

**Australian Medical Association Limited**  
**ABN 37 008 426 793**

42 Macquarie Street, Barton ACT 2600: PO Box 6090, Kingston ACT 2604  
 Telephone: (02) 6270 5400 Facsimile (02) 6270 5499  
 Website : <http://www.ama.com.au/>



**DRIVE TO ARRIVE THIS CHRISTMAS**

The AMA is calling on drivers to take extreme care on Australia’s roads this Christmas and holiday season.

AMA President, Dr Michael Gannon, said that doctors see the tragic consequences of road accidents and road trauma every day of the year, but the Christmas holiday period, which features family and community celebrations and long road trips, usually produces high numbers of casualties and deaths from road accidents.

“Doctors all around the country witness in the most tragic way when road safety is ignored or when terrible avoidable accidents occur,” Dr Gannon said.

“These accidents take lives and cause horrific injuries – and shatter families and communities.

“Speeding, fatigue, driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, and risk-taking behaviour are the main causes of road fatalities and injuries.

“The impact of road accidents and road trauma is also experienced by our first responders - the dedicated ambulance officers, police, fire brigade, and State Emergency Services.

“Along with the doctors and nurses, these professionals do not want to witness the horror of avoidable road accidents this year or any year.”

Last December, 97 people tragically died on Australian roads, and 99 more died in January this year.

A total of 1,209 people lost their lives in road accidents during 2014. In 2015, the road toll rose for the first time in three years.

The AMA offers the following advice to drivers:

- If you are over 65, or have a relative over 65, make sure all older drivers you know are cognitively able to drive, and offer assistance if there are concerns.
- Speeding on our roads contributes to approximately one-third of all fatal road traffic crashes. The best way to travel is by strictly adhering to all traffic rules, especially speed signs.
- Always ensure your vehicle is roadworthy. Take time to check your tyre pressure and the condition of your wheels.
- Don’t be distracted. Driving while texting or using a mobile phone is considered more dangerous than drunk driving.
- There will be increased random breath testing and roadside drug tests during the summer holidays. If you drive under the influence, you are a danger to yourself and others.
- Do not speed. Stop to rest when you’re tired. Drive to arrive.

The AMA is committed to improving the way Australians drive, the cars they drive, and the roads they drive on.

---

21 December 2016

CONTACT:      John Flannery                      02 6270 5477 / 0419 494 761  
                      Maria Hawthorne                      02 6270 5478 / 0427 209 753