

**The Chairman,
Coorong District Road safety group.**

Subject : Report on success of “Drowsy Driver Awareness” project.

Ref. : Coorong Road safety group 2002 grant project.

The Objectives.

The project objectives were

- Increase Driver awareness of the need to stop if fatigued.
- Endeavour to keep the driver focussed on the road.
- Reduce the number of crashes.

The Plan

The project called for the development of a series of new signs to be installed on the Mallee Dukes & Princes Highways, which were to be inserted onto some existing and some new fatigue signs by means of a securable slide mechanism. This allows the various messages to be alternated between sign installations to change the messages being delivered.

The signs developed were.

SHARE THE DRIVING	ARRIVE ALIVE	REST REVIVE SURVIVE
ARRIVE ALIVE SHARE THE DRIVE	TAKE A BREAK	TAKE A REST BE OUR GUEST
BE OUR GUEST TAKE A REST	FOR SAFETY SAKE TAKE A BREAK	TIRED ? STOP REST LIVE
FEELING TIRED ? TIME TO REST	STAY AWAKE ! TAKE A BREAK	

The project also called for a public awareness program within the community. This aspect of the project was completed by developing and distributing a pamphlet throughout the Coorong communities which explained who the Road safety Group was, What this “Fatigue Awareness” project was about and giving practical advice on how to avoid fatigue and minimise its effects. (Copy attached)

A media release was also developed and appeared in local newspapers. (Copy of Murray valley Standard article attached.) A good article, but it did not say anything about the project or the grant, or explain who the group are, and what was actually done. It is difficult to get papers to run this type of information in preference to attention grabbing detail.

The Evaluation.

The project evaluation was conducted with the assistance of the Murray Bridge Lions Club who asked patrons stopping at their Monteith "Driver Reviver" station to complete a survey form (Copy attached.)

The survey form sought to ask respondents what if any fatigue related signage they had seen and what messages if any they recalled. It also asked what influence the signage had firstly on them and then generally on motorists. It also reviewed the 8 most likely reasons that drivers stopped at the driver reviver station.

The success was measured firstly by conducting a survey over the October long weekend of 2002, when 92 valid survey forms were completed. This first survey was conducted prior to the installation of any of the new signage developed in the project.

A second survey was conducted over the Easter long weekend of 2003 when all the signage was in place. Almost 200 valid survey forms were received. In order to get an equal assessment, a random selection of 92 survey forms was used.

It can be seen from the attached survey comparison that all the responses to the questions indicated that, awareness of the signage, the numbers of people being aware of signage, the influence it had on them and the perceived level of effect on the general public all increased in the second sample.

"Drowsy Drivers Die" "Stop Revive Survive" and the like still remain strong messages and are almost universal responses. The Victorian "Power Nap" concept also appears to have found a niche.

It could not be conclusively assumed that any of the new messages was significantly recognised or identified. The respondents seem to be more aware of the signs, but recall only the basic concept message rather than any particular text.

There remains some potential to explore quite different messages to grab attention such as the suggested “Stay awake or you will end up in the lake” to be used at Meningie. It also seems clear that only very unique or widely publicised messages are likely to remain with drivers in the manner of a brand name.

Any further surveys of this type need to make it very clear that the questions relate to other fatigue signage, and not to the Driver Reviver station itself, which was a common misconception and reduced the benefit that might have been derived from the survey.

The assistance of the Murray Bridge Lions club is gratefully acknowledged, and the many comments made on the survey forms reflected most creditably on their efforts and the organisation as a whole.

Although this is not a definitive test, all things in both test samples were reasonably equal, the acknowledgment and recognition of fatigue related signage in the target area has clearly improved since the installation of the signage. See the attached comparison sheet.

Casualty crash statistics for the Dukes, Mallee & Princes Highways within the Coorong Council area for the first 3 months of 2002, prior to the installation of signs and the same period of 2003 indicated a reduction from 11 casualty crashes to 10. While this is encouraging, it may be some time before any definite or positive trend can be established.

The Expenditure.

	Grant	GST	Total
Grant (TSA)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 5,500.00
Project Expenditure	\$ 4,992.40	\$ 499.24	\$ 5491.64
Balance	\$ 7.60	\$ 0.76	\$ 8.36

Forwarded for information

Sgt Brian SCHMIDT
Traffic Manager
Hills Murray Local Service Area.

16th August 2003

QUESTION	RESPONSE	Oct-02	Apr-03	UP/DOWN	RESULT / COMMENT
Are you a Driver or Passenger	DRIVER	60	69	Up	Same sample number. 92 responses
	PASSENGER	32	23	Down	More drivers, less passengers.
Have you seen any road signs on your journey today encouraging drivers to rest or take a break from driving. Y / N	YES	86	91	Up	More people acknowledge seeing signs
	NO	6	1	Down	Less people remain unaware of the signs
If yes, how much did the signs influence YOU to take a break from driving. Not at all / Little / A Lot	NOT	8	6	Down	Reduction in people not affected by signage
	LITTLE	37	34	Down	Reduction in people affected a little by signage
	A LOT	46	52	Up	Increase in people affected a lot by signage.
How effective do you think the signs are in encouraging PEOPLE to stay alert None / Some / Effective / Very / unsure.	NONE	2	0	Down	Reduction in respondents who thought signs had no effect
	SOME	24	15	Down	Reduction in respondents who thought signs had some effect
	EFFECTIVE	32	41	Up	Increase in respondents who thought signs effective
	VERY	28	33	Up	Increase in respondents who thought signs very effective
	UNSURE	4	3	Down	Reduction in respondents who were unsure about effectiveness of signs
REASONS FOR STOPPING					
REFRESHMENTS		64	64	Same	Many thought the questionnaire was about the driver reviver stop and not about the fatigue signage
ANOTHER PERSONS SUGGESTION		4	3	Down	
TO CHANGE DRIVERS		8	9	Up	
KIDS BREAK		3	16	Up	Children travelling in vehicles may be a significant factor in enticing drivers & parents to stop at any place. Road safety Groups may consider the concept of developing safe and inviting playgrounds as part of a rest stop strategy.
TAKE A BREAK FROM DRIVING		49	59	Up	Remains a significant and fairly obvious reason.
CHANCE FOR A STRETCH		59	55	Down	Remains a significant and fairly obvious reason.
STOPPED HERE BEFORE		15	6	Down	
OTHER REASON		3	1	Down	

COORONG AND DISTRICTS ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE



Thank you for assisting with this anonymous survey. Please tick the relevant box or write your comments in the space provided.

1, Are you the DRIVER PASSENGER

2, have you seen any road signs on your journey today encouraging drivers to rest or take a break from driving?

YES NO

3, If yes, can you recall what they said?

.....
.....

4, A) If you answered Yes to questions 2 & 3, what did the signs mean to you?

.....

B) How much did the signs influence you to take a break from driving?

Not at all A little A lot

C) How effective do you think the signs are in encouraging drivers to stay alert?

No Effect Some Effect Effective Very Effective Not Sure

5, Why did you stop today at the place where you are completing this form? (Tick more than one if applicable).

- | | |
|---|--|
| Refreshments <input type="checkbox"/> | Another person's suggestion <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To change drivers <input type="checkbox"/> | Kids needed a break <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To take a break from driving <input type="checkbox"/> | Opportunity to stretch <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stopped here before <input type="checkbox"/> | Other..... <input type="checkbox"/> |

THANK YOU.

Coorong targets fatigue

The Coorong Road Safety Committee is reminding drivers not to drive when tired.

Estimates of the proportion of casualty crashes caused by driver fatigue vary, but could be as high as 20 per cent.

Falling asleep at the wheel is a hidden cause of death and serious injury on roads.

In 2001, there were 57 road crashes in the Coorong District Council area in which five people died and 39 people were seriously injured.

Up to 11 of these crashes could have been caused by driver fatigue, according to a committee spokesperson.

Messages on signs on major highways in the Coorong area will be changed regularly by Coorong Road Safety Committee members to prompt drivers to take breaks, rest and revive, and arrive alive.

The spokesperson said driver fatigue could severely impair judgement and could affect anyone.

It was particularly dangerous because one of the symptoms was decreased ability to judge the person's own level of tiredness.

Ways to avoid fatigue were to get a good night's sleep before a trip, take regular breaks and walk around for a while, share the driving if possible and do not drink alcohol before driving or during rest breaks.

The spokesperson urged people not to eat a big meal before or during a long trip and avoid travelling at times when usually asleep.



If sleep deprived, the only thing that would restore your ability to concentrate was sleep.

Drinking coffee, talking, listening to the radio or opening the window might help in the short term, but if you're tired, only sleep could improve your concentration. Be prepared to stay somewhere overnight so you can arrive alive.

Look out for the signs on the Princes, Mallee and Dukes Highway in the Coorong area.

Pick up a 'smart card' from local businesses in the Coorong area for handy hints on how to avoid fatigue.

The Lions Club also operates Driver Reviver stations in the area on holiday weekends.

ABOVE: Graham Warneke (technical officer, Transport SA and committee member), Evonne Whibley (committee member), Tracey Heriot (administration officer, Coorong District Council), and Sgt John Gigger (SA Police and committee chairman).

Publicity

The following Article appeared in the Murray valley Standard newspaper in February 2003 to advertise the project.

The Signage Developed.

The “Drowsy Drivers Die” panel in the sign indicated below is a removable sheet, which is inserted and secured into guides fitted to the face of the sign. This allows the various messages developed in the project to be interchanged and moved about the district to get maximum benefit.



Coorong Road Safety Committee

The Coorong Road Safety Committee was formed to identify hazards, formulate a strategic plan and research road safety issues.

The inaugural meeting was held in May 2001 with 15 people present. The Committee's aim is to focus on public education and awareness with various projects including:

- ☆ Education of school students with road rules
- ☆ Setting up a mock accident (road crash simulation)
- ☆ Road Safety audit of Princes Highway

The Committee received funding to hold the road crash simulation at Coomandook in September 2001. The project was titled "Operation Coorong Crash" and was a success.

The next project was "Drowsy Driver's Awareness". A competition was run through local schools for children to design a slogan and a letter head logo. The slogans are now in place on the "Drowsy Driver" signs on the highways and will be rotated every 3 months.



Coorong Road Safety Committee

A set of leaflets on Road Safety and awareness has been compiled and distributed at The Karoonda Farm Fair, The Menangle Show and local police stations.

The Committee conducted a survey along with the Murray Bridge City Lions Club on the long weekend in October 2001. The response of 90% was well received.

A grant application has been submitted for a strategic plan and another road simulation.



Contact Details:

Coorong Road Safety Committee

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February 2002

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Draft Copy

Coorong Road Safety Project 2002 - 2003

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Photo

Pamphlet for Community Awareness.

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