

LIMERICK motorists are being warned to wear their seat belts, slow down and not to drink and drive as the annual Christmas garda road safety campaign gets under way.

gardai are responding with an increasing number of checkpoints to clamp down on dangerous driving and reduce fatalities. According to Inspector Seamus Gallagher, Hen-

ous accidents occur between 1am and 6am. He commented: "All road users, pedestrians and the drivers of vehicles, have a serious responsibility in this area towards them-

that there are people out there who will not be around for the new millennium due to their own negligence or that of other road users. Accidents don't happen, they are caused."

care of taxis or non-drinkers. They are also advising pedestrians, especially in unlit areas not to walk on the roads without wearing reflective belts.

could have in reducing the number of fatalities." The campaign will focus on drink driving, speeding and the non-wearing of seat belts.

7,500 ON DOLE IN SPITE OF DELL JOBS

By EUGENE PHELAN

TANAISTE Mary Harney yesterday tried to explain why there are thousands still on the dole in the city while major manufacturers like Dell are crying out for workers.

Although unemployment numbers are dropping dramatically, Tanaiste Harney pointed out that there are still 7,500 unemployed in Limerick city and county.

"I would not say it is a thing of people not wanting to work. We have to target all the efforts to match people who are unemployed with the jobs that are there," she said after a visit to Dell yesterday when questioned about the problem of bringing in foreign workers.

"I am disappointed that they can't get all the workers here but some did not have the basic skills. That is what they told me," Ms Harney revealed.

Dell currently pays over £55 million a year in wages and the current workforce of 4,200 will rise to 5,000 within a year.

Ms Harney said that Dell were paying £6 an hour "which is good money". She also revealed that Dell were spending £250 million each year with suppliers.

"The minimum wage which is coming in next April is £4.40 so it is well ahead of that," she said.

The Tanaiste was visiting Dell for the awarding of the ISO 14001 accreditation, the international standard for environmental management systems.

"We are delighted to receive this accreditation. The fact that Limerick is the first of our manufacturing operations worldwide to achieve this accolade is a true testament to the quality and commitment of our Irish staff," said Glenn Armbruster, vice president, Dell, Europe, Middle East and Africa.

Meanwhile Dell have laughed off as a "large exaggeration" a story in the national media that a virus in the production systems could have cost them up to £14 million.

The company said that just 500 computers were recalled and found not to have the virus and 12,000 other computers ready for export were checked and found to be virus free.



Members of St Joseph's Scouts form a guard of honour at the removal of Ross Cooney last night

(LL)

Hundreds gather to say farewell to sportsman Ross

By CLIODHNA McGOWAN

HUNDREDS of sympathisers gathered at Cross's Funeral Home yesterday evening to pay their respects to 18-year-old Ross Cooney from Upper Mallow Street, who died suddenly at the weekend.

The removal to the Dominican Church was

delayed by over an hour due to the enormous crowd which turned up to sympathise with the young man's father, Garda Joe Cooney, mother Helen and sister Nicola, along with extended family and friends.

Fr Donal Mehigan told the huge congregation at the Dominican Church that they should hold as very dear the memories

they have of Ross.

"Jesus left us the Eucharist as a way of remembering him. If we cherish loved ones' memories they become present to us in a different form. Ross can still touch our lives with a different type of presence. No-one can take our memories of Ross away," he said.

At today's funeral Mass chaplain of St Enda's

School where Ross was a student, Fr Sean Harmon, described how the young man was very popular with both students and teachers.

"He played basketball for many years and was involved in debating and the Young Scientist of the Year Award. He also loved scouting and life saving. His attitude to life was just tremendous.

"He was always smiling and it was a joy for us to have him for those six years. He was so courteous and was a young gentleman."

Ross died after becoming ill while representing UL in a basketball tournament at the Tallaght arena on Saturday.

Ross had been extremely fit and there were never any indications of any

heart problems.

After becoming ill with a suspected "heart problem" Ross was rushed to Tallaght Hospital where he died.

The young man had been studying business studies at UL due to the tremendous results he received having sat his Leaving Cert exam at St Enda's School last summer.

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