#SlowDown in the #OrangeZone

Saskatchewan Government Insurance’s (SGI) 2019 July Traffic Safety Spotlight focus was work zones. This year a number of organizations were asked to participate, including the SCSA, the Heavy Construction Safety Association of Saskatchewan (HCSAS), WorkSafe Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, and Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association.

The key message for the 2019 media campaign emphasized both road safety and workplace safety, reminding drivers to pay attention and to slow to 60 km/h (or the speed that’s posted) when passing a highway worker, flag person or highway equipment with warning lights flashing.

“These workers are our friends, neighbours, and family members – it’s important that we do our part to get them home safe,” said Collin Pullar, President of the Saskatchewan Construction Safety Association. “Each year there are hundreds of speed-related collisions in Saskatchewan work zones resulting in both driver and worker injury. The sad reality is that sometimes there are even fatalities. Through awareness and education, we can prevent many incidents and close calls in our work zones and help create the safest construction environment in Canada.”

Through the months of July and August the SCSA ran a series of radio ads on Rawlco Radio throughout the province that featured Pullar and the Green Zone’s Jamie Nye the Sports Guy. There were four different ads to the campaign that, in addition to reminding drivers to slow down, offered humorous suggestions on passing the time in construction zones, from sing-a-longs and car karaoke to playing eye spy. The ads can be heard on the SCSA’s YouTube channel.

To examine the effectiveness of these type of broadcast and social media campaigns, the SCSA is leading an initiative to assemble a coalition. The group will also explore what else can be done to draw the public’s attention to the extreme importance of slowing down in work zones, obeying the signs and not driving distracted. The first meeting is scheduled for November and will involve various government departments, associations and safety associations like the SCSA and the HCSAS, and the companies and sub-contracted trades that are responsible for building roads and bridges.