

# 2019 Utilities Forum Report

Hosted by Santos - Brisbane QLD

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Prepared with support from the Utilities Forum Working Group and NRSP Partners

Participants:

APA Group	Horizon Power	Origin
AusNet	Hydro Tasmania	SA Power Networks
Downer	Jemena	SA Water
Gas & Electricity Epic	Melbourne Water	Santos
Essential Energy	Nestle	Telstra
EcoLabs	Optus	Water Corporation

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## Summary Forum 2019 Outcomes

In 2015, the [National Road Safety Partnership Program \(NRSPP\)](#) recognised the value of a national forum specifically for utility businesses from around the country. The sector is characterised by complex and diverse fleets and the forum provides an opportunity to identify common transport risks and contribute ideas as to how they may be mitigated. The first event was hosted by SA Water in Glenelg, Adelaide, and has become a strongly supported annual forum bringing together major utility organisations from around Australia.

Following on from the success of the 2015, Telstra hosted the 2016 forum in Melbourne, Water Corporation the 2017 forum in Perth and the 2018 hosted by APA Group in Sydney.

In 2019, the forum was held in Brisbane, hosted by Santos and was again strongly represented by utilities from across the country. The day prior to the forum delegates attended the QLD/WA Safer Together event with a number of speakers on various topics. This was followed by a presentation from David Bobbermen, Chair Austroads, The Seven Worldwide Disruptions and their Influence on Roads and Transport and promoted a vigorous discussion across the group.

The forum achieved the following key outcomes:

- Through the Utilities Forum Template, which partners completed ahead of the day, an understanding of participants' position within the group member organisations on a number of parameters from fleet size, management, technology profiles, safe driving systems and processes, IVMS, ANCAP rating, near misses, incidents and risk mitigation strategies and actions.
- Acquired an overview of changes over time on several parameters included in the template, with a view to further developing this longitudinal tracking.
- Understanding of key safety issues common throughout the participant group including;
  - Evidence of slow adoption and underutilisation of modern vehicle safety features which drivers primarily through lack of understanding and education;
  - Further action required to improve driver education on the use of safety features within modern vehicles, identifying the role of the manufacturer and dealership;
  - The issue of disconnect across the interface between fleet managers, HR and operational managers with regards to improving driver behaviours was raised as an ongoing gap with achieving better safety outcomes;

- A further concern relating to this gap was the compliance and 'tick the box' with measuring driver behaviour risk as opposed to real effective improvements;
- There was a consensus within the group that culture and leadership were the critical factors to deliver real outcomes from the vast amounts of data gathered, by ensuring that changes were agreed, actioned and followed-up.

At the conclusion of the forum, participants were asked to provide feedback on the event. A short questionnaire covering aspects of the profile template, workshop format, content and delivery was subsequently emailed to each of the participants.

Forum feedback has been immediate and positive on social media. LinkedIn posts provided the following insights into the day:

*"A great event that contributes to road safety year on year through active participation and knowledge sharing across the industry"*

– Chris Dhu Essential Energy

*"Thank you for a brilliant forum, filled with great discussion, insights and passion"*

– Luke Byrnes Nestle

Overall feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the outcomes, comments and feedback documented during the event provide strong support for the continuation of the program in a manner and frequency to be determined by the working group.

The forum agreed that another will be held in 2020 with the date and location yet to be finalised.

Feedback from the forum included that;

*'There is no industry event or conference quite like the Utilities Forum. It is not about being talked to, but based entirely around discussion with peers underpinned by comprehensive data analysis and benchmarking. Understanding how different peers have addressed similar risks and issues which can then be applied is invaluable'. Further, comment was made that the forum was 'a great opportunity to be part of.'*

## Utility Forum Purpose and Objectives

In 2015, the NRSPP recognised the value of a national forum specifically for utility businesses from around the country. This sector is characterised by complex and diverse fleets and the forum provides an opportunity to identify common transport risks and how they may be mitigated. The first event took place in Glenelg, Adelaide hosted by SA Water and has now become a strongly supported annual forum bringing together major utility organisations from around Australia. The 2019 event achieved a milestone in which the forum has now been conducted in each of the mainland state capitals.

The overriding purpose of the event is to provide a forum where organisations from the utilities sector can discuss their major transport risks, how they are mitigated, benchmark road safety performance and how the KPIs are influenced.

In 2019, the forum was held in Brisbane, hosted by Santos and attended by representatives from a wide range of utility organisations from across the country. The day prior to the forum delegates attended the QLD/WA Safer Together event with a number of speakers on various topics. This was followed by a presentation from David Bobbermen, Chair Austroads, The Seven Worldwide Disruptions and their Influence on Roads and Transport and promoted a vigorous discussion across the group.

### Background to NRSPP Utility Forum

The Australian utilities sector is diverse and often state and service sector focused in its operations. This is predominantly due to varied regulatory realities across states that apply to essential services delivery and responsibility, as well as geographical variations which also impacts national organisations operating across multiple jurisdictions. The activities of utility organisations demand transport related operations using a complex mix of vehicles to deliver the services they are responsible for. Vehicles range from light to heavy and often include customised vehicles for specific tasks relating to the asset. Depending upon the utility provider, maintaining the company's assets may also include establishing and servicing roads to access them. These road assets may be publicly accessible or solely for the use of the utility provider.

The establishment of the Utilities Forum facilitated knowledge sharing across states, services and organisations. It provided an opportunity for utilities operating in all states to meet in a single location with an aligned and focused purpose, that being road transport safety.

## Worker fatalities involving vehicles currently 63%

### Primary Road Safety Risks Current and Future

Australian research indicates that road crashes are one of the leading causes of work-related fatalities, injuries and absences from work. Over the years 2007 to current, nearly two thirds of worker fatalities in Australia involved vehicles. Of those vehicle related fatalities 32% were due to collisions. Staggeringly, Safe Work Australia statistics also indicate that 61% of workplace bystander fatalities are due to a vehicle collision.

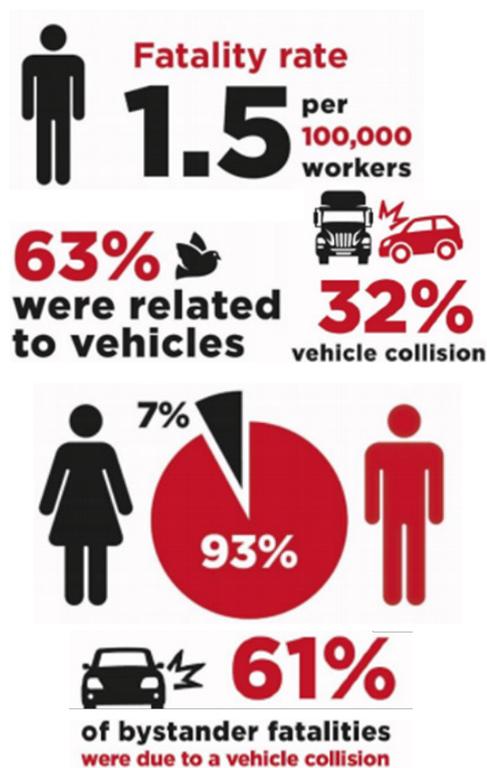


Figure 1 Infographic - Source Safe Work Australia

The latest published data (Safe Work Australia) shows that the utilities sector (categorised as electricity, gas, water and waste services) shows an increased proportion of fatalities in 2017 compared to its 10-year average, whilst the information, media and telecommunications sector remains largely unchanged.

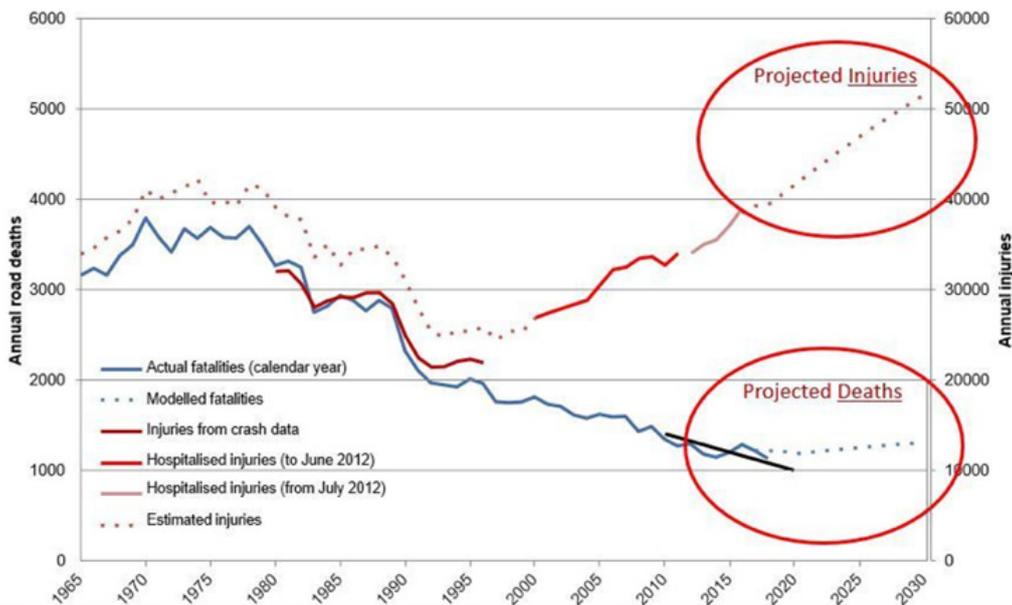


Figure 3 Annual Road Deaths and Injuries from Road Accidents.

The latest Australian road deaths data (September 2019, preliminary) from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) shows that:

- There were 91 road deaths in September 2019. This was 6.6 per cent lower than the average for September over the previous five years.
- There have been 914 deaths in 2019. This is 50 deaths (+5.8%) more than the same period in 2018.
- In the 12 months ended September 2019 there were 1,185 road deaths.
- During calendar 2018 there were 1,135 road deaths, 7 per cent lower than in 2017.

According to BITRE data, rates of injuries sustained in car accidents have been on the rise since 2001. There was an 8.6% increase in the number of hospitalised injuries in the time period from 2006 to 2013. Injuries sustained in road accidents are 27 times higher than those of fatality rates and there are concerns that this number will continue to rise. One possible cause for the increase in injuries is that the focus of transport safety technologies in Australia is on life saving strategies rather than injury prevention. Reducing the severity of accidents on the road could be contributing to the reduction in fatalities but could be also responsible for the increase in injuries.

Injuries account for 40% of the total social cost of roach crashes in Australia with money allocated between disability related costs, medical expenses and out of work productivity costs. In 2016 the total costs came in over \$33 billion, a 22% increase from 2006.

### The role of Fleet Managers

Fleet owners and operators significantly influence the use of vehicles and are responsible for over 50% of all new vehicle purchases. Decisions made on 'fit for purpose' purchase and use of these assets can directly and positively affect the safety of all road users and influence the make-up of carparks in Australia for a decade or more into the future.

As a significant industry sector, Utilities can influence of the quality and specification of vehicles that colleagues, family and friends drive and interact with on the roads each day.

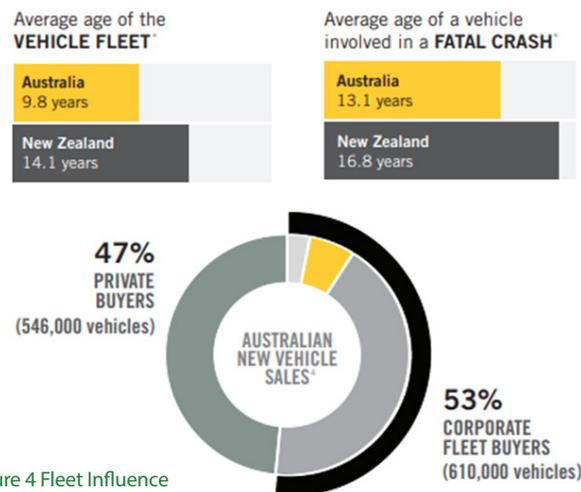


Figure 4 Fleet Influence

**Percentage of vehicles purchased by fleet 53%**

Source ANCAP / VFacts 2018

## Methodology Utilised by Utility Forum

The Utilities Forum Guiding Partners consist of Epic Energy, Essential Energy, Hydro Tasmania, Origin Energy, SA Power Networks, SA Water, Telstra, Water Corporation and CGU/IAG who steer the direction and development of the forum.

For 2019, the forum was five years in and a few changes were made to the collection and analysis of data in response to feedback from members. The structure of workshop remained unchanged, however more emphasis was placed on tracking data and what had changed over time. Following the 2018 forum, delegates expressed an interest in having more time to discuss risk mitigation strategies that had been employed by member organisations, with a view to gaining insights as to the effectiveness with improving outcomes. As a result of that feedback, the morning facilitation sessions followed key discussion threads instigated by participants and supported by the data, rather than a sequential presentation of the data template as in previous years. This allowed flexibility, focus and uninterrupted discussion on topics of relevance throughout both morning sessions which were only curtailed by timekeeping requirements.

Following on from the establishment of a site visit the day prior to the forum in 2018, this year delegates were invited to the QLD/WA Safer Together seminar with a theme, Driver Distraction. Presenters addressed the theme with evidence of good practice, plus learning from incidents from Santos, Arrow Energy, Eastern well, SWMS, Toll Logistics and NHVR Qld.

Following this David Bobbermen, Chair Austroads gave a powerful presentation 'The Seven Worldwide Disruptions and their Influence on Roads and Transport', which promoted a lively discussion across the group as to what the future holds. Davids presentation gave all plenty of food for thought as to the emerging technology and digital trends that are already impinging on the industry.

As per the previous few years the networking dinner was held the evening before and included a presentation by Dr. Lucia Kelleher on Busy Brain Syndrome and its effect on driver behaviour. Based on participant feedback, these additions once again added value to the overall event.

### Stage 1. Benchmark Safety Risk Template

A data template was developed with the assistance of the working group, for 2019 followed on from the 2018 template which was comprised 20 key data capture categories, over 100 fields and provided a detailed current snapshot and trend insights.

The template was distributed prior to the forum and data was collected, analysed and prepared for presentation at the event. The data was then used as a framework for discussion on the day, and also used to produce benchmarking reports.

The template is instrumental in being able to provide evidence of changes over time for the group, as well as informing the agenda for the forum.

No.	Field
1.	Business Profile
2.	Fleet Size
3.	Ownership & Management Model
4.	Operating Environment & Utilisation
5.	Technology Profile
6.	IVMS Purpose & Priorities
7.	IVMS Thresholds
8.	How were IVMS Thresholds determined?
9.	Organisational Policies
10.	Information Capture
11.	Hazard Reporting
12.	Driver Training
13.	Journey Management
14.	Journey Management Documentation
15.	Driver Behaviour Data
16.	Infringement Types
17.	Infringement Details
18.	Insurance & Crash Data
19.	Incident Profiles At Fault, Not At Fault
20.	Priority Transport Risks

Table 2 Data Capture Template - Key Categories

## Stage 2. Annual Two-Day Forum with Partners

After the preceding four events in Adelaide, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, Santos kindly hosted and arranged the venue for the fifth event at the Brisbane City Hall, Adelaide Street Brisbane.

Sixteen delegate organisations attended the day and one Utility provided data but was unable to attend. By changing the location of the forum each year, the attendee profiles do change, however it is an equitable solution and popular with utilities forum partners. Numbers at the 2019 forum were up from 2018 which once again indicated that there was good representation from a wide range of utility organisations from across the country. Further, those unable to attend re-iterated their continuing interest and engagement with the forum.

Similar to the previous year's forums, the event followed a structured format that comprised the following:

- welcome and overview of the NRSPP
- setting the scene
- ascertaining the size and scope of the transport safety risk
- identifying what participants want to get out of the forum
- identifying what has changed over time via tracking analysis
- facilitated discussion on the data in context of what was of interest to participating organisations, rather than sequentially presenting all the data findings
- Participants were provided with a copy of the entire exhibit pack of analysed data
- a wrap up / review of key risks and planning for 2020

As per the 2018 the day prior to the forum included a local event, this year it was the Safer Together Seminar, David Bobbermen's presentation visit and networking dinner the day prior. These events enhanced the dynamic at the forum by providing opportunity for participants to interact prior to the day and by delivering additional rich and relevant road safety knowledge.

## Stage 3. Outcomes and Objectives for Forthcoming Year

During the forum, participants were invited to provide feedback on whether the event should (after five years) continue in 2020 or perhaps be re-scheduled as a biannual event. The overwhelming position of participants was that it should continue as an annual event. Forum participants were also emailed a feedback form after the forum. Results of feedback will be used inform the template design, content and format of the 2020 event.

## The 2019 Utilities Forum



Figure 5 2019 Utilities Forum Workshop - delegates in action

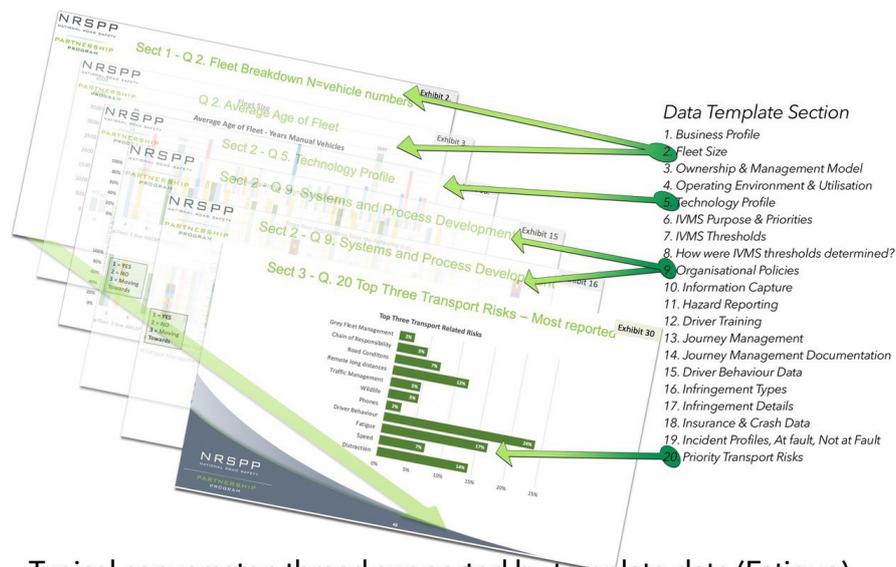
The Utilities Forum provides a unique opportunity for the sector to discuss their major transport risks, how they are mitigated, benchmark road safety performance and how KPIs are influenced

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As is now becoming tradition, the night prior to the utilities forum a networking dinner was held. The purpose of this working dinner is partially as an icebreaker and equally importantly to provide a thought-provoking presentation for delegates. This year, we were extremely fortunate to have Dr. Lucia Kelleher presenting on Busy Brain Syndrome and its effect on driver behaviour.

The formal workshop (October 24<sup>th</sup>) was hosted by Santos at the magnificent Brisbane Town Hall. Also joining this year's forum was the Automobile Association of Australia (AAA) and although their representation was primarily as observers, their input throughout the day was valuable and appreciated.



### Typical conversation thread supported by template data (Fatigue)

Figure 6 2019 Utilities Forum Workshop – Example, Facilitated Conversation – Fatigue

Once again, the forum was conducted under **Chatham House rules** and this led to an open and generous sharing of information, issues and solutions. With such outstanding facilities and layout the venue was highly conducive to a facilitated workshop environment. Key outcomes of the facilitated morning sessions focused on understanding the key safety issues common throughout the participant group including;

- Evidence of slow adoption and underutilisation of modern vehicle safety features which drivers primarily through lack of understanding and education;
- Further action required to improve driver education on the use of safety features within modern vehicles, identifying the role of the manufacturer and dealership;
- The issue of disconnect across the interface between fleet managers, HR and operational managers with regards to improving driver behaviours was raised as an ongoing gap with achieving better safety outcomes;
- A further concern relating to this gap was the compliance and ‘tick the box’ with measuring driver behaviour risk as opposed to real effective improvements;
- There was a consensus within the group that culture and leadership were the critical factors to deliver real outcomes from the vast amounts of data gathered, by ensuring that changes were agreed, actioned and followed-up.

The afternoon was divided into two key workshop presentations, the first by Andrew Leibie (Forensic Toxicologist) was based on Alcohol and other Drug Trends.

Andrew provided an overview of fleet and workplace relevant issues that included:

- An update on testing standards
- Alcohol and drug testing regime issues
- Current and trending drug matters.

Andrew’s workshop was followed by Senior Lecturer Darren Wishart from Griffith University, reviewing and challenging industry approaches to IVMS implementation and use. Darren was also able to engage the audience through the use of data template insights provided by participant organisations in the lead up to the forum. Both presentations were highly interactive and engaging.



Figure 7 Andrew Leibie AOD - workshop

## Template Data

The analysis of data in 2019 was undertaken by Dr Kelleher and the resulting slide package made available to participants is perhaps the most detailed and insightful to date. The presentation of data obtained from the templates was relevant, understood and appreciated, providing the catalyst for informed discussion during the day. 30 slides (Exhibits) were prepared from participant data and even though each exhibit provided rich opportunities for discussion, it was not practical to present all on the day. The slides used during the forum were based on participant conversations and were clear and relevant for all discussion threads.

A small selection of information generated for this years forum is included as examples below:

### NRSP National Road Safety Partnership Program Sect 2 - Q 9. Systems and Process Tracking 2018 - 2019



Figure 8 Process Tracking

A number of participants reported further maturation of their risk management process, this was of particular note in driver licence and demerit tracking, 5 Star vehicle policy and vehicle specification development.

### NRSP National Road Safety Partnership Program Sect 2 - Q 5. Technology Profile

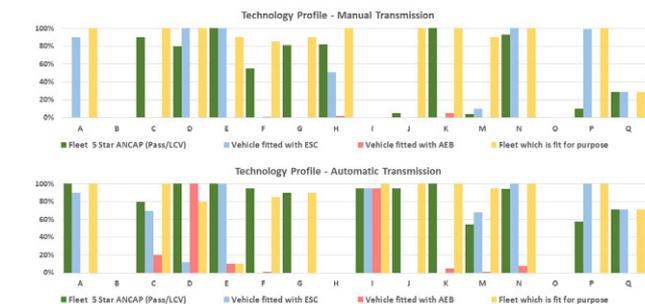


Figure 9 Technology Profile

The question of vehicle age and term selection, and how that influences (accelerates or slows) the introduction of new technology was discussed in the morning sessions. Participants reflected on the relative age of fleets, the economic and practical parameters that must be met, what and how new technologies are introduced. This conversation ranged broadly from the transition of manual to automatic vehicles to active safety and IVMS uptake.

Notably, two fleets have made significant progress in the introduction of Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) and the general topic of age and technology was also independently covered in Darren Wishart's afternoon IVMS workshop.

### NRSP National Road Safety Partnership Program Sect 3 - Q 10. Lead Indicators



Figure 10 Lead Indicators

The maturity of the utilities sectors approach to risk management (through lead indicators) is demonstrated in figure 10 (above). A notable example is near miss reporting, although there is some variation in defining what constitutes a near miss, all except one participant has a capture process in place. The remaining indicators show similar moves towards comprehensive tracked indicators, albeit in some areas there remains room for improvement. Notably, over half of the participants have systems in place for all the identified indicators.

Overall, the data templates provided detailed and updated insight into fleet profiles, operations and controls. However reflecting on participant responses, there are two notable areas to be addressed:

1. Only a relatively small group of participants have completed the templates each year since inception.
2. The late arrival of some data precluded its inclusion in the slide packs

Based on the submissions for 2019 and feedback received, it may be prudent to further evolve the data template for greater ease of use and address the distribution and return timelines to ensure maximum participation in the analytics.