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From General Manager, Orange City Council
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‘Free Cuppa for the Driver’ launches its 7th year of road safety campaigning

The seventh year of the multi-award winning ‘Free Cuppa for the Driver’ initiative was launched at the Old Dubbo Gaol on Wednesday 1 March and will run through until Wednesday 31 May in a bid to reduce fatigue related crashes on NSW roads.

Free Cuppa for the Driver is a successful initiative that allows drivers who have travelled more than 100 kilometres from the address on their drivers licence to qualify for a free cup of tea or coffee from a choice of 92 participating businesses in areas that stretch from the Queensland border down to the Victorian border in Central and South West NSW.

The launch welcomed Member for Dubbo, Mr Troy Grant along with other special guests including Acting Superintendent of the Orana Local Area Command, Mr Scott Tanner, Dubbo Regional Council's Administrator, Mr Michael Kneipp, Coordinator of Regional NSW High Productivity Road Transport's Alliance, Mr John Morris, Commissioner NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, Mr Mark Gibson ESM and Dubbo business owner Mr Michael Dodd.

Tony Grant highlighted at the launch that road fatalities have been going against previous trends and have increased rather than decreased from the year beforehand. Mr Grant emphasised on how important initiatives like Free Cuppa for the Driver are given the recent increase in fatalities on NSW roads.

Road Safety Officer for Orange City and Cabonne Shire Councils, Andrea Hamilton - Vaughan, explained that this initiative targets drivers travelling in areas with NSW highways and roads that are the gateway to major cities, such as Melbourne and Brisbane. These highways include the Castlereagh, Gwydir, Golden, Great Western, Hume, Mitchell, Newell and Oxley.

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Fatigue is one of the biggest killers on NSW roads with it contributing to 72 fatal crashes in NSW over the last 12 months.

“Free Cuppa for the Driver doesn’t just target drivers travelling in cars or caravans but also heavy vehicles, because truck drivers also face the risk of becoming fatigued whilst driving,” Ms Hamilton-Vaughan said.

Since its inception in 2010, over 5,700 free cuppas have been given away from 185 participating businesses throughout 161 cities, towns and villages in Western NSW.

Acting Superintendent for Orana Local Area Command, Mr Scott Tanner, is in full support of this initiative and reducing easily preventable fatigue related crashes by encouraging drivers to stop for a free cuppa and have a break.

“This Project, the Free Cuppa for the Driver, is a great time for drivers to say ok we are going to pull over in the next town and we are going to have a free cup of coffee,” Mr Tanner said.

Drivers can use the Free Cuppa for the Driver App and its GPS tracking technology to find a nearby participating business and the type of parking available. There is also a Free Cuppa website and Facebook page that offers useful information on participating businesses and the initiative itself. www.freecuppa.com.au

Visitor Information Centres from Victoria up to Queensland have received Free Cuppa for the Driver brochures which include information about participating businesses, competitions and contact details of coordinators of the initiative.

For any queries on Free Cuppa for the Driver please contact Orange City and Cabonne Council Road Safety Officer, Andrea Hamilton - Vaughan, on 02 6393 86200 or by email ahamilton – Vaughan@orange.nsw.gov.au.

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