



Road Trauma Memorial Project

Consultation

Wednesday March 10, 2010

6 pm

Uniting Church Centre, 130 Lt Collins Street, Melbourne

Death and serious injury on the roads has directly or indirectly affected almost every member of the Victorian community.

Thousands of Victorians have been killed or seriously injured over the course of the last hundred years. Each individual killed or injured was a contributor, or potential contributor, to the community and we are all poorer through losing their energy, skills and commitment.

Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) is a community-based counselling service funded by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC). As an organisation, we support people in their grief and their desire to suitably commemorate their loved ones. Grief takes many forms, and so the types of memorials may also take many forms. RTSSV believe that there is a need to commemorate people killed and injured in the past and in the future.

Given the shocking loss of life and rate of injury/disability, the community needs to find a range of expressions for the loss and grief experienced. In addition to formal rituals/funerals held, the placement of roadside memorials has gained prominence and proliferation, particularly over the past decade or two. This is also consistent with a similar trend internationally and has been a source of comfort for many people seeking to perpetuate the memory of a loved one(s). In certain areas, such personal actions have not been without controversy, and both local and state planning authorities have wrestled with the most appropriate course of action.

In 2006 Road Trauma Support Services Victoria held a Forum about roadside memorials for its volunteers and members. The forum supported the installation of

safe roadside memorials. There was also support expressed for the development of a permanent memorial.

Since 2001 Road Trauma Support Services, in conjunction with the Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, has organised an annual Time of Remembrance ceremony, designed to support people directly affected by road trauma. This is held on the third Sunday of November, designated by the United Nations as World Remembrance Day for Road Crash Victims.

Following a meeting in 2007 with the Hon Tim Holding, Minister for the Transport Accident Commission, discussions were held with TAC staff and other interested parties to further develop this vision of a permanent memorial. The TAC has provided initial funding support for the project, and the Uniting Church is providing the necessary infrastructure. A Steering Committee has been established, its members being:

Mrs Jeanette Suhr OAM	Ambassador RTSS
Ms Samantha Cockfield	Road Safety Manager TAC
Ms Sue-Anne Ware	Landscape Architect RMIT
Ms Jane Woollard	Playwright and Artist
Andy Calder	Project Manager, Uniting Church

A series of consultations with affected groups and individuals is now taking place, to learn about what people believe should be incorporated in such a memorial.

On Wednesday March 10 the Victorian Council of Churches, in conjunction with the Faith Communities Forum of Victoria, will convene a meeting with interested people. This forum will commence at 6pm and be held at the Uniting Church Centre, 130 Lt Collins Street. For catering purposes, please rsvp to vcc@vcc.org.au by Friday March 5.

In the event you are unable to attend, and would like to offer your thoughts and ideas, please go to www.rtssv.org.au where there are slides outlining the project, and forward your comments to andy.calder@victas.uca.org.au