

Discussion Paper

Queensland youth

on the road and in control

A discussion of ways to improve young driver safety

October 2005



Message from the Minister

For most young people, next to their choice of a career path, their decision to get a driver's licence will make a fundamental difference to their life.

Whilst getting a licence gives new freedoms and the ability to expand work, family and social horizons, for all too many young Queenslanders and their families, it can come at a terrible cost.

Tragically, people are killed and injured on our roads every day and these crashes devastate families, friends and whole communities. What is even worse is that young drivers are two and a half times more likely to be killed in crashes as the rest of us.

Many parents have told me that they lie awake at night waiting to hear the sound of their son or daughter's car pull into the driveway, or hear the door close, knowing that they are at last at home safe and sound. Parents not only have a key role in their children's educational and physical development, but want to play a greater role in areas such as their driver training.

We know that the first few years of driving are risky and that is when young drivers most need our assistance.

Our road safety efforts have resulted in the Queensland fatality rate decreasing by over 40% from 1993-2004. This is a significant decrease, and one that we are working hard to continue even further. During this time there was a 26% decrease in the young road user fatalities, however, young drivers are still twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash.

As Transport Minister, travelling around the state and reading the media, it is clear that the community wants to play more of a role in reducing the youth carnage on our roads.

This discussion paper contains a number of initiatives that I would like you to consider and provide comment on. Some of these initiatives have been adopted in other Australian states and overseas. They are designed to better prepare young people for the hazards of driving. This paper builds on the good work undertaken by the Government's Travelsafe Committee in 2003 in their two reports concerning young drivers.

This conversation with the Queensland community is about various initiatives that could possibly be introduced to save young lives. Not all would be feasible and some might attract negative reactions from some groups. But this is an issue we need to address.

Addressing youth road deaths is not "someone else's responsibility" – it's the responsibility of all of us. Government has a role – but if it's left up to government alone it can never work. Young drivers themselves, parents, motorists and the general community all need to get involved in this important issue.

There is a feedback and comment form at the back of this paper that you can use to provide your views. We will also be conducting a series of consultation meetings around the state so that you can have your say personally.

Don't be afraid to express your views even if they might be different from others. What would be far worse would be not to care or not have a say.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Paul Lucas
Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Contents

OUR YOUNG DRIVERS AT RISK	1
WHAT IS THIS PAPER ABOUT?	1
WHY ARE YOUNG DRIVERS AT RISK?	2
WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING IN QUEENSLAND TO IMPROVE YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY?	4
WHAT IS THE CURRENT QUEENSLAND LICENSING SYSTEM?	5
SO WHY THE NEED FOR CHANGE?	5
ROLE OF PARENTS	6
IMPROVING THE SYSTEM	7
<i>Pre-learners</i>	7
1. Pre-learner education package	7
2. First aid training	7
<i>Learner licence</i>	8
3. 120 hours of driving experience with a logbook	8
4. Education for learner drivers and supervisors	9
5. Hold a learner licence for at least 12 months	10
6. Reduce the learner licence age to 16 years	10
7. Review of penalties and sanctions for learner drivers who break the law	11
8. Review current Q-SAFE practical driving assessment	11
9. Introduce competency based training and assessment (CBTA) for learner drivers	11
<i>Provisional licence</i>	12
10. Peer passenger restrictions	12
11. Late night driving restrictions	13
12. Split provisional phase (P1 and P2)	14
13. P plates	14
14. Screen-based hazard perception test (HPT)	14
15. Working with driving instructors after changes to the GLS	15
16. Develop an education and media campaign on driver distraction	16
17. Prohibit all mobile phone use for learner and provisional drivers when driving	16
18. Review of penalties and sanctions for provisional drivers who break the law	16
19. Incentive and reward options for provisional drivers	17
20. Education and training support for provisional drivers	17
21. Restricting the cars that provisional drivers may drive	18
22. Speed limit restrictions	19
FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS	20

Our young drivers at risk

Too many young Queenslanders are being killed and injured on our roads. 17-24 years olds are one of Queensland's most at-risk groups on the road.

In 2004 young people accounted for only 13% of all licence holders, but 28% of the road toll. During that time 88 young people were killed.

From 1993-2004, the Queensland road fatality rate has decreased by over 40%. This represents a cumulative saving of over 1,500 lives. During this time there was a 26% decrease in young road user fatalities, and a saving of 353 lives.

However, in 2004 the fatality rate among young drivers was two-and-a-half times the rate for drivers over 25 years.

Generally young people are more susceptible to taking risks. Deaths from external causes (including transport related crashes, suicide, drowning) account for 70% of deaths of 15-24 year olds.

The main causes of young driver crashes are inexperience, alcohol/drugs, inattention and speeding. All of these things we can do something about.

What is this paper about?

This discussion paper presents a range of initiatives to improve the safety of young drivers aged between 17 and 24. Most of the initiatives are based on research or best practice which has shown an improvement in the safety of young drivers. Some are also provided to improve the operation and management of Queensland's licensing system.

International and national research shows that a young driver's risk of crash, injury or death can be reduced by improving the way they are managed in the licensing system.

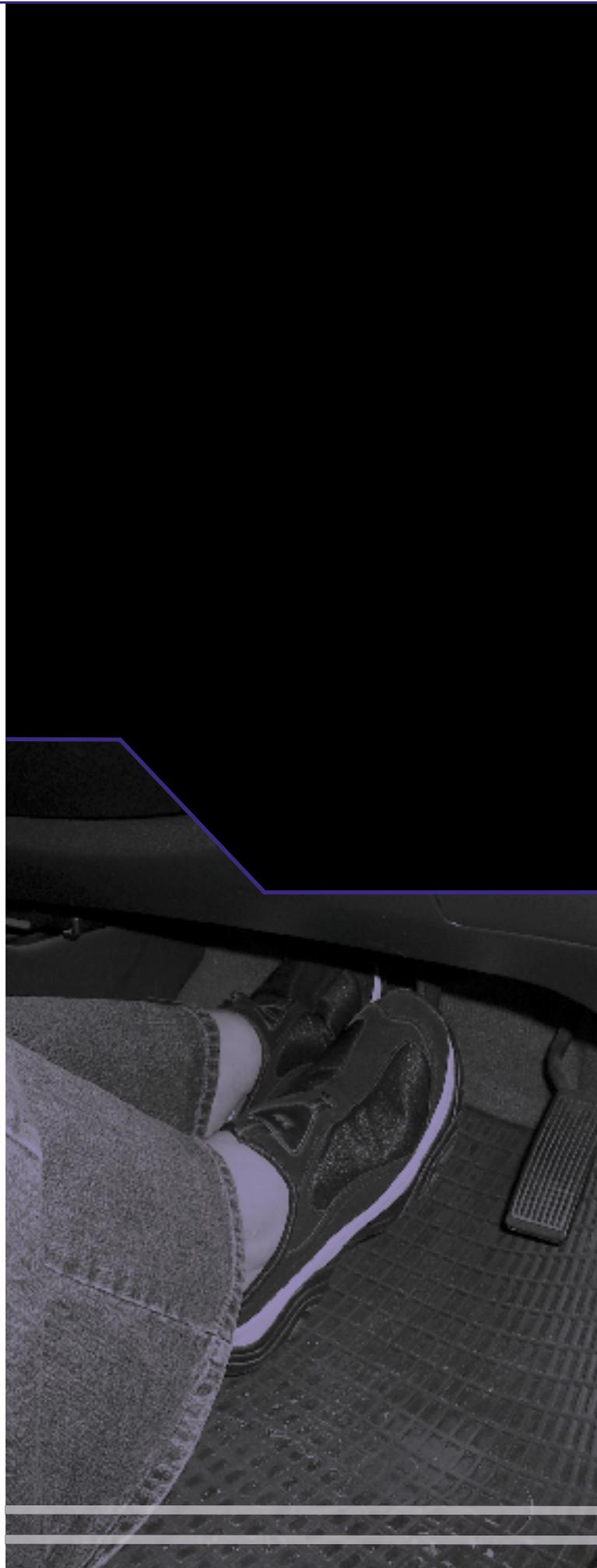
Therefore, possible changes to pre-learner, learner licence and provisional licence processes are outlined in this paper. It is important to understand that nothing has been set in stone. We want your comments before any changes are made.

We want to work with the community to find effective solutions to reduce the number of young people, their passengers and other road users being killed or injured. Everyone in the community can have their say about these measures by completing the feedback form on pages 20-24 or online at www.transport.qld.gov.au/youngdrivers.

“Your feedback will shape how

Queensland responds to this

serious problem.”



Why are young drivers at risk?

In 2003 and 2004 the biggest factor that caused young people to die on Queensland roads was inexperience.

Other reasons our young drivers are at such high risk include:

- less developed visual and perceptual skills
- inability to accurately identify and respond to risks or hazards when driving
- overconfidence
- inattention caused by inexperience with coping with distractions while driving
- tendency to drive at high risk times (for example at night and with a number of other young people in the car)
- alcohol/drugs
- deliberate risk-taking (for example high speed driving and tailgating).

Young drivers are most at risk during the first year of their provisional licence. (See Figure 1)

It takes about three years of solo driving before a young driver's crash risk is reduced to the same as a more experienced driver.

Learner drivers have the lowest crash risk of all drivers, generally because they are supervised. This shows that the learner period is a vital time for young drivers to develop driving skills.

It is important to note that although the crash risk is high for young drivers, only a minority of young people will be involved in a crash.

Rural Issues

Across the state young drivers are at risk regardless of whether they're in Brisbane, a provincial city such as Townsville, Mackay, or Toowoomba or a more rural or remote area such as Longreach or Mt Isa. However, the crash rate for young drivers is higher in rural areas.

Drivers in rural or remote areas are more likely to be involved in single vehicle crashes and to drive without a seatbelt. Speed and fatigue are major factors in these crashes.

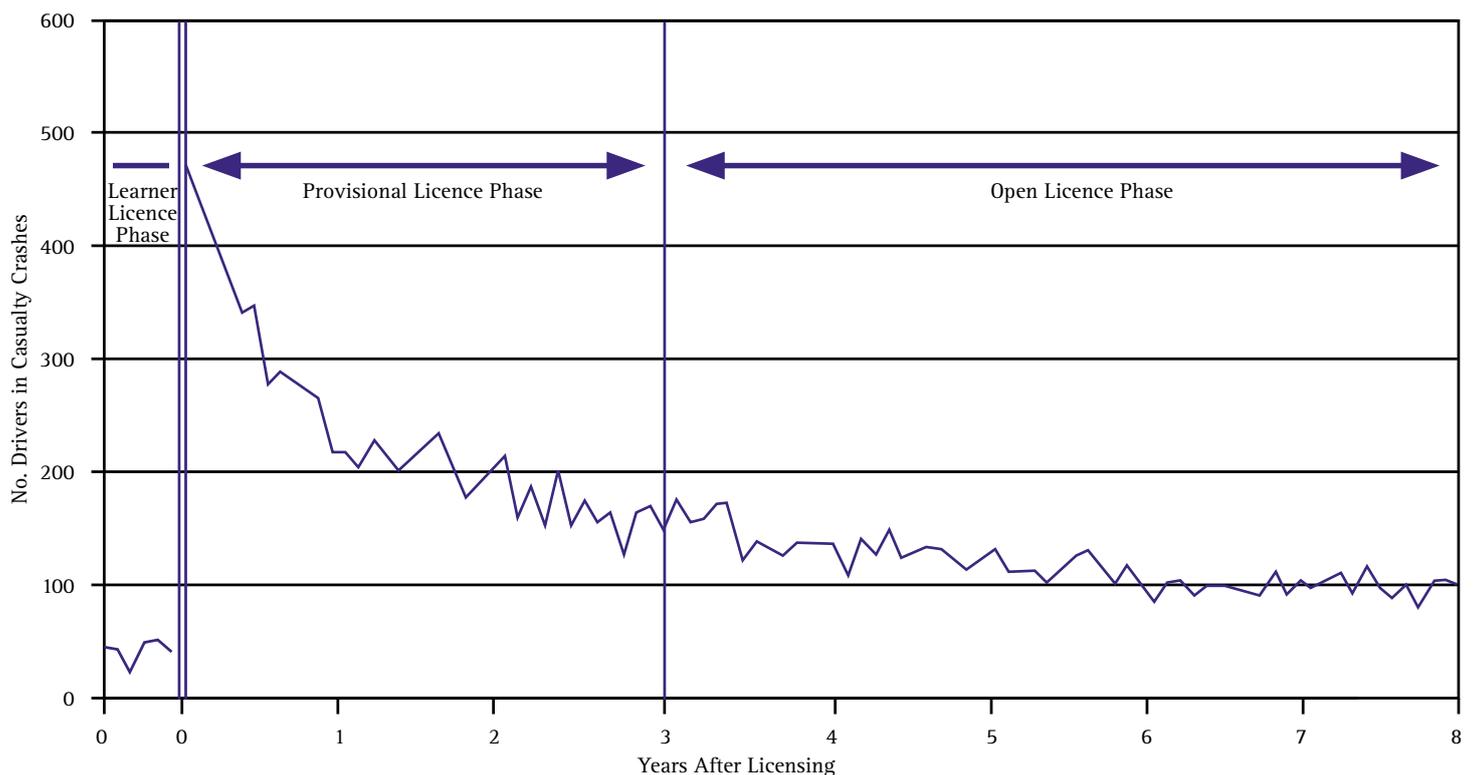
Recent research by Queensland University of Technology (QUT) has found that rural and remote drivers believed that they had a low risk of being involved in a crash relative to others, that they were more skilled drivers than others and were quite optimistic about their driving skills and safety. However, despite this, the crash rate for young drivers is higher in rural areas.

While there are certain factors that appear more common among rural and remote crashes, the options outlined in this paper will impact on all young drivers.

Some of the options proposed in this paper may have more severe impacts on the mobility of young people living in rural and remote areas. These impacts need to be balanced with the possibility of saving young lives.

Further exploration on how initiatives will work in rural areas will take place in the implementation phase.

Figure 1. Learner, Provisional and Open licence casualty crashes (2001-2003 data)



The bigger picture

The youthfulness and inexperience of young drivers is a worldwide road safety problem.

In 2004, Queensland's young driver fatalities (per 100,000 population) was mid range in Australia. However, overall Queensland fatalities (per 100,000 population) were one of the lowest in Australia.

Australia compares well to many other western countries when looking at road fatalities for young drivers. Australia sits well below the number of United States of America's (USA) young driver fatalities but above the United Kingdom's.

Worldwide, young male drivers are at a higher crash risk than females.

In Australia, men drive more often, are more likely to have a licence and take more driving risks than females.

Young Australian females are over-represented among those killed and injured as passengers of male drivers or riders.

Mobility

Between the age of 17-24 young people get more mobile, they leave school and get jobs or start further study, and generally have more independence.

Driving is often critical for getting to and from jobs, study, or sporting and social events, particularly in rural areas. It is not surprising that most eligible 17-24 year olds get their driver licence as soon as possible. With this increased mobility and independence comes the increased exposure to risk on the roads.

“Provisional drivers have the highest crash risk of all drivers.”



What's already happening in Queensland to improve young driver safety?

Queensland uses initiatives such as speed enforcement, random breath testing and public education campaigns to help keep people safe on the road.

Queensland Government has introduced a number of specific programs to educate young drivers.

Current activities include:

Pre-Learner

- Developing school-based education materials including teaching aids, student activities and lesson plans for pre-school – year 10 (see Example 1).
- Student Driver Education website available at www.roadsafety.qld.gov.au provides information for teachers, activities for students, and links to related resources. Targeted at students in years 11 and 12.
- Road Accident Awareness Program (RAAP) delivered by Department of Emergency Services.

Learner

- L plates three year trial for learner licence holders (started January 2005)
- 0.00% Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)
- New penalties for high speed offences, racing and speed trials are being introduced.

Provisional

- DVD information kit – *Never the Same Again* sent to provisional licence holders aged 17-18 years once they receive their licence. The kit promotes discussion between the young driver and their parent/s about risk taking. (see Example 2)
- 0.00% BAC - for under 25 years
- 0.05% BAC for over 25 years
- New penalties for high speed offences, racing and speed trials are being introduced.

But more can be done.

Example 1

School Road Safety Education Framework

A School Road Safety Education Framework provides Queensland teachers and other agencies with a comprehensive and consistent approach for effective road safety education.

The framework supports the School Road Safety Education Curriculum which is being developed in consultation with Queensland Department of Education, Queensland Studies Authority and other government agencies.

The curriculum will encourage a school and community approach to improving road safety. This approach will integrate road safety education throughout the whole school curriculum.

Example 2

Never the Same Again

Two weeks after a new driver gets their provisional licence and begins to drive unsupervised, they get a special DVD kit mailed direct to their homes. This is the most dangerous time for a new driver because they start to take risks they would not have taken if they were with a supervisor. The kit – Never the same again delivers critical information about road safety at the time new drivers need it.

The kit targets 17 and 18 year olds and their parents with a DVD that runs through three real Queensland stories. In their own words, survivors of road crashes and their friends and families talk about the consequences of road crashes and the impact on the young driver, their family and friends. Sent with the DVD is a booklet with practical information about buying your first car, keeping safe on the road and how to avoid breaking the law. Parents are encouraged to watch the DVD with their novice driver so they can discuss the important issues it raises. The kit is supported by a youth-friendly website www.neverthesameagain.com.au where young drivers and parents can find more road safety and licensing information.

What is the current Queensland licensing system?

Queensland operates a graduated licensing system (GLS) that progressively introduces new drivers to more complex road conditions as they gain their on-road experience (see Figure 2). This means that drivers demonstrate their ability before moving onto the next stage.

There are three stages: the fully supervised learner licence, the restricted provisional licence, and the unrestricted open licence.

This lets new drivers gain experience under less risky driving conditions before getting their open licence.

Queensland has minimum learner and provisional licence ages, requires supervision for all learner drivers and has alcohol restrictions for both learner and provisional drivers.

All Australian states and territories have a GLS as do many places around the world, including New Zealand, parts of the USA, and Canada. While each system differs slightly, international and national research indicates they have all been successful in reducing young driver crashes.

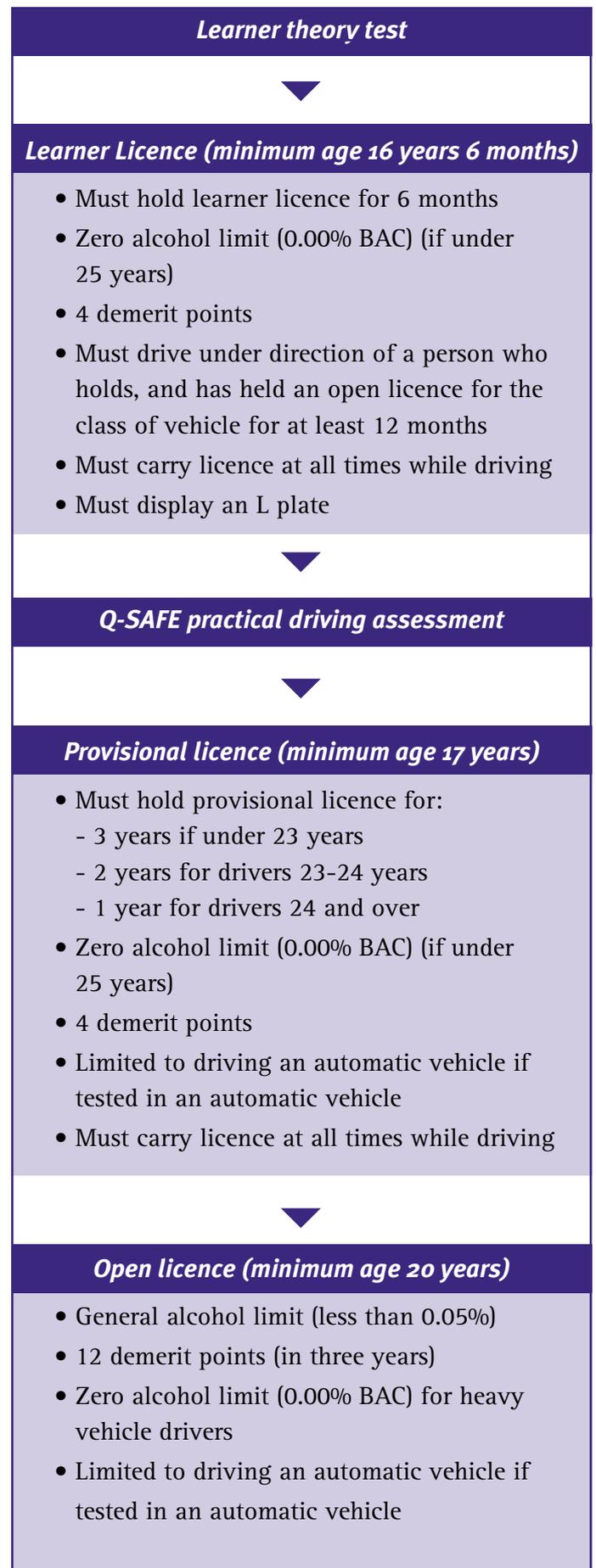
So why the need for change?

Throughout the world the risk to young drivers is high and the dilemma faced by the community is that there is no one, simple solution. The best way of tackling this problem is to use a combination of approaches that work together to change young driver behaviour.

We recognise that some of the changes considered in this paper may impact on mobility and convenience for young drivers, and also affect parents, other family members and friends. However, some inconvenience may be necessary to achieve the benefits from these changes. We are confident that adopting many of these changes would result in fewer deaths and injuries for young drivers, their passengers and other road users in Queensland.

“The GLS is like an apprenticeship system for new drivers – they gain experience under less risky driving conditions before graduating to an open licence.”

Figure 2: Current Graduated Licensing System in Queensland



Role of Parents



International research shows that parents have a major influence on the driving behaviour of their children. Young drivers tend to follow the behaviour patterns set by their parents and are more likely to follow the rules when supervised by a parent. This also means that often the parent's traffic violations and errors are repeated by their children.

The USA National Safety Council's *A Family Guide to Teen Driver Safety* provides advice for young drivers and their parents at provisional licence level. Research in the USA shows that parents can have a positive influence on their teenage children with provisional licences in helping them to comply with the licence conditions.

The role of parents as everyday models of good or bad driving behaviour for their teenagers, needs to be communicated and understood. A survey of 403 Queensland learner and provisional licence holders found that 75% of provisional licence holders had taken paid lessons from a professional driving instructor. However, 85% were taught by other persons as well as a driving instructor, with 88% of these being also taught by parents.

USA research found that in fact parental involvement in supervising logbook entries greatly improved compliance. In particular, the amount of supervised driving experience undertaken by learners was at a level that exceeded the requirement. While 50 hours were mandated, on average, 75 hours were reported. Mandating such regulations and involving parents/guardians reinforces the importance of the supervisory role.

Since parents are often the main driving instructors for young drivers it is vital to educate them about the benefit of supervised driving experience for their child. Parents can also help shape sensible drivers with a realistic view of their children's driving abilities and motives. Graduated licensing allows a longer and more involved role for families in the driving process.

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about the role of parents in teaching young people to drive?

Have your say on page 24.

1. Pre-learner education package

A pre-learner education package could be developed for new drivers which could be provided 12 months before the minimum licensing age. The package could provide information on the positive and negative components of driving.

Getting young people and their parents thinking about road safety before they even get into a car and have a chance to take any driving risks is a positive step. Parents have a major influence on the driving behaviour of their children – what parents do and say about driving is important.

Pre-learners could be provided with an education package in the 12 months before applying for a learner licence. This package could encourage young people to consider the positive consequences of driving (mobility, freedom, convenience) against the potential negative consequences (crash risk, injury risk, costs) before they get behind the wheel of a car.

The package could provide parents with information about the risks that their children may face as young drivers and show them ways to reduce these risks. It would remind learners and their parents that the risk of dying in a car crash in Australia is greater than the combined risk of being killed by assault, drowning, fire, plane crash or a shark attack.

How could it be delivered?

The package could be distributed to year 10 students through schools or made available on the internet or on DVD or CD Rom. Printed versions could also be mailed out to people without multimedia access.

What happens in other states?

Some other states in Australia provide information to drivers before their learner licence. The ACT runs a pre-learner interactive classroom based program called *Road Ready* designed to make young people aware of issues about safe road use. Most secondary school students are able to take the course for free. (www.roadready.act.gov.au/c/roadready)

Victoria promotes *Motorvation 2*, a multimedia pre-licence education resource designed to encourage young people in Year 10 to think about the complexity of driving a car or riding a motorcycle. It addresses recognising hazards in the traffic environment, the consequences of unsafe/irresponsible road use and encourages self-appraisal of their own skills and abilities as potential drivers. More details are available on the secondary school road safety education webpage of the Vicroads website at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au.

Pros

- Gets young people thinking about risks and driving safely
- Learner drivers benefit when there is cooperation between driving instructors and parents

Cons

- School curriculum is already full
- Knowledge may not be retained 12 months before driving
- Multimedia initiatives rely on internet or computer access
- No research evidence that pre-learner education reduces crash rates

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about a pre-learner education package?
Have your say on page 20.

2. First aid training

First aid training, made either compulsory or voluntary, could be provided at the pre-licence level to increase the awareness of risk among young people, particularly on the roads.

Research from the United Kingdom and Norway shows that secondary school students become more safety-conscious and aware of risks after completing first aid training.

First aid training could be made either as a voluntary or compulsory part of the Queensland licensing system. Training young people in first aid may help reduce the risks they take when driving and would also benefit the overall community.

Training could be delivered through traditional face-to-face teaching or via a multimedia or online course. Queensland Transport could link with a recognised first aid provider like St Johns Ambulance or Queensland Ambulance Service. The cost of the course is estimated at \$130, but drivers could be offered licensing or registration incentives such as a free licence for 12 months once they have completed the course.

Pros

- Improved knowledge of risks relating to driving
- Ability to use first aid skills at crash sites

Cons

- Training is only valid for 3 years – time/cost to retrain,
- Additional cost for young people or parents/guardians if made compulsory
- No research evidence that initiative reduces crash rates

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about first-aid training for pre-learners?
Have your say on page 20.

Supervisors (including family, friends with an open licence, or driving instructors) would sign off the time in the logbook. Logbooks would be checked when the learner applied for their provisional licence. The logbook would be compulsory and legally enforceable.

In the event that a learner driver lost a partially completed logbook they could re-enter the entries in a new logbook and the supervising driver would need to re-sign each entry. New South Wales currently operates this way, however this is not allowed in Western Australia where learners must redo hours if they lose their logbook.

Inexperience is one of the main causes of young driver fatalities. A compulsory 120 hours would almost triple the amount of experience most learner drivers get before they drive unaccompanied. While the extra hours may be an inconvenience to parents and learners at first, the result is more experienced drivers on our roads.

What's happening in the rest of the country?

Western Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania and South Australia enforce compulsory supervised driving hours. Victoria is also considering introducing 120 hours (among a number of initiatives) following the release of a young drivers discussion paper.

Most states offer free logbooks, but where there is a cost for learners it is no more than \$10. Some make the logbooks available for downloading from the internet. In most instances, the driving examiner assesses the logbook the day before the practical driving test is taken.

Each state reports that most people complete and submit the logbooks honestly with few people being prosecuted for falsification.

Pros

- Research shows initiative reduces crash risk
- Structured process provides a more complete learning experience

Cons

- 120 hours would not be achievable in current system of 6 months minimum learner licence period
- Potential fraudulent use of logbooks
- Learner drivers in rural and remote areas may not be able to access different traffic and road conditions

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about 120 hours of compulsory driving experience and recording the experience in a logbook?

Have your say on page 20.

4. Education for learner drivers, supervisors and parents

Learner drivers and supervisors could be encouraged to attend an information session detailing what experience should be gained and techniques on how to supervise novice drivers. A multimedia package could also be considered as an alternative to face-to-face sessions.

We recognise that parents are looking for help and support to provide information and advice to learner drivers and that this parental involvement is very important.

Information that could be supplied may include:

- what young drivers should be learning
- risks faced by new drivers
- tips about when, where and how to accumulate on-road driving experience
- driving in a variety of conditions, such as night, wet weather, heavy traffic or in the country
- how to complete learner logbooks.

It is also important for parents and supervisors to understand that any material of this nature does not provide them with technical or expert qualifications. The role of parents and learner driver supervisors is vital but does not take the place of qualified driving instructors/educators.

A multimedia kit for parents and learners to use at home could deliver this important information as it is a convenient way of reaching all Queenslanders including those who live in regional or remote areas. However, delivering this information through face to face sessions would allow supervisors and learners to focus on the information and not be subject to the distractions at home.

Both the learner driver and their parent/supervisor could attend these face-to-face sessions. These sessions could be provided through schools.

What about other states?

Victoria encourages learner drivers and their parents to attend Keys Please – a free two hour forum showing learners how to get the maximum benefit from the learner period and become a responsible and safe driver.

The RACV (Victoria) Driving School's Parents Plus program offers a free parent lesson where parents can observe their child driving with an instructor and obtain advice from the instructor on how to manage on-road supervision. Swedish research suggests that learners benefit when there is cooperation between driving instructors and parents and the RACV's program promotes that cooperation. More details can be found on the DriveSchool webpage within the RACV website at www.racv.com.au

Pros

- Provides an increased knowledge of driving tasks
- Learner drivers benefit when there is cooperation between driving instructors and parents
- Parents Plus program offered by the RACV Driving School in Victoria has been a popular program

Cons

- Additional cost for young people or parents/guardians if made compulsory
- Ability for learner drivers and supervisors in rural and remote areas to access information sessions
- No road safety evidence that initiative reduces crash rates
- Multimedia initiatives rely on internet or computer access

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about an education kit for learner drivers and their parents?

Have your say on page 21.

5. Hold a learner licence for at least 12 months

Learner drivers could be required to hold their licence for a minimum of 12 months so that drivers can obtain 120 hours of supervised driving experience. To assist with this increase, the learner licence could be issued for three years instead of the current one year.

If learner drivers are required to gain 120 hours of supervised driving before they get their provisional licence, many will need more than 6 months to do this. If they had their licence for a minimum of 12 months, it would be easier to complete 120 hours in changing weather and traffic conditions.

Further, at present learners must renew their licence every 12 months. It may be useful to consider increasing the period a learner licence is valid to 3 years.

Extending the learner licence period may stop learners from rushing the learning process when they may not be ready. Extending both the mandatory learner period and the learner licence validity period may take the pressure off learners (and their supervisors), giving them the time to gain driving experience at their own pace.

Research conducted by Queensland Transport in 2004 indicated that learner drivers in Queensland currently spend an average of 11 months on their learner licence. Therefore an increase in the minimum time may not greatly inconvenience the majority of drivers.

What about other states?

Most Australian states currently have a 6 month minimum learner licence period.

New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia are investigating increasing the learner licence period from 6 to 12 months in combination with increasing their compulsory supervised driving experience to 120 hours.

Pros

- Allows an extra six months to gain more experience driving
- Ability to experience conditions all year round as a supervised driver eg. all seasons, wet weather

Cons

- Disadvantages learner drivers who have completed their training in less than 12 months

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about changing the minimum learner licence period to 12 months and it being valid for three years?

Have your say on page 21.

6. Reduce the learner licence age to 16 years

The learner licence age could be reduced from 16.5 years to 16 years to give learner drivers more time to obtain the 120 hours supervised driving experience

If 120 hours of supervised on-road experience was introduced and the minimum time for holding a learner licence was increased to 12 months, it may be practical to lower the minimum learner licence age to 16. This would bring Queensland into line with most other Australian states. There are no plans to allow solo driving before the current minimum age of 17.

Learner drivers have a low crash rate because they are under the supervision of an experienced, fully licensed driver (see Figure 1). While reducing the learner licence age to 16 may appear to work against the goal of improving road safety for young drivers, research suggests that combined with increased experience, it actually reduces the crash risk of young drivers when they get their provisional licence and are able to drive on their own.

According to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) the age for a private pilot licence flight test is 16 and people can learn to fly at any age as long as they are accompanied by a flight instructor.

Changing the learner licence age to 16 years would give learners the benefit of an extra 6 months to gain experience in a safe and controlled driving environment.

Has this worked in other countries?

In 1993 Sweden lowered the age limit for learners to 16 years. This was accompanied by a program to encourage learners to gain extensive amounts of supervised, on-road experience. Following this initiative, which was the only change to the licensing system at that time, Sweden experienced an overall 17% reduction in crash rate for all novice drivers.

Pros

- Learner driving period is the safest
- Combined with 120 hours and minimum 12 months creates increased experience which reduces crash rate
- Provisional licence age would not change
- Brings Queensland in line with majority of other states

Cons

- Community perception of increased crash risk

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about reducing the learner licence age to 16 years?

Have your say on page 21.

7. Review of penalties and sanctions for learner drivers who break the law

New penalty and sanction options could be developed for learner drivers who break the law to deter them from re-offending.

Unfortunately, some learner drivers break their licence conditions and traffic laws. Usually, monetary fines and restrictions such as licence suspensions are used as a deterrent.

However, approaches that may stop learners from breaking the law could be:

- extend the learner licence period (for example, by an extra 3 months) after a licence has been suspended or as an alternative to the licence being suspended
- require them to resit the learner licence test when reapplying for the learner licence
- increase the severity of all penalties and sanctions for learner licence holders (eg, longer suspensions or higher penalties).

Pros

- *Stronger deterrence for learner drivers against breaking the law*

Cons

- *Increased risk of unlicensed driving*

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about Queensland investigating innovative penalties and sanctions for learner drivers who break the law?

Have your say on page 21.

8. Review current Q-SAFE practical driving assessment

The Q-SAFE practical driving assessment could be reviewed and updated to suit the changed licensing system and ensure more modern testing practices are used.

Queensland Transport could review the current practical driving test to make sure it fits in an improved system.

Existing educational and learning materials for learner drivers would also be reviewed to ensure they progress through the system based on ability. Licence tests are important and they need to ensure that people are competent to be on the road. They also help supervisors understand the skills that will be assessed. This test may need to be experienced to assess other driving related skills.

New South Wales and New Zealand have recently revised their practical driving tests and testing procedures which reflect more modern testing procedures.

Pros

- *Continual improvement in the licensing system*
- *Updating the testing procedures to reflect modern practices*

Cons

- *Research shows conflicting evidence about the usefulness of practical testing procedures*

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about reviewing the current Q-SAFE practical driving test?

Have your say on page 21.

9. Introduce competency based training and assessment (CBTA) for learner drivers

Queensland could examine introducing CBTA for learner drivers to assist in the management and operation of the Queensland licensing system.

CBTA could allow young drivers to get their provisional licence after completing a competency-based training course. This is similar to how the Q-RIDE process currently works for motorbike licences. CBTA provides a better adult learning environment.

Under a CBTA regime, once all competencies have been achieved and recorded in a logbook by an authorised driving instructor it is presented to the licensing authority and a provisional driver licence could be issued without further assessment.

This process is generally popular with learners and parents. However, while CBTA may be worthy of consideration on administrative and access grounds, research has shown that this process does not necessarily produce safer and more proficient car drivers. It is important to note that CBTA is not a substitute for supervised, on-road experience.

In rural areas, CBTA may be difficult to access, so alternative arrangements may be required.

Pros

- *Provides a standardised learning process*
- *Generates efficiencies in the licensing system*

Cons

- *Research shows there is no evidence that this initiative reduces crash rates or produces better drivers.*
- *More expensive for learner drivers than the current system*

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about CBTA?

Have your say on page 22.



10. Peer passenger restrictions

A peer passenger restriction, of no more than one passenger aged under 21 who does not hold an open licence, could be introduced for at least the first 12 months of solo driving. Exemptions could be considered for family members to be carried as passengers.

A young driver's risk of crashing is higher when they have more than one peer passenger. The risk grows with each additional peer passenger. A peer passenger is generally described as someone who is under the age of 21 and not a family member. Passengers aged over 21 with open licences do not seem to have this negative effect on provisional drivers.

Peer passenger restrictions could be introduced to reduce the likelihood of crashes involving provisional drivers and multiple passengers. These restrictions have reduced deaths and injuries in countries where they have been introduced.

A restriction could mean that for the first 12 months of a provisional licence drivers may not carry more than one passenger aged under 21 who does not hold an open licence.

Peer passenger restrictions may limit the mobility and convenience of provisional drivers, their families and their friends. Exemptions for driving with family members would need to be included in the system. Drivers who are required to transport children, siblings, parents or other family members could be exempt from such a restriction.

Peer passenger restrictions may negatively impact on drink driving by making it very difficult for young people to have a "designated driver" on a social outing. For example, a group of five young people travelling to a party would need three vehicles and three drivers to remain alcohol free, this is potentially unrealistic.

Driving solo can, however, present its own problems. Many young drivers, particularly women, may feel uncomfortable driving alone at night for safety reasons if a crash or breakdown occurs.

Around the world

Recent research conducted in the USA suggests that peer passenger restrictions are most effective in reducing crashes, deaths and injuries. USA analysis showed that even if compliance with peer passenger restrictions was only 20% among provisional drivers, crashes would still drop by almost 10%.

Research in Victoria and North America showed that while this restriction may have resulted in more provisional drivers on the road, significant crash reductions still occurred.

New South Wales and Victoria use peer passenger restrictions as a penalty for drivers who have been disqualified while on their provisional licence. However, the original intent of a peer passenger restriction was to reduce risk for all novice drivers, not to act as a penalty for poor driving behaviour.

Western Australia is currently assessing whether to introduce a peer passenger restrictions for the first 6 months of their provisional licence.

Both New Zealand and Canada have peer passenger restrictions which have been found to be effective. If police find a driver

breaking the restriction they will insist on passengers leaving the car and using alternate transport. However, police exercise discretion and may allow the trip to continue where it would be unsafe for passengers to leave the vehicle.

To ensure the enforcement of these restrictions P plates would more than likely need to be displayed for the period of the restrictions (see initiative 13).

Pros

- Research strongly indicates it reduces crash rates of young drivers
- Exemption system allows carriage of family members such as parents, siblings and children

Cons

- Reduces mobility and access of young people
- Inconvenience for family and friends who may be required to travel with young drivers
- May affect other programs such as anti-drink driving designated driver programs

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about peer passenger restrictions?
Have your say on page 22.

11. Late night driving restrictions

A late night driving restriction could be introduced for at least the first 12 months of solo driving. Exemptions could be made for work, educational and family purposes.

Provisional drivers often drive at night with their friends in the car going to parties, clubs or just driving around for fun. The risk of young drivers having a fatal car crash is high at night. To reduce these crashes, deaths and injuries, night time restrictions could be imposed.

Late night driving restrictions for provisional drivers could restrict driving between 11pm and 6am or 12am and 5am.

Restricting provisional drivers from late night driving could reduce mobility and cause inconvenience to young people, their families and their friends. An effective and workable exemption system would need to be put in place to make allowances for work, educational and family purposes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics industry data for 2004, indicates that approximately 65% of young people aged 15 – 24 years old work in the retail or hospitality industries. This employment may require travelling at night and late night driving restrictions would have a significant impact.

Late night driving restrictions may increase the reliance of young drivers on passenger transport at a time when service levels are typically lower. In Brisbane, all night trains and buses and better taxi services at the busiest times deliver safety and convenience for late night travellers.

However, these are on a trial basis and for Friday and Saturday nights only. Further, restrictions will create difficulties in rural areas where late night passenger transport options are limited.

Police would have difficulty identifying young drivers who would be legitimately exempt from the late night driving restrictions for reasons such as work or study. Identification could take the form of permits which would require details to be regularly updated by young drivers. The considerable cost of a compliance system that reduced abuse of any restrictions would need to be met by young drivers and taxpayers.

Restrictions on late night driving could create personal and road safety issues, for example if young drivers become stranded at a party or nightclub. There is also a possibility that they could speed or drive under the influence of alcohol to get home before the late night driving restriction period commences.

Around the world?

Late night driving restrictions have been shown to reduce young driver crashes by up to 60% in the USA.¹

The most common restriction is between midnight and 5am. However, research from the USA shows that greater crash reduction effects would result if the restriction covered from 11pm to 5am.²

In New Zealand and Canada where restrictions apply, drivers caught breaking the restriction are made to lock the car up at the side of the road (as long as a safe alternative can be arranged – for example, parents, public transport). Police exercise discretion in some circumstances and allow the trip to continue where it would be unsafe for the driver to walk during the restricted hours. In both New Zealand and Canada these restrictions are recognised as being valuable.

What about in other states?

South Australia now requires provisional drivers, who have lost their licence for a serious offence, to have restrictions placed on their driving. These drivers will be unable to drive between the hours of midnight to 5am for 12 months from the time they get their licence back. New South Wales has recently decided to defer any introduction of late night driving restrictions.

Pros

- Reduces crash rates of young drivers
- Exemption system would allow travel for work, study or family reasons
- May encourage increased use of public transport

Cons

- Reduces mobility and access of young people
- Inconvenience for family and friends who may be required to drive young people
- May have negative effect on personal safety

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about late night driving restrictions?
Have your say on page 22.

¹Hedlund, J. & Compton, R (in press). Graduated Driver Licensing Research in 2004 and 2005. *Journal of Safety Research*

²Williams, A.F. (2003). Teenage drivers: patterns of risk. *Journal of Safety Research*, 34, 5-15.

12. Split provisional phase (P1 and P2)

The provisional licence stage could be split into two phases (P1 and P2). The first phase could be subject to greater restrictions and conditions than the second, ensuring newer drivers were more thoroughly monitored.

The split system would ease new drivers into solo driving by minimising the high risk situations they could get themselves into.

Phase one (P1) could cover the first 12 months of driving on a provisional licence. This is the time when the crash risk is highest for new drivers so additional restrictions could apply.

Phase two (P2) could cover the last two years of driving on a provisional licence. It may not have night or peer passenger restrictions but may still have the current zero blood and breath alcohol concentration. Splitting the provisional licence into P1 and P2 phases would require a mechanism to identify the different drivers, such as different plates, or at least plates for P1 drivers.

The P1 driver could automatically graduate to the P2 level after 12 months or alternatively, they could be required to pass a test to advance. This test may measure the driver's ability to recognise potentially dangerous situations on the road and react accordingly. Tests like these are generally called Hazard Perception Tests and are mostly administered at a computer, most likely at the venue where other licence tests are taken.

Pros

- Provides increased restrictions for most dangerous time of driving (first 12 months unsupervised)
- More easily enforceable if P plates introduced
- Enables improved administration of the provisional phase

Cons

- Increased burden on young drivers if further assessments are required before progressing to next licence stage

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about a split provisional licence phase?
Have your say on page 22.

13. P plates

Provisional drivers could be required to display P plates for the duration of the provisional period to ensure they are recognised as novice drivers and to assist enforcement of any restrictions.

P plates tell other drivers that a provisional driver is operating the vehicle. This allows other drivers to exercise caution around provisional drivers. It may also provide the provisional driver a measure of protection as other drivers will not assume that they will behave like fully licensed drivers.

P plates are also a good reminder to the young driver that they are still gaining experience and do not yet have the skills, competencies or privileges of an open licence driver.

If P plates were introduced it is important that the community be supportive of the scheme and of novice drivers who display them. To create a supportive and tolerant environment for young drivers, we could develop a campaign encouraging other road users to be courteous toward provisional drivers. An evaluation of the L plate trial will examine whether L plate drivers experienced negative behaviour, and this information will be considered if P plates are implemented.

While displaying P plates may not directly save lives, it will make it simpler for police to identify provisional and learner drivers and therefore enforce licensing conditions such as late night or peer passenger restrictions. It would not be possible to enforce restrictions on provisional drivers, without an identification mechanism such as P plates. Without this, it would be necessary for the police to intercept all vehicles driven by young drivers.

While some drivers may remove the plates to escape detection, Victorian research suggests that about 80% of provisional drivers display P plates about 80% of the time. Fines and other penalties such as extension of the provisional period apply for failure to display P plates in other states and territories that require them.

Pros

- Warns other drivers of an inexperienced driver
- Enables enforcement where restrictions apply

Cons

- May make provisional drivers targets for abuse
- There has been no evaluation of the benefits of P plates
- Provisional drivers may not wear plates or may remove plates

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about P plates?
Have your say on page 22.

14. Screen-based hazard perception test (HPT)

The process of graduating from one licence level to the next could include a HPT to ensure new drivers have the skills required at that level.

Under the P1 and P2 system, provisional drivers could be required to pass a screen-based HPT to move from P1 to P2 or from P2 to their open licence. A driver's hazard perception skills are best developed and assessed once they have had some on-road experience as solo drivers. So, it would make sense to conduct a HPT after the driver has accumulated at least 12 months of solo driving experience. Alternatively it could be a good "exit" test once they have completed their 3 provisional years.

Screen-based HPTs involve a touch-screen computer-based test which measures the ability of drivers to recognise potentially dangerous situations on the road and to react appropriately. Implementation of screen-based HPTs may be an issue for young drivers living in rural areas, however this could be addressed using the internet, as is done in New South Wales.

HPTs are used in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. Generally if participants fail a HPT they are required to resit the test until they pass before moving to the next phase. Most states allow testing the following day but each additional test incurs a fee.

Specialised handbooks may be required to prepare for the test. The cost of the test ranges from \$13.50 (Victoria) and \$33 (New South Wales) per test in other states.

These tests are different from conventional licence tests which concentrate on road rules and vehicle control. They generally occur at a licensing centre on a computerised screen. New South Wales has an option to take the test online. Under this option, candidates book a session through the licensing centre and then conduct the test during this allotted time in the privacy of their own home. An example of a screen-based HPT can be seen on the New South Wales RTA website at <http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/licencingtests/hazardperceptiontest/buildyourskills/index.html>.



Photo courtesy of RTA.

While HPTs do encourage the development of novice drivers the crash reduction value of intermediate and exit tests is yet to be fully established. They also take time and money to develop and may be seen as an extra imposition on young drivers.

Pros

- Potentially encourages the development of hazard perception skills in novice drivers
- Testing ensures novice drivers have the skills to progress to the next level of licensing

Cons

- Increased financial cost for young drivers
- No research evidence of reduction in crash rates
- Increased burden on young people
- Expensive to develop and operate

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about screen-based hazard perception tests to ensure drivers have ability before moving up a level?

Have your say on page 22.

15. Working with driving instructors after changes to the GLS

Working with driving instructors after changes to the GLS are implemented could ensure they clearly understand the new requirements.

About 75% of Queensland learners receive some paid lessons from driving instructors. Queensland Transport requires driver trainers to have Certificate IV in driver instruction and meet standards related to their vehicles such as dual controls. Q-RIDE registered service providers must also meet business standards set in legislation.

Queensland Transport works with the driver training industry and other relevant agencies (such as the RACQ) to evaluate existing driver training and education programs, to identify the best training methods, and to promote and support the development of effective driver training in Queensland. Queensland Transport currently provides information to both driver instructors and Q-RIDE providers as required via the relevant industry bodies or direct mail.

If changes are made to the Queensland licensing system, driving instructors will need to be provided with information and training on how these changes will affect their current training practices.

The education and training may include:

- coaching and mentoring to help instructors develop key skills
- training techniques so trainers can develop hazard detection and response skills in their novice drivers.

Depending on what changes are made to the Queensland GLS, the driver training industry may require customised in-service programs, or restructure of their training programs and qualifications to extend the abilities of instructors.

Pros

- May assist in improving the quality of driver training to young drivers
- Increases knowledge and support within the industry

Cons

- May increase financial costs for driving instructors
- May create increased time burdens for driving instructors

HAVE YOUR SAY

Should Queensland Transport assist instructors with education and training after changes to the licensing system?

Have your say on page 23.

16. Develop an education and media campaign on driver distraction

An education and media campaign to inform the community on the dangers of driver distraction and inattention could be developed.

Young and inexperienced drivers are more susceptible to distractions inside and outside of the car. While some distractions cannot be avoided some can be reduced or eliminated.

Many events and activities both inside and outside the vehicle can take a driver's attention off the road. Some may be temporary distractions that are difficult to predict or control (such as an unusual event along the roadside, a loose object moving inside the vehicle, attending to a upset child, a sudden noise) while others may be distractions that are engaged in voluntarily (such as selecting and changing a CD, interacting with passengers, making or receiving a mobile phone call). Any event that interferes with a driver's attention to driving may result in a crash.

Due to these dangers it may be useful to consider the development of a targeted media and education campaign to inform young drivers of the dangers of driver distractions and inattention.

Pros

- Will inform young drivers of the dangers of driver distractions and inattention

Cons

- Distractions are varied and addressing all possibilities may be difficult or costly

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about an education program and media campaign on driver distraction issues?

Have your say on page 23.

“Research shows that young and inexperienced drivers, particularly those in the first year of solo driving, are more susceptible to distractions inside and outside of the car.”

17. Prohibit all mobile phone use for learner and provisional drivers when driving

To limit the risk of distraction, it may be useful to prohibit learner and provisional licence holders from using their mobile phones, while they are driving (including the use of hands-free kits).

Australian research shows hand-held mobile phone use while driving increases the risk of driver fatality by four to nine times for all drivers. Penalties for use of a hand held mobile phone while driving in Queensland have been increased but to reduce distractions, mobile phone use for provisional (and learner) drivers may not be allowed while driving. It is already against the law to use a hand-held mobile phone or send a text message/SMS while driving. This restriction would also prohibit the use of hands-free kits for young drivers.

This initiative may be popular with the general community on safety grounds, but will be unpopular with young drivers as it deprives them of access to hands-free mobile phone use while on the move, making them different from other drivers. Drivers would be able to use their phone when stopped with the engine switched off. This restriction could be enforced with the re-introduction of P plates in the first 12 months of a provisional licence.

Victoria is also considering introducing this restriction as detailed within its young driver discussion paper. Penalties for hand-held mobile phone use while driving have been increased recently in Queensland.

Pros

- Potentially reduce the risk of less experienced drivers from being involved in a crash

Cons

- May be seen as unnecessary impost on young drivers
- No research evidence of a reduction in crash risk for young drivers

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about prohibiting all mobile phone use for learner and provisional drivers when driving?

Have your say on page 23.

18. Review of penalties and sanctions for provisional drivers who break the law

Deterring provisional drivers from breaking the law or their licence conditions could be helped by reviewing the current penalties and sanctions.

Evidence shows disqualified driving is increasing. There is a continuing increase in the number of court convictions and infringement notices issued for unlicensed/disqualified driving by all drivers. Therefore it is important we continue to encourage individuals to stay within the licensing system.

Unsafe and illegal acts like speeding, drink driving and driving dangerously are common in young driver crashes. The penalties provisional licence holders get for breaking their licence conditions and traffic laws must be harsh if they are to be an effective deterrent.

Intervention programs for repeat offenders could also be explored, particularly for repeated speed or alcohol related offences.

Other approaches that could be applied to licence holders who accumulate the maximum number of points, include:

- extend their provisional licence period when they regain their licence or as an alternative to licence suspension (for example an additional 12 months)
- allow them to retain driving privileges but on a learner licence so they would have to be supervised
- following a suspension period, require that they resit their practical driving test when reapplying for a licence.

For more serious offences courts could be granted the power to order a licence holder to attend a speeding/drink driving program as part of their penalty.

Pros

- Further deter provisional drivers from breaking the law

Cons

- Increased risk of unlicensed driving

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about Queensland Transport reviewing the penalties for young drivers who breach the rules?

Have your say on page 23.

19. Incentive and reward options for provisional drivers

Rewarding young drivers who continue to comply with road laws and their licence conditions could be an option for Queensland.

A common concern among young drivers is that there is too much focus on restriction, regulation and control and not enough on incentives for good driving behaviour. There may be some value in exploring ways of rewarding young drivers who do the right thing on the road.

Examples of incentives include:

- a free first open licence to drivers who remain offence free during the provisional level
- a free learner licence to learners who undertake first aid training
- a reduction in the time spent on a provisional licence after undertaking an approved driver development program. However, Canadian research shows that there is an increase in crash involvement for young drivers who complete driver education and are allowed to exit the system early. This highlights that it is the experience gained under a licensing system that helps protect young drivers from crash risk.

Typically young drivers, based on their high crash involvement, pay higher insurance premiums than the general community. Insurance companies could consider offering lower premiums for young drivers with good driving records to encourage safer driving. This would be unlikely to be effective in the critical first few years before a driver had time to demonstrate a good driving record.

In light of the results from the research in Canada other jurisdictions that have featured this in their GLS such as New Zealand are reviewing their position. This same pattern has been found in other North American GLS and suggests that it is the experience gained under a GLS regime that helps protect novice drivers from crash risk and not driver training.

South Australia currently operates a program where provisional drivers can undertake a driver awareness course to reduce their provisional licence period from three years to two years (providing they are also offence free).

Incentives across the nation

The DriveRight program used in Victoria for provisional drivers periodically gives away a new car to a safe driver. Drivers are drawn from a pool of drivers spotted driving safely and within the law by police, ambulance and fire officers. The DriveRight scheme requires drivers to “opt-in” by putting a special sticker on their car. Other prizes such as new tyres, hotel accommodation and fuel are also offered. More information on DriveRight is available at www.tacsafety.com.au/jsp/driverright.

Pros

- Young people would appreciate being recognised for good driving behaviour

Cons

- Research shows no evidence of road safety benefit
- Incentives like progressing faster through the system early may have negative road safety impacts

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about incentive and reward options to encourage drivers to do the right thing?

Have your say on page 23.

20. Education and training support for provisional drivers

Education and training support could be developed for provisional drivers to help them understand issues including safe following speeds, hazard perception and vehicle maintenance.

Basic driver training for learner drivers concentrates on fundamental car control skills and road rule knowledge.

While most drivers develop additional skills such as hazard perception and the ability to manage distractions through experience and practice, more advanced programs could be developed.

However, international and Australian research shows that the driver training beyond that required to gain an initial driver licence may not decrease crash risk, particularly among young males.

For example, training that concentrates on car control (involving skid recovery and emergency braking) may increase risk among young drivers by making them overconfident, and want to test their driving abilities.

It would therefore be important to ensure that we do not offer training or development programs to novice drivers that may interfere with this experience-based learning.

Programs and resources could be developed that deal less with the physical driving task and more with things such as hazard perception, distractions, risk taking, risk management and the relationships between lifestyle and driving that affect young drivers.

Both international and Australian research suggests that there is no particular need for skills based education and training programs (for example, involving skid recovery and emergency braking) to supplement a GLS.

Scientific evaluations of off-road novice driver training in Australia, Norway, Sweden, USA and Canada over the last three decades have shown no worthwhile crash reduction effects compared to on-road programs. Some have actually shown such training may lead to an increase in crashes through overconfidence, particularly among young males. Off-road driver training facilities are also expensive to build, operate and maintain.^{3B4}

In December 2004 the Federal Transport Minister announced a 2-3 year project development and trial of a world's best practice provisional driver training course in New South Wales and Victoria, focusing on vehicle maintenance, safe following speeds and distances, and hazard perception. The program is designed to provide young drivers with an understanding of their own limitations and an insight into how they can reduce the risks they face on the road. The trial is based on a program from Finland which focuses on behaviour and motivation related to driving.

Queensland could experiment with programs of this nature, or wait for the evaluation of the trial and then make a decision about what may benefit our young drivers.

Given the extensive nature of the Commonwealth trial and conflicting research recommendations on what information should be provided to young drivers at this stage it may be better to wait for the evaluation of the trial before implementing a new education program. Access and cost of further education and training for provisional licence holders would be difficult for young drivers in some rural areas.

Currently government does not regulate the post-licence driver training industry on what content can be delivered to new drivers. If this training was made compulsory it would be necessary to regulate this information to ensure consistent information is provided.

A support program for the parents of provisional drivers known as "Checkpoints" is being trialled in the USA. Preliminary evaluation shows that it may be having a positive effect on GLS compliance among novice drivers.

Pros

- May have a positive effect on GLS compliance among novice drivers

Cons

- Driver training beyond that required to gain an initial driver licence may not decrease crash risk, particularly for young males.

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about innovative education and training support for provisional drivers?

Have your say on page 23.

21. Restricting the cars that provisional drivers may drive

Vehicle restrictions could be introduced to stop provisional licence holders from driving certain types of high-powered cars such as V8 or turbo charged cars. Modified vehicles could also be banned.

Exemptions could be granted where the family car or an employer's vehicle is a restricted vehicle.

Australian research shows that all drivers appear to be at slightly greater crash risk when driving high-powered vehicles. However, newer larger family cars often have extra safety features that can provide added protection in a crash.

It may be difficult for police to identify prohibited vehicles and this may limit them in enforcing the restriction and therefore undermine the potential effectiveness.

Further, driver attitudes may be more important than vehicle power. High speeds can be reached by a wide variety of cars and many young drivers will take risks regardless of the vehicle type.

Rural areas may be particularly disadvantaged by a power restriction as many families within rural areas have 4WD vehicles as a family car.

As mentioned previously in this paper common contributing factors in provisional driver crashes are inexperience, alcohol and speed. Young driver crashes in Queensland occur in all vehicles and there is no evidence that the power of the vehicle can be attributed to an increased crash risk.

Both Victoria and New South Wales do have vehicle restrictions for provisional drivers. However, although Victoria has had power-to-weight restrictions since 1991 there has been no evaluation of its effectiveness since its introduction.

The implementation of power restrictions are achieved differently in Victoria and New South Wales. Victoria has a system of power-to-

weight restrictions where they produce a list of restricted vehicles. This list is required to be regularly updated. However, New South Wales has recently introduced a restriction on engine size where V8, supercharged or turbo vehicles are banned for provisional drivers.

As engine capacities or power to weight ratio are not normally displayed on cars, detection and enforcement may present significant issues for police.

Pros

- Research shows greater crash risk for all drivers when driving high-powered vehicles

Cons

- New high-performance cars have extra safety features that provide added protection
- Administrative burden associated with updating banned vehicle list
- There is no evidence in Queensland that high-powered vehicles are a higher crash risk for young drivers

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about restricting the type of car a provisional licence holder can drive?

Have your say on page 24.

22. Speed limit restrictions

Queensland could consider limiting the speeds at which learner and provisional drivers are allowed to drive.

Whilst speed contributes to crash risk and severity for all drivers, 20% of all speeding infringements are attributed to young drivers. On average 1,500 high speed suspensions (travelling 40km/h over the speed limit) are issued each year to young drivers.

Limiting the speeds that young drivers travel at and banning them from freeways may sound safe, but in reality, it may not be.

Victorian research has shown that requiring young drivers to travel at 20 to 30km/h below the posted speed limit on these roads could actually increase their crash risk. Allowing all traffic to travel at much the same speed on a road or highway is generally safest for all drivers.

These limits would also prevent young drivers from gaining experience on freeways and motorways – roads that are often the safest roads despite their higher speed limits.

Drivers in remote or rural areas would be particularly affected by such restrictions because they often need to drive on highways that have 110km/h speed limits.

If a speed restriction was implemented for young drivers they would be at an increased risk of crashes as many rural areas have single lane roads with 100km/h or 110km/h speed limits. A young driver with a speed restriction, for example of 80km/h, would create an increased crash risk as more drivers could try to overtake on these narrow roads.

Queensland statistics indicate that crashes occur at all speeds and in all conditions. Table 2 shows that 52% of all young driver deaths were under the 100km/h speed limit.

Table 2 – Queensland crashes occurring at all speeds and in all conditions

Speed Zone	Year					Total
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
0 - 50 km/h	2	5	2	7	6	22
60 km/h	14	28	24	24	30	120
70 km/h	3	4	6	3	3	19
80 - 90 km/h	10	12	12	17	10	61
100 - 110 km/h	34	41	56	35	39	205
Total	63	90	100	86	88	427

Pros

- Speed contributes to crash risk and severity for all drivers

Cons

- Allowing young drivers to travel at 20 – 30 km/h below posted speed limits could actually increase their crash risk
- Rural and remote drivers may be particularly affected
- These limits would prevent young drivers gaining experience on freeways and motorways which are considered safer roads

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think about speed limit restrictions for provisional drivers?

Have your say on page 24.

Feedback and comment sheet

We would appreciate your feedback and comments on the initiatives in this paper. For each statement below please indicate your level of support by circling the appropriate number:

1 = Strongly Oppose 2 = Oppose 3 = Neutral 4 = Support 5 = Strongly Support

After each statement please write any additional comments you may have. If you need more space please use the back of the comment sheet.

After completing the feedback sheet detach and return to:

Queensland Youth – on the road and in control

Reply Paid

PO Box 673

Fortitude Valley

QLD 4006

No stamp is required. Please return this form by 10 March 2006.

Pre learner phase

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

1. Develop and trial a pre-learner education package for potential drivers 12 months before minimum learner licence age.

2. First aid training at the pre-learner level to promote awareness of risk among young people.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Learner licence level

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

3.a) Require learner drivers to gain 120 hours of supervised on-road experience.

b) Supervised on-road experience be recorded and certified in a logbook for learner drivers.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

c) If learner drivers lose a partially completed logbook they can re-enter previous information.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

d) Any supervising driver, who has had their open licence for 12 months, can sign the logbook eg. parents, driving instructors, siblings etc.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

4.a) Encourage supervisors of learner drivers to attend an information session on how to supervise learner drivers.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) Develop a multimedia guidance and educational package for learner drivers and parents.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5.a) Hold a learner licence for at least 12 months (to support the 120 hour experience requirement).

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) Increase the learner licence validity from one year to three years (to support the 120 hour experience requirement).

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Reduce the minimum learner licence age from 16 1/2 to 16 years (to allow time to gain 120 hours of experience).

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. Investigate penalty and sanction options for learner drivers who breach traffic laws or licence conditions.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

8.a) Review the Q-Safe practical driving assessment.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) The current practical driving test adequately tests the necessary driving actions. If not please comment below.

9. Introduce competency based training and assessment (CBTA) for learner drivers.

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

Provisional licence level

10. Introduce a peer passenger restriction of no more than one passenger aged under 21 who does not hold an open licence.

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

11. Introduce a late night driving restriction for the first 6-12 months of solo driving.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

12. Divide the P level into two phases (P1 and P2) with additional restrictions in the first phase.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

13. Require display of P plates on vehicles driven by provisional licence holders.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

14. Develop an education campaign encouraging tolerance for all drivers, particularly novice drivers.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

15.a) Use a screen-based hazard perception test (HPT) for P1 drivers to "graduate" to P2 licence phase.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

b) Use a screen-based HPT for provisional drivers to “graduate” to the open licence level (as an exit test).

16. Provide training and support programs to driving instructors to support the improved GLS.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

17. Introduce an education and media campaign on the dangers of driver distraction and inattention.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

18. Prohibit all mobile phone use for learner and provisional drivers when driving.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

19. Develop penalty and sanction options for provisional drivers who breach laws or licence conditions.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

20. Develop incentive and reward options for provisional drivers who comply with road law and licence conditions.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

21.a) Develop and trial new education and training support for provisional licence holders.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

b) Develop new skills based training programs for provisional licence holders.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
1	2	3	4	5

22. Introduce power restrictions for provisional drivers.

23. Introduce speed limit restrictions for provisional drivers.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

24. Parents should be more involved in the education and training of their children to learn to drive.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

25. There should be more information for parents on supporting their children in learning to drive eg. DVD, CD-Rom.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Additional comments

Thank you for your comments on the young driver's discussion paper. We appreciate your input and your help in developing the future direction for the GLS in Queensland. To help us organise and make good use of the comments from Queenslanders, we would like some very basic information about you. Please tick the description that best applies to you.

I am: Male Female

I am in the following age group: 13-16 17-20 21-25 26-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60 and over

I currently hold the following type of car driver licence: Learner Provisional Open (Full) Not applicable

What role do you play in teaching young drivers? Parent or guardian Grandparent Professional driver trainer
 Learner driver Sibling Other, please specify: _____

The postcode where I live is: _____

For further information

Web: www.transport.qld.gov.au/youngdrivers

Phone: 1800 681 636 (during business hours)