



# It's not fine

**Delivering better outcomes through the  
Community Road Safety Fund**

October 2020

## About the NRMA

The NRMA represents over 2.6 million Australians in NSW and the ACT, making it one of the largest tourism and transport companies in Australia. We provide motoring, transport and tourism services to our Members and the community.

We've been focused on better transport infrastructure since the beginning, when our founders lobbied for improvements to Sydney's Parramatta Road back in 1920. Independent advocacy is the foundation activity of our organisation and remains critical to who we are in our centenary.

## Introduction

One of the most effective ways to end the debate about the validity of road safety enforcement cameras has been to direct all fine revenue back into keeping people safe on our roads. This is currently occurring in NSW but not in the ACT.

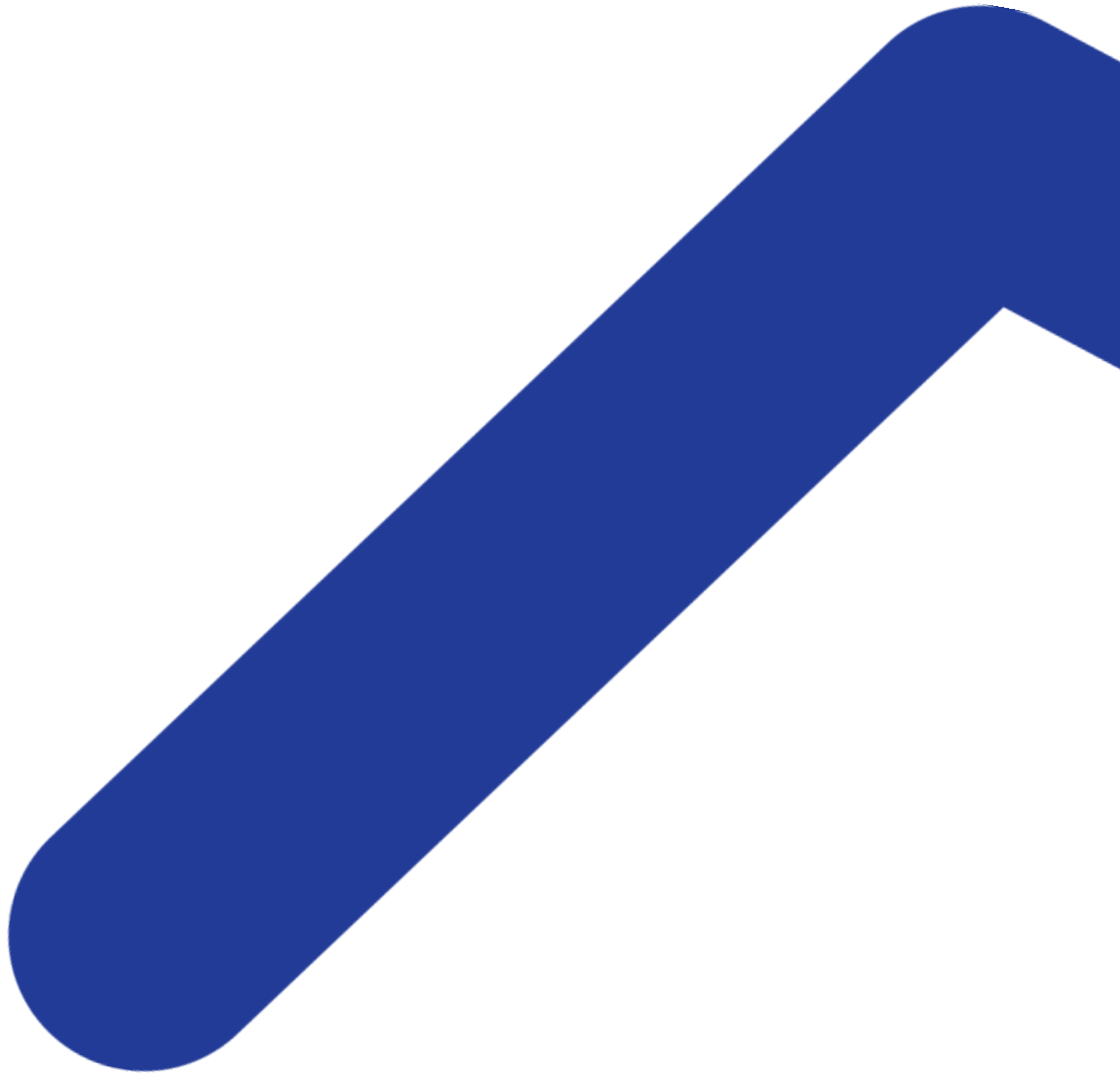
It's been nearly 10 years since the Community Road Safety Fund was established in NSW off the back of campaigning by the NRMA. While high level expenditure summaries are publicly released, these are out-of-date and lack detail. This report outlines measures that will provide greater transparency of the Fund and also calls for the establishment of an independent panel. It is also imperative that more NSW motorists are aware of how fine revenue is spent.

In regards to the ACT, now is the time for traffic infringement revenue to be directed into keeping people safe on ACT roads.

## What NRMA wants

- 1. The establishment of an independent committee to oversee the allocation and expenditure of fine revenue in the Community Road Safety Fund.**
- 2. More transparent, detailed and regular public reporting of the Community Road Safety Fund expenditure, including outcomes of funded programs or initiatives.**
- 3. Ensuring expenditure from the Community Road Safety Fund is directly relevant to improving road safety outcomes.**
- 4. Increased community awareness of the Community Road Safety Fund to help further negate the revenue raising debate.**
- 5. Direct all revenue from traffic infringement fines back into road safety in the ACT. An independent committee should be established in order to ensure that fine revenue is adequately allocated and expended on road safety measures and made publicly available.**

# NSW



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## What NSW NRMA Members are saying

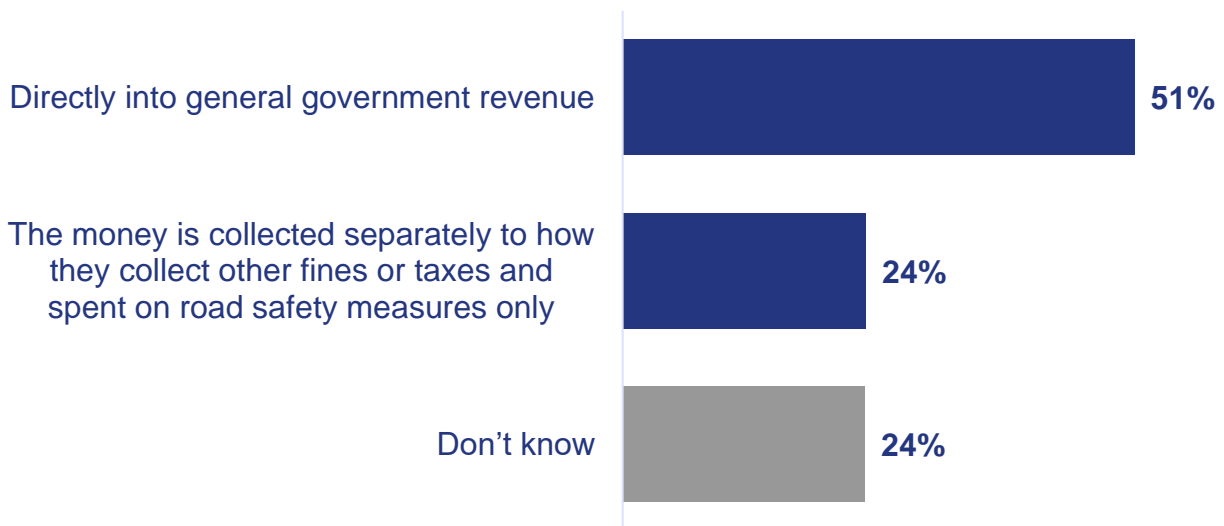
The NRMA surveyed over 1,200 NSW Members to understand their views about road safety enforcement camera revenue.<sup>1</sup>

### Where does the money go

**51%** believe that money collected from enforcement cameras goes directly into general government revenue.

**24%** are aware that revenue from enforcement cameras is spent on road safety measures only.

**24%** don't know where revenue collected from enforcement cameras goes.



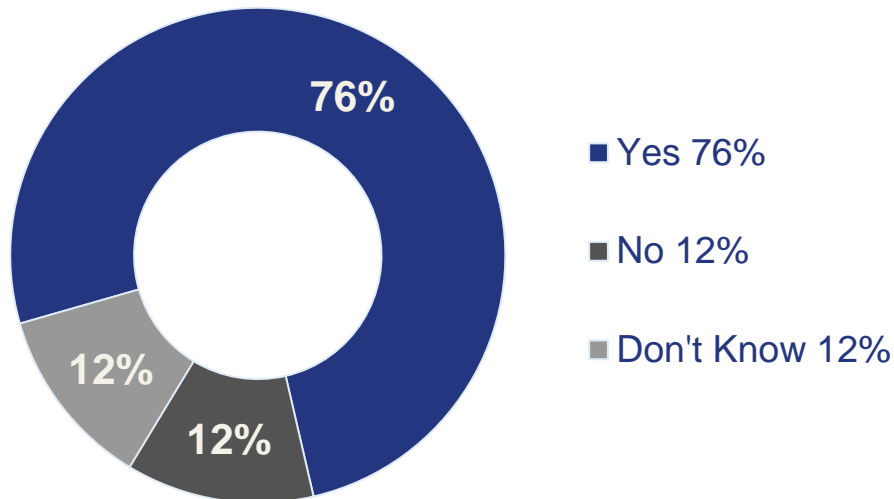
**Figure 1:** Where Members believe revenue collected from enforcement cameras goes.

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<sup>1</sup> NRMA. (2020). Community Road Safety Fund Market Research. Sydney. NRMA

### Independent oversight

76% support the establishment of an independent body to ensure that Community Road Safety Fund revenue is spent effectively in reducing the road toll and made publicly available.

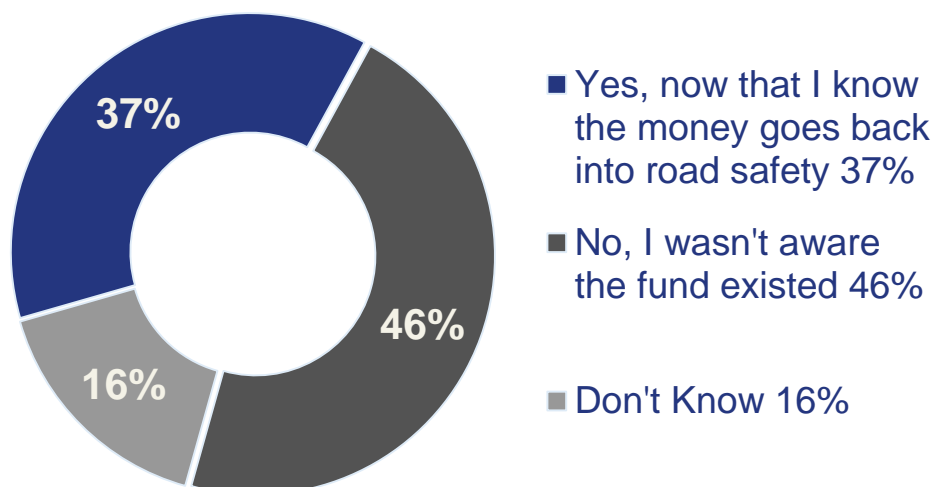


**Figure 2:** Support for the establishment of an independent body to oversee the Community Road Safety Fund.

### Raising revenue

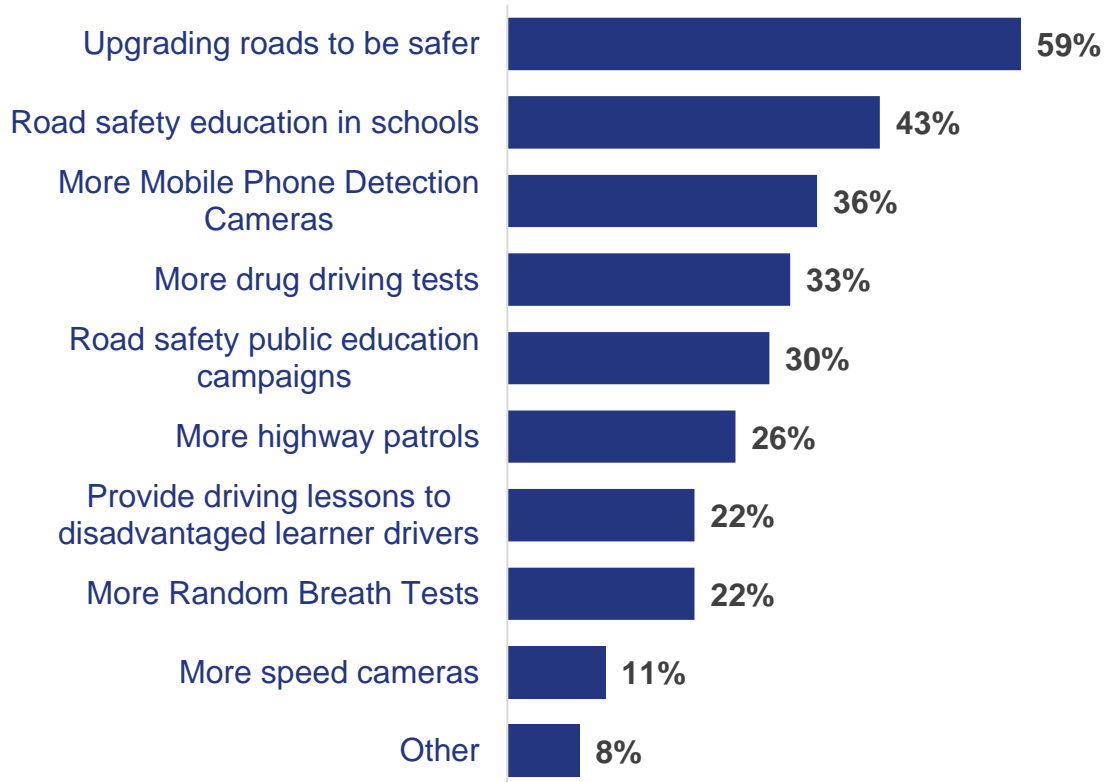
37% believe that directing traffic camera revenue back into road safety has succeeded in negating the revenue raising debate.

46% were unaware the Fund existed.



**Figure 3:** Whether Members believe directing traffic camera revenue back into road safety has succeeded in negating the revenue raising debate.

### **Road safety measures that should be funded**



**Figure 4:** Road safety measures that Members believe should be funded by the NSW Community Road Safety Fund.

**According to NSW NRMA Members, upgrading roads is the preferred road safety measure that should be funded by the Community Road Safety Fund.**

**ACT**



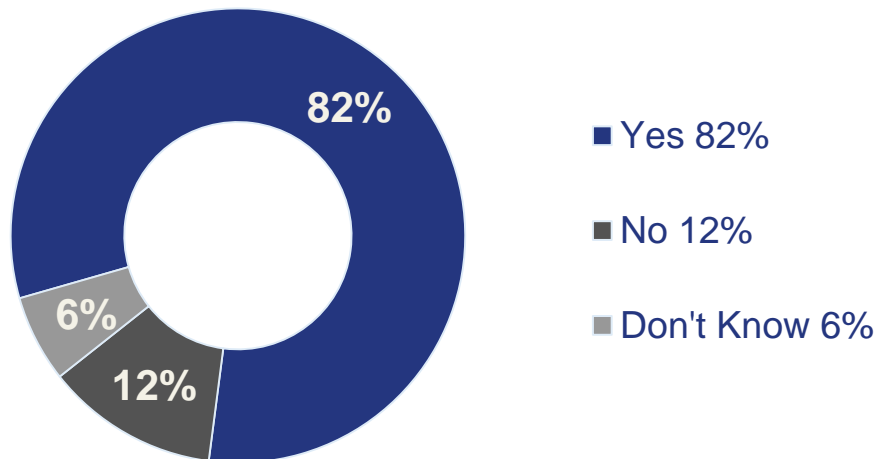


## What ACT NRMA Members are saying

The NRMA surveyed over 800 ACT Members to understand their views about road safety enforcement camera revenue.<sup>2</sup>

### Fine revenue into road safety

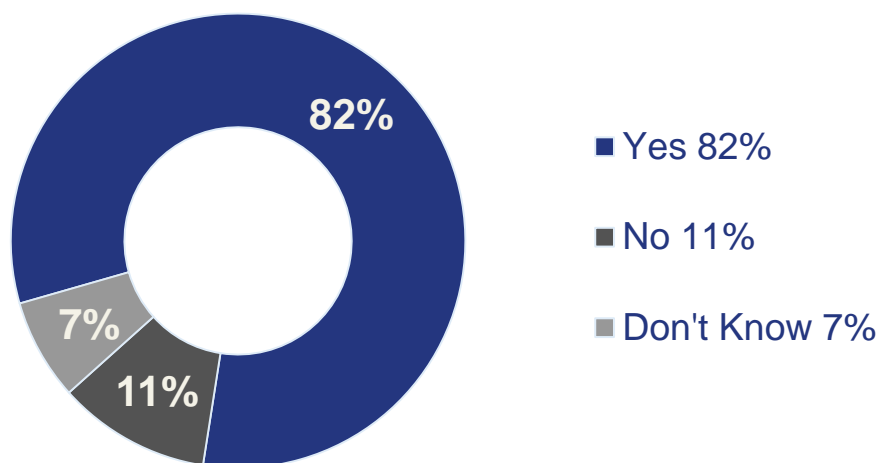
82% of ACT Members believe that enforcement camera revenue should go back into funding road safety measures.



*Figure 5: Support for the establishment a fund to direct enforcement camera revenue into road safety in the ACT.*

### Oversight required

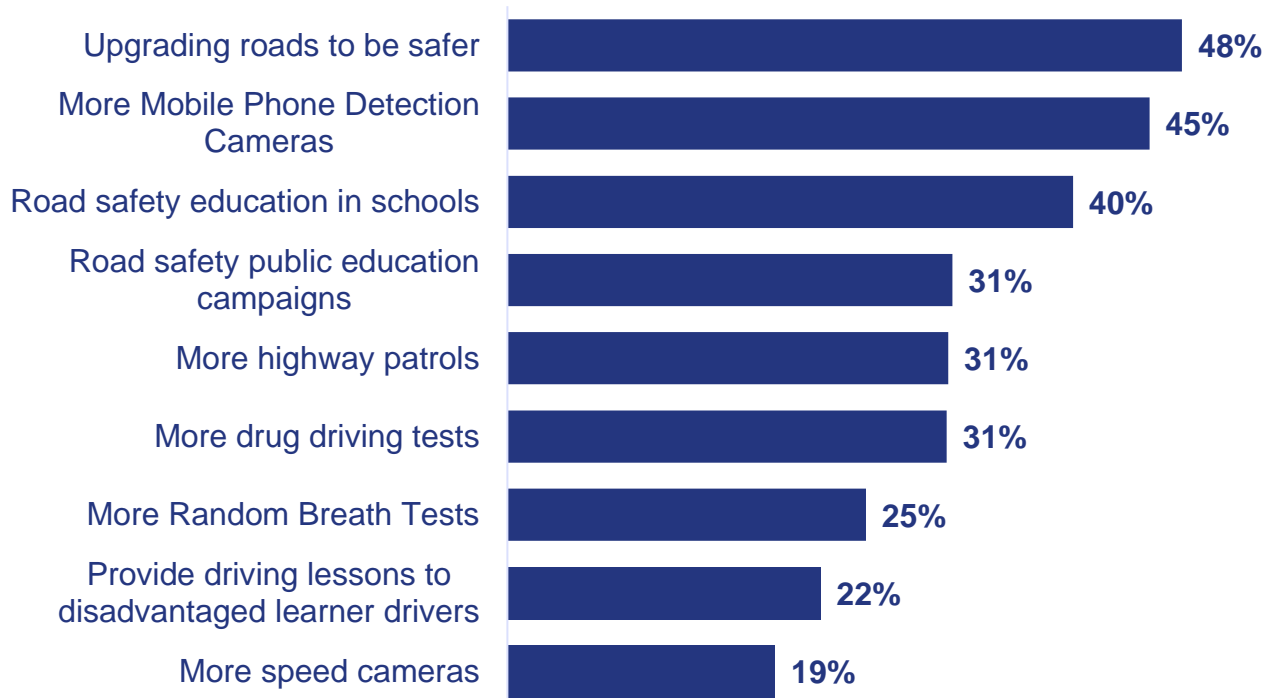
82% support the establishment of an independent body to ensure traffic infringement revenue is spent effectively in reducing the road toll and made publicly available.



*Figure 6: Support for the establishment of an independent body to ensure enforcement camera revenue is adequately allocated if traffic fines are directed into road safety.*

<sup>2</sup> NRMA. (2020). Community Road Safety Fund Market Research. Sydney. NRMA

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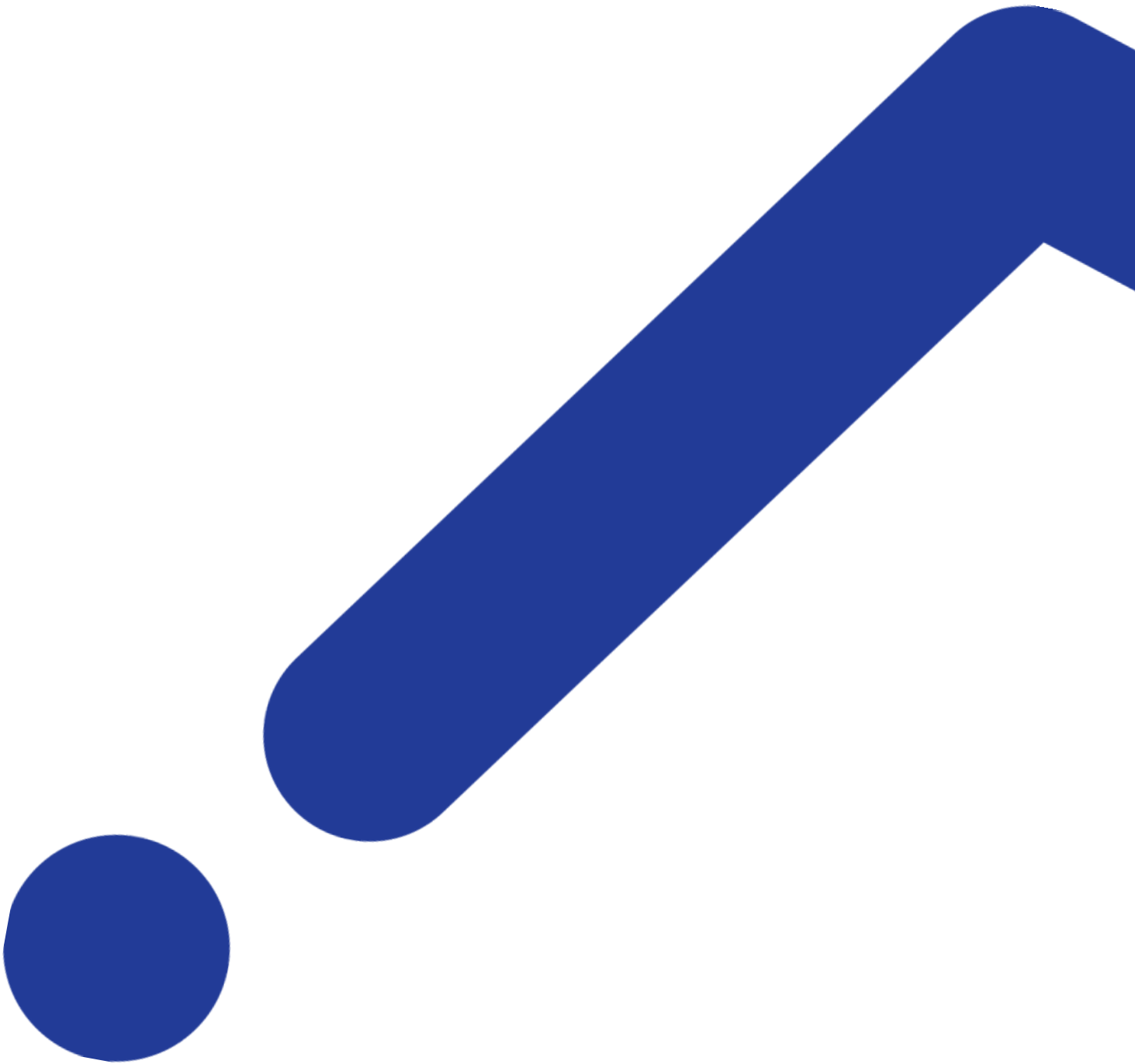
**Road safety measures that should be funded**

**Figure 7:** Road safety measures that ACT Members believe should be funded if enforcement camera revenue was directed into road safety measures.

***According to ACT NRMA Members, upgrading roads is the preferred road safety measure that should be funded by the Community Road Safety Fund.***

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# Community Road Safety Fund



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## Community Road Safety Fund

In 2011, the NRMA presented a petition signed by 13,500 motorists to the NSW Government. The petition called for all revenue from traffic enforcement cameras to be directed back into road safety. After the NRMA's sustained public campaign, the Community Road Safety Fund was established through legislation in 2012 and came into effect in 2013. The Fund is administrated through the Centre for Road Safety.

Today, all camera detected speed, mobile phone and red light running infringements are directed into the Fund. However, 51% of motorists surveyed still believe that the money goes directly into general government revenue.<sup>3</sup> The NRMA believes that more needs to be done to educate the people of NSW on where traffic camera revenue goes. This is one of most effective ways to manage the debate around the validity and integrity of road safety enforcement cameras in NSW and do away with the view that cameras are little more than cash cows.

Infringement notices for enforcement camera offences should inform motorists that their fine is going towards helping keep people safe on our roads. This is a simple and cost effective measure that will help build community awareness of the Community Road Safety Fund among road safety offenders.

### Revenue expenditure

The purpose of the Community Road Safety Fund is to direct fine revenue back into road safety measures that are proven to be effective in preventing road crashes and road trauma.

During the 2017 financial year, Community Road Safety Fund expenditure was \$256.8 million, of which \$165.4 million came from camera revenue. High level information of the allocation of the Fund is available, however it lacks detail and requires greater transparency. Independent oversight of the allocation and expenditure of Community Road Safety Fund revenue will also help strengthen the role of the Fund.

According to the Centre for Road Safety in the 2017 financial year, funds were allocated to a variety of road safety programs such as the NSW Safer Roads Program (\$68 million), the NSW Speed Camera program (\$48.4 million) and the Enhanced Enforcement Program/Police Funding (\$28.5 million).<sup>4</sup> The allocation of funds is shown on the following page in Table 1.

***The total Community Road Safety Fund expenditure for the 2017 financial year was \$256.8 million, of which \$165.4 million came from camera revenue.***

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<sup>3</sup> NRMA. (2020). Community Road Safety Fund Market Research. Sydney. NRMA

<sup>4</sup> NSW Government. (2019). *NSW Road Safety Progress Report 2018*. Available online: [roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/road-safety-progress-report-2018.pdf](https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/road-safety-progress-report-2018.pdf)

Community Road Safety Fund	2017–18 Actual (\$m)
<b>NSW Safer Roads Program</b>	
• State Black Spot	16.6
• High risk curves program	9.5
• Fatigue program	8.4
• Route reviews	2.3
• Local Government Safer Roads	6.5
• Motorcycle safety infrastructure program	1.6
• Intersections safety program	9.7
• Pedestrian program	3.6
• Aboriginal program	1.3
• Cycling safety program	0.5
• Fatal crash response	1.6
• Regional Projects Allocation	5.5
• Run Off Road Head On program	0.3
• Vehicle Activated Signs	0.6
<b>NSW Safer Roads Program (subtotal)</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Other Road Safety Programs</b>	
<b>Enhanced Enforcement Program/Police Funding</b> (Police operations)	28.5
<b>Road Safety Public Education Campaigns and Sponsorship</b>	24.4
<b>NSW Speed Camera Program</b> (Camera program rollout and maintenance)	48.4
<b>Speed Zone Management</b> (Speed zone reviews and expansion of 40km zones)	4.9
<b>Safety Around Schools</b> (Infrastructure treatments, crossing supervisors)	24.1
<b>Road safety education</b> (School and early childhood)	6.1
<b>Safer Drivers Course</b> (Continued delivery)	4.3
<b>State wide and national safety projects</b> (Resourcing, research, evaluation, policy development)	27.1
<b>Roads and Maritime Services</b> (Regional operations and programs)	16.1
<b>Local Government Road Safety Program</b> (Road safety officers)	4.9
<b>Other Road Safety Programs (subtotal)</b>	<b>188.8</b>
<b>Grand Total</b> (Exc. Federal and State direct funding on projects)	<b>256.8</b>

**Table 1.** The allocation of funding from the Community Road Safety Fund 2017-18.<sup>5</sup>  
(Source: Centre for Road Safety)

<sup>5</sup> NSW Government. (2019). *NSW Road Safety Progress Report 2018*. Available online: [roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/road-safety-progress-report-2018.pdf](https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/road-safety-progress-report-2018.pdf)

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## Greater transparency needed

The NRMA believes that an independent body, including representatives of the NRMA, should be established in order to ensure that enforcement camera fine revenue is adequately allocated and expended on appropriate and relevant road safety measures. This information must also be publicly released in a timely manner.

Greater detail about the effectiveness of all road safety measures funded is also needed. The body should ensure that any funded road safety measures are evaluated to ensure effectiveness and that results are publicly released.

For example, in the 2017 financial year, \$24.1 million has been spent on safety around schools that includes infrastructure and school crossing supervisors. Since the 2013 financial year nearly \$97 million has been spent on safety around schools.

This is a considerable investment and a worthy one to protect vulnerable children. However, it is difficult to know exactly how the money was allocated and spent, and whether these measures were effective and based on best practice.

The NRMA believes that a schedule of completed projects for safety around schools must be released, including a list of current or ongoing funded projects. Releasing these results publicly will further strengthen community support for the Fund.

## Timely reporting

In order to increase community confidence and awareness, it is essential that Community Road Safety Fund expenditure is released frequently and is also widely publicised.

Last available Community Road Safety Fund expenditure reporting is for the 2017 financial year. The NRMA believes releasing more current results is critical to keeping the public informed and providing greater transparency around the Community Road Safety Fund and the programs it has invested in.

Community Road Safety Fund expenditure should also be more widely publicised. Currently the expenditure exists on page 33 of a government document that the majority of people would not even know existed.

Motorists should also receive information on where fine revenue was spent in the last financial year. This could be sent with registration renewals, infringement notices or promoted online after a motorist has paid a traffic fine or renewed their vehicle registration. This would be similar to the information taxpayers receive on how income tax revenue is spent in Australia.

## Fine revenue in the ACT

Unlike NSW, when a motorist in the ACT pays a road safety enforcement camera fine, the money goes into general government revenue.

In the 2018/19 financial year, the ACT Government collected almost \$30 million from traffic fines.<sup>6</sup> The NRMA believes that this revenue should be directed into road safety. If it can be done in NSW there is no reason why it cannot be done in the ACT.

Lessons need to be learnt from the NSW model. An independent body to oversee the allocation and expenditure should be set up alongside the establishment of the fund.

***In the last financial year, the ACT Government collected almost \$30 million from traffic fines.***

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<sup>6</sup> ACT Government. 2019-20 Budget Paper No 3: Table 6.2.15: Other Revenue p.252

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