

22 January 2022

Lifesaving rule for roadside responders finally reality

RACQ has welcomed the State Government's commitment to protect roadside incident responders and stranded motorists following a four-year campaign spearheaded by the Club.

The Palaszczuk Government has announced the vital road rule, which would require motorists to move over or slow down at crashes and roadside incidents in Queensland.

RACQ Group Chief Executive Officer David Carter said the Club congratulated the Government on the agreed regulatory change, which would help protect emergency responders, including roadside assistance crews, who worked in high-risk environments.

"We've been backing this change since 2017, with 90 percent of our members in favour of making this lifesaving road rule a reality, so we're incredibly pleased the Government is taking action," Mr Carter said.

"Every day our roadside crews put their lives on the line to rescue stranded motorists, but we know one wrong move by a passing car could so easily result in tragedy.

"Near misses occur far too often with drivers not slowing down, merging dangerously, being distracted and in some cases colliding with RACQ vehicles.

"Analysis of our onboard camera footage shows that out of 30,000 passing vehicles, less than six percent who could move over to provide a safe space did. This highlights the very low level of voluntary compliance and the need for the new rule."

Mr Carter said the new rule would require Queenslanders to change their driving behaviour around roadside incidents.

"If you're passing a first responder's vehicle with flashing lights on a single-lane road, you'll need to slow down to a safe speed and leave sufficient space to ensure you have enough time to react to the changing conditions," he said.

"If you're on a multi-lane road and it's safe to do so, you'll need to vacate the lane nearest to the emergency response vehicle. If it's unsafe to move over, you'll still need to slow down and leave a safe passing distance.

"This will give our teams a safe space to work, so they can continue to help the people they're there to protect."

Transport and Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey thanked RACQ for its efforts in advocating for the rule change.

RACQ is Queensland's largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State's first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of more than 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.

“I’d like to acknowledge RACQ who has worked well with the Palaszczuk Government to create awareness of the need for this rule,” Mr Bailey said.

“RACQ supported its staff, along with emergency responders and its members to advocate for this change.”

Media inquiries: Media Advisor Kate Leonard-Jones 0419 543 514.

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