

Thursday, 3 September 2009

TIMELY REMINDER TO ALL ROADUSERS

Given the recent spike in South Australia's road toll, Emergency Services Minister, Michael Wright, is urging the driving community, especially young people, to renew their focus on driving safely.

This morning the Minister will lend his support to a powerful road safety message being delivered by the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) to year 12 high school students at Sacred Heart College.

Minister Wright said the MFS Road Awareness and Accident Prevention (RAAP) Program sends a strong, emotive message to new drivers that safety on the road is their responsibility.

"RAAP is a powerful, graphic program targeting licence aged drivers from secondary schools across South Australia. It reaches novice drivers and aims to create generational change in driver behaviour," Minister Wright says.

The program is delivered by an MFS firefighter with the help of young road crash survivor Eli Murn, who has an acquired brain injury. The Metropolitan Fire Service developed the RAAP Program for South Australia because firefighters were constantly devastated about responding to countless fatal or serious car crashes, with those involving young people particularly distressing.

"Our emergency services don't enjoy responding to serious and fatal car crashes.

"We've seen a recent surge of tragic road crashes in South Australia, and if anything they should serve as a stern reminder to all drivers to adopt the message of the road accident awareness program and use 'Concentration and Commonsense' on our roads."

"Over the past five years, the MFS has delivered more than 300 programs to over 35,000 students across South Australia." Minister Wright said.

MFS RAAP Program Coordinator, Rod Campbell, says the program is hard hitting and gives young drivers a chance to see the consequences of bad decisions made behind the wheel.

"Statistics show that road crashes are the number one cause of death for 16-24 year olds throughout Australia, and our message to new drivers is that almost all road crashes are avoidable," Mr Campbell says.

The RAAP Program, sponsored by AAMI and the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation is delivered to 44% of year 11 students across the State each year.

The dynamic program was recently delivered by the MFS to Australian students living in Hong Kong, who'll return to Australia in the near future, and to South Australian ETSA apprentices who cover millions of kilometres on the State's roads each year.