This week is my last radio broadcast for this year. I would like to talk with you about my official visit to New Zealand and why you should use safety seat belts in your car in 1971.

Over the past week I have been in New Zealand discussing progress made in defence supply co-operation between Australia and New Zealand.

With the New Zealand Ministers of Industries and Commerce, and of Defence, I discussed developments since the Memorandum of Understanding on co-operation in defence supply was signed in September 1969.

The talks, held in the precincts of the New Zealand House of Parliament at Wellington, re-affirmed the importance of achieving the objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding.

These objectives have been agreed upon in the interests of common defence, integrated military planning, the sharing of defence supply opportunities and continuing economic co-operation between Australia and New Zealand.

It was agreed that useful progress had been made over the past year in developing arrangements within the region to meet the objectives of standardisation and maximum logistic support for the Forces of both countries.

Increased opportunities are being made available to New Zealand industry to tender for Australian defence supplies.

It was further agreed that New Zealand has to develop from small beginnings its ability to compete successfully in this specialised area of industrial activity and military specification.

The New Zealand Ministers' realise that it is necessary to encourage participation by New Zealand industry to broaden New Zealand's defence production base. This would strengthen the potential of the area.

It is also necessary to pioneer a scheme of close defence industrial collaboration between the two independent countries of Australia and New Zealand.

This is, of course, a long term programme, but in the first year since the Agreement was signed, satisfactory progress has been made in identifying problems and the means of overcoming them.

But the successful achievement of the Agreement's objectives requires the co-operation of industry in Australia and New Zealand, to take the fullest opportunities which are now being offered in defence production.

Decisions, which resulted from my discussions in New Zealand should lead to accelerated progress on the Agreement.

Officials in both countries would be taking action on specific subjects over the next few months which should achieve beneficial results for both Australia and New Zealand.

I must stress that as a result of the talks in New Zealand it has been agreed that the talks had contributed significantly to our mutual understanding of the problems involved.
The talks also indicated the action necessary to achieve the important objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding.

The development of all facets of co-operation in defence supply between Australia and New Zealand is essential if we are to strengthen the capability of the Australian and New Zealand defence supply area.

For the seven months ended July, this year, 2206 persons were killed on our roads giving Australia one of the worst safety records in the world.

Despite pleas, regulations and heavy penalties, road deaths in Australia have reached record numbers.

Which is why every thoughtful motorist should welcome Victoria's efforts to introduce compulsory wearing or use of safety seat belts today.

When talking about seat belts it is important to realise that what is called "second impact" is the chief injury cause for driver or passenger.

The collision by a driver or passenger with objects within the vehicle or outside - if they are ejected - is called second impact.

The period between first and second impact extends for about one-tenth of a second. Towards the end of this brief period the occupants of a vehicle are thrown forward at the same speed at which the vehicle was travelling before the initial impact.

Severe braking has the same effect.

In certain collisions the impact forces can reach extremely destructive proportions.

For example, in the case of a vehicle travelling at 60 miles per hour which is subject to a crash stop in two feet, a 14-stone man will hit the interior of the vehicle with an estimated force of 5 1/3-tons.

The primary function of a seat belt is to limit the effects of these forces by restraining the movement of the occupant's body.

The external structure of the vehicle may crumple without serious deformation of the passenger space. It is the ability of the seat belt to hold the driver or occupant in this space, which reduces so dramatically the likelihood of fatal or serious injury in a motor vehicle collision.

It is essential to remember that a seat belt is useless in a car unless it is being worn or used.

In 1960, the Commissioner of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority, Sir William Hudson, made the wearing of seat belts compulsory for all occupants.
Sir William subsequently announced: "In the five years since, 30 million vehicle miles have been travelled and only one fatal injury was recorded in accidents and that happened because the driver removed his safety belt."

A study conducted at Brisbane General Hospital showed that in 1,000 road accidents, not one person who had been fatally injured had been wearing a seat belt. But where seat belts had been worn, there was a consistent absence of serious injury.

Statistics available from countries throughout the world indicate that wearing seat belts will reduce fatalities by at least 35 per cent and reduce injuries by up to 75 per cent.

It is a fallacy that it is safer to be ejected from the vehicle in an accident.

A study of 3,000 accidents in which 286 people were killed, showed that the risk of death for those thrown out was five times greater than for those remaining in the vehicle.

To sum up. Install seat belts for your own sake, and for the sake of your family and friends ensure that you use that seat belt.

This is my last radio broadcast before the end of the year. I hope that the broadcasts have been of value to you and your families. They have been designed to give you general information and provide background on current affairs.

It is proposed that these weekly programmes to assist you and inform you will be started again early in the New Year.

In the meantime, I wish you and your families a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Because I have completed the current series of radio broadcasts, it does not mean that I am out of touch.

Throughout Christmas and the New Year period I will be at home in Nareen and I have arranged for some of my staff to be on duty.

If you have any problems that I can help with do not hesitate to contact me at Tarrayoukyan 47, or at the Defence Department, Canberra A.C.T.

May I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year in 1971.