

Highway safety work for Medlow Bath

BY SHANE DESIATNIK

08 Aug, 2012 10:52 AM

The State Government will carry out new safety improvements on the Great Western Highway at Medlow Bath following growing concern over a dramatic spike in crashes along a stretch of the road near the village's railway station.

Transport for NSW data obtained by the Gazette shows there were 29 crashes on the highway in Medlow Bath that caused significant injuries between 2008 and 2011.

A 17-year-old Hartley resident was killed in a crash on March 12, 2011 while there were four 'casualty' crashes in 2009 and eight crashes in both 2010 and 2011.

Of those, 55 per cent occurred in wet weather and 66 per cent involved excessive speeding.

The department did not have crash statistics for the first half of 2012 but the Gazette's police rounds show there were at least five crashes causing injuries on the highway between Medlow Bath station and Evans Lookout Road between February and August — all in wet conditions and within a 1km stretch of road.

Five people involved in those crashes required rescuing from their vehicles and urgent transport to hospital by helicopter.

The Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) resealed the highway between Pulpit Hill and Foy Avenue less than 12 months ago following a sharp rise in crashes, reduced the speed limit at two corners, and installed 'slippery when wet' signs.

There are now fresh calls for urgent road safety measures to be implemented on the highway in Medlow Bath between Railway Parade and Evans Lookout Road.

Transport for NSW told the Gazette it plans to use Federal Government 'black spot program' funding to install roadside barriers and improve line marking on the stretch of road as well as install more warning signs.

It confirmed further investigations are underway to assess the road geometry and road surface.

Member for Blue Mountains Roza Sage said safety on our roads was a paramount issue.

"I welcome the safety measures RMS are putting in place along this notorious stretch of road," she said.

"Many residents have contacted me concerned about the numerous crashes that have occurred.

"I have had conversations with the police who are also concerned and I have made numerous representations to the RMS — I am glad the community's needs are being addressed."

Blackheath Highway Action Group (BHAG) spokesperson Michael Paag said the crash statistics support local concerns the highway between Medlow Bath and Blackheath is a notorious black spot.

"Whilst BHAG supports proposed highway resurfacing, improved signs and drainage works, we believe this won't be enough to deal with the high accident rate.

"The major bend near Medlow Bath [Railway Station] needs to be straightened and the camber fixed.

"We also call on RMS to implement proactive speed control measures."



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Speaking of safety. WARNING!!! Heading into Medlow Bath Nor/West before the turn off to Delmonte Ave/Bellevue Cres the speed limit has this week been changed from 60kph to 70kph!? Why? There is a service station, and there is NO TURN OFF LANE to Bellevue. Roza, have you ever tried turning off there? I do it daily with 2 small children in the back. It's a safety risk. It's dangerous enough slowing from 60kph being tailgated. Residents are now dreading the 70kph. It's deadly. Because there is NO turn off lane! The increase in speed limit is not a safety measure I welcome Roza. Danger Warning!

Posted by **Safety is an Issue**, 8/08/2012 8:30:12 PM, on Blue Mountains Gazette

Great News! I suppose from a managed risk assessment process, accidents (even reported death) in this tiny location (Blackheath to Medlow Bath) must have rung alarm bells for NSW Police, Ambulance, Fire Brigade-Rescue, Road Engineers personnel. After all, the GWH is a conduit for thousands of people driving into and out of metropolitan Sydney every 24 hours. As with some railways (the great southern line), faults in engineered road design may occur for many reasons. In my opinion, it is unfortunate that the lobbying of a member of parliament leads to action by NSW tax paid engineers & others.

Posted by **Adam Smith**, 9/08/2012 7:47:27 AM, on Blue Mountains Gazette

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Notorious black spot: One of two sharp bends in close proximity on the Great Western Highway north of Medlow Bath station where car crashes resulting in injury are on the increase, particularly in wet conditions.

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