

Media Release

15 November 2024

AUSTRALIANS URGED TO REFLECT AND REMEMBER AS ROAD TOLL SOARS

World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims serves as a reminder to save lives

In the lead-up to World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims this Sunday (17 November), Australians are being implored to remember, support and act on road trauma.

World Day of Remembrance is a global initiative designed to remember those killed and seriously injured on the road while also acknowledging the crucial work of the emergency services, advocating for better road outcomes and support for victims as well as promoting action to stop further tragedy.

So far this year, 956 people have been killed on Australian roads, a concerning 3.2 per cent higher than the same time last year (926).¹ Tragically, the number of children aged 0-7 years who have been killed by road trauma has increased by 60 per cent, with 16 fatalities in 2024 so far compared to 10 in 2023. Almost two thirds of these fatalities occurred in regional areas. 12 of the lives lost were passengers and 4 were pedestrians.

Approximately 1.35 million road traffic deaths occur each year and a life is lost on the world's roads every 24 seconds.

Australian Road Safety Foundation (ARSF) Founder and Chair Russell White hopes the day serves as a solemn reminder that the difference between life and death is often down to a simple choice.

"Marking initiatives such as World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims is essential to honour those lost on our roads and acknowledge the pain endured by their loved ones and the wider community," Mr White said.

"We need to recognise that road trauma is also experienced by the first responders, the emergency crews, the police, the fire brigade and the medical professionals who are called upon in the event of road incidents daily."

"It's also about being vigilant about road safety every single time you are behind a wheel, in a passenger seat, on a bike or even on foot. While people don't go out intending to crash, even switching to autopilot compromises all important reaction times and can be what takes a precious life away."

"Make a promise to choose road safety and take personal responsibility for your actions – for yourself, your family, and everyone sharing the roads," he said.

ARSF is asking all Australians to light a candle this Sunday as a means of reflecting upon road safety and remembering the thousands upon thousands of Australians whose lives were tragically taken too soon, who have suffered life-changing injuries and all those who must face the aftermath of road trauma, including the first responders.

¹ Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, Road Deaths Australia, October 2024

Current road toll figures:

January – October

State / Territory	2023	2024	Variance (%)
National	926	956	+3.2
Australian Capital Territory	3	6	+100
New South Wales	251	254	+1
Northern Territory	19	48	+153
Queensland	214	214	0
South Australia	86	61	-29
Tasmania	24	25	+4
Victoria	216	213	-1
Western Australia	113	135	+19

Source: BITRE, Australian Road Deaths Database, as at 14 October 2024

If you or someone you know has been affected by the themes discussed in this, we encourage you to seek support by contacting:

- Griefline - 1300 845 745
- Road Trauma Support Group NSW - 1800 808 384

For further information about the Australian Road Safety Foundation, visit www.arsf.com.au

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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About Australian Road Safety Foundation:

The Australian Road Safety Foundation (ARSF) is a not for profit organisation dedicated to improving road safety outcomes and reducing the rates of death and the mental and physical injuries that result from road crashes. It achieves this through innovative road safety awareness programs, education, advocacy, research and community engagement.