

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12.01AM SATURDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2021

RESULTS OF RACV'S MY COUNTRY ROAD SURVEY ARE IN

RACV today released the results of its *My Country Road Survey*, with 4,000 Victorians heeding the call to provide important data on the safety of regional roads across the state.

The Princes Highway from Stratford to Bairnsdale in the East Gippsland area received the most responses, followed by The Deans Marsh-Lorne Road in Benwerrin, Surf Coast. The Warburton Highway at Woori Yallock in the Yarra Ranges had the third highest number of responses.

As a trusted membership organisation with 2.2 million members, RACV is in a unique position to provide Government stakeholders with information directly from Victorians on not only where perceived road safety issues exist, but useful suggestions on how to make improvements.

RACV's Executive General Manager Motoring and Mobility, Phil Turnbull, thanked all Victorians who took the time to complete the survey.

"The local knowledge 4,000 Victorians have provided us about safety on our regional roads is invaluable," Mr Turnbull said.

"The number of responses received for each road is a good indicator that Victorians think these roads need improvement.

"As a safety advocate, it's important that RACV closely examines what Victorians think are the factors contributing to less safe conditions, so we can provide that information to government to help inform their planning. We also asked for possible solutions.

"Overall, Victorians felt that dangerous driver behaviour is the biggest contributing factor to safety conditions on our roads."

There were a number of possible solutions highlighted by Victorians that RACV will take to the Victorian State Government for consideration. These include road maintenance, speed limits and infrastructure improvements for bicycles.

"Sixty-one per cent of respondents believe the speed limit on the selected roads should be reduced until improvements or upgrades have been made, highlighting that many Victorians believe reducing the speed on certain regional roads to address safety concerns is an appropriate approach. We also have a rare opportunity to consider reduced speed limits while regional roads are quieter with Melbourne in lockdown," Mr Turnbull said.

"In terms of bicycles, on many roads there is a growing need to provide some form of separation between bike riders and vehicles, particularly on high speed rural roads without a suitable sealed shoulder."

The *My Country Road* survey used an interactive map showing high-speed roads with large concentrations of crashes causing death or serious injury in regional Victoria. It sought comments from people with local knowledge.

Survey participants provided their feedback by clicking on one of the 169 highlighted roads or dropping a pin and filling out a survey for another location.

Mr Turnbull went on to say the survey results are a timely reminder that road safety is everyone's responsibility and planning trips with a few simple safety tips in mind will mean it's still safe to enjoy everything regional Victoria has to offer.

"All road users must drive in a safe manner, whether it's driving at safe speeds, avoiding distractions or taking a break if we are fatigued," Mr Turnbull said.

"RACV also recommends that as much as possible drivers plan their routes along better main roads with more safety features."

RACV Emergency Roadside Assistance Patroller, Greg Bowen, said vehicle preparation is very important for driving in regional areas.

"When it comes to your vehicle preparation, make sure you check your fluid levels under your bonnet, including oil, coolant and even the windscreen washer water level. Be sure to check your tyres as well," Mr Bowen said.

-ENDS-

For all media requests, contact the RACV media team:

Phone: 0417 041 398 or 0407 064 748

Email: media@racv.com.au

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MORE DETAILED DATA

The following roads received the most responses:

1. A1 Princes Hwy, Stratford to Bairnsdale (West), East Gippsland/Wellington
2. C151 Deans Marsh-Lorne Rd, Benwerrin, Surf Coast
3. B380 Warburton Hwy, Woori Yallock, Yarra Ranges
4. B420 Phillip Island Rd, Sunset Strip, Bass Coast
5. C126 Queenscliff Rd, Mannerim, Greater Geelong
6. B360 Maroondah Hwy (Black Spur), Healesville to Narbethong, Yarra Ranges
7. C119 Skenes Creek Rd, Skenes Creek, Colac Otway
8. C777 Frankston-Flinders Rd, Merricks, Mornington Peninsula
9. C785 Coolart Rd, Mornington Peninsula
10. Howard St/B300 Midland Hwy intersection, Epsom, Greater Bendigo

Top issues respondents identified as contributing to how safe the roads are:

- 46% - Dangerous behaviours of other drivers (e.g. Speeding, erratic driving)
- 46% - Pot holes / road condition
- 44% - Narrow lanes/road
- 41% - Limited overtaking opportunities
- 36% - Intersection safety issues

State-wide top voted solutions:

- 43% - Improve road surface
- 42% - Wider shoulders (edges of road)
- 31% - Wider lanes
- 30% - Intersection safety improvements
- 24% - Bicycle safety improvements

The top three roads for each region (those that received the most responses):

South West Region

1. C151 Deans Marsh-Lorne Rd, Benwerrin, Surf Coast
2. C126 Queenscliff Rd, Mannerim, Greater Geelong
3. C119 Skenes Creek Rd, Skenes Creek, Colac Otway

Western Region

1. C704 Gisborne Rd/Bacchus Marsh Rd, Gisborne to Bacchus Marsh, Moorabool Shire/ Macedon Ranges (shared with Northern region)
2. A79 Calder Hwy / Seventeenth St, Mildura
3. C704 Bacchus Marsh Rd, Balliang East, Moorabool

Northern Region

1. Howard St/B300 Midland Hwy, Epsom, Greater Bendigo
2. C325 Melbourne-Lancefield Rd, Clarkfield, Macedon Ranges
3. C704 Gisborne Rd/Bacchus Marsh Rd, Gisborne to Bacchus Marsh, Moorabool Shire/ Macedon Ranges (shared with Western region)

North Eastern Region

1. B400 Murray Valley Hwy/ C531 Kiewa Highway, Wodonga
2. B300 Midland Hwy, Lake Nillahcootie, Mansfield
3. B300 Goulburn Valley Hwy / Maroondah Hwy, Murrindindi

Eastern Region

1. A1 Princes Hwy, Stratford to Bairnsdale (West), East Gippsland/Wellington
2. B420 Phillip Island Rd, Sunset Strip, Bass Coast
3. C425 Korumburra-Warragul Rd, Baw Baw

Yarra Ranges

1. B380 Warburton Hwy, Woori Yallock, Yarra Ranges
2. **B360 Maroondah Hwy (Black Spur), Healesville to Narbethong, Yarra Ranges**
3. B300 Melba Hwy, Yering, Yarra Ranges

Mornington

1. C777 Frankston-Flinders Rd, Merricks, Mornington Peninsula
2. C785 Coolart Rd, Mornington Peninsula
3. C788 Dunns Creek Rd/Bittern-Dromana Rd, Merricks North, Mornington Peninsula

State-wide stats

- 61% of respondents believe the speed limit on the selected roads should be reduced
- 48% of respondents identified locations where they believe the 90+ km/h speed limit should be 80/km/h or below
- 80% of responses identified a location to be dangerous or very dangerous
- South-West Region received the highest response rate, followed by the Eastern Region.