

Media Release

Ms Vicki Ward MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Transport



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TOURISM AND ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP TO COMBAT ROAD TOLL

Victoria's leading tourism and road safety bodies have joined forces to tackle fatigue-related road trauma and help people stay safe when traveling across the state.

A new partnership between the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and the Victoria Tourism Industry Council (VTIC) will see the TAC's popular *Pause Stop* program piloted as a permanent resource across Victoria's comprehensive Visitor Information Centre network.

New TAC *Pause Stops* will initially pop up at 11 accredited Visitor Information Centre locations, where visitors will be greeted with a range of resources to help them plan a safe onward journey, as well as activities for the kids.

Victorians are being urged to plan ahead and drive safely these school holidays and beyond, as the number of lives lost on the state's roads reaches 125, an increase from 104 at the same time last year.

Fatigue is a major cause of death and injuries on Victorian roads, with TAC research showing that driving while tired is a factor in around 20 per cent of road crashes. The partnership will provide a unique platform for the TAC and VTIC to engage with the millions of people who stop at Visitor Information Centres each year on key road safety issues, such as drowsy driving.

The pilot Visitor Information Centres will include Benalla, Bendigo, Dunkeld and Grampians, Echuca/Moama, Frankston, Geelong and Bellarine, Hamilton and Grampians, Heathcote, Melbourne Visitor Hub at Town Hall, Phillip Island, and Prom Country in Foster.

The pilot campaign will run until December and there will be a feasibility assessment into extending the partnership and including the entire network of 62 Visitor Information Centres across the state.

Travellers will be directed to the *Pause Stop* locations using the highly recognisable **yellow i** signage depicting Accredited Visitor Centres along key regional travel routes or online at www.tac.vic.gov.au/pausestop.

Quotes attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Transport Vicki Ward

"Driving when fatigued too often leads to tragedy and we know the risks are higher when traveling long distances during popular tourist periods like the winter school holidays."

"Victoria is fortunate to have such a great network of Visitor Information Centres and they are the ideal location to engage with traveling motorists on how to ensure they continue their journey safely."

Quote attributable to Transport Accident Commission Acting CEO Damian Poel

*"Fatigue remains a major factor in road trauma and partnering with VTIC to expand our popular *Pause Stop* campaign gives us the platform to help make millions of Victorian road trips safer every year."*

Quote attributable to Victorian Tourism Industry Council CEO Felicia Mariani

"With drive holidays on the rise across our state, it seemed a natural fit for TAC to align with the tourism industry. Activating our incredibly connected Visitor Information Centre network is a likely engagement point with travellers to deliver safe driving messages while assisting our visitors in planning to get the most out of their stay in the regions."

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