

INQUIRY INTO YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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4.1.7 Charitable Services Institution endorsement

The Committee Manager
Staysafe Committee
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY
NSW 2000



8th November 07

Reference:

Parliament of New South Wales Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety media release dated 28 September 2007.

Staysafe correspondence 97.006 dated 16 December 1998.

Dear Committee Manager

Submissions – Young Driver Safety

We at the NSW Driver Training Complex would like to say thank you for allowing us to make written submissions into Young Driver Safety.

We understand that there are five issues that will be considered in the course of the Committee's inquiry; they are;

1. The incidence of road crashes involving young drivers;
2. The main factors contributing to such accidents;
3. Differences in driving behaviour and crash outcomes in urban and rural areas;
4. The availability and appropriateness of diversionary programs for young driver offenders; and
5. The effectiveness of young driver education programs.

1. The incidence of road crashes involving young drivers

Does these statistics, clearly indicates interstate young drivers and international young drivers.

Interstate young drivers

With these drivers are the vehicle's themselves are causing road crashes, due to the vehicle's roadworthiness, to solve this problem may be there should be a national roadworthy certificate issued every year, there are too many irregularities in roadworthiness between states and territories, also there should be a national drivers licensing card, there are too many irregularities in drivers licences between states and territories.

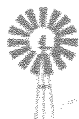
International young drivers

With these driver's they are more crashes involving young drivers due to their lack of exposure to the nation's road that vehicles have to drive on the left hand side of the road, the young drivers are safe when driving on divided roads (highways and freeways), but when they hop off the divided road and drive on a single road, they automatically revert back to their home country, in where they might drive on the right hand side of the road, for these visitors they obtain an International Drivers Permit from their home country, to solve this problem is to only issue the international drivers permit in Australia, and only after the international driver has obtained 10 hours of instruction, to make sure that the driver is fully aware of our roads and legislation.



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2. The main factors contributing to such accidents

Lack of experience, over confident and complacency

Lack of experience

It has been proven that when a first time driver obtains their licence, and within 12 months the risk of having an accident is 135%, but after 12 months the risk is reduced to 3 times more likely to be involved in an accident, to solve this problem is to have a RTA approved Driver Training provider, to give 20 hours of pre-driver course, this 20 hours it could be a part of the 150 hours need to obtain a licence, so when the young driver starts their driving lessons, they would have 20 hours of pre-driver experience.

Over confident

Once the young driver obtains their licence, then they do not have to drive within the standards shown to them by either their parents or driver instructor, they can drive a car with no one sitting in the passenger's seat, no one can see their mistakes and tell them what to do, they are free and this is the time they would take risks, to speed just 10 k's above the limit, to take other risks like to overtake another car, this is very risky you have to be very confident to overtake a car and not overconfident because if you are over confident them you take too many risks. To solve this problem is for the young driver not to become overconfident when just obtained their licence.

Complacency

Once a young driver obtains their licence, they feel complacent because they are 6 foot tall and bullet proof, in fact they are just the rest of the population, organic and venerable, and most young drivers do take their own lives and others when the road conditions change, for sum reason they can not recognised, that if they do not change their driving habits the will become another road statistic, to solve this problem is to keep reinforcing that you are not complacent when you are driving your car.

3. Differences in driving behaviour and crash outcomes in urban and rural areas

Urban

In this environment the young drivers have no peripheral vision, because it is blocked by advertising signs and buildings, the young driver also has no depth perception, due to the buildings and other road users, for some reason the young drivers have this belief that if you speed and travel too close to the vehicle in front of them, they feel safe and secure. To solve this problem is to have all licences endorsed with conditions such as "C" this will enable the young driver to drive in "Urban" conditions.

The crash outcome in urban areas is high due to the reasons I stated above.

Urban to Rural

When young driver exercises their privilege of driving on the nations roads, but has only driven and been tested on urban roads, they have a sensory overload, because they have now peripheral vision, no buildings blocking their view, also to have vast depth perception, due to the remoteness of vehicles, but also a major risk factor of driving on a single carriageway, and also they are travelling at a higher speed relative to the speed of urban areas, to solve this problem, is to have part of their 150 hours a percentage driving in rural conditions.

The crash outcome in rural areas is high because of the lack of young urban driver experience, in the rural environment.

Rural

When young driver exercises their privilege of driving on the nations roads, but has only driven and been tested on semi-urban/rural roads, they have a higher sensoria than their urban colleagues, because they have a greater peripheral vision, no buildings blocking their view, also to have vast depth perception, due to the remoteness of vehicles, but also a major risk factor of driving on urban and high traffic conditions, they seem to follow at a safe distance (3 seconds) from the vehicle in front of them, but due to the nature of city drivers there forced to take avoided measures to avoid a potential accident.

To solve this problem, is to have part of their 150 hours a percentage driving in urban conditions.

Rural to Urban

When young driver exercises their privilege of driving on the nations roads, but has only driven and been tested on rural roads, they are harassed, petrified and terrorised when it comes to driving in the urban environment by urban drivers, and this will stay with them throughout their entire lives, and they will avoid never to drive in the urban cities, but to stay where they feel safe and secure in the large rural cities eg: Wagga Wagga, Dubbo and Albury.

To solve this problem, is to have part of their 150 hours a percentage driving in urban conditions.

The crash outcome in rural to urban areas is high because of the lack of young urban driver experience, from driving from rural to urban environment.

4. The availability and appropriateness of diversionary programs for young driver offenders.

The only way to detour young drivers from breaking the law when driving is to dramatically increase the period of suspension, fines, imprisonment and confiscating their vehicle to be sold as “proceeds of crime” and to notify all vehicle insurers of the suspension and the confiscation.

To remove the appeal process, because on appeal they have their sentence reduced and in some cases removed due to a technicality.

The fines that are issued from the courts are a joke; there should be “Zero” tolerance to all driving offender’s not just young drivers.

If the state government adopts the policy of “zero” tolerance, then it will send a clear signal to all drivers, that we (community) do not tolerate driver offenders.

In regarding diversionary programs, this should not be available to young driver offenders, because they will abuse it, to try and get a leaner sentence, there are many diversionary programs operated by the community, to help drivers that have a habitual driving offences.

5. The effectiveness of young driver education programs

The state government has in place through the NSW Department of School Education, driver education – curriculum statement and guidelines – years 9-12, in where it is encourage to participate by years 9-12 to participate in a young driver education program set-up by the community, but this should be mandatory, it should be a part of the secondary school curriculum, and not up to the discretion of the principal.

If it was mandatory to attend such driver education program, the hours could go towards obtaining a licence, just for say you need 10 hours of theory, in addition to the 150 hours to obtain your licence.

Finally it has not been addressed, the training industry (instructors).

I am a commercial pilot; also I have obtained instructors endorsement, when I was in training to obtain this endorsement I have to be taught on how to give lessons, to understand the psychology of the student, in why they need a licence, what factors impede them from learning, to recognise their personal feelings, and yes we are tested on this important psychological conditions. We have to be honest with the students, to give them praise and encouragement, also to explain and to demonstrate any faults that they might display, this is a regulatory requirement laid down by the industry.

I understand for you to be a driver instructor, you have to attend an instructor school, and just how to pass a student, and do not take into account the understanding of the psychological condition of the student.

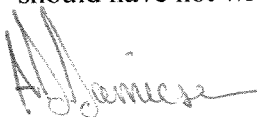
In make reference to the television program "Last Chance Learners", in this production the instructors do not take any duty of care when they are given instruction to the students, there was one occasion in where the student had collided with a telegraph pole, and set-off the safety air-bags, and the student was injured, the ambulance was called that's all, but I understand if there was an accident and the ambulance is called then the police should have been called.

There was a conflict between a student and the instructor, because the student keeps on complaining that they can not drive a car with manual transmission only a car with automatic-transmission. But the instructor never took any duty of care and insists the student drives a manual car, in the end the student left the program.

If I had a student that constantly complains to me about the type of aircraft, I would then have of sit down with the student and work out the problem, it could of be that the student is scared of the aircraft, but I would never ever push my student to operate the aircraft against their will.

Also on the program, the student puts lives of the instructor and other road users in grave and immediate danger, by attempting to take a right hand turn against the traffic, for some reason known to the student they can not see the danger of oncoming traffic (NSW bus) and the instructor had to take control of the car by grabbing hold of the steering wheel.

To me if a student puts my life in immediate grave danger when flying I will remove the risk, return to base and sit down, with the student and the Chief Flying Instructor, and try to explain to the student why I had to take immediate control of the aircraft, and why we should have not writing to CASA to have your licence cancelled.



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