



Department of Transport

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Court Ref: COR 2019 002161
DoT Ref: LAOS 4309

Ms Rebecca Hudson
Coroner's Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006

Dear Ms Hudson

INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF MR GREGORY HULANDS – COR 2019 002161

I refer to your letter dated 26 June 2020, addressed to Mr Paul Northey, regarding the investigation into the death of Mr Gregory Mark Hulands. Your letter has been forward to me for investigation and response.

The Department of Transport, previously known as VicRoads (DoT) wishes to convey its sincere condolences to the family of Mr Hulands.

Background

On 29 April 2019, Mr Hulands was involved in a motor vehicle incident on the Calder Alternate Highway in Ravenswood, Victoria 3453.

The Coroner conducted an investigation into Mr Hulands death and found that *the vehicle's speed through the bend combined with road design, inappropriate placement of the vehicle on the road and the high centre of gravity of the vehicle's load may have all contributed to the vehicle leaving the road* (per paragraph 30 of Coroner's report). Further, it was concluded that Mr Hulands passed away from mechanical asphyxia caused by an injury sustained after the vehicle he was driving left the Calder Alternate Highway and rolled down an embankment near Fentons Lane in Ravenswood, Victoria.

Recommendations

The Coroner's investigation led to two recommendations.

1. Informed by appropriate input from Victoria Police, VicRoads undertake an assessment of the condition of Calder Alternate Highway near Fentons Lane, Ravenswood including the adequacy of signage and road safety barriers applicable to traffic travelling in a north west and south east direction.
2. VicRoads make any necessary changes to signage and road safety barriers that this review identifies as being desirable.

DoT's response to the recommendations

DoT can advise that the recommendations made by the Coroner have been implemented. DoT has inspected the crash site from both directions and documented its conclusions in a fatal crash report. Other inputs into the fatal crash report include:

- a Victoria Police Fatal Collision Audit provided by Senior Sergeant Ian Brooks (Victoria Police Highway Patrol, Western D5, Member Number: 22799); and
- daytime and night-time inspections conducted by DoT senior traffic engineers which included a ball bank indicator test to determine the need for supplementary signs across the two (reverse) curves near Fentons Lane.

As a result of the above investigations and reports, additional signage, including advisory speed signs have been installed. Specifically, reverse curve warning signage with an 80 km/h advisory speed supplementary plate and curve alignment markers has been installed at this location on both approaches. These works were completed on 4 February 2020.

DoT will consider the installation of road safety barriers in both directions in future funding programs.

Should you require any further information, Daya Govender Manager Development T: 03 5434 5054 E: daya.govender@roads.vic.gov.au would be pleased to assist.

Kind regards,



Barry Green
Acting Director Northern

11 / 08 / 2020