



# Media Release

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## Wheatbelt drivers urged to drive to conditions

RAC is urging Wheatbelt residents to drive to the road conditions, with an alarming number of road fatalities and serious injuries occurring on Wheatbelt roads identified in the 2014 Risky Roads campaign.

RAC General Manager Corporate Affairs, Will Golsby, said the State-wide campaign identified a number of risky roads in the Wheatbelt including Bruce Rock-Merredin Road, parts of Great Northern Highway and Toodyay Road.

“Toodyay Road from Red Hill to Toodyay was the fourth most nominated Risky Road in the State. This road has had 181 crashes, resulting in 10 fatalities and 59 hospital or medical treatments since 2010,” Mr Golsby said.

“Single vehicle runs-offs are the dominant type of crash in the region. More than half of all fatal crashes between 2007 and 2012 were regional drivers running off the road and didn’t involve a second car.”

The campaign highlighted the urgent need for the State Government to deliver funding for regional road run-off sections with none allocated past the 15-16 financial year. The current State Budget also confirms the reduction of road maintenance funding across the State.

“This funding is urgent because tragically we lost 26 people on Wheatbelt roads last year. Fatal crashes occurring every two weeks on Wheatbelt roads is tragic and we need to do more to save lives and stop serious injuries.

“The Wheatbelt’s road fatality rate is 11 times the metropolitan rate, six times the state rate and twice nearby regions. It’s significantly higher than the rest of Western Australia.”

But until road upgrades become a State priority, RAC is urging Wheatbelt drivers to be even more diligent behind the wheel.

“More than half of our surveyed Wheatbelt drivers have admitted to speeding and one third of Wheatbelt road deaths weren’t wearing a seatbelt. These deliberate choices are easily avoidable, slow down and buckle up.

“Everyone – individuals, communities and the Government – has a role to play in addressing the Wheatbelt’s road safety record.”

RAC has embarked on a five year campaign in the Wheatbelt to break the silence on road safety; the first stage comprising of the [Elephant in the Wheatbelt](#). Made out of wrecked cars, the life-sized African elephant sculpture is touring the Wheatbelt to generate discussion and bring about behaviour change.

The RAC’s Risky Roads campaign is WA’s largest road infrastructure community survey and is undertaken to provide a snapshot of community perceptions, insight for road authorities and assist in identifying trends in traffic flow, infrastructure and safety.

For more information visit [Risky Roads](#).

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