



# Suicide issue is a national crisis

LIFELINE Australia Chairman John Brogden has called for suicide to be declared a national emergency.

In marking 10 years since he attempted to take his own life, Mr Brogden highlighted the 23,500 Australians who have died by suicide in that time.

“Every day, seven Australians die by suicide,” Mr Brogden said. “Furthermore, the number of suicides has increased by 20 per cent over the past ten years. What other cause of death would we allow such a significant increase without serious action?”

“Over the same period, the number of motor vehicle deaths has reduced by 25 per cent to 1200 each year - less than half the number of deaths by suicide.

“We need urgent action. Suicide must be declared a national emergency.

“Seven Australians take their

own lives every day. We should publish the suicide toll the way we publish the road toll. If we don't talk about suicide we can't stem the tide and reduce it.

“We have come a very long way in destigmatising and talking openly about depression and other ‘common’ mental illnesses but we still struggle to know how to deal with suicide. This is despite it being the largest single cause of death in Australia for men and women under 44, and our Indigenous People's suicide rates being amongst the highest in the world.

“It is time to get angry and stay angry until we see suicides drop. The commonwealth, state and territory governments must agree, implement and fund a national suicide strategy as a matter of urgency - the cost of inaction is far too great for our community to bear.”