

APPENDIX THIRTEEN

MACKAY WHITSUNDAY SAFE COMMUNITIES PROGRESS UPDATE 5 – DECEMBER 2003

MACKAY / WHITSUNDAY SAFE COMMUNITIES PROJECT (MWSCP) Progress Update No. 5, December 2003



This is the fifth of regular progress updates that will be released on a six monthly basis.

BACKGROUND:

As a response to above average injury rates identified in the Mackay/Whitsunday region, the MWSCP was established to address this issue and help the region become Queensland's first internationally recognised safe community.

This long-term Project is a World Health Organisation (WHO) supported approach to community injury control that aims to reduce injury in the Mackay/Whitsunday region by 30% over a 4-5 year period. It will be guided by the criteria and processes of the WHO's safe communities framework which has been proven to be an effective means of reducing injury throughout the world. Including Australia.

ROAD SAFETY REFERENCE GROUP

Young Drivers Expo

RAAG initiated the Young Drivers Expo due to the over-representation of young drivers (17–24yrs), in accidents on Mackay District roads. The purpose of the event was to address issues as they relate to young drivers and the vehicles they drive. The organisers formed partnerships with local driving schools, community youth groups, Queensland Transport, Main Roads, Queensland Health, Queensland Police, Emergency Services, local government and RACQ.

The event was held on Saturday 15 November 2003 at



Canelands Park, Mackay and it formed part of the Mackay City Council Community Safety Week, which was conducted from 8th November to 15th November 2003.

A wide range of activities and displays were held on the day with a large crowd of younger drivers attending and gaining valuable information on legislation, drivers licensing and modification of motor vehicles. Surveys were conducted throughout the day so that organisers could better understand the issues concerning the young drivers. Constable Matt Gerry (Mackay Traffic Branch) explained the workings of the Speed Camera.

Activities on the day included; a Booze Bus where people talked to the police, receive information on standard drinks, and consequences of drink driving information; a Speed Camera van and hand held radar with information on speeding and fines; Emergency Services, Queensland Fire and Rescue conducted a simulated rescue from a wrecked vehicle; Safety checks and noise testing on vehicles by RACQ and Queensland Transport Compliance Team; a Classic Car Club display; a Show and Shine for age group 17–24 (legal vehicles only); a Road Accident Action Group display with fatigue information; Displays from Driving Schools; and Displays by local vehicle performance businesses.

As a result of the expo there has been great interest shown in the concept and greater understanding of the issues that relate to young drivers not only by the members of the RAAG but also the young drivers

themselves. The event has opened the way for better communication between local car clubs, Police and Queensland Transport Compliance Officers.



A further expo is planned for 2004, which will have greater input from young drivers and other members of car clubs within Mackay. This involvement will ensure that the

target audience will receive information that they require to assist them through their driving life.

It is hoped that initiatives such as this will reduce traffic accidents generally but in particular ones involving young drivers of our community

SAFE COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE IN HELSINKI

Project Management Team Member Jan Kilbourne was fortunate enough to be able to attend the 5th Nordic Safe Communities Conference held in Helsinki, Finland, from 26 - 29 August 2003. Jan presented a paper on the Mackay/Whitsunday Safe Communities model which discussed how effective partnerships can promote project sustainability through transfer of knowledge, skills and



practice within partner organisations, thereby enhancing the capacity for injury prevention in these organisations. The paper was well received and Jan's attendance was the perfect opportunity not only to promote the

Mackay/Whitsunday safe Communities Project, but also the 7th Australian Injury Prevention Conference and 2nd Pacific Rim Safe Communities Conference which will be held in Mackay in September, 2004.

EMERGENCY SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Road Awareness & Accident Prevention Program

The Old Fire & Rescue Service delivers the Road Awareness & Accident Prevention Program to all grade 12



students in Old schools. This program involves firefighters visiting the school and performing a vehicle cut up using the jaws of life and a class session talking to students about road

accident prevention in Mackay & the Whitsunday's. Firefighters have visited 10 schools and performed RAAP to approx. 1200 students. In the five years that RAAP has been conducted, statistics show that accidents involving drivers in the 17 to 24 year old age group have been reduced.

ALCOHOL AND INJURY WORKING GROUP

1. "Choices 2003"

Congratulations to the talented and dedicated cast of **Choices 2003!** Eleven students of Mackay's Central Queensland University Conservatorium of Music wrote,



directed and produced the show based on information supplied by Queensland Health (Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Service), Queensland Police Service, Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Transport, and the Division of Liquor Licensing. This year marks the fifth year that drama has been used to convey safety messages to the Year Twelve students of the Mackay/ Whitsunday and Moranbah areas. Ten schools hosted **Choices** and the feedback from all was positive.

2.



The Mackay/ Whitsunday Safe Communities Project Alcohol and Injury Working Group (Mackay) launched its **Think Drive** campaign on Friday, 5th September. The campaign was a response to an identified local drink driving issue: statistics indicate that 484 persons were charged with drink driving in the Mackay Police Division between January and August 2003. Seventy-five per cent (366) of these drink drivers were detected within a two kilometre radius of the Mackay City Heart.

Think Drive embraced three key strategies- the promotion of Random Breath Testing (RBT) through distribution of a flyer by Mackay Police, the establishment of a Designated Driver program at the Platinum Lounge, and the engagement of media outlets to maintain the profile of the issue.

RBT: The deterrence value of RBT lies in enhancing the perceived probability of being apprehended for driving while over the legal Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) limit and the understanding that, once apprehended, penalties are inevitable and severe. According to one research study, approximately four in five (82%) people believed that they are likely to be caught by the police if they drink and drive.

Designated Driver: Research suggests that about a fifth of males would choose to nominate a driver in the group to stay under the limit. In light of this, the Platinum Lounge Designated Driver program was developed in partnership with this licensed premises. This component of the project aimed to identify drivers who agree to not drink alcohol and drive their companions home. This designated driver is 'rewarded' for their effort by being provided with free soft drinks.

Media: The objectives of the Think Drive project's media campaign were to; reinforce the social unacceptability of drink driving; to maintain awareness of RBT and the consequences of being caught; to reinforce the risks and consequences of crashing; to increase awareness of drink driving issues; and to inform the community about alternatives to drink driving.

Evaluation of **Think Drive** has yet to be completed, but the results to date are promising.

3. Schoolies Week



This year's schoolies week was again a huge success. We had a 25% increase in numbers from last year, with around two thousand five hundred (2,500) Year 12 School leavers descending on Airlie Beach. We were particularly pleased with the 30-40% increase in participation rates of all major activities. This shows that our safety and activity program is becoming even more popular with schoolies. Apart from some very minor incidents, these young people were very well behaved. There were no arrests and no major incidents.

Responding to feedback from last year, additional day activities were organized. They included Laser Skirmish, Lagoon activities, The Awesome Foursome and a highly discounted trip to the Reef. All of these activities were well attended. All day trips to the islands and the reef were booked out and most schoolies enjoyed the excellent facilities of the Airlie Beach Lagoon.

Additional security employed by the Schoolies committee assisted in keeping the schoolies program safe this year. Our strategy of registering every schoolie and providing them with their own Schoolies Photo ID Card also minimized problems. Registrations showed attendance around 70 schoolies from in and around Brisbane, 10 schoolies from New South Wales, the majority from the Mackay region and many coming from Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton.

NEW OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY WORKING GROUP

Every year approximately 2,000 people attend an Emergency Department in the region after being injured at work. This accounts for 1/4 of all injuries seen in people over 14 years of age. In November, the new Occupational Health and Safety Working Group was established under the umbrella of the Mackay Whitsunday Safe Communities Project. The group has identified a number of particularly vulnerable groups; our young workers, the self-employed and workers in small business. By linking expertise held by some of our bigger companies with schools, TAFE and local business associations, the group hopes to **work together, so we can work smarter and work safer in the Mackay / Whitsunday region.**



The Occupational Health and Safety Working Group, Nov-2003