



# MEDIA RELEASE

For Release April 25, 2007 – 10:00 A.M.

## OPERATION LOOKOUT<sup>®</sup>: Intervening to Prevent Impaired Driving

### April 25, 2007 (Ottawa, ON)

In recognition of the **First United Nations Global Road Safety** week, Ontario Community Council on Impaired Driving (OCCID) and Ottawa Alliance on Impaired Driving (OAID) are reminding the public of the role they can play to prevent impaired driving by participating in Operation Lookout<sup>®</sup>.

Operation Lookout<sup>®</sup> intervenes to remove unsafe drivers from the roads, and also deters potential impaired drivers by communicating an increased likelihood of apprehension. Road users are asked to report suspected impaired drivers by calling 9-1-1 or \*0PP.

“Drunk, drugged and fatigued drivers put us all at risk on our roads”, Mary Purnell, OCCID Vice-President and victim. “Operation Lookout has been recognized by Health Canada as a valuable program to deal with repeat offenders. Police services running Operation Lookout have seen four-fold increases in the number of calls, saving lives on our roads”.

At the OPP Ottawa Detachment Mary Purnell and OCCID President Shelley Timms with OAID representatives will present officers with signage that can be used to promote Operation Lookout at roadside in the rural Ottawa regions. OCCID gratefully acknowledges support from Acting/Deputy Chief Knowlton Roberts with Ottawa Police Service, S/Sgt Tim Pierce with Ontario Provincial Police, and Sgt. Jamie Johnston with the RCMP National Collision Reconstruction Program.

According to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon “Road traffic collisions kill nearly 1.2 million people worldwide every year, and injure millions more”. In Canada 2,725 people were killed in traffic collisions in 2004 and 212,000 injured.

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# BACKGROUND

## Operation Lookout

Operation Lookout was trademarked in 1992 by Against Drunk Driving (ADD) and today operates in almost 50 communities across Canada and is managed by Ontario Community Council on Impaired Driving (OCCID). The program provides an extremely timely approach to addressing all forms of unsafe driving (drugs, drinking and fatigue) and can even help someone suffering from a medical emergency while driving.

The program typically runs in communities in collaboration with Public Health and local police, local businesses and community groups (e.g. OSAID, MADD, Action Sudbury, Focus Coalitions).

47 communities are currently involved with Operation Lookout:

Amhurstberg, Bancroft, Belleville, Brockville, Bruce Peninsula, Chatham, Cornwall, Edmonton, Elgin County, Elliott Lake, Fredericton, Frontenac, Gananoque, Grenville, Grey County, Guelph, Haldimand, Hamilton, Hastings, Hawkesbury, Huron, Ingersoll, Kingston, Leeds, Lennox and Addington, Little Current/Manitoulin, London, Manitoba, Markstay, Napanee, Norfolk, Oshawa, Ottawa, Owen Sound, Peterborough, Port Hope, Prescott, St. Catharines, St. Thomas, Sharbot Lake, South Bruce, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Tillsonburg, Timmins, Toronto, and Woodstock.

Police Services across Canada have supported Operation Lookout for decades with the initial support for the program coming from Peel Regional Police; 24 OPP detachments and many more municipal services currently support Operation Lookout.

Health Canada acknowledges Operation Lookout as a valuable tool in removing impaired drivers from the road; focus testing by Strategic Counsel in 2003 determined that there has been a fundamental shift in the social climate around impaired driving – making a program like Operation Lookout possible.

## First United Nations Global Road Safety Week

This First United Nations Global Road Safety Week -- dedicated to young road users -- is a platform for improving safety for the hundreds of millions of young people who travel the world's roads every day.

Since World Health Day 2004, and subsequent discussions in the United Nations General Assembly, Governments and their partners have paid increased attention to road safety. But there is still much progress to be made. Road traffic collisions kill nearly 1.2 million people worldwide every year, and injure millions more. They are the leading cause of death for people aged 10 to 24 years, with devastating impact on families and communities.

Road traffic deaths and injuries also place an enormous strain on a country's health care system, and on the national economy in general. In regions where young people constitute a major part of the population, the problem is even more acute. On average, road traffic injuries cost low- and middle-income countries more than one per cent of their Gross National Product. For all these reasons, road traffic injuries are an important obstacle to development.