



Some Roads Are Safer Than Others, And Here's Why

AusRAP: A Cooperative Initiative Between Automobile Clubs and Road Agencies

Ken Ogden

Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV)

Former General Manager, Public Policy

→ kenogden@bigpond.net.au





AusRAP – Australian Road Assessment Program

Topics:

- Data collection
- Maps
- Communication
- Relationships with road agencies



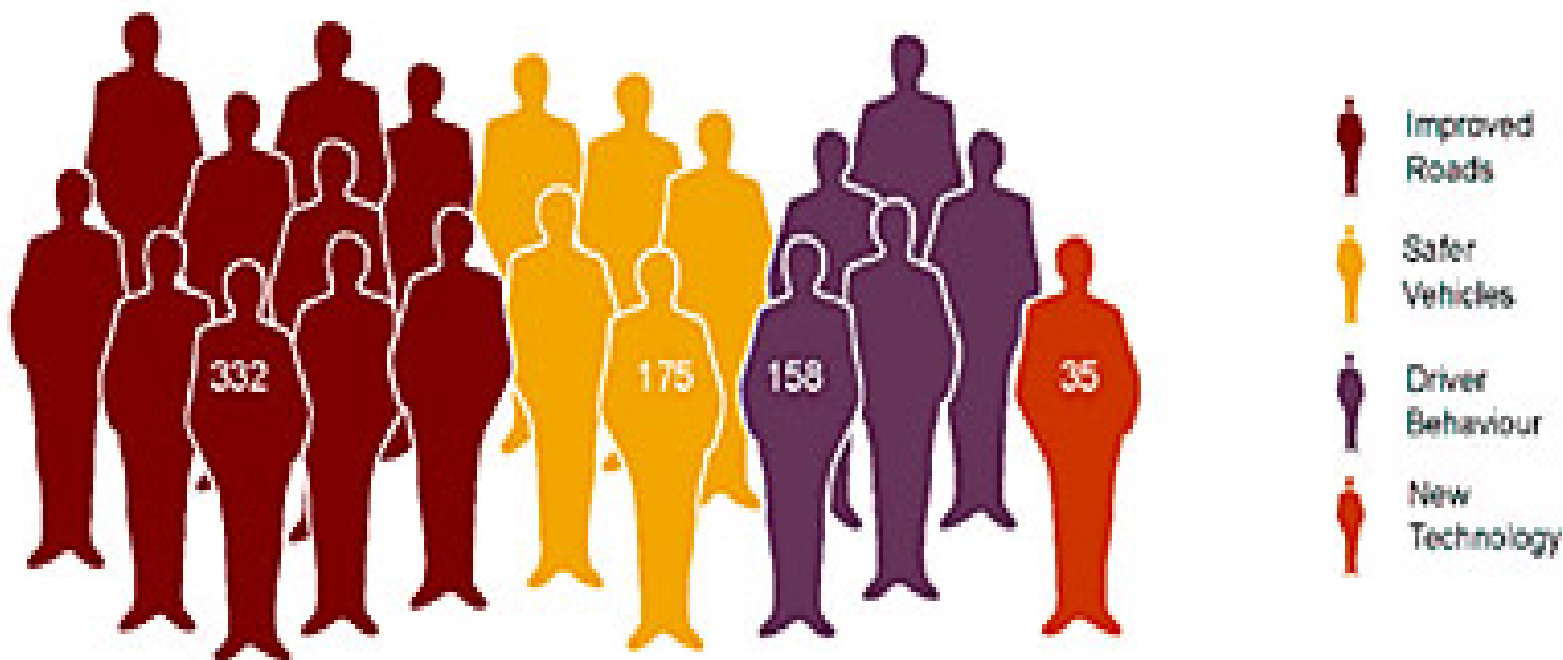
Automobile clubs - safety

Auto clubs have a key interest in road safety:

- Safer cars
- Safer drivers
- Safer roads

Australian National Road Safety Strategy

Here's how the NRSS says we could save 700 lives every year



Aim: to increase public and political awareness of the benefits of safer roads

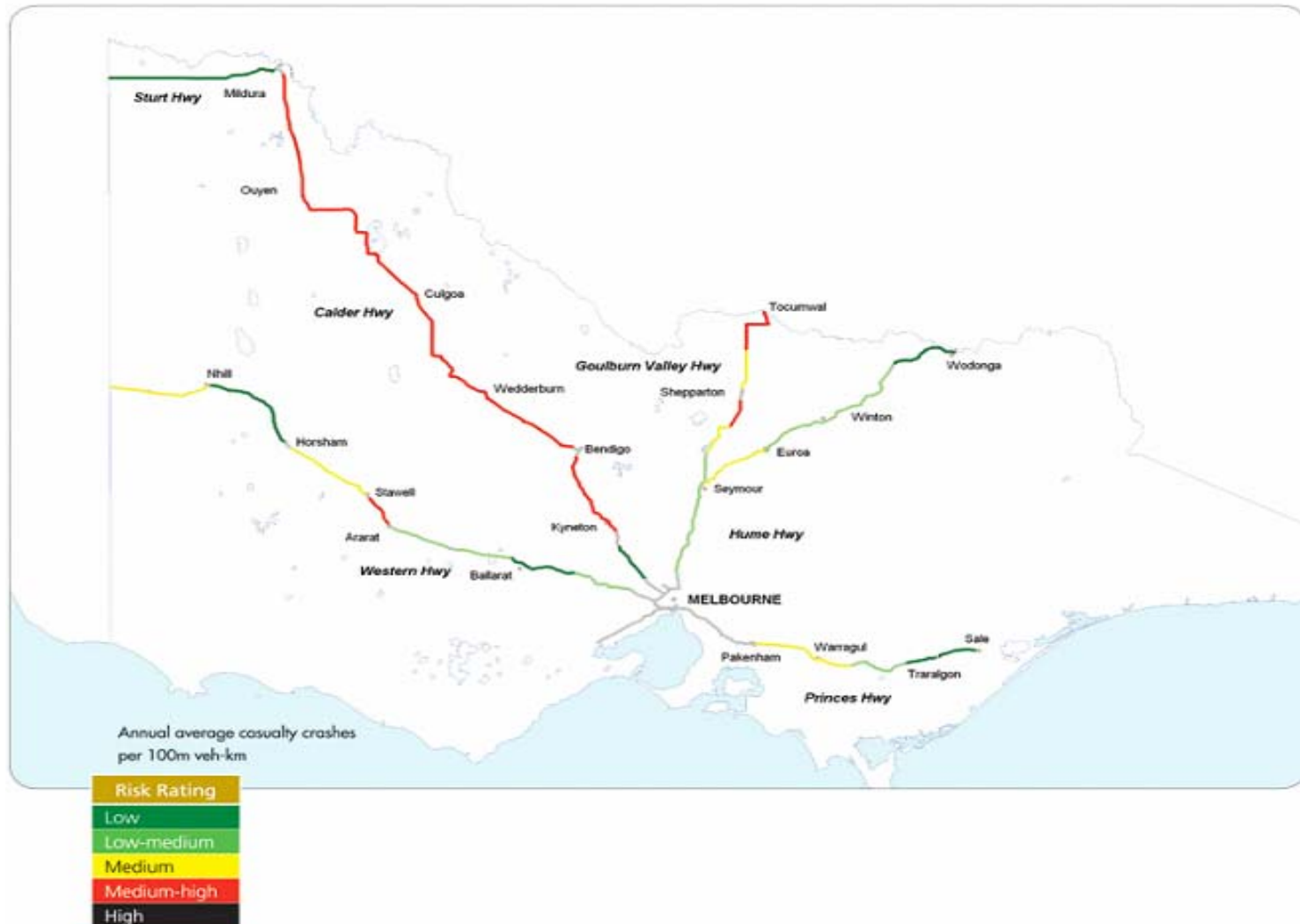
- Two protocols
 - o Risk maps
 - o Star ratings



Risk maps

- Collective risk: average annual casualty crashes per kilometre on selected roads, 1999-2003
- Individual risk: same, per vehicle kilometre

Individual risk map, Victoria, 1999-2003





Star ratings

- Used to communicate a measure of the safety built into a road via its design
- More stars awarded to roads which are:
 - Self-explaining
 - Forgiving

Star rating of Victorian highway network





Data collection and analysis

- Star ratings require detailed inspection
- Specially-equipped vehicles record digital images using an array of cameras
- Inspections based on road agencies' video data

Data collection vehicle





Analysis of digital images

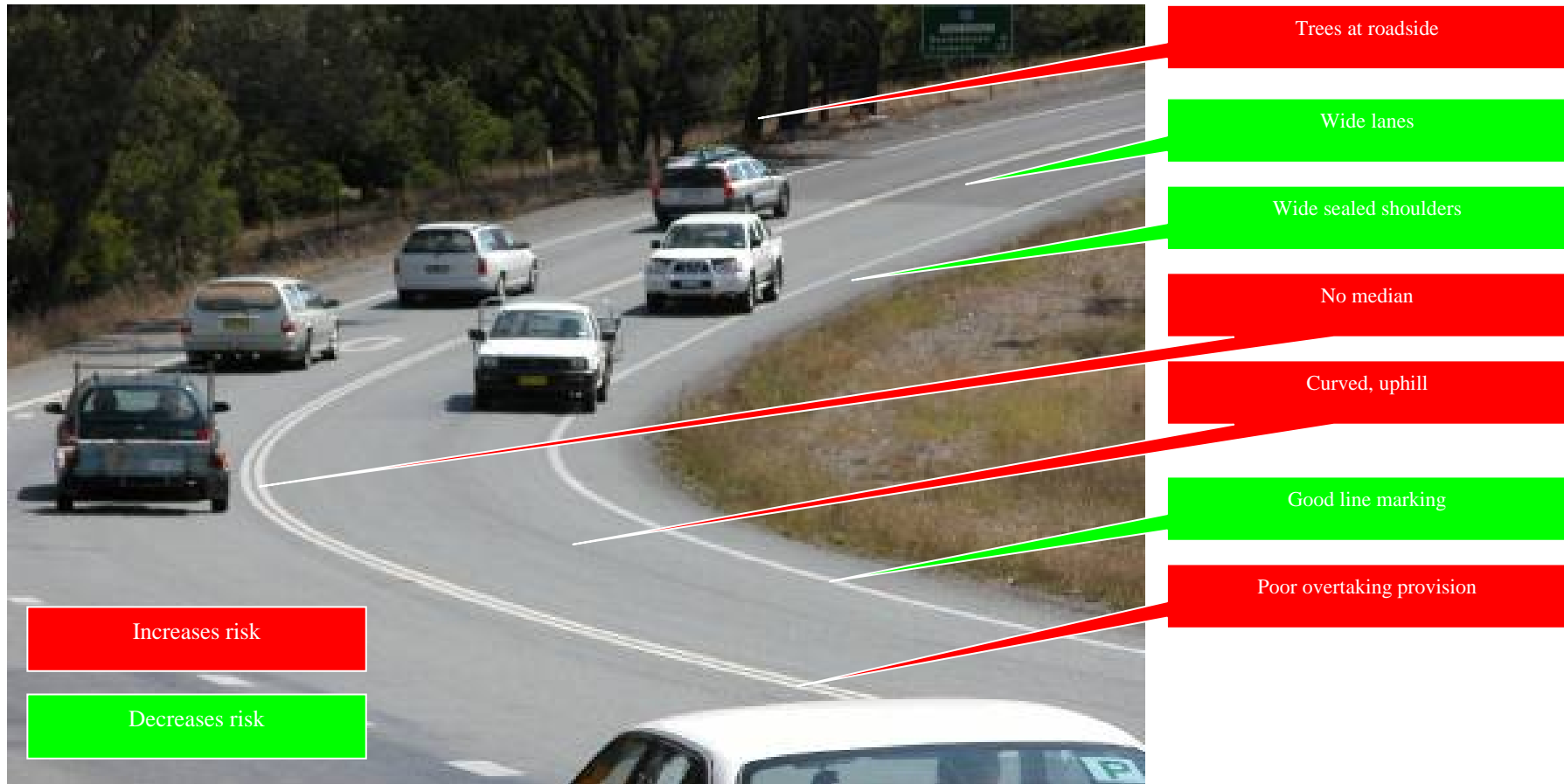
- Analyst can drive the road, virtually
- Hence, assign attributes needed for star ratings
 - Intersection attributes: type, sight distance, turn provisions, speed environment, etc
 - Section attributes: type, lane and shoulder width, terrain, overtaking, delineation, roadside hazards, etc



Road Protection Scores

- Star ratings are based on RPS
- RPS is based on a relative risk score determined for each of a road's design elements

Illustration of the effect of road features on risk





Road Protection Scores

- RPS is calculated for each section, for each of:
 - Run off road crashes,
 - Head-on crashes, and
 - Intersection crashes
- RPS is calculated by the weighted sum of these three
- Results are converted to star ratings

- **Actions:**

- Public launches
- Supporting collateral
- Websites
- DVD
- Fact sheets
- Stakeholder briefings
- Promote to other associations



Key message

Some roads are safer than others, and here's why

All communication, media, stakeholder, public and political briefings were based on this message



Communication

- Keys to effective communication:
 - o Clear objective
 - o Succinct message
 - o Detailed communication plan
 - o Excellent supporting collateral
 - o Political and technical credibility



Relationship with road agencies

- Auto clubs and road agencies have distinct roles
- Clarify roles: clubs not attempting to do agencies job
- Club aim: generate public support for political commitment to direct resources to safer roads



Relationship with road agencies (continued)

- Early and ongoing communication
- Operate in political and public spheres
- Road agencies do an excellent job – our aim is to generate funding so that they can do more
- Star ratings based in video data provided by the road agencies



Relationship with road agencies (continued)

- Agencies kept informed of progress
- Detailed briefings prior to public launch
- Media comments from agencies generally supportive