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3 October 2023

The Honorable Eva Lawler  
Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics  
Northern Territory Government  
[minister.lawler@nt.gov.au](mailto:minister.lawler@nt.gov.au)

Dear Minister Lawler

On behalf of Katherine Town Council, we write to seek your support for a first for the Northern Territory, Katherine Town Council's initiative to construct roadside trivia signs to combat driver fatigue.

Driver Reviver Trivia, also known as "fatigue zone trivia", is a method of ensuring that drivers never drive tired or distracted by providing some interest and, if there is someone else in the car, prompts a bit of discussion trying to come up with an answer. Fatigue contributes to 20-30% of all deaths and severe injuries on Australian roads.

At the Katherine Town Council's August 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting, the project to erect trivia signs on the Stuart Highway, within the Council's Municipality area, was unanimously approved. A sub committee of elected members was established to choose the first trivia questions relating to Katherine. It is anticipated that the signage questions will be changed on a regular rotational basis.

Our initiative was informed by research that shows over 50% of fatigue related crashes happen within 25 km of the departure point. This project is specifically designed to reduce the driver fatigue that occurs mainly from Katherine residents needing to attend Darwin and return to Katherine in the same day. Katherine residents frequently drive the 600 km, 6 hours round trip to Darwin and back in a day.

The Stuart Highway between Katherine and Darwin does not have enough rest stops or overtaking lanes, to cope with the volume of traffic, road trains and tourist vehicles, making it a long drive without breaks to complete in a day. Again, research shows on a long road trip, the closer drivers are to home, they start to relax and consequently are more at risk of succumbing to fatigue, contributing to road accidents.

The Katherine Town Council boundary toward Darwin sits at around the 40-kilometre mark, in the Edith Falls area. Initially we anticipated placing our trivia signs on Jawoyn land, running alongside the highway corridor. However on further investigation we note the highway corridor is approximately 200 metres wide, therefore for the signage to be safe and effective, will need to sit within the road corridor, which is DIPL controlled.

The driver reviver signs are not a new idea, and are successfully used in many other Australian states, but this initiative by Katherine Town Council is a first for the Northern Territory.

We would ask you to support our road safety and community safety initiative, to assist us seeking permission from Dipl in a timely manner. The signs have been ordered, to meet the criteria of the NT

Governments' "criteria for advertising in road reserves" and following the Australian standards for font size, distance and speed considerations.

Our application was lodged on 2<sup>nd</sup> October electronically with Dipl. However, there were technical issues, as we were unable to pinpoint our sign locations via the website. We have followed up with an email.

We believe as a Council we have a responsibility for the safety of our community, as road users as well. We hope that you will support our initiative and that you may even consider assisting us with its promotion. With the recent worst road fatalities experienced in some time in the Northern Territory, happening between Katherine and Pine Creek, it seems a timely reminder of the work we have to do and we hope our initiative will be successful in its application.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our CEO, Ingrid Stonhill.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Elisabeth Clark  
Mayor



Ingrid Stonhill  
CEO

Cc Louise McCormack  
Andrew Kirkman