

Research Performance Overview

Transport and Road Safety (TARS) Research Group

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Transport and Road Safety

Background

In 1999, the Health Administration Corporation (HAC), Motor Accidents Authority of NSW (MAA), Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW (RTA) and The University of New South Wales (UNSW) formed a collaboration to fund the NSW Injury Risk Management Centre (IRMRC). The collaboration was renewed by Deed of Agreement, after a review, in 2002 and 2008 for a further five year period in each case. The IRMRC Deed of Agreement was varied to allow the establishment of the Transport and Road Safety (TARS) Research group within the School of Aviation and the Falls Injury Prevention Group (FIPG) within Neuroscience Research Australia. The Deed of Variation (Variation) for each research group commenced on 1 December 2010 and expired on 30 November 2013. Over this time, the TARS Research has now grown to around 20 research staff and students and is continuing as an independent research centre within the School of Aviation at the UNSW.

This report provides a high-level overview of the TARS Research Group's performance – during the period covered by the Variation – and provides a platform for the ongoing activities of TARS Research.

Future Strategic Direction

The future strategic direction of TARS Research is focused on the key areas of research, community engagement and capacity building. We aspire to do this through:

- **Research**
 - Undertake profound research which benefits society;
 - Be recognised as a peer in good standing with the world's best transport and road safety researchers;
 - To build on current leading performance and continue attracting ARC, NHMRC and industry funding for strategic research;
- **Community Engagement**
 - Translate fundamental science into new policy and practice;
 - Equip government and industry to contribute to NSW, Australia and the world;
 - Continue work towards the promotion of injury-prevention measures, in a road environment, which supports the vision of zero fatalities and serious injuries within a Safe System approach;
- **Capacity Building**
 - To maintain and extend our position as Australia's leading research centre in terms of road safety research output per capita;
 - To be recognised as the research centre of choice for experts of high quality seeking to undertake transport and road safety research;
 - To attract high calibre students seeking to undertake higher degrees in relevant areas;
 - To maintain and enhance an environment which promotes collaboration between the range of disciplines required to meet the research needs of the challenges faced.

Skills & Expertise

The philosophy of the TARS Research group is the safe system principle, commonly used in occupational health and safety. This requires a multi-disciplinary approach to road safety research and policy development, where researchers focus on Safer Roads, Safer Vehicles, and Safer People and their integration into a Safe System approach.

TARS Research staff has enormous depth of multidisciplinary expertise and experience, and very strong nationally and internationally recognised track records of expertise across the entire range of road and transport safety. TARS research is structured around the essential disciplines needed for an effective transport and road safety research centre: safety policy and systems, psychology, human factors, engineering and crashworthiness, information technology systems, biomechanics, biostatistics, epidemiology, and social sciences.

TARS Research has 12 PhD level research staff covering 24 areas detailed in [TARS Capability & Expertise Matrix](#).

Publications

During the period 2010-2013, there has been a consistent increase in peer-reviewed publications as summarised in the Tables below. These show the number of each type of publication, the fractional contribution of TARS Research staff and number of [Higher Education Research Data Collection](#) (HERDC) points accrued for each category. A detailed list of research outputs is available [here](#).

2013

HERDC Category	Count	Fractions	Points
Book	1	0.1667	0.1667
Book chapter	4	0.9167	0.5
Journal article	43	20.1339	20.1339
Conference	15	9.2083	9.2083
Total	63	30.4256	30.0089

2012

HERDC Category	Count	Fractions	Points
Book	0	0	0
Book chapter	3	1.2	1.2
Journal article	32	11.9332	11.9332
Conference	8	4.85	4.85
Total	43	17.9832	17.9832

2011

HERDC Category	Count	Fractions	Points
Book	0	0	0
Book chapter	0	0	0
Journal article	32	11.9995	11.9995
Conference	13	5.6452	5.6452
Total	45	17.6447	17.6447

2010

HERDC Category	Count	Fractions	Points
Book	0	0	0
Book chapter	1	0.6667	0.6667
Journal article	23	9.565	9.565
Conference	8	4.75	4.75
Total	32	14.9817	14.9817

Performance

During the period 2010-2013, TARS was increasingly successful in attracting research income from a variety of sources as summarised in **Table 1**. Please note that indexation has not been applied to Category 1 figures.

Table 1: Funding awarded to TARS Researchers by [HERDC Category](#)

HERDC Category	2010	2011	2012	2013	Grand Total
Category 1: Australian competitive grants	610,000	980,990		1,651,000	3,241,990
Category 2: Other public sector research income	3,364,145	1,110,333	1,816,707	526,227	6,817,412
Category 3: Industry and other research income	338,110	768,515	90,260	297,596	1,494,481
Category 5: Non-HERDC research income	0	0	23,012	1,016,700	1,039,712
Grand Total	\$4,312,255	\$2,859,838	\$1,929,979	\$3,491,523	\$12,593,595

Governance & Reporting

The Management Review Committee met on a quarterly-basis to coordinate research direction and quality and enhance liaison between TARS, TfNSW and MAA. The Committee consisted as follows with the Secretariat function provided by the Research Business Manager:

- **Centre for Road Safety, Transport for NSW**
 - General Manager
 - Principal Research Scientist
 - Manager, Road Safety Strategy
- **TARS Research**
 - Director
 - Chair of Road Safety
- **Motor Accidents Authority of NSW**
 - Deputy General Manager
 - Manager, Injury Strategy
 - Principal Adviser, Injury Strategy