



# ROAD MATTERS

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

PROVIDING COMMUNITY EDUCATION THAT CREATES RESPONSIBLE ROAD USERS AND SAFER COMMUNITIES.



### THIS MONTH: Distracted Driving

Distractions are anything that takes your attention off the task of driving, and while it would be a struggle to drive 100% distraction free, being aware of the different types of distractions and what they look like is key to reducing the amount of distractions you may face behind the wheel.

Distractions can be divided into four broad categories, or a combination of them: visual, such as looking at the dog someone is walking, auditory, such as listening to music, cognitive, such as engaging in a conversation, and physical, such as adjusting the vent positions. These can seem like small things, which could be one reason why people don't see them as a risk while driving, but whether you see them as a risk or not, they do still pose one.

Distraction was a factor in 34 road fatalities in Queensland alone in 2024, this risk can be minimised through preventive measures, such as having your phone on silent and ensuring that everything in your car is set up before taking off, but the most important one is just pulling over to deal with whatever it is that is taking your sole focus off the task of driving.

### Experts Discuss Blue Mountain's Convict Made Road

Last week, Transport for NSW talked with a group of engineers seeking to provide a solution to the closure of Mitchells Causeway, a small stretch of the Great Western Highway, about two and a half hours north-west of Sydney. The closure has been in place since Sunday, the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2026, due to the development of large cracks in the road.



Engineering experts from more than 20 companies across the globe were briefed on the situation, with proposed solutions to be submitted for shortlisting by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2026. Solutions need to restore the road back to a minimum of two lanes and maintain the same load capacity as prior to the closure.

Further in-depth cracking of the road has occurred, with road movement continuing despite the current closure.

Since March, it has been found that the bedrock under the west-bound lane is up to four meters lower than the bedrock under the east-bound lane.

Approximately 12,000 commuters cross Mitchells Causeway a day, and are currently being diverted along Bells Line of Road through to Lithgow.

Mitchells Causeway, also known as Convict Bridge, was built using convict labour in the 1830s.

### WHAT'S ON NEXT MONTH?

Next month is our **Road Safety Review**.

In May, we will be looking at the data that has become available since our last Road Safety Review 12 months ago.

We will talk about what's changed, how things have improved and what areas still need to be worked on.



What do you expect we will find?

### MONTHLY ROAD FACT

DID YOU KNOW?

You may have heard of the Smithsonian, but did you know that it's actually an institute consisting of more than 30 museums and education centres, founded in 1846?

Their purpose is to utilise historical and scientific collections, along with modern research, to make as much knowledge as possible accessible to the public.

**One of the Smithsonian Institute's collections is cars of significance, with around 80 vehicles in its collection, but when did it acquire the first car in its collection?**

- A) 1884
- B) 1899
- C) 1907
- D) 1911

ANSWER: B

### TRAFFIC OFFENDER INTERVENTION PROGRAM

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### ROAD TIP OF THE MONTH

### FOOD FIGHTS FATIGUE

We know that fatigue can be deadly when combined with road use; however, one aspect that is often overlooked is diet. While food is not a solution to a poor night's sleep, what you eat can help prevent fatigue from coming on prematurely. Eating nutritionally balanced and filling meals regularly is one part of a fatigue-fighting diet. The other is avoiding foods and drinks that will give you a temporary spike in energy followed by a comedown. Foods that are high in added sugar, or caffeine, are some of the things that can contribute to an energy spike and crash.

**Planning what you are going to eat while driving on long trips will help fight off fatigue.**



### KEY DATES • EVENTS TO REMEMBER

10th Mother's Day

15th Walk Safely to School Day

20th World Bee Day

29th Fatality Free Friday



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