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THE BULLETIN

Taree head-on crash kills three

A woman and two men have died while another remains in a serious condition after a head-on collision near Taree, on the state's mid north coast.

The smash occurred around 2.50pm on the Pacific Highway, near the Croki turnoff, 8km north of Taree.

A police spokeswoman said a Mitsubishi Magna travelling north collided with two other vehicles travelling in the opposite direction, and then exploded into flames.

"As a result of the collision, the female passenger of the Mitsubishi was killed after being thrown from the vehicle," the spokeswoman said.

"The male driver was killed after the Mitsubishi burst into flames when it crashed into an embankment.

"The male passenger of a late model Ford Falcon was killed instantly."

The 66-year-old male driver of the Ford Falcon was trapped in the wreckage, and airlifted to John Hunter Hospital near Newcastle after being freed by emergency workers who rushed to the scene.

He remains in a serious condition, police said.

Names had not been released, but the Mitsubishi driver and passenger were a 66-year-old man and his 59-year-old wife from Wauchope, while the dead man in the Ford Falcon was a 64-year-old from Morrisett, near Newcastle, police said.

The spokeswoman said the occupants of the third vehicle involved sustained only minor injuries, and were treated at the scene by ambulance personnel.

Wreckage from the accident closed the highway for two hours, with traffic directed down a service road adjacent to the crash scene, police said.

The Taree smash marked the fifth death on NSW roads in the last 24-hours of the state's school holiday period.

A 24-year-old woman died in a smash on a dirt road at Brewarrina, in western NSW.

The spokeswoman said the dead woman, who has yet to be named, was a passenger in a vehicle travelling on Four Mile Road to the south of Brewarrina.

Police concerned at the manner of driving began following the vehicle around 3am but lost sight of it.

It was later found overturned beside the road with the body of the female passenger in the wreckage.

The male driver was taken to hospital with minor injuries.

Earlier, a 48-year-old man died in hospital after his car hit roadside timber posts at Gulgong, in central western NSW.

He had lost control of his car as he tried to pass another vehicle, police said.



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