



# FACT SHEET

## Speed Limits

Poor driver behaviour and speeding is an ongoing issue on many streets throughout the region and is a behaviour that is difficult to correct. Motorists are always encouraged to **drive to the prevailing road and traffic conditions** and reduce their speed where appropriate, including in bad weather, poor visibility, and in locations with high volumes of pedestrians or vehicles performing parking manoeuvres.

### Local Streets and Built-Up Areas

A **local street** or built-up area **has access to private property** and carries neighbourhood traffic. Some industrial and commercial areas also have local streets.

A built-up area is defined as an area where buildings on land next to a road, or street lighting, are less than 100m apart for a distance of 500m. If the road is less than 500m long, it includes the entire road.

### Default Speed Limit

The default speed limit for local streets in **built-up areas in Queensland is 50 km/h** and came into effect in regional Queensland on 1 February 2003. For roads that are outside a built-up area the default speed limit is 100 km/h unless signed otherwise.



These speed limits are **legally enforceable with or without posted signs**, which avoids the need for extensive signage. Speed restriction **signs are generally not installed on local streets in built up areas**, as the installation of these signs will have a negative impact on other unsigned streets. 50 km/h speed restriction signs may be installed on streets to indicate a speed limit change, such as at the end of a school zone.

**If you do not see a speed sign, you should assume the speed limit is 50 km/h until you pass a sign** (this includes when turning into another street).

### Gravel Roads

It is not possible to ensure that a nominated speed can be maintained on unsealed roads under all weather and maintenance conditions; it is for this reason that gravel roads are usually not signed for speed restrictions. Drivers are required to adjust their driving and vehicles' speeds to suit the prevailing road and traffic conditions.

### Vehicle Speeds and Safety

The enforcement of a 50 km/h speed limit in built-up areas is focussed on ensuring the safety of the community. A car travelling at 50 km/h is able to **stop 12-16 metres sooner** than one travelling at 60 km/h. In fact, by the time a car moving at 50 km/h has come to a stop, a car attempting to stop from 60 km/h would still be travelling at around 40 km/h. At this speed, a pedestrian hit by the car has an almost **60% chance of being killed**.

### Speed Enforcement

Complaints regarding speeding on local streets are a common occurrence for Council; however Council has no authority in matters concerning the enforcement of speed limits. The primary

agency responsible for the enforcement of road rules and response to poor driver behaviour (hooning) or speeding is the Queensland Police Service. Incidences of speeding or hooning can be reported to the Police through their **Policelink service on 131 444** or directly to your local police station.



Some streets within the urban network have higher traffic carrying functions and are signed with higher speed restriction signs.

### Determination of Speed Limits and Speed Limit Reviews

Speed limits are set in accordance with guidelines produced by the Department of Transport and Main Roads under the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD); working with this document ensures consistency across the state. From time to time Council may undertake a review of the speed limit on identified roads, which assesses a range of traffic and road conditions including crash history, traffic volumes, prevailing speeds, road condition, and geographic features. A speed limit review may take three months or more to complete.

Prevailing speeds and traffic volumes are generally determined by installing traffic counting tubes on a road to measure vehicle hits. These counts are generally conducted for a two-week period.

## Controlling Speeding with Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Devices

Local Area Traffic Management (LATM), also known as traffic calming, involves installing devices such as speed humps, roundabouts, traffic islands, and kerb build-outs to:

- Discourage non-local traffic and inappropriate vehicles using the street
- Moderate vehicle speeds, and
- Provide a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and residents.

LATM is generally carried out across an area rather than an individual street to ensure traffic issues are not transferred to other nearby local streets.

It is often found that where speeding is seen to be an issue, the **underlying problem is driver behaviour**. This is **best addressed through enforcement**, rather than changing the design of a road. **The implementation of LATM is not suitable for all streets**, and is generally not applied when the occurrence of dangerous driving and/or excessive speeding by irresponsible drivers is the primary issue for a street. If this is the case, you are encouraged to contact the Police via Police link or directly through your local police station.

