MEDIA RELEASE

RACS welcomes new Australian Trauma Registry funding announcement prior to the festive season

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Yesterday’s announcement will mean governments will have more data to make better decisions around how to reduce road trauma, leading to improved medical practice, with better outcomes for patients and to the health system.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull yesterday, accompanied by the Minister for Health & Aged Care Sussan Ley and the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Darren Chester, announced new funding for the Australian Trauma Registry (ATR) to monitor the incidence of severe injuries on our roads. The ATR is a collaborative effort of Australia’s 27 Major Trauma Centres and currently tracks major injuries in Australia—road trauma (including motor vehicles, pedestrian and cyclists), major falls, gunshot wounds and stabbings.

The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics has worked closely with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) and the National Trauma Research Institute (NTRI) over the past twelve months to develop arrangements which will detail the number and characteristics of injuries of people severely injured.

Chair of the RACS Trauma Committee Dr John Crozier says the registry, which is hosted by the NTRI, is a vital tool in tracking the burden of injury on the healthcare system.

"Injury is the leading cause of death and disability in people aged less than 45 years in Australia. In 2010, all Australian governments committed to a 30% reduction in serious injury and deaths on our roads by 2020. Today’s announcement is a significant step towards improving trauma services across the country," Dr Crozier said.

“This is an important milestone for road safety in Australia,” he said. “We would like to acknowledge the work of the Australian Automobile Association, the Australasian College of Road Safety and the Pedestrian Council of Australia for their commitment to this outcome.

“We would also like to acknowledge the significant commitment the Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, and Minister for Health have made by providing $450,000 over three years to improve data collection on serious injury.

“This complements a total in-kind contribution of an estimated $1.85 million from participating hospital sites, a $50,000 contribution from The Alfred Foundation and bio-statistical support from Monash University’s Department of Epidemiology and Preventative Medicine.”

The estimated cost of road trauma to the whole community is $27 billion per annum.

This is a timely reminder to the community to drive carefully this Christmas as we strive for zero road trauma.

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About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.

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