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RACT issues winter warning ahead of long-weekend get away

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease and Tasmanians prepare for a long-weekend getaway the RACT is calling on motorists to stay safe.

RACT's Community Manager, Will Oakley, said that there are a number of common problems that motorists should look out for.

"This is the first weekend of winter, the first weekend since COVID-19 restrictions were eased and the last state-wide long weekend for a number of months, so it's vital that people check their vehicles before heading out to enjoy a weekend with family and friends," Mr Oakley said.

"Over the last three years, we've conducted more than 400 Winter Safety Checks and found a number of key trends. Of the vehicles checked:

- 30 per cent required a light to be replaced
- 24 per cent required a top up of oil or other fluids
- 20 per cent of vehicles had batteries that needed attention
- 19 per cent had either flat or worn tyres
- 14 per cent had issues relating to seatbelts and/or child restraints
- 13 per cent required new wiper blades

"These problems are all relatively easy to fix, but if you don't pick them up early they can lead to significant problems and potentially even contribute to serious crashes or even fatalities. With many vehicles sitting idle for weeks during the lockdown, motorists need to be extra vigilant.

"The weather forecasts are also concerning and we are urging motorists to stay safe on the roads. We've already seen a 55 per cent increase in battery problems compared to this time last year, so motorists really need to understand the impact the lockdown has had on their vehicle.

"The Tasmanian community has done an amazing job when it comes to following simple rules to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and we would encourage people to take the same approach to road safety. We are also calling on the community this long weekend to avoid the fatal five while on our roads - speed, inattention, seatbelts, fatigue and drink/drug driving."