

MEDIA STATEMENT

Artwork to help clean up the coast

Main Roads is calling on volunteer artists to help brighten up Sunshine Coast streets.

Main Roads Regional Director Dennis Tennant said the trial project, Sunshine Coast Smart Art, will be run in conjunction with Urban Smart Projects to reduce the incidences of graffiti on the coast.

"Graffiti vandals have targeted traffic signal boxes for decades but now Sunshine Coast artists have the chance to use them as a canvas," Mr Tennant said.

"This is an issue that concerns all levels of government and this project is just another step in Main Roads' fight against graffiti and littering on the coast.

"The project will compliment the department's Graffiti Memorandum of Understanding with Sunshine Coast Regional Council, which has been developed to guide future graffiti and litter removal strategies for both Main Roads and council."

Urban Smart Projects Principal Consultant Catherine Ovenden said the quirky idea was a great way for artists to become recognised.

"Painting traffic signal boxes is a wonderful activity that gets your work out on the streets, enhances the look of roadways and fosters community pride," Ms Ovenden said.

"It is an ideal way for artists to refine their work, improve their work output and adjust to publicity.

"Many traffic signal box artists have gone on to fabulous high-profile careers as full-time exhibiting artists and some are now working in London and New York."

The Brisbane version of the project, Artforce, has been running since 1999 and proven to be successful in deterring graffiti artists.

Mr Tennant said results from the Brisbane project had showed unpainted traffic signal boxes were targeted by graffiti artists three times faster than painted boxes.

"Similar results to the Brisbane project are expected on the Sunshine Coast," he said.

Painting is set to begin in the next couple of weeks to include 32 boxes in Coolum, Maroochydore, Alexandra Headland, Buderim, Caloundra and Nambour.

Any interested artists should contact Urban Smart Projects on 1300 872 022 or email info@qldue.com.au

More information regarding this project can be found at www.urbansmartprojects.com

Ends

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