



VICTORIA POLICE

Staying safe over summer

An important safety message from
Assistant Commissioner Doug Fryer

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The summer period is typically a time when people are out and about on the roads visiting friends, travelling to holiday destinations and enjoying the better weather. This can include the towing of boats and caravans which may have been in storage or unused for some time. Taking the time to plan such trips and identifying the safest, rather than the shortest, routes can play a major role in staying safe on our roads.

Driving on unfamiliar roads and in different driving conditions, as well as towing caravans or boats can be tiring and can change the way your car handles. Ensuring your car, caravan or trailer is in tip top condition is paramount. When driving long distances, it is extremely important to break your trip into smaller pieces by having regular breaks. Take advantage of 'driver reviver' sites – stop and have a cuppa and a bit of a chat, and share the driving duties if you are able.

There are a number of things you can do to ensure that the summer road trips are safe and enjoyable. Some of these tips include:

- Before setting off on a long journey, having the car serviced and given a proper safety check up. Make sure the caravan and / or trailer are checked as well;

- Map out your trip and allow plenty of time to get to your destination. Make sure you include plenty of rest stops – enjoy the scenery and any attractions along the way;
- Try to limit driving in busy areas to off peak periods;
- If possible, restrict your drive to mainly daylight hours and avoid driving at sunset or sunrise which are periods of high glare and poor visibility;
- Never drink alcohol, not even small amounts, before or during a long trip.

You should also take steps to ensure that you are physically fit to drive throughout the year. Make sure you:

- Have your eyes tested at least once every two years and make sure your optometrist knows that you drive;
- Talk to your pharmacist or doctor about any effect your medication may have on your ability to drive.

By making sure you are physically fit to undertake a long summer trip and then planning out your journey you can ensure that you stay safe and complete your trip without incident. Enjoy the great weather and everything Victoria (and Australia) has to offer. Have a safe summer and travel responsibly on the roads.

The TAC has provided some useful checklists and tips for older drivers to help them stay safe on the roads. For further tips visit the TAC website – www.tac.vic.gov.au