MEDIA RELEASE

Choose zero death and no injury on our roads this festive season, surgeons urge

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Christmas and New Year should be enjoyed safely and peacefully with family and friends. Tragically, too often at this time of year, surgeons treat a spate of seriously injured road users who survive crashes. Road crashes are not accidents.

Two thirds of road user fatalities this festive season will involve single vehicle, run-off road crashes in rural Australia, if the past is any guide.

Distraction, speed, fatigue, alcohol consumption and other drug use are contributing factors in most road crashes. Dr John Crozier, Chair of RACS Trauma Committee, said that “As road users, there is nothing accidental in the choice we make about these factors.”

RACS President John Batten said we should not underestimate the danger of drinking and driving, especially over the holiday break when alcohol is ever present.

“Christmas is a time of joy and celebration but it can also be a dangerous time on our roads. Exercise caution when deciding whether you are capable of driving—the safest option is not to drive if you have consumed any alcohol,” he said.

RACS is also urging caution and restraint in regard to excessive speed, road safety awareness, and other road related dangers such as driving and texting or talking on the phone.

“Using your phone while driving, or riding a bicycle is not just illegal but can be fatal; it is not your life alone that you are putting at risk, but the lives of other road users,” Mr Batten said.

RACS President Mr John Batten urged “As surgeons, we ask you to please choose wisely; be respectful of other road users when driving, so that we might all enjoy a safe and peaceful Christmas and New Year. Our common goal is zero death and no injury on our roads this festive season.”

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.

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