Healthy Roads

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Letters to the Editor
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As reported recently in the West Australian, the draft National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 proposes a range of strategies that could reduce the road toll in WA – but its objectives are far too conservative.

In WA alone, the cost of road crashes is estimated at nearly $2 billion a year. In 2009 road crashes here were the cause of 194 fatalities and over 3,000 hospitalisations for serious injury. Over the last few days we have seen yet further tragedies arising from road crashes, and we have the Christmas/New Year period yet to come.

Road crashes are predictable and preventable, and while we applaud the Australian Transport Council for developing a long term strategy, we believe that this will only have an impact if it seeks a significant reduction.

The ATC aim for a 30 per cent reduction of road deaths and serious injuries by 2020. We would urge that this be revised to meet more ambitious objectives – especially as the UN are calling for measures that will lead to a 50% reduction. Surely we must aim high when trying to reduce not only our appalling road toll, but also its long term consequences for individuals, families and the community, and the impact on those in our hospitals and law enforcement systems who have to pick up the pieces.

Yours faithfully,

Professor Geoff Dobb, Chair, Healthy Roads

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