80% of travel occurs on roads rated 3 stars or higher.
- Our goals are challenging but achievable.
- AusRAP is a tool that helps us achieve our objectives by supporting proactive safety improvements to roads.
- Star ratings and crash risk maps support informed and effective investment decisions.
- AusRAP star ratings help drivers choose safer roads.

## What is AusRAP?

AusRAP is the Australian Road Assessment Program. It is used to identify, manage and improve the safety of road infrastructure and roadside features to systematically and proactively reduce road trauma. AusRAP rates the risks and safety performance of Australia's roads and is based on the globally recognised International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP).

## Who is responsible for AusRAP?

The program is coordinated nationally by Austroads, the association of Australian and New Zealand road transport authorities. AusRAP assessments are conducted by state, territory and some local governments. They collect data about a road's attributes and usage to calculate a road safety star rating. The higher the rating, the safer the road, with 5 stars being the safest.

## Is Australia the only country with a Road Assessment Program?

Road Assessment Programs (RAPs) operate in about 130 countries, and all programs around the world come under the umbrella of iRAP. Australia's program, AusRAP, is conducted according to iRAP principles so it is consistent with the assessments conducted in other countries.

## What is the benefit of AusRAP?

AusRAP ratings identify where the risk of fatal or serious injury is greatest. Prioritising the highest risk roads for treatment will maximise the return on investment, with each additional star in the star rating representing a halving of the risk. In addition to reducing impacts of road trauma on individual families, safer roads will reduce the number of hospital bed days that result from serious crashes.

## Why do we give roads star ratings?

Star ratings are an objective measure of the level of safety 'built-in' to the road. Combining star ratings with crash risk maps, showing collective and individual risk of fatal and serious injuries, can be used to inform infrastructure treatment plans that prioritise locations and measures that will reduce the risk of crashes occurring or mitigate the seriousness of crashes that do occur.

## How are star ratings calculated?

The star rating represents the risk of death and serious injury for an individual road user. Ratings take into account a broad range of risk factors and information, including travel speeds, traffic volume, road surface condition, and the presence and type of barriers and roadside hazards as well as crash data. The higher the star rating, the safer the road, with 5 stars being the safest.

## How much safer is each additional star?

For each improvement in star rating, the risk of fatal or serious injury is halved. Improving a road from 2-star to 3-star, for example, halves the number of serious crashes likely to occur.

## How do we decide which roads to assess?

AusRAP assessments prioritise national highways and the highest volume or high speed (80kmh or above) major arterial routes. These are the roads where not just the risk of fatal or serious injury is greatest, but also the numbers exposed to those risks are greatest and so where reducing the risk is most likely to prevent the largest number of fatal and serious injuries.

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## **How much of the road network has been rated?**

AusRAP assessments are undertaken on the highest travel volume and key high-speed roads, rather than determined by distance or a percentage of the total network. This is because there are close relationships between traffic volume and the frequency of crashes and with travel speed and the severity of crashes.

## **How often are roads assessed?**

Usually about every 5 years, but state or territory road authorities may conduct AusRAP assessments as required. Some authorities operate a rolling program, assessing 20% of their network each year, so all roads in their jurisdiction are re-assessed at least every 5 years. Specific roads may be re-assessed following major safety works or upgrades.

## **Why aim for minimum 3-star not for 5-star roads?**

Five-star rated roads are the gold standard for road safety. It is important to balance the cost of road improvements with prioritising the number of fatal and serious injuries that can be prevented. The greatest benefit, in terms of the number of lives saved and serious injuries avoided per dollar invested, will most often be achieved by upgrading low star roads to at least 3-star safety standard, rather than bringing 4-star rated roads up to 5 stars.

## **How are treatments chosen to address particular road safety risks?**

The impact of specific treatment measures is calculated using crash modification factors, which indicate the proportion of crashes that are expected after implementing a measure. Examples of common treatment measures include increasing the width of sealed road shoulders, installing audio-tactile lane markings, installing a median or roadside barrier, installing a roundabout or traffic signals and reducing speed limits. AusRAP uses tools to produce results that can inform decisions on road safety infrastructure spending.

## **How does AusRAP address the issue of potholes on local roads?**

AusRAP focuses on major arterial roads where the potential numbers of serious crashes are the greatest and infrastructure investment has the likelihood of preventing the most fatalities and serious injuries. AusRAP assessments do not currently include minor or local roads. Decisions on which roads to fix or upgrade balance the cost of the work with factors such as the value of the potential improvement, including preventing further maintenance costs, improving traffic flows and reducing road trauma. Roads are monitored for condition and safety performance by the controlling road authority and may be improved through various investment programs such as the Australian Government's National Black Spot and Safer Roads Programs.

## **Will safer roads mean less congestion?**

A safer road, as reflected by higher star ratings or lower crash risk, does not necessarily mean less traffic or congestion. Our focus is making progress towards reducing fatal and serious injuries on Australian roads.

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# AusRAP Logo

- When sharing information about AusRAP, please ensure the AusRAP logo is included in the materials. The logo can be provided upon request. Please contact the Program Lead, Keith Simmons, at [ksimmons@austroroads.gov.au](mailto:ksimmons@austroroads.gov.au).
- The AusRAP logo should be displayed prominently alongside or page balanced with the logo of the releasing agency (one either side or centred one above the other).
- It is important that clear space is maintained around the logo to ensure legibility. As a guide, other page or design elements should be placed no closer than the height of the 'us' in the AusRAP wordmark.
- The logo should be scaled to be the same size as the releasing agency logo.
- Where multiple pages are released, the AusRAP logo should appear on each page with the logo size scaled to fit content.



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## **AusRAP Website**

[austrroads.info/ausrap](http://austrroads.info/ausrap)

