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AAMI directs drowsy drivers to “Rest Towns” this Easter

- **New data reveals only one in five young drivers took regular breaks on a long trip**
- **One in 10 young drivers have had a microsleep behind the wheel or drifted into oncoming traffic**

Insurer AAMI has teamed up with Spotify to encourage drivers to plan their road trip with an integrated Rest Towns playlist that prompts them to stop every two hours.

Chosen for their location along seven of the most popular driving routes around the country, [AAMI Rest Towns](#) features 69 towns in Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia.

The new driver safety campaign is designed to make road trips more enjoyable and safer because it helps keep drivers alert. It works by enabling users to choose their trip, then it cleverly drops pins to identify a selection of “Rest Towns” located enroute. Upon approach, drivers hear an audio message prompting them to pull over, rest and visit a local attraction.

Kahl Dwight, AAMI’s Executive Manager of Motor Claims said the insurer is taking an innovative approach to tackling the issue of driver fatigue, with new research showing under 25s are the worst offenders.

“We’re particularly targeting younger drivers this Easter through a personalised playlist on Spotify. This also helps them to discover some of Australia’s hidden gems such as an iconic landmark, a secluded beach, or a picturesque town selling the perfect pie,” said Mr Dwight.

“With border restrictions eased many young drivers may be embarking on their first road trip. We want it to be fun while also encouraging younger drivers to adopt safer behaviours of stopping regularly.”

AAMI’s campaign also gives Australian towns and businesses that have had a tough couple of years the opportunity to secure some much-needed visitors.

Impact of drowsy driving

According to new AAMI research, only one fifth of drivers aged 18-24 took regular breaks (every 2 hours) on a long trip in the past year and were the least likely age group to do this. Alarmingly 1 in 10 have had a microsleep while behind the wheel in the past year, or worse- have driven into another lane/oncoming traffic.

- Furthermore, almost 1 in 10 young drivers admit exhaustion was the cause of an accident or near-miss they had in the past 12 months where they were the driver.
- Under 25s are one of the least likelyⁱ to share the driving if a trip is longer than two hours
- One in 10 young drivers experienced excessive drowsiness while driving in the past year.
- One in five (21%) young drivers have used distraction techniques (cool air, loud music, caffeine) to stay awake behind the wheel.



Australian Road Safety Foundation (ARSF) support for Rest Towns

Russell White, CEO of the Australian Road Safety Foundation said he hoped young Aussie drivers would embrace the AAMI Rest Towns campaign, and place the safety of themselves, and other road users, ahead of arriving at a destination faster.

“Last year 25 people were killed on Australian roads over the Easter holiday period”, which is the worst it has been in ten years,” Mr White said.

“We know fatigue is a contributing factor to road trauma, so make sure you’re well rested by taking regular breaks every two hours, and if possible, share the driving with other passengers.

“Road conditions are going to be really different over Easter so expect more traffic and prepare to be patient. Most importantly, make sure you don’t drive at times when you’d normally be sleeping.

“This is particularly important for young drivers who won’t have much long- distance driving experience. They will also have reduced driving skills due to spending less time behind the wheel during the pandemic, which puts them at heightened risk for a crash.

“Our message to young drivers this Easter is simple – don’t push the limits, stop and take a break. Pressing on to get somewhere or overdoing things just isn’t worth the risk. It’s much better to arrive at your destination a little later than expected than not at all,” said White.

The AAMI Rest Towns playlist is available on Spotify until 30 April 2022.

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor:

To prepare for a trip and download your playlist, simply visit [AAMI’s Spotify](#) feature and follow the prompts. Drivers can find out more about the campaign, Australia’s rural hidden gems and best places to rest before departing at www.aami.com.au/resttowns

The research surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,491 Australians 18 years+, conducted by Kantar in October 2021 on behalf of the Suncorp Group.

Case studies available for interview/photos: A young driver embarking on an Easter road trip (ACT to NSW), and Tim and Tegan whose daughter Olivia (aged 8) was killed by a driver who had fallen asleep at the wheel (QLD).

Pre-recorded interviews with Kahl Dwight (AAMI), and Russell White (ARSF) are available to view and download on request.

State breakdown of AAMI data

Question	NAT	NSW /ACT	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS
In the past 12 months, what is the longest you have driven without stopping for a break?							
More than 4 hours	9%	10%	6%	13%	10%	7%	9%
In the past year, have you done any of the following?							



Woken early to start a long-distance drive but not gone to bed earlier night before	10%	12%	8%	10%	7%	9%	6%
Embarked on long-distance drive at the end of a workday to get to holiday destination earlier	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	9%
Fallen asleep at the wheel while driving	1%	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	2%
Had a microsleep while driving	4%	3%	5%	3%	2%	6%	4%
Experienced excessive drowsiness while driving	10%	10%	10%	7%	13%	15%	4%
Drifted into another lane/oncoming traffic	4%	4%	4%	2%	3%	5%	4%
Driving more than 8–10 hours in one day	8%	8%	5%	11%	11%	8%	2%
Shared the driving with someone else if the trip was longer than two hours	20%	20%	18%	23%	23%	21%	2%
Took breaks (every 2hrs) on a long trip	25%	29%	21%	27%	27%	19%	27%
Broke up a long trip with an overnight stay	14%	14%	10%	17%	14%	15%	17%
Used distraction techniques to stay awake while driving (cool air, loud music, caffeine)	16%	16%	15%	18%	15%	18%	15%

For further information about the AAMI Rest Towns campaign or to arrange an interview:

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ⁱ 40–49-year-olds are the least likely age group to share the driving if the trip is more than 2 hours.

ⁱⁱ 5-day period (Thursday through to Easter Monday). Source: www.data.gov.au