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RACQ: Put safety first this weekend as road toll soars

RACQ has warned motorists hitting the road this long weekend to take their safety seriously, as the death toll in Queensland continued to soar.

Club spokesperson Lauren Ritchie said unfortunately three-day weekends were a high-risk time for crashes and fatalities with more people hitting the road to explore the State.

“We know plenty of Queenslanders will be travelling locally, as the borders are closed to New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Victoria,” Ms Ritchie said.

“We expect to see heavy traffic on the major roads heading north and south from Brisbane starting this afternoon, so we need to plan ahead and pack our patience.”

Ms Ritchie said the Queensland road toll sat at 149, compared to 124 at the same time last year.

“Sadly, Queensland is the only State in Australia that hasn’t seen its road toll decrease this year compared with the same period last year,” she said.

“Despite there being less traffic on the roads due to coronavirus travel restrictions we’ve seen more cases of incredibly dangerous driver behaviour.”

Ms Ritchie said above everything else, motorists should avoid taking unnecessary risks.

“The Fatal Five, including mobile phones and distraction, are responsible for the majority of deadly crashes on our roads,” she said.

“Motorists need to wake up to the risk they are taking every time they take their eyes off the road.

“Set your phone to Do Not Disturb before you get behind the wheel, so your focus isn’t taken away from driving.

“If you’re going on a long trip, make sure you plan regular breaks and get a good night’s sleep beforehand to fight fatigue.”

Media inquiries: RACQ spokesperson Lauren Ritchie 0427 137 022; Media Advisor Vivien O’Connor 0427 261 932.

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 the 1.8 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.