

# THE LIMPOPO ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY (LRSS): A BLUE PRINT FOR IMPLEMENTING PROVINCE SPECIFIC ROAD SAFETY STRATEGIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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## ABSTRACT

The paper provides a work plan to develop customised specific provincial road safety strategies, based on work conducted in the Limpopo Province. The methodology for developing the strategy is described; as well as the experience and lessons learnt that could be beneficial to other provinces that will be implementing similar road safety strategies. The first step was a review of international and national road safety strategies, including the lessons learnt through the implementation process. Some of the more successful strategies are the Swedish Zero Vision and the Dutch Sustainable Safety approach, culminating in the Safe System Approach. The second focus was to conduct a status quo analysis of the current Limpopo Province planning, preparation and response to the road safety challenge. This analysis is an important element in developing a province specific road safety strategy. Thirdly, the paper provides an overview of the stakeholder engagement process followed to clearly understand the local road safety challenges and guidance obtained to draft potential road safety interventions based on the stakeholder's experience. The next step was the development of a list of province specific road safety interventions to be implemented over the short, medium and long term. These interventions form the core of the Limpopo Road Safety Strategy (LRSS); and must be practical, implementable and measurable. The Implementation Plan for the LRSS provides a broad framework about how to move forward. It describes the governance structures for the implementation process, involving provincial departments, district municipalities, the Limpopo Road Safety Programme (LRSP) team, private corporate leadership and members of the community. A set of road safety performance indicators are listed to be used to monitor successes with the implementation of the targeted interventions – which specifically define the needs and priorities of the Limpopo Province. The lessons learnt during the development of the LRSS are discussed and can be beneficial for developing a road safety strategy. An important prerequisite for the successful implementation of the LRSS is to involve the political leadership in the province to oversee and coordinate the implementation phase.

**Keywords:** Road safety, Strategies, Interventions, Stakeholder engagement, Implementation.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the paper is to provide guidance about how to develop a province specific road safety strategy, based on the recent experience in the Limpopo Province, to develop such a strategy in line with the National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS); also aligning it with

international best practice and experience. The paper describes the procedure followed and provides an overview of the process followed. It also shares the experience and lessons learnt with other provinces that will be implementing similar province specific road safety strategies.

The Anglo-American Foundation (AAF), supported by the Impact Catalyst, an Anglo-American initiative driving socio-economic development through public-private partnerships, initiated the Limpopo Road Safety Programme (LRSP), consisting of a number of focused road safety projects. The development of LRSS – which is aligned to the NRSS - is a core focus of the programme, based on the SSA. The current LRSP is a three-year initiative, aligned with strategic interventions, developed, and implemented by the Impact Catalyst and is set, through public and private partnerships (PPP), to support communities in reducing the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents (Sustainable Development Goal 3.6).

The purpose of the LRSP is to develop a blueprint to promote investment in development of local capabilities and initiatives, following a partnership approach to address local and regional road safety issues in the Limpopo Province. The LRSS forms part of the larger LRSP as Project 1: Development of a LRSS; and is one of the key foundational components of the Programme that was developed. It is anticipated that the LRSS will:

- Result in improved provincial road safety planning for Limpopo;
- Aid in prioritisation of road safety actions and allocation of resources for road safety; and
- Guide additional investment in support of road safety efforts.

## **2. UNDERSTANDING THE ROAD SAFETY CHALLENGE**

### **2.1 The Global Road Safety Challenge**

The WHO Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 (World Health Organization, 2020) shows that road traffic crashes cause nearly 1.3 million preventable deaths and an estimated 50 million injuries each year – making it the leading killer of children and young people worldwide. A further estimated 13 million deaths and 500 million injuries during the next decade and hinder sustainable development, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, unless specific actions are implemented. These unacceptable numbers, both in absolute and relative terms, have remained largely unchanged for the past 20 years, despite the painstaking work of the United Nations and other road safety bodies.

Recognizing the importance of the challenge and the need to act, governments from around the world declared unanimously – through UN General Assembly Resolution 74/299 – a Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021–2030 with the explicit target to reduce road deaths and injuries by at least 50% during that period. The launch of the Second Decade of Action and the target to halve road deaths and injuries by 2030 are fully consistent with the commitment made by UN Member States to take accelerated action in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In fact, road-injury prevention is explicitly mentioned in the Goals for Health (SDG 3.6: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) and Cities (SDG 11.2: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) adopted by heads of government as part of the 2030 Agenda.

The Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030 (World Health Organization, 2020) rejects business as usual and calls on governments and stakeholders to take a new path – one that prioritizes and implements an integrated Safe System approach that squarely positions road safety as a key driver of sustainable development. It also calls for actions that help the world hit the target of a 50% reduction in the number of road traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030.

## 2.2 Global Best Practices

### *2.2.1 Background*

Various concepts have evolved since the 1990's to address the growing global road safety challenge, particularly Vision Zero and Sustainable Safety. More recently, these concepts have culminated into the SSA. The various concepts are interwoven and complement each other and have shaped contemporary international road safety thinking. These concepts have been implemented in many countries with success to reduce road trauma hence have a direct bearing on the national and provincial road safety developmental process in South Africa.

### *2.2.2 Vision Zero*

Vision Zero was initiated in 1994 and is the Swedish approach to road safety thinking. It can be summarised in one sentence: No loss of life is acceptable. It is based on the simple fact that all road users are human and make mistakes. The Vision Zero approach has proven highly successful. After just three years of the concept being implemented in Sweden, the Swedish Parliament passed a Road Traffic Safety Bill that put the Vision Zero into the Swedish law. The Bill sets an ultimate target of no deaths or serious injuries on Sweden's roads, and it is not satisfied with merely reducing accidents to an economically manageable level. Sweden has since modelled its road safety reform strategy on the Vision Zero approach. Vision Zero contributed to competence and technical developments that are useful to the rest of the world because road safety is one of the greatest safety risks especially for young persons around the world.

### *2.2.3 Sustainable Safety*

In the 1990s, the Netherlands introduced the vision of Sustainable Safety. In a sustainably safe traffic system, crashes are prevented as much as possible, and when prevention is not possible, the probability of severe injury is reduced to almost zero. Human factors are the primary focus: by starting from the needs, competences, limitations and vulnerability of people, the traffic system can be realistically adapted to achieve maximum safety. The principles adopted are:

- Functionally of road – there are through roads, distributor roads and access roads in a hierarchically structured road network. Each has its own road safety requirements.
- Homogeneity of mass and/or speed and direction reduces road casualties.
- Predictability of road course and road user behaviour by a recognizable road design based on consistency and continuity of road design.
- Forgivingness of the environment to limit road users' injury and anticipated of road user behaviour.

#### 2.2.4 *Safe System Approach*

The Safe System Approach (SSA) forms basis of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021 - 2030, a holistic view to road safety as well as a better understanding of the interaction of the elements. The core elements of the SSA include safe road users, safe vehicles, safe speeds, safe roads, and post-crash care (road users, roads and roadsides, vehicles, speeds, emergency response).

The SSA represents a paradigm shift away from the traditional approach to road safety, which focuses on changing behaviour through enforcement and education and on actions that protect car occupants, with less attention to people walking and cycling. The traditional approach emphasizes the responsibility of road users to avoid crashes rather than the responsibility of government to provide a safe mobility system. The SSA acknowledges that humans make mistakes, and accounts for human vulnerability. It emphasizes that road systems should be built in a way to reduce human error and protect humans from death and severe injury when they make mistakes. It also reiterates that road safety is a shared responsibility among all stakeholders and that proactive approaches can be taken to improve road safety. Some countries such as Australia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, and Sweden have embraced and implemented the SSA for many years and have had success in reducing road traffic deaths and injuries).

### 2.3 National Road Safety Strategy 2016 - 2030

South Africa pledged to half road traffic injury by 2030 from the 2010 baseline. The National Department of Transport (NDoT) developed the revised National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) 2016 - 2030. The NRSS is based on the principles of the SSA and aims to address the South African road safety challenge by prioritising road safety interventions on a national basis. The NRSS, however, is an overall national framework; and therefore, each province must develop its own customised road safety strategy, based on the NRSS.

The Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) is the custodian of the NRSS and responsible for the development thereof. A strategic framework was developed with a vision and mission with goals and targets (reducing road fatalities by 50% from 2010 to 2030). A prioritisation and strategy plan were developed and under strategic themes (according to the 5 pillars of the DoA) an 83-point action plan was developed with a short, medium to long-term implementation plan.

Guided by a challenge analysis, themed interventions have been identified to define the new direction for road safety. Proposed interventions were informed by best practice insights and a fundamental adherence to the principles outlined with the aim of addressing the challenges and strategic themes identified. By addressing challenges in this way, this strategy aims to meet the strategic targets, vision and strategic goals. An important aspect of any strategy is the ability to monitor progress, and this will be done through performance indicators identified per objective.

Effective execution requires having a clear focus and thoughtful sequencing of interventions. This is necessitated by the resource constrained context in which road safety is promoted in the country. As a developing economy, South Africa's fiscal and human resources are limited. There is also a great need for existing resources to be directed toward activities which directly

facilitate economic growth and development e.g. funding industrialisation. Improving the safety of South African roads is therefore a task of achieving much with very little.

A prioritisation matrix assists in determining the relative importance and supports the planning of the interventions. Themed interventions are comparatively assessed based on ease of implementation as well as expected impact on the set targets. It was proposed that the implementation of the Road Safety Strategy be tracked, progress monitored and evaluated to ensure delivery of the strategy in accordance with planned timeframes. The implementation components should be captured in the annual business plans of all departmental or agency units and monitored and evaluated in accordance with performance contracts. Annual reports on the progress of the strategy need to be published, within six months of year end. Any required adjustments or revisions to the road safety strategy must come into effect within a period as specified by the National Road Safety Coordinating Committee (NRSCC) to ensure that deviations do not compromise the strategic objectives and targets.

While the RTMC is the custodian of the NRSS, it is important to note that the strategy was developed collaboratively with the National Department of Transport and other key departments, reflecting a whole-of-government approach. This collaborative foundation is especially relevant for the Limpopo Road Safety Strategy (LRSS), where inclusive stakeholder consultation should be prioritised to ensure alignment with both national priorities and provincial needs. Additionally, the LRSS should expand on the NRSS by integrating emerging pillars aligned with the updated UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2030, such as equity and sustainability. This evolution will highlight the LRSS's intent to remain globally aligned while addressing local realities more comprehensively.

## 2.4 Need for Province Specific Road Safety Strategies

The NRSS provides a broad framework of interventions for provinces to improve road safety. Although Limpopo Province has many road safety challenges similar to those experienced by other provinces, it also has its unique circumstances that require it to develop a province-specific road safety strategy, based on recommended and proven interventions to resolve its road safety challenges.

Furthermore, provinces differ, e.g. some more urbanised and other more rural, each need a specific customised road safety strategy to address its road safety challenges. Hence, there is the need to develop provincial specific road safety strategies underpinning the NRSS.

## **3. LIMPOPO ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY**

### 3.1 Background

Limpopo has a higher average of road related deaths per 100 000 population than the rest of South Africa. The national average for South Africa was 24.9, whereas Limpopo deaths fluctuated between 26 and increasing to 29.5 between 2015 and 2017. Furthermore, Limpopo is the most rural province in South Africa with specific challenges. It also serves as the major international gateway to South Africa, thereby experiencing specific road safety challenges as a result of a mix of international and local traffic conditions. It, therefore, need to develop a province specific road safety strategy, catering for its specific road safety challenges.

The NRSS indicates that the strategic goal is to, “continually reduce the occurrence and severity of road incidents and consequently the level of fatalities and injuries in an efficient, integrated and coordinated manner”. The Limpopo Province, therefore, apart from addressing its own road safety challenges, has a role to play in achieving this national strategic goal.

While international best practices such as Vision Zero, Sustainable Safety, and the Safe System Approach have demonstrated significant success in reducing road trauma globally, their true value lies in how they are adapted to address local realities. These approaches offer a valuable framework for provinces like Limpopo to design context-specific strategies that move beyond traditional methods and embed road safety into a broader development agenda. To fully realise the benefits of these global models, it is critical to align them with the unique socioeconomic, infrastructural, and institutional conditions of the province.

The following section outlines how the Limpopo Road Safety Strategy (LRSS) draws from these global principles while responding to the province’s distinct challenges and opportunities through tailored and innovative interventions. To contextualise road safety in the Limpopo Province, understanding the current context is necessary. Through understanding the context, key areas of concern and potential challenges, the extent of incidents begin to emerge and in so doing, a way forward can be proposed.

## 3.2 The Limpopo Road Safety Programme

### *3.2.1 Introduction*

The Limpopo Road Safety Strategy 2025-2035 (LRSS) forms part of the larger Limpopo Road Safety Programme (LRSP). The LRSP is a three-year initiative and implemented by the Impact Catalyst and is set, to through public and private partnerships (PPP), support the Limpopo Province government and communities in reducing the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents (Sustainable Development Goal 3.6). The purpose of the LRSP is to develop a blueprint to promote investment in development of local capabilities and initiatives, following a partnership approach to address local and regional road safety issues in the Limpopo Province.

The LRSS is one of the key foundational components of the LRSP. It is anticipated that the LRSS will:

- Result in improved provincial road safety planning for Limpopo;
- Aid in prioritisation of road safety actions and allocation of resources for road safety; and
- Guide additional investment in support of road safety efforts.

### *3.2.2 Public Private Partnerships in Support of Road Safety Efforts*

Impact Catalyst responded to a call for proposals to address road safety in the Limpopo province. The Impact Catalyst is an initiative founded by Anglo American and the Anglo-American Foundation to deliver socio economic change on a regional scale. The other projects in the LRSP includes a network level assessment of 1000 km roads (national and provincial roads), road safety audits, road safety education at schools, upskilling first responders (emergency medical personnel refresher training), Safe System Approach training to stakeholders and iRAP assessment training.

### 3.3 Developing the Limpopo Road Safety Strategy 2025 - 2035

#### *3.3.1 Introduction*

The development of the LRSS included a number of specific activities driven goals, namely understanding the international and national road safety approaches and strategies, an assessment of the current road safety status quo in the province, the engagement of all the stakeholders involved (provincial and national) to pinpoint the specific road safety challenges in the province, the procedure followed in developing the LRSS and the implementation thereof. The international and national approaches have been captured in the preceding text. Only the province specific activities are outlined hereunder to highlight what provinces need to consider when conducting a road safety status quo analysis.

#### *3.3.2 Assessing the Current Road Safety Status Quo in Limpopo*

To develop effective strategies for improving road safety in Limpopo, it is essential to understand the root causes of traffic incidents, namely road user behaviour, vehicle safety and engineering and environment factors. Related matters include the co-ordination of efforts and interdepartmental co-operation.

The Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL) faces significant challenges in maintaining its extensive road network, primarily due to aging infrastructure, budget constraints, and limited institutional capacity (Roads Agency Limpopo, 2022). Limpopo's road network spans approximately 23,200 kilometres, with 84% managed by RAL, consisting mostly of provincial roads, of which 67% are unpaved. A concerning 30% of paved roads and 40% of gravel roads are classified as poor or very poor (Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety, 2023). Years of underfunding and inadequate asset management have contributed to this decline, with RAL acknowledging a 115-year backlog in road maintenance with current funding levels. Despite these challenges, strategic investment and maintenance interventions could leverage the road network to enhance economic growth and improve road safety.

Effective public transportation systems are essential for improving road safety, particularly in urban areas. By decreasing the volume of private vehicles, lessen traffic congestion and, consequently, reduce the risk of accidents. In Limpopo, taxis are the most utilised mode of transport, according to the 2022 National Household Travel Survey, showcasing their critical role in the province (Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety, 2023). Various bus and minibus taxi companies from African countries transport passengers to South Africa via the various border posts in Limpopo. Although various international protocols are in place, these public transport vehicles do not always comply with adopted minimum road safety conditions.

The Limpopo Province is a key freight corridor in South Africa and currently faces challenges in ensuring the safety of Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) drivers, as well as other motorists. It should also be noted that vehicles enter and exit the country through the Beitbridge Border or the Groblersbrug Border, and travel through Limpopo. The absence of designated truck stops compels drivers to rest along roadsides, leading to increased fatigue and a higher risk of accidents (Maluleke, 2021). Additionally, overloaded heavy vehicles damage the province's road infrastructure. The high volume of HGV traffic, driven by mining, agriculture, and industrial activities, causes urban congestion, particularly at intersections prone to incidents.

Despite existing road safety legislation, Limpopo Province experiences high rates of traffic fatalities and injuries, indicating widespread risky driving behaviour. This includes disregard for traffic laws, inadequate enforcement, and a culture of impunity. Common violations like speeding, overloading, driving defective vehicles, reckless driving, intoxication of drivers and pedestrians and pedestrian-related incidents are prevalent. This is documented by the World Health Organization (2018) and Du Plessis et al. (2020).

Limpopo Province relies heavily on walking, making pedestrians particularly vulnerable (Arrive Alive, 2010). Their lack of protection, visibility, slow reaction times, and unpredictable behaviour increase their risk of accidents. While infrastructure like pedestrian bridges and gravel shoulders can improve safety, underutilisation due to ignorance, safety concerns, and poor design hinder their effectiveness. Pedestrian education and training, focusing on age-related limitations and road regulations, are crucial for reducing fatalities.

Learner transport is essential, especially in rural areas where walking distances are significant. The National Learner Transport Policy aims to improve access and safety. However, Light Delivery Vehicles (LDVs), often overloaded and unsafe, are commonly used, particularly in areas with poor road conditions, increasing risks for learners (Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety, 2023). Schools located in high-traffic areas, including mining and forestry zones, further expose learners to danger. Various districts use diverse learner transport methods, including LDVs, tuk-tuks, and contracted services. Road safety education in schools, combined with a comprehensive curriculum developed through collaboration between the Departments of Transport and Education, is equipping learners with essential road safety skills.

Half of all crash victims are vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. While non-motorised transport (NMT) is essential, it is often used out of necessity due to the province's spatial challenges, with many communities being far from urban amenities. Factors contributing to the risks for NMT users include poor urban design, lack of designated lanes, poor road conditions, and unsafe driver behaviour. Promoting awareness and responsible behaviour from all road users is essential for creating a safer environment for NMT users.

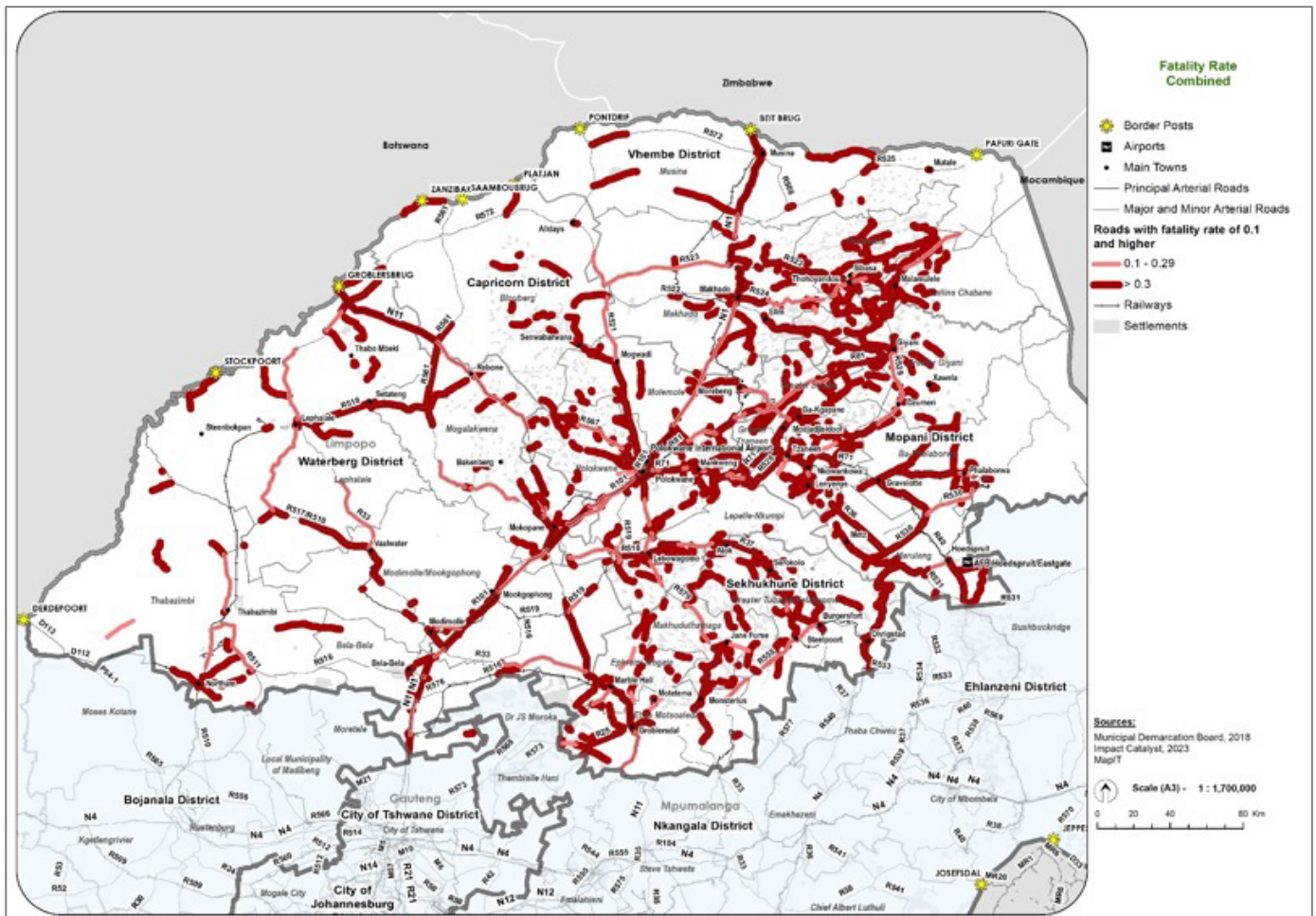
Road safety awareness programs in Limpopo Province demonstrate potential for improving driver behaviour and reducing incidents. Initiatives like Arrive Alive, a national campaign, and the Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety's programs, focus on educating road users about traffic laws, safe practices, and the dangers of risky behaviours. These campaigns utilize various strategies, including mass media, targeted interventions at high-risk locations, and educational programs, aiming to foster a culture of responsible road use (Arrive Alive, 2024). Emphasizing early intervention through school-based education, as recommended by studies, is considered crucial for instilling lifelong safe road habits.

Limpopo's Road Incident Management System (RIMS) aims to provide a coordinated response to road emergencies, prioritizing high-traffic national and provincial roads. RIMS involves collaboration between emergency services, police, and other stakeholders (Tolcon, 2024). However, challenges such as resource limitations, a lack of truck stops, and roadside disruptions hinder its effectiveness. Complementing RIMS with an initiative-taking Incident Management Plan, focusing on incident prevention and impact minimization, is suggested to

enhance overall road safety. The province's healthcare facilities, often located far from incident sites, further emphasize the need for efficient emergency response.

The economic impact of road incidents in Limpopo Province is substantial, extending beyond the tragic loss of life and injuries. Lost workdays, diminished productivity, and vehicle damage contribute to significant financial losses. While there has been a slight downward trend in total accident costs over the past five years, the economic burden remains considerable, impacting the province's GDP. Factors such as the number and severity of incidents, as well as inflation, influence these costs. Investing in road safety measures is essential to mitigate both the human and economic consequences of road incidents.

The top ten worst roads in Limpopo Province were identified by calculating accident and fatality rates for each year from 2018 to 2022. An average accident and fatality rate was then determined for each road over this period. The roads were ranked from the highest to the lowest accident and fatality rates to create a ranking. The results revealed that many of the worst roads are district roads. Figure 1 highlights road sections with a fatality rate higher than 0.1.



**Figure 1: Fatality rate map (per 100,000 vehicle kilometres) of road sections with a fatality rate > 0.1 (2018 – 2023)**

### 3.3.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is a crucial part of developing any road safety strategy. The process followed in the Limpopo Province was to, firstly, conduct a general stakeholder workshop with all stakeholders to familiarize them with the process and to obtain their perspectives on the road safety issues in the province. Secondly, one-on-one stakeholder workshops, both online or in person, were conducted to obtain more specific and detailed road safety challenges and potential solutions from the individual stakeholders from their perspective.

The general stakeholder engagement workshop aimed to align the stakeholders with the SSA concept, the UN/WHO Decade of Action, and the NRSS. The workshop also focused on two-way communication and collaboration and covered aspects such as stakeholder mapping, identifying key groups such as state institutions (national, provincial, and local), state-owned enterprises, and private sector entities, including road user representatives and public transport operators. The stakeholders involved are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: List of stakeholders invited to the stakeholder engagement workshop**

Stakeholder Grouping	Stakeholder Entities
State Institutions	- Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety (LDTCS) (focus on road safety and RIMS)
	- Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE) (focus on road safety at schools)
	- Limpopo Department of Health and Social Development (LDoH)
	- Limpopo Department of Public Works, Roads, and Infrastructure (LDPWRI)
	- Limpopo Department of Traditional Affairs (LDoTA)
	- District and Local municipalities (focus on district municipalities)
	- South African Police Service (SAPS)
State Owned Entities	- Roads Agency Limpopo (RAL)
	- South African National Roads Transport Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL)
	- Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC)
	- Road Traffic Infringement Agency (RTIA)
	- Cross Border Road Transport Agency (C-BRTA)
Private Sector	- Bakwena N1N4 Toll concessionaire
	- Automobile Association of South Africa (AASA)
	- Limpopo Liquor Board
	- International Road Assessment Programme (iRAP)
	- Emergency response entities
	- Road Safety Partnership (RSP) South Africa
	- ChildSafe (NGO)
	- Car tracking companies
- Public transport operators (bus and minibus taxi industries)	

Following mapping, stakeholder analysis defined roles and expectations, categorizing stakeholders based on their influence and interest. This led to targeted engagement, including individual sessions with key stakeholders like the Limpopo Departments of Transport, Health, and Education, as well as district municipalities and relevant agencies. A workshop was also

conducted to gather input on the strategy's alignment with national and international road safety frameworks, and to understand the needs of road users in Limpopo.

Participants used a human-centered approach to assess the current state of road safety and identify user needs. Through an ideation process, stakeholders also developed aspirations for short-term and long-term improvements in road safety within the province.

The stakeholder engagement process in developing the LRSS was both comprehensive and impactful, comprising a multi-phased approach of broad consultation and targeted engagement to ensure that stakeholder inputs directly informed the strategy's interventions. The process began with stakeholder mapping and analysis, where entities were grouped according to their roles in road safety and assessed based on their influence and interest using an influence-interest matrix. This informed a dual-level engagement strategy: broader workshops for awareness and alignment, and focused one-on-one sessions with high-impact stakeholders such as the Limpopo Departments of Transport, Health, and Education; RTMC; SANRAL; SAPS; and district municipalities. During the April 2024 stakeholder workshop and individual sessions (until October 2024), participants engaged in a human-centred design process to reflect on the needs of diverse road users and envision both short- and long-term safety outcomes. This ideation process led to specific aspirations for various user groups – such as speed calming measures and NMT facilities for school children, law enforcement training, truck driver rest regulations, and infrastructure upgrades for EMS personnel. These inputs were not merely consultative but shaped the LRSS interventions directly. For example, repeated calls for safer school zones and dedicated infrastructure for vulnerable users informed the prioritisation of pedestrian safety measures and NMT facilities in the strategy. Similarly, insights on enforcement gaps and EMS constraints guided the inclusion of interventions around capacity building, better data systems, and inter-agency coordination. Ultimately, the engagement ensured that the LRSS reflected the lived experiences and expert insights of key stakeholders, embedding collaboration, integration, and local relevance into its framework.

#### *3.3.4 Developing the LRSS*

Based on the various sets of data collected, as outlined above, the development of the LRSS followed. A detailed project report, covering a detailed analysis all the aspects was compiled, covering a comprehensive set of potential interventions to be considered in the Limpopo Province for each of the pillars of the SSA. From the main report, a more detailed 50-pager LRSS was developed. The LRSS is summarised in Figure 2. The road map covers the key interventions to be considered and implemented in order to reduce road fatalities by 50% by 2030, the common themes to guide the respective actions, the targeted road user groups and the unfolding of the Implementation Plan.

The most sensible approach to follow to implement the LRSS is to focus on a number of short-term interventions (low hanging fruit) that can result in maximum impact in reducing fatalities. For example, a major issue is road user behaviour, and the focus is on social media intervention to influence their behaviour, focussing on the 10 most hazardous spots. As progress is made with these interventions, other medium- and longer-term interventions will be considered.



**Figure 2: Limpopo road safety strategy at a glance**

### 3.3.5 Implementation and Monitoring Plan

The Implementation Plan for the LRSS is an important step to ensure that the targeted interventions, as identified through the stakeholder engagement process and international and local best practice, are properly implemented and monitored; and the effectiveness thereof measured.

The general steps in implementing and monitoring the LRSS are the following:

#### ► **Governance Structure**

- A governance structure will be established to support and monitor the LRSS implementation process. An Implementation Steering Committee (ISC) will be established as the central governance body overseeing the delivery of the LRSS. This structure requires that a balance need to be affected between political buy-in and the line functions. The Office of the Premier and MECs must co-ordinate the implementation process.

#### ► **Planning**

- Provincial, national, and donor funding mechanisms will be leveraged on a continuous basis.

- Each year, a set of Top 10 priority interventions or corridors will be selected for accelerated support.
- Continuous consultation with all the departments that will implement the targeted interventions.
- Workshopping the implementation of the targeted interventions with all government and private sector role players. Since there are a wide range of targeted interventions, a more refined list must be prepared in consultation with all stakeholders.

#### ► **Monitoring**

The LRSS will adopt a multi-tiered monitoring framework, drawing on the Bliss & Breen model and adapted for Safe System implementation:

- Input indicators: budget execution, training delivered.
- Output indicators: infrastructure built; enforcement conducted.
- Outcome indicators: speeding reduced, seatbelt use improved.
- Impact indicators: fatalities and serious injuries reduced.
- Social cost indicators: estimated reductions in crash-related economic burden.

#### ► **Reviewing**

- Conduct periodic reviews to identify areas for improvement and adapt the strategy as needed.
- Collect feedback from stakeholders to regularly review the strategy and suggesting changes, if needed.

#### ► **Updating the Strategy**

- Revising the strategy as goals, strategies, and safety data change.

#### ► **Involving the Public**

- Engaging the broader society in the implementation of the strategy.
- An annual Limpopo Road Safety Progress Report will be published and disseminated publicly.

## **4. LESSONS LEARNT FROM DEVELOPING A PROVINCE SPECIFIC ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY**

The project team gained several valuable insights throughout the development and implementation of the LRSS. These lessons were critical in shaping the approach to stakeholder engagement, strategy execution, and overcoming challenges. By reflecting on these experiences, the team was able to identify key factors that played a crucial role in the project's progress and success.

The following points highlight the most significant lessons learned, which contributed to a deeper understanding of stakeholder dynamics, the importance of early political involvement,

and the need for ongoing relationship-building to ensure effective collaboration and successful outcomes:

- The initial workshop, facilitated with broad government representation, was successful. However, it was only after the face-to-face (one-on-one) meetings were held that a deeper understanding of the stakeholders, their challenges, and concerns was gained.
- The strategy development and implementation were supported by the prior knowledge stakeholders had gained from attending the South African Road Federation (SARF) training on the Safe System Approach (SSA).
- Limpopo stakeholders have a good understanding of their challenges, and many are experienced practitioners with advanced qualifications in road safety. The LRSP's ongoing interaction and relationship-building with stakeholders greatly assisted the project team in reaching key stakeholders. Maintaining a strong connection with key stakeholders was crucial to the development of the strategy and is crucial for a successful implementation.
- Political commitment must be secured at the outset of the project. A recommended action is to set up a kick-off meeting with the Office of the Premier and the HOD from LDTCS at the beginning of the project. This will help ensure their continued involvement throughout the project, not just during the handover ceremony. High-level political engagement is also essential to ensure the successful implementation of the LRSS over the next five years.
- Having a liaison person in Province (such as the HOD for Capable State at the Impact Catalyst) with strong contacts and relationships with provincial government departments is vital to ensure broader provincial involvement in the development and implementation of a tailor-made provincial road safety strategy.
- For future projects of a similar nature, incorporating a graphic designer component will be essential to presenting technical information in a more accessible and user-friendly format, ensuring broader understanding and support.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The Limpopo Road Safety Strategy stands as the first province-specific road safety strategy established in South Africa, supporting the National Road Safety Strategy (NRSS) and aligning with internationally benchmarked road safety practices, particularly the Safe System Approach (SSA). Broad consultation with both government stakeholders and private sector players involved in transport and road safety operations within Limpopo has been essential to the successful development and future implementation of the LRSS.

The LRSS development was informed by the international, and national policies and frameworks as discussed; however, contextualised to consider the specific realities within the province. Limpopo Province is predominantly a rural province, as such, in addition to the road safety needs in urban areas and along transport corridors, the road safety needs of the rural population and tribal council areas needs are critical to the province.

The LRSS will function as a catalyst for improved provincial road safety planning, prioritisation of road safety actions and for securing additional investment in support of road safety efforts. It is informed by the NRSS; and the good practice and learning sourced from the global efforts to reduce road trauma.

While delays occurred due to stakeholder engagement, the election year, and subsequent changes within the government, LRSP supported the development of the LRSS. The strong relationships fostered by the Impact Catalyst team were critical in ensuring effective stakeholder engagement and collaboration, which contributed significantly to the project's progress.

The LRSS represents a significant step toward improving the focus and planning related to road safety in Limpopo, and the lessons learned throughout its development will serve as a valuable foundation for future road safety initiatives.

Additionally, securing political commitment from the Office of the Premier and the Head of Department (HOD) of LDTCS from the outset will remain crucial for steering the successful implementation of the LRSS in Limpopo Province.

Adequate resources including financial, physical, and human must be allocated for the full implementation of the LRSS. Furthermore, the involvement of corporate leadership and the public is necessary to ensure the strategy's success. The project also highlighted that poor human behaviour on the roads is a major contributor to road trauma. To address this, the use of social media and the deployment of more road safety officers are recommended strategies to help modify road user behaviour and enhance safety across the road network. Additionally, securing political commitment from the Office of the Premier and the Head of the Department of Transport and Community Safety from the outset will remain crucial for steering the successful implementation of the LRSS in the Limpopo Province.

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