

TUESDAY, 30 JULY 2024

## RACV ROAD SAFETY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS DANGER ON VICTORIA'S REGIONAL ROADS

Today RACV has released the results of its *My Country Road* survey, with more than 7,000 Victorians providing important data on the safety of regional roads across the state.

Potholes and poor road condition were the top issues identified, with an overwhelming 64 per cent of participants identifying these as the primary safety issue; up from 46 per cent in 2021.

Potholes are a major safety risk for drivers as they try and avoid damaging their vehicles. Swerving to avoid a pothole at the last moment is dangerous as drivers may lose control of their vehicles or swerve into oncoming traffic.

The Melba Highway from Coldstream to Yea received the most responses regarding safety concerns, followed by Tylden-Woodend Road from Woodend to Tylden, Kilmore Road from Monegeetta to Gisborne, and the Goulburn Valley Highway from Nagambie to Shepparton.

The most dangerous intersection in regional Victoria was identified as the junction of the Midland Highway and Howard Street in Epsom, north of Bendigo.

Overall, 14 per cent of participants supported 'a lower or more appropriate speed limit' as a measure to improve road safety. That response rose to 56 per cent on the top 12 worst roads, highlighting that many Victorians believe reducing the speed on highly dangerous roads is an appropriate approach.

RACV will use the data from the survey to encourage the state government and local councils to make commitments that deliver safer regional roads.

RACV Head of Policy James Williams said the data from the survey indicated that the condition of regional roads has become a major safety concern for Victorians.

"Over 7,000 Victorians have provided us with data about safety on our regional roads, with potholes or poor road condition being the number one safety issue," Mr Williams said.

"As a safety advocate, it's important that RACV closely examines what Victorians think are the factors contributing to unsafe road conditions, so we can provide that information to all levels of government and encourage action.

"The number of responses received is a strong indicator that Victorians are concerned about safety on regional roads and are calling for urgent improvement.

“Sixty per cent of survey participants think that improving road surfaces should be the priority road safety solution.

“While in 2021, dangerous driver behaviour was the biggest safety concern on regional roads, this year poor road conditions received more than double the number of responses as dangerous driver behaviour.

“Fifty-eight per cent of the survey participants told us that they use the road they identified every day, and that level of local knowledge has been invaluable to identifying Victoria’s most unsafe roads.

“Six of the top roads identified in the 2021 survey appear again this year, including the Melba Highway, Bass Highway, Bacchus Marsh Road, Phillip Island Road, Warburton Highway, and the junction of the Midland Highway and Howard Street in Epsom.

“Sixteen of the twenty-one most dangerous roads identified in the 2021 survey received upgrades and improvements by government; but more work needs to be undertaken to improve the safety of regional roads.”

The survey used an online interactive map that showed high-speed roads with large concentrations of crashes causing death or serious injury in regional Victoria.

The map highlighted roads with speed limits of 80km per hour or higher where there have been fatal or serious crashes for the five-year period between 2018 and 2023. Participants provided feedback by clicking on one of the highlighted roads and filling out a survey. Participants were also welcome to nominate another road in regional Victoria that they felt posed a risk to drivers.

*My Country Road* was also an opportunity for participants to let RACV know what they think of electric vehicles (EVs), and barriers to uptake.

The results showed 36 per cent of participants have considered buying an EV. 7 per cent of the survey participants are current EV owners.

“The top two reasons participants gave for deciding not to drive an EV were that they are currently too expensive to purchase and the limited battery range,” Mr Williams said.

“Regional Victorians have a preference for more charging stations at service stations and rest stops.”

The number of responses to the 2024 *My Country Road* survey increased by more than 75 per cent from the 4,000 responses to the 2021 survey.

*My Country Road* forms part of the [Have Your Say](#) survey series which, together with *My Melbourne Road* and *My Home*, helps RACV to continue to advocate for Victorians on the issues that are most important to them.

The full results of the *My Country Road* survey are available at [racv.com.au/haveyoursay](https://racv.com.au/haveyoursay)

**-ENDS-**

## Further information

### The following roads received the most responses:

1. Melba Hwy, Coldstream to Yea (B300)
2. Tylden-Woodend Road, Woodend to Tylden (C317)
3. Kilmore Road, Monegeetta to Gisborne (C708)
4. Goulburn Valley Hwy, Nagambie to Shepparton (A39)
5. Princes Hwy, Warrnambool to Portland (A1)
6. Western Hwy, Trawalla to Beaufort (A8)
7. Bass Hwy, Jam Jerrup to Leongatha (M420/B460)
8. Princes Hwy, Colac to Stonyford (A1)
9. Princes Hwy, Stratford to Bairnsdale (A1)
10. Great Alpine Road, Bairnsdale to Wangaratta (B500)
11. Bacchus Marsh Road, Balliang to Lara (C704)
12. Phillip Island Road, Phillip Island (B420).

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

- 64% - Potholes/road condition
- 32% - Dangerous behaviours of other drivers (e.g. speeding, erratic driving)
- 29% - Narrow lanes/road
- 26% - Intersection safety issues
- 24% - Limited overtaking opportunities.

### State-wide top voted solutions:

- 60% - Improve road surface
- 23% - Wider shoulders (edges of road)
- 15% - Wider lanes
- 14% - A lower/more appropriate speed limit
- 13% - Clear trees/vegetation/other obstructions
- 12% - Intersection safety improvements.

### State-wide stats:

- 56 per cent of participants believe the speed limit on the top 12 most dangerous roads should be reduced.
- 61 per cent of participants identified locations where they believe the 90+ km/h speed limit should be 80/km/h or below.

- 78 per cent of responses identified a location to be dangerous or very dangerous.
- Northern Region received the highest response rate, followed by the Southwestern Region.

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

**Southwest Region**

- Princes Hwy, Warrnambool to Portland (A1)
- Princes Hwy, Colac to Stonyford (A1)
- Murradoc Road, between Drysdale and St Leonards (C125)

**Western Region**

- Western Hwy, Trawalla to Beaufort (A8)
- Bacchus Marsh Road, Balliang to Lara (C704)
- Intersection of Midland Highway and Howard Street, Epsom (A300)

**Northern Region**

- Melba Hwy, Coldstream to Yea (B300)
- Tylden-Woodend Road, Woodend to Tylden (C317)
- Kilmore Road, Monegeetta to Gisborne (C708)

**Eastern Region**

- Princes Hwy, Stratford to Bairnsdale (A1)
- Great Alpine Road, Bairnsdale to Wangaratta (B500)
- Murray Valley Hwy, Cobram to Rutherglen (B400)

**Southeastern Region**

- Bass Hwy, Jam Jerrup to Leongatha (M420/B460)
- Phillip Island Road, Phillip Island (B420)
- Boneo Road, Mornington Peninsula (C777)

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**High-res images** are available for use, please email the RACV media team.

**Download storybook:** [racv.com.au/haveyoursay](https://racv.com.au/haveyoursay)

**Social embed:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9t-LvURwTWU>

**B-roll:** <https://f.io/53NOSwyD>

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