VicRoads is conducting a review of its Traffic Noise Reduction Policy in response to the increasing traffic on our roads over the last ten years. In March and April, we asked the community to share their concerns and issues with traffic noise issues in an online forum.

Who participated?

- 2,379 unique visitors to the online consultation hub
- 225 comments posted
- 1,054 people voted on a post
- 443 people completed an online survey
- 49 people responded in writing

What you told us

**Regulation**

A large majority of participants expressed their concerns regarding the legislation and enforcement of vehicle noise emissions, particularly in relation to motor bike exhaust systems and the use of truck engine brakes.

- "Legislate to prevent the use of engine brakes in residential areas and enforce it."
- "All vehicles including all motorcycles should have appropriate mufflers fitted and checked at least every two years as part of a roadworthy inspection."
- "We need enforcement on the ground sending clear messages to people who flout."

**Trucks and engine brakes**

Trucks and engine brake noise were clearly a major issue for many people.

- "My main concern is the use of trucks on residential streets especially during non-peak hours when there is plenty of spare capacity on the freeways."
- "I believe that trucks are using residential streets to avoid paying tolls. In Footscray, there should be a night time curfew..."
- "I'm staggered at how much noise truck engine brakes make. How can it be legal to make such violent noise in dense metropolitan areas during sleeping hours?"
- "One driver of a heavy vehicle admitted to me that he loves the sound of engine brakes echoing off buildings - with attitudes like this we may needs laws to govern the use of this type of braking."
- "All trucks should be fitted with exhaust mufflers to suppress engine brake noise [...] I have worked in the transport industry all my working life, driving trucks of all sizes up to road trains with two trailers. I believe I have the experience to know that the [engine brake] noise is not necessary"

**Motorbikes**

The traffic noise from motorbikes was another major source of consternation for many people.

- "We have a number of extremely noisy motor bikes that use our residential street regularly, at all hours of the day and night... They regularly wake us up at night time."
- "The noise they make is extreme and can be heard from a great distance. I do not understand why this amount of noise is legal when it can easily be controlled."

**Noise walls and noise limits**

Comments relating to noise walls largely focused on non-existent or inadequate noise walls near freeways.

- "Build higher, more effective sound walls and ban the noise created by trucks using engine brakes and loud motorcycles... The sound walls are constantly in need of repairs."
- "Sound barriers should be installed around the length of the Westgate Freeway, and where they currently exist, install better ones as they're not effective with the increased levels of traffic over the years."
- "I live in Balwyn North between Bulleen Rd and Doncaster Rd where there are no sound barriers at all. With the increase in traffic due to the East link connection, there is now much more traffic flowing past our suburb."

**The need for consistency in relation to setting of noise limits and building of noise walls were key themes.**

- "Noise walls should be installed wherever traffic noise levels reach 63db(A) on existing roads"
- "The existing policy is deficient as it only refers to new roads, so arterial roads or other roads which have by default become arterial roads, which are not being "upgraded" are not touched by the noise policy."
The Number Crunch

Where is the traffic noise coming from?
Over half (55%) of survey respondents were concerned by traffic noise from freeways.

![Traffic Noise Location Chart]

When is traffic noise the biggest issue?
The large majority (69%) on all types of road were concerned by traffic noise at night. Those concerned about traffic noise on freeways reported being significantly annoyed in the evening peak (63%) and early morning (63%). Those concerned about traffic noise on arterial roads reported being significantly annoyed early in the morning (59%).

What is the source of the traffic noise?
Individual noisy vehicles were by far the most mentioned source of traffic noise on arterial (92%) and local roads (99%). General traffic was the main source of noise for those who reported being affected by freeways.

Individual noisy trucks were the greatest source of annoyance on all road types, particularly on arterial roads (80%). Truck engine brakes were also reported as a major source of annoyance. Noisy motorbikes were mentioned as a particular issue on local (64%) and arterial roads (58%).

What happens now?
Input from the community consultation will inform the development of a discussion paper which will be the basis of a second round of consultation in the second half of 2015.

We will post the discussion paper and call for submissions on the consultation hub: consult.vicroads.vic.gov.au/trafficnoise.