



Media Release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service

Minister returns as old scholar as current students become empowered road users

Wednesday, 1 June 2022

Old scholar, the Minister for Emergency Services is returning to school to see new drivers becoming empowered to look after their mates on the State's roads.

Minister Joe Szakacs MP will speak with students at **Saint Michael's College at Henley Beach** before Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters deliver the powerful Road Awareness Program (RAP). **Media are welcome.**

Minister Szakacs said it's heartening to see students across South Australia taking ownership of road safety and the safety of their mates and families.

"Many young people feel invincible, and that sense of confidence is a wonderful thing. But, on our roads, we need young people to understand the potentially devastating consequences of just one risk or mistake."

"That's where hard-hitting, powerful programs like the MFS' RAP have an important role across our State in helping young people face the reality that the road is unforgiving and is not the place to take risks. That applies not just to drivers, but pedestrians and cyclists too," Minister Szakacs said.

MFS RAP Coordinator and Senior Firefighter Josh Byerlee said RAP is confronting, emotional but uplifting.

"We give students no room to hide from the realities of road trauma. But we design the program to ensure students leave the program feeling uplifted and empowered to be a responsible road user."

"We consistently receive feedback from young people that RAP has completely changed their relationship with their mates in the car. In many cases, students provide feedback that it's prevented them from taking risks, because they can see where it might lead," MFS RAP Coordinator Byerlee said.

Thanks to the combined efforts of MFS RAP and other road safety programs targeting young people, South Australia has seen road fatalities in the 16-19 year old age group almost halve in the past decade.

YEAR	SA Fatalities (16-19 yo)
2009	20
2021	9
2022	5 (year to date)

Crash survivor Daniel Woolley will help deliver the MFS RAP presentation at Saint Michael's College, speaking of his two lives; pre and post-crash.

Daniel now has an acquired brain injury after his car was t-boned at an intersection after failing to give way. He will tell students about how he once thought risk-taking on the road was tough and cool.

RAP is presented to 85 % of high school students across South Australia, and is proudly supported by the South Australian Government, Think! Road Safety, SA Power Networks, RAA and the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation.

MEDIA NOTE: Media are welcome to attend the MFS Road Awareness Program (RAP) at Saint Michael's College on Wednesday, 1 June 2022 at 8.45 am (90 minute program).

Minister Szakacs, MFS RAP Coordinator Josh Byerlee and crash survivor Daniel Woolley will be available for interview.

For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

Members of the public should call the MFS Community Engagement Department on (08) 8204 3611 during business hours for further information. Country callers 1300 737 637.