

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Crash survivor urges safe summer for young drivers

Monday, 10 December 2018

After surviving a road crash and 46 days clinging to life in a coma, Yudhi Mohan-Ram is quietly spoken, but his message to secondary school students is powerful.

Today, he will join Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighter Barnaby French in delivering the final Road Awareness Program (RAP) of 2018 at Pembroke College where his three daughters attend.

Yudhi said as South Australian students look towards summer holidays, he's sharing his story of survival to inspire a safe festive season.

"Last summer, 16 people died on South Australian roads. Through sharing my story, I'd like to help reduce road trauma and empower students and their parents to be responsible road users this festive season.

"For every fatality, there are many people like me who survive with serious injuries. In my case, a P-Plater ran a stop sign and t-boned my motorcycle. It left me in a coma with a bruised heart, broken ulna and radius, broken collarbone, broken ribs, smashed wrist, broken tibia and fibia," Yudhi said.

Yudhi was given a less than 10 % chance of survival and his voice box was rebuilt four times. He now uses his voice to inspire a reduction in the road toll amongst young people.

Despite being on target for one of the lowest road tolls on record for fatalities, South Australia has experienced a recent spike in fatalities in RAP's target age range of 16-19 year olds, with nine fatalities this year to date.

MFS Senior Firefighter and RAP Presenter, Barnaby French has responded to many road crashes throughout his career. He says firefighters remain determined to reach young drivers.

"While RAP confronts students with the realities of driving and being road users, it's also designed to uplift and inspire them to create generational change on the roads and to use positive peer pressure within their friendship groups.

"As we head towards summer holidays, Christmas and the New Year, it's the perfect time to remind young drivers – and their parents – about what it means to be a responsible road user. Everyone deserves to have a great festive season together, not one marred by grief and loss," MFS Senior Firefighter French said.

RAP was introduced by MFS firefighters in South Australia in 2005, targeting licence-aged students in the 16-19 year age group.

In the last ten years, the fatalities in RAP's target age group has dropped from about 20 fatalities per year to an average of six per year. This is a testament to the great work young people are doing in heeding the road safety message and putting it into practice. Currently, the fatalities in this age group sit at nine for 2018.

The MFS thanks generous program sponsors the Motor Accident Commission (MAC), the RAA, SA Power Networks and the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation (APFF) for helping RAP reach up to 85 % of secondary school students across the state.

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