

MEDIA RELEASE

18 March 2008

First aid can save lives on the road this Easter

Last Easter there were 26 deaths on the road across Australia, with nine people being killed in New South Wales alone¹.

St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) is urging drivers to obey the road rules and ensure they know what to do at a road accident to help reduce the road toll by up to 15%².

Robyn Galwey, General Manager of Training, St John (NSW) comments:

“Immediate and correct first aid at the scene of road accidents can significantly increase the chance of survival of any casualties.

“As with any serious accident the first few minutes are crucial and the key to saving more lives is to ensure more bystanders and witnesses are equipped with the skills to help others. When it comes to car accidents, often the first on the scene will be another driver.

“Only seven percent of Australians feel very confident in administering first aid at serious road accidents³, so we are encouraging more people to learn first aid.”

St John, Australia’s leading first aid provider, has developed a simple action plan to follow in the event of a road accident.

What to do when you arrive at an accident where people are injured:

- Direct someone to call 000 for an ambulance
- Check that there is no danger to you, safely park your car and put the hazard lights on. Light up the scene at night with headlights

What to do with the injured person:

- Are they conscious or unconscious?
- If conscious ask them to take a big breath to see if they can breathe easily
- With unconscious casualties it is imperative that they have a clear and open airway. If trapped in the car lift their chin off the chest
- Stop any bleeding with direct pressure over the wound, use clothing, towels or a first aid pad
- Look for other injuries and stabilise the head with your hands to protect the head and neck

Manage the casualty, wherever possible, in the position found unless it is dangerous to do so.

St John recommends that every car should carry a first aid kit in case of emergencies. For further information or to learn first aid, contact St John on 1300 360 455 or www.stjohnnsw.com.au

ENDS

Further information and to organise interviews please contact:

Bethany Hoskin, on 02 9219 6856 or bethany_hoskin@stjohnnsw.com.au

¹ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200704/s1892941.htm>

² Mabott, N. (2000), *Harm minimisation for victims of road trauma*, AARB Transport Research

³ Findings are based on responses from 1,460 Australians aged 18 years and over. The research was conducted in November 2006 by independent consultants Stollznow Research.