



8 January 2020

## **Never leave children and pets alone in your car**

With the weather warming up again tomorrow and school holidays in full swing, RACT is reminding Tasmanians of the dangers of children and pets becoming locked in a car.

Between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2019, the RACT Roadside patrols received callouts to 99 children and 126 pets, as well as 16 adults, locked in cars.

RACT Executive General Manager, Membership and Community, Stacey Pennicott, said it only took a moment to accidentally become locked in a car and the consequences could be devastating.

“The temperature inside a parked vehicle on a typical summer’s day could be 30 to 40 degrees Celsius hotter than outside,” she said.

“On a day like tomorrow when the forecast temperature in Hobart is 28 degrees, it means that the temperature inside a car could be as high as 68 degrees.

“And it doesn’t even have to be a particularly hot day – even at 22 degrees like today the interior of a car could rise up to 62 degrees.”

Ms Pennicott said the effects of being locked in a car on a warm day were rapid and could be devastating.

“As the temperature inside a vehicle increases, any child or pet locked in a car can begin to develop heat stress and start to dehydrate,” she said.

“In addition, young children are more sensitive to heat than older children or adults, meaning they can be at greater risk of heat stroke and other health risks.

“It is a pretty simple message – don’t leave children or pets unattended in a car, even for a moment.”

Ms Pennicott said RACT would prioritise callouts to children, pets and adults locked in cars, and you don’t have to be a member to receive the service.

“We just want to make sure everyone is safe,” she said.

Ms Pennicott said if a member of the public noticed a child locked in a car and the owner was unknown to them, Tasmania Police should be advised immediately by calling triple zero (000).

In relation to animals, police should be called on 13 14 44.

Further advice re animals locked in vehicles should be directed to the RSPCA.

Other facts to consider:

- Darker coloured cars can reach slightly higher temperatures when parked in the sun.
- The colour of the interior trim has little impact on the speed the temperature inside a car increases.
- Tinted windows make little difference to the temperature of the interior of a vehicle.
- A large car can heat up just as quickly as a small car.
- Having the windows down five centimetres causes only the slightest decrease in temperature.

Released by:

Nicolas Turner  
Tel: 6210 5206 or 0418 538 865