



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety

5 July 2022

MEDIA RELEASE

A licence to drive for rural and regional learner drivers

Rural and regional learner drivers need more support when applying for a driver licence.

The Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety (Staysafe) today tabled its report on support for rural and regional learner drivers. The Hon. Lou Amato MLC, Committee Chair, said learning to drive is a key factor in gaining access to a range of services, but learner drivers in these areas do not have the support they need when applying for a licence.

"Rural and regional learner drivers don't have easy access to public transport, and not having a licence can mean reduced or no access to employment, health services, legal services training, education and social freedom," said Mr Amato.

"We need to focus on addressing the issues in rural and regional areas that make it difficult for those drivers to get their licence and to become safe drivers."

The Committee heard that rural and regional learner drivers face unique barriers to obtaining a driver licence. These include inadequate access to driving programs and instructors as well as, inadequate access to safe vehicles to learn on.

The report's 21 recommendations focus on expanding the eligibility criteria for participation in specific driving programs and increasing ongoing support for rural and regional drivers. That support includes training, financial and on-road driving support, and improved communication about the availability of driver mentoring programs.

The report also looked at the use of driving simulators in the Graduated Licensing Scheme and found that further evaluation on their effectiveness is needed.

"We received evidence from a number of stakeholders which suggests that driving simulators may have benefits. However, at this stage, we need more time to evaluate their suitability at replicating the on-road driving experience."

The Committee also examined changes made to the Graduated Licensing Scheme, driving programs, and regulatory frameworks for professional driving instructors since its 2017 report into Driver Education, Training and Road Safety.

"Recommendations made in this report focus on increasing support for rural and regional learner drivers so that they too enjoy the benefits and freedoms that come with having a driver licence."

The report is available on the Committee's [webpage](#).

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