

Media Release

Monday November 12, 2018



Understand
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Schoolies beware: risky behaviour can void travel insurance

Thousands of Year 12 graduates will travel to South-East Asia for their Schoolies trip without the protection of travel insurance, according to new research from Smartraveller and Understand Insurance.

The poll, conducted by Quantum Market Research, shows one in five young Australians head to SE Asia without insurance. And 75 per cent of young travellers engage in risky behaviours that are unlikely to be covered, even if they had insurance.

Lisa Kable, spokesperson for understandinsurance.com.au, says: “Thousands of teenagers are finishing their final exams and are on their way to popular destinations in SE Asia, including Bali and Thailand. Many will overindulge in alcohol. Some may take illicit drugs. And many will ride a motorbike or scooter or take part in an adventure sport or activity.

“The insurance industry and the Australian Government’s Smartraveller program are concerned about the number of young Australians who will be injured overseas, without the cover of insurance, during this Schoolies break.

“Teens and their families need to be aware of the importance of holidaying with the right travel insurance. The Australian Government does not pay for medical treatment or emergency flights home if something goes wrong, despite 25 per cent of travellers wrongly believing the Government will assist with medical and related costs.

“They should understand they may not be covered by their insurance if they make a claim for an event caused by alcohol, drugs, use of a motorbike or failing to declare a pre-existing medical condition.”

SE Asian destinations including Bali attracted more than 10,000 teens last year; the Indonesian island is one of the top four destinations for Australian deaths overseas.

“The right travel insurance is a necessity. Families should discuss not just the destination but the activities their teens will be engaging in on their holiday. There are hundreds of travel insurance policies on the market, so choosing a policy that covers the destinations and the activities is of utmost importance,” Ms Kable said.

Only a few insurers cover the high-risk activity of motorbike riding with strict conditions. Some insurers require a full Australian motorbike licence AND an international or local driving permit for bikes over 125cc; others require a temporary Indonesian driving permit for a motorcycle under 125cc.



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How to avoid a motorbike-related travel insurance claim being declined:

- Always wear a helmet with strap done up
- Don't consume alcohol or illegal drugs and ride
- Follow the local road rules
- Shop around and check the product disclosure statement (PDS) for the specific travel insurance conditions for motorbike riding as a driver or passenger.
- The cheapest travel insurance policy may not be the best one for your needs check exclusions. Be aware that price comparison websites list only a small number of policies and encourage purchase based on price not policy features.

The ICA and Smartraveller encourage all Schoolies and their parents to read the travel advice on Smartraveller.gov.au before they leave Australia and subscribe to receive travel updates or follow Smartraveller on social media.

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Media contact: Lisa Kable Manager, Communications and Public Relations
0432 051328 or 02 9253 5146 lkable@insurancecouncil.com.au

