



Media Release

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Emergency responders' plea to stop Wheatbelt road trauma

RAC, Wheatbelt Police and the Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades (AVBFB) of WA are pleading with Wheatbelt residents to be diligent, with drivers being 11 times more likely to be killed in the Wheatbelt than in Perth.

RAC Senior Manager Media and Government Relations Liz Carey said the emergency responders in the region were too used to attending horrific car crash scenes where they knew of the victim.

"26 people were killed on Wheatbelt roads last year. The emergency responders often live in the region and have to deal with the reality that crashes they're called to could involve someone they know," Ms Carey said.

"Our Community Attitudes Survey results show that Wheatbelt residents think it's the city slickers to blame, but in actual fact, two thirds of road deaths are drivers from the local area."

AVBFB Vice President David Gossage said the hardest thing is how fatal crashes impact on the responders and everyone in the local community.

"These are small communities; car crashes tear them apart. Fatal crashes are certainly devastating, but what people tend to forget about is the impact of a near miss or serious injury," Mr Gossage said.

"Rescuing a baby from a car crash and having to revive it is a memory that will stay with me for life. Luckily the baby was ok."

Wheatbelt Police Superintendent Peter Halliday said the Wheatbelt Police District's crime statistics showed the region is one of the safest places to live, yet one of the most unsafe places to drive.

"When you consider the fatal and serious road crash statistics, it's scary. You are then within one of the most dangerous places within the State," Superintendent Halliday said.

"If your mate is doing something wrong, tell them, or contact the police if you know of someone drunk or drug driving. I've lost count of the amount of car crashes I've attended, especially through Great Eastern Highway and Toodyay Road. We've got to work together to put a stop to it."

RAC has embarked on a five year road safety campaign in the Wheatbelt; 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. He will be attending the Brookton Photography Exhibition (7-8 Oct), the 95th Quairading Show supported by RAC (10 Oct), Parliament House (13 Oct), Narrogin Spring Festival (17 Oct) and Murray Street Mall in Perth (28-29 Oct).

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