



Friday 7 August 2009

Leighton Contractors creates safer young drivers

Friday 7 August – Main Roads Minister and Member for Thuringowa Craig Wallace officially launched the Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative today in Townsville.

Under the initiative, thousands of Townsville secondary students will have an opportunity to win one of 125 drive safe packages, totalling 625 hours of free learner driver tuition.

Darren Weir, General Manager of Leighton Contractors Northern Region (Queensland and Northern Territory) said he was pleased to offer Youth Drive Safe to Townsville as the first regional centre to be part of the initiative.

“This initiative is one way we would like to give back to the people of Townsville after our warm welcome to town late last year as constructors of the V8 Supercar project,” he said.

Each drive safe package consists of five hours of free professional tuition enabling the 125 selected participants to gain valuable practical driving skills and knowledge to set them on course for a long and safe driving career.

The initiative will save selected participants and parents around \$300 in driving lessons, which are equivalent to 15 hours in the Queensland learner logbook.

“Our long history in designing and constructing roads in partnership with the Department of Transport and Main Roads has made us aware of the disproportion of young people killed on our roads and the need for improved road safety skills,” Mr Weir said.

“Youth Drive Safe aims to address one of the nation’s leading social issues which sadly is a major cause of death for young Queenslanders.

“Last year alone, 73 people aged between 17 and 24 years were killed in accidents – this represents close to a quarter (22 percent) of the state’s fatalities.

“Professional driving tuition has a strong emphasis on road safety skills and we hope by offering this initiative to Townsville, young learner drivers will be given the best start to their driving future.”

Launching the 2009 Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative, Mr Wallace commended Leighton Contractors for its progressive approach to corporate social responsibility and safety.

“The Queensland Government is committed to the safety of the community and this includes safety among road users,” Mr Wallace said.

“Leighton Contractors has worked closely with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to ensure they deliver an effective road safety initiative complementing government initiatives.

“The launch of this initiative in Townsville demonstrates what can be achieved when government, business and the community work together to improve road safety – a responsibility shared by everyone.

“I applaud Leighton Contractors for taking an active role in the community by providing free driving lessons to help create safer drivers and safer communities.”

Mayor of Townsville Cr Les Tyrell said the Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative would benefit the local community.

"I applaud Leighton Contractors for making a significant investment in the community by providing free learner driving tuition to Townsville's secondary school students," Cr Tyrell said.

"I look forward to hearing about the success of the initiative over the next six months and hope that learner drivers seize this chance to learn about safe motoring on our roads."

Leighton Contractors remains committed to monitoring and refining the Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative to ensure it continues as an effective road safety initiative.

"Depending on its success in Townsville over the next six months, we hope to offer this initiative to more students in 2010," Mr Weir said.

The initiative demonstrates Leighton Contractors' commitment to corporate social responsibility and forms part of a broader road safety program, with Youth Drive Safe one of three components.

The second component is a research partnership between Leighton Contractors Northern Region and CARRS-Q (Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety - Queensland) to conduct road safety research focused on the safety of workers and road users around road infrastructure projects.

The third component is sponsorship of the 2009 Queensland Road Safety Awards and 2009 Leighton Contractors Queensland Road Safety Awards Business Development Workshop.

Students wishing to enter the draw to win a drive safe package need to attend one of the participating schools and register online at www.leightondrivesafe.com.au.

For more information about the Leighton Contractors Youth Drive Safe Initiative visit www.leightondrivesafe.com.au

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For further information please contact:

Sharon Heaps, Communications Coordinator, Leighton Contractors

M: 0434 567 163

Eva Ford-Murphy, Marketing and Communications Manager, Leighton Contractors

M: 0434 183 346

About Leighton Contractors

Leighton Contractors is one of Australia's leading contracting and project development groups with over \$8.3 billion work in hand, employing more than 9,000 people across Australia and New Zealand. The company services clients across a range of industries and sectors including resources, construction, telecommunications, energy, infrastructure and facility management.