

# Media Release

**The Hon Lisa Neville MP**  
Minister for Police  
Minister for Water



Wednesday, 9 March 2022

## MAKE ROAD SAFETY TOP OF MIND THIS LONG WEEKEND

The Victorian Government is urging Victorians to take care on the roads and plan ahead for the long weekend, after a heartbreaking start to the year.

In just over two months, 54 people have lost their lives on Victorian roads – compared to 44 in 2021 – leaving many families, workplaces and communities mourning the unnecessary loss of a loved one.

After a record low in 2021, regional deaths have increased by 70 per cent, with 34 lives lost compared to 20 at this time last year.

Road safety authorities are particularly concerned with the rise in pedestrian, motorcyclist and young driver deaths. Pedestrian and motorcycle deaths are well above the same time last year, and nine young people aged 18-20 have lost their lives – over four times the five-year average.

With March historically a high fatality period on our roads, the Government is calling on all road users to play their part in keeping roads safe – plan ahead, slow down, don't drink or drug drive, put your phone away and make safe choices.

Long weekends are a time when Victorians like to get out and explore different parts of the state and, as a result, there tends to be an increase in traffic. In 2021, seven people died on Victorian roads over the Labour Day long-weekend.

Victoria Police will be out in force over the long weekend, with Operation Arid targeting behaviours such as speed, distraction and drink and drug driving and motorcyclist behaviour.

Last year's Operation Arid detected 2906 speeding offences, 215 drink drivers, 195 drug drivers, and 161 disqualified or suspended drivers.

Disappointingly, the operation also saw 263 people caught using mobile phones, which significantly increases the risk of a crash.

The TAC will be out helping drivers stay rested over the long weekend, with 'Pause Stops' set up along major regional routes. People can enjoy complimentary barista-made coffee, comfortable deck chairs for a 15-minute powernap and games to entertain children while parents relax.

### Quote attributable to Minister for Police Lisa Neville

*"We're urging all road users to protect themselves and others on the roads this long weekend. Victoria Police won't tolerate those who do the wrong thing behind the wheel – if you make bad decisions, you will be caught."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

*"Everyone deserves to make it to their destination safely – we can all play our part in turning this tragic start to the year around by slowing down, wearing a seatbelt, avoiding distractions, driving well rested and not driving drunk or on drugs."*