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AMA URGES DRIVERS TO LEARN LESSONS FROM VICTIMS OF ROAD TRAUMA

World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, Sunday 15 November 2015

AMA President, Professor Brian Owler, said that today, World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, is a very sad day for many Australians as they remember family, friends, and loved ones who lost their lives on Australian roads.

Professor Owler said the Day of Remembrance is also an opportunity for people who use Australia’s roads – car and truck drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, and pedestrians – to stay alert and take extra care when travelling, commuting, or simply crossing the road.

“Today is a time to remember the victims of road accidents, and it also a day to acknowledge the doctors, emergency workers, paramedics, and others who are faced with the consequences of road trauma,” Professor Owler said.

“People are still making risky decisions on the road that not only have devastating impacts on individuals, but also on their family and friends.

“Anyone who has witnessed the consequences of road trauma understands that it is quick and unforgiving.”

Professor Owler said that too many lives are still being lost on our roads, with three people on average dying every day.

Since data on the road toll began in 1925 there have been more than 185,000 deaths on Australia’s roads, with on average 33,900 adults and children dying and or injured on our roads every year.

The cost of road trauma to the Australian community is enormous, estimated at \$27 billion per year, or \$70 million per day.

“We must change driver behaviour and change the culture and mentality about speeding and rushing to be somewhere,” Professor Owler said.

“The introduction of preventative measures, such as seat belts; improved automobile technology; and random breath tests have managed to substantially reduce road trauma - but more needs to be done.

“Greater focus is needed on driver fatigue and driver distraction, and we must adopt new technologies, such as autonomous emergency braking (AEB), that save lives and reduce road trauma.

“Reducing the number of road accidents can only be achieved through cooperation - governments, industry, and the community all need to work together to pursue safer Australian roads and safer Australian driving.”

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