

INQUIRY INTO YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Organisation: Australian Driver Trainers Association (NSW)
Name: Mr Allan Porter
Position: Executive Director
Date Received: 10/12/2007



(NSW) Limited
ABN 19 000 218 075

PO Box 706
AVALON NSW 2107

Tel: 02 9918 3590
Fax: 02 9918 3588
Email: adta@bigpond.com
Website: www.adta.com.au

December 6, 2007

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



Dear Sir

Inquiry into Young Driver Safety and Education Programs

We refer to the above Inquiry and are pleased to submit as follows.

The Australian Driver Trainers Association NSW Ltd (ADTA) is the representative body of professional driving instructors celebrating 50 years of service in 2007. Members are qualified to provide instruction for all types of driving licences - from motor cycles and cars to heavy trucks and buses and account for the vast majority of licences issued each year in NSW.

Our objective is to ensure high service standards are delivered by our members in order to achieve safer, more competent drivers and improvements to road safety outcomes. In this regard, we work closely with RTA Customer Education & Compliance and RTA Road Safety and liaise with other agencies and organisations at State and Federal level.

We believe joint efforts between our industry in NSW and others with an interest in seeing an improvement to the competency of young drivers, has been far in excess of that in other states and territories and has paved the way for the sharing of knowledge and experience around Australia.

Our association has at all times endeavoured to ensure its continuing reputation as one providing advice borne out of our quest for excellence in achieving quality outcomes befitting a professional association of professional service providers and continuing our commitment to the development of all initiatives that will achieve a benefit to improving the safety of young drivers.

Driver training as part of road safety

Driver training and education is regarded as an extremely important component of road safety. Measures introduced by the licensing authority and initiatives developed and introduced in conjunction with the authority by our association have been aimed at increasing the level of safety and competency of all young drivers.

Legislation

The legislative and auditing provisions that are the responsibility of the Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) provide an effective measure in ensuring regulatory responsibility on the part of driving instructors.

Training and education programs

Training and education of young drivers starts with programs in secondary schools which we fully support. However, a young person's attitude to driving and their later driving behaviour may be

influenced by what they are exposed to in their early years by their parents. ('The sins of the fathers are passed on to the young'). This is an issue that we believe can be countered by effective training and education 'partnerships' between professional driver trainer, pupil and their parent/guardian and will be expanded upon in this submission.

Other training and education programs have been introduced with our support and direct involvement. Among them the Rotary Young Driver Awareness (RYDA) programs.

Low-risk driver education

Driver training and education has evolved in recent times from evidence based research that shows if a young driver's training and education is managed through a system of professional tuition and experience, the result is a safer, more competent driver. To help in achieving this, logbook training that was first introduced in NSW on July 1, 2000 with a 50-hour logbook and the 120-hour log book introduced on July 1, 2007 require new drivers to show they have achieved a level of experience under supervision in a wide variety of driving situations.

In addition, improved driver testing and assessment procedures require new drivers to demonstrate they have achieved a high level of knowledge and skill in 'low-risk' driving techniques, are capable of recognizing hazardous situations and are able to take the appropriate action to avoid a crash or incident occurring.

We are pleased that we have been able to work closely with the RTA in the development of low-risk driving practices and the new driving test that has in recent months, been progressively rolled out across NSW.

Workshops

Workshops jointly organised by our association and the RTA are aimed at ensuring professional trainers are upskilled in all the finer points of low-risk, hazard aware training. Twelve professional development workshops have been held during 2007 in metro and regional areas throughout the state. More will be held in 2008.

Support material for training and education

Teaching material focusing on the importance of low-risk training and education for the benefit of professional trainers and their pupils has been introduced with our direct support, content design and involvement including –

Beyond Test Routes

A package of information produced by the RTA on low-risk driving.

Key Facts for New Drivers

Illustrated material encouraging safe driving produced by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau. (ATSB).

Driver Record Reports

Produced by our association for our members corresponding to driver logbooks and providing a reporting measure to pupil and parents of the pupil's progress through their training and education.

Samples of the above can be made available.

Professional and supervised training

Evidence based research in Australia and overseas shows that the longer a new driver can be kept under professional training and supervision by being exposed to a wide variety of driving situations, the more competent and safer they will become. The 120-hour logbook introduced on July 1, 2007 will help achieve this.

A logbook 'discount'

We feel that to accompany the introduction of the increased number of logbook hours, there is an opportunity to facilitate the process of its accurate completion, by the new learner driver, if there was an incentive introduced to gain a benefit from a Professional Driver Trainer.

The incentive would be to offer new learner drivers a 'logbook discount', of one hour of professional tuition by a licensed Professional Driver Trainer equaling three hours of logbook time capped with a maximum of say ten hours professional tuition equaling 30 hours in the logbook. The proposal also corresponds to what has been agreed by the authorities in Queensland and introduced on July 1, 2007.

Partnerships – the key to success

This initiative would allow the structuring of an effective partnership between the learner, the parents and the professional trainer that would facilitate the learner's progress and help to keep that progress on track. It would also help in countering any influence that bad driving habits of parents or others may have had on the new driver.

If learner drivers are to be provided with all the essentials of competent and safe driving, the partnership will help both learner and parents understand the magnitude and complexity of the task and help achieve the best possible result for the new driver.

Code of Practice

We are completing an industry Code of Practice that will seek a signed commitment from our members in ensuring all the tenets of safe driving are presented to new drivers. The Code would facilitate industry auditing and monitoring of service delivery to agreed standards to ensure satisfactory outcomes.

Australian Automobile Association (AAA) proposal

There is a proposal from the Australian Automobile Association called *Keys 2 Drive*. The Proposal is to offer a free lesson to a learner driver, by a professional driver trainer, in which a parent or supervising driver can sit in the back and learn how to structure lessons and provide much needed practice for their learner driver.

Keys 2 Drive is fully supported by our Association and is seen as another way to set up a partnership between the professional Driver Trainer, the Parent or Supervisor and the Learner Driver, for the long term benefit of the learner driver.

Continuing research

We are partners in research into the evaluation of some 20,000 young driver's pre and post licence training/education and driving record through the Young Driver 'Drive' Research program being carried out by the George Institute, University of Sydney. The program commenced in 2000 and we have maintained a close involvement with the project which has the potential to further influence training, education and achieving positive outcomes of new drivers.

We are also partners to the development by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) of a post-license assessment program aimed at assessing the driving outcomes of young drivers once they have had experience driving solo on their red P's. This program involves both the RTA and Vic Roads in Victoria.

Personal involvement

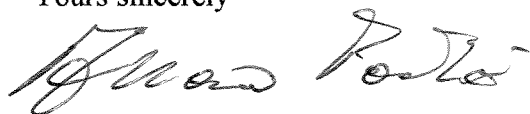
Our association has developed and maintains close working relationships with a variety of organisations and institutions that share similar interests of road safety and driver training and education.

Our Executive consists of members with a range of qualifications, background and experience that is representative of our Association's commitment and experience in the pursuit of further improving road safety through the introduction of improved driver training and education measures.

Individual members of our Executive hold positions on the Australasian College of Road Safety and the Management Committee of the Post Licence Assessment Scheme under development by the ATSB.

We look forward to working with the Committee as the Inquiry progresses.

Yours sincerely



Allan Porter
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

