

ACT Auditor-General's Office

Performance Audit Report

Follow-up Audit: Implementation of Audit Recommendations on Road Safety

Department of Territory and Municipal Services

May 2009



ACT AUDITOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE



PA 08/14

The Speaker
ACT Legislative Assembly
Civic Square, London Circuit
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Speaker

I am pleased to present to you a Performance Audit Report titled '***Follow-up Audit: Implementation of Audit Recommendations on Road Safety***', pursuant to Section 17(5) of the *Auditor-General Act 1996*.

Yours sincerely

Tu Pham
Auditor-General
1 May 2009

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ADI	Accredited Driving Instructors
AFP	Australian Federal Police
DUS	Department of Urban Services
MUG	Motorcycle User Group
NRMA	National Roads and Motorists' Association
NSW	New South Wales
RSU	Road Safety Unit
TAMS	Department of Territory and Municipal Services

1. REPORT SUMMARY AND AUDIT CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the results of a follow-up audit that reviewed whether the Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) had addressed recommendations from the Performance Audit Report No. 4 of 2006, *Road Safety*, presented to the Legislative Assembly on 27 June 2006 (the 2006 Audit Report).
- 1.2 At the time the 2006 report was tabled, the responsible Department was the Department of Urban Services (DUS). As a result of an administrative restructure, the responsible department is now TAMS.

BACKGROUND

- 1.3 Performance audit reports provide an independent assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of government activities. These reports often include recommendations that aim to improve the accountability and administration of public sector agencies through improving operations and procedures. Normally, audit recommendations provide guidance that directs the agency to areas for improvement. Therefore, specifics of how it can be done are often left to the audited agency, which has more in-depth operational knowledge and experience.
- 1.4 Audit recognises that it is action on recommendations – not the recommendations themselves – that helps government agencies to improve efficiency and accountability of the Government to the Legislative Assembly.
- 1.5 The 2006 Audit Report made seven recommendations. In its Submission to the Legislative Assembly in December 2006; the ACT Government agreed or agreed in part to all seven audit recommendations.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

- 1.6 The objective of this follow-up audit was to report to the Legislative Assembly on the extent to which TAMS has addressed and resolved issues or deficiencies identified in the 2006 Audit Report.
- 1.7 The audit focused on:
 - procedures established within TAMS for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of performance audit recommendations; and
 - the extent to which TAMS had implemented accepted recommendations made in the original report.

CONCLUSIONS

1.8 The audit opinions drawn against the audit objective are set out below.

Overall, TAMS made mixed progress in implementing recommendations from Performance Audit Report No. 4 of 2006, *Road Safety*. The Department implemented four of the seven recommendations made in this report.

TAMS has included recommendations not fully implemented in its current Road Safety Action Plan to be actioned.

There has been slow progress towards addressing safety issues relating to learner motorcyclists and repeat offenders.

KEY FINDINGS

Process for implementing audit recommendations (Chapter 2)

- TAMS developed and implemented an action plan for the implementation of audit recommendations.
- TAMS' internal audit function did not have an active role in addressing audit recommendations.

Implementation of audit recommendations (Chapter 3)

- Six of the seven recommendations stemming from the 2006 Audit Report were either implemented or partially implemented.
- The creation of the Road Safety Unit by TAMS provided a centralised and more efficient management of road safety issues that were previously managed across a number of units within TAMS.
- The Road Safety Unit now manages an overall road safety budget that can be allocated to various road safety measures as priorities determine.
- The *ACT Road Safety Strategy 2007-2010* and *ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2007-2008* were published and made available to the public. These took into account the audit recommendations from the 2006 Audit Report.
- To monitor the progress of the action plan, TAMS formed a road safety liaison framework, involving relevant agencies and stakeholders such as the Australian Federal Police and the National Roads and Motorists' Association (NRMA). Quarterly reports on this action plan were provided to the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services.
- TAMS did not fully implement three recommendations, stating that:
 - resources were limited and actions were taken based on priority;
 - alternative measures were considered to better suit current circumstances;
 - and

- issues involved numerous stakeholders and time was required for further consultation.
- The cross-border road safety campaigns to address interstate casualties had been strengthened. However, there was no target to reduce interstate accidents that involved ACT drivers. This made it difficult to evaluate whether the measures adopted by TAMS had achieved their intended outcome.
- A random sample review of Accredited Driving Instructors (ADI) audits indicated that all ADIs are now audited more than once every six months.
- Audit’s recommendation regarding the requirement for instructors’ vehicles to properly accommodate ADI auditors was reflected in the amendment of the disallowable instrument *Road Transport (Driver Licensing) Driving Instruction Code of Practice*.
- A review of ACT licensing, training and testing requirements for novice motorcycle riders was an action item in the ACT Road Safety Action Plan but had not yet commenced.
- TAMS has made little progress in addressing issues identified with motorcyclist safety while the number of motorcyclist deaths in Australia has steadily increased over the last five years, whereas the number of road user deaths overall has decreased.
- None of TAMS’ initiatives will result in all novice drivers completing a driver attitude and awareness course before a full licence is granted.
- TAMS investigated, and decided not to proceed with, the introduction of a speed awareness course as compulsory remedial training for serious offenders.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES TO THE REPORT

- 1.9 This follow-up audit report makes four recommendations to address the audit findings detailed in this report. These recommendations are intended to further improve TAMS’ implementation of audit recommendations.
- 1.10 In accordance with section 18 of the *Auditor-General Act 1996*, a final draft of this report was provided to the Chief Executive of the Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS), for his consideration and comments. The Chief Executive’s comments in response to the report are included after each recommendation.

Recommendation 1 (page 9)

TAMS should include in the charter for its Audit Committee the key responsibility to maintain a register of audit recommendations to monitor whether appropriate action takes place within a reasonable timeframe.

TAMS’ response:

Agreed – TAMS will amend the Audit Committee Charter accordingly.

Recommendation 2 (page 15)

TAMS should commence, as early as practicable, the evaluation of engineering treatments and policy initiatives aimed at improving the safety of roads to ensure actions taken are effective and achieve value for money.

TAMS' response:

Agreed – Undertaking a program of evaluation of road safety engineering treatments and policy initiatives is an item under the ACT Road Safety Action Plan for 2009 and 2010.

Recommendation 3 (page 19)

TAMS should develop a comprehensive project plan for the project to computerise crash data processing which should include:

- scope and objectives;
- budget;
- milestone timeframes;
- stakeholders and their requirements; and
- end users of the crash data.

TAMS' response:

Agreed – Implementation of a computerised SmartForm to allow electronic reporting of ACT traffic crashes is an item under the ACT Road Safety Action Plan for 2009 and 2010. A project plan will be prepared by mid 2009 to assist with the completion of this project.

Recommendation 4 (page 26)

TAMS should implement the recommendation of the 2006 Audit Report on road safety relating to motorcycle safety, including the enhanced approach to testing novice riders, such as on-road testing.

TAMS' response:

Agreed in part - A review of ACT licensing, training and testing requirements for novice drivers will be addressed as an item under the ACT Road Safety Action Plan for 2009 and 2010.

2. PROCESSES FOR IMPLEMENTING AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This chapter describes the process undertaken by the Department of Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) to implement accepted recommendations from audit reports.

KEY FINDINGS

- TAMS developed and implemented an action plan for the implementation of audit recommendations.
- TAMS' internal audit function did not have an active role in addressing the audit recommendations.

BACKGROUND

- 2.2 Audit reports produced by the Audit Office contain recommendations that suggest areas for improvement within agencies, but do not normally provide detailed guidance to agencies on how to implement these recommendations. This recognises that agencies, given their in-depth knowledge and experience of their operations, are in a better position than the Audit Office to decide the most appropriate way to implement recommendations and address deficiencies identified in audit reports.
- 2.3 The Audit Office has no role in implementing recommendations, but is available to discuss the report to assist agencies to determine the intent of the recommendations and an appropriate implementation plan.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

- 2.4 Agencies manage the implementation of audit recommendations through various processes ranging from action plans and directions from Chief Executives to informal working groups.
- 2.5 Findings in a follow-up audit report titled '*Agency Implementation of Audit Recommendations*', tabled in June 2007 (the 2007 Audit Report), showed that agencies with action plans were more effective in implementing and evaluating recommendations than those without such plans.
- 2.6 In addressing the recommendations of the Performance Audit Report No. 4 of 2006, *Road Safety* (the 2006 Audit Report), TAMS developed an action plan, which resulted in the implementation or partial implementation of six out of seven recommendations. However, the action plan did not include all the better practice suggestions detailed in the 2007 Audit Report.

2.7 The development of a better practice framework could assist TAMS to ensure compliance with legislative, policy and procedural requirements and promote a consistent approach amongst business units to the implementation of audit recommendations.

2.8 The following Better Practices Guide was adapted from a similar guide issued by the Audit Office of NSW.

Table 2.1: Better Practices - Implementation and Monitoring of Performance Audit Recommendations

ACT Government agencies should have a comprehensive policy that establishes appropriate processes to monitor progress and report on changes following a performance audit.

Following a performance audit, each agency should:

- assign responsibility for the implementation of recommendations accepted to a single person or business unit;
- develop an action plan that includes a timetable for implementation and clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for the implementation of each recommendation accepted;
- include in the plan mechanisms to monitor and report on results against key indicators where they have been identified in the audit;
- allocate sufficient resources to implement the plan and set realistic and achievable timeframes and targets;
- have the plan endorsed by the Chief Executive, and where appropriate, the Board and/or the Minister;
- nominate or establish a committee (such as an Audit Committee) to monitor and report on progress;
- provide regular reports on the progress of implementation of the recommendations to the Chief Executive and where appropriate, the Board or the Minister;
- raise staff awareness of the outcomes of the performance audit and invite feedback on how best to implement the recommendations;
- regularly review and monitor the action plan and make amendments, where necessary, to maintain relevance and appropriateness; and
- report progress and actions taken to address issues raised in the performance audit to the Legislative Assembly (reporting progress each year, through the agency's annual report, until implementation is complete).

2.9 Many Auditor-General's reports identify common issues that have broader implications outside the audited agency. In this respect, internal audit should consider the relevance of key findings and recommendations in all Auditor-General's reports, and refer them to executive management or the Audit Committee as appropriate. Internal audit should also play a role in monitoring the

implementation progress of audit recommendations within TAMS. Inclusion of these functions in an agency's audit committee charter is an appropriate way to ensure they are completed.

- 2.10 TAMS' internal audit function had no involvement in the implementation of audit recommendations stemming from the 2006 Audit Report.

Recommendation 1

TAMS should include in the charter for its Audit Committee the key responsibility to maintain a register of audit recommendations to monitor whether appropriate action takes place within a reasonable timeframe.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS ON ROAD SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

3.1 This chapter discusses the extent of progress made in the implementation of recommendations from the performance audit 'Road Safety' tabled in June 2006.

KEY FINDINGS

- Six of the seven recommendations stemming from the 2006 Audit Report were either implemented or partially implemented.
- The creation of the Road Safety Unit by TAMS provided a centralised, and more efficient, management of road safety issues that were previously managed across a number of units within TAMS.
- The Road Safety Unit now manages an overall road safety budget that can be allocated to various road safety measures as priorities determine.
- The *ACT Road Safety Strategy 2007-2010* and *ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2007-2008* were published and made available to the public. These took into account the audit recommendations from the 2006 Audit Report.
- To monitor the progress of the action plan, TAMS formed a road safety liaison framework, involving relevant agencies and stakeholders such as the Australian Federal Police and NRMA. Quarterly reports on this action plan were provided to the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services.
- TAMS did not fully implement three recommendations, stating that:
 - resources were limited and actions were taken based on priority;
 - alternative measures were considered to better suit current circumstances; and
 - issues involved numerous stakeholders and time was required for further consultation.
- The cross-border road safety campaigns to address interstate casualties had been strengthened. However, there was no target to reduce interstate accidents that involved ACT drivers. This made it difficult to evaluate whether the measures adopted by TAMS had achieved their intended outcome.
- A random sample review of Accredited Driving Instructors (ADI) audits indicated that all ADIs are now audited more than once every six months.
- Audit's recommendation regarding the requirement for instructors' vehicles to properly accommodate ADI auditors was reflected in the amendment of the disallowable instrument *Road Transport (Driver Licensing) Driving Instruction Code of Practice*.

- A review of ACT licensing, training and testing requirements for novice motorcycle riders was an action item in the ACT Road Safety Action Plan but had not yet commenced.
- TAMS has made little progress in addressing issues identified with motorcyclist safety while the number of motorcyclist deaths in Australia has steadily increased over the last five years, whereas the number of road user deaths overall has decreased.
- None of TAMS' initiatives will result in all novice drivers completing a driver attitude and awareness course before a full licence is granted.
- TAMS investigated, and decided not to proceed with, the introduction of a speed awareness course as compulsory remedial training for serious offenders.

BACKGROUND

3.2 The Performance Audit Report No. 4 of 2006, *Road Safety* (the 2006 Audit Report), was conducted as a result of an increase in road accident fatalities in 2005. The audit aimed to provide an independent opinion to the Legislative Assembly on whether the then Department of Urban Services had effectively monitored road safety issues and developed effective measures to reduce road injuries and fatalities.

3.3 This report made seven recommendations relating to aspects of the coordination of road safety activities, monitoring and analysis of road safety issues, and development and implementation of road safety measures. The Department agreed or agreed in part to all recommendations included in the report.

STATUS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2006 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.4 Table 3.1 below summarises the overall status of implementation. Each recommendation is then discussed in detail.

Table 3.1: Status of Implementation

2006 Audit Recommendation	Agency Response in 2006	Status of Implementation	Comments
1	Agreed	Partially Implemented	Other than the national road safety target of road fatalities below 5.6 per 100 000 population, Audit noted a lack of clear performance measures and targets for assessing the effectiveness of the Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan.
2	Agreed	Implemented	
3	Agreed	Partially Implemented	A project is underway to computerise the current paper-based form for reporting traffic crashes in the ACT.
4	Agreed	Implemented	
5	Agreed	Implemented	
6	Agreed in part	Not implemented	Some preparatory work had been completed.
7	Agreed in part	Implemented	TAMS has prepared options to improve driver attitude and awareness as recommended, but has decided not to implement some new measures relating to novice drivers and repeat offenders.

3.5 In summary, of the seven recommendations, four were fully implemented, two were partially implemented and one had not been implemented.

3.6 The status of the implementation of each audit recommendation is discussed below.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 1

2006 Recommendation 1:

3.7 The Department of Urban Services should assess the effectiveness of the Road Safety Strategy and Plan.

2006 Department response:

Agreed.

An assessment of the effectiveness of key measures in the 2005-06 Road Safety Action Plan and the previous five-year Road Safety Strategy will be undertaken prior to the establishment of a new Action Plan. Consideration will also be given to the outcome of the

review of the National Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan as the national framework will provide key indicators for future directions.

Table 3.2: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 1 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Partially Implemented	<p>A new ACT Road Safety Strategy for the period 2007 to 2010, incorporating the ACT Road Safety Action Plan for 2007 and 2008, was publicly launched in April 2007. These documents were developed following a review of ACT crash data, identification of key road safety issues and consultation with stakeholder groups.</p> <p>The ACT Strategy and Action Plan adopt and complement the principles and objectives of the National Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan framework.</p> <p>The ACT is closely involved at a national level to develop the next National Road Safety Action Plan (covering the period 2009 and 2010) and the next National Road Safety Strategy (post 2010).</p>

3.8 Audit acknowledges the efforts made by TAMS to finalise the *ACT Road Safety Strategy 2007-2010 and ACT Road Safety and Action Plan 2007-2008* (the Action Plan) and ongoing work in monitoring progress against a targeted timeframe.

3.9 However, there was a lack of clear performance measures and targets for assessing the effectiveness of the Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan. Despite the adoption of a national road safety target of road fatalities below 5.6 per 100 000 population by 2010, no other performance indicators were clearly established as targets to achieve.

3.10 Representatives of TAMS stated that difficulties lay mainly in

- the complexity of road safety issues; and
- establishing appropriate and measurable performance measures.

3.11 It is difficult to attribute results directly to any road safety initiative without extensive evidence-based research. For TAMS the research would involve comparing crash test data, road engineering and in some cases information protected by privacy agreements. TAMS was also wary of contributing effectiveness to any one initiative because many initiatives run simultaneously. Although TAMS had an Action Plan item to evaluate road safety engineering treatments and policy initiatives, this Action Plan item has not yet commenced.

3.12 TAMS also considered the implementation of recommendations from a cost-benefit analysis perspective and advised that, due to limited resources, high priority tasks were often attended to first.

3.13 TAMS had proposed to undertake an evaluation program for road safety engineering treatments (for example traffic lights and signage) and policy initiatives assessment and had included this in the Action Plan. It would be beneficial to decision makers if this evaluation program could commence as early as practicable to ensure actions taken are effective and achieve value for money.

Recommendation 2

TAMS should commence, as early as practicable, the evaluation of engineering treatments and policy initiatives aimed at improving the safety of roads to ensure actions taken are effective and achieve value for money.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 2

2006 Recommendation 2:

- 3.14 The Department of Urban Services should improve overall coordination of its road safety function through means such as:
- better utilisation of the Traffic Liaison Committee to coordinate input from other agencies such as the NRMA and the Australian Federal Police (AFP);
 - establishment of a strong road safety coordination unit; and
 - introduction of an overall road safety budget that can be allocated to various road safety measures as priorities determine.

2006 Department response:

Agreed.

From 1 July 2006, the Office of Transport will contain a Road Safety Unit which will draw together and enhance the current level of resourcing for road safety. Functional responsibility for the development of a cross-agency and community based Liaison Committee and the establishment of a defined road safety budget will be established as part of the new structure.

Table 3.3: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 2 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Implemented	<p>New arrangements for road safety coordination and liaison were implemented during 2007, with the establishment of the Road Safety Liaison Committee and Road Safety Task Force. These bodies have replaced the former Traffic Liaison Committee. They have clear membership, terms of reference and reporting lines, and have met five times each to date. Liaison arrangements with road safety stakeholders have also been established, comprising the Road Users Working Group and separate bilateral meetings with representatives of motorists, cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians.</p> <p>A Road Safety Unit has been established in the Office of Transport since July 2006. An initial round of recruitment was completed in early 2007. A process is currently underway to convert the Road Safety Officer position from a contract to a permanent position.</p> <p>The Road Safety Unit has its own budget arrangements as part of Traffic Management and Safety, Roads ACT. This includes funding for ongoing activities and engineering and awareness initiatives.</p>

Better utilisation of the Traffic Liaison Committee to coordinate input from other agencies such as the NRMA and the AFP

3.15 TAMS had replaced the Traffic Liaison Committee that existed in 2006 with a three-level liaison framework. The table below summarises the membership and objectives of the current arrangement:

Table 3.4: Current road safety liaison arrangements

Liaison Level	Membership	Objectives
Road Safety Liaison Committee (RSLC)	Executive Director of Community and Infrastructure Services, TAMS (Chair) Commander, ACT Police Director of Curriculum Support and Professional Learning, Department of Education and Training Director, Legal and Insurance Policy, ACT Treasury Director of Roads ACT, TAMS. Manager of Road Safety, Roads ACT, TAMS.	Monitoring implementation of the ACT Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan. Provide quarterly advice to Minister.
Road Safety Task Force	Director, Roads ACT, TAMS (Chair) General Manager, Road Transport, TAMS Superintendent, Traffic Operations, ACT Police Representative from the Department of Education and Training Secretary / Manager of NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust Policy Officer, Legal and Insurance Policy, Department of Treasury Manager, Road Safety Unit, TAMS	Support group for Road Safety Liaison Committee. Provide agency input to ACT Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan. Report on progress against Action Plan and on other Road Safety initiatives.
Road Users Working Group and separate bilateral discussions with road safety stakeholders	Numerous discussions were held between TAMS and various road user groups, including NRMA Motoring and Services, Bicycle User Group, and Motorcycle User Group. NRMA Motoring and Services, Pedal Power, Motorcycle Riders Association and Pedestrian Forum are members of the Road Users Working Group.	Provide comment and input to road safety issues. Report to the Road Safety Task Force on major issues.

Source: Department of Territory and Municipal Services

3.16 Audit considers the current structure to be more effective than the previous arrangement as it allows major road safety issues, collated from stakeholders, to be reviewed by executive officers and reported to the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services.

- 3.17 This new arrangement also added efficiency to the implementation of road safety initiatives. Issues were actioned by Department representatives and proposals promptly dealt with, if no further approval was required from the executive level.

Establishment of a strong road safety coordination unit

- 3.18 A new unit of TAMS, the Road Safety Unit (RSU), was established to develop and implement programs to improve road safety in the ACT. The establishment of the RSU also allowed TAMS to liaise with stakeholders regarding road safety in ACT and strengthened the communication framework of their organisation.
- 3.19 Most audit recommendations were implemented by senior management within this unit. Within this new communication framework an action plan for ACT Road Safety (aligned to the *National Road Safety Action Plan 2007 and 2008*) was developed, monitored and reported on to the Minister.
- 3.20 However, Audit noted certain matters required the involvement of the RSU in conjunction with other sub-units, such as Transport Regulation and Planning for the review of vehicle licensing and training courses. Recommendations relating to these sub units were only partially implemented or awaiting action.
- 3.21 In relation to licensing and training issues, RSU worked with the Transport Regulation and Planning area of TAMS. Recommendations relating to these areas are currently either partially implemented or awaiting action.
- 3.22 Audit considered that there was scope for more regular communication and coordination between the Road Safety Unit and other business units within TAMS to achieve further integration of all road safety issues.

Introduction of an overall road safety budget that can be allocated to various road safety measures as priorities determine

- 3.23 TAMS created an output class in the budget papers for 'Office of Transport'. Part of this budget was allocated to the RSU, which managed the funds for road safety measures.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 3

2006 Recommendation 3:

- 3.24 The Department of Urban Services should, as a priority, ensure that important road safety statistics can be produced accurately and promptly.

2006 Department response:

Agreed.

While there has been a delay in the release of some reports, the primary report on 2004 Road Traffic Crashes was released in September 2005. Analysis of the 2004 and 2005 data is being undertaken to assist with the development of future Black Spot programs. Interrogation of the data will also identify key factors or patterns in recent road crashes, which will assist with the development of targeted education campaigns.

As a small jurisdiction, fluctuations in crash data can result in wide statistical variations, therefore use of national data reports is often of great assistance in recognising trends in unsafe driving practices. The release in May 2006 of the Department of Transport and Regional Services ‘Community Attitudes to Road Safety’ report, based on data collected in February and March 2005, will provide critical data for the development of the next ACT Road Safety Action Plan.

Table 3.5: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 3 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Partially Implemented	<p>Ongoing efforts are made to ensure that information from police crash reports are entered into the Roads ACT crash database in a timely way. However, some delays can occur due to the submission and collation of paper forms, collection from the AFP and data entry and system issues. The report for the 2007 calendar year crashes was completed in April 2008.</p> <p>A project is underway to computerise the current paper-based form for reporting traffic crashes in the ACT. Once completed, this project will improve the process involved in the collection of crash data and its prompt availability.</p> <p>Further improvements to the Integrated Asset Management System are planned to enhance interrogation of road safety statistics.</p> <p>The 2006 Audit Report noted that the ACT experienced a sharp rise in the number of road deaths in 2005. As noted in the original Government response to this recommendation, the number of deaths in the ACT is quite small, and annual changes can be influenced by random statistical variation. The number of road deaths in 2006 and 2007 was significantly lower than in 2005.</p>

3.25 Audit considered the release of the ACT 2007 crash report, in April 2008, was timely. The report included analysis of the following areas:

- road crash fatalities and injury trends;
- comparison against other jurisdictions and national figures;
- types of accidents and vehicles;
- age and gender of crash victims; and
- causes of casualties, such as weather condition, time, positions of vehicle, and fixed object crashes.

3.26 Audit regards the analysis provided in the crash report as constructive for road safety improvement. The current Road Safety Action Plan addresses findings in the crash report, such as to further study and develop specific engineering programs to address issues of concern and to provide inputs under the Federal Black Spot Program.

3.27 It was suggested in the 2006 Audit Report that the crash report could also include up-to-date data on interstate road fatalities and injuries to highlight and enhance road user awareness of road safety and different road rules and conditions in other

jurisdictions. TAMS informed Audit that it did not plan to include data on interstate road fatalities in the ACT crash report.

3.28 TAMS has an ongoing project, ‘Smartform’, to computerise the existing paper-based crash reporting process and the status of this project is noted in the Road Safety Action Plan. This could enhance the efficiency of traffic accident analysis and reporting. However, Audit found that this project had no plan which defined the project scope, objective, planned budget and an implementation timeframe. As a result, the project may not be completed in a manner that ensures the intended benefits are achieved.

3.29 A sound project plan would assist in resource utilisation and better project management. Table 3.6 indicates some potential key advantages of sound project management, if applied to the ‘Smartform’ project:

Table 3.6: Example of potential benefits of project management

Project Plan Component	Activity	Advantages
Scope and objective	Meet with stakeholders (e.g. AFP, Hospitals, NRMA Compulsory Third Party Insurance, the Department of Treasury, and InTACT).	To define potential functions and inclusions of ‘Smartform’. To ensure the project meets the needs of users.
Budget	Seek budget approval based on project scope and defined objectives. Regularly monitor the variance between budget and actual expenditure.	To assist in assessing the project’s progress against budget and other outcomes.
Timeframe	Break down the project into key activities and milestones. Conduct analysis of time required for each key project activity. To regularly monitor the time spent for each activity against the plan.	To achieve better resources utilisation. To assist in meeting project deadlines.

Recommendation 3

TAMS should develop a comprehensive project plan for the project to computerise crash data processing which should include:

- scope and objectives;
- budget;
- milestone timeframes;
- stakeholders and their requirements; and
- end users of the crash data.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 4

2006 Recommendation 4:

- 3.30 The Department of Urban Services should take into account the risk of interstate crashes when developing and implementing measures such as awareness campaigns and driver education reforms.

2006 Department response:

Agreed.

The newly formed Road Safety Unit will employ a Road Safety Officer with responsibility to assess both ACT and interstate data, where available, and develop appropriate awareness campaigns.

Table 3.7: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 4 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Implemented	<p>The issue of reducing fatalities and casualties occurring to ACT drivers travelling interstate has been specifically identified in the ACT Road Safety Strategy.</p> <p>TAMS and the NRMA-ACT Road Safety Trust have attended cross-border liaison meetings with New South Wales (NSW), ACT Policing and road safety officers.</p> <p>Cross-border campaigns have included the Monaro Highway (snow season 2007), Barton Highway (October 2007) and Kings Highway (Christmas 2007 and Easter 2008).</p> <p>Further joint campaigns are planned. In addition, TAMS has placed fatigue messages in the print media during holiday periods.</p>

- 3.31 TAMS' focus on improving interstate road safety and reducing casualties lies mainly in cooperation with NSW. TAMS' continued collaboration with NSW and ACT Policing in addressing interstate crashes, by means such as increasing enforcement programs and awareness campaigns. TAMS also participated in regular national road safety forums relating to regulation and vehicle safety enhancement.
- 3.32 Audit observed that the cross-border campaigns to tackle interstate casualties had been strengthened. However, as there was no target to reduce the interstate accidents that involved ACT drivers, it was difficult to evaluate whether the measures adopted had delivered their intended outcome.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 5

2006 Recommendation 5:

- 3.33 The Department of Urban Services should improve its processes for ensuring the quality of driving instructors by:
- ensuring all driving instructors are subject to audits at least a specified number of times in a year;
 - requiring driving instructors to use a vehicle that will safely accommodate a DUS auditor for on-road auditing; and
 - establishing a set of risk-based guidelines to help auditors select which driving instructor to audit.

2006 Department response:

Agreed.

All Accredited Driving Instructors (ADI) that are training and assessing licence applicants will be audited a minimum of once every six months. Additional audits will be conducted in accordance with the risk based guidelines to be established under recommendation bullet point three. The guidelines will account for the number of applicants assessed by the ADI, previous audit results, applicants’ feedback on ADIs and a higher level of auditing for new ADIs.

Consultation with stakeholders would be undertaken prior to any changes requiring ADIs to use certain types of vehicle. To introduce such a requirement would result in a change to Code of Practice for Accredited Driving Instructors. The Code is a disallowable instrument signed by the Chief Executive of the Road Transport Authority.

Table 3.8: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 5 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Implemented	<p>All Accredited Driving Instructors (ADI) who are currently operating are audited a minimum of once every six months. Additional audits are conducted in accordance with guidelines that have been incorporated into the procedure for Auditing of Accredited Driving Instructors.</p> <p>Discussions were held with driving instructor industry representatives concerning the phase out of unsuitable vehicles.</p> <p>The Code of Practice has now been amended to require that a vehicle provided for instruction or assessment must be capable of comfortably carrying an adult observer in a rear seating position in accordance with a list of approved vehicles.</p>

- 3.34 A risk-based ADI audit guideline was released in October 2006 which clearly adopted the 2006 Audit Report recommendation.
- 3.35 Audit reviewed a random sample of audits conducted by RUS, and found that all ADIs are now audited more than once every six months.

- 3.36 Audit's recommendation regarding the requirement for instructor's vehicles should properly accommodate ADI auditors was reflected in the amendment of *Road Transport (Driver Licensing) Driving Instruction Code of Practice*.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 6

2006 Recommendation 6:

- 3.37 In the light of the increase in accidents involving motorcyclists, the Department of Urban Services should review the regime for motorcycle licensing with a view to introducing an on-road component.

2006 Department response:

Agreed in part.

The existing pre-learner licence course and assessment is conducted off-road in a controlled environment. The course provides nine hours motorcycle instruction and includes theory and practical components. This course provides riding skills for people prior to commencing on-road riding.

The Minister for Territory and Municipal Services has given in-principle support to enhance existing pre-provisional motorcycle rider training course to make the course compulsory for all persons moving from a learner licence to a provisional licence. The course contains an on-road component.

Table 3.9: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 6 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Not implemented (to be commenced)	A review of ACT licensing, training and testing requirements for novice motorcycle riders is an action item under the ACT Road Safety Action Plan. Review of motorcycle licensing requires input from both the policy regulation area as well as the Road Safety Unit under Roads ACT. Initial discussions have been held with Motorcycle User Group (MUG) representatives. External participation of MUG includes the motorcyclist association, training providers, NRMA Motoring and Services, and industry representatives. Members of MUG contribute to the issues of concern to or affecting motorcyclists.

- 3.38 Motorcycle riding casualties ranked as the second highest number of road casualties in 2007 and there has been an increase in the numbers of registered motorcyclists in the ACT. The number of motorcyclist deaths in Australia has steadily increased over the last five years, whereas the number of road user deaths overall has decreased. Accordingly, TAMS should take more active and timely steps to improve motorcycle safety, including the enhanced approach to testing novice riders, which includes an on-road component, as recommended in 2006.
- 3.39 Audit considers the regular meetings of MUG a reasonable approach in terms of gathering information on potential issues and facilitating motorcycle road safety campaigns. A review of motorcycle licensing requires input from the policy

regulation area and the Road Safety Unit under Roads ACT. Better communication between these two business units on the issue of review of motorcycle riding licensing in the ACT would be beneficial to achieve the implementation of this recommendation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF 2006 AUDIT REPORT RECOMMENDATION 7

2006 Recommendation 7:

3.40 The Department of Urban Services should prepare options for Government on measures to improve driver attitude and awareness such as:

- requiring all novice drivers to undertake a driver attitude and awareness course before a full licence is granted;
- compulsory remedial training for licence-holders after serious or numerous offences; and
- enhanced road safety awareness campaigns.

2006 Department response:

Agreed in part.

The Department considers that the Road Ready Plus Course, particularly when expanding to five hours with the introduction of an additional module covering a Driver Development Plan, meets driver attitude and awareness training for provisional licence holders. The recently introduced voluntary Driver Awareness Course in South Australia and compulsory Driver Qualification Test in operation in NSW will be investigated as part of any future review of Road Ready Plus.

The Department will be commissioning a feasibility study to assess a Speed Awareness Course, currently in operation in the United Kingdom, for persons who have committed repeat speeding offences. The course would be similar to the 'Sober Driver' course currently required for recidivist drink drivers.

The establishment of the Road Safety Unit in the Office of Transport will enable a coordinated approach to the development of future road safety awareness campaigns.

Table 3.10: 2006 Audit Report Recommendation 7 – status of implementation

Status of Implementation	Comments from TAMS
Implemented	<p>The issue of novice drivers continues to be a priority for all jurisdictions. ACT arrangements for novice drivers – including the Road Ready course, competency based training and assessment, and the Road Ready Plus course – continue to operate as envisaged.</p> <p>The ACT Government has previously indicated its intention to focus on these education measures, rather than additional regulatory measures. The ACT continues to monitor interstate developments in relation to novice drivers, although best practice has not been clearly established.</p> <p>A large scale national trial, sponsored by the Federal, NSW and Victorian Governments, is due to report around 2010. The results from this trial, and interventions in other jurisdictions, will be considered by the ACT in due course. Current items under the ACT Road Safety Action Plan include a review and update of materials used in the Road Ready Course, and the implementation of an additional module to enhance the Road Ready Plus course. These items will be progressed in the near future.</p> <p>A consultant study examining the potential for introducing a Speed Awareness Course for drivers with multiple speeding offences has been completed. However, further detailed consideration of this proposal is required, and other speed management initiatives are likely to be more effective in the short term. This issue will be further considered as part of an overall speed management strategy under the ACT Road Safety Strategy. A consultancy report providing advice on a broader media strategy to support the various awareness elements of the Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan has also been completed. The recommendations from this report are currently being implemented, and will inform road safety media efforts over 2008-09 and in future years. In the meantime, a program of TAMS advertisements has been implemented, comprising a series of road safety advertisements in local print media reflecting the key issues in the Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan.</p>

Novice drivers attending compulsory driver attitude and awareness training

3.41 Initiatives relating to novice drivers in the ACT include:

- a *Road Ready* course that is given to Year 10 students to help familiarise them with the road rules. The content of this program undergoes regular updates;
- a *Road Ready Plus* course that is optional for drivers under 26 years old on their P Plates. The successful completion of this course allows the licence holder to remove P plates from their car and issues them with 4 additional demerit points (giving them a total of 8 licence demerit points – a full licence has 12 demerit points). The content of this course is regularly updated;
- the Road Ready website for learner and provisional drivers that is updated regularly; and
- other jurisdictions are monitored by TAMS for potential novice driver initiatives.

- 3.42 Audit remains concerned that none of these initiatives will result in all novice drivers completing a driver attitude and awareness course before a full licence is granted.
- 3.43 TAMS informed Audit that making the *Road Ready Plus* course compulsory would be a large and expensive cross-organisational task and would not necessarily be beneficial or useful to all participants.

Compulsory remedial training for licence holders after serious or numerous offences

- 3.44 TAMS sought to address the issue of speeding motorists by the use of media campaigns, increases in the number of speed cameras (both fixed and mobile) and consultants reports commissioned to review various aspects of speeding and road signage.
- 3.45 TAMS commissioned a consultant to review a speed awareness course that is currently underway in Lancashire in the United Kingdom, to evaluate whether it could be beneficial to the ACT¹. The course targeted offenders who had exceeded the speed limit by less than 15 km/h. As part of the review, the AFP was asked for comment and subsequently indicated that the course would be advantageous to the ACT.
- 3.46 After consideration of practices in other Australian jurisdictions and a review of the United Kingdom study, TAMS decided not to proceed further with this issue. Instead TAMS had decided to focus on optional training for minimal speeding offenders. It is these offenders that TAMS believed would most likely benefit from a speed awareness course.
- 3.47 TAMS advised that a national investigation was being conducted into speed awareness programmes.

Enhanced road safety awareness campaigns

- 3.48 TAMS sought input from the AFP, agencies including the Department of Education and Training and community organisations in the creation and implementation of the *ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2007 – 2008* (Action Plan). Twenty-two of the fifty-eight Action Plan items (38 percent) relate to road safety awareness. These include:
- integrated media campaigns;
 - education programs such as ‘Bicycle Month’ and ‘Share the Road’;
 - random roadside drug testing investigations; and
 - targeting driver distractions.

¹ Report titled ‘An Evaluation of the Lancashire County Council’s, United Kingdom (UK) Speed Awareness Course and its Adaptability to the Australian Capital Territory ACT, Australia’ prepared by Annita Wenban (Road Safety Consultant).

3.49 These road safety awareness campaigns were at various stages of completion. TAMS should ensure these campaigns are completed in timely manner to ensure they achieve the intended benefits.

CONCLUSION

3.50 TAMS made progress in implementing certain organisational and procedural changes. In particular the:

- creation of the Road Safety Unit by TAMS provided a centralised management of the road safety issues that were previously managed across a number of units within TAMS. A budget was managed by the Road Safety Unit to apply to road safety issues as they arose; and
- Road Safety Unit had used the *National Road Safety Action Plan 2007 and 2008* as the basis to develop the *ACT Road Safety Strategy 2007 – 2010 and ACT Road Safety Action Plan 2007 - 2008*. A three-level liaison framework monitored this action plan. The creation and monitoring of the action plan represented effective ways to continue the progress of road safety initiatives in the ACT.

3.51 However, there was a lack of progress made in addressing road safety issues concerning motorcyclists and learner drivers.

3.52 TAMS indicated that the effectiveness of any of the initiatives they undertake was hard to measure and link directly to an impact on ACT road safety and fatalities. This was due, in part, to the number of initiatives run concurrently; making it difficult to determine which initiative was having an impact. It was also difficult to select methods of evaluation to ensure the initiatives were relevant, cost effective and reliable.

3.53 The high proportion of traffic crashes in the ACT due to speeding and drink driving has influenced TAMS' focus on these factors in its aim to reduce crashes.

3.54 At the time of audit, TAMS was on track to meet its target of a fatality rate of less than the national target of 5.6 deaths per 100 000 population by 2010. As at January 2009, the ACT road deaths per 100 000 population was 3.8.

Recommendation 4

TAMS should implement the recommendation of the 2006 Audit Report on road safety relating to motorcycle safety, including the enhanced approach to testing novice riders, such as on-road testing.

APPENDIX A AUDIT CRITERIA, APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

AUDIT CRITERIA

The audit was conducted against the following criteria:

- Did the agency assess the impact of the recommendations, and determine an appropriate course of action?
- Did the agency develop an action plan or similar, endorsed by the Chief Executive or other responsible senior manager, that included:
 - a timetable for implementation;
 - clear delineation of roles and responsibilities for the implementation of each accepted recommendation;
 - a process for regular reporting of process in implementation; and
 - a process for evaluation of the efficiency of the action taken to address the issues raised in the audit report.
- Did the agency implement the accepted recommendation in accordance with the action plan?
- Had the action plan been monitored and reported upon (e.g., through the Audit Committee)?

AUDIT APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

Audit obtained information on the implementation of recommendations initially through advice from the responsible agency. This assisted in forming a view on whether the agency advice was consistent with our existing knowledge of the agency and whether, given the complexity of the issues and resources assigned, the agency had made reasonable progress in implementing the initial report's recommendations.

The audit approach included:

- seeking feedback from the agency on implementation progress;
- reviewing the methods the agency had in place to monitor and report on the implementation of recommendations; and
- reviewing and analysing relevant agency documents and files.

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