

Trial Approach

What is the Safer Speeds Trial?

The Safer Speeds Trial is a partnership between the City of Busselton, Shire of Augusta Margaret River and RAC with implementation support from Main Roads WA. It aims to assess the impact of reducing speed limits on roads within parts of the City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River.

The Trial would be the first of its kind in WA and would use a holistic, area-wide approach. This means there would be a consistent reduction of speed limits across similar road types in selected areas between Busselton and Augusta.

Approximately 550 roads in the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and 1,250 roads in the City of Busselton would be affected.

What would the Safer Speeds Trial measure?

- » The extent lower speed limits assist in preventing people dying or experiencing life changing injuries on our roads.
- » Whether using an area-wide approach to changing speed limits is more impactful than the current case-by-case approach.
- » Whether more consistent speed limits reduce confusion and frustration for road users.
- » How lower speeds through town centres and residential areas impact people who walk, ride, scoot and drive.

Which roads would be impacted?

To view the roads that would be impacted by this proposed Trial and the reasons they've been selected, view the interactive map at www.saferspeedstrial.com.au.

How were the proposed speed limits determined?

The proposed speed limits have been chosen by considering multiple factors including:

- » Research on best-practice approaches.
- » Over 200 nominations for speed limit reductions from the community in 2022.
- » Petitions and requests from the community for speed limit reductions.
- » History of crashes resulting in fatalities and serious injuries.
- » Traffic volumes.
- » Changes in land uses, such as new housing developments and subdivisions.
- » Safety features of roads.

How have the proposed roads been chosen?

The proposed Trial would focus on the sealed road networks managed by the Shire of Augusta Margaret River and City of Busselton.

To ensure safety improvements for users of different road types, five different road environments would be included in the Trial:

- » Rural roads west of Bussell Highway.
- » Residential roads on the outskirts of town.
- » Urban major roads.
- » Town centres (main streets through town centres and streets with high pedestrian activity).
- » Residential streets.

How would this approach be different?

In most local governments across Western Australia, speed limits are changed on a case-by-case basis, when a submission is made by a local government to Main Roads WA.

For this Trial, we have reviewed the speed limits for the entire road networks managed by the two local governments. Given the scale of the Trial, the approach we took to assessment has been both holistic and consistent with Main Roads Speed Zone guidelines.

How would the Trial be implemented?

The Trial is proposed to start in early 2025, with new speed limit signs being installed throughout the Trial area over approximately six months. The Trial would be in place for three years.

Comprehensive evaluations would take place 12 months after the Trial commences and then after three years.

The results would determine the Trial's success and whether the proposed speeds should be retained, returned to their previous speed or a combination of both.

Why the City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River?

The City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River are home to key tourist destinations and population centres within regional WA.

The South West region has experienced significant population growth over the past decade and continues to be a popular destination to visit, which means there are more people using City and Shire roads than ever before.

Between 2019 and 2023, 195 people were killed or seriously injured on roads in the City of Busselton and Shire of Augusta Margaret River. This represents one of the highest figures in regional WA.

One way to improve the safety of our roads and reduce speed related fatalities or serious injuries is to reduce speed limits across high-traffic areas within the City and Shire.

