



DRIVER SAFETY BULLETIN - THE DAILY COMMUTE

A recent survey conducted by Galaxy Research on behalf of Renault Australiaⁱ has found that 83% of drivers find their daily commute to work more stressful than their work itself and that this problem is growing, with 89% of respondents believing that traffic is only getting worse. The survey found that the majority of this stress was due to traffic jams, gridlock, and that the evening commute was the most stressful period of the day. Stress behind the wheel can often lead to a higher chance of being involved in a motor vehicle incident, which means that drivers are more likely to be involved in incidents during the evening commute. This coincides with data collected by Innovation Group as part of our yearly comprehensive benchmarking analysis, indicating that 28% of all fleet vehicle incidents typically occur in the 3-5:59pm time bracket in 2010ⁱⁱ.

Some tips to make your daily commute safer, and less stressful:

- If you are finding the route home particularly congested and stressful, try taking a different route home. It may take a little longer, but you will arrive home relaxed and with less chance of being involved in an incident. This approach also keeps you more alert to the road environment, as you can become complacent driving the same route day-in-day-out.
- Reduce your reliance on car usage for certain activities. Our perception that cars are always the fastest way of travel may not always be accurate. In most large cities, train speeds can match and exceed the average traffic speed.ⁱⁱⁱ Using public transport can also have a positive impact on the environment and reduce your contribution to carbon emissions – not to mention reduce your stress levels and enhance your safety.
- Few people carpool but it can greatly reduce traffic congestion, as well as save money in petrol costs.
- Try to leave earlier or later to skip rush hour where possible.
- Listen to traffic reports for delays and if possible use free internet services to try to find an alternate route to your destination.

- If you are stuck in traffic, try listening to the radio or a good CD to help pass the time and keep you relaxed.
- Remember that other drivers are stressed too. Try to be courteous and not react to other driver's bad behaviour.
- Be conservative when making plans after work and always leave plenty of time to get to your destination in traffic, after all, it's no good being dead on time!

**Safe Driving,
The team at Innovation Group.**

ⁱ Renault Latitude Driver Stress Study, July 2011, Galaxy Research

ⁱⁱ Based upon an analysis of over 40,000 motor vehicle claims lodged with Innovation Group in 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Australia Institute (2005) Discussion Paper No. 78. Flood, M; Barbato, C.