



RURAL ROAD SAFETY MONTH 2021

National Fact Sheet

Under strict embargo until 12.01am 6th September 2021

Regional road safety is not limited to just rural residents:

- Almost all Australians utilise regional roads at least once a year (94%)
 - More than 4 in 10 (43%) Australians utilise regional roads at least once a week
 - 3 in 10 (30%) do so multiple times a week
- It's not just residents of regional areas utilising the roads either, the most common reason for utilising regional roads in order are:
 - 31% for personal travel
 - 27% to visit family and friends
 - 22% reside in regional areas
 - 14% are travelling for work
- In a post-Covid era, the usage of regional roads is expected to increase with 49% of Australians more likely to drive longer trips than fly this year

Dangerous driving conditions that are typically associated with regional areas have impacted the majority of drivers:

- In fact, more than 86% of Australians have driven under extreme conditions:
 - Heavy rainfall (78%)
 - Thick fog (61%)
 - Hail (40%)
 - Flooding (24%)
 - Bushfire (16%)
 - Heavy Snowfall (11%)
 - Cyclone (5%)
- When faced with this scenario, 96% reported feeling unsafe for part or all of the experience
- Despite this, 65% of Australians don't have a safety plan in place for driving under extreme conditions
- Almost 4 in 10 (37%) of Australians believe better education or training on what to do would have made them feel safer
- 84% of Australians believe that there should be more community awareness for road safety resilience in preparation for these extreme conditions



Australian attitudes towards safety are a critical factor in the shocking statistic that two in three road deaths occur in regional areas:

- Not only do two-thirds of Australians break road rules generally, but a quarter are more likely to do so when in regional areas
- More concerning, however, is the frequency of this high risk behaviour.
 - In regional areas, more than 1 in 10 drivers will break a road rule on a daily basis, double the numbers in metropolitan areas
 - 3 in 10 will do so at least once a week in regional areas, compared to 2 in 10 driving on urban streets
- The main reasons for breaking road rules in regional areas are preventable - half of drivers say distraction was number one reason, but also for more than 3 in 10 drivers it's believing they are safe from being caught.

The types of unsafe practices Australians undertake more in regional areas are in conflict to what are already what makes these roads more high risk:

- Despite the higher risks of regional roads such as speeds, infrastructure and other hazards such as wild life, the following were more likely to occur in regional areas than in city areas:
 - Not wearing a seat belt
 - Not wearing a helmet (on motorbike, bicycle, scooter etc)
 - Using a mobile phone behind the wheel
 - Driving over the alcohol limit
 - Driving under the influence of drugs

Community engagement and education on personal responsibility has the power to dramatically reduce road trauma in regional areas:

- Almost all Australians believe we have the power to reduce the road toll
- More than half believe it's education and a change in attitude that will have the biggest impact against other solutions such as improved infrastructure or more policing
- Education and engagement reported the strongest influence on Australians for improving their own road safety practices:
 - Reading or hearing about road safety in the media (56%)
 - Reading or hearing about road safety on social media (35%)
 - Seeing or attending a community event (30%)
 - Being personally impacted by road trauma (23%)

Research conducted by Pure Profile on behalf of the Australian Road Safety Foundation, April 2020, n=1001 nationally representative by gender, age and location of Australian drivers aged 18 years and over