

The journey so far

The Bruce Highway's high traffic volumes, mix of local and highway traffic, as well as long stretches of single-carriageway intersecting with many other roads are all significant factors in the number of serious and fatal crashes being experienced along the corridor.

In response, the Australian and Queensland Governments committed to address major safety issues, along with addressing capacity and flood resilience issues by establishing the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program (BHUP).

Under the BHUP, significant upgrades have been delivered, including major capacity and duplication projects in the Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton and Sunshine Coast regions, plus additional overtaking lanes, intersection upgrades, new bridges, rest areas, roadside hazard removal and town entry treatments – all of which continues to improve road safety.

Innovative engineering standards aimed specifically at reducing the cross-centreline crashes have been installed, with more than 850 kilometres of the Bruce Highway now upgraded with Wide Centre Line Treatment (WCLT: widening of the existing centre line format) and Audio Tactile Line Marking (ATLM). To date, sections of Bruce Highway where these treatments have been installed are achieving reductions in vehicle crashes.

The reduction and then plateauing of fatal crashes over time has been offset by a corresponding increase in crashes resulting in serious injuries. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, a notable upward trend has been seen in fatalities on the Bruce Highway, consistent with the rest of the Queensland road network. See figure 3 for fatalities and serious injuries from 2012 onwards along the Bruce Highway.

With more work to do, this *Safer Bruce 2030 Action Plan* outlines targeted safety treatments, and other safety measures, including technology, enforcement, education and behavioural change to improve safety outcomes and help realise the 60 per cent target of reduced fatalities by 2030.



Townsville Ring Road – Stage 4 upgrade, completed 2016.



Neilsen Avenue – Angela Road intersection, north of Rockhampton.

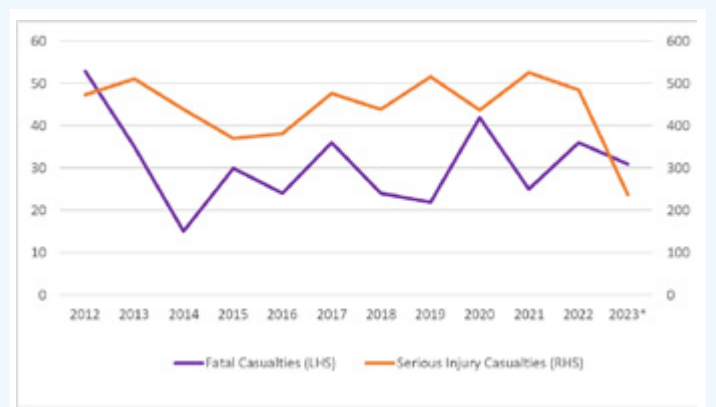


Figure 3: Fatalities and serious injuries from 2012 to 2023 along the Bruce Highway. Note: 2023 serious injury data is until 30 June 2023 (not a full calendar year).