



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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The National Road Trauma Advisory Council will meet for the first time later this year following Government agreement on detailed arrangements. The Council is a bipartisan initiative based on a proposal made last year by the Australian Medical Association, and in particular Sir Dennis Paterson, Head of Orthopaedic Surgery at Adelaide Children's Hospital.

The Council will allow health professionals and other community groups to have a direct input into the process for establishing and reviewing road and vehicle safety standards and related issues, on a national basis. The advice of the Council will be invaluable in saving lives on our roads and in reducing the toll, both in a personal sense and in health and social security resources, of serious injury.

The main functions of the Council will be to:

- (a) assess the major national causes of road trauma in Australia;
- (b) advise Governments on policies to reduce road trauma levels;
- (c) identify areas of research into road safety issues; and
- (d) identify national solutions to the road trauma level.

The Australian Medical Association's involvement, and the work of its officials, has resulted in a rare level of State and Territory agreement on the establishment of the Council. It is my Government's hope that this will extend to national agreement to advice which the Council will provide on road safety.

The Council will liaise closely with relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory bodies in its work of targeting road safety and health efforts to areas where maximum reductions can be made in road fatalities and serious injuries.

It will comprise a maximum of seven members with experience in the fields of road safety and health. It will report annually to me and to the Premiers and its reports will be tabled in Parliament. The Director of the Federal Office of Road Safety will be the Executive Director of the Council and the Department of Community Services and Health will be represented at meetings.

Appointments to the Council will be announced shortly.