



9 April 2009

Return Home Safe This Easter

During the official Easter Long weekend last year, New South Wales recorded its first zero result (no deaths). This was the first time that this had occurred since road statistic records were first recorded nearly 60 years ago in 1949.

This Year, Ambulance is urging drivers in NSW to work hard at keeping the road toll down and **return home safe this Easter.**

During Easter there is extra traffic on the roads, on major highways and in popular holiday destinations and the roads become packed with drivers who are unfamiliar with local roads and conditions. This unfamiliarity increases risk of having a serious motor vehicle collision increases.

If you are planning on travelling during this busy time, Ambulance recommends you go prepared! By taking a few pre-departure steps you can ensure that you reach your destination safely:

- Before you depart on your journey, ensure that your car is in safe mechanical order. Perform regular maintenance and car checks. Ensure that your tyres have good tread and are correctly inflated and that all of your lights are working.
- Advance plan your route using current maps, and allow plenty of time for unexpected delays.
- Make sure that you always have a first aid kit, torch, mobile phone and fire extinguisher in your car.
- Ensure you have food and water in the car should you be caught in heavy traffic or you are travelling on days are of extreme heat.

Ambulance also offers the following driving tips to help you and your family stay safe:

- **Drive to the conditions** – remember, the speed limit is the maximum speed in good conditions. In adverse conditions **SLOW DOWN!**
- **Always** maintain a safe distance between you and the car in front. A gap of at least three seconds between cars is suggested in good conditions. A longer gap is recommended if you are carrying extra weight such as a trailer or if the road/weather conditions are less than ideal.



- ALWAYS ensure that every person in the car is wearing a seatbelt at all times. Pets should also be properly restrained.
- Children **MUST** always be restrained in an approved RTA fitted child seat or capsule.
- Take a break at least every two hours – stop, revive, survive
- Endeavour to travel during daylight hours – this is when visibility is at its best and your body clock is in “awake mode”
- **Drive with your headlights on**, even during daylight hours as it will make you more visible to other road users.
- **Alcohol and driving DO NOT mix** – ensure that only licensed sober drivers get behind the wheel.
- **Never use your mobile phone or text whilst driving.** Use a ‘hands free’ unit or better still, delegate all mobile phone duties to someone else in the car.
- Motorcyclists and pillion passengers **MUST** always remember to wear visible protective clothing & footwear as well as an approved Australian Standards Helmet.

Remember, everyone has family, friends and loved ones. Fatalities and serious injuries affect not only the lives of the immediate victims but also that of many family members, friends and the community as a whole.

In the event of a medical emergency, **ring TRIPLE ZERO (000)**, ask for ambulance and stay on the line with the operations centre whilst ambulance paramedics are dispatched to your location.

So please take care! The Ambulance Service of NSW wishes everyone a safe and happy Easter.

~ ENDS ~