

AusRAP Spots the Differences:

Safety features of roads are not always obvious, but AusRAP shows how high risk roads can be made safe



Undivided Roads with only one lane in each direction make it riskier to overtake. Freeways with wide medians and safety barriers can handle much higher traffic volumes with virtually no chance of a head-on crash.



Roadside killers like trees, poles and steep embankments can turn what would be a minor crash into a killer. If these hazards can't be removed, safety barriers can dramatically lower the risk.



If a driver moves out of their lane, a sealed shoulder offers extra space to recover. Unforgiving of simple mistakes, unsealed or narrow shoulders can cause a vehicle to run off the road or veer into oncoming traffic.



Roads with lots of intersections are less safe because of an increased risk of brutal side impact crashes with cross traffic. Low risk intersections have separate turning lanes and are clearly visible day and night. The best intersections have freeway-style on and off ramps.



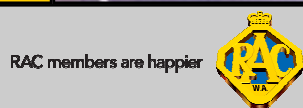
Safer Roads

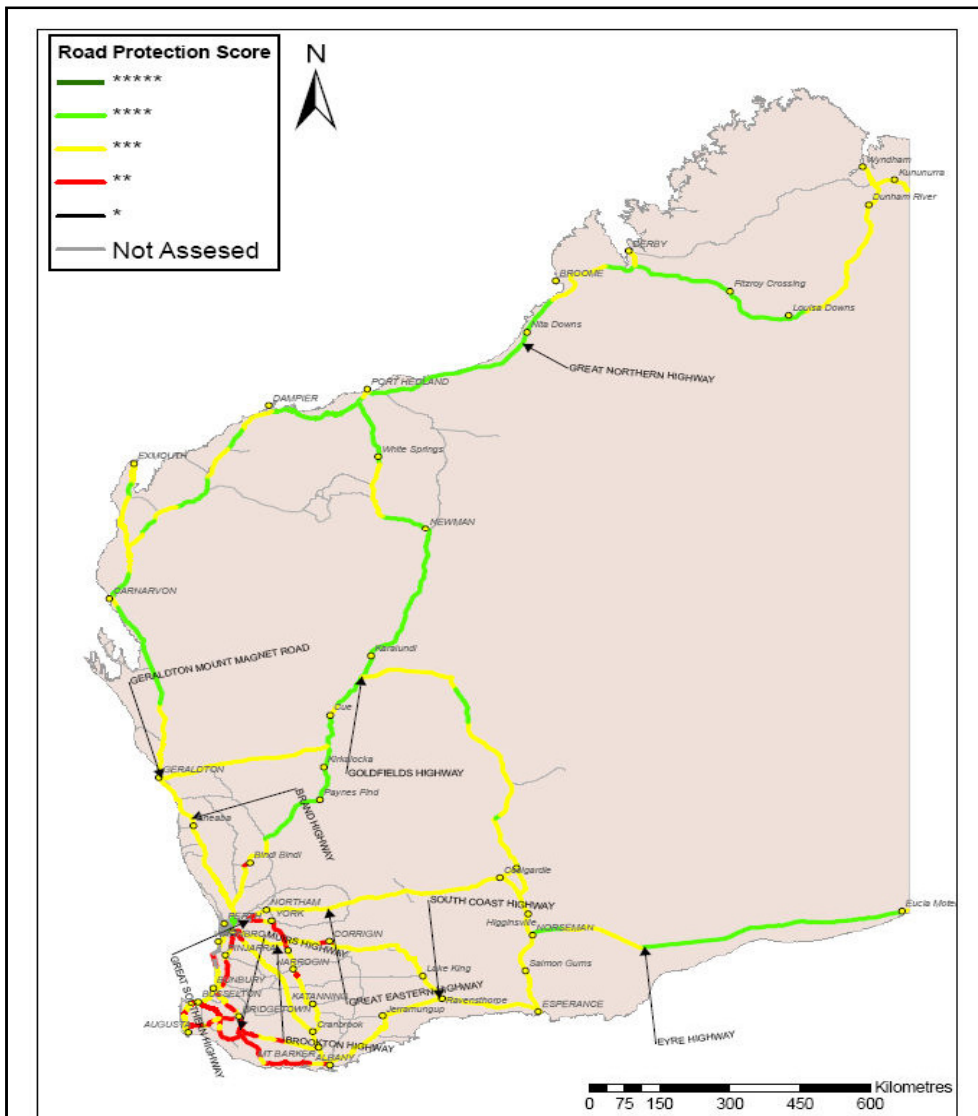
Star Ratings for
WA's Major Highways
January 2008



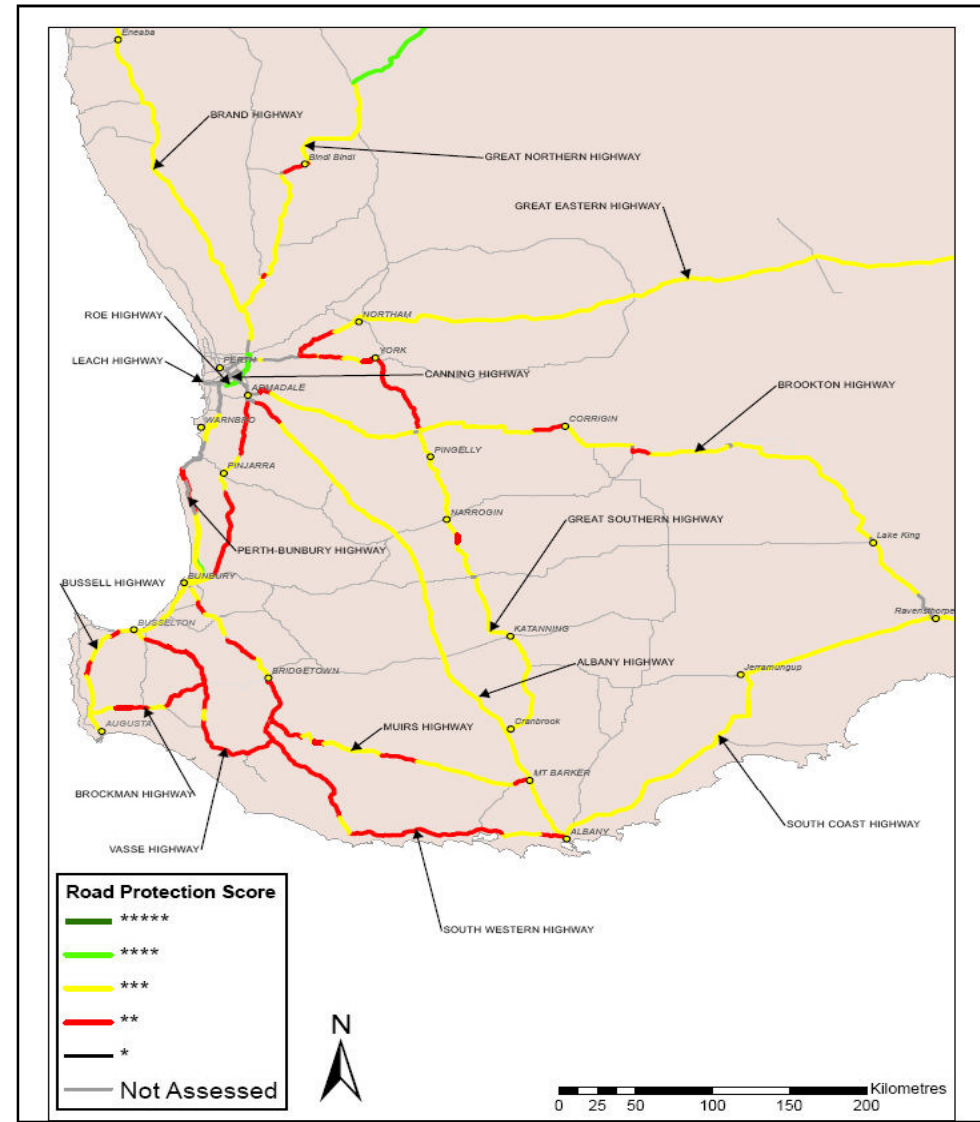
RAC members are happier

Source: Australian Automobile Association (www.aaa.asn.au)
More information: rac.com.au or www.ausrap.org





In July 2006, the total AusLink rural network in WA was mapped and given a star rating for its safety performance by ARRB Group for the Australian Automobile Association (AAA). In addition, the RAC commissioned ARRB Group to map and rate major rural Western Australian roads that were not part of the AusLink network. Around 20,000km of roads in WA were assessed and given a safety rating out of a possible 5 stars (based on their Road Protection Score). Most sections were rated as 3 or 4-star for safety. No sections were rated as 5-star. Unfortunately, more than 1,000km of road sections in Western Australia received a poor 2-star rating.



Roads that received a 2-star rating in 2006 were re-assessed in 2007 to investigate whether any positive changes had been made that would improve the Road Protection Score for these sections of road since the previous survey. According to the 2007 findings, the vast majority of sections that previously obtained a 2-star rating had not changed dramatically. There was no evidence of significant deterioration and this would not be expected unless major infrastructure changes had been made. On the other hand, there was little improvement except with some small sections of the Great Southern, Great Eastern and South Western Highways moving from 2-star to a 3-star rating.