



MEDIA RELEASE

INQUIRY INTO YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY & EDUCATION PROGRAMS PUBLIC HEARING - PORT MACQUARIE

The Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety (Staysafe) is holding a regional public hearing at the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council chambers on Tuesday 27 May 2008. The Committee will take evidence from witnesses representing 5 local government areas in Northern New South Wales as part of its Inquiry into Young Driver Safety and Education Programs. The hearing program is attached.

Despite an overall decline in the number of drivers involved in fatal car accidents in the five years to 2005, drivers aged 17-25 years continue to be overrepresented in fatal crashes. According to data compiled by the RTA, young, primarily male drivers are involved in 26% of fatal crashes and 28% of all motor vehicle accidents. This is despite the fact that they constitute only 15% of all license holders. The casualties that result affect not only the young drivers themselves but also all vehicle passengers and other road users.

Approximately two-thirds of all fatal crashes occurring in New South Wales take place outside of the Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle metropolitan areas. Thus, the risk of being killed or injured on the roads is greater for all drivers living in rural New South Wales, not just young or novice drivers.

"The Committee has already held a two-day public hearing at Parliament House but felt it necessary to conduct an additional hearing in regional New South Wales due to the significant number of submissions received from individuals and organisations outside the metropolitan areas", the Committee Chair Geoff Corrigan MP said. "The evidence provided by witnesses will assist the Committee in determining any differences in driving behaviours and crash outcomes in urban and rural areas. An assessment of education programs that have been established at a local level will aid the Committee in formulating recommendations for 'best practice' in this important area of government policy."

Further information can be obtained by visiting the Committee website at <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/staysafe> or by contacting Mr Geoff Corrigan, Chair on (02) 4655 3333 or Mr Bjarne Nordin, Senior Committee Officer on (02) 9230 2843.

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