



MEDIA RELEASE

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* *For immediate release*

Kimberley students urged to take road safety seriously

Students in the Kimberley will hear a road safety message from the heart when paraplegic, Anton Zappelli visits the region with RAC representative, Rachel MacGeehan.

Anton is a representative of the Paraplegic Benefit Fund (PBF), a national not-for-profit organisation founded by spinal surgeon Sir George Bedbrook in 1984.

Anton was just 17 years old when a road crash left him confined to a wheelchair for life. Anton now speaks to students in years 10, 11 and 12 about the impact split-second decisions may have on the rest of their lives.

RAC Community Ed and PBF will be visiting the region between June 9th and 12th speaking to students in Derby and Broome.

The pair will speaking at Broome Senior High School on Tuesday 10th June, Derby Senior High School on Wednesday 11th June and Anton will be visiting St Mary's College on Thursday, June 12th.

Anton presents his program as part of the award winning **PBFPREVENTION**-road. He urges the students to take safety seriously.

"My message is to think about the choices you have now, while you are young, fit and healthy, and be responsible for those choices," Anton says.

The road program includes scenario-based activities, which help students identify risk-reduction strategies, and a DVD featuring other West Australians who have been seriously injured in road crashes.

The Community Ed presentations and workshops cover a range of issues including learning to drive, buying a car, road safety and money management.

PBFPREVENTION-road spokesperson Hazel Hodgkins says the partnership between the RAC and PBF allows for the crucial message of road safety to be spread to people in regional areas who often miss out, due to the high level of cost.

"Young people aged 15-24 years are most at risk of being involved in a road crash. It is important that as many young people as possible have access to both of these programs," Ms Hodgkins says.

RAC Community Ed Manager Katrina Bell says that communicating road safety messages to young people was an important part of the organisations road safety strategy.

“Young people who are taking to the road for the first time are often the most at risk and engaging them through a range of innovative presentations and seminars can help them to prepare for their time behind the wheel.

“There were 59 more road deaths on regional roads than metropolitan roads in 2007, so it is important we raise awareness of road safety in these areas,” Ms Bell says.

****To arrange an interview or photo opportunity, call Cristin Plath on 9443 1777.***

For further information on PBF or the **PBFPREVENTION** – road program, visit www.pbf.asn.au or call PBF Australia on (08) 9443 1777.

For more information on the RAC Community Ed programs, visit www.rac.com.au and click on the Community link or call 9436 4471.

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