

## Is it safe to walk in Melbourne?

The Andrews Government and local councils are crowdsourcing opinions on walking around Melbourne, in a ground-breaking approach to understanding road safety.

They are asking people to indicate their walking safety concerns through an interactive online map.

"The Andrews Government is investing in local organisations to develop innovative ways to keep pedestrians safe in metropolitan Melbourne," says the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Hon. Luke Donnellan.

The project is being led by Victoria Walks, a walking promotion charity supported by VicHealth, and internet engagement specialists CrowdSpot.

"This is the first time the CrowdSpot platform has been used to gather pedestrian perceptions right across a major city," said Anthony Aisenberg, Director of CrowdSpot.

The Andrews Government, the City of Melbourne and 13 other metropolitan councils have signed up to the project. They will get the data to help them decide on road safety improvements and prioritise investment.

"Our understanding of road safety issues is usually limited to official crash statistics, which only tell part of the story" says Dr Ben Rossiter, Executive Officer of Victoria Walks. "Crash statistics provide data on serious injury crashes, but they don't tell us about all crashes, what people are worried about and where they do or don't feel safe walking."

Road management agencies are asking people to record their walking issues and concerns at <http://walkspot.crowdspot.com.au/>. They can indicate concerns like a lack of pedestrian crossings, poor street lighting, high traffic speed, or footpath problems.

"The community is facing many serious health and economic challenges relating to the obesity epidemic, congestion and road trauma. It is critical that we get a better understanding of people's road safety concerns if we are to get more people walking", said Dr Rossiter.

In the last 10 years, 444 pedestrians lost their lives on Victorian roads. "Business as usual is not an option," Dr Rossiter says.

"Road agencies won't be able to fix every problem, and action will take time. But the feedback from the community will help them decide what to do and where."

The project is being funded primarily by a Community Road Safety Grant from the TAC. More information is available at [www.walkspot.org.au](http://www.walkspot.org.au).

**ENDS**

Further comment:

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