

## **INQUIRY INTO YOUNG DRIVER SAFETY AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Organisation:** Cessnock City Council  
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**Position:** Road Safety Officer  
**Date Received:** 28/11/2007

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The Hon Geoff Corrigan MP  
Chair  
Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety (Staysafe)  
Parliament of New South Wales  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir

The following is the submission of Cessnock City Council for the inquiry into Young Driver Safety and Education Programs addressing the terms of reference as requested.

NB : Information about Youth On The Move can be located on council's website - [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au) look under Publications, Road Safety, Youth On The Move

Any enquires or requests for further information can be directed to Ms Jennifer Andrews Road Safety Officer on 4993 4251 or [jennifer.andrews@cessnock.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jennifer.andrews@cessnock.nsw.gov.au)

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Andrews".

Jennifer Andrews  
Road Safety Officer  
Cessnock City Council  
Tuesday, 27 November 2007

2 x Attachments

1. YOUTH ON THE MOVE
2. CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL - YOUTH ON THE MOVE EVALUATION.

## **CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL**

### **Submission in response to request for information and comment Inquiry into Young Driver Safety and Education Programs.**

Cessnock City is largely a rural and residential Local Government Area located in Hunter Valley Wine Country in the heart of the Hunter Valley.

As with most rural council areas, Cessnock Local Government Area has its share of issues with young drivers in the community.

After the deaths of 4 locals in 2 separate crashes in 1994, our Council has been committed to young driver education. In 1995 a Road Safety Committee was established and in 1997 council consulted with stakeholders and the community to develop educational programs for young drivers. Thence:

- The Youth on the Move Project (YOTM Project) was developed in 1997. The project development was conducted in partnership with Cessnock City Council, Samaritan's Job Placement Employment and Training, Kurri Kurri Youth Centre and Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service. The project was developed for application in the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA).
  
- The aims of the YOTM Project are to:
  - a) Educate young and novice drivers about the issues and consequences of driving;
  - b) Improve road user behaviour and road safety attitudes;
  - c) Decrease the incidence of risk taking behaviour;
  - d) Increase the awareness of drug and alcohol issues and standard drink information;
  - e) Improve hazard perception;
  - f) Decrease the incidence of road rage.
  
- The main product or output of the YOTM project is the Youth on the Move Young Driver Education Program (the Program).

The YOTM program has 3 key components.

- 1 Educational sessions - over 6 weeks involving the following presenters and topics such as
  - Headstart - Acquired Brain Injury - the facts and consequences
  - Volunteer Rescue Association - crash consequences from a local perspective
  - Risk taking and hazard perception
  - Police - legal consequences, crash factors, common mistakes and misapprehensions
  - Alcohol and other drugs
  - Road safety - cost of crashes and behavioural factors
  - Stress management, peer pressure, intimidation and road rage
  - RTA - Licensing, points and vehicle modifications
  - Media - advertising and the real cost of owning a car
  - Insurance - legalities and fraud
- 2 Senior First Aid Course - over 2 day weekend
- 3 Professional Driver Training - 4 Free lessons the next 3-4 months.

This program has now been conducted in the Cessnock City Council Local Government Area 2-3 times per year and is continually modified to need the changing needs.

Youth On The Move was judged as "best practice" on YOUTH road safety at the RTA Road Safety 2010, Hunter Region Road Safety forum July 2000.

After reviewing evaluations from many community based young driver program i.e. "U Turn the Wheel" council , in 2007 engaged the services of a Professional Research company to conduct a thorough evaluation of the program. A brief was prepared and then data was obtained from over 183 participants and explore the key benefits that graduates were experiencing as a result of their involvement, and to determine the ways that the information and instruction that they received from the Youth On The Move course influenced their driving behaviour. (YOTM Evaluation 2007 attached).

It is worthy of noting some of the findings, (note: YOTM evaluation executive summary) in particular that the overwhelming majority of graduates felt that attending the Program had influenced the way that they drive, which is one of the essential goals of the Program. Almost 97 per cent (96.7%) indicated that the way that that they drive had been influenced by the course.

Graduates of the program also gave information relating to the ***way in which the information provided at YOTM has influenced graduates driving behaviour i.e. that they***

- ***Drive more cautiously*** and ***Drive with greater awareness of hazards and/or consequences*** were the two major ways in which the Program had influenced the way that graduates drive (nominated by 61.6% and 38.4% of graduates respectively). All of the graduates indicated at least one of these options, with ***Don't speed*** as the third most popular option (nominated by 11.9% of graduates).

Whilst generally Cessnock City Council has the very same or similar young driver issues as almost every other council area in the state on NSW it was very pleasing to see that in the calendar year of 2005 there were no fatalities in the 17-25 age group (2004 only 11%) in the LGA of Cessnock which statistically went significantly against State and regional trends. However, the numbers are only small and therefore can't be used to discern statistical significance.

However in regard to the statewide young driver problem Cessnock council believes that not enough priority is placed by the State on young driver education and implementing education programs that are proven to demonstrate behaviour change in this age group.

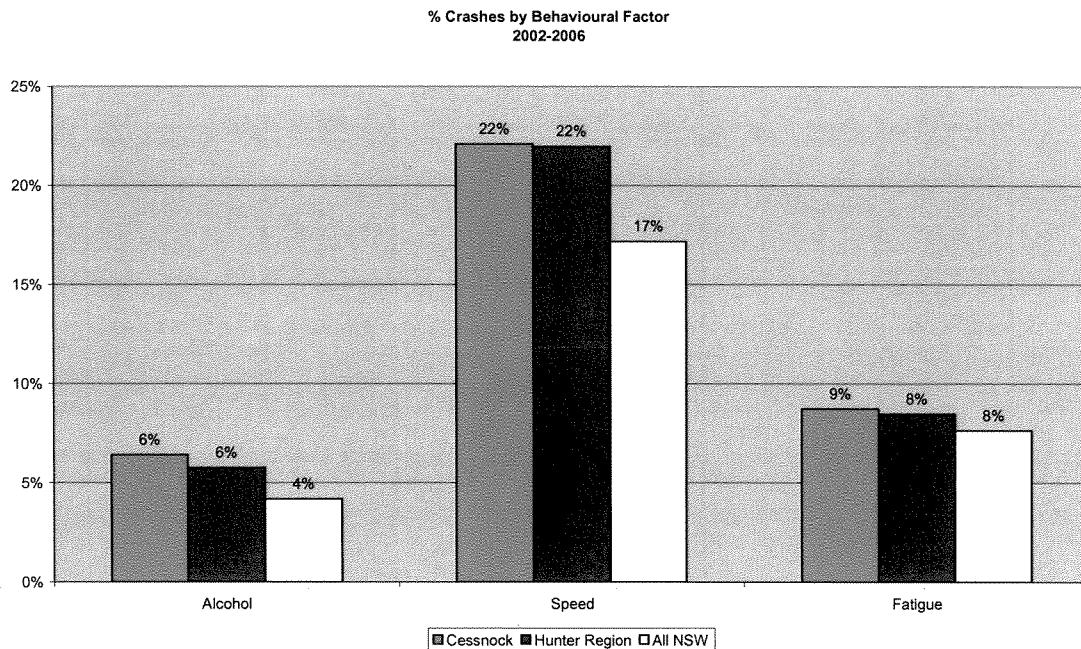
Council recognises the importance of education programs to improve young driver safety in Cessnock and welcomes this initiative of the State Government Staysafe committee and the opportunity it presents for Council comment.

The following addresses and makes comment on the terms of reference for the inquiry into young driver safety and education programs.

2002-2006

All Casualties	2002-2006											
	0-4	5-12	13-16	17-20	21-25	26-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+	Unknown
<b>Motor vehicle driver</b>												
Male	0	5	16	9	39	9	6	11	9	4	5	6
Female	0	13	11	15	22	4	3	32	9	12	17	9
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	0	18	27	24	61	13	9	43	18	16	22	15
<b>Motor vehicle passenger</b>												
Male	0	0	2	1	19	14	24	33	25	15	5	0
Female	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	3	5	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	0	0	2	1	19	16	25	37	28	20	5	0
<b>Motorcyclist (inc. pass.)</b>												
Male	0	0	5	5	1	1	0	6	3	3	2	0
Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	0	0	5	6	1	1	0	8	3	3	2	0
<b>Pedestrian</b>												
Male	0	0	2	2	2	1	1	4	4	4	4	4
Female	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	3	0	2	3	4
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	1	1	3	4	2	1	1	7	4	6	7	8
<b>Other</b>												
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sub-total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>ALL ROAD USER CLASSES</b>												
Male	5	19	25	18	131	69	64	112	95	58	32	30
Female	14	14	12	18	87	50	32	86	69	56	39	29
Unknown	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>59</b>

## b) Underlying risks and major factors contributing to such crashes.



Speed continues to be the main contributing factor for crashes in the Cessnock area, although both alcohol and fatigue, along with speed continue to be above the state average for crashes.

The examination of road user movement categories of crash data further indicate that a high percentage of crashes are rear end collisions which indicate inattention and not keeping a safe crash avoidance space from the vehicle in front.

## c) Differences in driving behaviour, crash outcomes and relevant trends in urban and rural areas of NSW.

- Many roads in rural areas are high speed with the road environment unforgiving to motor vehicle crashes.
- Police enforcement on rural roads is sporadic due largely to staffing and the need for high visibility on major urban roads. This may lead to non compliance of speed limits and risk taking behaviours on rural roads.
- The lack of public transport in rural areas in particular late night transport results in individuals driving with illegal BAC and also without licences as the risk of detection is perceived as being reduced.

## d) The availability of appropriateness of current diversionary and educational programs for young offenders involved in serious traffic violations.

Current programs for young offenders in Cessnock is limited to the Traffic Offenders Program – a six week education and road safety awareness program coordinated by the Cessnock Police Citizens Youth Club with

offenders referred through the Magistrate at the Local Court. The program involves a number of speakers conducting presentations ranging from victim impact to low risk driving.

**e) The efficacy of young driver education programs and the potential for development and expansion of these programs.**

- Education programs like Youth On The Move are not supported by RTA, therefore, aren't encouraged throughout the state. Some councils, like Port Stephens and Tamworth (plus many others) have taken on the program and modified it to suit their community needs.
- Road Safety Officers are not permitted to conduct education and awareness programs in schools. Road Safety is supposed to be part of the senior curriculum but schools consistently contact Council to request support on this topic.
- Considerable change has been made with changes to rules and restrictions for young drivers but it appears that little in the way of localised education has been implemented to support these enforcement strategies.
- 'Helping learner drivers become safer drivers' workshops is the only young driver education support program that the RTA supports. However, this is for parents and not the young drivers.
- 'Helping learner drivers become safer drivers' is not compulsory for supervising drivers and misses the majority of parents and other supervisors who directly impact on the teaching of driving behaviours to young people.

**f) Other initiatives to improve young driver safety.**

- Youth On The Move needs to be rolled out across the state as an effective measure to educate young drivers in the areas of Risk Taking, Hazard Perception and road user education.
- A clear direction of education programs that are effective for influencing young driver behaviour needs to be investigated and a consistent program brief rolled out that is supported by Government, research based and able to be implemented Statewide. A lot of communication is conducted on what we are not permitted to implement regarding road safety education for young people but no clear strategy for what can be done is forthcoming. A number of Councils run individual programs funded through Council funds but these are often not supported by the RTA.

**g) Any other relevant matters.**

- Young Driver education in NSW is lacking the huge component of behavioural factors causing crashes. The RTA handbook is limited to road rules and vehicle handling is addressed during the driving tests.
- Education of Driver Behavioural needs urgent funding and promotion.