

NEWSLETTER

WELCOME TO IN THE PASSENGER SEAT – YOUR INDUSTRY
NEWSLETTER

EDITION 7 | FEBRUARY 2020 | PH: 1300 585 866

Welcome to the 7th edition of **In the Passenger Seat**, our free monthly newsletter for the driving instructors of Australia!

IS IT OKAY TO SPEED THROUGH A SCHOOL ZONE?

Release Date: February 04, 2020

I hope the answer that springs to mind immediately is – HELL NO!!!

When you hear the term “[school zone](#)” you immediately know it’s zoned 40kmh because it is a high-risk area of the road. The simple reason is children congregate here, and children are our most vulnerable and ignorant road users.

As a result, traffic is slowed so that when a child is not paying attention or does something unexpected, like chase a ball across the road, you as the driver have more time to react. A vehicle travelling at 40kmh still takes [26m to stop](#), and should you hit a pedestrian the chance of a fatality is 30%. However, [the 40kmh speed limit provides plenty of time for an alert driver to react](#).

The key point here is an **alert driver**.

A [recent survey of 1000 Australian adult drivers](#) discovered an alarming attitude towards texting on a handheld device. Nearly 40% of drivers said it’s acceptable to respond to a text while driving at 40kmh. By comparison, only 13% said it was acceptable to check the phone while stopped, and changing the song of a playlist was only okay with 10% (thankfully just over 38% viewed any of these behaviours as unacceptable).

This data also indicates some road users won’t respond to texts at high speeds, but the same practice becomes acceptable at a lower speed.

Is this because the risk of harm is now lower? That’s fine if you’re the driver. But for vulnerable road users, like children and other pedestrians, speed makes a huge difference.

Reducing impact speed from [60kmh to 50kmh almost halves the likelihood of death](#), but has little impact on likelihood of injury, which remains close to 100%. But bring your speed down to 40kmh, like in school zones, and you’ve reduced the likelihood of death four times compared with 60kmh, and dramatically reduced the chances of impact too.

Speed really does matter. And so does the driver being alert and able to react.



IN THE PASSENGER SEAT

The survey results reflect that the road safety issue here is the texting driver has failed to recognise they are part of a system is designed to keep everyone safe. Their choices and actions have consequences, and texting while driving significantly increases their risk of a crash.

To put it into context, a text message that takes 10 seconds to type is the equivalent of driving [111m essentially blindfolded](#). Something I don't think any driver would otherwise choose to do.

Lower speed zones are in place to account for predominately higher risk areas of incidents, mainly with VRUs, not to provide a focal area for drivers to respond to texts.

Interestingly, the insurer's survey also showed 32% of drivers identified tougher penalties as a deterrent from texting while driving, and another 21% the use of mobile detection cameras.

Hopefully road users will decide, just like drink driving, texting can wait until you're out of the car. Is it really that important?

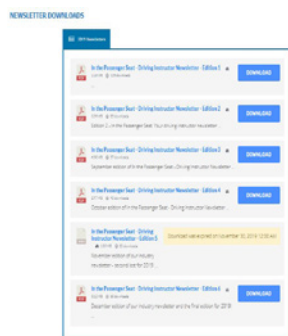
The "[Using a mobile phone while driving: Australian survey 2020](#)" was conducted by insurer [Budget Direct](#).

This survey was conducted by Google Surveys on behalf of Budget Direct in January 2020. All figures are from this research unless stated otherwise. The survey was conducted online with a total sample size of 1,000 weighted and representative of all Australian adults (aged 18+).

SOURCE: National Road Safety



MISSED A PREVIOUS EDITION OF THIS NEWSLETTER, WE HAVE YOU COVERED!



Simply click on the link below or visit the Intelligent Training Solutions website to download any previous edition of this newsletter absolutely free of charge.

LINK: <https://www.its.vic.edu.au/in-the-passenger-seat/>

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DEFENSIVE DRIVE COURSE FOR DRIVING INSTRUCTORS



On the 21st and, at the time of publishing this newsletter, the 28th of February, Intelligent Training Solutions had the pleasure of conducting our defensive drive course as a professional development day for the driver training industry.

On the course we had international trainers from Hong Kong, Interstate Trainers from Tasmania and NSW and trainers/instructors from across Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne join us for this fun filled and informative PD day.

Any trainer willing to give up a day of work and travel to invest in themselves for the future benefit of their business and clients ought to be congratulated.

We are pleasure to report that all our participants enjoyed the day which consisted of both theory and practical training. This PD course provided some of our industries hard working driver trainers to have access to new information that identifies the emerging road safety hot spots, allowing them to develop and integrate the information presented into their own training and business.

Our unique approach to professional development allowed our participants to learn as students, consider it as trainers and apply it as individuals and business owners.

The practical activities give many 'on-road' trainers an opportunity to experience off-road training, including the types of activities they could integrate into their on-road training with learner drivers. This PD course also allowed participants access to important information and invaluable logistics required to conduct off-road training if and when they plan to offer this type of training into their business or job role. Most of all, this course offered participants an insight into their own reactions and behaviours that cannot be experienced until you have attended a course like this.

We had a great time conducted this course and want to say a big thank you to those trainers/instructors who attended this wonderful day, especially those who travel from far away distances. We look forward to running this, and other courses again for the driver training industry.



WRITTEN BY: CAMERON GUTTERSON

CRACKING DOWN ON CORRUPT DRIVING INSTRUCTORS

The Marshall Government is cracking down on corrupt driving instructors and is developing a suite of reforms to strengthen and improve behaviour and standards within the industry.

Driving instructors play a crucial role teaching teenagers and new drivers and equipping them with the driving and road safety skills to keep them and others safe on our roads.



A State Government survey has shown there is strong community and industry support to reform the sector to stamp out inappropriate and corrupt behaviour in the industry, with;

- 85 per cent of industry participants were aware or very aware of corruption in the industry;
- 73 per cent of industry participants felt a review was long overdue;
- 65 per cent of industry participants believe that the CBT&A (rather than VORT) is the most consistent method for safer drivers; and,
- 28 per cent of community participants did not feel confident with all of their driving skills after gaining their full driver's licence.

"The results of the survey are actually quite alarming with the vast majority of driving instructors surveyed being aware of corruption within the industry," said Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government Stephan Knoll.

"We have had reports of driving instructors accepting bribes, misrepresenting their accreditation, engaging in inappropriate behaviour with minors or engaging in other business – some of these have led to convictions.

"If novice drivers aren't being trained to an acceptable level this not only jeopardises the safety of the new driver themselves, but also everyone else on our roads.

"Driving instructors have a huge responsibility to equip teenagers and new drivers with the road safety and driving skills that could one day help save their life on the road and keep others safe too.

"That's why we will work with industry to develop a suite of reforms to stamp out corruption and inappropriate behaviour.

"Over the last four years people under the age of 30 have tragically accounted for 30 lives lost on our roads each year on average.

"Our reforms will help ensure teenagers and new drivers are getting the best possible driving and road safety education so when they get their full licence they are as safe as possible on our roads.

"We will now undertake further consultation with industry on the full suite of our reforms and progress many measures industry have already shown support for.

"These include regular tougher entry requirements, tougher sanctions for poor performance, increased penalties for breaches for unacceptable behaviour and greater transparency of auditing."

Examples of corrupt and inappropriate behaviour include;

- the issue of licences to applicants who have not demonstrated competency;
- including accepting bribes; engaging in other business activities whilst training or assessing applicants for a licence;
- engaging in inappropriate behaviour with minors;
- engaging in other deceptive behaviour such as misrepresenting their accreditation;
- omitting mandatory components of a driving test or refusal to issue receipts for monies paid by a client; and,
- training applicants for a licence on testing routes.

The survey revealed that the solutions industry are most receptive to, which will be considered as part of a suite of reforms, are as follows:

- Provide regular training in road rules and safe driving practices to the driver training industry;
- Implement tougher sanctions on poor performing industry members;
- Publication of DPTI's auditing framework;
- More engagement with DPTI;
- Require a Working with Children Check for all industry members;
- Implement tougher entry requirements into the industry;
- Introduce greater accountability for all industry members;
- Introduce penalties for breaches of acceptable behaviour and standards e.g. warnings, expiations and prosecutions;
- Each industry member to be responsible to maintain and improve their own skills and knowledge;
- Greater accountability of MDI's generally e.g. regular audits and hold appropriate insurances;
- Requirement to keep records of clients (e.g. when lessons or tests were undertaken); and,
- Implement an online register of MDI's, AE's and RTO's to enable the community to make an informed decision as to which provider best suits their needs.

SOURCE: PREMIER.SA.GOV.AU WEBSITE

ROAD SMART @ HILLCREST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE



In late January, the Intelligent Training Solutions Road Smart team had the great pleasure of running what must have been the earliest Road Smart session ever.

The Hillcrest Christian College team have used the second day of the school year to have the VicRoads Road Smart program delivered onsite so that the 120+ students who participated can use the Road Smart message as a launching point for their school year.

Well done to the staff and students of Hillcrest Christian College!



FOR SALE – 2017 HYUNDAI ACCENT – DUAL CONTROLLED

Earlier this month we were contacted by Amanda from Learner and Beyond who is looking at selling one of her driving school vehicles.



This may be of interest to those currently working in the driver training industry or for those considering entering the driving instruction industry. This would also be a great vehicle for anybody looking at a newer car. For more information on this vehicle or to contact the owner please see the Car Sales advert ID: SSE-AD-6495132

TRANSMISSION: 6-speed manual

KM: 19,855km

BODY TYPE: RB4 Active 5dr Hatchback

ENGINE: 4CYL 1.4L Petrol

VIN No.: KMHCT51BLHU 320232

ASKING PRICE: \$13,499 ONO

This vehicle is still under manufacturer warranty until 30th Jan 2022!!

NOTE: The dual controls currently come with the vehicle however they can be removed for those interested in this vehicle for private use. Dual controls are an addition to a vehicle (like a car radio or bull bar) and not a modification therefore once removed, the vehicle will be restored to its original factory condition.



SAVE THE DATE – TUESDAY 10TH MARCH 2020!

DRIVING INSTRUCTOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSION & CATCH-UP!

Our next catch-up session will be held on the 10th March 2020 at 6.30pm. During the night, we will be holding an industry building workshop designed to establish a professional development schedule for the 2020 year for all driving instructors. This will be followed up with light refreshments and an opportunity to catch up with one another.

We have said this before and we will say it again, there aren't many events aimed towards helping driving instructors with their business, whereby the sole goal is to provide you with value and support, so we hope you all take advantage of this opportunity and participate in shaping your businesses and futures.

COST OF NIGHT: \$5 per person – that's it

Registration for this event will be available from the Intelligent Training Solutions website or contact the I.T.S office during business hours, Monday to Friday.

AUSTRALIAN TAX OFFICE SMALL BUSINESS NEWSROOM

SUPPORTING YOU AND YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

Whether you're new to business or long-established, do your own tax or use a registered tax or BAS agent, the ATO has a range of tools and services to make it easier.

For example, you can:

- watch their small business webinars on a range of topics from activity statements to Single Touch Payroll
- use their tools and calculators to help you get your tax right
- set up a payment plan to manage your debt.

The demands of running a business can also contribute to stress and place pressure on your mental health. This can then impact your quality of life and ability to run your business.

If you're feeling overwhelmed or getting behind with your tax and super obligations, let us or your registered tax agent know as early as possible so we can work with you to find a solution. No matter what your situation is, it's never too late to ask for help.

SOURCE: Australian TAX Office – Small Business Newsroom

BUSHFIRE SUPPORT



Devastating bushfires continue to burn across large parts of Australia.

If you've been impacted by these bushfires, don't be concerned about your tax affairs. Now is the time for you, your family and community. We'll help you sort out your tax affairs later.

Where your business or residential address is in one of the identified bushfire impacted postcodes, we've automatically applied deferrals for lodgements and payments due.

You or your agent do not need to apply for this deferral.

We have also automatically fast tracked your refund if you have one due to you.

Employers will still need to meet their ongoing super guarantee obligations for employees.

If you aren't able to meet the deferred due date, we can work with you to find a solution. Phone the Emergency Support Infoline or speak with your registered tax professional.

We also don't want you to worry if you've been impacted by the bushfires but are not in an identified postcode. Contact us when you're ready and we will help you to get back on track.

For more information around specific support available, you can visit our dedicated bushfire webpage.

SOURCE: Australian TAX Office – Small Business Newsroom

HELPING EMPLOYEES IN EMERGENCIES



Normally, benefits you provide to your employees such as non-work-related hotel stays or loaning them a car for their private use would be considered fringe benefits, and subject to fringe benefits tax (FBT).

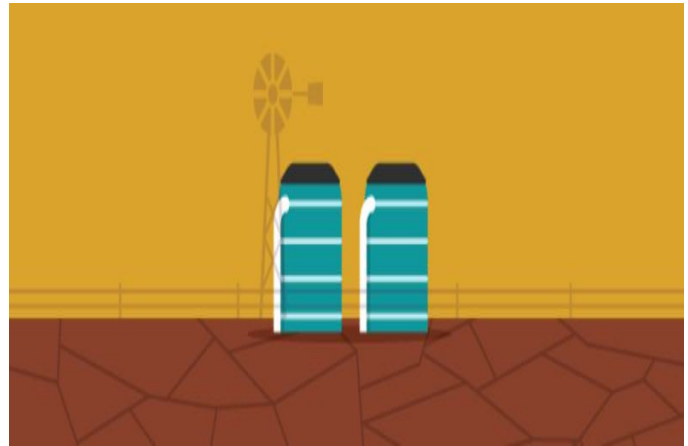
However, in emergency situations like natural disasters, providing immediate relief to employees who are impacted (or potentially impacted) is exempt from FBT where the assistance is for:

- first aid or emergency health care

- emergency meals, food supplies, clothing, accommodation, transport or use of household goods
- temporary repairs
- any similar matter.

These exemptions also apply where your employee has been affected by:

- an accident
- serious illness
- armed conflicts
- civil disturbances.



There are specific requirements when it comes to providing health care, and exemptions don't apply to long-term benefits like providing a new house or car to replace one destroyed as a result of an emergency.

If you or your business are affected by a disaster we understand tax is the last thing on your mind right now. We have a hotline you can call for assistance in getting your tax back on track once the emergency has passed. Your registered tax agent or BAS agent can also help you.

SOURCE: Australian TAX Office – Small Business Newsroom

HOLISTIC SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESS



My Business Health, a free web portal designed to provide holistic support to small business owners, is now live.

Many small and family business owners may not be aware that their everyday worries – be it cash flow, staff related concerns or paying suppliers – can actually cause high levels of psychological distress.

Accessed via the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman website, My Business Health offers practical information and resources to help with those day-to-day issues that keep small business owners awake at night.

If you are experiencing any such worries or concerns about your business, visit My Business Health today and find out how it can help you.

SOURCE: Australian TAX Office – Small Business Newsroom



HOW DOES GST WORK?

GST is a 10% tax paid on most goods and services sold or consumed in Australia.

You must register for GST if you:

- run a business or enterprise that has a turnover of \$75,000 or more per year
- run a not-for-profit organisation that has a turnover of \$150,000 or more per year
- are a taxi or ride-sourcing driver.



If you aren't registered for GST, check each month to see whether you've reached the registration turnover threshold, or are likely to reach it. If you do, you need to register for GST within 21 days.

If you are registered for GST you:

- need to include GST in the price of your sales, unless they are GST-free or input-taxed
- can claim credits for GST included in the price of goods and services you buy for your business or enterprise
- can account for GST on either a cash or non-cash basis (the method you use will affect when you report and claim GST)
- will need to lodge an activity statement to report and pay the GST you have collected and claim credits for the GST you have paid.

SOURCE: Australian TAX Office – Small Business Newsroom

I DON'T LIKE PINEAPPLE ON MY PIZZA!



Did you know using a simple statement like 'I don't like pineapple on my pizza!' as a password can take more than one year and costs scammers \$107,000 to crack? The reason it's a great password is it:

- is easy to remember
- has 35 characters
- includes an apostrophe, exclamation mark and spaces.

This is just one of the tips you can find in a range of resources available to help you protect your business. These resources have been developed by us and the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) who recently surveyed small businesses about cyber security.

The ACSC found 75% of small business owners surveyed are responsible for their own IT and almost half say they don't know enough about cyber security.

If this sounds familiar, then these resources are a great place to start.

LINK: <https://www.cyber.gov.au/small-business>

SOURCE: Australian TAX Office – Small Business Newsroom

KEEPING SAFE ON VICTORIAN ROADS THIS SUMMER



Victorians hitting the roads over the hotter months are urged to make road safety their number one priority. Preparation is key to ensuring everyone gets to their destination safely.

Make sure you check the [Vic Emergency](#) app before setting out for road incidents and warnings.

Drivers can keep updated with the latest state-wide traffic information by visiting the [VicTraffic](#) site or downloading the app.

SOURCE: VicRoads Road Rule Update – February 2020 Edition

DRIVING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT & EMERGENCY VEHICLES



From **01 July 2017** a new road rule was introduced to improve safety for our emergency and enforcement workers.

If a police, emergency, enforcement or escort vehicle has its red, blue or magenta lights flashing or its siren on, you must:

- get out of its way
- give way and stop if necessary, even if you have a green traffic light.

You must not exceed **40km/h** when passing the vehicle and not increase your speed until a safe distance from the scene.

You must also **stop** if twin red lights are flashing on a road, e.g. outside a fire or ambulance station. You can start driving again once the lights have stopped flashing and the road is clear of emergency or other vehicles.

DON'T GET SCAMMED BY FAKE VICROADS WORKERS

We're urging Victorians to be on the lookout for fake VicRoads workers offering to fix driveways or line marking on private property.

VicRoads have been alerted to six cases of people being scammed across Melbourne with the fake workers targeting businesses and homes in areas including Craigieburn, Frankston and Langwarrin.



In the most serious case, two men claiming to be working for VicRoads and displaying fake VicRoads identification, knocked on the door of a house in Langwarrin and told the property owner they were selling 'left over' asphalt from nearby construction projects and offered to fix the driveway.

The owner agreed to the work, and within minutes trucks and rolling machines arrived. The owner paid \$20,000 and was presented with a fake invoice with the company name 'Vic Road Marking Pty Ltd'.

The scam is elaborate with the men not only using fake VicRoads branded identification – they are also driving a fake VicRoads branded Mazda ute.

In several other incidents, men claiming to be employed by VicRoads displaying fake identification targeted medical clinics offering to perform line marking in their car parks.

Department of Transport Executive Director for Metro South East, Vince Punaro, said the incidents were concerning and warned people to be vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to Victoria Police immediately.

"Our staff never perform work on private property, and they certainly don't go from door-to-door offering to do asphaltting or line marking."

"These incidents are very concerning and we would encourage anybody who suspects they may have been a victim of these scams to report it to Victoria Police immediately."

If people are considering having work done on their properties, we urge them to visit the [Consumer Affairs Victoria website\(External link\)](#) for advice.

SOURCE: VicRoads Road Rule Update – February 2020 Edition

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

The Department of Health and Human Services is working closely with the Victorian health sector, Commonwealth and international agencies to respond appropriately to the outbreak of a novel coronavirus.

This situation is changing frequently. Please visit <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus> for updates.

The advice from the Department of Health and Human Services is that unless you have been in mainland China in the past 14 days, you should continue to go about your daily lives and travel as normal. This includes continuing to use public transport, cars, taxis, hire cars and ridesharing.

SOURCE: VicRoads Road Rule Update – February 2020 Edition

INFORMATION FOR THE EDUCATION SECTOR – NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

(COVID-19)

| [Information and advice for schools](#)



An outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was detected in Wuhan, China in late December 2019. Cases have been reported predominantly in the city of Wuhan, in the Hubei province of China, as well as other

SOURCE: VicRoads Road Rule Update – February 2020 Edition

ADTAV UPDATE REGARDING VICROADS

The President and Secretary of the ADTAV recently meet with the new Executive Director of Road Safety Victoria, Carl Muller. It has been reported by the ADTAV that several items were discussed including the privatisation of VicRoads. We were not privileged to this conversation and therefore cannot provide you with the actual outcome of this meeting and its effects on Driving Instructors in Victoria, however, it was mentioned that review of VicRoads departments was underway and that the outcomes of the review will be released shortly.

For more information on this topic, please contact the ADTAV.

SOURCE: ADTAV Email Update

UPDATE ON THE HAZARD PERCEPTION TEST (HPT)

It has been reported through our customer service centres that, VicRoads is currently rolling out a updated hazard perception test with CSC's such as Carlton and Dromana being piloted this month. VicRoads advise keeping an eye on their website for updated information. It is expected that the roll out to CSC's across Victoria will take place in March.

SOURCE: Driver Trainers of Australia Facebook page

Chinese cities and countries, including confirmed cases in Victoria, Australia.

In accordance with national public health guidelines and current information about novel coronavirus from the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer the department is now advising all people who have visited mainland China, returning to Australia from 1 February 2020 to stay at home and avoid public settings, including early learning centres, schools and universities, until 14 days after leaving mainland China. For updated advice visit the [information for the public - novel coronavirus page](#).

If you think a child, student or staff member may have the coronavirus please call the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to discuss further actions on 1300 651 160. Please keep Triple Zero (000) for emergencies only.

WORKING WITH LOCAL COUNCIL AND COMMUNITIES



Road access is being restored across the Upper Murray thanks to a joint effort between Regional Roads Victoria (RRV), Towong Shire Council and several other key agencies.

RRV has joined forces with Towong Shire Council and the Australian Defence Force, with assistance from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Victoria Police, Parks Victoria and VicForests, to undertake the mammoth task of inspecting, repairing and reopening five arterial and over 67 council managed roads over the past month.

Fire impact assessments were carried out to identify and remove potentially dangerous trees and identify damage to roads, bridges and culverts.

RRV's North Eastern Regional Director, Steve Bowmaker said the roads body has been working tirelessly to restore both arterial and local roads after bushfires swept through the region in January.

"The fallout from the fires has been huge with thousands of roadside trees burned, tonnes of debris strewn on and around our roads and thousands of signs and guideposts wiped out. Now we're squarely focussed on helping North Eastern Victoria return to business-as-usual and a huge part of this has been enabling the community to safely access their homes, schools and workplaces," Mr Bowmaker said.

"Pooling our resources for this emergency response and recovery has undoubtedly delivered the best outcome for the community, with this partnership going a long way to restoring the road network for the 6,000 residents who live there, as well as the significant number of local industries who need these critical transport links to run their businesses."

Towong Shire Council Mayor, Cr David Wortmann said the strong collaborative partnership between key agencies ensured Upper Murray roads were assessed for safety and reopened as quickly as possible.

"Restoring road access following the bushfires has been critical in reconnecting remote communities with the services and support they need, particularly for the primary producers in the Upper Murray. Following the fires our dairy farmers needed to continue milking and without adequate road access for milk trucks, dairy farmers can be left with no other option but to pour their milk down the drain," Cr Wortmann said.

"The reopened roads allow us to declare the Upper Murray open for business and welcome visitors back to the area in support of local businesses and primary producers."

RRV has been working with a raft of agencies, businesses, geotechnical specialists and arborists since fires ravaged parts of Gippsland and north east Victoria earlier this year. Work continues on the post-fire clean-up process which is expected to take several months.

Some fire-affected roads remain closed across the state and the most up-to-date closure information is available at the [VicTraffic website](#).

SOURCE: Regional Roads Victoria website

UNDERA SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN THE ROPES OF ROAD MAINTENANCE

Undera Primary School students got a first-hand look at road maintenance in action with a visit from Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) North Eastern Region and the North Eastern Maintenance Alliance (NEMA) in early February.



The small group of prep to grade 6 students had noticed roadworks starting on the Echuca-Mooroopna Road right outside their school and were armed with plenty of questions for the RRV team.

Small hands shot up to ask about how to tell when a road needs fixing, what roads are made of and – most importantly – how we would go about fixing ‘their’ road.

NEMA Project Leaders Jason Brown and Tom Harrison stepped up to answer the questions, no matter how curly. They talked to the

students about some of the ways a road surface can deteriorate, the layers used to construct a road and the different stages of rehabilitation work underway on Echuca-Mooroopna Road.

The students discovered what material used in each layer of the road felt like with a hands-on road model and learned about the importance of road worker safety, particularly protective clothing.

There were plenty of smiles and giggles as the kids donned high visibility vests, hard hats, gloves and safety glasses, with even Undera Primary School Principal Dave Farrell getting in on the act.

Students were able to see and hear about how a multi-wheel roller was being used onsite and were excited when the spray from a water truck was demonstrated in the school car park.

Finally, the RRV team asked some questions of the students to see how much they’d learned about RRV, road maintenance and road worker safety. Again, small hands shot into the air and all questions were easily answered.

Principal Farrell thanked RRV and NEMA for taking time to visit the school. He said he was looking forward to hearing how the students would share their knowledge with family, friends and the school bus driver, as they travelled to and from school through the roadworks site.

Regional Roads Victoria is reconstructing a 610m section of the [Echuca-Mooroopna Road at Undera](#). Essential pavement works have started and are expected to be completed by the end of February, weather permitting.

SOURCE: Regional Roads Victoria website



VICROADS HOLIDAY OPENING HOURS FOR 2020

At the time of publishing this newsletter, the VicRoads website had still not been updated with the 2020 holiday opening hours for its customer service centres throughout Victoria.

SOURCE: VicRoads website

VICROADS DRIVING INSTRUCTOR MEETINGS FOR 2020

Sorry readers, we have not yet received the 2020 driving instructor meeting schedule.

SOURCE: VicRoads

VICROADS ROADSMART PROGRAM

ROADSMART ACCREDITED OFF-ROAD PROVIDERS

- > **Intelligent Training Solutions Pty Ltd**
PH: 03 5415 0209 or 1300 585 866
W: <https://www.its.edu.au>
E: roadsmart@its.vic.edu.au
- > **Icon Drive Services**
PH: 0414 950 833 (Rita Waters)
W: <http://icondrive.com.au/>
E: info@icondrive.com.au
- > **ADTAV**
PH: (03) 9887 8074 (Jenny Ravlic)
W: www.adtav.org.au
E: info@adtav.org.au

The accredited providers listed above have off-road training venues utilised by the Road Smart program for the delivery of the practical driving component. If you are interested in working on this program, contact the accredited providers listed above.

VICROADS TESTING CENTRES

REMEMBER: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Your contribution to this section will determine its success. If you have any information about your local VicRoads office that would be beneficial for visiting or local instructors to know, please email us at editorial@its.edu.au

Your VICROADS testing offices are:

- VicRoads Ararat
- VicRoads Bairnsdale
- VicRoads Ballarat
- VicRoads Benalla
- VicRoads Bendigo
- VicRoads Broadmeadows
- VicRoads Bundoora
- VicRoads Burwood
- VicRoads Carlton
- VicRoads Cobram
- VicRoads Colac
- VicRoads Dandenong
- VicRoads Dromana
- VicRoads Echuca
- VicRoads Frankston
- VicRoads Geelong
- VicRoads Hamilton
- VicRoads Heatherton
- VicRoads Hoppers Crossing
- VicRoads Horsham
- VicRoads Kyneton
- VicRoads Leongatha
- VicRoads Melton
- VicRoads Mooroolbark (Appointments Only)
- VicRoads Morwell
- VicRoads Pakenham
- VicRoads Portland
- VicRoads Sale
- VicRoads Seymour
- VicRoads Shepparton
- VicRoads Swan Hill
- VicRoads Wangaratta
- VicRoads Warragul
- VicRoads Warrnambool
- VicRoads Werribee (Appointments Only)
- VicRoads Wodonga

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS SECTION EMAIL:
editorial@its.edu.au

**VICTORIAN
SCHOOL TERM DATES FOR 2020**

Victoria School Term Dates for 2020		
School Holidays	Starts	Finishes
Term 1	28 Jan 20	27 Mar 20
Term 2	14 Apr 20	26 Jun 20
Term 3	13 July 20	18 Sep 20
Term 4	05 Oct 20	18 Dec 20

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA SCHOOL TERM DATES
FOR 2020**

South Australia School Term Dates for 2020		
School Holidays	Starts	Finishes
Term 1	29 Jan 20	09 Apr 20
Term 2	27 Apr 20	03 July 20
Term 3	20 July 20	25 Sep 20
Term 4	12 Oct 20	11 Dec 20

**NEW SOUTH WALES SCHOOL TERM DATES
FOR 2020**

New South Wales – School Term Dates 2020		
School Holidays	Starts	Finishes
Term 1	28 Jan 20	09 Apr 20
Term 2	27 Apr 20	03 July 20
Term 3	20 July 20	25 Sep 20
Term 4	12 Oct 20	18 Dec 20

**QUEENSLAND SCHOOL TERM DATES FOR
2020**

Queensland School Term Dates 2020		
School Holidays	Starts	Finishes
Term 1	28 Jan 20	03 Apr 20
Term 2	20 Apr 20	26 Jun 20
Term 3	13 July 20	18 Sep 20
Term 4	6 Oct 20	11 Dec 20

SOURCE: Various government department sources via Google Search



DRIVER TRAINERS OF AUSTRALIA FACEBOOK PAGE

Groups See All



Driver Trainers of Australia
 Group · 320 members

This Facebook page is a place for the best of the best in Australian Driver Training to congregate and consider how we all move...
 Member since November 2016

With the Driver Trainers of Australia Facebook page now being the largest Driving Instructor Online community that we are aware of, it comes with no surprise that this little page is has continued to grow in members over Christmas and has continued

providing a platform for like-minded instructors and trainers to come together to share their ideas and ask those thought provoke questions.

To list all the conversations held on the Driver Trainers of Australia page here would be a waste of paper as all the posts since Nov 2016 are available online to view, instead we encourage you to take a look for yourself and join the Driver Trainers of Australia Facebook page.

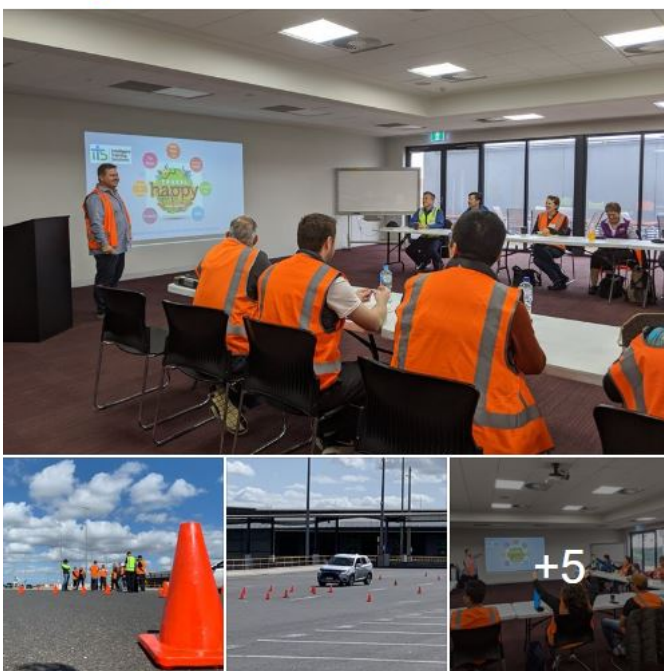
Membership to this online community is completely free, simply open Facebook and search for 'Driver Trainers of Australia'

Here are two of the most recent posts from this online community.

 **Intelligent Training Solutions Pty Ltd - RTO 22570** shared a post. ...

Published by Cameron Gutterson (?) · 22 February at 12:39

We truly had a great day delivering this course to our wonderful hard-working industry yesterday. It warms our hearts to offer meaningful support and opportunity for our fellow trainers. It saddens us to understand how rare these opportunities are for instructors. (This is the shameless plug) We do have a couple of spots left for next week. We don't know when will run another. 😊



16 February at 13:30 ...

Found this funny.

Had a stalker. She followed us from a Vicroads Car Park, till the end of the lesson. Always in the distance, always watching.

My guess, international driver trying to learn where the test would take her. Sorry love, but the court we took you down 6 times isn't the test route 🤔😂

This happen to many people? Was funny.



SOURCE: Driver Trainers of Australia Facebook Page



It's been a busy start to 2020 for Keys2drive and we look forward to keeping you informed throughout the year about what we're up to.

Here's an article that touches on some major themes in the Keys2drive methodology. It talks about the tragic overrepresentation of novice drivers in road trauma, and how a free Keys2drive lesson can help learners and supervisors become safer on the road.

P-plater crash risk

It's widely known that newly-licensed drivers have a higher crash risk than their peers, particularly in the first six months of solo driving. On the day a novice driver gets P-plates, their crash risk skyrockets, then gradually reduces over time. This occurs right across the world and it's a trend that has challenged road-safety experts for decades.

Confident or overconfident?

There are many reasons for this jump in crash risk for a new P-plater and one has to do with a novice driver's confidence in their own ability. As learners practise, they generally become more confident, but new and challenging situations can have an effect. If the situations are too hard, for example, the experience might damage a novice-driver's confidence. But if they're successful in overcoming these challenges, it can contribute to *overconfidence*, which usually leads to increased crash risk.

It's fair to say that most new drivers – after completing their supervised hours and passing the driving test – are biased towards an optimistic view of their ability and how safe they'll be. They may even have such a view well before they gain P-plates. Drivers with an unrealistic view of their ability are often described as being mis calibrated – their *perceived* ability doesn't match their *actual* ability.

Optimism bias

One of the concepts we describe in Keys2drive online training is 'optimism bias'. Wikipedia defines optimism bias as: "...a cognitive bias that causes someone to believe that they themselves are less likely to experience a negative event. Optimism bias is common and transcends gender, ethnicity, nationality and age."¹

The links between optimism bias and road safety are clear. But we're all prone to it, not just novice drivers. In fact, 80% of us have it². And it can occur in many areas of our lives – our health, finances, our relationships; even where we choose to live.

A lot of people think they're better and safer than the average driver. Many of us think that road crashes affect other people, not us. But road crashes can happen anywhere at any time, can't they? Why do so many people downplay the risk to themselves?

In her 2012 TED Talk on optimism bias, cognitive neuroscientist Tali Sharot explains that it's not that people believe things will magically work out; they just think they have the skills and know-how to make it so. Here's a link to Professor Sharot's TED Talk – it's well worth a look:

https://www.ted.com/talks/tali_sharot_the_optimism_bias?language=en#t-14069

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optimism_bias

² https://www.ted.com/talks/tali_sharot_the_optimism_bias?language=en#t-14069

If a learner has had exactly the same training and learning-to-drive experience as their peers, then their crash risk is the same too. It stands to reason, yet it's a hard concept for many learners to understand. Many still rate themselves as better and safer drivers than their peers.

How often do you notice optimism bias in your students? Is it common or rare? Is it obvious or subtle? How do you deal with it? Do you try to address it, or do you expect it to fade away over time? How do your students react when you explain to them the realities about novice-driver crash risk? Does it affect their optimism or views about their own safety?

Keys2drive instructors learn ways to prevent or stifle optimism bias in learner drivers. This might be through an instructor providing accurate feedback on a learner's performance, or it might be how they respond to the learner's errors or mistakes. It might also be in the way an instructor reframes the driving test by, say, clarifying with the learner what exactly they think it is assessing, and what passing the test means in relation to the new P-plater's ability and how much they have to learn.

One of the reasons why involving parents and supervisors in Keys2drive is compulsory is that they too are susceptible to overconfidence – either in their own ability as supervisors or in their learner's ability on the road. Parents and supervisors may note, for example, the absence of crashes or near misses during the L-plate period and consider that to be a reliable predictor of their learner's safety as a P-plater. Or they might think that telling the learner they're doing well (even though they're not) is good for their self-esteem, not realising it could lead to overconfidence and a higher likelihood of a crash.

It's complex – and there are no easy answers – but Keys2drive is specifically designed to help learners and their supervisors learn strategies and techniques that help build within a learner a strong foundation for a lifetime of safe driving.

How do I become a Keys2drive-accredited instructor?

Keys2drive has a network of 1,400 accredited instructors delivering lessons in all Australian states and territories. If you'd like to join them, you'll find the accreditation criteria at:

<https://www.keys2drive.com.au/accreditation-criteria>

You'll also find information on how to register for Keys2drive accreditation and what happens after you do.

If you have any queries about Keys2drive, contact the team on 1800 696 929 or at admin@keys2drive.com.au, or visit the website: www.keys2drive.com.au

WRITTEN BY: Andrew Rasch

VINTAGE EVERYDAY

Check-out this old-school helmet that allows for someone driving a motorcycle to communicate with their passenger.



WHO CAN BECOME A KEYS2DRIVE ACCREDITED DRIVING INSTRUCTOR?

Any accredited driving instructor who meets the keys2drive application criteria can register themselves to become an accredited Keys2Drive trainer. There is NO charge to complete the registration training and the whole course is completed online. From start to finish, the entire accreditation process should ideally take 3 to 6 weeks depending on the individual, however, there are a few eligibility criteria that you must adhere to prior to submitting an application. They are:



- Full Australian Driver Licence
- Instructors licence for your state/territory
- Current working with children's check
- You must hold a Certificate IV in Driving Instruction.
- Utilise a minimum five-star ANCAP rated vehicle.
- Provide a current comprehensive motor vehicle insurance policy statement
- Hold an active ABN

For more information on the Keys2Drive application criteria visit:

<https://www.keys2drive.com.au/accreditation-criteria> or call them on 1800 696 929.



VIC: COMMERCIAL PASSENGER VEHICLES VICTORIA (CPVV)**TYRE SAFETY BLITZ STARTS IN MARCH**

Don't risk driving on worn or damaged tyres.

That's the message from Commercial Passenger Vehicles Victoria as it launches a month-long blitz focused on tyre safety.

Unroadworthy tyres are dangerous. They put drivers, passengers and other road users at risk.

Throughout March 2020, authorised officers will be carrying out additional checks on commercial passenger vehicles across Victoria looking specifically for issues with tyres.

Any vehicles with unroadworthy tyres can be taken off the road – and the driver or vehicle owner can be fined \$413.

While the focus of the March blitz will be tyre safety, officers will also be checking vehicles for other issues. Vehicle owners are urged to check that they are complying with all their safety responsibilities.

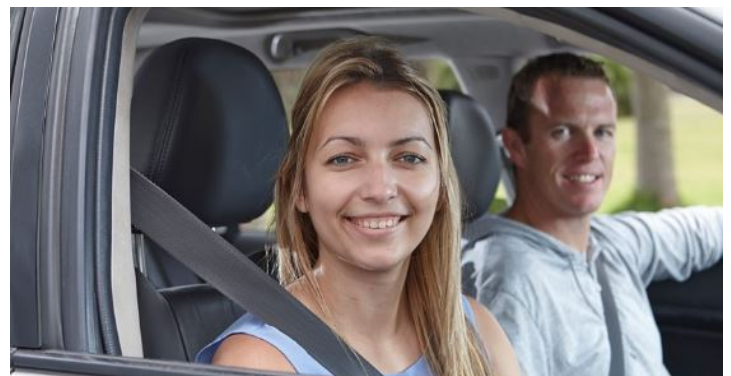
Commercial passenger vehicle drivers and instructors should make sure their vehicle is safe to drive before every shift – and that includes checking the tyres for signs of wear or damage.

SOURCE: CPVV

**NSW: TRANSPORT ROADS AND MARITIME SERVICES (RMS)****FREE WORKSHOP: HELPING LEARNERS BECOME SAFER DRIVERS**

This month, NSW Roads will be hosting their free workshop titled 'Help Learners Become Safer Drivers' where they will have experts speaking on topics such as:

- How to buy the safest vehicle
- Laws around safe driving practices
- Advice on maintenance
- Tips and tricks on teaching learners how to drive and much more.



We reached out to NSW Roads, but unfortunately due to the time constraints and our publishing deadlines, we weren't able to identify the target audience for this workshop, or if any of our readers were attending.

We would assume that the workshops target group would be supervising drivers, however, if you were lucky enough to attend this event, please drop us a line and fill us in. We would love to share the outcomes and intent of this NSW Roads lead event with our readers.

SOURCE: NSW Roads Facebook Page

SPEED LIMIT CHANGES ALONG SECTIONS OF M4 MOTORWAY

Motorists are advised original speed limits are being reinstated from next week along the M4 Motorway between Mays Hill and Penrith.

A Transport for NSW spokesperson said the speed limits were lowered to allow work to be carried out safely on the NSW Government's \$600 Million M4 Smart Motorway project.



"In December 2017, the speed limit along the M4 Motorway was lowered to allow crews to build additional lanes, upgrade interchanges and install smart technology," the spokesperson said.

"From next week, most sections of the motorway will have returned to their original speed limit.

"This includes an 11km stretch westbound between the Cumberland Highway and Wallgrove Road and an 8km stretch

eastbound between the Prospect Highway and Church Street.

"With work being carried out in live traffic conditions, it was essential lower speed limits were in place to ensure the safety of all workers and motorists."

The Spokesperson said work on the project is progressing well, with the majority of the work now complete.

"The project is reaching the finish line, with crews continuing to install gantries and trial ramp meters along the M4 Motorway," the spokesperson said.

"Where work continues, small sections of the Motorway will remain at 80 km/h to ensure the safety of workers and road users.

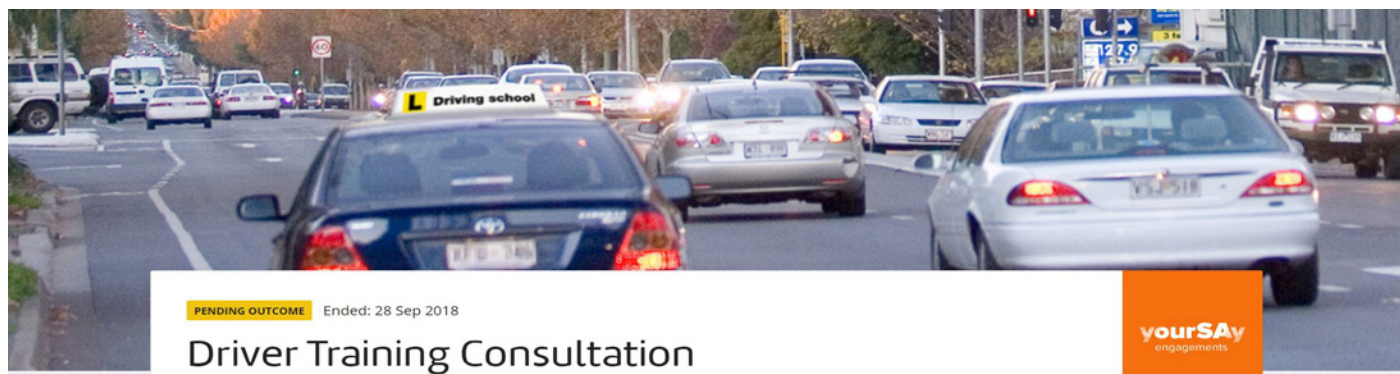
"Motorists are reminded to drive to the conditions and follow all signs when travelling through work zones."

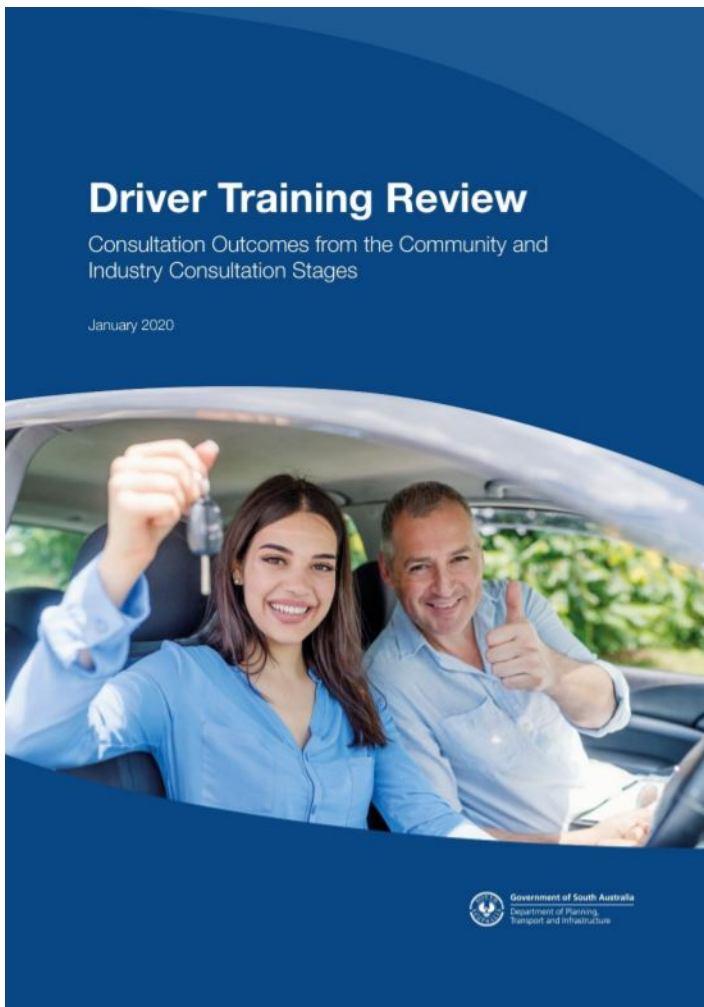
For more information about the reinstated speed limits and the project, visit the M4 page.

SOURCE: Transport for NSW website

SA: DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE (DPTI)

DRIVER TRAINING REVIEW – FEEDBACK REPORT AVAILABLE





The Driver Training Review has completed two stages of consultation to date. In Stage 1 we asked the community to tell us about their driver training and assessment experience, and what they liked and didn't like. The response to the survey was strong and included people who had had very recent experiences to some whose experiences spanned back more than 20 years ago. Whilst all responses are appreciated, only those experiences that occurred within the last 5 years are recorded in the report.

Stage 2 was focussed on the driver training industry. We asked what they thought about the community feedback, provided an opportunity to identify what they thought the problems were within the industry, and to suggest how these could be addressed.

Thanks to everyone who participated. The results of each consultation stage are now available and you can find them in the Driver Training Consultation Public Report.

Both stages confirmed the need for reform of the industry. Another clear message was that the standards to enter the driver training

industry and the standards to remain in the driver training industry need to be improved. We will now work with the driver training industry to progress a reform package.

For those interested in reading the 38 pages report, [click here:](https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/decisions/driver-training-consultation/about)
<https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/decisions/driver-training-consultation/about>

SOURCE: yourSAy website



TRANSPORT ACCIDENT COMMISSION (TAC)

ROAD TRAUMA MEMORIAL GETS UNDERWAY



The Victorian State Government has begun work on a new memorial at Geelong's waterfront to give people who have experienced road trauma a place to reflect and remember.

Ocean Grove's Don Walters' concept 'Solace' will be an enduring memorial for people to contemplate the impacts of road trauma and to remember people who have lost their lives on Victorian roads. Member for Geelong Christine Couzens recently joined Mr Walters to announce the start of works on the memorial.

The sculpture will have a permanent home along the picturesque eastern Geelong waterfront, off Hearne Parade, where the views will provide a peaceful place for remembering. The memorial and its design will create a place for all people affected by road trauma to visit and remember their loved ones, as well as raise awareness for Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) and Uniting Church of Australia (UCAVT), who offer support services for people impacted by road trauma.

The TAC has partnered with the City of Greater Geelong to deliver the road trauma memorial project with support from RTSSV and UCAVT. Representatives from the TAC and City of Greater Geelong, along with TAC clients and community members affected by road trauma, were all involved in the selection process of the successful artwork.

The City of Greater Geelong is undertaking landscaping works around the memorial site to create a welcoming space with all-abilities access. The project is expected to be completed by the middle of this year.

SOURCE: TAC

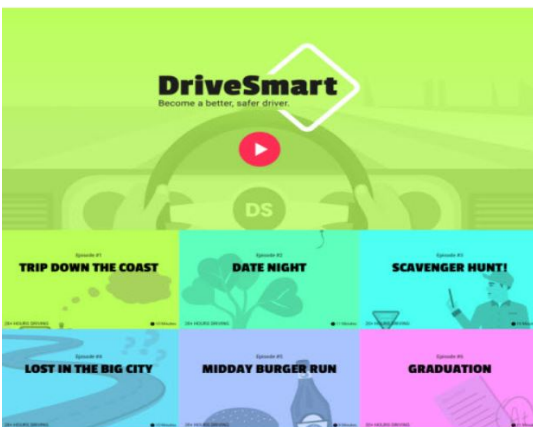
DRIVESMART – LEARNING TO DRIVE PROGRAM

Have you seen this TAC initiative aimed at learner drivers?

DriveSmart is a free program which helps you practice your skills and become a more experienced and safer driver as you work towards getting your probationary licence.

DriveSmart is an online training tool designed to accelerate learning of skills needed for safe driving - particularly those relating to hazard perception and concentration - with the ultimate aim of helping reduce the number of young people killed or injured on our roads.

DriveSmart is designed to support the on-road driving experience for learner drivers, it is the perfect partner to getting hands-on experience in a car. The program includes challenges for learners with 20+ hours of supervised driving practice and 50+ hours of supervised driving practice.



What can users expect in the DriveSmart program?

- Users can sign up with their Facebook or email address
- Real-world videos
- A focus on unprotected road users
- Fun story-based groups of challenges called 'Episodes'
- Mobile-optimised program
- Program also available with Chinese text and limited audio

The program is based on three years of research by MUARC (the Monash University Accident Research Centre) using state-of-the-art driving simulators.

Many of the techniques used in DriveSmart have been adapted from techniques used to train air force pilots. Scientific studies have shown that completing the DriveSmart program helps develop safer driving skills and that it is important to keep with the program to get the best results.

Visit: www.drivesmart.vic.gov.au

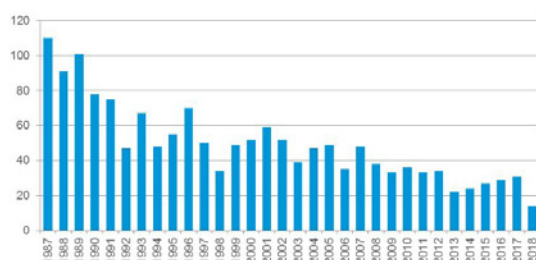
SOURCE: TAC

YOUNG DRIVER STATISTICS

More than 300 young drivers aged 18 – 25 have lost their lives in Victoria in the last 10 years – representing just less than one in four or 23% of drivers lives lost in Victoria in this period.

In 2018, 14% of drivers who lost their lives were aged between 18 and 25 years, with this age group only representing around 10% of Victorian licence holders.

Young Drivers lives lost (1987 – 2018)



Of the 14 young drivers who lost their lives on our roads in 2018:

- 79% were male
- 39% were killed in regional Victoria (73% of these were killed on 100+km/hr roads)
- 50% were killed in single vehicle crashes
- 75% were involved in crashes that occurred in high alcohol times

TRANSPORT ACCIDENT COMMISSION (TAC) SEEKS PANEL OF AGENCIES: SUBMISSIONS

CLOSE 4 MARCH 2020

Victoria's Transport Accident Commission (TAC) – which is charged with promoting the prevention of accidents, and the safe use of transport – has kicked off the tender process to find a panel of agencies for creative and advertising services, public relations, website content and design, and experiential, event management and activations.

In March last year, Clemenger BBDO Melbourne held onto the TAC creative account, which it first won in 2013. The agreement is non-exclusive and allows TAC to continue working with a range of specialist communication experts. Clemenger BBDO was behind the TAC's award-winning 2016 'Meet Graham' campaign showing how humans would look if they were designed to survive car accidents.

The tender details note the services being sought do not include above-the-line creative and advertising services, and TAC is now seeking a group of suppliers to join a non-exclusive panel. The initial panel term is for three years, with an option for the TAC to extend for a further two years.

"During the course of the term, the TAC will call upon panel suppliers to submit quotations for specific event, activation, advertising, public relations, photography, videography, graphic design and digital projects across TAC Road Safety, Partnerships and Marketing, as well as the Corporate Affairs and Community Relations teams from time to time," the tender documents say.

The TAC was clear it is not seeking a full-service advertising agency. The suppliers must have an office in Victoria and experience in government, social insurance and behaviour change campaigns. TAC's aim is to achieve zero deaths and serious injuries on Victoria's roads.

In August, SDWM worked on a TAC Towards Zero campaign, in which more than a thousand captains of Victorian local football and netball clubs traded their numbered jumpers for the number zero, to mark the AFL's road safety round. To support the initiative, two campaign films were made of the jumper presentations, highlighting the loss of someone close to a team member due to road trauma.



The TAC tender closes at 2pm on 4 March. The contract execution is expected in August 2020.

SOURCE: Australian College of Road Safety

INDUSTRY NEWS FROM AROUND AUSTRALIA

The section of our newsletter provides you with driver trainer related industry news from throughout Australia.

Our aim is to highlight stories of interest and educational content that can be shared between the driving instructor community and your students. We also aim to share information that has the potential to inspire you to take in new work in other areas of driver training within our industry.

AUSTRALIAN AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

The start of 2020 was supposed to be a time when Australia was counting down the months towards achieving the goal of a 30 per cent reduction in road deaths and serious injuries over the past decade.

- Australian road toll for 2019 shows 4.7% increase in deaths (1188 people in 2019)
- Road toll increases in Victoria (up 25.8%) and South Australia (up 42.5%)
- Federal Government needs to urgently act on the “Reviving Road safety” recommendations of 23 organisations.

The latest Australian Automobile Association (AAA) report shows 1188 people lost their lives on Australian roads in 2019; a 4.7 per cent annual increase that more than reverses the small improvement recorded the previous year. Particularly alarming annual increases were recorded in Victoria (25.8% increase) and South Australia (42.5%).

The latest edition of the AAA’s quarterly Benchmarking the Performance of the National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020 shows the Australian Capital Territory as the only jurisdiction on track to meet the decade’s targets.

Signed by state and federal governments in 2011, the National Road Safety Strategy aims to reduce road death and injuries by 30 per cent through the decade to 2020. Yet the new analysis by Australia’s peak motoring group shows the 2019 road toll to be significantly higher than it was in 2014 (1,151 fatalities).

AAA Managing Director Michael Bradley said: “These figures underscore the failure of Australia’s current approach to road safety and make clear that our current Strategy has not been supported by the investment, leadership, or accountability required. “Successive inquiries and reviews have said Australia needs – and can develop – a new approach to road safety, with an enhanced role for Canberra sitting at its core.”

The AAA – which represents more than 8 million motorists through its member clubs, the NRMA, RACV, RACQ, RAC, RAA, RACT and the AANT – has called on the Federal Government to urgently adopt key recommendations of the Reviving Road Safety strategy, which last year brought together the expertise and input of 23 organisations dedicated to improving road safety.



BENCHMARKING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY Q4 2019



Australian
Automobile
Association

released February 2020



REGULATOR NEWS AND UPDATES

Priority recommendations include linking federal infrastructure funding to the Strategy's objectives and targets; policies that encourage the delivery of safer vehicles; and establishment of a national Road Safety Data Hub.

"The AAA has welcomed the Federal Government's recent establishment of a National Office of Road Safety to oversee the next National Road Safety Strategy, and the appointment of the Assistant Minister for Road Safety," Mr Bradley said. "The establishment of a bipartisan Select Committee on Road Safety is also welcome, as it has the potential to highlight a clearer federal road safety role and ensure we don't repeat the mistakes of the past."

Read the Full Report here: <https://www.aaa.asn.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/AAA-Benchmarking-Report-Q4-2019.pdf>

SOURCE: Australian College of Road Safety

NZ NEWS: BOOZE, LEARNER LICENCES AND POLICE CHECKPOINTS FACTORS IN ROAD TOLL RISE - STUDY

New research into the country's appalling road toll figures has blamed alcohol and drivers on learner licences for a spike in crash deaths. The findings identify concerns about the falling number of alcohol checkpoints being carried out by police and problems with drivers progressing to a restricted license.



A just-published study, involving researchers from the Ministry of Transport and Otago and Canterbury universities, picked apart crash data over the past decade.

It asked why declining crash rates began to reverse in 2013, with fatal crash numbers rising 2 per cent each of the following three years. The 376 deaths recorded in 2018 were up nearly 50 per cent on 2013's toll of 253. Last year 353 motorists lost their lives on our roads.

Study leader Dr Darren Walton said the Ministry of Transport and the NZ Transport Agency commissioned several reports to investigate the trend.

But none could pin the rising toll to usual factors like shifts in travel, employment or economic growth. "We took a new approach using a different form of analysis."

The findings

Using the Crash Analysis System – a collation of police reports for all fatal and injury crashes – researchers modelled 21 separate factors, ranging from the sex and age of drivers, to the time of crashes and the vehicles, roads and speeds involved. Three big factors jumped out: alcohol, learner licences, and a regional spate in Auckland.

Their findings suggested that, over the 2014 to 2017 period, the odds of alcohol being a factor in a fatal crash shot up by about 40 per cent. This was despite a drop over that time in reported

alcohol-related driving and a 2014 law change that lowered the adult alcohol limit from 80mg to 50mg.

Based on the findings, the researchers suggested something had changed in policing practices which meant fewer detections were occurring, and which allowed for a higher likelihood of alcohol being a factor in crashes. Meanwhile, an increase in crashes involving drivers with learner licences likely reflected a change in the way drivers were graduating through the system, with a "bottleneck" between those on their learner and restricted licenses.

Despite a recent law change lowering the expiry date from a maximum of 10 to five years, the researchers believed many learner drivers were simply taking longer to obtain a restricted licence, and thus had higher odds of appearing in serious crash statistics.

Both of those trends were more pronounced in Auckland, something they found might partly be explained by local population growth.

The researchers were left with several lingering questions about the influence and resourcing of police. "Have learner licence holders changed their perceptions of the likelihood of being caught and ticketed for a minor \$100 fine? It is possible that New Zealand's successful road safety initiatives of the past have been undermined by reduced levels of enforcement and an unexpected outcome from the graduated driving licence system."

SOURCE: ACRS

MORE NZ NEWS: NEW BARRIERS ALONG DEADLY ROAD HIT SIX TIMES

Less than a year after they were installed, the flexible barriers along a dangerous stretch of road in Christchurch have been labelled a "success story". So far six cars have been caught by the barriers on Queen Elizabeth II Drive between Burwood and Innes Rds since they were put in.



Between January 2008 and December 2017, there were two deaths and 13 serious injuries as a result of vehicle collisions on the stretch of road. But in July last year, the barriers - which are designed to "catch vehicles" that leave their lane - were installed along the road as part of a \$2.5 million New Zealand Transport Agency road safety project.

Since then, the barriers have been struck six times between Marshland and Burwood Rds. Vehicles have struck the median barrier twice, potentially preventing head-on collisions, and hit the edge barrier four times, "preventing run-off road or run into tree/ditch crashes," an NZTA spokeswoman said.

When a vehicle hits a barrier, the wire cables flex, slowing the vehicle down and keeping it upright during and after the collision. The barrier also absorbs the impact, reducing the force on the people inside the vehicle. There are no plans to permanently remove the barriers.

"However, on January 20, construction began on a 500m section of the road with barriers to make it wider, after the originally constructed width was found to be slightly short of the planned width,"

the spokeswoman said. "There is no cost to the transport agency for this remedial work, it is covered in the contract with the contractor."

Prior to the barriers being installed, NZTA worked with Fire and Emergency NZ and other stakeholders to allow for the appropriate width for emergency vehicles to reach crash sites.

SOURCE: ACRS

VIC NEWS: SURGEONS SAY TAC'S ROAD PLAN IS 'CLEARLY NOT ON TARGET' AND NEEDS RETHINK

Victoria's road safety plan is "clearly not on a target" and must be morphed into a new strategy using evidence-based approaches, according to a group tasked with saving the lives of those at the centre of the trauma. The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons says Victoria's road safety plan is "clearly not on a target" and must be morphed into a new strategy.

The influential body, representing more than 1400 surgeons statewide, says the state's road trauma is a "serious public health problem of epidemic proportions". It is one of several key groups to have made submissions to a parliamentary inquiry investigating the rise in Victoria's 2019 road toll.

Last year, 268 people died on Victoria's roads — an increase of nearly 26 per cent on the year before. Greater Geelong also recorded its highest road toll in three years with 15 fatalities. In a broad-ranging review the Legislative Council's Economy and Infrastructure Committee will examine how the Geelong-based Transport Accident Commission's Towards Zero 2016-2020 road safety strategy plans to reduce fatalities.

The strategy, which aimed for 200 or less lives lost annually by 2020, is not on track, surgeons said. After the announcement of the review, committee chair Nazih Elasmr said it would also examine current drug and alcohol testing capabilities, speed enforcement, distraction and ways to improve the accessibility of new and safe cars. "Our road toll has risen (in 2019), with more than 240 lives lost," Mr Elasmr said. "As a community we need to work together to look at why this is happening and what can be done to turn this trend around."

In a written submission to the inquiry, surgeons Susan Shedda and Christian Kenfield also called for more aggressive drug and alcohol testing, blood alcohol testing for all road casualty patients over 16 and the national harmonisation of blood alcohol limits across driver categories.

"Strong data about the prevalence of alcohol and drug use while driving will enable better responses to be developed and provided a clear understanding of the scale to which alcohol and drugs contribute to road trauma," they said. Ms Shedda and Mr Kenfield said better reporting on the location of serious crashes linked to other road conditions, like weather or road quality, could help authorities prevent future crashes.

Last month, chair of the college's trauma committee Dr John Crozier said doctors were increasingly seeing road trauma due to drivers using mobile phones and backed calls for Queensland's \$1000 fine for phone use to be introduced in Victoria. In their submission, Ms Shedda and Mr Kenfield said distraction involving mobile phones was a fatal factor in many crashes. "Mobile phone use by drivers is underestimated and current penalties are not sufficient to deter drivers from using them," they said.

The surgeons said while the inquiry was welcomed there was a "growing sense of frustration" that it was taking too long to implement proven life saving initiatives.

TAC director of road safety Samantha Cockfield said the increase in fatalities last year was a “heartbreaking reminder” the work was far from over. “This inquiry is an opportunity to take a deep look at the factors contributing to road trauma and how we can continue to reduce death and serious injury on our roads,” she said.

SOURCE: *Herald Sun Newspaper*

ACT NEWS: RIDESHARE DRIVERS SECURE AMENDMENTS THAT ALLOW THEM TO TOUCH THEIR MOBILES

One of the first rideshare drivers in Canberra has ensured that the more than 2000 drivers in the ACT do not receive hefty fines for touching their mobile phones while driving.



When Uber driver John Burge noticed that the legality of touching his phone while on the job was “at best doubtful”, he contacted the Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety Shane Rattenbury who checked the legislation. As a result, on 20 December last year amendments to sections 299 and 300 of the *Road Transport (Road Rules) Regulation 2017* were made by the ACT Government.

Mr Rattenbury responded to Mr Burge, saying, “The amendments clarify that rideshare, taxi and hire car drivers can use their mobile device as a driver’s aid (for example, a dispatch system) while the vehicle is moving if the information displayed is in relation to the transport of passengers.

“This includes touching the device to accept or reject a job request but does not include touching the device to enter an address or other text-based information. The body of the mobile device must be secured in a mounting affixed to the vehicle while being used.”

Mr Burge told *Region Media* the amendments to the legislation were important to rideshare drivers' business. "My concern was that unless the car was parked, was it legal for us to touch the phone?"

"The issue here is that to do our job, we have to touch the phone when a ride request comes in. We get the notification and we need to accept or reject it. To accept it, you have to touch the phone. Once you pick up the passenger, you have to start the trip by touching the phone and the same happens when you end the trip," Mr Burge said.

The fine in the ACT for touching your phone while in control of a motor vehicle is \$480 or three demerit points. If the driver is using the mobile for social media or the internet, the fine goes up to \$588 with a loss of four demerit points. Mr Burge said the effect of these fines for rideshare drivers would be catastrophic, as rideshare drivers tend to be low-income earners.

"The issue for me was, is it legal to touch our phones and are we at a risk of getting one of those massive fines, which could seriously affect our income and would be close to losing our licence? "It was worse than being a grey area. I came to the conclusion that using a mobile phone while driving was likely to be illegal."

SOURCE: ACRS

NSW NEWS: NSW STATE GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO RECLAIM UP TO 15,000 KILOMETRES OF RURAL AND REGIONAL COUNCIL ROADS HAS BEEN WELCOMED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW

A panel of six experts has been appointed to identify a selection of roads to be reclassified to state control. "Local Government NSW, on behalf of councils, has been pushing for an end to cost shifting in the road system for some time," said LGNSW President, Cr Linda Scott. "We thank the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW and the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads for responding to our calls to work with us to reduce the administrative and financial burden".



"The management of tens of thousands of kilometres of roads by rural and regional councils is yet another example of cost shifting, in which local councils take on more responsibilities for services and infrastructure without the provision of adequate funding.

"It's one of the most significant problems facing councils. In 2018/19, about \$820 million was cost-shifted to NSW councils, part of a burden estimated at \$6.2 billion over 10 years." Cr Scott wants the group to

work closely with LGNSW and member councils and is hopeful of a fast-tracked decision.

"Councils must be consulted as the independent panel formulates its advice on which roads should be given to the state and how to prioritise each one. In doing so, it is our hope the panel will be able to deliver their report well in advance of July 2021, the delivery date indicated by the Deputy Premier. This project is even more important now, with the drought and bushfires heavily

impacting regional councils. These communities simply cannot be expected to wait any longer than is necessary.”

John Roydhouse, former IPWEA NSW CEO, is on the panel. David Jenkins, IPWEA Australasia CEO said, “I welcome this proposal, which is both sensible and pragmatic. I am sure the experts will work closely with LGNSW to generate the best outcomes for all concerned.”

The other five panel members are: Wendy Machin, Peter Duncan, Jillian Kilby, Michael Kilgariff and Peter Tegart.

SOURCE: ACRS

WA NEWS: RAC CALLS FOR 100KM/H SPEED LIMIT ON REGIONAL WA ROADS

The RAC wants the default speed limit on WA’s regional roads to fall from 110km/h to 100km/h as it called on the McGowan Government to “do more to tackle the unforgivably high number of people killed” on the State’s roads.

The organisation said “courageous leadership by a Government truly committed to saving lives today, not in years to come” was needed to achieve safer travel speeds, adding that WA had one of the “poorest road safety performances of all Australian States”.

In a submission to the State Road Safety Strategy consultation, the RAC’s Patrick Walker said progress in road safety in the past 10 years in WA “has been unforgivably slow”. He said that WA speed limits were among the highest in the world and, apart from the Northern Territory, WA was the only Australian jurisdiction to still have the 110km/h rural default speed limit.



A RAC survey found most West Australians were against speed limit drops, with only 16 per cent of respondents in support. Men and young drivers were the most likely to oppose reductions. One in five admitted driving up to 5km/h above the limit most of the time.

Mr Walker said bipartisan support was needed to cut speed limits and improve community understanding of the impact of speed on crashes. Mr Walker said the next strategy should set a more ambitious target to halve the number of people killed or seriously injured on WA roads over the next five years. He called for the Road Safety Commission to report to a joint parliamentary standing committee instead of a minister, for all departments to have shared road safety key performance indicators and for the State to commit to a \$900 million program to improve regional roads, regardless of Federal funding.

There were 165 road deaths in WA last year, the highest since 2016, including 99 in regional areas. Thirteen people have died on roads this year. Road Safety Minister Michelle Roberts said there was no plan for an across the board speed limit cut, adding: “Where, however, there is widespread community support for a review of a speed limit in an area, that will be considered.”

SOURCE: ACRS

MORE WA NEWS: WA INTRODUCES NEW \$1,000 FINE FOR USING MOBILE PHONES WHILE DRIVING, THE EQUAL HIGHEST IN AUSTRALIA

The West Australian Government has announced harsh new penalties for using mobile phones while driving, introducing a maximum \$1,000 on-the-spot fine for motorists.

Key points:

- The penalty is the equal-harshesht in Australia along with Queensland's
- Almost 12,000 WA motorists were caught using their mobiles last year
- The WA Police Minister says it's about changing the culture of drivers

From July 1 this year, anyone caught texting, emailing, using social media, watching videos or accessing the internet while behind the wheel will be hit with the \$1,000 fine and four demerit points. The new penalty is more than double the current \$400 fine and means WA drivers will face the equal-harshesht penalty in Australia for the offence, after Queensland announced last year it was increasing its fine.



Motorists caught touching their mobile phone when stopped at traffic lights, or talking on their phone while holding the handset, will be fined \$500 and receive three demerit points. The increased penalties come after 31 people were killed on WA roads last year as a result of inattention, which includes mobile phone use. Almost 12,000 motorists were caught by WA Police using their mobile phones behind the wheel in 2019.

Fines to target 'incredibly dangerous' driving

WA Police Minister Michelle Roberts said the higher fines would send a strong message to drivers who engaged in "deliberate risk-taking behaviour". "I want to make it clear to motorists that using your mobile phone to text or read emails or [make video calls] while you're driving is incredibly dangerous," she said.

"We need to change the culture of many drivers. We've done it before with drink driving, we've done it with seatbelts and speeding. Now we are doing it with mobile phones. It may take some time to persuade people to be responsible, but we have to do it in order to make our roads safer."

The State Government said the distinction between different types of phone use borrowed from the approach taken in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. But the penalties in those states are not as harsh, with the \$1,000 fines in WA and Queensland nearly double the next highest among Australian states and territories. The Northern Territory has the lowest fine at \$250.

SOURCE: ABC.NET.AU





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