

11 December 2017

Any number is too many in Otago

Otago Regional Council (ORC) adds its support to the growing movement taking a stand against road death with the new road safety programme, *Any number is too many*.

Since 2012, 136 people have died on Southern roads, and many more have been seriously injured. This year alone, 27 people have died on Southern roads (for Otago and Southland combined). Nationally, the number of road deaths across the country has reached 342, the highest since 2010 – and 2017 is not over yet.

“Every single road death or serious injury on our roads has a major, long-lasting impact on Otago communities. We might have an idea of what an acceptable number of deaths on our roads is,” ORC councillor and Otago Regional Transport Committee Chair Trevor Kempton says.

“But what if that included our partner, child or wider whānau? Is it still acceptable? The only real answer is zero.”

Together the Southern Road Safety Influencing Group (SRSIG) and Southern emergency responders (NZ Police, St John Ambulance, and Fire and Emergency Southland) have developed *Any number is too many*, which asks communities to think and talk about road risk.

This new inclusive approach to addressing road risk recognises local people know their roads and can help develop possible solutions to the increasing road toll.

“We know from recent research that people in the South are a little more resigned to road deaths than in other regions,” Cr Kempton says.

“We think crashes are caused by poor drivers, and we think they are prevented by improving the roads. Improving the roads won’t stop poor decision making. It will only make the landing a little softer. It’s time to have some honest conversations about what we as drivers can do to stop the rising road toll in our community.

“Driving around Otago for work is the number one safety risk for ORC staff and councillors. We’re currently reviewing our approach to driving processes and road safety, and we’re working with other members of the SRSIG to bring awareness to *Any number is too many*.”

To show their support and start the conversation, ORC is putting campaign bumper stickers on the vehicle fleet, wrapping up the Stafford St office entrance way with the *Any number is too many* campaign tape, and producing a short, collaborative social media video with other territorial authorities.

“I’ve been riding motorbikes for 45 years and the statistics tell me I’m one of an endangered species. We have to talk to each other about how to make sure we come home safe from our summer trips. Of our mates, we know who take the biggest risks. So, this summer, are you going to be the mate who said something?” Cr Kempton says.

Caption:

ORC Councillor and Otago Regional Transport Committee Chair Trevor Kempton with his 1971 Suzuki Titan.

Background:

Established in 2016, the SRSIG looks at new ways of solving an old problem – how to reduce the number of people being killed and seriously injured on Southland and Otago roads. The group is made up of regional and local authorities from Southland and Otago, representatives from government agencies, and partners representing the transport sector.

Members of the SRSIG:

Otago Regional Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council, Central Otago District Council, Clutha District Council, Dunedin City Council, Environment Southland, Gore District Council, Invercargill City Council, Southland District Council, AA, ACC, HW Richardson, Fonterra, Real Journeys, NZ Police, and NZ Transport Agency.

How to join the conversation:

- Visit the *Any number is too many* Facebook [page](#) and like/share/comment
- Visit the official website anynumberistoomany.org for more information, including campaign materials and personal stories
- Start a conversation with your friends and whānau
- Display a bumper sticker on your car or letterbox
- Put up posters at your school or community space

If you would like some materials, please contact ORC Customer Services team on 0800 474 082.

Photo opportunity:

The entrance of ORC's Dunedin office on Stafford St is wrapped up in the special road safety tape, signalling ORC's involvement with the programme.

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