

RAA Member Panel

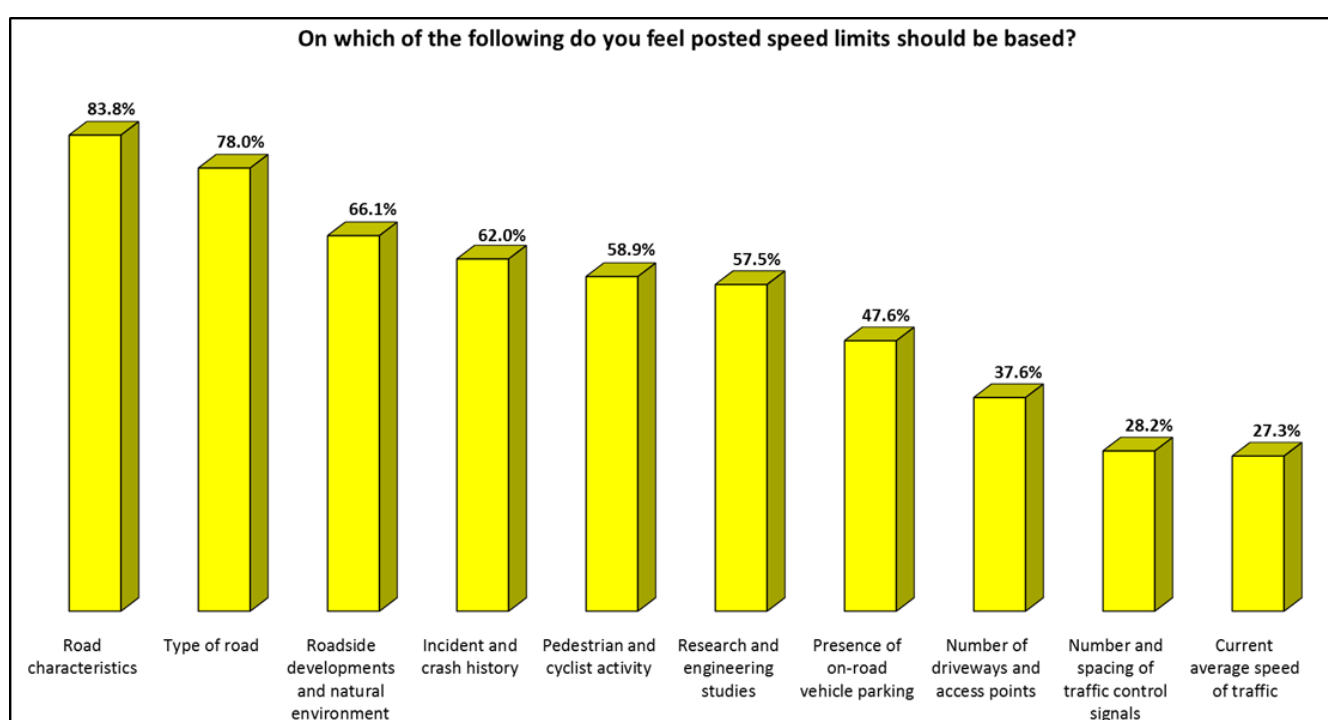
Speed Limit Survey

In June 2019 the RAA Road Safety team conducted a survey to explore member attitudes towards speed limits and speed enforcement in South Australia.

The survey was distributed via email, with responses collected from 4th – 18th June 2019. The sample size was 1,392 individuals based on the total number of responses received.

Setting the speed limit

Most respondents feel that speed limits should be based on road characteristics e.g. shoulder condition, alignment, sight distance, followed by the type of road e.g. highway, rural road, suburban arterial. More than half of all respondents believe the incident and crash history, along with the presence of other road users should also be considered.



More than 50% of respondents feel 110 km/hour is the most appropriate speed limit for National and State highways. However, a quarter believe a speed limit greater than 110 km/hour would be acceptable on a National highway. The current default speed limit on each of these road types is 100 km/hour.

For unsealed roads, almost half of all respondents feel 80 km/hour is more appropriate on this type of road (default speed limit on unsealed roads is 100 km/hour). Differences in opinion were seen between metro and rural residents, with metro residents more likely to suggest a speed limit below 80 km/hour on unsealed roads.

Around a third of respondents feel a speed of 110 km/hour on rural roads would be appropriate, while 49% agree with the current default speed limit of 100 km/hour.

For suburban arterial roads, most respondents (64%) feel a 60 km/hour speed limit is appropriate. However, a quarter of respondents indicated a speed greater than 60 km/hour would be acceptable on this type of road. The default speed limit of 50 km/hour was considered appropriate for around 60% of respondents when applied to CBD and local residential streets, however, around a quarter believe a reduction to 40 km/hour on these road types would be appropriate.

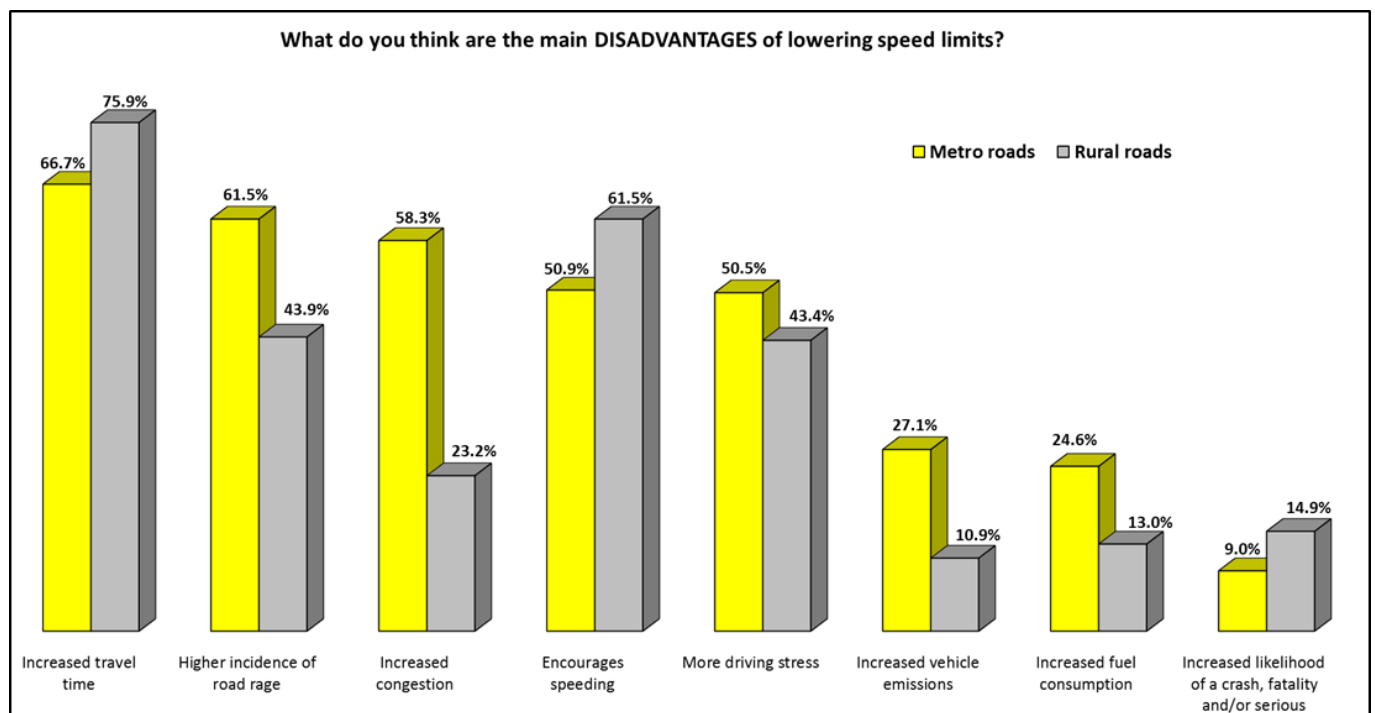
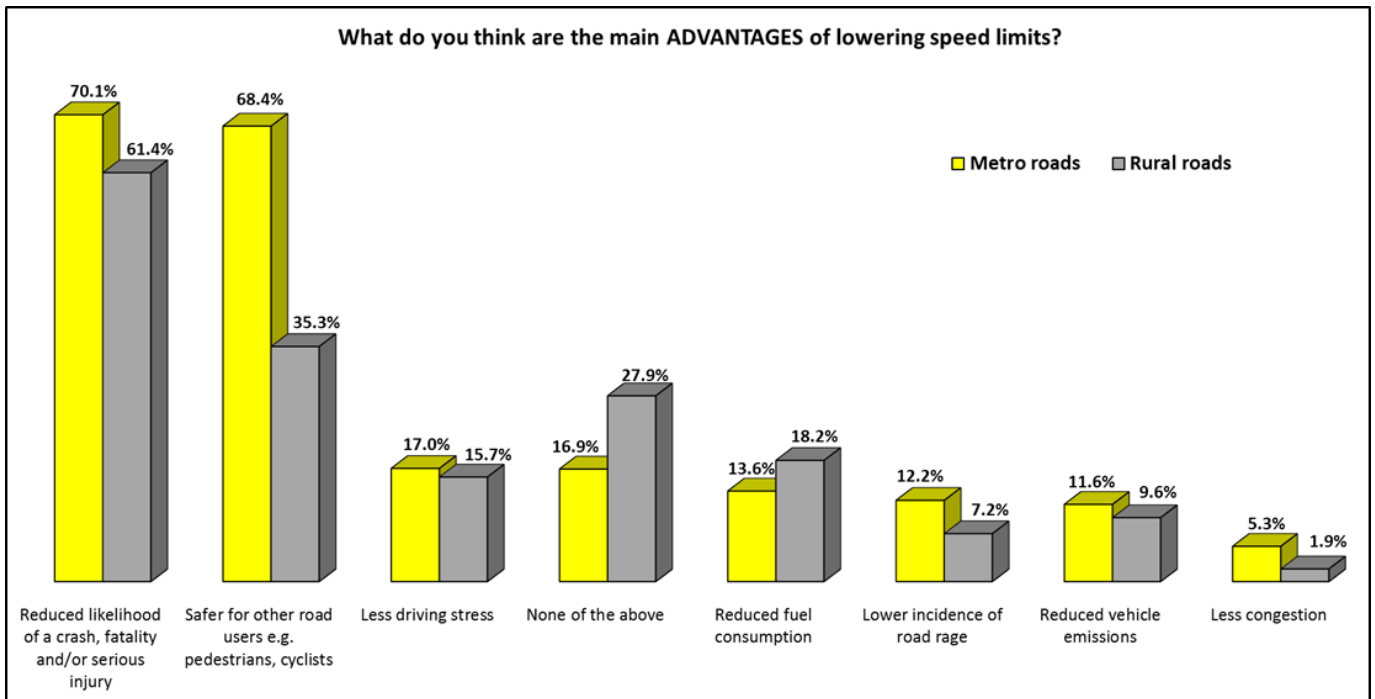
For school zones, most respondents (67%) feel 25 km/hour is appropriate.

Lowering speed limits

More than two thirds of respondents believe the main advantages of lowering speed limits in metropolitan areas are the reduced likelihood of a crash or fatality and improved safety for other road users. However, more than half feel that a reduction in speed limits will increase travel time, lead to higher levels of road rage and increase congestion.

For rural roads, 61% believe the main advantage of reduced speed limits is the decreased likelihood of a crash or fatality. However, more than half believe reducing speed limits will lead to an increase in travel time and encourage speeding on rural roads.

In most instances, rural respondents were less supportive of reducing speed limits than metro respondents, particularly when it comes to reducing highway speed limits.



Speeding and enforcement

When comparing themselves to the average driver, 75% of respondents feel they drive 'about the same speed', while 20% believe they drive slower and 5% said they would drive faster.

Respondents were asked how easy they feel it is to maintain their driving speed at the posted speed limit, to which 32% feel it is 'somewhat' difficult and 7% find it 'very' difficult. The main reasons respondents gave for feeling this way include: not always being aware of what the speed limit is, trouble maintaining a set speed when travelling downhill, and feeling pressure from other drivers to speed. Those that find it easy to maintain the posted speed said they are assisted in doing so using cruise control and other vehicle technologies.

Most respondents (84%) admitted to driving 5-10 km/hour over the limit at times, while 49% would exceed the limit by more than 10 km/hour on occasion. Most said they would exceed the speed limit less than 10% of the time, with around 73% of respondents indicating they are most likely to do so when overtaking. Other situations in which respondents said they are likely to exceed the speed limit include: during roadworks when no workers are present, when they're not sure what the speed limit is, and when travelling on a highway or expressway.

In regards to speed enforcement, a visible police presence is perceived to be most effective compared to other strategies, while monetary fines are considered least effective in discouraging speeding.

