



AfPA Calls for Greater Road Safety Standards Amid National Road Safety Week

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The Australian Flexible Pavement Association (AfPA) acknowledges National Road Safety Week, and calls for greater road safety standards for both road users and roadworkers, recognising the crucial role that safe road design and construction play in preventing or reducing the severity of road accidents.

AfPA calls for greater road safety standards in alignment with a common set of national safety priorities identified by the National Health & Safety Committee (NHSC), committed to standardising safety practices and regulations throughout the nation's flexible pavement industry, with the goal of creating a better road network that safeguards road workers, minimises emissions, and enhances conditions for all motorists.

AfPA also reaffirms its support for Queensland's Roadways Behaviour Monitoring System (RBMS), a world-first technology designed to address speeding near roadworks and school zones. Trials undertaken in Queensland have gained high support from road workers who have evidenced significant reductions in speed through their work sites. The RBMS is currently undergoing a two-year pilot program, and AfPA urges other states and territories to consider adopting similar initiatives to improve road safety for all.

The NHSC has identified four key themes to enhance roadworker safety and well-being at work, which includes the separation of people and traffic, the separation of people and plant, RCS, silica and dust management, as well as workplace mental health.

The separation of people and traffic aims to reduce the potential danger to workers walking in and around construction areas by changing driver behaviour and imposing speed limits. This initiative calls for greater collaboration between AfPA and NHSC, in partnership with industry organisations and road authorities, to create a national best practice standard for safeguarding the well-being of workers.

AfPA's priority is to separate people from heavy machinery to create safer construction sites and protect workers. This goal will be accomplished by promoting greater industry dedication to training and risk management in maintenance and construction ventures. Members will be assisted through the development of scenarios that describe worker and machinery interactions, including details of the tasks, equipment, and employees involved, as well as the standard controls available for risk management. AfPA's Worker on Foot training program will be the cornerstone to support this initiative and help minimise risk.



One of the hazards many roadworkers face is exposure to high levels of RCS, silica and dust. AfPA's calls for an implementation of industry best practice management of RCS to minimise the risk to workers and the environment. The strategy also recognises the need to adopt new and innovative materials and procedures to reduce the environmental impact of roadwork activities, such as the use of Warm Mix Asphalt (WMA). By working closely with industry bodies and road authorities, AfPA aims to develop and promote a national standard for the management of RCS and other dust-related hazards. This will help ensure that all workers involved in road construction are protected and that the industry as a whole is moving towards a more sustainable and environmentally responsible future.

Mark Piorkowski, AfPA Executive Director of QLD and NT and convenor of AfPA's National Health and Safety Committee, said:

“Safe roads are not a luxury; they are a necessity. As we acknowledge National Road Safety Week, it's important to also highlight the invaluable contribution of roadworkers. We must ensure that they have a safe working environment, just as we demand safe roads to drive on.

“AfPA's priority is to ensure that all workers involved in road construction are protected from a range of risks and dangers from speeding vehicles to worksite emissions, while also separating them from heavy machinery to create safer work environments. By promoting greater industry dedication to training and risk management in maintenance and construction ventures, we can achieve this goal, and pave the way towards a safer and more sustainable road network.

“We believe that road safety is a year-round priority, and we are dedicated to promoting this message through our ongoing collaboration with the NHSC. We are also proud to support initiatives like Queensland's Roadways Behaviour Monitoring System, as collaboration and innovation will work hand in hand, in establishing long-term, harmonised safety practices and standards across the country.”