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<i>14/4/11</i>	

**To:** Chief Executive Officer

**Organisation:** All Councils

**Reference:** 05-009-03-0003

**Subject:** Main Roads WA Roadside Memorials Policy and Guidelines

**From:** Michelle Mackenzie, Executive Manager Infrastructure

**Date:** 15 April 2011

**Priority:** Medium

**IN BRIEF**

<b>Operational Area:</b>	Chief Executive Officers, Engineering and Works, Ranger Services
<b>Key Issues:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Main Roads WA Roadside Memorial Policy and Guidelines issued in December 2010</li> <li>Model policy and guidelines to govern roadside memorials for Local Governments</li> <li>Consistent approach for Local Governments</li> </ul>
<b>Action Required:</b>	Consideration of adopting the Main Roads WA Policy and Guidelines as a Model Policy

**Revised Main Roads WA Roadside Memorials Policy and Guidelines**

In 2009 Main Roads WA (MRWA) undertook a review of its Roadside Memorials Policy and Guidelines. WALGA was part of the review process and consulted with the Local Government sector, which determined there should be a consistent approach to deal with this sensitive matter.

WALGA provided MRWA with sector feedback and in December 2010 the revised Main Roads WA Roadside Memorial Policy and Guidelines were issued (document no D10#252657). The policy and guidelines were developed in consultation with the community and various interest groups.

In January 2011, WALGA sought further comment from Local Governments and the revised policy and guidelines were endorsed by the respondents.

The amendments to the revised policy and guidelines are:

- Part 4.3.3 - Maintenance for Roadside Memorials added
- Part 4.3.4 - Visitation to Roadside Memorials added
- Part 4.3.1.6 – Memorabilia and Personalisation amended
- Part 4.4 – Roadworks/Maintenance near Approved Roadside Memorials amended
- Part 4.5 – Roadside Memorial Removal Procedure amended
- Part 5 – Contacts amended

The objectives of the policy and guidelines are to:

- Respect people's grief and ensure the road environment is safe for all road users
- Inform the public, Local Government, Main Roads Officers and contractors
- Outline the installation, ongoing maintenance and removal of roadside memorials

In response to sector feedback, WALGA recommends that Local Governments adopt the Main Roads WA Roadside Memorials Policy and Guidelines as a Model Policy to guide decision-making for this sensitive matter.

The revised policy and guidelines is available at the Main Roads WA website: About Us – Corporate Information – Roadside Memorials Policy and Guidelines

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**The Voice of Local Government**







**Document No D10#252657**

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**ROADSIDE MEMORIALS POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

This document is owned and authorised by the Executive Director Road Network Services. Please submit all comments to the Project Coordinator Customer Service, Road User and Customer Service Branch. Telephone 138 138, Fax 9323 4400 or email: [enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@mainroads.wa.gov.au)

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## **'We respect your feelings'**

### **1. OVERVIEW**

Every year, too many people lose their lives on Western Australian roads. Frequently, family and friends have chosen to honour their memories by erecting some type of roadside memorial.

Memorials at fatal crash sites provide a means for assisting people to grieve for their loved ones as well as serving as a visual deterrent to road users, delivering a powerful road safety message. Main Roads respects the need for people to erect roadside memorials, but it must also provide a safe and efficient road network to all road users to meet its obligations under the *Main Roads Act 1930*. To do this Main Roads needs to consider potential safety hazards including visual distractions to motorists, physical objects that could harm road users and the possible movement of personal items onto the road. Main Roads also needs to consider the safety of pedestrians in close proximity to fast moving vehicles.

Main Roads' overall objective is to respect people's grief and ensure the road environment is safe for all road users. This policy has been developed in consultation with the community and various interest groups. It has been prepared to inform the public, Local Government, Main Roads Officers and contractors of the types of roadside memorials approved and supplied by Main Roads on Freeways, Highways and main roads throughout Western Australia. It also outlines how Main Roads will arrange the installation and ongoing management of roadside memorials.

### **2. DEFINITION OF A ROADSIDE MEMORIAL**

A roadside memorial can be described as an object or image constructed, erected, planted, painted or placed within the road reserve in honour of family or friends whose lives have been lost on the road or road reserve.

### **3. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Main Roads has an obligation to provide a safe and efficient road network. Main Roads will:

- Be considerate and respectful of the needs of persons wishing to install roadside memorials;
- Approve the placement of roadside memorials;
- Supply roadside memorials (as defined in section 4.3);
- Install or assist in the installation of roadside memorials at suitable locations as detailed in the guidelines attached to this policy;
- Not accept responsibility for the security or maintenance of roadside memorials;
- Remove any roadside memorials not conforming to this policy;

- Not approve or provide roadside memorials for animals; and
- Will only approve or provide roadside memorials for accident sites where fatalities have occurred.

#### **4. GUIDELINES**

##### **4.1 Requests for Roadside Memorials**

When touched by tragedy, family and friends find a roadside memorial can help comfort and heal, as it provides a tangible record of a life lived and serves as a reminder to the community to drive carefully. Where requests are received, Main Roads can provide support to family and friends by assisting them to understand the requirements of this policy and install or assist in the installation of a suitable roadside memorial at the safest location. It should be noted that this policy is intended to provide guidance to Main Roads Officers and each case should be dealt with on an individual basis.

Main Roads' foremost concern is that all road users are provided with a safe road environment and that family and friends and the road user are safe whilst a roadside memorial is being erected, visited, or is being maintained. It is important that family and friends park their vehicles safely and clear of the road while attending the roadside memorial.

##### **4.2 Recording Requests for Roadside Memorials**

Main Roads will maintain a record of requests for roadside memorials. The details will be documented so the person/s responsible for the roadside memorial can be contacted if necessary.

##### **4.3 Memorial Requirements to Maximise Road Safety**

Main Roads will approve, supply and assist with the installation of a cross, paver, or decal as per the specifications in section 4.3.1, depending on the family and/or friends preference. Alternatively, the applicant may purchase a plant compliant with Main Roads' guidelines and Main Roads will subsidise the purchase up to \$50 and assist with the installation.

###### **4.3.1 Roadside Memorials – Types and Structure**

In consideration of safety to all, the following specifications are recommended. If unsure, please contact Main Roads.

Note: These specifications should be used as a guide only. Common sense should prevail when assessing specific locations for placement of roadside memorials.

###### **4.3.1.1 Cross**

Crosses are constructed from timber and are:

- 850mm long (600mm out of the ground) and 400mm wide;

- Built from pieces 40mm x 18mm; and
- Painted white and are non-reflective.

Crosses shall be located:

- No closer than 3 metres from the edge of any bitumen/road seal;
- No closer than 1 metre from behind the line of guideposts; and
- No closer than 1 metre from the edge of any shared path.

Crosses shall not be located:

- Where they may interfere with the role of any traffic control item;
- In close proximity to residential dwellings where they may cause concern to the occupants;

#### 4.3.1.2 Paver

Pavers are of grey concrete and are 600mm long and 300mm wide.

Pavers should be flush with the existing surface and shall be located:

- No closer than 1 metre from behind the line of guideposts;
- No closer than 3 metres from the edge of any bitumen/road seal;
- No closer than 1 metre from the edge of any shared path;
- On control of access highways and freeways; and
- On traffic islands and medians where the landscaping permits.

Pavers shall not be located:

- Within the area which is regularly graded during shoulder grading or drain maintenance;
- In close proximity to residential dwellings where they may cause concern to the occupants;
- On landscaped verges; and
- On roundabouts.

#### 4.3.1.3 Decal

Decals are adhesive labels, 160mm long and 130mm wide, which display a white cross on a black background.

Decals shall be located:

- At the base of traffic signal poles; and
- At the base of street light columns.

Decals shall not be located:

- On any traffic signs; and
- On street name signs.

#### 4.3.1.4 Plant

Plants must comply with Main Roads vegetation placement guidelines in regards to trunk size and setback distance. The requested plant type must be stated as part of the application/approval process and Main Roads will verify the appropriateness of the plant type for the location.

Examples of locally occurring plants that would be suitable for the metropolitan area are as follows:

- Honeybush (*Hakea lissocarpha*);
- Many of the Melaleucas (e.g. *Melaleuca preissiana*);
- Many of the small Eucalypts (e.g. *Eucalyptus todtiana*); and
- Many of the Grevilleas (e.g. *Grevillea manglesii*).

Examples of locally occurring plants that would be suitable for specific regional areas are:

- Geraldton Wax; and
- Albany Woollybush.

Other plants that are typical from other regional areas would also be considered if the plant is of special significance to the family. (For a more comprehensive list or further information Main Roads Officers should contact the Environment Branch).

Plants shall be located:

- Outside of the maintenance (TNC) clearing zone;
- No closer than 1 metre from the edge of any shared path;
- On control of access highways and freeways; and
- On traffic islands and medians where the landscaping permits.

Plants shall not be located:

- Where they may interfere with the role of any traffic control item;
- In close proximity to residential dwellings where they may cause concern to the occupants; and
- On landscaped verges.

#### 4.3.1.5 Memorial Options

If a cross is not suitable, please contact Main Roads to discuss alternative options.

#### 4.3.1.6 Memorabilia and Personalisation

Main Roads understands that personalising a memorial may provide comfort to families and friends of people who have lost their lives on the road. In the interest of preserving safety for all, items such as flowers, toys and other personal effects must be firmly secured to the memorial. Where possible, memorabilia should not exceed the dimensions outlined in the memorial requirements, the reason being that such items may be a visual distraction to road users. Physical objects could harm road users and the possible movement of personal items onto the road could be a potential road safety hazard. Only one (1) roadside memorial shall be allowed per life lost.

Some items that are a safety hazard and should not be used include:

- Reflective material such as foil and cellophane
- Solar lights
- Rocks, bricks or other non frangible items

Personalisation of crosses should be limited to non-reflective material.

#### 4.3.2 Installation of Roadside Memorials

A Main Roads representative will assist in the installation of approved roadside memorials as detailed in section 4.3.1. The Main Roads Officer will ensure its placement is in accordance with Main Roads' standards and requirements and most importantly take into consideration the safety of road users. Main Roads Officers will consider safety issues such as where the road geometry is less than optimum i.e. road crests, bends and high-speed locations.

\*All memorials on Freeways within WA must be installed by Main Roads

#### 4.3.3 Maintenance of Roadside Memorials

The road reserve is maintained by Main Roads WA. Main Roads does not accept responsibility for the loss or damage of roadside memorials that may occur due to vandalism. Main Roads, will as part of its regular maintenance program, report on memorials on its network which have been subject to vandalism or are in a significant state of disrepair.

If the condition of a memorial has deteriorated, or after a period of five years, Main Roads will endeavour to contact the owners of a memorial to discuss its condition and to confirm their wish for the memorial to remain in place.

#### 4.3.4 Visiting a Roadside Memorial

Main Roads is concerned for the safety of people who visit roadside memorials. They may expose themselves and other road users to safety risks. If people visit roadside memorials they must understand that roadsides can be hazardous locations and take appropriate precautions. Main Roads can provide advice as to what precautionary steps may be taken to maintain a safe environment.

Stopping on Freeways is prohibited under the *Road Traffic Code 2000*. As such visits to Memorials on freeways are also prohibited.

### 4.4 Roadworks / Maintenance Near Approved Roadside Memorials

Main Roads will continue to perform all construction and maintenance works required within road reserves that contain roadside memorials.



Where works are required to the ground on which an approved roadside memorial is located, the memorial will be carefully shifted away from the work area for the duration of works and then re-installed as close as practical to the original location at the conclusion of works unless otherwise advised by the memorial owner. Care will be taken to minimise damage to the roadside memorial.

For unregistered memorials, Main Roads will make every effort to locate the owners of the memorial before the removal, which may include placing a notice on the memorial prior to removal for roadworks to take place. Main Roads will store these removed memorials for 4 months or the period of the roadworks (whichever is the greater).

#### **4.5 Roadside Memorial Removal Procedure**

One of Main Roads' key objectives is to maximise road safety on Western Australian roads. Any roadside memorial presenting a safety hazard will be removed without notice. Every effort will be made to contact the responsible person/s regarding the removal of the roadside memorial.

Person/s responsible for roadside memorials that comply with section 4.3 but require removal because of their poor state of repair or concerns raised by the local community, shall be contacted by Main Roads. If Main Roads is unsuccessful in contacting the appropriate person, a notice will be attached to the memorial asking the person who has placed, or requested the placement of the memorial, to contact Main Roads within 60 days. (The standard notification advising of the need to remove a roadside memorial is at Attachment 1)

If Main Roads is not contacted within the given timeframe, the roadside memorial will be removed. Main Roads will store the removed roadside memorial for a period of 4 months.

#### **4.6 Existing Memorials**

Main Roads will treat all existing roadside memorials in a sensitive manner and will address each one on an individual basis with the aim of making all roadside memorials compliant with this policy.

## 5. CONTACTS

Main Roads Customer Contact Centre  
(24 hours a day 7 days a week, 365 days a year)

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ATTACHMENT 1

MAIN ROADS WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
ROADSIDE MEMORIAL NOTICE

We regret to advise, that it has become necessary for this roadside memorial to be removed/relocated. The basis of the removal/relocation will be explained in full upon contacting our office.

Can the person responsible for this roadside memorial please contact: -

\_\_\_\_\_

at Main Roads Western Australia on telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
**within 60 days** of the date of this notice to discuss arrangements for its removal/relocation.

If the above-nominated Main Roads Officer is not contacted by the \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_, the roadside memorial will be removed. Main Roads will store the removed roadside memorial for a period of four months.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
(Date)

## ATTACHMENT 2 - GLOSSARY

Bitumen/road seal	The surface of the road.
Carriageway	The portion of a road or bridge devoted particularly to the use of vehicles, inclusive of shoulders and auxiliary lanes.
Contractors	A contract with a third party to deliver a set of given services for a defined period to maintain sections of the road network.
Control of Access Road	Roads that do not permit pedestrian access or parking. For example the Freeways, Tonkin Highway and Reid Highway.
Freeway	A divided highway for through-traffic with no access for traffic between interchanges and with grade separation at all intersections.
Guideposts	A wooden or plastic white post with a reflector approximately 1.5 metres from the edge of the road.
Highway	Highways provide connections between capital cities. They are also principal routes between a city and the major producing regions of the State. Highways also service major transport terminals or significant commercial and industrial centres.
Landscaped verges	Landscaped frontages/ mown verges that are adjacent to the road. For example estates such as Secret Harbour and Carramar.
Main Road	A principal road in the road system.
Median	Divides two carriageways.
Road Reserve	The area either side of the road that belongs to Main Roads.
Roadside Structure	For example, bridges, overpasses, tunnels.
Shared Path	Paths which are adjacent to freeways, major highways and rail corridors. These paths cater for pedestrians, including those in wheelchairs, and cyclists.
Traffic Control Item	Traffic signals or signs.
Traffic Islands	Small refuge typically located at intersections.

