

Queensland Road Safety Week 2016

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Abstract

Queensland Road Safety Week (QRSW) began in 2015 as a joint initiative of the Queensland Police Service (QPS) and Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR); encouraging Queenslanders to ‘speak up for road safety’. Communities, schools, and workplaces were encouraged to support QRSW2016 by hosting local events or sharing road safety information. Focused on the ‘Fatal Five’, campaign themes were delivered through three mediums: education, engagement, and enforcement. QRSW2016 was a successful expansion of QRSW2015; yielding a large online presence and reaching a wide audience, positive responses from event attendees and hosts, and an increase in road policing enforcement hours were achieved.

Background

QRSW is an expansion of the successful Central Police Region Road Safety Week, which occurred in 2014. In support of the Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2015-17, QRSW aimed to engage the community in important conversations about road safety. With the successful launch of QRSW in 2015 the initiative was repeated in 2016 with a third QRSW envisioned for 2017.

QRSW2016 was held between 22–28 August, and was collaboratively hosted by QPS, TMR, and the Motor Accident Insurance Commission (MAIC). The Royal Automobile Club of Queensland (RACQ) and the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety - Queensland (CARRS-Q) were also engaged as representatives on the advisory group. The theme of QRSW2016 was ‘speak up for road safety’. QRSW2016 focused on the ‘Fatal Five’; with each business day dedicated to a different road user behaviour. There were three mediums of delivery for QRSW; education, engagement and enforcement.

QRSW activities

Education

A focus on school-aged children helps build positive road safety attitudes, an essential element for future safe road users. A school toolkit was promoted to all Queensland schools through the Department of Education and Training, Queensland. The toolkit included: Background information and key messages; suggestions for events and activities; factsheets; and decorative bunting.

A ‘road safety in my town’ competition was also designed to encourage primary school-aged students to consider what road safety means to them. An illustrative prompt was provided for children to encourage creativity. Forty entries were submitted, resulting in five winners. Each winning child was awarded an iPad for themselves and their school.

Engagement

QPS and TMR promoted QRSW2016 through their organisation’s Blogs, Facebook, and Twitter feeds. Engagement via the ‘Join the Drive’ (JTD) website increased in QRSW2016 compared to QRSW2015 (note statistics accounted for a two-month period to measure residual activity), including the number of website users (419% to 12,254), website sessions (366% to 14,652), and page views (203% to 10,155).

To encourage people to become actively involved in QRSW2016, TMR ran a #SpeakUpSelfie competition resulting in 136 entrants. Facebook and Instagram proved the most successful channels for engagement.

Community groups, government agencies, and businesses were asked to promote QRSW2016. Organisations were provided with a toolkit which included: Background information; event and activity ideas; fact sheets; and promotional items. Feedback indicates that activities included internal communication, sharing of social media content, staff barbecues, and in-office presentations.

Event hosts were encouraged to register their event online via the JTD website. One-hundred-seventy-nine events were registered, with 64 hosts completing a post event survey. There were approximately 18,300 attendees at the 64 events. All hosts were willing to host an event in 2017 (dependent on approval and budget); and 96.7% said their event was successful.

Enforcement

Throughout QRSW2016 additional resources were provided by the Road Policing Command to QPS Regions to increase service delivery, and media efforts focused on safe, legal, and responsible road user behaviours.

When compared to QRSW2015, QRSW2016 saw an increase in approximately 8,150 road policing enforcement hours, a 25% increase in the number of driver's breath tested (to 116,049), and a 138% increase in the number of drink drivers detected (to 486). The drink driving detection rate increased from 1:144 in 2015 to 1:239 in 2016. It is unknown why the detection rate increased. There was a slight increase in the number of speeding traffic infringement notices issued, and a slight decrease in the number of seatbelt and mobile phone traffic infringement notices issued.

Conclusion

The activities in QRSW were successful in achieving their goals, and were an improvement on the previous QRSW. Recommendations for future QRSWs include: Engaging with stakeholders, and schools earlier to enhance participation; earlier engagement with the evaluation team to best utilise knowledge garnered from QRSW2016 to develop the strategy and organise the collation of required data for a report; utilise results from QRSW2016 surveys to enhance the engagement strategy; ensure a high level of media coverage is repeated, with a focus on including details of upcoming events and the inclusion of high quality and eye catching photos; and consult with other jurisdictions on the benefits of QRSW to encourage the adoption of the initiative across Australia.

References

Department of Transport and Main Roads. (2015). *Safer Roads, Safer Queensland. Queensland's Road Safety Action Plan 2015-17*. Retrieved from <http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety/Road-safety/Strategy-and-action-plans.aspx>