



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

Federal Member for New England

The Hon Scott Buchholz MP

Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport

Federal Member for Wright

MEDIA RELEASE

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MAKING RURAL AND REGIONAL ROAD SAFETY EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Australians are being urged to put safety first on regional and rural roads as Rural Road Safety Month gets underway.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Barnaby Joyce said the overrepresentation of regional and rural road users in the national fatality and serious injury statistics was very concerning.

"Crashes on rural and remote roads account for almost two-thirds of the people who die on our roads each year," the Deputy Prime Minister said.

"People driving on rural and regional roads are also more likely to be seriously injured on a per capita basis than on roads in our major cities.

"A major factor in this is the higher speeds on rural and regional roads. And it's not just people from out of town or the city who are dying, it's locals too.

"In 2019, there were 778 deaths on our regional and remote roads. That's 778 people going about their everyday business – heading to the nearest town for supplies, doing the school drop off, driving to the next farm gate, or heading home.

"778 is too many. Even one life lost is one too many, and it is the job of every motorist and rider across Australia to bring these numbers down.

"Driving to the conditions, taking rest breaks, and choosing the safest vehicle you can afford using the ANCAP safety ratings or the Used Car Safety Rating program are steps all Australians can take now to keep themselves and their loved ones safe on regional roads."

Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport Scott Buchholz said that road safety was a key priority for the Australian Government.

"The Australian Government has committed \$3 billion for the nationwide Road Safety Program," Mr Buchholz said.

"This investment in road upgrades will provide a boost to the economy while ensuring Australians get home sooner and safer.

“The funding supports the fast roll-out of life-saving safety works on regional and rural roads, and is another example of the Australian Government working to reduce the number of Australians missing around the dinner table due to tragedies on our roads.

“Making our roads safer is a critical component of our work to reduce deaths and serious injuries on our roads and move towards achieving ‘vision zero’ – that is zero deaths or serious injuries on our roads by 2050.

“We are also investing significantly in other life-saving road safety initiatives, including the Black Spot Program, Targeted Road Safety Works initiative and the Road Safety Innovation Fund.

“This additional funding complements that work, resulting in an even greater roll-out of improved infrastructure and roads right across the nation.

“The Government thanks the Australian Road Safety Foundation for hosting the annual Rural Road Safety Month and making rural road safety everyone’s business.”

Australian Road Safety Foundation founder and chief executive officer Russell White said tackling the high disparity between road fatalities on rural and regional roads compared to city streets was about all Australians being the change they want to see on the road.

“Our Rural Road Safety Month research, released today, shows that it's not just locals using rural roads, and that with a quarter of drivers more likely to break a road rule in these areas, it was on every road user to make better choices and in turn, reduce road trauma,” Mr White said.

For more information on Australian Government road safety initiatives visit www.officeofroadsafety.gov.au.

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