

## MEDIA RELEASE

March 25th, 2008

\* *For immediate release*

### Road Program heads to the Midwest

The Paraplegic Benefit Fund of Australia (PBF) and the RAC have joined forces to spread the road safety message to teenagers throughout the Midwest.

The presentations will take place between March 31<sup>st</sup> and April 4<sup>th</sup> at various locations throughout Geraldton.

The award-winning **PBF**PREVENTION-road and the RAC presentations aim to inform students of the risks involved in driving and the life changing impact split second decisions on the road can have, regarding both themselves and others.

**PBF**PREVENTION-road presenter Bridget Cheffins was only 17 years old when a car accident left her with permanent spinal cord damage which would change her life forever.

Bridget sustained her injury when the driver of the overcrowded car she was traveling in lost control. She wasn't wearing a seatbelt and had been drinking alcohol.

As a presenter for PBF Bridget tells students her story, urging them to think about their choices and take road safety seriously.

Also included in the **PBF**PREVENTION-road program is scenario-based activities, which help students identify risk-reduction strategies, and a DVD featuring other Western Australians who have been seriously injured in road crashes.

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

**PBF**PREVENTION-road spokesperson Hazel Hodgkins says that this partnership allows the crucial road safety message to be spread to regional areas, who often missed out due to the high cost of travel.

"Young people aged 15-24 years are most at risk of being involved in a road crash," Ms Hodgkins said.

"It is important that as many young people as possible have access to both the **PBF**PREVENTION – road program and the RAC Community Ed programs," Ms Hodgkins said.

RAC Community Ed Program Developer Suzanne Bertolini said that communicating road safety messages to young people was an important part of the organisation's road safety strategy.

“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 Bertolini said.

“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.” Ms Bertolini said.

***\*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/road](http://www.pbf.asn.au/road) or call PBF Australia on (08) 9443 1777.

For more information on the RAC Community Ed programs, visit [www.rac.com.au](http://www.rac.com.au) and click on the Community link or call 9436 4471.

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