BLESSING OF THE ROADS

Raising road safety awareness for an injury-free Easter
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Acknowledgement

Special thanks to the Local Governments and organisations that have partnered with WALGA’s RoadWise Program to develop and implement this exciting campaign in their communities.

All images and samples were submitted with permission to print in WALGA’s promotional and educational materials, including campaign kits.
Introduction

Who is this kit for?
This campaign kit was developed to encourage Local Governments and their RoadWise Committees to actively take part in the Blessing of the Roads campaign, an annual state-wide road safety community awareness campaign run in the lead up to and during the Easter long weekend. This year, the long weekend runs from 18 April to 21 April.

The kit contains a range of tools and resources to help Local Governments who wish to participate and formally bless their local roads as part of an official ceremony. Events can take place on any day. Tools in this kit were developed to assist in activity planning and promotion, including media, stakeholder and community engagement.

The Blessing of the Roads campaign is not connected with any specific religious or spiritual groups or domination but can be adapted as a religiously neutral event to involve a variety of religious leaders and clergy. When embraced from a non-religious perspective, some suggestions are: bless the roads without saying a prayer, observe a moment of silence or include a non-religious prayer. Whichever you go with, aim for more engagement and participation by including a wider range of community representatives from a diverse range of backgrounds.

This campaign kit provides ideas and guidance on how to plan, organise and implement your Blessing of the Roads campaign. It includes information to enhance your social marketing efforts in spreading road safety messages and in encouraging individuals in your community to be responsible road users.

Tools available in this kit

The Blessing of the Roads campaign is not a fundraising campaign. There is also no specific logo or symbol to represent the campaign.

The following resources are also available as single files at roadwise.asn.au

- Blessing of the Roads information sheet
- What does road safety mean to you? poster
- Towards Zero message
- What does road safety mean to you? Event information flyer
- Event information flyers
- Event running sheet sample
- Media alert sample
- Media release sample
- Media article sample
- Speech sample
- Blessing and prayer samples
- Declaration of Road Safety information sheet
- Human Spirit Award information sheet
- Indigenous community involvement information.

Templates can be adapted to suit each individual Local Governments requirements.

Word versions are available on the website.
Visit the WALGA RoadWise Program website to download the templates.
Campaign overview

What the campaign aims for

The *Blessing of the Roads* campaign seeks to:

- Remind road users that we all share responsibility for road safety
- Increase community awareness of road safety in the lead up to Easter
- Emphasise police enforcement activities in local areas
- Engage high profile local people to support community awareness and police enforcement activities
- Create a positive road safety culture in local communities and engage local leaders to help demonstrate that road trauma can be prevented.

The campaign is a community project that encourages participants to:

**Create** awareness for all road users of the need to exercise courtesy, care and common sense when travelling on our roads at all times, including over the busy Easter weekend.

**Remember** the family and friends of those who have died or been injured in road crashes and provides an opportunity for them to encourage others to be more road safety aware.

**Recognise** the dedication and efforts of those, both full time and volunteers, who work towards reducing road trauma.

What the campaign calls on the community to do:

- Be responsible for our own actions
- Assist in creating a safer road system in our community and State
- Slow down and enjoy the ride
- Don’t drink and drive
- Wear seatbelts and ensure children are properly restrained
- Take breaks to avoid fatigue when travelling – every two hours is recommended
- Change drivers or stop and revive at one of the many coffee stops or Driver Reviver locations
- Turn off mobile phones to avoid being distracted whilst driving.

With each community joining together and appealing to all road users to take care over Easter, the hope is to raise awareness of the things that everyone can do to stay safe on our roads.

*Sandfire Roadhouse, 2012*
Why you should get involved

Shared responsibility for road safety

With Easter being a four-day holiday, many families travel long distances to visit family or friends, or to go on holiday.

It is important to take time during that period to promote the issue of road safety and the impact it has on our family, friends and community.

Using the Blessing of the Roads campaign, Local Governments can raise community awareness of road safety over the busy weekend.

Blessing of the Roads events are held to raise awareness of road safety being a community issue and that for all roads to be safe it is ‘we’, the community, that must make a difference.

The community, as one, needs to make road safety a goal or we will continue to have families suffer the grief associated with the loss of life and serious injury as the result of a road crash.

Local Government contributions to road safety

Local Governments throughout Western Australia are working constantly to help reduce road crashes on our roads. By creating a safer road environment and supporting local RoadWise committees, they are contributing to the long term vision — Towards Zero.

Local Governments also contribute through the purchase of safe vehicles (4-5 star ANCAP rating) which are then on-sold to the community, increasing the number of safe vehicles on our roads.

By getting involved in the Blessing of the Roads campaign you will be making a contribution to the Local Government sector efforts in promoting safe driving over the Easter long weekend.

Recognising emergency services

The campaign provides blessings for our police and emergency services personnel.

They work tirelessly over this holiday period as well as throughout the rest of the year, to provide services intended to save lives and make our roads safer.

The Blessing of the Roads events are the perfect opportunities to recognise these workers and to thank them for their assistance.
How to get involved

In the week leading up to Easter long weekend, Local Governments tend to organise different types of events either by invite only or open to the wider community.

Suggestions to consider

- **Small services or events.** Organise one at the Council offices, local park or black spot location to formally bless the roads in your community. This can be held in the week leading up to Easter.

- **Who to invite.** Invite local religious leaders (of all denominations) to deliver a blessing and/or prayer as part of the service and/or incorporate performances by Elders, Traditional Owners and Custodians.

- **Add to your other events.** Incorporate Blessing of the Roads messages into existing community or Council events which may take place in the lead up to or over the Easter long weekend.

- **Sign a Declaration for Road Safety.** Contact your local Road Safety Advisor for more information about how to sign a Declaration. *See page 28 for what’s involved.*

- **Add to Council meetings.** This is an opportunity to involve all members and to make road safety a priority at the meeting.

- **Add to Driver Reviver stations.** Have a ceremony at one of the stations at the start of the day.

- **Distribute campaign information to** local religious leaders and schools for adaptation or inclusion in services in the lead up to Easter. Local religious leaders can use the prayer and blessing templates to customise to their local community.

- **Simply provide opportunity to reflect on road safety.**

A word on roadside safety for events

Unless you’ve organised a formal road closure for the purpose of your Blessing of the Roads event, care should be taken to ensure the safety of all attendees when holding your event close to a road.

To minimise potential driver distraction, don’t position your event in a place where it has the potential to distract a driver’s attention and lead to unsafe driving.

Check the guidelines for advertising signs within and beyond road reserves, before placing banners, flags and posters close to the road.

A ceremony doesn't have to be held right next to the road that’s being blessed. If there is a building, park or car park next to the road, consider organising your event there and position everyone so that they face the road to be blessed.

Visit roadwise.asn.au for downloadable resources
Who to involve in your campaign

Everyone has a role to play

The entire local community has a role to play in ensuring our roads are safe over the Easter break.

- **Local Government representatives** are encouraged to involve their Mayor/President, Councillors and Council staff;

- **RoadWise Committee members** and other road safety partners in the local community are encouraged to involve local groups and industries.

- **Religious leaders** from various denominations could be involved to deliver blessing and/or prayer as part of the ceremony.

- **Traditional owners and custodians** may be involved by carrying out a Welcome to Country or a smoking ceremony which signifies the cleansing of an area of bad spirits and welcome to good and positive energies and spirits. Another option making an offering of gifts symbolising coming together and moving forward together.

- **Schools** could be invited to deliver presentations, perform songs and plays that promote road safety messages.

- **Human Spirit Awards** could be presented as part of community celebrations by acknowledging local road safety efforts and contributions.

- **Local companies** whose employees are always on the road should be invited to participate.

Please see pages 11-33 for templates and other resources available for use in your campaign.
Ways to promote your campaign

Lead by example
Get involved in road safety promotion and other activities. Consider your values and vision for a safe road system. Publicly sign a Declaration for Road Safety.

Set up a booth or display
Organise a booth to exhibit campaign materials at a community event, at a car wash, at a shopping centre, your local licensing office or at your main office entrance.

Get your team on board
Distribute information to staff, committee members, councillors and volunteers to encourage participation and to spread the word about the campaign through the community.

Team up with others
Partnering with other local organisations, car dealerships and community groups can help you expand your reach and get more people involved.

Newsletters and websites
Insert an advertisement into your newsletters or mention the campaign or events in newspaper columns written by the Mayor or President. Remember to write encouraging messages so that staff are reminded to take care on the roads. Include information on your Council’s website.

Buy advertising space
Insert print advertisements in your local newspaper or other local publications and resources guides about road safety.

Use your networks
Promoting your event through your networks and community links is easy. You can potentially reach many networks of people. Use RoadWise committee representatives to promote to their networks.

Get in the media
Send a media alert or media release about your activities to your local media. Include photo and interview opportunities. For media contacts across Western Australia, visit ourcommunity.com.au/marketing

WALGA’s media release, newsletter and website
Get a mention in WALGA’s official media release to all media outlets, in the Road Safety Round-Up newsletter and on the WALGA RoadWise Program’s website. Forward your event details to roadwise@walga.asn.au by Friday 4 April.

Shire of Esperance ceremony, 2011
Who to contact at RoadWise

Road Safety Advisors are available in all regions across Western Australia, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gascoyne</td>
<td>08 9965 6771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldfields/Esperance</td>
<td>08 9071 9853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Southern</td>
<td>08 9892 1145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>0419 192 759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan North</td>
<td>08 9213 2041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan South</td>
<td>08 9213 2041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>08 9965 6771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilbara</td>
<td>0419 192 759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>08 9792 7078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheatbelt North</td>
<td>08 9622 6124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheatbelt South</td>
<td>0409 689 313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We want to hear about your campaign

Submit photos and articles to WALGA’s RoadWise Program. These images and stories will be included in the Road Safety Round-Up newsletter and will also be posted on the WALGA’s RoadWise Program website.

Images and stories should be emailed to roadwise@walga.asn.au before Friday 9 May.
RESOURCES

The following resources have been compiled to assist with the preparation of your campaign but the supply of material and information is not exhaustive.

Contact your nearest Road Safety Advisor if you require more resources.
The *Blessing of the Roads* campaign

The *Blessing of the Roads* campaign is a community-based initiative usually guided by Local Governments, road safety committees and others passionate for a safer community. The campaign is designed to allow every single member of the community, regardless of their religion or culture, to join in the effort of raising awareness about the importance of road safety, including over the Easter holiday period.

Individuals are encouraged to participate in events to help raise awareness of road safety in Western Australia and to acknowledge the local police and emergency services who work night and day to help save lives and make our roads safer.

**What the campaign aims for**

- A long term vision of zero deaths and serious injuries from road crashes in WA.
- Achieving this vision requires shared responsibility where we all have a role to play in working towards a safe system.
- The safe system approach aims for a road network that protects road users and prevents crashes that result in death and serious injury.
- The safe system aims to improve road safety through four cornerstones:

  - **Safe Roads and Roadsides:** Investing in improvements to roads and infrastructure.
  - **Safe Speeds:** Ensuring speed limits and travel speeds are appropriate for the safety of the road infrastructure.
  - **Safe Vehicles:** Encouraging the community and organisations to purchase safe vehicles and key safety features.
  - **Safe Road Use:** Address impaired driving (alcohol, drugs, fatigue and distraction), restraint use and speed choice.

**What you can do as a road user**

- Drive safely, obey the road rules and purchase safe vehicles with key safety features.
- Don’t accept that anyone should die or be seriously injured on our roads.

**Who should participate**

- Local Governments
- Police
- Government agencies
- Private organisations
- Not for profit organisations
- Individuals

**How to promote the campaign**

- Send direct email or mail to the local residents
- Promote on your website, in your newsletter, on your Facebook page and Twitter
- Place a message in your email footer
- Send an invitation to friends and relatives to join you at the events
- Tell other people at your meetings
- Place it on your meeting agenda.

**When is the campaign?**

- The 2014 campaign targets road users during the Easter long weekend. Event organisers are encouraged to start promoting from at least 2 weeks before Good Friday.
- Blessing of roads are also encouraged as a road safety activity during the rest of the year, for example when a new road is opened.

**What resources are available?**

We’re glad you asked. We have a campaign kit available free of charge on our website and it includes templates, posters and other campaign materials. Visit roadwise.asn.au to download a copy. Feel free to distribute.
Wearing a seatbelt. A seatbelt can protect me from severe injury in a collision.

Don’t drink and drive. Driving under the influence turns me into a lethal weapon. If I drink-drive, I could harm myself and others.

No mobile phone while driving. Mobile phones can distract me and lead me to hit someone or something.

Taking a break. Resting for at least 15 minutes every 2 hours will help me stay alert.

Slowing down, taking my time. I will keep to the limit and remember that the faster I drive, the harder I hit.

Swapping drivers when tired. Driving tired can cause my thoughts to wander or cause me to fall to sleep at the wheel.

Restraining children correctly. Choosing appropriate restraints can keep children and babies safe. I should check for damage or wear.

Keeping my distance. I will keep at least 2 seconds between the time when the front bumper tyre of the car in front passes a stationary object and the front of my car reaches that object.

Driving a safe vehicle. I will drive a vehicle that is roadworthy. When buying, I will look for high safety rating.

Overtaking cyclists safely. I will give at least a distance of 1 metre when passing a cyclist.

Keeping to the speed limit when overtaking. I will remember that it’s illegal to exceed the speed limit when overtaking.

Being aware of pedestrians. I will be more alert around areas where pedestrians are likely to be.
The campaign aims for a long term vision of zero deaths and serious injuries from road crashes in WA.

Achieving this vision requires shared responsibility where we all have a role to play in working towards a safe system.

The safe system approach aims for a road network that protects road users and prevents crashes that result in death and serious injury.

Road users are responsible for behaving safely, obeying the road rules and purchasing safe vehicles with key safety features.

Responsibility for road safety rests with each of us.

Find out more at

roadwise.asn.au
BLESSING OF THE ROADS

what does road safety mean to YOU?

Join your local Council and road safety advocates to:

* **raise awareness** of safe driving and road safety
* **bless our roads** for the safety of all road users
* **recognise and thank** our emergency services, local police and engineers for helping to make our roads safer

**WHEN** __________________________

**WHERE** __________________________

**TIME** ____________________________
Join us for the launch of the

Blessing of the Roads

Members of the community are invited to attend the *Blessing of the Roads* ceremony.

The ceremony aims to raise community awareness about the importance of driving safely over the Easter long weekend.

As well as providing a blessing for the safety of all road users, the ceremony will recognise our police and emergency services personnel who work to provide services intended to save lives and help make our roads safer.

Date: ______________________________

Time: ______________________________

Location: __________________________

TOWARDS ZERO

getting there together
## Event Running Sheet sample

### Blessing of the Roads - <INSERT COUNCIL>

**<INSERT DAY AND DATE OF EVENT>**

**<INSERT TIME>**

**<INSERT VENUE AND ADDRESS>**

Contact: <INSERT NAME AND NUMBER OF WHO TO CONTACT IN CASE OF EMERGENCY>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30 am</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Event organisers</td>
<td>Set up venue</td>
<td>Chairs, tables, microphones, banners etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.00 am</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Event organisers</td>
<td>Guests arrive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>2 mins</td>
<td>MC (Council CEO or Manager)</td>
<td>Welcome guests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Welcome VIPs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Give brief introduction and outline format of event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce Welcome to Country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce speaker (Mayor or President)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.32am</td>
<td>10-15mins</td>
<td>Elder / Traditional Owner or Custodian</td>
<td>Welcome to Country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mayor or President</td>
<td>Mayo or President speech (may use template provided)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.47am</td>
<td>2 mins</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Introduce local religious leader(s) to deliver blessing/prayer.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduce Elder/ Traditional Owner or Custodian to perform / ceremony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.49am</td>
<td>5-10 mins</td>
<td>Religious leaders</td>
<td>Blessing/prayer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elder / Traditional Owner or Custodian</td>
<td>(may use template provided)</td>
<td>Blessing/prayer notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Performance/ceremony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.00am</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Close event</td>
<td>Possibly distribute Easter eggs as part of the service or make sprigs of rosemary available, as that’s usually for remembrance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thank attendees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reiterate road safety message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Invite attendees to enjoy afternoon/morning tea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.05am</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>All attendees</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>Catering (e.g. hot cross buns, tea/coffee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Morning/afternoon tea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.35am</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Event organisers</td>
<td>Pack down venue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit roadwise.asn.au for downloadable resources
MEDIA ALERT

DATE

Support the Blessing of the Roads campaign

A Blessing of the Roads ceremony organised by the Shire of XXXXX to bless XXXXX Highway in XXXX and its travellers will launch the Shire’s local road safety campaign for the 20XX Easter long weekend. The road safety campaign will remind residents and those driving through the Shire of the need for extra care when driving over the holiday break.

This event will also provide the opportunity to reconfirm the Shire’s commitment to road safety and applaud the work of the local police and the emergency services personnel who are called on to attend road crashes.

When: Tuesday 26 March 2013

Where: Your event location

Time: 9am to 12pm

Speakers: John Z Smith, Shire of XXXX Chief Executive Officer
Cr Jane Smith, Shire of XXXX President

Blessings by: Joe X Smith of the XXXXXX

Further information about the Blessing of the Roads campaign is available on RoadWise Program’s website at roadwise.asn.au.

Ends

For media enquiries, images or to arrange interviews contact Cliff Simpson on xxxx xxx xxx or csimpson@walga.asn.au
Slow Down and Enjoy the Ride through New Norcia

On Tuesday 26 March, the Shire of Victoria Plains and the Community of New Norcia held a Blessing of the Roads ceremony outside the Old Police Station on Great Northern Highway, New Norcia.

A gathering of 28 people saw Shire CEO Harry Hawkins in his introduction speak of the need for extra care when driving over the Easter break. Shire President Geoff Erickson then reconfirmed the Shire’s commitment to road safety and support for WALGA’s Blessing of the Roads program.

He encouraged motorists to take regular breaks to avoid fatigue, belt up, and reduce speed. “While most of us do the right thing when we drive, we are all human and can also make mistakes. We all have a shared responsibility in road safety,” Cr Erickson said.

Cr Erickson also applauded the work of the Police and volunteer emergency personnel who are called on to attend crashes. “These people will tell us that they are just doing their job- but I think that is an understatement- they give their all to what they do and this needs to be recognized and supported by our community.”

Abbot John of the Benedictine Community then blessed the road and its travellers, and led those present in the Lord’s Prayer.

The group later enjoyed a morning tea at the Hotel, provided by the Shire.

Such events are a way for communities to express their concern at the damage done to lives, property and the environment through road crashes, including the ever increasing pressure on our highways. The State Road Safety Policy, Towards Zero, talks about the need for investment in our roads and roadsides to improve safety, and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured when crashes do happen.

In the last year there have been many incidents of concern to the community of New Norcia, such as oversized loads destroying olive trees on the roadside, branches ripped off and left in the middle of the road, and extensive damage to water pipes and the fire hydrant. New Norcia is a popular destination for tourists, with school groups and other visitors walking around the historic buildings and crossing the highway. With trucks and oversized loads thundering past these lives are put at considerable risk.

In the four years 2008-2012 there were 44 reported crashes on Great Northern Highway in Victoria Plains. That is less than 50 kilometres of road. There were two recorded fatalities, one casualty requiring hospitalization, and 4 casualties requiring medical treatment.

Sixteen of these crashes involved one or more trucks, truck and trailers, road trains or prime movers.

Media contact info
Cliff Simpson
Regional Road Safety Officer
Walga’s RoadWise Program
0409 686 138
Local roads blessed

ON the Tuesday before Easter, March 26, the Shire of Victoria Plains and the community of New Norcia held a Blessing of the Roads ceremony outside the Old Police Station on Great Northern Highway, New Norcia.

A gathering of 28 people saw Shire chief executive Harry Hawkins in his introduction speak of the need for extra care when driving over the Easter break.

Shire president Geoff Erickson then reaffirmed the Shire’s commitment to road safety and support for the Western Australian local government Blessing of the Roads program.

Cr Erickson encouraged motorists to take regular breaks to avoid fatigue, belt up, and reduce speed.

“While most of us do the right thing when we drive, we are all human and can also make mistakes,” he said.

“We all have a shared responsibility in road safety.”

Cr Erickson also applauded the work of the police and volunteer emergency personnel who are called on to attend crashes.

“These people will tell us that they are just doing their job but I think that is an understatement,” he said.

“They give their all to what they do and this needs to be recognised and supported by our community.”

Abbot John from the Benedictine community then blessed the road, its travellers and led those present in the Lord’s Prayer.

The group later enjoyed a morning tea at the hotel, provided by the Shire.

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The State Road safety policy, Towards Zero, talks about the need for investment in our roads and roadways to improve safety and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured when crashes do happen.

In the past year there have been many incidents of concern to the community of New Norcia, such as oversized loads destroying olive trees on the roadside, branches being ripped off and left in the middle of the road, and extensive damage to water pipes and the fire hydrant.

New Norcia is a popular destination for tourists, with school groups and other visitors walking around the historic buildings and crossing the highway.

With trucks and oversized loads thundering past these lives are put at considerable risk.

In the four years 2008-2012 there were 44 reported crashes on Great Northern Highway in Victoria Plains.

That is less than 50 kilometres of road.

There were two recorded fatalities, one casualty requiring hospitalisation, and four casualties requiring medical treatment.

Sixteen of these crashes involved one or more trucks, truck and trailers, road trains or prime movers.

Accident: Damage caused to a tree as a truck passed through the township of New Norcia.
Blessing a reminder to be safe on the roads this Easter

With many Shire of Plantagenet residents heading off on holidays for Easter, local roads are being blessed to encourage everyone to take responsibility for ensuring the roads are safe this Easter long weekend.

In the lead up to the Easter celebrations and travels, a Blessing of the Roads ceremony will involve the Shire of Plantagenet, local police, emergency services, local schools and a blessing by local religious leaders. Mr Kevin Proudoe and Mr Andrew McGovern (Proudies Foundation) will deliver the keynote address. The official blessing ceremony will take place at The Shire Administration Offices on Wednesday 20 March 2013 at 11.30 am. Local community members are encouraged to attend.

The ceremony will remind the community that road safety is a joint effort, and as road users, whether we are driving, riding or walking, we are responsible for our own choices and actions.

Cr Ken Clements, Shire President said that Easter was a special time of the year, a time to spend with family and friends and remember the important things in life – including safety coming home from travelling on our roads.

“The Blessing of the Roads campaign gives us the opportunity to promote the importance of road safety in the lead up to the Easter long weekend and school holidays.”

“Road safety is a shared responsibility, and given that everyone has a role to play, the Blessing of the Roads campaign is just one of the many ways in which the Shire of Plantagenet is making a contribution to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.”

“No one wants to remember this Easter for tragic reasons so I urge you all to take road safety seriously, no matter how far you travel this weekend.” he said.

The Blessing of the Roads campaign pleads with all road users to make this Easter the safest on our roads. Remember to slow down, don’t drink and drive, wear seatbelts, ensure children are properly restrained, take breaks to avoid fatigue and turn off your mobile phones to avoid being distracted whilst driving.

Remember, plan ahead—leave enough time to get to your destination, change drivers or stop and revive at one of the many coffee stops or Driver Reviver locations run by volunteers throughout WA.

To find out more about the Blessing of the Roads initiative, contact Vanessa at the Shire of Plantagenet on 9892 1140 or visit www.roadwise.asn.au

Rob Stewart

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
BLESSING A REMINDER TO BE SAFE ON THE ROADS THIS EASTER

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Rob Stewart
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Wednesday 13 March 2013 - 16
For Mayor/President

<Salutations – VIPs and dignitaries.>

Welcome to the <COUNCIL> Blessing of the Roads ceremony.

As many of you know, the <INSERT SHIRE/TOWN/CITY> is committed to addressing road safety issues in our community.

<Detail a few of the key road safety initiatives implemented in the area in the last 6-12 months with a focus on safe roads and roadsides, safe vehicles, safe speeds and safe road use (behaviours – drink driving, fatigue, speeding, restraints)>

In addition, <once again/this year> the <INSERT COUNCIL> is supporting the WALGA’s RoadWise Program’s Blessing of the Roads campaign.

Easter is a time to rejoice and enjoy the warmth and closeness of family and friends. It is a time of celebration, for giving and sharing, laughing and spending time with those we love.

Easter is also one of the peak holiday periods where we travel both near and far, so it is important to take time to promote the issue of road safety and the impact it has on our family, friends and community.

Soon WA Police and the Road Safety Council will appeal for our assistance in trying to keep our roads safe this Easter weekend. By safe I am not just talking about deaths on the roads but also large numbers of people seriously injured in crashes.

Crashes which result in serious injury have a major impact on local families and these crashes are far more frequent than road deaths.

There are many in our community who bear the permanent scars of a serious crash. These are people who now rely on others to provide that constant support to enable them to get through the day.

By participating in the Blessing of the Roads campaign, we are trying to contribute to reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured during the Easter break.

Most of us hear road safety messages over and over again and while most of us also do the right thing when we drive, we are only human and we can also make mistakes.

What we don’t want is for drivers to engage in risky behaviour such as drinking and then driving, driving above the posted speed limit or too fast for road conditions, driving without a seatbelt, driving tired or using mobile phones while driving.

Governments can legislate, we can build safer roads, police can enforce and road safety groups can educate and we can all buy safer cars but unless we, the community, make road safety our personal goal, we will continue to have families suffer the grief associated with the loss of life in a road crash.

All the work that RoadWise Committees and participating Local Governments do at the local and regional level aims to support the enforcement campaigns of our police and the other Road Safety Council agencies.

Continued on next page
Over the Easter weekend, WA Police will be called upon to attend crashes and advise loved ones of the all too often tragic results. Ambulance and fire brigade personnel, both volunteer and full time members, will be called upon to extract bodies from wrecked vehicles.

These people will tell us that they are just doing their job – but I think that is an understatement – they give their all to what they do and this needs to be recognised and more importantly supported by our community.

Today I acknowledge the work of these unsung heroes and on behalf of Local Governments and their communities, thank them for their dedication and ongoing efforts in striving to keep our family and friends safe.

So I plead with all members of our community:

- If you are planning to drink, plan not to drive – stay over, grab a taxi, elect a skipper or take public transport <edit as appropriate in regional areas>.
- Take regular breaks every two hours if you are travelling long distances – swap drivers, go for a walk or take a 20 minute nap.
- Reduce your speed – drive within the speed limit and drive to the road conditions.
- Belt up no matter how short the journey and ensure children are buckled up in an appropriate child car restraint.
- Turn off your mobile phone while driving to avoid being distracted.

I appeal to you to take these life saving precautions and to spread the message to your friends, family and colleagues.

Encourage your families to be safe road users – your participation just may save someone’s life.

Road safety is up to all of us, so join in the effort to make this Easter the safest on our roads.

Ends

(Hand over to MC to introduce religious leader/s for formal Blessing of the Roads/prayer).
Blessing

O Lord our God; we know that all people are precious in your sight and that you would not want any of your dear ones to be hurt in any way. And so we seek your blessing upon our roads this Easter, asking for your protection and your guidance as many of our citizens and their families make their journey afar to enjoy this holiday period.

Instil in us all Father, the virtue of patience, understanding and common sense, praying that we may all drive with due care and regard for our fellow-road-users, and we ask you to bring us all home again in your peace without death, injury or trauma.

We dedicate our police men and women who will be seeking to ensure a death-free Easter period. Travel with them and keep them ever vigilant and alert in their care of us all, that they may provide safety and security for all who travel at this time.

Keep us always mindful of our sense of responsibility and fair play for others who care to share the roads of this State, particularly on country roads and unfamiliar road surfaces.

Accept this, our dedication and our strong determination to make this Easter period death-free for all West Australians and those who may visit our state at this time.

And so Father, we bless these roads and all the roads of our state in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN

Prayer

Father, we pray for safety on our roads, for those who design and build our highways and streets, and for all traffic-control systems. We pray for faithful design and maintenance so that all road-users may travel with confidence.

Lord hear us. LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We pray for all who make and administer our traffic laws, so that the highest of standards are set and maintained, ensuring safety for all drivers who travel the network of our road system.

Lord hear us. LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We pray for all those who use our roads for work or for leisure, in all forms of road transport and for all pedestrians who traverse our carriage ways, so that all of us may be alert to our responsibilities one to another.

Lord hear us. LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We pray for all who exercise responsibility in traffic-control and in particular, our Police Officers, that they may at all times carry out their required duties with care and consideration; with compassion and due regard for the welfare of all road-users and that they in turn receive courteous cooperation from members of the public.

Lord hear us. LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.

We pray for those who suffer the traumas of roads crashes, for the maimed and injured in body or in mind and we also pray for the families and loved ones who suffer distress as a result of injury.

Lord hear us. LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER.
Indigenous community involvement

_Blessing of the Roads_ is a campaign that aspires to attract all demographics of our population to participate in action for road safety. This includes Indigenous Australian people (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander). In WA, across five regions there are ninety-nine different language groups. WALGA’s RoadWise Program wants to ensure that Indigenous Australian people are included and represented in this initiative.

Statistics show that Indigenous Australian road users are over represented in road trauma in Australia. Indigenous Western Australians are around three times more likely to die in road crashes than non-Indigenous Western Australians (ORS, 2012). Making sure the message of road safety is everybody's business is vital.

**How to engage the Indigenous community**

- **Host an open community forum** — This gives the local community a chance to discuss how they wish to best capture their local and wider Indigenous Australian community. This opportunity allows discussion, suggestions and involvement by the local community giving them a sense of ownership and ‘place’ in the Local Government initiatives.

- **Performance** — This may include a Welcome to Country by an Elder/Traditional Owner or Custodian, a dance performance, and/or smoking ceremony which signifies the cleansing of an area (in this case a road) of a bad spirit and welcome the good and positive energies and spirits. However, all communities are different and may offer and suggest something they feel is relevant.

- **Presentation of gifts** — Message sticks or ‘Boorrn Warkiny’ are used on certain occasions throughout the state and nation as part of a welcoming ceremony. Traditionally used to welcome visitors to country as a form of passport, possessing a message stick demonstrated verification that local people granted access to an area. This practice is now common in contemporary times and has an underlying message of coming together and moving forward together. The use of a message stick is at the discretion of the Custodian/Elder. Gifts can also include pins, sports equipment or other merchandise with Indigenous Australian inspired designs.

**Showing respect for Indigenous road trauma victims**

Showing respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are dealing with death (commonly referred to as the ‘passing’ of a friend or relative) can and will vary. Sorry Time and Sorry Business are two generic factors that exist in Indigenous Australian communities. Sorry Time is the period of mourning following the passing of a family/community member. Due to the diverse nature of Indigenous Australian people, the approach whilst Sorry Business is being carried out during Sorry Time may vary however some similar characteristics present including:

- Refrain from speaking the name of the deceased if requested.
- The period of mourning can vary from days to years.
- Consciousness around entering communities or certain interactions with people during the period of Sorry Time and Sorry Business (this can include personal touch, speaking with and making eye contact).

*Continued on next page*
Indigenous community involvement continued

Where to start and who to contact

There are many organisations that can help you make contact with your local Indigenous community. Forming relationships with local Indigenous groups or associations who work with the community such as the Aboriginal Legal Service, health services or community services are great places to advertise, hold information sessions or go for some insight and advice. Depending on the location of the community you are trying to establish rapport with, different styles of introduction and interaction may be required. Contacts provided below may assist. However, don’t be afraid to simply call or meet with people, as establishing contact and relationships with Indigenous communities, is more often than not, easier than one may think.

If you are or know of an Indigenous Australian community or organisation that would like to participate in Blessing of the Roads please contact your Local Government or your Road Safety Advisor from WALGA’s RoadWise Program.

Useful links and contacts

Gascoyne Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Centre

HREOC 2012. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Engagement Toolkit PDF can be downloaded from humanrights.gov.au


Office of Road Safety
ors.wa.gov.au/Road-Safety-Topics/Road-Issues/Indigenous-Road-Safety

Queensland Health (date unknown). Sad News, Sorry Business: Guidelines for - Queensland

Kart Koort Wiern
Ingrid Cumming
kartkoortwiern.com
0431 670 800

Southern Aboriginal Corporation
45/47 Serpentine Road
ALBANY WA 6330
9842 7777

Gumala Aboriginal Corporation
gumala.com.au

Ngarda-Ngarli-Yarndu Foundation
nnyf.com.au/about.php

Wangkamaya
wangkamaya.org.au

YMCA Cultural Protocol Guide
yamatji.org.au

For more information please visit WALGA’s RoadWise program website roadwise.asn.au
The Declaration provides an opportunity for Local Government to pledge their commitment to the Western Australian vision of road safety and is consistent with the intent of *Towards Zero*, road safety strategy for WA 2008-2020.

The Declaration is voluntary and can be amended to suit the level of commitment of individual Local Governments.

Declarations signed by Local Governments will be developed into framed documents for each signatory Local Government to display as part of its commitment.

In order to assist all of Western Australia in achieving this ambitious vision for road safety, and create a strong advocacy position for Local Governments, the Association has developed on behalf of the sector the 'Declaration for Road Safety'.

There is a strong evidence base from international leaders in road safety, which shows political will and support from all levels of government provide greater reductions in road trauma.

The Declaration will stand as a voluntary opportunity for Local Governments to demonstrate their political commitment to work towards zero road fatalities and serious injuries, and to participate in a sector wide leadership approach.

It does not commit Local Governments to actions beyond current resources, standards or means, but provides a statement of intent and acknowledges the moral and ethical role Local Governments have in their communities.

Essentially, the Declaration provides an opportunity for local leaders to pledge to future generations that every road death is one too many.

The Association encourages all Local Governments to become signatories to the Declaration for road safety, which supports the Association’s policy and advocacy work on this issue. It’s designed to strengthen Local Governments advocacy position by articulating a shared political commitment across the sector, as well as providing an opportunity for individual Local Governments to declare their commitment to a future where road deaths and serious injuries are no longer accepted as a fact of life.

For more information please contact your Road Safety Advisor.
The Human Spirit Award, administered by the WA Local Government Association’s RoadWise Program, is awarded to members of the community who demonstrate a commitment to road safety by working together to save lives and reduce road trauma in Western Australia.

The Human Spirit Award Program has recognised more than 170 groups and individuals in the past ten years.

There are dedicated road safety champions working in local communities across the state and the Human Spirit Award provides an opportunity to recognise their valuable contribution.

If you have dedicated road safety champions who you would like to recognise at a Blessing of the Roads event please contact your local Road Safety Advisor for a nomination form.

Need help getting started?

If you are interested in getting involved in the Blessing of the Roads campaign and would like assistance, please contact the Road Safety Advisor in your region.

See roadwise.asn.au for their details.
WALGA’s RoadWise Program Resources

WALGA’s RoadWise Program has a collection of resources available for loan. The following pages show some of our most sought after resources. Please note that resources may vary across regions and you would need to make a booking well in advance.

For information and bookings, contact your nearest Road Safety Advisor (see list on the right).

Banners available for loan:

- Pull-Up Banners (self standing) 88cm x 206cm
- Vinyl Banners (to tie to a structure) 300cm x 100cm
- Tear Drop Banners approx. 2m high

Region | Phone
---|---
Gascoyne | 08 9965 6771
Goldfields/Esperance | 08 9071 9853
Great Southern | 08 9892 1145
Kimberley | 0419 192 759
Metropolitan North | 08 9213 2041
Metropolitan South | 08 9213 2041
Mid West | 08 9965 6771
Pilbara | 0419 192 759
South West | 08 9792 7078
Wheatbelt North | 08 9622 6124
Wheatbelt South | 0409 689 313

Visit roadwise.asn.au for downloadable resources
Towards Zero display trailers

Road safety displays will be made easy with the display trailers, reducing much of the organisation and logistics required when planning a display. All resources and merchandise are contained within the trailer, which is easily transported and quick to assemble.

To book a trailer contact your Road Safety Advisor