



Safer road ahead for motorists

By BRENT O'NEILL

REDUCING the disproportionately high fatality rates among young Queensland drivers is the aim of a program which has just been launched.

After a successful pilot in 2008, the 2009 version of the Leighton Contractors' Youth Drive Safe Initiative will give 625 school-based learner licence holders – or those eligible for a learner licence – from Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan, Caboolture, and Townsville five hours of free learner driver training.

Last year, Queensland road users aged 17-24 accounted for 22 per cent of the state's road toll, despite representing just 12 per cent of the population. Leighton Contractors strategic development manager Renaye Peters said this statistic made the second instalment of the Drive Safe initiative a necessity.

"The program aims to improve the understanding and responsibility young drivers take on when they get their learner's licence," Ms Peters said.

"We hope kids learn some great skills and share them with their peers.

"As one parent involved in the pilot said, 'Even if this program saves one life, it's worth it'."

That one life may be that of Morayfield State High School's Sara Hines, who was a member of the pilot group.

"It's made me a safer driver," she said.

"It helped me to understand driving more, and I'm more confident."



closeup
young targets

- New driver program targets young.
- Five hours free learner driving.
- 17-24 year olds account for 22 per cent of state road toll.