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TITLE: WSROC SPEED YOU LOSE – Phases 1-5

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(linked to Powerpoint presentation)

ABSTRACT:

WSROC: 'Speed You Lose' Phases 1-5

The WSROC (Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils) "Speed You Lose" campaign has been running for over 4 years in Western Sydney and has utilised a number of effective education strategies to reach the target audience. The campaign is a result of the joint activities of the Road Safety Officers in the affiliated councils.

The objectives of the project (Phase 1-5) are to:

- Reduce death and injury caused by speeding in identified locations in each LGA.
- Reduce the number of speeding infringements in each LGA
- Raise awareness of the consequences of speeding
- Decrease the social acceptability of speeding
- Put speeding on the youth and broader community agenda

Strategies used over the four years include voxpop radio ads, press ads, national media coverage, hot air balloon, banners, t-shirts, stickers, cinema advertising, pizza deliveries, displays in pubs and more.

In phase 5 the WSROC Councils joined forces with the local police. Using speed monitoring equipment, accident and speed blackspots were targeted. Drivers saw visual radar displays at the kerbside displaying the driver's speed as they pass. This was followed up by police enforcement within the next couple of days. Pre, during and post project data was obtained from traffic/speed counts at each site. Special stickers with the project slogan were produced to be placed on the side of wheelie bins.

Each phase of the project has evaluated well. The project continues to be sustainable in the long term and therefore has a high profile in the community.

PAPER:

This paper outlines the success of the Speed You Lose Campaign. This Campaign is distinctive in two ways:

1. It is a Regional Campaign, which incorporates nine local government areas (this is shortly to be increased to ten with the acceptance of Auburn City Council into the fold).
2. It has been run over a five year period – five stages – and has responded to both local and regional needs in the education for speed reduction.

It is worthwhile to briefly reflect on the history of this group and the way that the often conflicting needs of various Councils have been brought together in a positive way – ultimately targeting the common goals and issues.

WHAT IS WSROC:

The acronym WSROC stands for the Western Sydney Region of Councils. Founded in November 1973 the mission statement of WSROC is to:

Secure through research, lobbying and the fostering of communication between councils a sustainable lifestyle for the people of Western Sydney and the provision of infrastructure.

HISTORY OF THE WSROC , RSO SUB-COMMITTEE:

- Sydney Region of the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) had initiated the Road Safety Officer pilot programme in Fairfield Council in 1992.
- The success of the pilot saw Road Safety Officers placed in many Councils across the Sydney Region. Under the guidance of the RTA these early Road Safety Officers met each month to share information and often the trials and tribulations of the introduction of an educational/behavioural focus to road safety issues at their local Council.
- The growth of the programme eventually led to the division of Sydney Road Safety Officers into three geographically determined groups for these information and resource sharing meetings.
- The WSROC – Road Safety Officers Committee was one such group. The group commenced in 1995 meeting on a monthly basis.

The WSROC Road Safety Officer Sub-Committee includes the local government areas of:

Baulkham Hills
Blacktown
Blue Mountains
Fairfield
Hawkesbury
Holroyd
Liverpool
Parramatta
Penrith

Auburn Council's application for membership into WSROC was considered at the board meeting on 12 October and it is expected that they will be added to the WSROC register shortly.

THE FORMATION

These local government areas of WSROC account geographically for over 25% of the population of NSW and geographically approximately 40% of the Sydney Metropolitan area.

The WSROC Road Safety Officers Committee was formed originally as a Sub-Committee of the Traffic Engineers, which were a sub-committee of the Technical Committee. Over time this group of Road Safety Officers paid particular attention to the alignment with WSROC as an organisation. The result of this was that the Road Safety Officer Committee is now on equal footing in the organisation with the Traffic Engineers Committee and we report directly to the Technical Committee, which is made up of the Directors of Engineering. Nevertheless the partnerships by nature of the road safety issue remain extremely active and strong.

The WSROC Group of Road Safety Officers are currently writing a Regional Strategic Plan for the adoption into the WSROC Management Plan – this is a first and is seen as a positive direct consequence of a successful alliance – the SPEED YOU LOSE CAMPAIGN has contributed significantly to this evolution.

THE CHALLENGE

The WSROC Road Safety Officers although recognising common issues and target areas initially had difficulty in the design of a joint Road Safety initiative that had community relevance across all Council areas.

For the first joint project the WSROC, RSO Sub Committee investigated relevant crash statistics to identify issues of common concern for Road Safety Officers in the region. These investigations revealed that young speeding males were a major factor in fatal and serious injury car accidents in the west of Sydney. It was therefore determined to formulate a speed reduction campaign targeting young drivers that was appropriate to the WSROC area. Although, common targets and objectives proved no problem to identify it was quite tricky to formulate a campaign that met the local aims of each participating local government area.

Prior to the commencement of the planning phase, notice of a speed and young driver campaign was given to the Technical Committee and minuted for their endorsement and support.

The SPEED YOU LOSE Campaign was the first successful campaign to come out of this process of partnership.

Today, I will be outlining the 5 stages of the SPEED YOU LOSE CAMPAIGN which has evaluated positively over the course of it's five stages.

Due to the ongoing commitment of so many Councils to this project it was deemed appropriate in SPEED YOU LOSE Stage Three to contract an outside company to provide a quantitative evaluation of this project. It was recognised that this process takes up significant funds but given the long term nature of this project it was deemed most appropriate.

SPEED YOU LOSE – SUMMARY OF THE FIVE STAGES:

1. September – December 1996 –

Aim – To reduce the involvement of young people, particularly young males, in speed related road trauma.

Objectives – To raise awareness of the consequences of speeding
To decrease the social acceptability of speeding
Put speeding on the youth agenda

Target Group –

Primary: 17 – 25 year old males
Secondary: Young females – (often passengers)

Summary –

- “Vox Pop” street interviews created utilising Communications Students from the University of Western Sydney.
- Thirty interviews in a variety of localities were used to extract pertinent messages to edit into a 30 second radio tape reflecting a strong “youth to youth” message on the dangers and consequences of speeding.
- A western Sydney radio station was chosen on the basis of affordability and popularity with the target audience.
- The campaign included 4 weeks of air time for the 30 second commercial, which totalled 208 announcements. This translates into 52 commercials per week across 5 time slots each day.
- The advertisement also aired on 2MMM and community radio stations.

2. April – May 1997 –

- Taking the one message from Campaign 1 – SPEED YOU LOSE – which reflected the essence of the “Vox Pop” messages.
- Major strategy was a competition run in conjunction with a western Sydney radio station, titled – GO SLOW – WIN BIG and asking entrants to compose a road safety ad or lyric. The prize was \$1000 of stereo equipment and all entrants received a Speed You Lose T-Shirt. These T-shirts were to prove hugely popular and are still to be seen around western Sydney at times.
- One FM – extended its Phase One agreement and ran free community advertising for this project.
- Print Media advertising also supported this campaign.

3. December 1997 – January 1998 -

- The Evaluative Phase: Formal evaluation by a Market Research Firm.

Aimed at assessing the validity of our message to our audience, message recognition and effectiveness of our chosen mediums for conveying the message “SPEED YOU LOSE”.

In summary over half of the 300 respondents could complete the message SPEED YOU-----

The most effective medium for advertising was seen to be the banners.

- The Formal Launch of the project.

Additionally -

- Building on the success of phases 1 & 2 – continued the same format in phase 3.
- Given the high profile of the speeding issue for young males it was deemed appropriate to “launch” this phase of the campaign in a high profile manner – to attract wider media coverage with a greater audience reach.
- Chosen for its contrast in speed of movement to a speeding car – an early morning breakfast launch was organised using a HOT AIR BALLOON which then circled western Sydney adorned with the SPEED YOU LOSE SLOGAN.
- The event was highly successful and was attended by high profile dignitaries, celebrities and guests. The response from mainstream Sydney media was excellent.
- Used an intensive radio advertising programme.
- Distributed 20,000 campaign stickers.
- 80 taxi back advertisements.
- Used banners over highways in the region.
- Press coverage by local and state media.

3. October – December 1998 –

Designed using the learning experiences of the first 3 phases and the results of the commercially commissioned evaluation (Micromex Marketing). The consistency of the message SPEED YOU LOSE was seen to be important whilst expanding the campaign by introducing the “consequences of speeding”.

Campaign Components included:

- Cinema Advertising – as 60% of our target audience attended cinemas on a weekly basis.
- 40,000 Scratch Lottery tickets designed to scratch the correct speed on the odometer or SPEED YOU LOSE were created and distributed throughout western Sydney.
- Pizza Box stickers and distributed by Dominoes and other pizza establishments throughout western Sydney.
- Local Cinema Centre Launches in each local government area with approx 150 people in attendance who were offered the opportunity to EAT, SIT AND SCRATCH – the campaign elements of eating a pizza, sitting through a movie and scratching a prize.
- Campaign banners were again in place.

4. December 1999 – March 2000 –

This stage marked a refinement of the Primary objectives and the Primary Target.

Objectives -

- To reduce the death and injury caused by speeding in identified areas in each LGA.

- To reduce the number of speeding infringements in each LGA.

Primary Target –

- All drivers who drive in excess of the posted speed limit in each LGA, particularly in the 0-15 and 15-30 km/h range.
- The main focus issue being that there are consequences to speeding, there is no such thing as safe speeding and the limit is the limit.

Campaign Components –

- Speed You Lose Banners over major roads.
- Road Side Speed Monitor in each LGA positioned at key locations nominated by Highway Patrol as being “Blackspots” for speeding infringements. Also used in special zones such as schools and in response to resident concerns.
- Local Area Police Commands supported the “radar education” sites with follow up enforcement.
- Campaign watches were created in small numbers for sending to local and regional media including radio stations. This was designed as a form of “Guerilla marketing” to attract coverage.
- Letterbox drop of “Bin Stickers” for residents which provided the SPEED YOU LOSE message for permanent display on "otto" bins. This was very successful and this small commitment by residents has led to a lasting campaign message – at least on bin nights – but it is heartening to see this message on nine out of ten bins in some streets.
- WSROC – Website – containing campaign information.
- Press Advertisement.

SUSTAINABILITY –

- Each Road Safety Officer is currently utilising the Speed Radar for ongoing projects and in response to resident demand.
- Guidelines for the ongoing management of this device are being handled by individual RSO's.

RSO COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

It is important to maintain the local flavour of these regional campaigns so each Road Safety Officer supplements each campaign with a variety of local events and activities. Over the years these have included:

- Banners over main roads
- Local newspaper editorial
- Display
- Stickers
- Shop-a-dockets
- Battle of the Bands

DATA OVER THE COURSE OF THE CAMPAIGN

- **1995**, 34% of all fatal accidents and 18% of serious injury accidents were speed related.
- Young males 17 – 25 years old are 8 times more likely than the general population of the WSROC Region to be a controller in a speed related crash.
- 53% of speeding drivers involved in accidents were within the target age group.
- **1999**, while drivers aged 17 – 25 continue to be over-represented in serious injury and fatality statistics, anecdotal reports from regional highway patrols indicates that a significant proportion of speeding infringements also occur in older age groups.
- Road Safety Researchers hypothesise, that older drivers do not show up in the accident statistics because they are more experienced and skilled in handling their vehicle and in dealing with the unplanned incidents which occur in the road environment.
- This same evidence also brings out the point that in the older age range the majority of speeding infringements are issued in the low to mid range speeding categories. This is probably the reason why older drivers are involved less in serious car accidents as high range speeding infringements are more frequently issued to young male drivers.

- This has meant that in Phase 5 the SPEED YOU LOSE Campaign has evolved to target all drivers driving over the speed limit.

RESULTS TO DATE:

- The campaign has evaluated well both quantitatively via the Micromex contracted survey and utilising Process methods.
- The use of the Speed Monitoring devices has provided data which shows a marked reduction in speed when the device is in operation and a subsequent reduction in follow up Police Infringements issued when compared with pre-data.
- Young Drivers, however, still continue to be over-represented in accident statistics in western Sydney.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF A REGIONAL CAMPAIGN

We've all heard of the three E's – well this can be summarised using the THREE C's =

1. Collaboration –

Provides a support for Road Safety Officers – particularly useful when new RSO's commence.

2. Communication –

Information flow, distribution of research.

3. Creativity –

Expands the skills of each RSO – better targeted messages.

4. CASH –

Pooling of cash resources – commonly known in economic terms as economies of scale.

And the last "C":

CONCLUSION – WHERE TO FROM HERE:

It has been a privilege to be involved with the evolution of this project – in returning to the original campaigns it is obvious that over time the planning, organisation and delivery of the campaigns has become more sophisticated. Certainly, the ability to understand the role and function of a Regional Campaign has been an outcome of the SPEED YOU LOSE experience.

The early days were fraught with uncertainties and often differences of opinion became huge sticking points – certainly WSROC still encourages a healthy argument of topics and nutting out of campaign strategies BUT what is in place, is a structure that supports the organisation of Regional Campaigns.

It is in place because SPEED YOU LOSE as one albeit a high profile joint campaign has evaluated successfully and each Road Safety Officer has found it an important part of their Action Plan.

Therefore, the success of Regional RSO's coordinating a specific campaign lies in the commitment of each Council to both the regional and localised strategies, good Committee chairmanship and regular contact. Rather than working towards a common goal with disparate approaches, we are working together in all ways and are motivated by the synergy that this approach creates.