RAA

2026 State Election Platform

Growth without gridlock

Strategic investment for a growing South Australia.

Safe Sustainable Liveable

Contents

Foreword

RAA is a passionate advocate for South Australia. We are South Australia's largest member-based organisation and exist to make life better for our members and the community.

In the lead-up to the 2026 State Election, RAA is proud to present our vision for a safer, more sustainable and liveable South Australia.

We are committed to working with government, industry and the community to spur economic activity and build a thriving state.

However, as our state grows, we need to build the infrastructure to maintain our unique liveability and ensure everyone can live and move around our great state in an affordable, efficient and sustainable way.

This platform reflects the voices of our more than 830,000 members and outlines practical, evidence-based proposals to improve transport, energy, tourism and community resilience across the state.

It builds on our long history of advocacy and our commitment to delivering benefits not just to our members, but to the broader South Australian community.

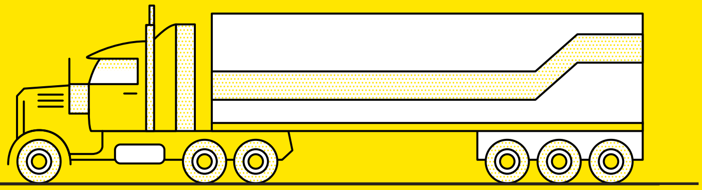
We look forward to working constructively with the next Government of South Australia to deliver outcomes that keep our state moving forward.

RAA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands that our members and staff live on. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We are committed to contributing to reconciliation in Australia and embedding this in the culture and operations of RAA.

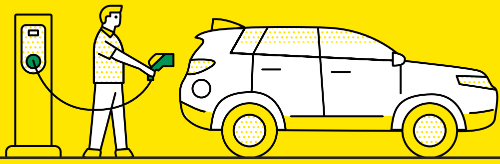
Artwork by Elizabeth Close,
Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Artist.

Safe



Safer freight routes Upgrade our national highways to boost productivity and make travel safer	• **National Highway upgrades:** As part of a long-term plan to upgrade our national highways, complete planning and commit funding to duplicate: a) Augusta Highway between Port Pirie and Crystal Brook b) Sturt Highway between Truro and Nuriootpa c) Dukes Highway between Tailem Bend and Mallee Highway • **Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass:** Secure full funding and progress the Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass, including Truro Bypass and upgrade of Swanport Bridge
Safer roads Increase funding for regional roads and leverage road safety data to deliver targeted investments	• **Road safety maintenance:** Increase road maintenance funding to a minimum of $250 million per year to address the increasing maintenance backlog resulting from historical underspend • **Road safety data:** Release and use AusRAP star ratings to improve transparency and support evidence-based funding decisions • **Local government capacity:** Fund better asset management tools for local councils to enhance data-driven infrastructure planning • **Road safety upgrades:** Develop a Safety and Productivity Program to improve roads in the Fleurieu Peninsula
Safer active transport Make cycling and use of e-mobility devices safer to encourage uptake and protect vulnerable road users	• **Cycling and e-mobility infrastructure:** Invest $10 million each year into a dedicated infrastructure fund to support safer cycling and the use of e-mobility devices

Sustainable



Affordable energy

Implement practical measures to reduce energy costs and support the clean energy transition

- **Energy efficient homes:** Progress the disclosure of energy ratings for existing residential homes, backed with support to fund energy efficiency upgrades
- **EV-ready homes:** Implement the latest EV-ready building standards for new homes
- **Vehicle to home charging:** Offer grants for 1,000 home bi-directional chargers to drive the convergence of vehicle and home energy systems
- **Circular economy:** Commit to developing a renewable energy resource recovery precinct

Cleaner transport

Accelerate South Australia's transition to zero-emission vehicles and fleets

- **Public EV charging:** Develop a competitive EV charging infrastructure grants program for small businesses and local governments, targeting regions and tourism hotspots
- **Electric public transport:** Mandate that only zero emission buses are purchased for Adelaide Metro services going forward and invest in smart charging infrastructure at depots

Sustainable communities

Enhance community resilience to floods and bushfires through stronger planning, investment, and climate-ready infrastructure

- **Disaster mitigation funding:** Commit $20 million per year for disaster mitigation measures, matching the national Disaster Ready Fund
- **Data-driven planning:** Complete and implement the flood hazard code amendment within the next two years
- **Safer and more resilient homes:** Commit to implementing building code changes that improve climate resilience for homes

Liveable

Modern public transport

Expand South Australia's public transport system to be modern, reliable, and accessible, reducing car dependency and broadening travel choices

- **Rail expansions:** Develop and release a blueprint to expand passenger rail to the north and south of Adelaide and investigate options to unlock capacity at Adelaide railway station
- **On-demand services:** Expand on-demand bus networks to improve services in outer suburbs and regional centres
- **Public transport fares:** Implement a new 12-trip fare for $36 to help regular users reduce travel costs
- **Bus network improvements and metro boundary expansion:** Review bus operations to improve frequency and reliability of the bus network
- **Regional transport:** Create a fund for local councils to develop new transport options for regional communities

Reduced congestion

Manage growth and urban sprawl through strategic infrastructure investment that reduces bottlenecks and travel times

- **Road infrastructure upgrades:** Develop a road infrastructure program to support housing growth, which includes:

  a) Curtis Road duplication

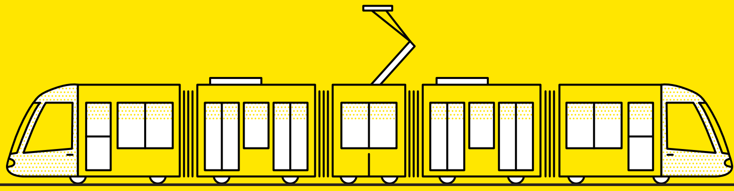
  b) An overpass at the intersection of Port Wakefield Road and Riverlea

  c) A third lane on Main North Road between Montague Road and Kesters Road

  d) A third lane on Main South Road between the Southern Expressway and the Onkaparinga River

  e) Planning for a third lane on the South Eastern Freeway from Crafers to Verdun

RAA



Lower cost of living

Ease cost-of-living pressures by keeping transport affordable and ensuring equitable access to mobility across South Australia

- **Fuel price transparency:** Recommit to keeping real-time fuel pricing in its current form
- **Transport affordability:** Maintain affordability of transport costs by ensuring any increases in government fees and charges are at or below CPI
- **Fair and equitable road user charge:** Work with the Federal Government to develop and implement fair and equitable road user charge
- **Accessible driving lessons:** Expand the Licence to Work Program to deliver more driving lessons for low-income adults and apprentices

A stronger tourism economy

Build a stronger, more diverse and resilient visitor economy in South Australia

- **Export-ready Tourism:** Create a $5 million fund to strengthen digital capability and export-readiness of small and community operators, complemented by $1.4 million for additional SATC resourcing to drive product and destination development
- **Competitive marketing funding:** Increase SATC marketing funding to at least $40 million per year
- **New attractions and drawcards:** Create a co-investment model to attract new year-round tourism experiences in South Australia

Safe

RAA Senior Traffic Engineer Matt Vertudaches and RAA Traffic Engineer Paul Leone

Safer freight routes

- **National Highway upgrades:** As part of a long-term plan to upgrade our national highways, complete planning and commit funding to duplicate:
  - Augusta Highway between Port Pirie and Crystal Brook
  - Sturt Highway between Truro and Nuriootpa
  - Dukes Highway between Tailem Bend and Mallee Highway
- **Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass:** Secure full funding and progress the Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass, including Truro Bypass and upgrade of Swanport Bridge

Introduction

South Australia's major highways and freight routes are the backbone of the transport network. The State Government must ensure these corridors remain fit for purpose, to enhance freight productivity and improve safety for all road users.

RAA welcomes recent government funding for major highways, including the duplication of the Augusta Highway between Port Wakefield and Lochiel, the duplication of Joy Baluch AM Bridge, and safety improvements along the Dukes Highway corridor. We also welcome the investment by both Federal and State Governments to improve safety on the South-Eastern Freeway.

These works have been well received and highlight the importance of completing upgrades to major corridors that improve safety, productivity, and network resilience. They also reflect key priorities outlined in the South Australian Government's Transport Strategy 2025, which emphasises the need for a connected, safe and efficient freight network to support economic growth and regional development.

However, our major highways will become more congested in coming years, with road freight predicted to increase in response to population and economic growth. While this growth is good for the economy, it will increase the risk of road crashes if we don't upgrade our roads to cope with more demand.

There are also limited opportunities to transfer the freight task from road to rail, making the need to upgrade roads more critical. This is not to say that we shouldn't continue to explore opportunities to utilise the benefits of rail transport to reduce the reliance on road transport where practicable.

National Highway duplication

RAA believes there should be a long-term plan to duplicate the Augusta, Sturt and Dukes Highways to support the growing freight task and the move towards high productivity vehicles, like B-Triples or double road trains.

RAA supports the Government's current work to identify future infrastructure upgrades to open up access for high productivity vehicles along our national highways. However, we believe these upgrades should include duplication to future proof our network.

Over the next four years RAA believes the State Government should:

- Design and provide funding to duplicate the Augusta Highway between Crystal Brook and Port Pirie, which addresses the busiest section of this corridor with the worst crash history.
- Design and provide funding to duplicate the Sturt Highway between Nuriootpa and Truro, creating a continuous multi-lane carriageway all the way from Truro to Port Adelaide.
- Investigate duplicating the Dukes Highway between Tailem Bend and the Mallee Highway, where upgrades would improve safety.
- Continue to identify strategic locations to upgrade national highways to support usage of high productivity heavy vehicles.

The number of road crashes along our highways is still unacceptably high. Between 2019 and 2023 there were 19 fatalities, 41 serious injuries and 90 minor injuries on the Augusta Highway, with three fatalities occurring because of head-on crashes. On the Sturt Highway there were 100 casualty crashes between Nuriootpa and the Victorian border. On the Dukes Highway, there were 53 casualty crashes, and seven lives lost.

The Augusta Highway is the principal route to the State's north and west for freight, agriculture, and tourism, carrying an average of more than 4,000 vehicles per day, about 30% of which is commercial traffic including road trains and b-triples.

The image opposite graphically demonstrates how critically important the Augusta Highway is to many regions in the state, as well as Port Adelaide and international markets.

The Sturt Highway forms part of the national highway network and is the principal road link running from Gawler to the Victorian border and beyond into New South Wales. Freight use is already very high along the whole corridor, with daily traffic volumes as high as 7,200 vehicles per day in Nuriootpa, which includes 1,900 heavy vehicles and 8,800 vehicles per day between Berri and Renmark, including 1,500 heavy vehicles.

The Dukes Highway is the main traffic corridor linking Adelaide and Melbourne. Known as a vital route for both road freight and tourism, the Dukes Highway carries substantial daily traffic, accommodating up to 2,000 commercial vehicles. Notably, 50% of heavy vehicle traffic comprises B-double units or larger, underscoring its significance as a key commercial thoroughfare between the two cities.

Completing these duplications and strategic upgrades will improve road safety and ensure the transport network can meet the demands of South Australia's growing economy. They are vital links for regional communities and industries, carrying significant freight volumes and supporting economic activity across the state.

Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass

RAA believes the $1 billion Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass should be co-funded by the Federal and State Governments (80:20), reflecting its national productivity value and the need to ensure safety as road trains interact with light vehicle traffic.

The project includes the duplication of the Swanport Bridge, an upgrade to the South Eastern Freeway interchange at Monarto, road upgrades behind the hills and a dual-lane Truro Bypass.

It will provide a critical link for freight travelling between the south-eastern and northern regions of South Australia. It will support high productivity vehicles and reduce the growth in freight movements coming down the South Eastern Freeway and traversing metropolitan Adelaide.

The project is expected to cost $1 billion and to date the State Government has committed $125 million, while the Federal Government has committed $525 million.

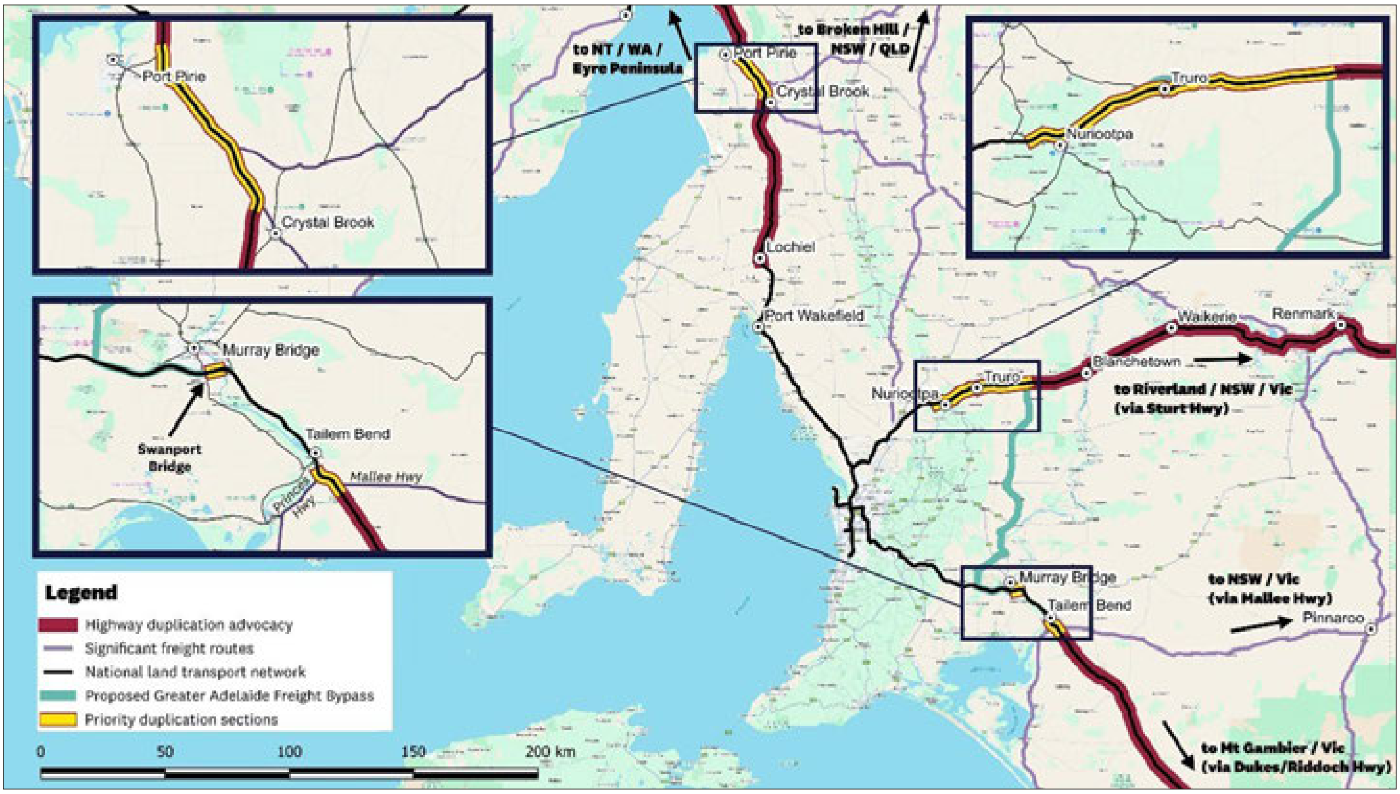
RAA congratulates both governments on allocating funding towards this project; however, there is still a budget shortfall of approximately $350 million.

Given the importance of this project, the funding shortfall must be addressed in the next Federal and State budgets to give the project certainty, with the State Government committing $200 million and the Federal Government committing $800 million.

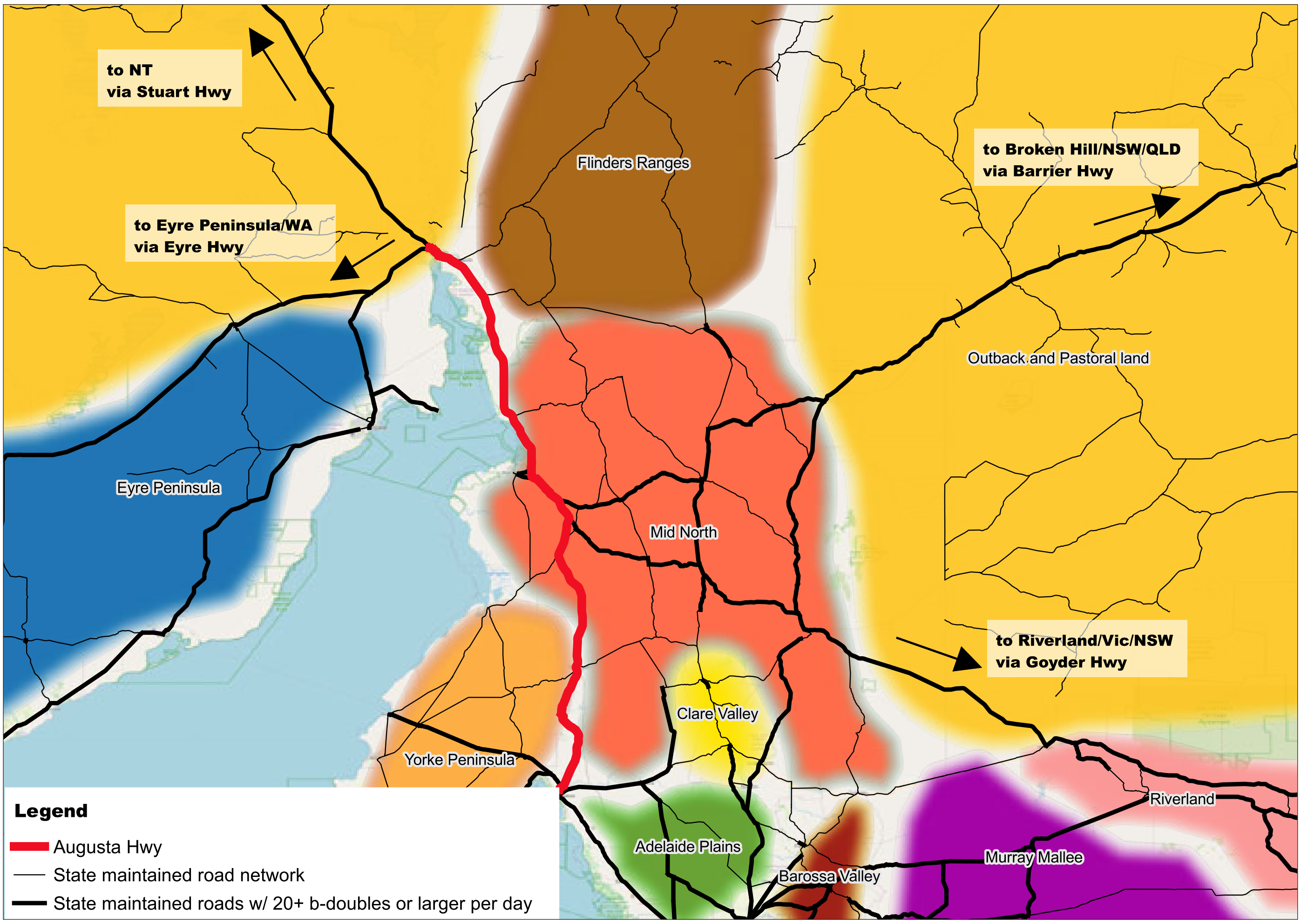
The Bypass is of strategic importance to the state and the national freight network and recent announcements such as the Federal Government's 80% contribution to the Bruce Highway upgrade in Queensland demonstrate precedence for an 80:20 funding split. This funding model would significantly reduce the financial burden on the state and accelerate these vital upgrades.

While the project is expected to reduce growth of heavy vehicle movements coming down the South Eastern Freeway, it will not stop all trucks heading to metropolitan Adelaide. Both the Federal and State Government have committed $350 million to upgrade the South Eastern Freeway, which includes funding upgrade the Heysen Tunnels, installation of an Intelligent Transport System for lane use management, variable speed limit signs, and median barrier gates to enable traffic contra-flow in the event of an incident.

RAA has previously called for a third safety ramp at the end of the South Eastern Freeway to provide an additional opportunity for heavy vehicles to stop in the event of an emergency. While we continue to believe it would be beneficial, it is acknowledged that a new safety ramp would be a significant cost to governments and the current works being undertaken will improve safety on the descent into Adelaide. Therefore, RAA believes the State Government should monitor how the current works improve safety, and how the Adelaide Hills Freight Bypass impacts heavy vehicle freight movements, before reviewing the need for a third safety ramp.



Priority sections of the national highway network for duplication



Strategic importance of Augusta Highway to the surrounding regions

Safer regional roads

- **Road safety maintenance:** Increase road maintenance funding to a minimum $250 million per year to address the increasing maintenance backlog resulting from historical underspend
- **Road safety data:** Release and use AusRAP star ratings to improve transparency and support evidence-based funding decisions
- **Local government capacity:** Fund better asset management tools for local councils to enhance data-driven infrastructure planning
- **Road safety upgrades:** Develop a Safety and Productivity Program to improve roads in the Fleurieu Peninsula

Introduction

Investment in regional roads is vital to ensure safe, reliable and efficient travel for communities, freight operators and visitors. Well-maintained roads reduce crash risks and improve access to essential services, while also supporting local businesses and regional economies.

It is an unfortunate fact that South Australia is not on track to meet our road safety target of reducing lives lost on our roads by 50% by 2031. Over the last five years, 68 per cent of lives lost on SA roads were on regional roads.

Transparency around the condition of the road network and infrastructure funding decisions are critical if the public is to have confidence that investment is being prioritised to where it is most needed.

Building the capacity of local governments to implement best practice initiatives is also critical in improving road safety, as local councils are responsible for maintaining 77 per cent of SA roads.

Road safety maintenance

RAA believes the State Government must increase the annual road maintenance budget to at least $250 million, up from the estimated $160 million, to help get on top of the road maintenance backlog.

Growing population size and an expanding road network, combined with historical underspend on road maintenance, means that South Australia's road maintenance backlog continues to grow. A report by the Auditor-General in 2023 revealed significant and ongoing underinvestment in road maintenance over many years, which has created a maintenance backlog of $1.9 billion.

The report detailed concerning statistics, including:

- Approximately 2,090 km of the state's 13,500 km sealed network was in backlog
- Approximately 1,230 km of the state's 9,400 km unsealed network was in backlog (up from just 500 km in 2021), with an estimated cost of $190 million
- Electrical assets, such as lights, light poles, and traffic signals, had an estimated backlog of $150 million
- Bridges and structures such as culverts had an estimated backlog of $220 million.

The report estimated that the annual depreciation of the road network is approximately $405 million, and that ideally this annual depreciation should be matched with maintenance expenditure (i.e. an asset sustainability ratio of 1). However, the average asset sustainability ratio of the last 5 years was just 0.15. In other words, successive governments have only been investing 15 per cent of what is needed to maintain our roads.

RAA acknowledges recent road maintenance investment by the State and Federal Governments. However, much more is needed to prevent South Australia's road maintenance backlog from worsening.

While RAA's call for an annual investment of $250 million won't eliminate the backlog, we believe this is the minimum level that should be invested to ensure the situation does not deteriorate further.

Key corridors raised in our 2024 Risky Roads survey for road maintenance issues include Victor Harbor Road (McLaren Vale – Willunga), Black Top Road (One Tree Hill), Womma Road, Marion Road and Main North Road.

RAA also believes there needs to be greater transparency when it comes to road funding decisions and the condition of our roads.

As a first step, the State Government should provide detailed reporting on road maintenance spending on an annual basis. Current budget papers lack clarity, making it difficult to assess where funds are allocated and how they are spent.

Road safety data

RAA believes the State Government should release AusRAP star ratings of all roads that have been mapped to provide a better understanding of the condition of the road network and use this information to make transparent funding decisions.

This improved transparency will help ensure that investments in the road network are being targeted towards the highest-priority areas, enhancing accountability and public confidence in the state's transport planning processes.

All state and territory governments, including the South Australian Government, regularly assess the safety of roads using the globally recognised star rating system designed by the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP).

AusRAP (Australian Road Assessment Program) is a tool to evaluate and map road crash risks leading to fatalities and severe injuries and rates roads for safety. It identifies road improvements to reduce crash likelihood and severity. AusRAP assesses roads to assign a risk 'star' rating from one to five, with each star improvement indicating reduced crash risk and severity.

Star ratings are already a key performance indicator for road safety strategies and action plans, including a target of achieving 3-star ratings or better for 80 per cent of travel on state roads where the speed limit is 80km/h or higher. While South Australia's recently released Road Safety Action Plan Annual Report highlights that 48% of the networks achieves this standard, there is no public visibility of which roads this applies to.

Asset management for councils

RAA believes the State Government should offer funding to local councils to use better asset management tools to manage local government roads.

Local governments maintain the vast majority of (77%) of roads; however, in SA there is no benchmark to assess the condition of these roads and make data-driven investment decisions.

The State Government has started using an Intelligent Pavement Assessment Vehicle, iPAVE, to better evaluate road surface conditions across state-maintained roads. This is a positive step toward more consistent and data-driven infrastructure planning, and it should now be extended to local road networks.

Importantly, this support should be designed to assist councils that have limited resources or less mature asset management systems, while recognising and complementing the strong practices already in place in other councils.

This is particularly important in regional areas, where councils are responsible for large road networks but often have limited resources. These roads are the largest infrastructure liability across the local government. Without consistent reporting, the State Government cannot gain a complete picture of the condition of South Australia's roads or properly assess the risks associated with deferred maintenance.

By enabling access to tools, capacity and consistent approaches, the State Government can strengthen councils' asset management capability, improve investment decisions and deliver better outcomes for communities across South Australia.

Road safety upgrades

RAA believes the State Government should work with the Federal Government to develop a Road Safety and Productivity Package Program for the Fleurieu Peninsula, similar to the Adelaide Hills Productivity Package Program.

The Adelaide Hills Productivity Package is a $150 million initiative, jointly funded by the Australian and South Australian governments (80:20) over five years to upgrade and improve road safety in the region.

A similar Productivity Package Program for the Fleurieu should be developed to focus on addressing key freight bottlenecks and safety concerns. Five of the top 10 regional risky roads in RAA's 2024 Risky Road survey were in the Fleurieu Peninsula region. Please refer to the map on the next page.

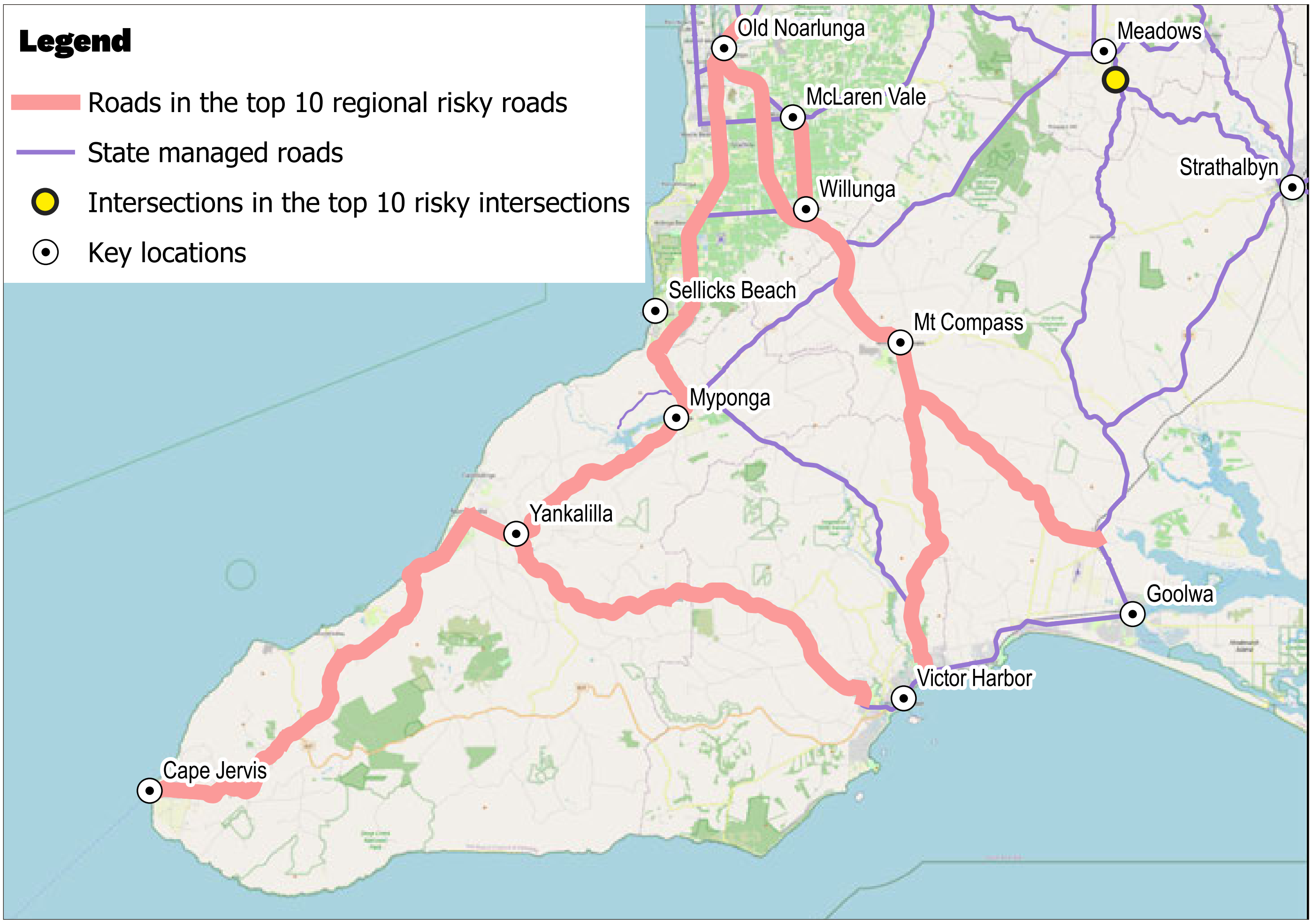
More investment is required in the region to support expected population growth planned for Victor Harbor and Goolwa, which was identified in the Greater Adelaide Regional Plan.

RAA believes priority sections to be addressed in a productivity program include:

- Upgrading Victor Harbor Road to an AusRAP 3-star road
- Building dual lanes between McLaren Vale and the bottom of Willunga Hill
- Safety improvements on Inman Valley Road and Goolwa Road.

These additional investments would support the welcome work on Main South Road between Seaford and Sellicks Beach and Victor Harbor Road between Main South Road and McLaren Vale.

The State Government should also consider a rolling road safety and productivity program across the state in cooperation with the Federal Government. While RAA has identified the Fleurieu as a priority, similar programs could be rolled out in the Limestone Coast and mid-north in the future.



Fleurieu Peninsula roads and intersections nominated in the top 10 regional roads and top 10 intersections during our 2024 Risky Roads campaign

Safer active transport

- **Cycling and e-mobility infrastructure:** Invest $10 million each year into a dedicated infrastructure fund to support safer cycling and the use of e-mobility devices

Introduction

Investment in cycling infrastructure creates safer streets, healthier communities, and more sustainable transport choices. A network of quality cycling routes will encourage more people to cycle or ride e-mobility devices reducing congestion on our roads and taking pressure off public transport.

With the recent introduction of laws permitting the use of e-scooters and other personal mobility devices on public roads and footpaths, safe cycling infrastructure will help support the anticipated increased use of these devices.

In 2023, the National Walking and Cycling Participation Survey found SA had the lowest level of cycling participation compared to other states and territories, with 31.8% of South Australians cycling compared to the national average of 36.6%. Even more concerning was the fact that our participation has declined since 2021, when 38.3% of South Australians cycled.

Many of South Australia's cycling routes are incomplete, forcing cyclists to share the road with cars and heavy vehicles. RAA's 2022 Risky Rides survey found that 94% of cyclists had experienced a close pass by a vehicle while on their bikes and 76% had experienced road rage behaviour from a motorist while cycling. The survey found that top infrastructure issues for cyclists were discontinuous bike lanes, the need for new on-road cycling lanes, and risks presented by sharing busy roads with motor vehicles.

In 2025, the Committee for Adelaide's Benchmarking Report revealed Adelaide currently ranks last among peer cities for the quality of its bike network. The benchmarking score for Adelaide's cycle network points to a significant gap, also ranking last among peers for access to people, jobs and educational institutions, and shopping areas through low-stress biking routes.

Cycling and e-mobility infrastructure

RAA believes the State Government should invest at least $10 million each year into a dedicated infrastructure fund to build safer cycling routes and support the safe use of e-mobility devices. This fund should also be supported by a State Cycling Strategy.

While the United Nations recommends governments dedicate 20% of transport funding, South Australia allocates less than 1% of the state transport budget to cycling infrastructure.

RAA welcomes the recent $37 million investment in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, as part of the $168 million Road Safety Program developed between the Federal and State Governments. This program is running over three years and so equals about $12 million a year for cycling infrastructure. We also acknowledge that cycling and active transport provisions are now key considerations in the design of new projects.

While supporting this investment, it is critical there is an ongoing fund that can progressively address gaps in the existing network.

Continuous investment is needed to increase access to segregated cycling paths and wide kerbside lanes to improve cycling safety on roads shared by bicycles and motor vehicles. Investment in high activity and potential high activity corridors by addressing Adelaide's missing links, poor connectivity and dangerous intersections is needed.

As part of an ongoing investment in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, RAA supports prioritising the following:

- The completion of the Gawler Greenway
- A bridge connecting the Royal Adelaide Hospital to the River Torrens Linear Path
- A continuous shared-use path running adjacent to Greenhill Road in the Adelaide Park Lands
- Increased safe cycle storage at Park and Ride facilities.

RAA also believes the State Government should support active infrastructure that would support tourism such as the extension and connection of regional cycling trails to deliver the Great Australian Wine Trail between Clare Valley and McLaren Vale, and the construction of a 1.9km shared use path adjacent to the rail line to enable the Encounter Bikeway to bypass Hindmarsh Road in McCracken.

RAA also supports continued funding for the Way2Go bike education program. The Way2Go bike education program is a highly effective way of providing cycling training and promotion to primary school children.

Sustainable

Affordable energy

- **Energy efficient homes:** Progress the disclosure of energy ratings for existing residential homes, backed with support to fund energy efficiency upgrades
- **EV-ready homes:** Implement the latest EV-ready building standards for new homes
- **Vehicle to home charging:** Offer grants for 1,000 home bi-directional chargers to drive the convergence of vehicle and home energy systems
- **Circular economy:** Commit to developing a renewable energy resource recovery precinct

Introduction

Cutting transport and household emissions can help families save on fuel and power bills and also make communities safer, healthier and more sustainable places to live.

RAA supports the State Government's twin goals of achieving 100% renewable energy by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050. RAA believes the consumer must be at the centre of the path to net zero, ensuring the transition delivers affordable and reliable power, as well as clean energy.

We know families and businesses are feeling the pinch of rising energy bills. An RAA survey conducted in May 2025 found that cost of living continues to rate as a top concern for members, with 74% concerned or highly concerned about cost of living.

As an energy retailer and provider of home solar and battery solutions, there are enormous opportunities to utilise Consumer Energy Resources (CER) to lower the cost of electricity and meet net zero. CERs are small-scale technologies like rooftop solar, batteries, and electric vehicles that allow households and businesses to generate, store, and manage their own electricity.

Energy efficient homes

RAA believes the State Government should pursue greater disclosure of home energy ratings at point of sale or lease, aligned with the timing and approach of other states and territories, and backed by financial assistance to help households improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Currently, many existing homes are poorly insulated and expensive to run, with energy efficiency standards for homes only being introduced in 2003. There are strong energy efficiency standards for new homes being built today; however, there is a lack of visibility on the performance of existing houses.

Buyers and renters of older houses deserve up to date information about the energy efficiency of the home they are about to live in. Empowering consumer choice with this information can protect households from rising cost of living pressures, poor occupant comfort and risks of adverse health and wellbeing outcomes during extreme weather events. In addition, with Australian homes responsible for around 24% of energy usage, making homes sustainable is an essential step towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

The State Government's strong focus on low emissions electricity generation, while supported, needs to be backed up with improvements to existing houses to provide ongoing cost of living protection for vulnerable and disempowered households.

In recent years, Energy Ministers from all state and territories have been working collaboratively to deliver initiatives that will progressively improve the thermal performance and energy efficiency of Australian houses.

In December 2024, Energy Ministers released a Home Energy Ratings Disclosure Framework, which sets out a national approach to implementing disclosure schemes across Australia. Mandatory disclosure has been required in the ACT since 2001, and the NSW

Government will undertake a trial of mandatory disclosure ratings in late 2025.

A report by Common Capital in 2024, prepared for the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, found positive economic benefits to disclosing home energy ratings (SA benefit 1.17 to 1.29). The same report also found considerable net benefit for households that implement upgrades based on their home energy rating.

Empowered with energy rating information, households can seek to improve the efficiency of their homes and use existing government-backed zero-interest loans to reduce cost barriers. These programs are essential to supporting the transition to electrification.

Loans like the $1 billion Household Energy Upgrades Fund provide discounted consumer finance products to help households upgrade the energy performance of their homes. These loans need to be better promoted, and they must also reach vulnerable households. The State Government should also review current state level incentives to help households improve the efficiency of their homes.

With more than 50% of homes having rooftop solar, South Australians understand the benefits of making an upfront investment in sustainable technologies to mitigate cost of living impacts from electricity costs. Armed with energy ratings, we can continue to improve the efficiency of our homes, reducing cost of living pressures and meeting net zero goals.

EV-ready homes

RAA believes the State Government should implement new building standards in South Australia that ensure new homes are pre-wired for EV charging.

The National Construction Code (NCC) 2025 is proposing changes to include extra space in the switchboard so EV chargers can be added later, as well as at least one car space having a power outlet ready for EV charging. This outlet must have a strong power capacity to charge most EVs.

In 2024, the State Government announced a 10-year moratorium on implementing further changes to the NCC. If fully implemented without exemption, the moratorium will result in deferral of NCC 2025 requirements for EV charging in new South Australian homes.

With approximately 10,000 new homes constructed in South Australia each year, the 10-year moratorium could result in up to 100,000 new homes by 2035 having a significant and avoidable financial barrier for EV ownership.

The RAA believe the NCC 2025 changes for EVs are a cost-effective and timely inclusion for new homes. Not only would it support EV home charging but also support vehicle to home or bi-directional charging in the future.

RAA estimate that this change would increase the cost of a new home by approximately $230 but the same work would cost approximately $1,850 after the house is built. That is an 800% increase over the NCC EV-Ready Homes requirements.

Acknowledging South Australian's housing affordability crisis, RAA considers deferral of EV Ready provisions to be false economy that will entrench transport disadvantage by slowing EV uptake and contributing to a commuter cost-of-living crisis.

The hardest hit commuters will be occupants of new houses in urban fringe growth areas such as Riverlea Park, Two Wells, Roseworthy, Mount Barker and Aldinga.

RAA estimates that a resident of Riverlea Park commuting to Adelaide's CBD for work will drive at least 17,500km per year to access employment. In an affordable EV, this resident could reduce the fuel cost of their daily commute by more than 80%, saving over $1,100 each year. If there are multiple drivers in the household, the annual savings from an EV-ready home could be even more significant.

Vehicle to home charging

RAA believes the State Government should create a grant program to drive a targeted uptake of bi-directional chargers and demonstrate the benefits of converging of vehicle and home energy systems.

Vehicle to Home (V2H), or bidirectional charging, enables electricity to flow both into and out of an EV. This allows EVs not only to charge when electricity is cheapest or cleanest (smart charging), but also to discharge power back into a home, building, or the grid, effectively turning the car into a mobile energy source. This can put downward pressure on energy bills for households and help meet our net zero goals.

RAA acknowledges this is a relatively new offering, particularly for mainstream adoption, and there are only a handful of vehicles that support V2H use today. However, the ARENA *National Roadmap for Bidirectional EV Charging*, released in February 2025, outlines an exciting future. It estimates that Australia will have 300,000 V2H capable EVs by 2030, and that usable storage capacity in Australia's EV fleet will be over three times total National Electricity Market storage capacity by 2050.

There are a series of key technical standards that will underpin the use of V2H, which are being progressively reviewed and updated. For example, in August 2024, Australian Standard AS4777, which relates to grid connected inverters, was updated to remove uncertainty for installing and connection bi-directional vehicle to home/grid chargers. The State Government can also support V2H integration by adopting EV-ready changes proposed in the NCC 2025.

A major barrier to V2H integration is the cost of installing a bi-directional charger. This device allows electricity to flow both ways from the EV and the home and can cost up to $10,000.

To address this barrier, RAA's proposed grant program would involve the State Government covering 50 per cent (up to $5,000) of the cost of installing a bidirectional charger, capped at 1,000 units. This would cost the Government $5 million but create the spark to drive V2H integration in South Australia.

Driving a large but controlled uptake of bi-directional chargers through a grant program would enable South Australia to gain a better understanding how households will use V2H and ensure South Australia's power network is well-placed to manage larger rollouts into the future.

Supporting bi-directional charging will ensure South Australia continues to lead the world in the clean energy transition, particularly in the lead up to the Conference of Parties (COP) 31 in November 2026.

Circular economy

RAA believes the State Government should commit to establishing a large-scale resource recovery and advanced recycling facility in South Australia to process end-of-life solar panels and lithium batteries. This can be achieved by leveraging the Australian Government's *Future Made in Australia Fund* to co-invest in a facility.

South Australians are global leaders in adopting clean energy technologies, yet recycling capacity for solar panels and batteries remains limited.

By 2030, Australia will generate around 100,000 tonnes of solar panel waste annually, and by 2035, the electric vehicle fleet could exceed 22 million vehicles, creating a massive volume of battery material requiring safe disposal or reuse. Green Industries SA estimates the national battery recycling market could be worth $3.1 billion by 2035.

The Australian Government is progressing a mandatory product stewardship scheme, with the final design due in 2025. South Australia has a unique opportunity to lead this emerging industry, reduce landfill, recover critical materials, and create high-value jobs in regional areas.

Cleaner transport

- **Public EV charging:** Develop a competitive EV charging infrastructure grants program for small businesses and local governments, targeting regions and tourism hotspots
- **Electric public transport:** Mandate that only zero emission buses are purchased for Adelaide Metro services going forward and invest in smart charging infrastructure at depots

Introduction

RAA believes EVs are the future here and around the world. We support responsible measures to increase uptake and reduce barriers to adoption, recognising South Australia's opportunity to harness our abundant supply of renewable energy and reduce motoring costs.

Currently, transport is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in South Australia, accounting for around 39% of total emissions.

To meet net zero by 2050, more than 50% of new car sales will need to be EVs in 2030, according to the EV Council. While EV sales are expected to accelerate with the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) which came into effect on 1 July 2025, more needs to be done to support uptake and reduce emissions.

Public EV charging

RAA believes the State Government should establish a competitive grants program to support small businesses and local governments installing EV charging infrastructure, particularly in regional towns and tourism hotspots.

RAA congratulates the State Government's investment to date in public EV charging, including the $12 million competitive grant awarded to RAA to build public EV charging infrastructure at 140 locations across the state.

Despite the growth in public EV charging infrastructure, range anxiety continues to be a barrier to greater EV adoption. A survey of RAA members in November 2024 found that range anxiety was rated the highest concern about EV ownership (69% of respondents) and lack of public charging was rated third (62% of respondents).

Targeted government support remains essential to address gaps in the EV public charging network and encourage private sector co-investment. Without intervention, the disconnect between EV uptake and charger provision will limit route choice, discourage EV uptake, and reduce the economic benefits that EV tourism can bring to regional communities.

RAA's proposal to offer grants to businesses and local governments to contribute towards the cost of installing charging stations will help address range anxiety and support growth in private investment in charging infrastructure.

RAA believes the program could prioritise the roll-out of ≥7kW AC chargers at regional accommodation businesses, ≥50kW DC chargers in regional town centres and tourism attractions, and additional two to four bay sites, equipped with ≥200kW DC capacity, in high transit demand locations along regional highways.

Electric public transport

RAA believes the State Government should mandate that only zero emission buses are purchased for Adelaide metro services going forward.

RAA supports the Government's work to date, including the announcement in March 2025 that it will purchase 60 fully electric buses. However, with public transport buses having a lifespan of up to 25 years, buses purchased today could still be in operation in 2050. This is why new buses purchased today should produce zero emissions.

The electrification and decarbonisation of our entire public transport network is critical to meeting our net zero targets. It is also critical to improving urban liveability through reduced air and noise pollution and will have added benefit by providing a cleaner, greener experience for commuters.

Electric buses and depot-based smart charging are now viable and economic technologies that should be deployed at pace to electrify Adelaide bus routes.

To lower electricity costs for all South Australians, RAA also believes a key area of focus for detailed planning is for bus depots to be equipped for smart charging outside of peak electricity demand (typically 4pm to 9pm) or grid constrained periods.

Aligning charging to times when there is surplus grid or generating capacity could enable fixed network costs to be amortised across more units of delivered electricity, reducing costs for all consumers and avoiding unnecessary grid upgrades. To ensure service continuity during periods of electricity grid instability and increase electricity demand during periods of high solar generation, RAA encourages the State Government to consider incorporating grid scale battery energy storage systems at depots.

Sustainable communities

- **Disaster mitigation funding:** Commit $20 million per year for disaster mitigation measures, matching the national Disaster Ready Fund
- **Data-driven planning:** Complete and implement the flood hazard code amendment within the next two years
- **Safer and more resilient homes:** Implement building code changes that improve climate resilience for homes

Introduction

RAA believes the State Government must significantly increase infrastructure investment and improve land use planning to reduce the impact of natural disasters, such as bushfires, floods and extreme storms. As the frequency and intensity of these events is predicted to escalate due to climate change, so too does the cost to communities, infrastructure, and lives.

Recent floods and bushfires across Australia have exposed serious vulnerabilities in our preparedness for natural disasters. South Australia has not been immune, with flooding along the Gawler River causing major property damage in 2016, extreme bushfires across the state in the summer of 2019-20, a significant hailstorm in October 2021 causing $1 billion of damage, and recently floods along the Murray River.

Disaster mitigation funding

RAA believes the State Government should allocate at least $20 million a year in the Budget to support disaster mitigation projects funded by the Federal Government's Disaster Ready Fund.

A commitment to provide secure, long-term funding would give confidence for all levels of government, as well as community groups and industry, to work together on developing solutions to reduce the impact of fire, floods and major storms on our communities.

Currently, the Federal Government's Disaster Ready Fund allocates to $200 million each year for disaster mitigation projects, matched by state and territory governments up until 2028-29. The matching contribution from state governments can be direct funding or in-kind contributions from industry.

Given the long-term challenges posed by worsening extreme weather in Australia, RAA agrees with the Insurance Council of Australia's position that disaster mitigation funding must move to a rolling ten-year program, as occurs with funding for land transport infrastructure and defence spending.

This would enable state and local governments to submit more comprehensive plans for funding approval, including projects that may require planning and construction over more than three years.

RAA believes the State Government should support a ten-year rolling program and guarantee at least $20 million per year in direct funding to match a fair allocation of Federal Government funding for South Australia. A federal investment in South Australia of at least $20 million per year would equal 10 per cent of total funding for the program, aligning close to our population ratio.

The benefits of investing in disaster mitigation measures are highlighted in research commissioned by the Insurance Council of Australia, which found that a five-year program of resilience measures costing approximately $2 billion could reduce costs to governments and households by more than $19 billion by 2050 – a nearly tenfold return on investment.

The ability for the State Government to fund such measures can be achieved through revenue from Stamp Duty on general insurance products.

The SA Government will collect approximately $2.5 billion in Stamp Duty on general insurance products over the next four years. Stamp Duty in SA is applied at a rate of 11 per cent of premiums – this is the highest rate of any state or territory, with most other jurisdictions applying rates of either 9 or 10 per cent.

While there is a strong case for taxation reform, the funding collected from insurance taxes provides a strong basis for the State Government to make investments into disaster mitigation infrastructure.

Data driven planning

RAA believes the State Government should review and update the Flood Hazard Mapping Update Code Amendment in the next two years to ensure South Australia's planning system reflects the flood risk to homes across the state.

RAA supports the State Government's current work in updating South Australia's bushfire hazard mapping and planning rules, which are being finalised. It is important that this work is completed as soon as possible so work can begin in updating flood mapping.

RAA supports population growth and welcomes the State Government's efforts to open up new land for future development. However, a critical challenge for Greater Adelaide is the fact that most of the land available for development is to the north of Adelaide, where there is high a risk of flooding, and in the Adelaide Hills, which has a high bushfire risk in some areas.

Analysis of the updated Bushfire Code Amendment (currently in consultation) shows a large increase in the number of homes at 'high' bushfire risk in South Australia.

The top five LGA's are:

- **Adelaide Hills:** 83% of homes at high risk, up 24%
- **Kangaroo Island:** 74%, up 27%
- **Mount Barker:** 71%, up 23%
- **Mitcham:** 70%, up 13%
- **Victor Harbor:** 64%, up 19%

We shouldn't wait for a major disaster before acting to improve our planning laws. For example, it was clear that planning laws (and the enforcement of them) at the time of Murray River flooding were inadequate with the flood risk posed by living along the Murray River. This flood inundated more than 4,500 homes and businesses between December 2022 and February 2023.

The State Government has since reviewed the land use planning laws along the Murray River and subsequently raised the Finished Floor Level (FFL) from 2.5 metres to 3 metres (and a maximum of 4 metres) for homes along the river and made design changes for undercroft areas to improve water flow in the event of a flood. But we shouldn't have to wait for a major event to act.

It is critical that South Australia's planning system reflects the latest bushfire and flood hazard mapping information to ensure development is occurring with the latest information so the correct mitigation measures can be put in place to protect homes.

Safer and more resilient homes

RAA believes the State Government should commit to implementing new building code measures designed to improve climate resilience.

RAA strongly supports the decision to add climate resilience as an objective of the Australian Building Codes Board. This responds to a recommendation from the 2020 National Natural Disaster Arrangements Royal Commission and paves the way for the Australian Building Codes Board to consider future standards which ensure buildings can better withstand more extreme weather.

Strengthening the National Construction Code to ensure new homes are made more resilient to extreme weather could save an estimated $4 billion a year, according to a report from the Centre for International Studies. We strongly believe buildings need to be able to withstand more severe bushfires, and worsening flooding.

In August 2024, the State Government announced a moratorium on making amendments to the Building Code for 10 years. RAA believes climate resilience measures are too important to delay and could result in added costs in the future.

RAA also supports calls by the Insurance Council of Australia to reduce the risk and impact of natural disasters, including:

- Establishment of a National Hazard Data Asset that streamlines national, state and territory datasets. This would ensure data on flood and fire risks is accessible to governments, industry and the public, enabling informed decisions on land use and building resilience.
- The creation of a National Flood Information Database and federal investment to update local government hazard mapping, which would increase accuracy for premium pricing and help communities.
- Funding to improve hazard mapping accuracy, especially flood risk mapping and to standardise and publicly release climate risk data.

Liveable

Adelaide Railway Station, South Australia

Modern public transport

- **Rail expansions:** Develop and release a blueprint to expand passenger rail to the north and south of Adelaide and investigate options to unlock capacity at Adelaide railway station
- **On-demand services:** Expand on-demand bus networks to improve services in outer suburbs and regional centres
- **Public transport fares:** Implement a new 12-trip fare for $36 to help regular users reduce travel costs
- **Bus network improvements and metro boundary expansion:** Review bus operations to improve frequency and reliability of the bus network
- **Regional transport:** Create a fund for local councils to develop new transport options for regional communities

Introduction

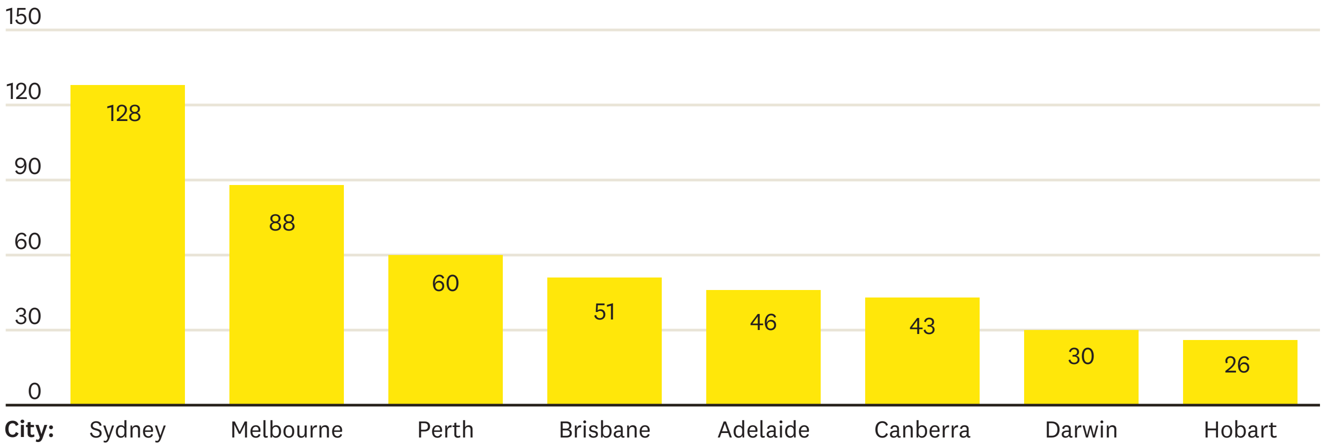
Efficient and reliable public transport is critical to a modern, liveable city. Done well, it will boost productivity, reduce congestion and improve access to jobs, education, and services, particularly for people without a car. It can provide people with trip choices that can ease household transport costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support population growth, and improve urban amenity.

Investing in public transport isn't just about moving people – it's about enhancing South Australia's liveability, sustainability, vibrancy, and economic potential.

Unfortunately, public transport usage and satisfaction ratings in South Australia are consistently poor compared to other Australian cities and comparative international centres.

There are various statistics and reports that demonstrate South Australia's underusage of public transport. The Australian Infrastructure and Transport Statistics Yearbook 2024 states that in 2023–24, Adelaide recorded 67.7 million trips, translating to approximately 46 trips per person annually compared to 60 in Perth, 84 in Melbourne and over 100 in Sydney.

Trips per person (2023–24)



Source: BITRE, Infrastructure Year Book 2023–24

Furthermore, the Productivity Commission's 2021 report on Public Transport Pricing, South Australia had the lowest proportion of work trips involving multiple modes of transport at 5.5%, compared to 21.2% in Perth, reflecting both limited network integration and poor service frequency.

Evidence shows that South Australians will turn to public transport when it is convenient, easy to use and effective, as demonstrated by the high use of public transport to attend large events like AFL and concerts. Similarly, the O-Bahn system has shown consistently high levels of patronage due to its high frequency and reliability.

RAA believes the State Government should undertake a series of short-term public transport improvements while laying the groundwork for a long-term shift in travel behaviour towards public transport. This approach reflects both the current realities of a car-dependent transport culture and the need to move towards a more connected, low-emissions future.

Passenger rail expansion

RAA believes that the State Government should develop and commit to releasing a masterplan to expand Adelaide's passenger rail network to the north and south of Adelaide to support housing growth and reduce congestion on our roads.

The greenfield land developments at Sellicks Beach and Aldinga in the south, and Riverlea, Concordia, Roseworthy and Dry Creek in the north, will put significant pressure on existing transport infrastructure.

The outer north alone is project to be home to an extra 189,000 people in coming years. The current public transport network is not capable of supporting this increase.

RAA welcomes the planning studies underway to consider rail extensions and supports the Government's move to preserve land for a future passenger rail to Aldinga in the south and Roseworthy and Concordia in the north.

However, there is currently no timeline or no commitment to publicly releasing these studies. The Government should also move quickly to preserve land for rail extensions to Riverlea and Dry Creek.

Rail offers scalable, high-capacity transport with lower per-passenger emissions over time. Strategic investment in rail extensions to key growth corridors will future proof the network and offer a reliable alternative to increasing reliance on private vehicles as SA's population grows.

RAA is also aware that network capacity constraints at the Adelaide train station limit the ability to expand passenger rail services in metropolitan Adelaide. It is therefore critical that the State Government investigates options to improve capacity at the Adelaide train station as part of the blueprint, including the option of a city rail loop. To be a liveable city, we must expand passenger rail to new communities in Adelaide's growth areas and increase the frequency of existing services. Please refer to the map on the opposite page.

On-demand bus services

RAA believes the State Government should establish a formal on-demand bus expansion program to trial services in other peri-urban growth regions like Goolwa, Victor Harbor, and parts of the Adelaide Hills, following the successful service in Mount Barker.

RAA welcomed the decision to make on-demand bus services permanent in Mount Barker, which has been a long-held advocacy position. The Mount Barker model has delivered over 500,000 trips since its launch in 2020, consistently achieved 98 per cent customer satisfaction and maintained average wait times as low as 10 minutes.

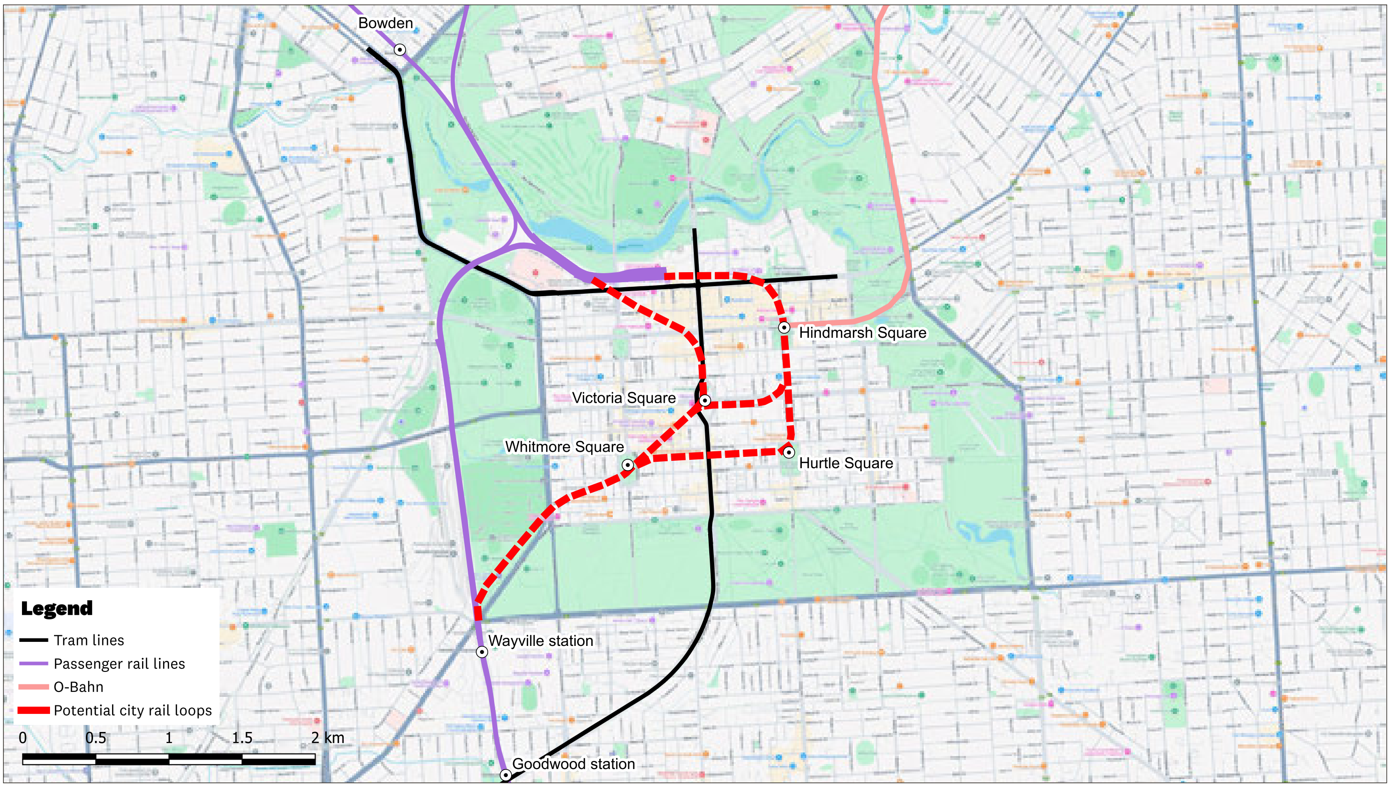
These outcomes demonstrate that when services are designed around local needs, community uptake follows. On-demand services allow for better coverage in dispersed, low-density areas where traditional fixed route services using full size buses are not practical, while also adapting to changing work and travel patterns, especially outside of peak commuting hours.

A formal expansion program could enhance public transport affordability and equity, improve service adaptability in peri-urban and regional zones and encourage modal shift, reducing car dependency and emissions from long car commutes on our roads. A more integrated, flexible transport system will ensure that no South Australian is disadvantaged by their postcode and that our transport network evolves alongside our communities.

To better meet the needs of South Australia's growing peri-urban and regional centres, the State Government should also extend the metroCARD fare boundary to high-growth regions such as Murray Bridge and the broader Fleurieu Peninsula where population growth is accelerating.

These areas are often excluded from integrated fare systems, forcing residents to use more expensive or less accessible alternatives. This inequity creates a barrier to uptake and undermines the affordability and convenience that underpin successful modal shift.

Future rail extension options



Future Adelaide passenger rail loop options

Bus network improvements and metro boundary expansion

RAA believes the State Government must explore options to increase the frequency and reliability of key Adelaide Metro bus routes. Around 70 per cent of Adelaide's public transport usage is on the bus network. It is therefore essential that the bus network is as efficient, sustainable, and reliable as possible.

RAA research conducted in May 2025 found that 53% of respondents said convenience and route availability was the main factor influencing their decision to use public transport, followed by 24% who cited travel time compared to other options.

Options to increase patronage of existing rail services by encouraging more people to use either active transport or feeder bus services to existing stations should also be considered. The integration of bus and rail services encourages patronage by taking advantage of the key strengths of the respective modes. For buses it is flexibility and network permeability and for rail it is capacity and running time reliability.

Significant changes to public transport routes and timetabling must involve community engagement to ensure there is understanding of both the proposed benefits and implications that may accompany these.

This is particularly important in the case of vulnerable community members for whom public transport is often the only mode of transport available to them. Many in our community are reliant on access to buses, trains and trams and any major change that may reduce services enrages the community, as witnessed when the former government announced a raft of service changes that would have impacted on a number of the low patronage bus routes.

To that end, any future reform must prioritise the needs of people most reliant on the network – including older adults, people with a disability, low-income households, and those without access to a private vehicle – to ensure they are not disproportionately impacted by service adjustments.

It is acknowledged that it is often difficult to strike a balance between frequency of services, speed of travel, abundance of stops and network reach. However, mastering this challenge will provide multilayered benefits to the mobility and sustainability of SA, therefore RAA encourages the State Government to be bold and chart a new course.

To better meet the needs of South Australia's growing peri-urban and regional centres, the State Government should also extend the metroCARD fare boundary to high-growth regions such as Murray Bridge where population growth is accelerating. These areas are often excluded from integrated fare systems, forcing residents to use more expensive or less accessible alternatives. This inequity creates a barrier to uptake and undermines the affordability and convenience that underpins successful modal shift.

Public transport fares

RAA believes the State Government should introduce a new metroCARD fare allowing regular and concession users to purchase 12 trips for $36 to use over 28 days – a more flexible option than the current 28-day metroCARD pass, which is not a valuable option for most people, given today's flexible workplace arrangements.

For most users of public transport, the 14-day and 28-day metroCARD fare only provides value for commuters who consistently travel on public transport at least 4 days a week. A commuter taking 5 return trips per week on a 28-day fare would pay $3.00 a trip, compared to the single trip cost of $4.55.

With work from home a mainstay and flexibility in the days people work over extended periods, this option doesn't provide any incentive or offer any savings for people who travel fewer than four days a week.

Providing an option for commuters to purchase 12 trips for $36 would equal $3.00 a fare for someone travelling to work three days a week.

RAA welcomes the State Government's recent announcement in the 2025–26 State Budget to reduce the cost of a student 28-day metroCARD from $28.60 to just $10, saving families up to $242 per child per year. This targeted cost of living support is a commendable step that recognises the financial pressures families face and begins to reframe public transport as a preferred mode of transport.

However, this should be seen as a first step in providing more affordable and flexible fare options for public transport users.

In May 2025, RAA surveyed members on their views on public transport fares and whether a reduction in fares would increase patronage. It found that 46% of younger people (aged 18–39) and weekly users would be more likely to use public transport if fares were cheaper.

Regional Public Transport Fund

RAA believes the South Australian Government establish a dedicated Regional Public Transport Fund, designed to empower local councils and regional communities to co-design and deliver tailored, locally appropriate public transport solutions.

Currently, regional public transport services are fragmented, underfunded, and misaligned with community needs. Local governments, who are best placed to understand and respond to the mobility challenges of their residents often lack the resources and mandate to lead transport initiatives.

A dedicated fund would enable local councils and regional partnerships to deliver scalable, context-specific transport models such as demand responsive bus services, flexible community shuttles, school and health precinct connectors and inter-town connections aligned with regional employment and education hubs.

Regional rail in South Australia is not a feasible solution in the foreseeable future due to the state's unique population distribution and lack of existing infrastructure. Unlike Victoria, where regional rail services link Melbourne with nearby high-density towns such as Bendigo, Ballarat and Shepparton, South Australia's regional towns are more dispersed and less connected by legacy rail corridors. The cost of re-establishing or constructing rail services in areas such as the Barossa, Riverland or Yorke Peninsula would be prohibitive and unlikely to match demand in the foreseeable future.

Rather than replicating solutions designed for other jurisdictions, South Australia must adopt a more flexible, place-based approach that reflects our geography and population profile. By providing direct funding to local governments, the State can enable bottom-up innovation and build capacity across regions to design the transport systems they need, rather than top-down fixes that may never arrive.

In practical terms, this fund could operate in partnership with the Commonwealth through co-investment opportunities and may also attract private investment, particularly in areas where tourism, employment or social services can be enhanced by better mobility.

RAA believes this approach will improve public transport access for underserved regional residents, increase mobility for youth, older adults, and low-income households, strengthen regional economic resilience and workforce participation, reduce social isolation and reliance on private vehicles and fosters innovation through local leadership and tailored service design.

Reduced congestion

- **Road infrastructure upgrades:** Develop a road infrastructure program to support housing growth, which includes:
  a. Curtis Road duplication
  b. An overpass at the intersection of Port Wakefield Road and Riverlea
  c. A third lane on Main North Road between Montague Road and Kesters Road
  d. A third lane on Main South Road between the Southern Expressway and the Onkaparinga River
  e. Planning for a third lane on the South Eastern Freeway between Crafers and Verdun

Introduction

RAA supports strong population growth as a driver of economic activity and a source of greater opportunities for young people. However, as our population grows towards two million people, it is essential that we preserve the unique liveability that makes SA a great place to live.

In early 2023, RAA surveyed members to understand their views on population growth. While there were concerns about growth, the main issue was about infrastructure keeping pace. Their concern arises if that growth compromises their quality of life – whether that be through more congested roads, greater demand on services, and more competition for jobs.

Much like the rest of the country, South Australia is grappling with a housing crisis, rising cost of living pressures and is in urgent need of more funding for essential infrastructure and services.

To support population growth, RAA believes in a targeted approach to strategic infill housing development and a focus on maximising opportunities for higher density growth near existing transit corridors, which will reduce the need for growth in the outer suburbs.

We also appreciate and support the need for new greenfield developments. However, if we are to maintain our unique liveability into the future, road infrastructure upgrades need to occur in parallel with these housing developments. Unless more investment is made in the network, population growth will increase congestion, frustrate commuters, and strangle economic activity.

While there is currently a large focus on improving water infrastructure to support housing, the State Government can't lose sight of the need to improve road infrastructure.

Not only is there a need to upgrade roads in the immediate area of a new development, but there are also flow on issues with the 'middle infrastructure', where developments create congestion on roads several kilometres away, which need to be considered as well.

RAA believes the State Government should work with the Federal Government to develop a road infrastructure upgrade program to support housing growth in South Australia. RAA has identified several bottlenecks that should be prioritised as part of this new program.

Curtis Road

RAA believes the State Government should commit to funding the duplication of Curtis Road to support population growth in the area.

The Outer North is the fastest growing metropolitan region in Adelaide. Between 2001 and 2011, it grew from 94,512 people to 113,724 people, an increase of 20.3%. Between 2011 and 2021, it grew to 139,452 – another 22.6% increase.

Between 2021 and 2041, the region is expected to grow to 229,115 people, an annual average change of 3.21%. This is well above the average growth of greater Adelaide, which is expected to grow by just over 1% per year.

Curtis Road is a key thoroughfare between Main North Road and the Northern Expressway and has been severely impacted by housing growth, with more congestion and more road crashes.

In 2023, there was a record-high 90 crashes reported, of which 28 resulted in minor injury and three resulted in serious injury. Rear end crashes have been the most common crash type to occur in the past five years, accounting for half of all casualty crashes, and one quarter of all crashes resulting in serious injury. Right angle and right turn crashes at intersections have accounted for a combined 39% of casualty crashes over this time, and 69% of serious injury crashes.

Curtis Road was top of RAA's 2024 Risky Road survey. Survey participants identified significant frustration and concern regarding congestion, hazardous conditions, and inadequate infrastructure along Curtis Road and its intersections.

A recurring theme was severe traffic build-up, particularly at major intersections like the Northern Expressway, Main North Road, and Peachey Road. Respondents cited long delays, poor traffic flow, and difficulties accessing or exiting Curtis Road safely, with banked-up traffic during peak hours posing a major challenge for both commuters and local residents.

RAA welcomes recent funding for Curtis Road, including $250 million to remove the level crossing and $30 million for a roundabout at Heaslip Road. This will go some way to improving Curtis Road.

However, ultimately, further improvements to Curtis Road will be needed in the future, including duplicating the road and progressing associated intersection and safety upgrades.

RAA recognises that Curtis Road is currently a local government road, managed by the City of Playford. Ideally, RAA believes the responsibility of Curtis Road should be transferred to the Department for Infrastructure and Transport. However, if there is no transfer, the local government needs to work cooperatively with the State Government to develop the plans to upgrade the road as a matter of priority.

Current traffic congestion along Curtis Road

Riverlea intersection and Port Wakefield Highway

RAA believes the State Government must undertake planning and commit funding to deliver an overpass at the intersection of Riverlea Boulevard and Port Wakefield Highway within the next four years.

Currently, there is one set of traffic lights allowing residents to exit Riverlea onto Port Wakefield Highway. While the population of Riverlea is small now, it is expected to be home to 40,000 people in coming years. This one set of traffic lights is completely inadequate to support the thousands of people who will live in Riverlea and increases the risk of road crashes.

Both State and Federal Governments can future-proof this intersection by committing to building an overpass. Doing so would support housing growth reduce the risk of road crashes in the area.

In addition, over the next four years, the State Government should develop a corridor upgrade plan on the Port Wakefield Highway between Waterloo Corner and Two Wells to improve safety and support housing growth.

As development continues in Riverlea, as many as 10,800 future dwellings are earmarked for Two Wells, and Virginia also continues to grow. This growth will continue to strain capacity of other intersections along Port Wakefield Highway such as Mallala Road, Brooks Road, and Old Port Wakefield Road, leading to higher likelihood of serious crashes occurring along this high-speed stretch of highway already notorious for serious crashes.

Main North Road

RAA believes the State Government needs to build a third lane along Main North Road between Montague Road and Kesters Road.

Main North Road was nominated as the second riskiest metro road in our 2024 Risky Roads survey. Amongst metro roads, Main North Road was nominated second highest in both our 2017 and 2019 risky roads surveys, and third highest in our 2021 survey.

The corridor is a major arterial link between Adelaide and its northern suburbs, passing through the local government areas of Prospect, Walkerville, Port Adelaide Enfield, Salisbury, Playford and Gawler.

Traffic volumes on Main North Road are typically between 35,000 and 50,000 vehicles per day, with the busiest section between The Grove Way and John Rice Avenue carrying more than 63,000 vehicles per day.

The section between Montague Road and Kesters Road is currently two lanes in each direction but has three lanes through intersections other than

Riverlea intersection and Port Wakefield Highway at Mawson Lakes Boulevard. Building a third lane between intersections will improve safety and reduce congestion along this important corridor.

Main North Road also reduces to two lanes between Kings Road and The Grove Way and again in Smithfield south of Curtis Road, which is also a current bottleneck and expected to become more congested as population swells in the area. The SA Government should also develop plans to add a third lane to these sections in the future.

South Eastern Freeway

RAA believes the State Government should undertake detailed planning for a third lane on the South Eastern Freeway between Crafers and Verdun.

While the growth in the north is accelerating, RAA continues to support strategic infrastructure improvements to accommodate the growing population in the Adelaide Hills and Mount Barker regions that will also improve safety for all road users on this critical corridor.

The Adelaide Hills has seen the third largest population growth in the Greater Adelaide region over the past decade, particularly around Mount Barker.

The population in the Adelaide Hills is projected to increase by 1.73% each year between 2021 and 2041, with the number of people living there growing from 80,501 to 108,291. In 2001, there were just 61,883 people living in the Adelaide Hills.

This population growth will place additional pressure on the South Eastern Freeway between Crafers and Mount Barker, where continued growth in traffic volumes will further compromise travel speeds, increase congestion, and increase the risk of associated crashes.

Almost 50,000 motorists travel this section of the freeway every day, serving as a key corridor for cars, trucks and buses between Adelaide and the Adelaide Hills. Buses are currently the only method of public transport in the Hills. While rail proposals have been explored, none have proven to be cost-effective, convenient, or timely enough. Without a clear path for rail development, the short to medium-term focus should be on optimising the reliability, frequency, and quality of the existing bus network.

RAA supports implementation of a revised public transport system between Adelaide and Mount Barker, which may include a bus rapid transit (BRT) system as recommended by Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island.

Investigations to improve public transport between the city and the Adelaide Hills must include a corridor management plan for Glen Osmond Road. RAA considers bus movement through the three intersections with Cross Road, Fullarton Road, and Greenhill Road to be critical in delivering effective and efficient bus services between Adelaide and the Adelaide Hills.

A third traffic lane between Crafers and Verdun coupled with an upgraded Verdun interchange, would provide additional efficiencies and capacity along the South Eastern Freeway, including for public transport. This is a longer-term priority but believes the State Government should progress planning for this project during the next term of government.

Main South Road, Old Noarlunga

RAA believes the State Government should undertake planning and commit funding to add a third lane in both directions on Main South Road between the Southern Expressway and the Onkaparinga River.

This corridor is a critical link in Adelaide's southern transport network, carrying more than 58,000 vehicles per day (2022 estimates) and connecting people to jobs, education, and essential services. It is the primary arterial road connection between the Southern Expressway and the rapidly growing communities of Aldinga, Sellicks Beach, and McLaren Vale, as well as the greater Fleurieu Peninsula region including Victor Harbor.

However, with just two lanes in each direction, it no longer meets the demands of the traffic volumes it carries. The situation is compounded by the completion of major duplication works along Main South Road and Victor Harbor Road, which now funnel multi-lane traffic into a constrained four-lane bridge crossing.

This bottleneck not only undermines the efficiency of the broader corridor upgrades but also contributes to frequent incidents and crashes along the corridor, often linked to congestion and high traffic volumes.

When these occur, the impacts are felt widely, as the surrounding road network is vastly under-capacity to manage detoured traffic, leading to major delays for commuters, freight, and emergency services.

Demand on this corridor will only intensify as the region continues to grow. The Aldinga (SA2) population is forecast to increase by 26% between 2021 and 2041, while Victor Harbor (SA2) is one of the fastest-growing regional centres in South Australia with an expected 48% increase over the same period. Similarly, the Yankalilla (SA2) area is forecast to grow by 50% between 2021 and 2041.

Main South Road also supports tourism and freight, with Fleurieu Peninsula products such as wine, seafood, and agricultural produce transported across it, alongside more than 700,000 overnight visitors and 2 million day-trippers who travel to the region each year.

Upgrading this section of Main South Road is therefore essential to unlock the full benefits of recent duplication projects, improve road safety, and provide the southern region with a resilient and reliable transport corridor. RAA also supports exploring the feasibility of an overpass at the Main South Road, Seaford Road and Patapinda Road intersection as part of long-term planning

Without this investment, the corridor remains the weakest link in the state's southern road network, limiting economic growth, constraining tourism, and compromising the accessibility of health and emergency services for communities across the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Main South Road, Onkaparinga. Google Maps.

Lower cost of living

- **Fuel price transparency:** Recommit to continuing real-time fuel pricing in its current form
- **Transport affordability:** Maintain affordability of transport costs by ensuring any increases in government fees and charges are kept at or below CPI
- **Fair and equitable road user charge:** Work with the Federal Government to develop and implement a fair and equitable road user charge
- **Accessible driving lessons:** Expand the Licence to Work Program to deliver more driving lessons for low-income adults and apprentices

Introduction

Transport is a significant and unavoidable expense that accounts for a significant proportion of household budgets, and it is one of the main drivers of inflation. The Transport Affordability Index published by the Australian Automobile Association shows that a typical household in Adelaide spends more than $23,000 on transport costs each year, or about 15.2 per cent of their income.

RAA believes governments at all levels must carefully consider transport cost pressures when formulating policy.

Fuel price transparency

RAA believes the State Government must recommit to continuing real-time fuel pricing in its current form.

One of the largest contributing factors to cost of living pressures is fuel. A recent RAA survey found that over 60 per cent of motorists now spend more than $100 a month on fuel.

RAA has long supported mandatory fuel pricing schemes that allow motorists to easily see current fuel prices and find the lowest fuel retail sites.

Petrol prices in Adelaide (and in many other major Australian cities) conform to a price cycle. Through intense competition amongst retail outlets, petrol prices gradually drop over a certain period and then increase sharply.

While these price cycles can be frustrating, motorists can take advantage of lower prices at the bottom of the cycle if they have real-time information to help understand and anticipate these cycles.

After consistent lobbying by RAA, the State Government introduced a trial Real Time Fuel Pricing scheme in 2021. In the 2022–23 State Budget, the State Government committed funding to extending the fuel pricing transparency scheme to 2025–26.

The current sharing of information in real-time and the nature of price cycles in SA is clearly benefiting motorists. An ACCC report, *Making the Most of Fuel Price Apps and Websites*, shows drivers who use price checking apps in SA are saving an average of $486 per year – second only behind Perth – thanks to the current fuel price transparency scheme and SA's shorter price cycle.

Crucially, the RAA App data demonstrates the overwhelming public demand for this service. Since the start of the scheme, more than 566,000 South Australians have used the fuel map feature. On average, members check fuel prices 10 times per user, reflecting how integral the app has become for household budgeting.

Real-time fuel pricing has been a game changer for motorists, saving them money at the bowser to help offset the rising cost of fuel. In August 2025, an RAA survey estimated that users of real-time fuel pricing apps saved an average of 10 cents per litre, resulting in savings of $36 million across the state.

Transport affordability

RAA believes all transport taxes and chargers should be kept to a minimum to ensure it remains accessible and affordable to all South Australians.

Transport costs continue to put pressure on household budgets, and the RAA supports government efforts to set state-based fees and charges at a level that ensures transport modes remain accessible and affordable for all South Australians.

The State Government collects revenue from motorists through registration fees, stamp duty on registration transfers, the Lifetime Support Scheme levy, fines, and the Emergency Services Levy on mobile property.

RAA acknowledges the important infrastructure and services required to enable our transport network and we believe it's appropriate that government collect this revenue.

However, to ensure these costs remain as affordable as possible for road-users, RAA is supportive of the State Government continuing to take into account both public sector wages growth and the Consumer Price Index when setting annual increases to government fees and charges. This method is both cost reflective for government and provides some protection from significant price increases from one year to the next.

Fair and equitable road user charge

RAA believes the State Government must work with the Federal Government to develop a fair and equitable road user charge system for motorists to ensure we can maintain roads and build new transport infrastructure in the future.

Currently, motorists pay fuel excise every time they buy petrol or diesel. The current rate of this excise is 51.6 cents per litre. Over the next four years, the Federal Government will collect approximately $16 billion in fuel excise revenue, most of which will be used to pay for the maintenance of roads and fund new transport projects.

This revenue stream will decline as more fuel efficient vehicles and EVs enter the market. This is because motorists who drive electric don't need to fill up their vehicles with petrol or diesel, which means they don't pay the fuel excise. While this is good for the environment, it also means less money for roads, making it harder to keep them safe, maintained and free from congestion.

It will also mean that motorists who cannot afford to purchase a newer car or an EV will be paying to maintain the road network through the fuel excise they pay, while other motorists will be paying nothing at all.

According to an RAA survey:

- 64% of respondents supported a road user charge to replace the fuel excise;
- 72% of respondents wanted Federal and State Governments to increase funding for road maintenance; and
- 85% and 63% of respondents believe regional and metropolitan roads need improvement respectively.

RAA is encouraged by the work underway between the federal, state and territory treasurers to establish a new road user charge, which would capture electric vehicles in the first instance. The Federal Government must continue to lead this work to ensure a consistent, national approach.

The application of a distance-based charge should be introduced in way that does not disincentivise adoption of EVs, such as through a lower rate and/or incentives to compensate for the charge. All revenue from the charge should be directed to land transport and electric vehicle infrastructure.

Accessible driving lessons

RAA believes the State Government should provide targeted financial support for low income and disadvantaged groups to obtain a driver's licence.

RAA is increasingly concerned about the barriers many people face in being able to afford driving lessons, especially for low-income households and regional communities.

Access to a driver's licence is vital for employment, education, and independence – articularly for young people from low-income and regional backgrounds.

In 2018, RAA introduced a Licence to Work program to help disadvantaged young South Australians overcome transport barriers to employment and education.

The program offers up to 50 hours of supervised driving with professional instructors, helping students meet the state's licencing requirements while addressing the financial and logistical challenges that often prevent participation.

This structured support helps participants build safe driving behaviours and reliably meet their supervised driving requirements.

It is delivered in partnership with five secondary schools, (Tjindu, Warriappendi Secondary School, Mark Oliphant College, Christies Beach and Seaton High School). These schools nominate students who are most in need – specifically those who have no viable pathway to obtaining their licence independently.

Priority is given to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, as well as those who have demonstrated a clear and committed career trajectory. This may include transitions from school to TAFE or university, or pathways into employment where holding a licence is essential.

To date, the program has delivered over 9000 hours of professional driving instruction to over 200 students, providing essential support that helps participants access jobs, training, and broader community life.

Participants report a range of personal and educational benefits, including:

- Increased confidence, resilience, and independence
- Higher levels of school engagement and education retention
- Greater access to part-time work, apprenticeships, and further training
- Improved mental health and a stronger sense of belonging.

Demand for the program has never been stronger, with more than 10 additional high schools expressing interest.

Based on this success, RAA would welcome the opportunity to negotiate a co-funding model with the State Government to expand the program to more schools and help more young people who may find the cost of obtaining a licence unaffordable.

Last financial year, RAA invested approximately $125,000 into the program, which allows us to work with five schools and approximately 30 students. A commitment from the State Government to invest $500,000 a year would allow the program to reach an additional ten schools and increase the number of students benefiting from 30 to 90 each year.

Licence to Work aligns strongly with South Australian Government priorities to address youth disadvantage, boost educational and employment outcomes, and reduce transport-related barriers to participation.

Other states have implemented government-funded programs to address barriers faced by disadvantaged learner drivers.

For example, NSW has introduced the Driver Licensing Access Program (DLAP), which is aimed at assisting individuals who face significant barriers in obtaining or regaining a driver licence. There are DLAP service providers across the state, who determine eligibility and support requirements.

In addition, Victoria has a L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program, where learners are paired with fully licensed volunteer mentors and provided access to a program vehicle.

A stronger tourism economy

- **Export-ready tourism:** Create a $5 million fund to strengthen digital capability and export-readiness of small and community operators, complemented by $1.4 million for additional SATC resourcing to drive product and destination development
- **Competitive marketing funding:** Increase SATC marketing funding to at least $40 million per year
- **New attractions and drawcards:** Create a co-investment model to attract new year-round tourism experiences in South Australia

Introduction

Tourism is a critical driver of South Australia's economy, providing jobs to over 40,000 people and bringing in over $9 billion to the state every year.

RAA strongly supports the State Government's goal of growing the visitor economy to $12.8 billion by 2030. We commend investments in major events like AFL Gather Round, LIV Golf and Supercars, as well as continuing to support the Tour Down Under, Adelaide Festival, the Fringe and WOMADelaide. We also support the Government's investment in new marketing campaigns and focus on growing airline connections to other parts of the world.

The events and international connects are driving a renewed interest in South Australia. However, we believe it is critical that we build on the momentum by building a stronger, more diverse and resilient visitor economy.

Export-ready tourism

The State Government should create a $5 million Export-Ready Tourism Fund over four years to support small operators and community-led initiatives in strengthening the commercial appeal of local experiences.

While there are many outstanding visitor experiences already bookable online, far too many lack the visibility, digital polish, or promotional support to reach broader audiences and convert interest into sales.

Over the past four years, the South Australian Government has provided $1.6 million to the Tourism Industry Council of South Australia (TiCSA) to help deliver industry capability-building initiatives. While valuable, that funding has reached only a fraction of the operators who could benefit.

Expanded support is now essential to reach more businesses, including volunteer-led and community-run experiences, compete in an increasingly experience-driven and export-orientated market.

This would include product development and market access through training in digital marketing, sales channel management, product packaging, and partnerships with neighbouring operators to create connected itineraries.

Critically, it would also focus on building export-ready products – experiences that are compelling to international visitors, easy to book remotely and suitable for inclusion in global trade-partner distribution channels. Developing more export-ready experiences will strengthen South Australia's brand positioning abroad, improve the marketability of regional destinations, and directly drive tourism export growth.

Tourism is already South Australia's second largest export sector, contributing $9.9 billion to the state economy in 2023 and supporting 40,400 jobs. The state has set a clear target of reaching a $12.8 billion visitor economy by 2030. To deliver on this, the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) also requires additional funding. SATC's current resourcing limits its ability to fully deliver on its product and destination remit, particularly in regional areas.

An allocation of $1.4 million over four years for additional FTE positions would provide SATC with the capacity to support operators, accelerate export-ready product development, and grow high-value segments such as the youth market, which is proven to drive long-term visitation, repeat travel, and brand advocacy for South Australia.

With regional tourism contributing $3.6 billion to the visitor economy and supporting thousands of jobs, this investment is not just a tourism strategy - it is regional economic development.

By making regional experiences easier to book, better connected into itineraries and visible in global markets, South Australia can convert interest into visitation and spend.

In doing so, more tourism businesses will be able to effectively compete in a crowded online marketplace and respond to growing demand for authentic, connected regional experiences.

Marketing funding

RAA believes the State Government should increase the SATC annual core marketing budget from approximately $33 million to at least $40 million per year, with part of the uplift ring-fenced to promote regional tourism experiences.

This request directly supports the South Australian Tourism Commission's 2030 Strategy, which sets the target of growing the visitor economy to $12.8 billion and aligns with broader tourism sector priorities identified by the Tourism Industry Council SA and other government policy frameworks. Achieving this ambition requires more than maintaining current levels of funding – it requires a step change in investment to keep pace with competitor states.

By scaling up core marketing, South Australia can amplify these outcomes and better convert awareness into actual visitation and bookings. Peer jurisdictions allocate materially larger destination-marketing resources. For example, Tourism Tasmania invests between $38–43 million per year and the Northern Territory tourism portfolio exceeds $80 million in funding with a stated emphasis on international marketing.

In contrast, SATC's marketing allocation has remained largely unchanged in nominal terms for the past five financial years, meaning its real value has declined when adjusted for consistent CPI increases, despite increasing competition for domestic and international visitors.

Importantly, SATC's own reporting demonstrates that well-funded marketing campaigns deliver strong returns on investment, increasing visitor numbers, length of stay, and average expenditure. Additional investment would also enable in-country marketing in new flight route destinations, building awareness and demand in key source markets.

According to SATC international statistics, South Australia captures approximately 6% of Australia's international visitation but only 4.4% of international visitor expenditure. With more competitive funding, South Australia can grow its international presence and better capture high-value visitors.

Increasing SATC's marketing investment with a focus on regional tourism will ensure the growing pipeline of bookable experiences – many developed through public and private investment – can be strategically promoted, discovered, and booked. This targeted, evidence-based approach will strengthen regional tourism, stimulate demand across the state, and help achieve the Government's 2030 visitor economy target.

New attractions and drawcards

RAA believes the State Government should establish a co-investment model to support the creation of major, year-round tourism attractions in South Australia. This could include contributing of capital costs and providing financial guarantees to unlock private investment in bold new tourism infrastructure.

The State Government's efforts to secure direct flight connections to Adelaide are positive steps to boost visitation. However, to truly capitalise on this, South Australia needs standout experiences that can anchor marketing campaigns and offer visitors a unique reason to visit our state.

While South Australia has a vibrant events calendar and well-loved destinations, we lack the kind of permanent, signature tourism experiences that anchor visitation throughout the year. Our current offering is heavily reliant on seasonality and event spikes.

National and international visitors are increasingly drawn to immersive, high-yield, experience-rich destinations, such as cultural precincts, luxury nature-based lodges, and built icons that define a place. Unique experiences like Meow Wolf and teamLab, which provide immersive and interactive experiences are growing in popularity across the world.

Such opportunities are not limited to metropolitan Adelaide. Regional South Australia is well placed to host new signature attractions that can deliver lasting impact as well.

For example, a River Murray luxury cruise experience could create a year-round drawcard centred around our state's most iconic natural asset. Similarly, a world-class observatory in the Riverland's International Dark Sky Reserve could put South Australia on the map as a global leader in astro-tourism. These types of attractions have the potential to drive longer stays, and generate meaningful regional and economic dividends.

Creating major tourism drawcards is essential to compete in a global market where signature attractions are often the key reason people choose a destination. These large-scale offerings bring new visitors, increase overnight stays, and stimulate additional spend across accommodation, dining, transport and retail. They also help position South Australia as a destination of choice, not just a stopover.

By committing to a co-investment model, the Government can de-risk bold ideas, encourage private sector investment, and enable long-term tourism growth. This approach will help deliver the step-change needed to elevate South Australia's profile, support regional economies, and unlock sustainable growth in the visitor economy.

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