SAFE SYSTEMS: A LITTLE LESS CONVERSATION, A LITTLE MORE ACTION - THE PARKES ELVIS FESTIVAL STREET PARADE EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

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Each January in Parkes NSW, some 15,000 Elvis fans line the streets of Parkes to witness the annual Elvis Festival Street Parade. The centrepiece of the Parkes Elvis Festival, the parade includes all manner of Elvii walking, riding, driving and dancing on a vast range of vehicles. It attracts regional, national and international media coverage.

This intense scrutiny of the parade prompted Parkes Shire Council to establish a parade planning group in 2009, with the objective of improving the safety of the parade for participants and spectators. The parade planning group was comprised of local emergency service personnel, key council staff and Elvis festival volunteers, each with their own unique perspective on the parade.

This paper provides an overview of how safe system principles were implemented into the conduct of the parade. The process and controls implemented by Parkes Shire Council are transportable for other councils to plan parades in their LGAs to ensure the safety of both participants and spectators.

Key Words: Safe Systems, Safer Roads, Safer People, Safer Vehicles, Safer Speeds, Street Parades