MINISTER'S FOREWORD

The Community Road Safety Partnerships (CRSP) program, first established in Tasmania in 2003, continues to be one of the most successful road safety initiatives co-ordinated by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER).

At the heart of the program is the belief that local communities are ideally placed to implement strategies that will address high risk road user behaviour at a grassroots level and to achieve significant improvements in road safety.

It is also an excellent example of what can be achieved when two tiers of government and local community groups work constructively together.

There are now 26 municipalities on board with negotiations occurring with the remaining three communities.

The program has resulted in many volunteers and community advocates actively participating in road safety-related activities. It is a considerable contribution and one which underpins the whole program. It is a contribution which cannot be over-estimated.

It is a sobering fact that in Tasmania the cost of a road fatality to our community is $1.74 million and each serious casualty costs $430,000. The cost in human terms is incalculable.

In a small State such as ours, and especially in small communities, a road death has a devastating "ripple effect" as the impact spreads from the victim's immediate family to friends, colleagues, workmates and the wider community.

Too many people are still not taking their responsibility to be safe on the road seriously enough, and it continues to cost lives.

We have a responsibility to do more because every life lost on Tasmania's roads is an avoidable tragedy.

Earlier this year I launched a Be Alert road safety initiative on Hobart's Southern Outlet. Be Alert is a Kingborough CRSP project which aims to influence drivers to adopt safer behaviour and attitudes, especially relating to speeding, driving to conditions, drink-driving and inattention.

The campaign is supported by interchangeable messages, such as 'Watch Your Speed', 'Don't Drink and Drive' and 'Drive to Conditions' which will be displayed at different times of the year.

The combined efforts of the many CRSP groups around the State have a vital role to play in raising road safety awareness.

I congratulate those local communities which have taken up the challenge of the CRSP program and I commend the officers of DIER and others in the community who continue to turn the vision of this program into reality.

The Government will continue to do all it can, but we can't do it alone.

We all have a responsibility to drive safely on our roads. All Tasmanians need to do their part, not only for their own sake, but for that of all road users.

DAVID O'BYRNE
Minister for Infrastructure