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Fleet Safety: Research to Practice

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Aims

- Propose a definition of 'fleet safety'
- Review organisational, financial and legislative barriers
- Review the current national state of fleet safety
- Future fleet safety challenges

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Fleet management & 'fleet safety'

- Fleet management = logistics and economics of fleets and fleet risk management
- Safety = safe vehicles
- Academic use of 'fleet safety' refers to vehicles and users (drivers)

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Proposed definition

- '*Fleet safety*' is the organisational practice which aims to maximise the safety of vehicles and drivers at work, through effective strategies in fleet management, occupational safety and organisational development.

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Other terminologies

- Work-related driver safety
- Work-related road safety
- Light vehicle fleet safety
  - Passenger vehicles
  - Delivery vehicles
- Heavy vehicle fleet safety
  - Long haul freight, livestock, fuel/chemical
- Passenger transport safety

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Why is driver safety a WH&S concern?

- 25% - 30% of occupational fatalities
  - 50% (including commuting/journey)
- Getting into a vehicle is the most dangerous thing most Australians will ever do while at work or outside of work
- Road crashes are the most common cause of work related death, injury and absence from work in Australia

Source: ASCC (2006); NOHSC (1998); Haworth et al. (2000)

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Fleet management functions/responsibilities

- Procurement
  - Vehicle fit for purpose
  - Outfitting and/or modifying vehicles
- Maintaining vehicles
- Maintaining insurance and fuel
- Monitoring and reporting mileage
- Monitoring and reporting insurance claims
- Pooled vehicle/short term hire
- Logistical functions

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Roles, responsibilities, management commitment

- Large fleets
  - Teams of operational/admin staff
  - Client/customer service
  - Fleet risk management
  - Maintenance
  - Finance and account management
- Small/medium
  - Fleet staff usually within finance or other operational/finance units
  - Often partially/fully outsourced
  - Formally or informally delegated (to finance, HR, facilities/utilities or other operational)

Roles, responsibilities, management commitment cont'd

- Management commitment to fleet safety crucial (Wills, Watson, & Biggs, 2006)
- Variable levels of understanding and perceived importance
- Vehicle ('compliance') focus
- Rural/regional vs. metro
  - Anecdotal differences
  - Further research required

Economic factors

- Maximising residual value (fleet risk management)
- Influenced by external and internal factors
- Fleet mix diversity

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Legislation

- Queensland's *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* defines "a vehicle supplied by an employer for use by a worker in the performance of work" as a workplace
- In Australia – legislation and/or regulation regarding fleet safety is limited

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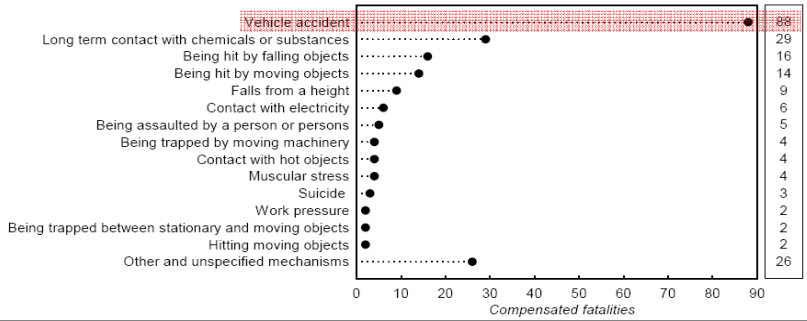
Current state of fleet safety in Australia

- Fatal workers compensation claims
- Road fatalities

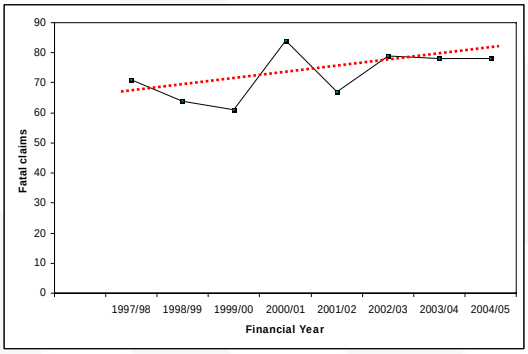
Attributed Causes of Occupational Fatality

Figure 12 **Compensated fatalities: number by mechanism of injury or disease, 2004–05p**

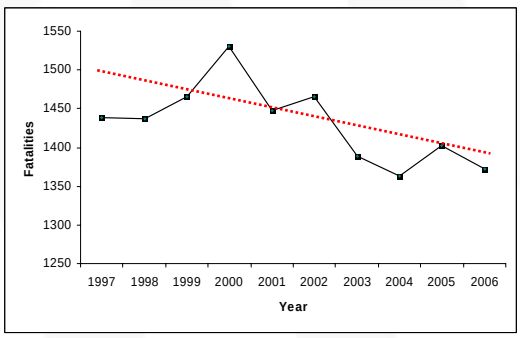


Source: ASCC (2007)

Total fatal workers' compensation claims resulting from road crashes in Australia 1997/98 - 2004/05 financial years



Total road fatalities in Australia 1997-2006



Sources as cited in Wills (2007): ASCC Online Statistics Interactive National Workers' Compensation Statistics Databases; Fatal Road Crash Database (ATSB)

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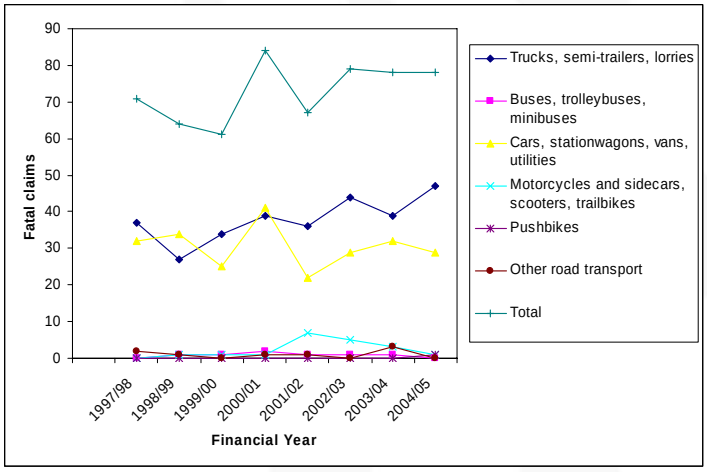
Fatal workers' compensation claims resulting from road crashes in Australia, 1997/98 – 2004/05 financial years (road transport type)



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Past recommendations for fleet safety

- MUARC (Haworth et al., 2000)
  - Select safer vehicles
  - Some training & education programs
  - Incentives (not "rewards")
  - Overall emphasis on safety at work
- CARRS-Q (Murray et al., 2003)
  - Improving government agency data
  - Build fleet safety into national and state plans
  - Links and collaborations
  - Extend COR legislation
  - Government agency leadership

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Future challenges for fleet safety advocacy

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National approach

- National Road Safety Action Plan (2007-2008)
  - '4.3 Safer Vehicles' and '4.4 Safer Road Users and Safer Behaviour' recommended that government fleets lead by example with fleet safety programs in the public service and policies regarding the safety of fleet vehicles, such as preference for the purchase of vehicles with Electronic Stability Programs (ESP).
  - '4.4.4 Safe use of fleet vehicles' also recommends that governments develop fleet safety guidelines for use internally and by commercial fleets which emphasise safe driving behaviour, use of seatbelts, discouraging any mobile phone use, and a zero BAC requirement.
- Government agencies in Qld, Vic and WA have released public guidance documents

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National approach cont'd

- **Between 2000 and 2006, 23 papers were been presented at this conference on topics directly relating to fleet safety. Including**
  - **Current fleet safety practices within Australian and international organisations, including government, commercial and educational organisations**
  - **Identifying and/or comparing the individual and/or organisational factors affecting work-related driver safety**
  - **Conceptual and theoretical models of fleet safety**
  - **At least two papers identified some of the barriers to implementing fleet safety programs in Australia and the UK.**

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Engaging (the correct) stakeholders

Stakeholder Group	Responsibility / Stake
CEO	• legislatively accountable for workplace health and safety • performance of organisation (human resource and economic) • public image of organisation
Senior management	• appropriate strategies to achieve organisational objectives and performance goals
Human resources	• workers' skills and knowledge appropriate • accurate and appropriate job descriptions • appropriate professional development strategies
Fleet management	• maximising residual value of vehicles • selecting fit for purpose vehicles • implementing vehicle policy
Finance management	• allocating sufficient funds to achieve organisation objectives
Supervisors / team leaders	• health, safety and wellbeing of employees
WH&S officers	• advising management on how to meet WH&S legislative obligations
Employees / workers	• health, safety and wellbeing of themselves and others

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Legislation and regulation

- Murray et al. (2003) recommended applying Chain of Responsibility (CoR) regulations to light vehicle fleets
- "any party who has control in the transport chain can be held responsible and may be made legally liable" (NTC, 2004)
- Potential significant impact on fleet safety in Australia

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Data improvements

- Murray et al. (2003) - purpose of journey in police crash reports (national crash/fatality databases)
- Some State agencies have started collecting this (Qld, Vic, Tas)
- This data will help identify differences in factors contributing to work and non-work related crash fatalities

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Conclusion

- Fleet safety is not improving in proportion with the national road toll
- Further attention required
  - Strengthening national approach
  - Broaden the scope of stakeholder engagement
  - Introduce legislative measures
  - Improve fatality data at a national level
- We need fleet safety ambassadors!

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Thank you

The views expressed are those of the presenter and do not represent the views or policies of affiliated organisations.

For further information/sources contact:

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