

EASTER ROAD SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Statement by Minister for Road Safety

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Road Safety) [9.07 am]: Tonight marks the commencement of the Easter long weekend. Traditionally, the Easter weekend brings increased traffic on our roads, particularly in regional areas, as people take the opportunity to enjoy this break. With extra traffic comes the increased possibility of crashes and road trauma. Since the Towards Zero strategy began in 2008, there has been one fatality-free Easter, in 2012, and that was the result we were hoping for this year.

As always, WA Police will be making a significant contribution to keeping road safety foremost in our minds and targeting unsafe road-user behaviour across the state. Police efforts will be complemented by reinforced communication from the Road Safety Commission around issues including speeding, alcohol, fatigue, use of restraints and looking out for others, particularly vulnerable road users. The Road Safety Commissioner is also keen to ensure that those travelling in vehicles being driven poorly or dangerously have the courage to speak out and bring this behaviour to the attention of the driver. Research has shown that those prone to bad behaviour can show more care when someone else is in the vehicle. This small action to remind someone of their responsibility to their passengers and other road users by driving safely could save lives. The Road Safety Commission and agencies with road safety responsibilities receive funding for initiatives through the road trauma trust account and have agreed on a shared hashtag, #SafeEasterWA, to be used from 18 March on all social media posts relating to Easter road safety.

Yesterday I was joined by the Commissioner of Police, senior traffic police and the Road Safety Commissioner for the launch of the government's Easter road safety campaign at state traffic headquarters in Midland. Every available officer will be on duty over the Easter break. As always, police will take a zero-tolerance approach to illegal, dangerous and anti-social driver behaviour and will focus enforcement efforts on the offences we know lead to fatal and serious injury crashes—speeding, alcohol, drug use, fatigue, inattention and failure to wear seatbelts. In 2015, 39 per cent of fatalities on WA roads involved speed-related crashes, alcohol use contributed to approximately 25 per cent of fatalities, and fatigue and inattention played a part in 29 of the 161 deaths on WA roads. These statistics speak for themselves.

Double demerits will apply from midnight tonight and, for some people, one infringement could mean losing their licence. Sadly, we have already lost two people on our roads. This Easter I urge all road users to take care and make safety a priority every time they get on the road to prevent further fatalities over the long weekend. Please drive safely and responsibly and help to get this very important message to your friends and family and everyone you know. I wish everyone a happy, safe and fatality-free Easter break.