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**10 December 2020**

## **Preparation is key as holidaymakers face busier roads this summer**

It's the summer for road trips, but new research from NRMA Insurance is warning of a lot more traffic on the roads this year, with an expected 20% increase<sup>1</sup> in the number of Australians planning a driving holiday this year.

As interstate travel restrictions gradually ease across the country, the NRMA Insurance poll shows 90% of Aussies who are going on a driving holiday are planning on travelling for more than two hours, with nearly one in ten (9%) planning a trip of more than 15 hours to reach their destination.

The school holidays will see the busiest traffic conditions, with nearly three-quarters going away in December and January.

But while Aussies may be eager to hit the road, many haven't factored in proper break times for their trip. Only half intend to take a break from driving the recommended frequency of every two hours, with over a quarter (26%) stating they'll only take a break from continuous driving every 3-4 hours.

NRMA Insurance Executive General Manager Claims Luke Gallagher said planning properly for a long road-trip helps make the journey safer – and more enjoyable – for everyone.

"It's encouraging to see that many drivers are planning to stop every two hours or less on their road trips this summer but preparing for a long journey should start before the day you set off. As well as taking regular breaks to stretch your legs and reset your mind, we also recommend getting a good night's sleep before setting off and doing some general maintenance on your car."

The NRMA Insurance Summer Road Trip research shows around half of drivers – 47% on average<sup>2</sup> – carry out any recommended maintenance on their vehicles before setting off on a road trip, while almost one in five (18%) admit they don't do any maintenance on their vehicle, or even plan their route, before setting off.

Only around 16% of those going on a road trip prepare in advance by checking apps for up-to-date information on traffic, the status of any bushfires along the route, or weather forecasts. However, more worryingly, nearly one in five (18%) admit they don't do any maintenance on their vehicle, or even plan their route, before setting off.

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<sup>1</sup> Pure Profile research commissioned by NRMA Insurance, November 2020: 65% of respondents stated they have planned or are considering a driving holiday in Australia this summer (December 2020 – February 2021) compared to the 46% who went on a driving holiday in Australia last summer.

<sup>2</sup> Get the car professionally serviced – 43%; Check tyre pressure – 61%; check water levels – 55%; change windscreen wipers – 25%; check oil levels – 50%

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### **How Aussies prepare for an upcoming road trip<sup>3</sup>:**

- 43% get their car professionally serviced
- 43% check tyre pressure
- 55% check water levels
- 25% change windscreen wipers
- 50% check oil levels
- 46% map the route
- 21% check where service stations / driver reviver stops are on the chosen route
- 20% check for any planned roadworks or weather alerts before setting off
- 16% download apps to get real-time alerts (e.g. LiveTraffic, NSW RFS Fires Near Me)
- 18% do 'none of the above'

Mr Gallagher added: "Make sure your car or caravan is kept in good working order at any time, but particularly before you head off on a long road trip. Get your car serviced if it's overdue, check your tyre pressure, top up your engine oil and coolants and check all brakes and indicator lights are working properly.

"You should also check conditions before setting off and even consider delaying your trip if the forecast shows a significant weather event or bushfire. If you do get stuck in bad conditions, adjust your driving to remain safe by slowing down, turning on your headlights and leaving enough room between you and other drivers."

### **To keep safe on a long road trip this summer, NRMA Insurance advises:**

- Get a good night's sleep before setting off. Getting eight hours' sleep will mean you're refreshed and in tip-top shape for a long road trip
- Make sure your vehicle is ready for the long trip ahead:
  - Get the car serviced
  - Check your tyres are pumped with the correct air pressure
  - Refuel
  - Top-up your engine oil and coolant to optimal levels
  - Check all breaks and lights are working properly and the car battery's connection is secure
- Have an emergency kit handy, including a spare tyre, jack, tyre lever, pump and any other tools that will come in handy in case of a break down, including a basic first aid kit
- Pack essential supplies such as food, water, tissues and in-car chargers
- Store luggage safely
- Restrain children and pets correctly
- Choose the best travel route
- Take regular breaks – if you're travelling for more than two hours, take regular breaks to stretch your legs and reset your mind
- Check weather conditions before setting off and plan accordingly, even delaying your plans if the forecast is for storms

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<sup>3</sup> Pure Profile research commissioned by NRMA Insurance, November 2020

# Media Release



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## **About NRMA Insurance**

NRMA Insurance is one of Australia's most trusted general insurance providers – helping people protect the things they care about since 1920. It has a long proud history of working with communities to build their resilience against severe weather and keep people safer on the road.

Almost three million customers across NSW, Queensland, ACT and Tasmania choose NRMA Insurance to protect their homes, vehicles, businesses, motorcycles, boats, pets and travel. In 2019, more than 350,000 claims were paid.

NRMA Insurance is backed by IAG, the largest general insurer in Australia and New Zealand and operator of some of Australia's biggest insurance brands including CGU, SGIO, SGIC and WFI.

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