



## FROM THE COAST

### Roadwise in Esperance

Long weekends provide an opportunity for many of us to hit the road to visit loved ones in and out of Esperance so it's a good time to spare a thought for driver behaviour. "Driver behaviour" doesn't just mean obvious silliness, it is also the behaviour many consider harmless, such as eating on the way, glancing at the phone, or not belting up when you're just taking a short trip down a gravel road. It's hard to imagine these behaviours resulting in tragedy but they do, over and over again.

The Shire of Esperance's RoadWise Committee aims to eradicate road crashes in our region by encouraging people to stop and think about how they drive every time they get behind the wheel. In Esperance our road network is vast and unfortunately road crashes are common enough to cause gut wrenching reactions at the very sight of roadside white crosses from those in the community who've been heartbroken by incidents on our roads.

How hard is it to give driving your full attention, take regular breaks to eat, have a stretch, check your phone or even have a nap if you need it? It won't make much difference in time to your journey but it could make the world of difference to your family, friends, colleagues and community if it saves your life or someone else's.

The Shire is committed to the RoadWise Committee campaigns because they save lives. In February we won the award for Safe Road Use at the Local Government Road Safety Awards for the 'Enjoy the Ride' campaign. Whilst it was lovely to be recognised, what was more gratifying was the feedback and attendance at the campaign events that showed the community was behind us in spreading the message. WA Police reported less people speeding during a three day blitz implemented during November, and it appeared that people were getting the message.

This long weekend and over Easter and ANZAC Day we'd like to see the message continue to be heard. This Easter the Committee will hold a 'Blessing of the Roads' event in a bid to raise road safety awareness at this critical time of year on our roads. The community is invited to join the Committee on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7.00am at the Jetty Headland for a blessing ceremony followed by a community breakfast. The event will continue to promote the 'Enjoy the Ride' campaign to encourage the community to slow down on the roads and make sure we all arrive safely at our destination and appreciate spending time with loved ones as we 'Enjoy the Ride' over the coming long weekends.